



School For Life

Newsletter Edition 18, Aug 2007

Registered Charity No. 1062953

Patron: Robert Carlyle OBE

www.schoolforliferomania.org

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 info@schoolforliferomania.com. Thank you for your ongoing interest in the Romanian project. Every six months you will hear about the latest developments at the project in Siret, and our fundraising efforts in the UK and Romania to support the growth of the amazing work that is changing the lives of many young people with special needs in Siret.

School For Life is a registered UK charity dedicated to funding children and adults brought up in an orphanage in Siret, Romania, providing special needs education and training 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.

Latest report from
Romania:



Working on fine motor skills at SPV

Earlier this year, Doina (SPV Director of Administration) and her husband Radu came to the UK to attend the Trustees Meeting. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to hear how the project is progressing- the difficulties, solutions, the day to day questions... It was a stark reality check to see that food prices in the UK are actually LOWER than in Romania (because of all the "buy one get one free" offers that we have). And yet, our teachers are paid just £80 a month...

INCREASE IN SALARY FOR TEACHERS

From May, the teachers salaries have increased by £23 each a month with their taxes paid. This does not sound much, and indeed the teachers remain on virtually the minimum wage. But with no new sources of funding identified the SPV team have done

well to release money from their budget to find a compromise that the teachers could accept.

THEATRE PERFORMANCE IN SUCEAVA

On the International Day for People with Disabilities, many of our young people took part in a wonderful short play, performed in Suceava (a large town 20 km from Siret). The young people learned their parts by heart, and a lot of effort went in to creating period costumes, and the event was extremely well received by local townspeople.

CHICKENS REPLACED WITH FRUIT & VEG

Due to problems with Bird Flu in Siret, the chickens are No More, and instead the Foundation is tending an increased fruit orchard and vegetable patch.

SMILING FOR THE FIRST TIME

The teachers now work with smaller groups of children, enabling those with the greatest levels of disabilities to receive more focussed input. The result: a smile from Maria, a teenager with autism, for the very first time!



The fruit and veg patch has increased.



With more people owning cars even in rural Siret, hopes for big business at the car wash are high! This is Siret market.

CAR WASH IS BUILT!

The car wash service has been created and all proceeds from the business go towards buying wood for the central heating system in the school buildings. This was an idea that came from SPV themselves, and gives the young people there a focussed activity to be involved in that will contribute greatly towards the cost of the SPV project. Our ethos is that the Romanian side of the project should be supported to become as self sufficient as possible, so that real needs are being assessed and met and not imposed from the UK, and to enable the long term survival and growth of the project.

ROOMS FOR RESIDENTS-SPACE FOR ONE MORE

Lenuta has been buying her own furniture and belongings, from her wages. As well as helping the Teachers as a teaching assistant, Lenuta has her own independent job cleaning people's houses in the town. She is well respected and her integration into the community is great to see. A huge achievement for someone who has grown up in an Institution with not even a pair of shoes to call their own. Viorica and Dana have chosen to share a room, and work together at a Portugese factory in Siret. They contribute towards the cost of their food. Rodica works tirelessly as a Teaching Assistant and due to ill health is not able to sustain further work in the community. There is space at SPV for a further resident, but no funding, which is a tragic shame. Think of those few hundred young people still living in the Institution with no personal space, and the opportunity they could be offered by Scoala Pentru Viata, for just £120 a month of extra funding.

Supported accommodation with SPV for four young people- room for one more! But funding must be guaranteed for such a commitment...



Rodica, one of the residents, cooking in the supported living house SPV provides.



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AN EXAMPLE OF A PROGRESS REPORT

Romanian registration requirements have meant that progress reports are now in place. Here are some excerpts from a report of one of Carmen's students, Elena B, a typical teenage student who has lived all her life in the Institution and has limited opportunities to see the world outside.

Personal profile: Has some physical difficulties, and her language is under developed. She is able to identify parts of the body. Her motor coordination is limited and she is not able to eat independently. She cooperates well in class and has a good memory. She is able to explore her environment, is able to improvise, and has a good level of social ability. She can't read or write but is able to count.

Long term objectives: Socialisation, improve vocabulary, personal hygiene, participate in group work.

Short term objectives: To recognise things in the environment, recognise animals, fruits, vegetables. To be able to recite a short poem and to hold a short dialogue.

Progress: "Elena is very happy when she is receiving attention, can say 'Hello', is polite, likes listening to music and sings".

Scoala Pentru Viata is providing young people like Elena with an opportunity to learn, to socialise, to have new experiences, and to develop a sense of self and self worth. Without your help, none of this could happen. It is so important for these young people that the project supports them to move from strength to strength. For that, we need regular donations that SPV can then budget with. Please help us ensure the project can continue. Thank you for your ongoing support!



