



# SAFE PASSAGE



A Newsletter for the Humanitarian Mine Action and Small Arms/Light Weapons Communities

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## Marshall Legacy Institute Promotes CHAMPS in Arizona and California

By Kimberly McCasland, Marshall Legacy Institute, and Jim Lawrence, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement



Photo: The Marshall Legacy Institute

*Hidden by the sea of St. Francis Xavier blue is PM/WRA's Jim Lawrence, standing with students and MLI's CHAMPS Team. His visit highlighted the activities of veteran mine detection dog Rosa as MLI promoted its CHildren Against Mines Program.*

The Marshall Legacy Institute (MLI) took its CHildren Against Mines Program (CHAMPS) to Phoenix, Arizona, in February to promote the landmine issue and foster a spirit of global citizenship among local schoolchildren. The CHAMPS Team (accompanied by PM/WRA's Jim Lawrence) visited seven schools, three Rotary Clubs, and five television stations in partnership with its corporate sponsor Qwest Communications. The students thoroughly enjoyed the mine detection dog demonstrations performed by Rosa, a 12-yr old Belgian Malinois who "sniffed out" landmines and saved lives in six countries from 1996-2004. With Qwest providing up to \$10,000 in matching funds, the schoolchildren have nearly reached the CHAMPS-Arizona Campaign goal of \$20,000 to sponsor their own lifesaving Arizona, who will join five highly trained canine friends (contributed by students throughout the U.S.) in Bosnia-Herzegovina this summer.

The CHAMPS Team also traveled to the La Jolla Country Day School in San Diego, where fifth graders organized a campaign to sponsor a dog named La Jolla. On March 18, MLI attended the Annual Conference of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) in Long Beach, California, where Rosa received the first ever "Hero Dog Award" presented by AAHA in its 36 year history. Many of the thousands of veterinarians who participated in the ceremony have offered to support MLI's mine detection dog program to help make a better and safer world for all.

For more information on MLI's CHAMPS program, please visit [http://www.marshall-legacy.org/k9\\_demining\\_corps/champs.htm](http://www.marshall-legacy.org/k9_demining_corps/champs.htm).

## MINE ACTION HIGHLIGHT U.S. Funding for Mine Action Surpasses \$1 Billion

United States support for humanitarian mine action since 1993 passed the \$1 billion mark in 2005. In addition to the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement in the U.S. Department of State, participants include the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, the U.S. Agency for International Development's Patrick J. Leahy War Victims Fund, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation.

"Our efforts over the years, in partnership with other governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations, have reduced landmine casualties, enabled millions to live, farm, and raise their children safely, and made mine action a more efficient discipline," remarked Dr. John Hillen, Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs. "The goal of a world free from the humanitarian impact of landmines is attainable in our lifetime provided we all continue to apply lessons learned and focus on the landmines that pose an imminent threat to the safety of communities and that hinder economic development."

# Seventh Annual Princess Diana Memorial Sitting Volleyball Tournament

By Christine Manula, Landmine Survivors Network

Created by and for landmine survivors, Landmine Survivors Network (LSN) empowers individuals, families, and communities affected by landmines to recover from trauma and reclaim their lives. The hallmark of LSN's programs is peer support, employing landmine survivors to conduct outreach programs designed to link survivors to health services. LSN also increases economic opportunities for survivors, providing job training and small business grants. LSN operates in seven countries: Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), Colombia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Jordan, Mozambique, and Vietnam.

Bosnia & Herzegovina became the first LSN Network in 1997 shortly after Diana, Princess of Wales, and LSN co-founders, Jerry White and Ken Rutherford, visited the region on a humanitarian mission. Years of conflict left BiH one of the most heavily-mined countries in Europe; LSN now operates in twelve of its most heavily mined regions. To date, LSN-BiH outreach workers have assisted more than 6,000 survivors. The Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement generously supports LSN's work in Bosnia & Herzegovina through the International Trust Fund.

## The Healing Power of Sports

Athletics is an integral part of LSN's recovery program. Last September, LSN organized its Seventh Annual Princess Diana Memorial Sitting Volleyball Tournament



Photo: Landmine Survivors Network

In the Bonn, Germany marketplace, onlookers watch two teams demonstrate the game of sitting volleyball during Bonn International Paralympic Day 2005. This adaptation is considered more intense and fast-paced than its traditional standing format.

in Tuzla, Bosnia, in cooperation with the Cantonal Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports and the Tuzla municipality. The tournament not only promotes the skills and capacities of persons with disabilities, but also creates shared experiences that help reconcile bitterly divided ethnic groups marked by years of civil strife and

war, even attracting teams from Hungary and Croatia. Murat Asoli, a survivor who competed in the tournament, stated "it was a new day in my country, and I felt great pride in the spirit of sportsmanship during the games." For more information, please visit <http://www.landminesurvivors.org>.

## Making Water Points Safe in Chad

Photos & Article Courtesy of MAG (Mines Advisory Group)



Photo: MAG (Mines Advisory Group)

Nomads congregate at cleared water point in Bir Gosse in March 2006.

An Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA)-funded project in Chad is enabling MAG (Mines Advisory Group) to clear safe access to water sources for communities in the village of Bedo and at Bir Gosse, in remote areas of northern Chad. Both were contaminated with unexploded ordnance (UXO) left over from 19 years of sporadic fighting. Fear of this contamination affected the nomadic populations who lived in the harsh desert environment and relied on the water points for their survival as well as that of their camels. A number of the victims of UXO accidents were children, curious about the items they found lying in and around the water points, but some

were also a result of nomads straying into dangerous areas.

