

NOROC, Inc  
Abilene Texas



Special points of  
Interest:

- **A note from Liz**
- **Looking Forward**
- **MADD Camps could use a few volunteers**
- **New Library at the Club is completed**
- **Prayers of request and celebration**

# NOROC News

(New Opportunities for Romanian Orphaned Children)

A publication of NOROC, Inc., Abilene, Texas Carol Schempp, Editor

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## A note from Liz

by Liz Searles, PC(USA) Mission Co-Worker

On May 5 Romanian Orthodox believers ended a Holy Week cycle of Liturgical services, many of which last 3-4 hours, when many are on their knees, prostrating themselves, and lighting and extinguishing candles as the various Biblical stories are sung.

On Holy Saturday night at midnight, the faithful gathered outside churches all over Romania to celebrate the miracle of Resurrection. At 11:45 PM church bells from all over our small city of Tulcea invited all who would to worship.

People streamed through the church gate. Some carried candles or small covered red votives. Some carried larger covered candle lanterns from home. You see, on this night-this very special Resurrection night-light arises out of darkness. We gathered to receive it, light our own candles, and carry that light home, lighting the way for others and preserving the light in our homes and our hearts as long as we can.

After the (relatively) short liturgical midnight service, the celebrant intones: "Hristos a inviat!" and the people answer: "Adeverat a inviat!" And then they announce and confirm that good news many, many more times in greeting and response as they depart and wend their way home. Their red votives and candle lanterns bring light into the darkness of crooked streets and alleys, a procession of lights that then begins to dot the vertical landscape of apartment blocks and buildings as the lights reflect off of windows and decorate tables in apartments all over the city. And then some people stay up to party, but most head for bed to rest up for the big family meal and celebration on Easter Day.

This special morning Easter morning, May 5th, seemed hushed and expectant. Too often, I find the early morning sounds and smells a bit distracting as they float up to my bed-

room. Men smoke under my window; there is garbage, cats in heat yowl, dogs bark, roosters crow, and people talk in loud voices, even at 6 AM.

But this morning came with the stillness of the Garden and the empty tomb.

The dogs and cats had fallen silent.

The owls slept on.

Few cars wove sound patterns in my well-trafficked street.

The crows of the cocks of Tulcea, Romania put us all in mind of Peter's failure of courage, and of Christ's acceptance and redemption.

When human voices broke the stillness, miraculously they were not fighting or shouting or joking. The men who usually smoke under my window today greeted each other with "Hristos a inviat!" and responded: "Adeverat a inviat!" and miraculously walked on.

Orthodox believers in Romania trace their Christian heritage to the first century after Christ. For them, Pentecost is still a few weeks off. Between Easter and Pentecost the common greeting continues to be "Hristos a inviat!" and the response continues to be "Adeverat a inviat!"

Today, rejoice with them, won't you! Announce once again that "Christ is Risen!" and affirm that "He is Risen, Indeed!"

Resurrection blessings from Tulcea, Romania to all of you! Liz



Liz, Petru, and several youth "bringing the light" to the orphanage.

## Liz Writes About...Looking Forward

Two MADD Camps are scheduled for late July. NOROC would welcome a volunteer or two who could share their gifts in these areas!

### CAMP:

Plans are afoot for two late-July MADD (music, art, drama, dance) camps. **NOROC would welcome a volunteer or two who could share their gifts in these areas.** We hope to use "kiddie bells," chimes and guitars, as well as kazoos and rhythm instruments. Camps are a special time of relationships-building, relaxation, and transformation for children who otherwise spend their summer holiday in the institutions.

Two groups will get to enjoy the lovely camp setting at Camp Sunshine in Dunavat. I'm looking forward to working with music, drama workshops acting out Bible Stories, and line dancing. Surely, you don't want to miss this!!

### SETTLING IN:

For Liz and Doug Searles, this summer is mostly about Doug arriving in Tulcea and our getting settled into our apartment, and new life and work in Romania. Oh . . . and . . . of course . . . LANGUAGE STUDY!! Keep us in your prayers as we discover, and learn, and seek to make ourselves understood, won't you?

