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Night program

From the desk of Elena Verdolini

A JOB, FREE TIME AND HOUSING
A holistic approach to succeed in our mission

Good Samaritan Beius promotes the social and professional integration of young orphans in the community of Beius. Our clients are young people in Beius who have left the orphanage and are unable to transition into a "normal" life with a long-term job, participation in a church or interest group, and the financial stability necessary to rent or buy a house.

Transforming one of our clients into a responsible and committed person takes considerable effort and time. They are avoided and marginalized by the general population and frequently they are exploited and unpaid for the work they perform. On the other hand, our clients often do not want to change or improve their quality of

life. They have developed a detrimental lifestyle and have fostered a negative attitude toward the general population.

In order to succeed in our mission, we must have a comprehensive approach to the problems of our clients. Giving them a job will not sufficiently help them change their lives. After work, our clients return to their small apartments, where they live in desperate conditions, and re-enter the environment in which their poor behavior is developed and sustained.

For this reason, I want to emphasize the importance of an after-work program. Creating a space where our clients can interact, play games, cook, and be involved in activities will help them not only

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On the road to success!

Remus Roman started his year internship in the Good Samaritan Beius Restaurant in March 2003. Instructed by the skilled Head Cook and temporary Restaurant Program Manager, Mrs. Silvia Flore, Remus excelled in learning budgeting, elementary accounting practices, menu planning, product selection, and purchasing. He also mastered the culinary skills necessary to efficiently handle food production for the G.S.B. Restaurant. Because of Remus' outstanding industriousness during his eight months of training in the G.S.B. Program, he was chosen to fill Head Cook Silvia's position while

she took a much deserved vacation during the month of December 2003.

Although Remus is only 19 years old, he supervised a team of two other orphans and two American volunteers to produce a nutritious daily hot lunch (of soup, bread, and a main course) for the G.S.B. clients over a three week period! In addition, Remus cheerfully took on the major responsibility of preparing the G.S.B. Christmas feast for 40 people. His initiative and strong desire to learn, plus his ready smile and friendliness will hopefully see him through any new challenges he will face. We at

Good Samaritan Beius will miss him and applaud the fine example he set for the other orphans and us all! May God's blessings go with you, Remus!



Remus Roman

Specialization Course for Youngsters

This summer Good Samaritan Beius sent a group of youngsters to the Romanian-German Foundation specialization course in Timisoara. The course benefited the youngsters by increasing their social and professional training and providing them with more employment opportunities outside of Good Samaritan.

Given the positive outcome of the first class of students, in December 2003 we sent four more people from the HFH Partnership in Beius and Cluj. Although one of our clients, Ciprian, had to drop out due to health problems, the other three finished the school with good results. Mircea, Carol, and Bogdan attended the construction course and received diplomas officially recognized by the



Mircea



Carol



Ciprian



Bogdan

Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. Now, Good Samaritan is helping the youngsters find jobs in the local community. Mircea will start a probationary period for a job in Oradea, we will support him in demonstrating his willingness to work and commitment to the job. Due to the success of the training courses, Good Samaritan also decided to send youngsters from the carpentry shop. Remus is attending a course in Arad; we look forward to sending two more youngsters to the same program. By attending these courses, the orphans will have an advantage securing employment and improve their integration opportunities.

Joys and Concerns Over Soup

My name is Sheila Bruno, one member of the American family volunteering for a year with Good Samaritan Beius. I want to share some of my experiences, joys, and concerns regarding the GSB Restaurant, as I have now been involved with the Program for over 6 months.

In August 2003, after a week of recuperating from "jet lag" and settling in, my oldest daughter, Jana, and I started helping in the GSB Restaurant. Head Cook Silvia Flore enthusiastically welcomed the extra help preparing meals for the HFH groups and the regular crowd of people involved with GSB. At this time the kitchen staff consisted of Cook Silvia assisted by three orphan teenagers: Remus, (Little) Silvia, and Lacrimioara. Together we prepared breakfast and lunch for about 15 Internationals, and a separate lunch for approximately 25-30 clients, volunteers, and staff daily. In addition, we created a companion menu for the vegetarians and one person allergic to wheat flour! Each day at the restaurant presented exciting, new challenges, such as trying to understand what I was hearing (Romanian!), developing new friendships, discovering cultural differences, training the apprentices in restaurant protocol, and understanding more fully where my family could be of help in G.S.B. While serving bowl

upon bowl of soup and washing tons of dishes, my days were interspersed with moments of unexpected joy! A few of the memorable moments were: doing the "can-can" and Western Swing with Little Silvia and Lacrimioara on breaks; Remus not only teaching me how to cut up an onion more efficiently and with less tears, but how to fold Origami roses, birds, and dogs; being instructed in the fine points of "open market bargaining" by Cook Silvia; and the intensive training sessions Lacrimioara put me through as I learned to sing Romanian "Colinde" (Christmas Carols).

As I reflect on my time working in the Restaurant, I also have concerns. Jana and I are particularly concerned with the sanitation practices at the restaurant. While taking into account the differences in cultural sanitation norms, we have promoted safe food handling procedures and hygiene training. One positive change in this area that we have seen is the use of disinfectant in the water when washing dishes. Another concern is the difficulty of not having a Program Manager to effectively train the apprentices in the Restaurant Program. But by far the most distressing concern is that G.S.B. cannot serve one meal a day to people sorely in need of food, even with a fully functioning kitchen/restaurant. The people in need include orphans who are in the G.S.B. network but not employed by the organization. I am looking forward to helping find solutions to these concerns in my next few months with Good Samaritan Beius!