At Bir Gosse, 47 items of UXO were found and destroyed. Didier Leonard, Technical Operations Manager, stated, "Since MAG has been working in Borkou province, 1,765,000 square meters of land have been cleared. A total of 12 water points have been rehabilitated and 19 contaminated areas have now been marked." For the most current information on MAG, please visit <http://www.mag.org.uk/>.

# Clearance Efforts Bring Baseball to Vietnam

By Gerard Lumban, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement

On January 17-25, a delegation hosted by Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) President Jan Scruggs and Cleveland Indians pitcher Danny Graves brought baseball to Vietnam as an integral part of a VVMF initiative called Project RENEW™. The project began in December 2000 to reduce the threat of landmines and UXO through mine awareness education and survivors assistance in Quang Tri Province's Trieu Phong District.

The trip involved a series of baseball-related activities, culminating in the dedication of a new baseball field and a baseball clinic taught by Danny Graves. Thanks to Project RENEW™ clearance efforts, an area once littered with UXO is now the first baseball field in Vietnam. The Baseball Tomorrow Fund, a joint initiative of Major League Baseball (MLB) and the MLB Player's Association, funded the construction of the field while MLB, Louisville Slugger, the New York Mets Foundation, the Cincinnati Reds and Pittsburgh Pirates donated the equipment and apparel.

HBO's "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel" covered the trip, highlighting the return of Danny Graves and his mother to Vietnam after over 30 years in America. The first Vietnamese player in MLB history, he left Vietnam

when he was 14 months old. This trip was an opportunity for him and his mother to reconnect with the family they left behind.

Visit <http://www.landmines.org.vn/project.htm> for more information on Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's Project RENEW™.

Learn more about Major League Baseball's Baseball Tomorrow Fund at <http://www.baseballtomorrowfund.com/>.



*Flanked by large crowd in Dong Ha, Quang Tri Province, Cleveland Indians pitcher Danny Graves teaches the fundamentals of pitching to one of a hundred participating students at VVMF's baseball clinic at Le Loi High School.*

Photo: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

## PROGRAM ASSESSMENT VISIT TO VIETNAM

By Gerard Lumban, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement

John Stevens, PM/WRA's new Program Manager for Vietnam, recently conducted a program assessment visit there, meeting with Vietnamese Government and provincial officials in Hanoi and Quang Tri and Quang Binh Provinces, and with representatives of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Catholic Relief Services, Landmine Survivors Network, and Clear Path International. He also visited an underwater UXO clearance site north of the capital operated by the Vietnamese Army's Technology Center for Bomb and Mine Disposal. Particularly memorable was a school built on land cleared of UXO by PeaceTrees Vietnam, just a few kilometers from the battle sites of Khe Sanh and Lang Vay.

Vietnam remains one of PM/WRA's top priority countries due to the degree of UXO and landmine contamination there. Through the concerted efforts of PM/WRA, the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, and our partners in humanitarian mine and UXO clearance, much progress has been made and continues as you read this newsletter.



*John Stevens meets with a PeaceTrees Vietnam clearance site supervisor at the site of a new kindergarten whose grounds are being cleared of UXO.*

Photo: John Stevens (PM/WRA)

# Mine Action Support Group Meets in Geneva

By Jim Lawrence, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement

Richard Kidd convened the first meeting of the Mine Action Support Group (MASG) under U.S. chairmanship in Geneva on March 7. Representatives from donor governments, the UN, the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and NGOs gathered to share information on their programs and future funding projections. Most donor governments intend to maintain funding for mine action at current levels for the next few years. Several donors are conducting policy and strategy reviews right now. They agreed on the need for capacity building in mine-affected countries as well as greater donor coordination. The UN mine action agencies (UNMAS, UNDP, and UNICEF) discussed their strategic plans and urged greater involvement by donor embassies in mine-affected countries. The GICHD made presentations on the program life cycle of mine action and how these patterns can help donors examine end-states and reconstruction and development. Bob Eaton of the Survey Action Center gave a lunch presentation that measured the impact of mine action and illustrated the importance of setting achievable goals. It was heartening to hear consensus that this problem can be solved in years, not decades. The U.S. will chair the MASG through 2007. Visit the new MASG website at [www.state.gov/t/pm/wra/c17719.htm](http://www.state.gov/t/pm/wra/c17719.htm).

## Intern-Fellow Spotlight

**Eric Patterson, Ph.D.**, joined the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) as the William C. Foster Fellow in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs for the 2005-2006 academic year. An Assistant Professor of Political Science at Vanguard University in Costa Mesa, California, he teaches courses on "U.S. Foreign Policy" and "War, Peace, and Security" and has edited two books, two completed manuscripts, and numerous scholarly articles and Op-Eds. Dr. Patterson is a technical resource for PM/WRA and represents the office at conferences and other meetings. He also serves on PM's External Research Board.

**Sho Morimoto** has been with PM/WRA since August 2005. He is a graduate student at Georgetown University completing his Masters degree in Security Studies and is also a Presidential Management Fellow finalist. He primarily works with the SA/LW program.

**Jeffrey Trinker** served as a graduate intern at PM/WRA from January-March 2006. He is a student at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville

working on his Masters degree in Political Science. In PM/WRA, his work focused on SA/LW and MANPADS issues. He has returned to Tennessee to finish his degree this coming fall and begin his Ph.D. in the spring of 2007.

**Craig Finkelstein** joined PM/WRA in January 2006 as a Frasure-Kreuzel-Drew Humanitarian Demining Fellow. He is a junior at James Madison University majoring in International Affairs. His primary responsibility is to assist the Resource Management section with grants application and processing.

**Gerard Lumban** worked in PM/WRA from January-April 2006. He is an undergraduate at American University majoring in International Studies, specializing in U.S. Foreign Policy and East Asia. His primary responsibilities included supporting the Outreach staff with events, partner research, and producing this newsletter.

### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE MINE ACTION PARTNERS

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