

# NOROC NEWS DECEMBER 2006

Publication of NOROC (New Opportunities for Romanian Orphaned Children), Inc., Abilene, Texas  
Editor: Carol Schempp (You are encouraged to reproduce and distribute this newsletter.)

## From Mary's Desk by Mary Ferris, Mission Co-Worker in Tulcea, Romania

This is our busiest time of the year, as we prepare the Christmas bags for literally hundreds of children. All the donations sent to us: knitted hats, slippers, scarves, toys, cosmetics, and jewelry are all in the middle of my living room. The nativity crafts are being used in the centers. The gifts that were brought by the Americans and Danish are being "ooed and awed" over before they are even put in their bags. We have teams to help sort, pack and label. We are making plans for our second annual Christmas Outdoor Pageant. This year we have added

the three wise men, some new costumes, and more lights so we will have a really great program.

This year Joseph will be a young man, Alex Sandu. He is a young man I have known from the very beginning of my stay here in Tulcea. He is not a young person who has gotten a lot of attention because he never makes problems and does not ask for much, but Alex has surfaced in the past year as a true disciple of Jesus Christ and one of my most dependable young persons. Alex was "terminated" from the system and sent back to stay with his



mother on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. This was not a happy birthday surprise for him. She asked for him to be sent back so he could work and support her, and greeted him with a bottle of tuica (moonshine) as a birthday gift. He really did not want to stay with her so he got a

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## One Person...Making a Difference

About 5 years ago at a Presbytery meeting, Gloria Falconer, a Presbyterian layperson and member of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Austin, Minnesota heard a presentation about the NOROC Big Hearted Grannies program. After that meeting Gloria said she kept seeing those babies in their cribs with no one to pick them up or rub them, and she couldn't get that picture out of her mind. She knew that she couldn't go to Romania to help those babies, but still she said, "God didn't leave me alone." For days she sensed God saying to her, "Gloria, do something about this." Initially, she responded in the way most of us do by wondering, "What can I do in the face of such great need?" But then she said she felt that divine voice saying, "Do what you can. Start with one." So Gloria went to her pastor and asked if their church might explore supporting NOROC's Grannies program.

What happened afterward has been a wonderful story of effective mission

developing from one person's personal response to God's "GO!" Gloria met with Cliff Stewart, pastor of First Central Presbyterian Church, Abilene, Texas while he was traveling in Minnesota recently and told him her story. "Each year after our stewardship campaign I get to work," Gloria told Cliff. "We do what we can to help these needy children." Every year around Christmas they have a drive to collect something that will be useful for the children. This year they are collecting school supplies.

The folks in Austin also know to give their leftover yarn to Gloria who will see that it is knit into warm afghans, hats, mittens and booties for Romanian orphans. Almost every week at church she finds a bag of yarn with her name on it, which she distributes to several friends. All of the knitters are not members of her church, but all are people who feel called to give to others less fortunate

than themselves. One of these knitters is a gentleman with palsy. He has a knitting machine and the miracle is that when he knits he doesn't shake, so he knits hats for the orphans.

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Austin, Minnesota as well as many people in the town are some of NOROC's most ardent financial supporters. Maybe you will feel that nudge from above, just as Gloria did, to do something for Romanian orphans. If you do, let us know and we will put you in touch with Gloria Falconer of Austin, Minnesota.



## Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern:

- Mihai, our Casa Noastra caretaker, has made a remarkable recovery after his accident and will return to work soon.
- The young children in the new Cocorii Centers will celebrate their first Christmas in a home-like atmosphere.
- For the children whose lives are transformed by God through our work, made possible by your prayers and support.
- For the 10 students in the "School Waits For You" program as they prepare for their exams.

**From Mary's Desk**

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construction job in Tulcea where they offered room and board and a very small salary. He was not particularly well suited for construction work so he decided to become a cook. NOROC gave him the 25 dollars to sign up for a cooking class. He went to night school and continued to work during the day. After one year he graduated and got a job as a cook at the hospital. In the meantime, Alex started attending the Baptist Church and the real transformation began. You can see him every Sunday morning beaming from the choir loft, sing-

ing his heart out for the Lord. You can also see him every Thursday night at our Bible Study, adding so much love and attention to the others who come. Because of his musical talent he is a tremendous asset to our group, and he occasionally uses his culinary talents to make us delectable food. He made most of our pageant costumes this year, and is always upbeat and positive. We all attended his baptism last spring. He is a true example of how the Lord transforms someone from the inside out. Because of his job at the hospital, he keeps us all

informed of who is in the hospital. He invites people into our fellowship all the time so we are outgrowing our space ... a good thing. Alex still has his low paying job and lives in a rented room so his circumstances are no better than the others, but his love of God and people make him a wonderful choice for the faithful and loving Joseph in our pageant.

I pray for you and your families this Christmas.

Peace on Earth,  
Mary

**Tales from Tulcea...what's happening?**



Ionut Toma lived at the center in Babadag until it was closed in October, when he was transferred to Tulcea. Very talented in art he designed the NOROC Christmas card 2 years ago. Since coming to Tulcea he has been lonely and frustrated, but has channeled his frustration into positive energy by taking Spanish dance lessons. He entered a national dance competition in Bucuresti and won third place, with a large cash prize! NOROC helped him with his costume and with practice for the competition. Your support helped Ionut make his dreams come true. Go, Ionut!



Children at Speranta, the children's home in Tulcea, enjoy learning how to use the computers donated by the Danish and installed by NOROC. Violeta Bandacu is the teacher.

Both boys from Speranta and older boys (most of whom are out of the orphanage system) meet every Saturday to enjoy the sports program sponsored by NOROC. NOROC's new sports instructor is Ionut Ganea.



**If you wish to make a tax deductible donation to NOROC, please mail it to: NOROC, INC, 200 Hedges, Abilene, TX**