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Twenty-seven year old Ton Nu Lien Huong gathers her children around her for a portrait at her new Scotts Valley home. A Vietnamese refugee, Huong fled from her home in Hue to Saigon and finally to the United States as the communist troops advanced on the capital city.

Her husband was a major in the Vietnamese army. He is currently in Camp Pendleton awaiting work. Her children include, from left, 3-year-old Pham Dang Minh, 6-year-old Pham Dang Quynh, and 5-year-old Pham Thi Diem Huong.

Another Viet Family In SV

BY PEGGY RUDNICKI
Sentinel Staff Writer

Twenty-seven year old Ton Nu Lien Huong is a woman of quiet grace and simplicity.

Clothed in a donated dress and surrounded by her three small children, she smiles softly as she thanks her American hosts for their hospitality.

"I never forget here," she said. "I come and have no food, no money, no house. I am very sad.

"But now I get food and a place to stay. These people are so good — I never forget."

Huong is one of the newest Vietnamese refugees to come to the Santa Cruz area.

She and her three children join eight other Vietnamese citizens who arrived here Sunday.

Huong traveled to the Santa Cruz area from Camp Pendleton, where she and her family had been housed for five days following their arrival in the United States.

Her husband, a major in the Vietnamese army, remains in the camp and is expected to be reunited with his family once he finds work, she said.

Huong fled from Hue to Saigon in the wake of a communist takeover of the area.

She said that she and her family fled south in a boxcar to the capital city before boarding a plane to the United States.

Huong said she was worried that her husband would be killed since he was a major in the Vietnamese army.

While she didn't discuss the



Ton Nu Lien Huong

long flight from Hue to Saigon she did say that once at the airport she suddenly decided she didn't want to go to America.

She told her husband "we have no money, no job. What are we going to do once we get there?"

Huong said she cried at the airport, but her husband convinced her that there would be a better life in the United States.

The family left, traveling from the Philippines to Guam and then to Camp Pendleton.

She said she liked the camp, but said it was "very, very cold" at the site.

She also said that she was worried about leaving her husband to come to Scotts Valley, but he told her it was the best thing, she added.

"Now, everybody helps me," she said.

Huong and her family are housed in the Scotts Valley home of Pauline and Roy Garner.

Meanwhile, an outpouring of food, clothing and help has been given by local residents, according to Betty Boyd a local coordinator of Vietnamese refugee aid.

She said that local churches have donated 30 to 50 boxes of clothes for the refugees and that local markets have given food to the families.

At least one of the refugees who arrived Sunday has found a job in the area, she said.

Thu Huong, 31, is now working as a seamstress at Symbra 'Ette in Scotts Valley.

Two other daughters in the family are working as temporary housekeepers in Monterey and plan to apply for local jobs that have been offered to them, she said.

The three school aged-children were taken for an interview at Baymonte Christian School and may soon be enrolled there, she said.

A spokesman at the Vietnamese Refugee Emergency Relief program in Monterey said some 100 refugees have arrived in the Monterey area.

He said there is a possibility that the number may swell to 400.

The refugees are being housed "wherever we can find space," he said.

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