



# School For Life

Newsletter Edition 16, Aug 2006  
Registered Charity No. 1062953  
Patron: Robert Carlyle OBE

## Școala Pentru Viață

Welcome to the bi-annual newsletter for School for Life. Please feel free to pass it on to friends, make copies, or request an electronic version (pdf) from [ejkeetley@hotmail.com](mailto:ejkeetley@hotmail.com). Thank you for your ongoing interest in the Romanian project.

In this edition, you will hear about the latest developments at the project in Siret, and many of our fundraising efforts in the UK to support the growth of the amazing work that is changing the lives of many young people in Siret, Romania.

School For Life is a registered UK charity dedicated to funding, educating and training children and adults in Siret, Romania, so they can develop the skills they need to lead fulfilling lives. The money raised is sent to our sister organisation in Siret, "Școala Pentru Viata", which is led and staffed exclusively by people from the local community. All donations and funds received go directly to the project in Siret (except for bank charges to transfer funds to Romania). All other costs, including regular trips to Siret to support the project and feedback to the UK charity meetings, and all publicity, are met by the Trustees and School For Life Friends themselves. So more than 99p of every pound you have given goes directly to the children and young adults who need it. And 99p still goes a long way in Romania as you will see from the Financial Report on the back page!



Students warm up for a gym session at the SPV "Foundation" in Romania

**Latest report from Siret:**  
Marianne Lownsbrough & Sylvia Gurr, Trustees

It's been a big year for School for Life and Școala Pentru Viata. With imminent entrance to the EU, our aim of creating a project in Romania that is self-sustaining becomes more urgent. To that end, the visit by Sylvia and Marianne to the project in Siret in April 2006 centred around planning for the future of the project- a future where the balance shifts away from UK-based funding.

Ideas for fundraising within Romania at a local level include a car wash on site (called "Single", which will pay for the wood for the boiler system), putting donation boxes in large new shops, and selling products made by the young people. On a larger scale, EU funding schemes will be accessed, and the possibility of investing in properties to provide housing for the young people is also being explored.

Without doubt the project in Siret is perceived as a huge success; the homely atmosphere nurtures the young people, who see the workers as a supportive and accepting "family". The hospital institution where most of the young people live hold the SPV project in high regard, and this is also reflected in the perceptions of the local community townspeople.

Areas where support from the Trustees in the UK is still required is in encouraging the vision of the project in SPV, and in material ways of increasing resources. After a “Vision Making Meeting” with Marianne and Sylvia, the Directors and Teachers seemed more confident to take ownership of the project and continue to drive it forward. This is hard when funding sources are unknown; and this is why School For Life will help ensure a smooth transition to a more independent SPV. A bottle of champagne helped to celebrate the future that SPV are willing and able to develop.

#### STEPPING FORWARD

Many of the young people now attend college or have gained employment since the input of SPV, which is wonderful to see. The residents living in the SPV house are keen to become more independent, and have agreed that they will start to contribute towards utility and food costs of the building as a way of showing their ability to begin to support themselves. On one visit, one of the residents helpfully showed us how to wash our hair- with no running hot water, you need an extra pair of hands! Their confidence and life skill ability, and their pleasure in sharing is great to see.



*Material resources are always needed, and are sought from within Romania.*



*Residents show us a thing or two in the kitchen!*

#### THE HOSPITAL

The new Director of the Hospital Institution where many of the young people live is keen to work towards its closure in preference of small group homes or supported living. Again, there is a lack of EU funding to provide the buildings required to achieve this, as pointed out recently by the World Health Organisation. (For further information, visit [www.psihiatriesiret.go.ro](http://www.psihiatriesiret.go.ro).) SPV and School For Life are involved in assisting the planning and will offer support to such projects where possible. Conditions within the hospital have improved greatly, with the young people looking better fed, and rooms painted in bright colours. Many now have their own belongings which they can keep securely in lockers- unlike 15 years ago when our input began in the Neuropsychiatric hospital, with big children stealing what few items of clothing there were from the smaller, weaker ones.

The SPV teachers continue to provide sessions within the Hospital to the young people unable to access the SPV “Foundation”, due to our limited capacity. Radu, an invaluable member of the SPV team, and now voluntary administrator for sources of funding from within Romania, is investigating the possibility of German-made kit houses to increase capacity at the Foundation! A good example of SPV planning future direction in a way we could not have anticipated from the UK.

#### BUILDING LINKS

There are a number of organisations in Siret working to achieve similar aims for the many young people still caught in institutionalised living with little or no chance to develop life skills. The possibilities of joint working are being explored. The future direction of SPV is developing, and there are exciting possibilities ahead to maximise quality of life for these young people in Siret.



