

Asian child meets long lost parents

United Press International
DALLAS — Separated for nearly a decade by a war and a hostile peace, an Asian boy and his Vietnamese mother were reunited Thursday with their American father who said the moment was like witnessing childbirth.

"It'll be like having a newborn son," Robert Reighard, the child's father, said. "We are very, very excited."

After her son arrived a day late at Dallas Fort Worth Regional Airport, mother Dang Reighard, and son Trinh Quoc Nam, 10, held each other silently in a tearful embrace while family members and friends gathered close to see the youth they knew only through newspaper accounts and letters.

Even the clergy was repre-

sented with Thick Tri Hien, 42, Zen Buddhist master of Grand Prairie temple. Reighard, a former Buddhist convert, helped build the temple two years ago.

Brian Rieghard, holding his older brother's hand, said he was considering teaching Trinh either soccer or the video game PacMan.

Ushering his family into a white, convertible limousine — decked out in Texas longhorn hood ornaments and state flags — Reighard, a Garland, Texas, engineer, said he felt bitter about all the red tape.

"The communists do use the children as blackmail," he said.

Trinh's arrival ended a four-day journey across two continents and included 27

hours of air travel. Sunday night, shortly before he began the final two hours of his homecoming, his parents telephoned to tell him to spend the night in Los Angeles.

"The family just felt that he deserved a rest," said Allen T. Dorrough, a spokesman for Delta Air Lines, which provided the connecting flight from Los Angeles.

Trinh, the offspring of an officially hated enemy, was denied housing, ration cards and schooling. Reighard said he was forced to leave the child with a grandmother when he was hastily pulled out of the country in 1973 with only two hours notice.

"We thought we could get (him) out sooner, but we weren't able to financially," he said.

Appreciative friends bury forsaken woman

United Press International
DALLAS — Irene Walker defied prejudice in a lifetime spent helping others, so those she loved saved her from a pauper's funeral Tuesday.

Last week, the woman died a forsaken and forgotten woman who was to be buried in a pauper's grave.

Most of her relatives and some of her friends no longer claimed her because they felt too many of the people the white woman had helped over the years were black.

About 17 years ago, while operating the Bogel Hotel, Walker found an abandoned toddler in one of the rooms.

She took the toddler to her

own rooms, and when his mother finally returned, Walker approached her about the boy.

Despite opposition from friends and family, Walker kept Steve Thomas and referred to him as her son. She tried in vain for years to adopt him.

"She told me that she was my legal guardian, but all in all, I would say she was my mother," Thomas, now 22, said. "Mrs. Walker took on the responsibility of raising me, even though the white people didn't like the idea of her raising a black child."

About nine years ago, Walker helped Sarah Herron, who was ill and ran short of food.

"She helped and helped and helped until she died," Herron said.

Walker died Sept. 27 at a Dallas hospital. The only relative still in contact with her was Mabel Britton, 71, a half-niece who lives on Social Security and could not afford a funeral.

Herron learned Walker would be buried in a crude wooden box at county expense and decided to "work in the name of Jesus to get up some money so she would be put away like a human and not be thrown away like a dog."

Friends called the American Legion auxiliary which raised \$800, one of Walker's neighbors donated a cemetery plot and a sympathetic mortuary owner agreed to take a loss on the burial.

Singer interrupts robber, gets handcuffed to soap dish

United Press International
DALLAS — Grammy Award winner Boz Scaggs was left handcuffed to a soap dish in the shower. A female companion — identified by police as Victoria Pryor, 23, of Dallas — was bound with a necktie to the doorknob of Scaggs' room. She also was unharmed, police said.

Scaggs and a companion interrupted the well-dressed robber who was looting the room Monday. The robber escaped

with \$1,800 and three rings taken from Scaggs and two friends, police said.

Scaggs, unharmed, was left handcuffed to a soap dish in the shower. A female companion — identified by police as Victoria Pryor, 23, of Dallas — was bound with a necktie to the doorknob of Scaggs' room. She also was unharmed, police said.

Both she and Scaggs were freed by another member of Scaggs' party who blundered into the robbery. Jack Hobday, a member of Scaggs' group, was forced to lie on the floor while the robber escaped, police said.

Scaggs was in Dallas for a wedding reception, investigators said.

Tribute to orange opens

United Press International
HOUSTON — The late Jeff McKissack was a little offbeat. The retired postal worker spent the last 25 years of his life building a tribute to a fruit in a vacant lot across the street from his house.

His almost religious belief in the orange grew into a brightly colored, Grandma Moses-like collection of orange-ana — a tiny theme park tucked into McKissack's neighborhood of bungalows in south Houston.

The Orange Show's brightly colored walls feature tile slogans such as "I Love Oranges," "Go Orange; Be Strong" or "Eat Oranges and Live". The park has gallery of stuffed dummies acting out scenes honoring the orange, a motorized steamboat in a dry pond, painted antique tractor seats, spoked farm implement wheels, weather vanes and other junk artistically arranged.

McKissack, 77, sculpted a couple of palm tree of metal. He sat a couple of concrete lions on pedestals and named them Mike and Judy. His was an eclectic taste.

McKissack finally opened the show to the public in May 1979

and, for a \$1 admission fee, personally conducted tours whenever people showed up. When he died in January 1980 the show's future was in doubt.

No one is laughing at the World's First Orange Show now. It has become honored folk art, a semi-official city treasure complete with its own supporting foundation. It officially reopens to the public Saturday.

The Orange Show Foundation grew from Marilyn Lubetkin's purchase of the park to save it. She bought it from McKissack's heirs for an undisclosed sum and turned to 20 friends for support to maintain and reopen the show.

The Barry Morris architectural firm was hired to refurbish the show and strengthen some of McKissack's amateur architecture. Nearly \$200,000 was spent.

"The biggest part of it, in terms of time and money, was cleaning and repainting," project architect Jack Kent said. "He had vast amounts of metal work done in different colors."

"We had a couple of areas where there were real structural problems. Those we had to shore up."

"I think it's wonderful," Kent said. "It's a little bit crazy in certain ways. It's a little bit off from the way most other people would do things, but he had a really incredible sense of space and a sense of detail that was very fine."

The foundation had a series of fund-raising dedication parties the weekend of Sept. 25-26, charging \$100 a couple Friday and Sunday and \$1,000 a couple

for a Saturday night gala.

Foundation member Max Miller, himself a metal sculptor with an appreciation for McKissack's work, made some replicas of McKissack's metal palm trees and is selling them to raise money. One went for \$2,500.

We've made enough to pay for the work on the park and the first year's operating budget, Max Miller said.

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