

ROMANIA

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Hearts has several ambitious projects underway to help Romanian orphans. Two very large shipments of medical supplies sent by Hearts arrived in Brasov this year. The supplies were donated by local North Texas individuals and groups and distributed to Brasov area hospitals and orphanages.

In addition, a vision program has been developed by Hearts to correct strabismus (crossed eyes) in institutionalized children in Romania. To date, 31 children have had surgery to successfully correct their vision.

The foundation is also working on two new programs.

A visitation program to the United States for older children living in orphanages is planned for spring. The children will stay with host families and have the opportunity to see the sights in the Dallas-Fort Worth area and experience a new culture firsthand.

Hearts is also excited about their program for teens that are leaving the government orphanage system. To help them transition from institutional living to living independently, Hearts is working with indi-

viduals in Romania to set up training programs for these teens, including skills training. Plans are also underway to set up a home where the teens will live while they prepare for jobs or attend technical school. This home environment will give the teens a good foundation and the necessary skills to build their lives on.

I saw first hand the wonderful work Hearts Across Romania has been able to accomplish in a very short period of time.

My trip to Romania provided me the opportunity to give something of myself to the children as well as build new friendships and experiences. It was a fantastic experience and one I hope to have again.



HAPPY TODDLERS: Hearts Across Romania volunteer Geanie Burns visits with a child living in an orphanage in Dacia, Romania.

If you would like more information on Hearts Across Romania, visit the Web site www.heartsacrossromania.org or contact Hearts president Geanie Burns at 214-521-8595 or Mariana Achiriloaie at 972-233-2689.

Kathy Roote is a resident of Coppel who volunteers with Hearts Across Romania.