

NOROC NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2008

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

Dear Friends of NOROC,

School starts next week and I want to give you a review of what our summer was like with the children here in Tulcea. We have seen proof that God is truly in charge of even the smallest details. The annual wholesale moving of all the children from Speranta into other centers for summer repairs and cleaning did not happen this year. I am not certain why, but one week it was supposed to happen and then nothing ever came of the plan. We had been loudly questioning this practice to everyone who would listen and maybe some person within the system changed their mind based on what was good for the children. Or, maybe someone's heart was changed. Certainly God moved to stop this awful practice. Simultaneously we were given a very generous and unexpected monetary gift which we used for supplemental summer

activities.

Our summer started with the wonderful visit of the work team from America and our first annual Bible School. This was followed by a week at church camp sponsored by NOROC. Another foundation also sponsored a camp so almost all eligible children got to go to camp. This is definitely something we need to do again next year. Then teams from France and Italy visited the children during the month of July so they had plenty of activities to do. Because of the monetary grant we received we were able to take children to the beach, to bowling, to the movies, and best of all, out of town to the only swimming pool in the area. Steau Apelor (Water Stars) is the equivalent to a country club with three pools, lounge chairs, and a wonderful atmosphere. We were able to take many of the chil-

dren there several times and watching them swim and play was a true miracle. We also bought some books for the children. I wish I had had my camera to record our small group leader, Tori, reading to a group of excited children. I want to get children's books and project them on the wall with our new video projector so the children can read the pages. There are so many wonderful things we use this projector for. It has been used several times every week since we bought it, again thanks to a generous sponsor.

Despite the many wonderful things happening at Speranta and in the apartments, there is still too much violence and bullying. There is a huge rash of teenage pregnancies and the response of the department is a quick abortion. This is a real moral dilemma for me personally because instead of supervising and educating the girls they give them all

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Tales from Tulcea: To the Beach, or to the Pool?



Prayers of

- For the unexpected stability at Speranta.
- For the generous donations that made summer recreation a reality.
- For continued cooperation between the Department of Child Protection and NOROC.

Thanksgiving and Concern:

From Mary's Desk...

pregnancy tests every month. If they are pregnant they get a quick abortion, without anyone knowing. This is a wide spread practice all over Romania. Aside from being morally outrageous at so many levels chiefly because it is so psychologically damaging for these girls, it is physically harmful. Many girls have multiple abortions. They are not given any counseling, guidance, or love, just a urine test and an abortion. These girls become pregnant in many different situations and they need someone to talk to, to cry with. Also, the young girls who are not active deeply resent this invasion into their privacy. Instead of providing counseling and education about reproduction, this is their form of birth control. Mass monthly pregnancy tests are exactly what the communist used to do to force people to have babies, and now they are doing the same thing in reverse. Last week a 16 year old came to me and told me she thought she was pregnant. The father of the baby is 28. I felt very disloyal to her but I had to inform the social worker as this is not a secret that can be kept. After going to the doctor we found out she was 2 ½ months pregnant. Without even talking to her they have scheduled her for an abortion. She left screaming and cursing the social worker at the top of her lungs in front of a long line of docile, resigned pa-

tients. The doctor and the social workers all said she was mentally ill. She does not want an abortion. They cannot physically make her go have one. The right to choose means you have the right to say NO, but she needs the courage to just say no. Of course having the baby will also be very traumatic and since it is impossible for this young girl to raise the child on her own this means another abandoned child, so the cycle repeats itself. We know a family that wants to adopt a baby and maybe something can be arranged. We need to pray about this. This case shows why there is no reduction in the number of abandoned children in Romania but just the opposite, a huge increase.

On a cheerier note, I had one week of my study leave at a health spa a la Romania. I am in the process of writing up this experience as it is too funny and wonderful for words. It was in a place renowned for hot sulphur springs. The setting is in the mountains and the hotel/resort is in a 200 year old building, beautiful from the outside but probably not renovated in that long either. Supposedly Napoleon came here for the mineral spring treatment. I will post all the details of this adventure on NOROC's website. I plan to start a blog on the website so people can keep up with NOROC's

adventures if they wish.

NOROC's President, Petru Solca, leaves for America next week as part of the Presbyterian Church USA International Peacemaking program. We are so very proud of him. He is a true peacemaker in the middle of all the chaos. He knows when to speak, to whom to speak, and when to be quiet and let things rest. Please pray for him on this journey.

I would like to close with the prayer written by Rev. Cliff Stewart for NOROC. We invite you to pray this everyday with the NOROC staff.

Almighty and gracious God, extend your loving kindness, mercy and compassion upon all, we pray. We pray for the mission of NOROC, for the staff, for those who support us. But above all we pray for the children...that we may make a difference in their lives.

Grant us your grace, O Holy One that we may respond in love, with kind and determined action, and with fervent prayer. Give us compassion for those who have lost so much, forgiveness for those who make mistakes, and joy with those who accomplish positive steps into the future.

We give thanks that you use us in this mission that can only happen with your blessing. Through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

In all things rejoice and again I say rejoice! Phil 4:4 Peace, Mary

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How Can I Help? Or...Ways to Contribute to NOROC

Many NOROC supporters and church groups have asked for suggestions of specific ways they can help support NOROC. A list of items, projects, and people who you can provide support for at a variety of monetary levels follows. Please send your tax deductible donations to NOROC at the address at the bottom of this newsletter. Every penny you donate goes directly to the mission work.

\$5 Undesignated contribution to be used where most needed

\$5 Small Group Excursions (per child)

\$10 Christmas gift per child

\$15 Bus transportation to school for 1 month (per student)

\$15 Dental check up

\$15 Summer Church Camp, per day, per child

\$25 Winter shoes

\$25 Warm winter coat

\$60 Monthly group birthday party

\$60 Big Hearted Teacher for one month

\$85 Big Hearted Granny for one month

\$120 Books and supplies for one year at the high school level

\$240 Books and supplies for one year at the university level

\$480 Tuition for one year at the university in Tulcea

\$720 Tuition for one year at the university in Bucharest or Constanta

May God bless you in your support of NOROC.

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