

NOROC NEWS

NOVEMBER 2005

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

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who can walk on water, heal the lame, and who cares for children in the orphanages of Romania.

Now that the students from the School Waits for You program are on their study break, (see article below.) I can breathe a bit and start getting ready for Christmas. Again, thanks to the many donations sent from all over, we will have enough for all children to get an individually wrapped and tagged gift. Last year we gave away about 250 gifts. This year we will give even more, as we have more items— thanks to so many donations. The team from Denmark brought their Christmas items already gift wrapped. They have the advantage of driving to Tulcea all the way from Denmark. My sister arrived from Texas with over 100 handmade

necklaces for Christmas plus materials for the children to make even more. She made a lot last year and they were a huge hit. The boys all wanted one as well. Thanks to our good friend Hazel in Oregon all of the children will get a pair of hand knitted slippers.

Our driver will soon get his wish, a brand new van. We have had to order it from VW in Germany, but it should arrive in time for Christmas. This fabulous gift is a result of one church's very generous support. Some of their members experienced breakdowns first hand on the road trip from the airport to Tulcea! We wound up having to have the van towed into Tulcea by a friend. There are no such things as tow trucks, AAA, or roadside assistance in Romania. (They

have their own system, called hitchhiking, if you have a breakdown and you hope your car is still there when you return.)

If you ask our president, Carolyn White, what she would like for Christmas, she would say for our accounts to end the year in the black. This would take a miracle, but stranger things have happened. I remember that this time last year we were wondering where we were ever going to get the money for a new van. It would be nice if Carolyn gets her Christmas wish. NOROC operates totally on gifts and donations, and we presently have an approximate budget deficit of \$20,000 for this year, which will end December 31. Contributions to this ministry are always

Continued on page 2

Tales from Tulcea County: "School Waits for You" Celebrates

The first Halloween Party our children have ever experienced was held in our fabulous new meeting room at Casa Noastra on October 28th to celebrate the completion of the first half of the School Waits for You Program. It was the PERFECT party. Everyone had a great time, everyone behaved, and it cost almost nothing. It was the first real party many of these children had ever experienced. They all had homemade costumes and masks. They concocted their costumes on the spot from crafts and items do-

nated by all of you. We painted pumpkins, had music and dancing (it is a Romanian tradition to dance every chance they can), and we ate pumpkin pie and drank hot chocolate. The highlight was the trick or treating. Instead of going from door to door, the children went from adult to adult and performed for us by answering questions from their homework over the past six weeks. Their prizes were socks, shampoo, bars of soap, and things from our store of donated items. Each child had the opportunity to be the star



Students from Mahmudia meet with Mrs. Solca and Mary Ferris at Casa Noastra.

Continued on page 2

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Concern:

- For God to stop the pimps who seduce the girls from the orphanage
- For the Grannies who save our babies from retardation and mental illness
- For Flori as she deals with her new job situation
- For everyone who reads this newsletter and prays for NOROC
- For the daily miracles among impossible situations
- For our dedicated staff of teachers, friends, and group leaders in Tulcea

From Mary's Desk

cont'd from page 1

appreciated and 100% of all contributions go toward program expenses. There are no administrative costs.

My wish is for all of the children in our School Waits for You program to pass their exams in December and for Aurelia, Bianca and Eusebiu Munteanu to find peace on earth. You will hear a lot more about Christmas in the next newsletter.

Please pray for God to stop the pimps who seduce the girls from the girl's home into prostitution. They take the girls for rides in their fancy cars and give them cigarettes and cheap jewelry. It is hard to believe that some of the girls fall for this, but when they have a deep need for love and affection the girls tend to be susceptible. This problem is on my heart as I see some of the girls we have been working with falling for these traps.

I thank God for our Grannies who day in

and day out keep the babies from becoming retarded and mentally ill. The children cannot say thank you so we have to do this for them. They are still the heart and soul of our program and have a very difficult job especially with the transition to the handicapped center. The new law says the babies cannot be in an institution, so the place where they are now is called a "family center". Over 60 severely retarded children and young adults live there. It is an institution. Another new law dictates that you cannot segregate the children according to age. So we now have the babies living isolated in this "family" center. I do not think they are ever taken out of their rooms. When the children are moved away the grannies never see them again and both sides suffer from separation anxiety. Their love and influence on these tiny young lives is beyond measure. If Carolyn gets her wish of a balanced budget, perhaps we can think about giving our dear grannies a nice

Christmas bonus.

