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Romanian Children's Homes

Care, support and education for abandoned children in Romania

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Newsletter 2008

Dear Friends

The past year has seen a mixture of emotions. We were only able to make one visit this year and spent 4 weeks during August and September in Romania.



In July our youngest set of twins, Stefan and Stefania, were adopted. This brought a great deal of sadness to the home as well as for those at the charity. Such a situation is always a cause for thought and reflection. We again remember that the purpose of our work is to take children in dire circumstances and help to give them a better life. This has certainly been the case with Stefan and Stefania, who were severely neglected and malnourished when brought to Casa Joany. They have enjoyed 3 years of a happy warm family home and now they have moved on to a family that can give them a permanent home and love. The new family only live a few miles away and Nelu and Carmen have been able to visit and take a few familiar toys and clothes. Stefan was especially pleased to have a favourite pair of shoes. They will of course be missed by the other children but hopefully we

will have the chance to help some more children in the future.



Five years ago Catalin and Catalina, at the age of 16 months, lay in a cot in a mental institution never having seen the sunshine. This September at the age of 6 years they both started school. While we were visiting we took them shopping for their new school uniforms. For boys it is a three piece suit with bow ties. We also bought books, bags and sports clothes. (All things for children are very expensive). Uniforms are a new rule in schools and unfortunately if the children do not have a uniform they are not allowed into school which of course is not good for poor families. We were very proud to see the twins in their uniforms and to realise just how far they have come.



During our stay we had several visits to our small house by Costel and Lydia. They would come on the pretence of practising their English conversation, so we spent many hours with them having "little conversations". Costel likes school very much and as you can see from the photo is getting quite tall.



Christi has one more year left at school and although at one time wished to go to university he has now learnt more of the “big wide world” and wishes to earn money instead. We are not sure if he will remain at the home and work on the farm or seek employment elsewhere. Many young people have left the country to work abroad and so employment within the country is easier to find.

We have another young man working at the farm. His name is Costel and he is 17 years old but is unable to read or write. He is very good with the animals and likes working at the farm. We now have a herd of 100 goats including this year’s baby females. We have had enquiries regarding supplying goat’s cheese to Austria but we would need to increase the herd size to 200. So this is our aim over the next two years. We continue to upgrade the farm house and work during summer has taken place on the first floor.

The cost of contractors to do ploughing and mowing has dramatically increased in the past year so we are looking at purchasing a small tractor and mower.

We have begun work on the new kitchen to bring it up to EU standards. The biggest expense so far has been a new cooker which has been sourced from Germany. Nelu has also made some changes to the path at the side of the house to prevent the hall flooding during heavy rain.

We also had the opportunity to meet up with Diana, the girl who used to work at the home. Since leaving us she has got married and in August gave birth to a baby girl. She had no pram or baby equipment so in view of her hard work with us we bought a few things. She was pleased to receive them. Some of you may remember a girl called Alina who worked for a short time at the home before leaving to nurse her sick mother. Alina lives in the same village as Diana and we were pleased to see her again. She too has married and is expecting a baby shortly.



With Many Thanks for your support

Ian Sherwood
Chairman