*Cooling down in the Apa Siret. Warm weather allows longer trips out for the young people attending SPV.*

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THANK YOU THANK YOU

THANK YOU

for your ongoing support!  
From the students and young people at SPV.



A big thank you and good bye to Olga Hutanu (left), whose wonderful work has seen the residents develop into confident young women with skills for independent living. A warm welcome to Alina Spencer who joins the SPV team in Olga's place, and to Radu Harasemiuc who takes on the role of finding funding sources from within Romania- incredibly, on a voluntary basis. Photos of the new staff members next newsletter!

**School For Life AGM:**  
Sat 4th Nov 2006 3pm, Glasgow.  
Please contact Secretary for further details.  
All welcome to attend.



Rodica helps the students in a session at the Foundation, as they learn how to use cutlery



Lenuta shows home-grown onions, stored in the loft space for the winter. Everyone has worked hard in the vegetable garden which had produced radishes and spring onions by May!

# financial report

by Keith Lownsbrough, Treasurer

The **cash balance** at the end of July '06 stood at £8618.70. Cash has been transferred to Romania to cover the budget until the end of August. Our **monthly income** of Standing Orders currently stands at £1256.50 per month, with £360 per annum in quarterly or annual payments. Of this, £1028.50 per month is given under the **gift aid scheme** giving a minimum tax rebate of £3481 next year.

## cash requirement

projections, in £ sterling:

	2005/6
SPV staff & assistants	10776
Taxes	6960
Building costs	1680
Other costs	4255
Car costs	1080
Residents costs	2400

**Total**

**£27151**

## annual income

(less additional fundraising):

Standing orders	15072
Tax relief	3481

**Total**

**£18553**

***Our financial policy for the projected budget to not exceed the monthly income is once again not met; new standing orders, donations, tax relief and other fundraising activities are needed to make up the annual short fall of £8598. Please help! See below...***

Recent **fund-raisers** include:

£237 William Leith Baker Collecting Tins (available free from secretary), £288 Willerby Methodist Wives, £300 Swanland Cubs sponsored silence, £100 St Amunds Catholic School, £118 Wantage Methodist Church, £116 Will Gold sponsored walk, £925 with £60-£64 tax relief Keith & Marianne's 40th bash, £1435 with £274-94 tax relief Dave & Anna's wedding, £135 Trinity Church Quiz night, £1000 anonymous donation via CAF.

All welcome to the Charity Ball fundraising event, flyer enclosed: tables seat a maximum of 10 people. Main course will be Scottish salmon-please inform of any special dietary requirements when booking your ticket through the secretary. Cheques payable to School For Life Romania, sent to Fairhaven, Toward, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 7UE.

**Auction items include a rare hard backed signed copy of JK Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince", a day at a Scottish Spa, theatre tickets, and much more!**

*Thank you for your ongoing support. Please pass this newsletter to anyone who may be interested in our project.*

## Contact Details

### Scoala Pentru Viata

**Doina Harasemiuc-Director of Administration**

**Stefan Hutanu - Director of Education**

### School For Life

#### Dave Emptage - Trustee

Many years experience working with people with profound and moderate disabilities in long stay residential homes. Worked in Romania for 2 years bringing his experience and his music to the great appreciation of those in Siret.

#### Katie Goodier- Trustee

A qualified teacher now works in Glasgow teaching Special Needs. She lived and worked in Siret for over 2 years and has been actively involved ever since with fund raising and publicity.

#### William Gould - Trustee

A University lecturer who worked in Siret for over 2 years where he met and later married his wife Olivia who grew up in Siret. They ensure good communication and translation between SPV and SFL.

#### Sylvia Gurr - Trustee

Experienced in working with people with profound learning difficulties. She now works as a mental health worker with homeless adults and is completing her MA in integrative child psychotherapy. Sylvia worked in Siret for 3 years and is now considering returning.

#### Phil Keetley - Trustee/Newsletter

Met his now wife Lizzy while they were living and working in Romania over a two year period. Phil is now in the British army. Lizzy a qualified social worker is able to bring her knowledge and expertise of independent living to the team.

#### Marianne Lownsbrough -Trustee

A playworker of 20 years who now runs an assessment and training centre for Playwork covering the Yorkshire region. Worked in Siret from 1991 for over 2 years bringing different expertise within the team, and leading the work of the volunteers. Lives at the charity address with her husband the treasurer.

#### Keith Lownsbrough - Treasurer

59 Eastgate  
North Newbald, York YO4 3SD  
Tel: 01430 827010

#### Ruth Brown

A qualified teacher who lived and worked in Siret for nearly 2 years, now living in Glasgow she gives much support with fund raising and publicity.

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