

HEARTBEAT

A newsletter for



HEARTS
ACROSS
ROMANIA

April 2004

KICK-OFF PARTY

Hearts Across Romania had a kick-off party on December 7, 2003 at the home of Mariana and Ioan Achiriloaie with an attendance of over 40 people. Thank you to everyone who attended, and to those of you who were unable to make it, you missed a great time! The party was a wonderful excuse to get together with adoptive families, children, volunteers and friends who share a bond with Romania.

THE “EYE CARE” PROJECT

Foundation members Mariana Achiriloaie, Geanie Burns and Susan Flanagan took flight on their inaugural trip February 26th for a two-week stay. The focus for this administrative trip was to launch the “Eye Care” project to correct vision for children with strabismus, commonly referred to as “crossed eyes”.

The first two eye surgeries were completed six days after foundation members arrived in Brasov—an amazing time frame for Romania. Two additional eye surgeries were completed the following week, and with the help of our Romanian team—Rodica Toma and John Ghiuca—the operations will continue on a weekly basis. Three additional eye surgeries have been completed since foundation members returned home bringing the total number of operations to 7. Our Romanian team will also coordinate and complete the follow through on children who receive treatment. Hearts Across Romania has sponsored eye



exams 43 children and purchased glasses when prescribed. Eye exams will continue until all the children with problems in the Brasov area orphanages have been evaluated.

Foundation members owe a debt of gratitude to the Medical Director of Children’s Hospital, Dr. Ioan Mazgareanu, whose cooperation and support paved the way to begin the eye surgeries. Without his help, the project would not have gotten off the ground so quickly, and Hearts Across Romania has made a commitment to Dr. Mazgareanu to raise funds to purchase updated equipment, including a vitrectomy unit, a special biomicroscope, a microscope with coaxial illumination, and instruments for microsurgery of cataracts, glaucoma and strabismus. The long-range goal for Hearts Across Romania is to raise money to establish an ophthalmology room at the hospital dedicated to correcting vision problems.



DACIA ORPHANAGE

Foundation members “adopted” an orphanage new to them located in Dacia, a small village about 30 miles North of Brasov. The connection was made through a child that Susan Flanagan had come to know in previous trips to Romania and followed over the past few years. This nine-year old girl had been transferred to the orphanage at Dacia last year, and she became one of the first two children to have corrective surgery through our “Eye Care” project. Special thanks to Susan for spending two nights in the Children’s Hospital to care for these two children. Dacia is not on the mainstream path, so volunteers and donors often overlook this small orphanage of only 30 young children. Our foundation purchased cleaning supplies, medicines

and fruit for this orphanage, and we were also able to provide all of the children with new shoes.



ORTHOPEDIC SURGERIES

Foundation members were successful in getting three children with orthopedic problems evaluated, all of whom can and will be operated on to correct their problems. Dr. Anda Turcu, a personal family friend of Mariana's and an orthopedic doctor, accompanied

foundation members to the orphanage where the children were located and examined them. The first surgery is scheduled for early April, and foundation members would like to thank Dr. Turcu for her support.

SHOES TO FILL

Hearts Across Romania would like to thank Buckner Maternity and Adoption Agency for their very generous donation of 325 pairs of new shoes and 200 pairs of house slippers, which were dispersed to orphanages, as well as some needy families in the Brasov area. We would also like to thank Mariana's son, Radu, for paying to ship the shoes to Romania.



CANADIAN CONNECTIONS

Our Canadian friends, whom some of you met when they visited Dallas in 2002, will be our foundation representatives in Canada. The Vasiles hit the ground running by collecting donations in Toronto and hand delivering Christmas gifts to the children at Dacia when they visited their family in Romania in December. The orphanage director at Dacia felt that it was a miracle when Fanel and Mihaela arrived unexpectedly with gifts for the kids.



THANKS TO OUR DONORS

Hearts Across Romania would like to thank those of you who have contributed money and in-kind donations. Without you, we would not be able to do the work we are doing.

Radu Achiriloaie & Raluca Moucha
Phil & Cindy Allbritten
Rod & Elizabeth Baltzer
The Benefit Store, Inc.
Charlie & Pam Burns
Michael A. Burns & Associates, Inc.
Buckner Maternity & Adoption Agency
Lucia Cristescu

Laticia DeLa Rosa
Michael & Jeanne Domingue
Jim & Maggie Dunham
Susan Flanagan
Richard & Ileana Grube
Jean & Bill Hamby
Greg & Gretchen Harper
Sammy & Dina Jibrin
Max & Marie Leibold

Nancy Leibold
Micki Melsheimer
Tom & Suzanne Milner
Connie Mlack
Debby & Webb Spradley
Vi & Paul Steed
Janet & Ronald Stukalin
Vincent & Melissa Toner

VOLUNTEER WORK TEAM

Hearts Across Romania will sponsor their first volunteer work team in mid-September of this year to work in the orphanages. Volunteers must apply, be screened for criminal/child abuse records and pay their own expenses for the two-week trip. Interested individuals may call Mariana at (972) 233-2689 or Susan at (972) 669-0291 for additional information.

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