Christmas and New Year Party

On December 23 and 29, Good Samaritan welcomed the orphans to Christmas and New Years celebration dinners at the GSB restaurant.



Thirty-five people, including GSB clients and their families, enjoyed the Christmas and New Years parties. After excellent family-style dinners, the orphans had a time for fellowship, music, and games. The staff and youngsters would like to thank members of the local community who generously provided donations for



these events. We also thank you for your interest in sponsoring a GSB client. It is only with the help of people like you that we can make a difference in the life of Romanian orphans.

From the desk of Eelena Verdolini , continued from Page 1

retain the life skills training they need to integrate, but it will also give them a chance to escape the environment that encourages bad behaviors. Developing an after-work program allows us to involve key people from the local community in our mission, thus improving the perception society has of our clients and the one our clients have of society.

Another important component of the GSB approach is helping our clients secure a decent living environment. In the past, some of our clients were selected for and received a Habitat house. Becoming homeowners has helped them develop responsibility and commitment to their jobs in order to pay the house installments. These recipients of Habitat homes also take pride in their homes. Kiso Remus, father of two children and owner of a Habitat house, works in the GSB carpentry shop; he built beds and kitchen furniture for his house. Aranka and Marius, two other GSB carpentry employees and Habitat house owners, have done the same. Clients who have bought houses through GSB support have also developed positively. Last year, two of our married clients, Nicu and Maria, bought an apartment with GSB assistance. Since having their own home, Maria and Nicu have decreased their dependence on GSB. Likewise, we helped another young orphan, Margareta,

to renovate the one-bedroom apartment she had purchased with the help of her sponsor. I hope



Meg receiving the keys for the flat

the responsibility involved in owning a house and repaying debt will be instrumental in showing Margareta the importance of retaining a long-term job. While many of our clients do not qualify for Habitat houses, GSB's goal is to give them the opportunity to own a home. In October 2003, GSB started a construction project consisting of four housing units available to individuals and families in our target population. The homeowner will pay back the cost of the house over the next 20-25 years. I am convinced that this holistic approach to the many concerns facing our clients will have positive outcomes for the GSB orphans. I will keep GSB true to its mission by increasing the accountability and transparency of the organization. With the support of committed staff and supportive donors, I commit myself to the improvement of our clients' conditions and opportunities.

WELCOME !



*Elena Verdolini has been working as Executive Director of Good Samaritan Beius since December 2003. Elena has a Master in Public Administration and a Master in International Studies from the University of Washington, Seattle. She has been involved with Good Samaritan for two years and will help the organization to build capacity and increase transparency and accountability. If you wish to contact her, please email elena.verdolini@goodsamaritanbeius.org
Elena, welcome on board!*

Adrian Ciorna, Chairman

IMPROVEMENTS AT NOAH'S ARK

In the last six months, many improvements have been made to Noah's Ark Farm. This property in the village of Finis is home to a number of young women in the Good Samaritan program. In August, a team of Italian volunteers from *Incontro fra i Popoli* poured a concrete floor for a shed attached to the house. This outbuilding is now used for the storage of farm equipment. Sidewalks connecting this new floor to the house's porch and the porch to the carport were also constructed in Autumn 2003. The upstairs kitchen drain is now connected to drainage pipes with cleanout valves. The rain gutters flow into these pipes, as well. Combined, these projects have made the main travel areas around the house less muddy.

Three large sets of sturdy, wooden shelves were constructed in the property's out-buildings. One set of shelves is in the woodshed, which has been cleaned out and partitioned to allow for the safe and organized storage of firewood.



New stairs, replacing cracked and broken ones, now lead to the house's loft. A railing along this steep stairway has also been added. General cleanup of the farm, the moving of a large concrete cistern, and new septic tank covers have also enhanced the look and operation of our farm. We thank the Bruno/Graham family and their supporters for these improvements to the living and working conditions at Noah's Ark Farm.

We would like to thank

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ERRATUM

*In the last issue of our newsletter we thanked the Rotary Club for its help in securing a significant grant for GSB. At that time we did not acknowledge the fundamental role of the **Lake Chatuge Rotary Club**, Hiwassee, GA. Lake Chatuge RC was the sponsor club that presented a grant for GSB and secured matching funds from District 6910 and the Rotary Foundation. We apologize for our mistake, and would like to thank the Lake Chatuge RC for their help.*

Please visit

www.goodsamaritanbeius.org
*for new exciting projects
that you can support.*

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Artists For a Day

In November and December 2003 paint flew and creativity blossomed as the Good Samaritan orphans made Thanksgiving and Christmas cards for their sponsors and supportive friends. The orphans enjoyed the opportunity to thank their sponsors as well as develop their imagination and problem-solving capabilities through art. Likewise, the youth practiced cooperation with each other and the staff, creating a positive atmosphere and feelings of accomplishment. For the Thanksgiving cards, the orphans painted real leaves with colors inspired by the autumn trees sur-

rounding Beius. They then pressed the leaves to translucent paper, leaving traces of the veins and the leaf's shape. The Christmas cards also displayed a similar pressing technique, using sponge cut-outs of birds, stars, fruit, leaves, and a village. Some enthusiastic youth embellished their cards with additional paintings of hearts, smiley faces, and rainbows. Contests spontaneously developed about who could make the most cards and who had the most beautiful pressing. In two days of card making, the orphans produced over 500 colorful, expressive cards.