

# Heartbeat

A NEWSLETTER FROM HEARTS ACROSS ROMANIA



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ACROSS  
ROMANIA

November 2005

## TEEN-AGERS RULE!

Work team volunteers Patricia Adams and Kathy Roote accompanied board members Mariana Achiriloaie, Geanie Burns and Susan Flanagan to Brasov, Romania in October expecting to spend their time feeding and rocking babies. Instead, they met and fell in love with Brasov area teens who have spent their lives growing up in orphanages.

Hearts has always worked with teens, but they really became the focus of the October work team due to a lack of



availability of babies. We have seen dramatic changes in Brasov County Child Protective Services over the past year, due in large part to Romania's desire to join the European Union. The EU has influenced Romania to address the long-standing problem of children living in institutions, and the country has responded by moving children from orphanages to private foster homes, government managed group homes, or re-uniting them with their biological families. As a result, the baby orphanage in Brasov where Hearts volunteers have worked in the past has been phased out.



*Volunteer Pat Adams with two teens she is sponsoring.*

So ... on come the teen-agers!! And Hearts volunteers were up to the challenge. Kathy is the mother of two teenagers, and

Patricia (Pat) has three grown children and a number of teenage grandchildren, so both had lots of hands-on experience. The highlight for the work team and the kids was a pizza party for approximately 15 teens after they "shopped" for clothing donated by Hearts. One of the teen-age boys looked down the table at the restaurant where his friends and work team members sat talking and eating and remarked, "It's like a family."



Pat was so impressed with our teens that she graciously offered to financially sponsor three young boys that she met on the trip – two very talented artists and one athlete who has won awards for kayaking and is currently in training to compete on an international level. Special thanks to Pat for her generosity.



## ADDITIONAL WORK TEAM PROJECTS

Hearts Across Romania distributed its second shipment of medical supplies valued at approximately \$42,000 to Brasov area hospitals during the October work team visit. Hearts would like to thank Jerry Williams, volunteer, for continuing to gather hospital donations, as well as Judy Ford at Christian Community Action in Lewisville for her agency's ongoing medical contributions.

Hearts volunteers made two trips to the Dacia orphanage and were able to visit the preschool located nearby and leave donations of art supplies for the children. Hearts also toured an abandoned building on the premises of the Dacia orphanage, which will be considered as a possibility for a transitional housing project for older children. The cost for remodeling and updating the facility is estimated at approximately \$50,000 and could house 10 children. We are very interested in developing a transitional project for older children who reach the age at which they have to leave the orphanage, and a price tag of \$50,000 would be affordable with the help of our donors. Staff supervision and meals could be provided by the Dacia orphanage, as well as training for the children in carpentry and agriculture, so Hearts will continue to explore this project.

Hearts also purchased additional equipment for the eye doctor at Children's Hospital in Brasov at a cost of \$2,123.00 as



a continuation of the "I Care" project. In addition, we purchased a year's subscription to the "Journal of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus" for Dr. Apatachioae.

## THANKS TO OUR DONORS

**Patricia Adams**  
**Christian Community Action**  
**Chris Ely**  
**Luci Johnson**  
**Kathy Roote**  
**Bo Stewart**

**David & Lisa Burns**  
**Lori Crissup**  
**John & Teresa Gossett**  
**Linda Lavender**  
**Christine Ruffing**  
**Wilyln Wahl**

**Baylor Heart & Vascular Hospital**  
**Leigh Ann Dibble**  
**Brad & Ginger Henderson**  
**Allison Reese**  
**Vi & Paul Steed, Jr.**

Team members were impressed with some of the group homes for toddlers that they were able to tour on their trip. There were approximately 10 busy children in the homes with three or four caretakers per home. In Kathy's words, the children "couldn't get enough attention, enough hugs, enough kisses."

The baby orphanage has been transformed into a day center for handicapped children with up-to-date equipment and trained staff to work with these special needs children with much of the funding coming from the EU. Hearts was very pleased to see these children, who would have otherwise been lost in the system, getting much needed attention and care.



***Kathy Roote,  
volunteer, holding  
an infant.***

## U. S. VISITATION PROGRAM

Hearts is working with Brasov County Child Protective Services on a U. S. visitation program for 8 selected Romanian children to come to the Dallas area and stay with host families for approximately two weeks next year. Dates have not been finalized yet, but Hearts is looking forward to bringing some of our children to the states. We have host families, but we are still in need of sponsorship money. Call Geanie Burns at (214) 521-8596 if you are interested in participating in this project.

## FUTURE WORK TEAMS

Hearts will be sponsoring a volunteer work team of teenage girls from the Denton area in June 2006. A fall work team is tentatively scheduled for September 14-28, and spots are still open. Please call Geanie Burns at (214) 521-8596 if you are interested in participating.