### PROGRAM NEEDS:

Please remember special program needs:  
-used laptop computers with lots of life left  
-kiddie bells (have C to C bells, need more)  
-baritone ukuleles  
-activity aprons (a fun sewing project for your youth, circle, or other group) Feel free to write Liz directly about volunteering or about program needs! [thesearles@gmail.com](mailto:thesearles@gmail.com)

## Healthy Bodies & Healthy Spirits

photos by Petru Solca

After visiting three different monasteries a group of older youth made the long climb to the top for an aerial view of Celic monastery that was well worth the effort. Everyone had a great day. These excursions, offered by NOROC, get the young people out of the orphanage to go places and see sights they would otherwise miss.



Excursions offered by NOROC give the children and youth a chance to get out of the orphanage to go places they would otherwise miss.



## Bible Study Group Offers Programs for Palm Sunday

photos by Petru Solca



On Palm Sunday afternoon the Bible Study group presented readings and scripture at both the Senior Center, the home for senior citizens and Speranta, the central orphanage in Tulcea. This marked the beginning of Holy Week, a very meaningful time in the Orthodox tradition. Gifts and flowers were also distributed to the residents. The Bible study group continues to give back to the wider community as an expression of their thanks for NOROC's involvement in their lives. They worked for several weeks to prepare for this performance.



## The Louise Covington Library is Complete! photos by Petru Solca

Thanks to the dreams and donations of family and friends at First Presbyterian Church, Lubbock, Texas, the Louise Covington Library has become a reality! It is located at "The Club", the activity center for the NOROC Foundation in Tulcea. Created as a memorial to Louise, it serves as a physical expression of her love of books and of children. The project was spearheaded by Karen Copple, a member of First Presbyterian and long time friend of both Louise and her husband Bob. Bob traveled to Tulcea last summer with the Presbytery Mission/Work Team. Petru Solca oversaw the creation of the library in Tulcea. The children and youth in Tulcea will now have access to many wonderful books. The grannies and tutors will also be able to use them as resources for their activities with the children. Thank you, friends of NOROC!



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**New Opportunities for Romanian  
Orphaned Children**

**NOROC** is a Christ-based, non-profit organization. *Noroc* is a Romanian word which means "God Bless." We've adopted it as our name because it also reflects our mission: **To share God's blessings by providing New Opportunities for Romanian Orphaned Children spiritually, developmentally, socially and medically.**

**NOROC** was founded to find ways to nurture these abandoned children. Currently, NOROC's programs are focused in the orphanages of Tulcea County, Romania. There we try to provide for children in material ways such as providing diapers, school supplies, or adequate shoes. But at an even more basic level of need our organization provides the loving relationships these children so desperately crave thanks to the day to day devotion of our **Big Hearted Grannies, Big Hearted Teachers, and Big Hearted Friends.** Churches and individual friends currently support this mission. Please join us in our work.

## **Prayer Requests, Needs, Thanks, and Celebration**

**by Carol Schempp**

1. Prayers as NOROC moves forward into new areas of ministry. Liz shares her hope that we might receive several items to help promote and sustain new program areas. Many of these needs are listed on page 2 (**Looking Forward**).
2. Prayers for bathing suits for tots through teens to use during summer swimming outings.
3. Liz would be *ecstatic* to find a volunteer willing to coordinate the making of sensory activity aprons. Her vision is for a coordinator who would develop teams to create and sew age appropriate aprons from Pre K though early Elementary. Sensory activity aprons are just what the name suggests: apron like garments with several different "activities" sewn onto the front of the apron. (See example.) These multi-sensory activities include objects to practice buttoning, tying, zipping, braiding, buckling, snapping and more. Activity aprons are useful for developing fine motor skills in young children as well as increasing attention span and offering tactile stimulation. We have found that many of the orphans lack certain skills and therefore have a difficult time using utensils, writing instruments, scissors, and everyday objects needed for self-help activities such as dressing themselves and attending to tasks. Please contact Liz directly at [thesearles@gmail.com](mailto:thesearles@gmail.com) if you are interested in heading up such a project. Below is a link showing an example of commercially available sensory activity aprons: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/B004PMNZ7E> (If the link doesn't connect just copy and paste into your web browser.)
4. Prayers of thanks for a "team" in Abilene, Texas that is considering working on aprons as Liz envisions in #3.
5. Prayers for safe travels as Liz and Doug make their way across the Atlantic on the Queen Mary II to Germany, then Poland (to gather belongings) and finally to Tulcea, with an anticipated arrival date of June 17.
6. Prayers of celebration that NOROC has been blessed with Liz as the Mission Co-Worker partnered with NOROC.