We also need to pray for Flori, who was the director at Cocorii for over twenty years. The closing of the baby orphanage took place while she was caring for her ill husband. Since they have closed Cocorii and moved all the babies into the handicapped center she has been demoted to a nurse's aide at the maternal center the only area still in use at Cocorii. This is very heartbreaking to witness as Flori knows the most about the needs of these babies.

As we begin the Advent season, a time of waiting and expectations, I pray that our prayers and dreams will come to fruition.

Do you need Christmas gift ideas? Check out the attached Christmas Wish List.

School Waits for You...

cont'd from page 1

for a few minutes. A highlight of the party was me dressed as a devil wearing a pair of red horns and Mrs. Jivan dressed as a witch complete with a witch's hat. Between Mrs. Jivan and me, these kids don't know what has hit them. They all have perfect attendance! The majority have had perfect behavior and great grades. At the end of the party I asked each child if they wanted to continue with this intense program and they all said yes. During November they will study for their final exams in December. Our Big Hearted Teachers will tutor them during this time.

These youth range between 13 and 18. Each has a sad story of why they had abandoned school at such a young age. Two children are from a family where they have no windows, running water, or electricity in their house. Another two are from a house where the father conducts prostitution from the children's bedrooms. Two are from a family where the father recently died and the mother is an alcoholic.

They smell bad due to lack of water in their houses, so the soap, shampoo and toothpaste are all blessings for them. All these children were originally from the children's home in Tulcea but were "reintegrated" into their families in Mahmudia. They have done what most children do when returned to dysfunctional families without any preparation of families or children. They become deeply depressed, angry, and get into trouble. One of our top students, who had previously gotten into trouble, is so proud of himself for returning to school. He is one child who desperately wants a second chance.

The hero of this entire program is our van driver. He makes two round trips to Mahmudia every day with these kids. The other adults rotate riding with them. We had behavior problems in the beginning with some of the children, but banning two children for one day was enough to let them know we meant business. The children do not have the same schedule everyday so some days we have to leave at 5:30 AM to pick

them up in time for school which begins at 7:00 AM. When they go in the afternoon, they are not finished until 7:00 PM so the driver is not home until 9:00 PM, but he hardly ever complains. He is truly the real hero. Next semester we will have our new van, thanks to the First Presbyterian Church of Canadian, Texas, and this will be a dream come true.



Students eating lunch at Casa Noastra.

If you wish to make a tax deductible donation to NOROC, please mail it to: NOROC, INC, 200 Hedges, Abilene, TX 79605

The following list is provided as a giving guide for NOROC (New Opportunities for Romanian Orphaned Children). Gifts can be made payable to

NOROC and sent to the following address:

NOROC
200 Hedges Rd.
Abilene, TX 7960



2005 Christmas Wish List

\$ 1.30	A Granny's salary for 1 day
\$ 1.50	A walk to town for juice and ice cream for 1 child
\$ 4.00	1 gallon of gasoline
\$ 5.00	Feminine hygiene supplies for 1 girl for a month (not supplied by the orphanage)
\$ 6.00	Museum trip for a small group (10 children)
\$ 7.00	Textbook for a student (not provided free by the school)
\$10.00	Bus ticket for 1 student for 1 month (to go to school)
\$10.00	Activities for small groups (NOROC has 10 groups)
\$15.00	Dental visit for 1 student
\$15.00	Cooking & sewing supplies for living skills class for 1 month
\$21.00	Teacher or tutor for 1 month
\$25.00	Eye glasses for a student (orphanage rarely provides)
\$25.00	Daycare for young mother for 1 month
\$30.00	Monthly group birthday party (pizza and dessert)
\$30.00	Rent on an apartment for working teens, post-orphanage
\$30.00	Uniform for a student to start work (almost every job requires a uniform)
\$35.00	A Granny's salary for 1 month
\$40.00	Dormitory space for a university student for 1 month
\$45.00	Tuition for a university student for 1 month
\$45.00	Private school, room & board, for challenged student for 1 month
\$50.00	Travel to medical specialists in Bucuresti (needed more and more)
\$20,000	To maintain and expand program into remote areas