Party time in the Gymnasium at SPV!

**AGM - all welcome
6th October 2007 3pm**

Venue: Dave & Anna Emptage, 77 Windermere Rd, Lancaster LA1 3EZ
Contact any of the Trustees for further details or email
info@schoolforliferomania.org

OUR PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

School for Life aims to achieve the following:

- Increase the work of the foundation and to work with those adults who currently receive nothing, by accessing funding from within Romania or the EU.
- At the same time work with the hospital authorities to provide smaller group houses for the people who live in the hospital and close it.

Thank you for your ongoing help to achieve these aims. Read on for easy, free ways to help us raise more funds...

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EASY WAYS to help RAISE FUNDS

by Sylvia Gurr, Trustee

www.schoolforliferomania.org

newly designed website

We now have a **newly designed website** that you can tell your friends, colleagues or family about. It gives a comprehensive view of School For Life Romania's work, aims, history, mission statement, UK and Romanian teams and copies of our backdated newsletters.

In addition there are more ideas on different ways to support us at **little, if no, additional cost to you** (listed below) and links for secure online donations.

The website was kindly designed and sponsored by Montormedia, so everyone at SFL would like to say thanks to all the staff at Montormedia for their time and support. In particular Sally and Andy who in their spare time volunteered to build and design it. Thank you.

Quotes4Charity



- www.quotes4charity.co.uk
QUOTES4CHARITY has offered to support us in raising an additional £20,000 over the next two years, for a minibus and general running costs!

If you are about to remortgage your home, update your life cover or building / contents insurance, consider using this community interest company, regulated by the FSA.

Quotes4charity will support School For Life Romania by donating 30% of their commission on products sold when you state you want it to go to us. See their website for more details.

John Mulkerrin, the founder of Quotes4charity, has offered to support and promote School For Life/SPV by aiming to raise £20,000 over the next 2 years through their financial services, for a badly needed minibus and general running costs for the organisation. To raise this, we would need about 200 people with a £100,000 mortgage to use their service. The advice is free, with no obligations.

Wedge Card

- <http://www.ncvo.biz/wedgocard/individuals.asp?RO=SFLR07>
The Wedge discount card entitles you to a range of great offers at hundreds of independent shops, and makes a donation to School For Life Romania at the same time. It helps us support our beneficiaries at the same time as contributing to your local community.

The Wedge Card aims to revitalise local communities by offering great discounts to customers using local shops and services. It also supports charities and if you buy a card using the web link above we will receive £10 out of the £20 cost of the card.

Initially launched in Central London, Wedge is spreading across the capital and out into other cities rapidly, and you'll find a range of fantastic deals exclusive to Wedge Card holders in your local shops.

Wedge Cards cost just £20 and are valid for one year. Most card holders find that they recoup the initial cost in just a few purchases. Visit www.wedgocard.co.uk to find out what traders have signed up to the scheme.



The computer mice celebrate their new Wedge

Easy Fundraising

- www.easyfundraising.org.uk
Are you an internet shopper? Would you like to support us at the same time?

You can shop with 350+ Brand Name retailers such as Amazon, B&Q, Next, Dell, Interflora etc. Also buy flights and holidays (BA, Lastminute.com, Thomas Cook, The Trainline, Eurostar and many more) and to raise funds for us too. You just use the links from the Easy Fundraising website first - it's that simple!

You don't pay any extra and up to 15% of every purchase (depending on the retailer) will be donated to us, if you register School For Life Romania.



Sylvia Gurr, trustee has worked hard to find out about free and easy ways to raise funds.



Every Click

- www.everyclick.com
If you, or your company, or work place are an internet user and wish to support us for free, sign up to this search engine as a School For Life Romania, individual or corporate supporter.

Half of the gross revenue generated by Everyclick is paid out to us, based on how many times you click and search. All at no extra cost to you or us!

Come and join the next fundraiser at Edinburgh's Royal Scots Club on Saturday 8th Sept, 7pm!



Help us raise more than last year's successful event which produced £2400 for Scoala Pentru Viata!



Tickets £45 per person, includes glass of fizz on arrival, three course meal with wine, and scottish dancing with live ceilidh band The Trows. No scottish dancing experience necessary, they will guide us through! Seating plan is flexible; come with a party if you can and we will reserve you a table, otherwise just join the fun!



Tickets available NOW from Phil & Lizzy Keetley, 07968302424

Black tie/kilts. Scottish salmon as main course or please state if alternative required.

Auction, raffle, live music, and delicious food and wine at the prestigious
Royal Scots Club
30 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh EH3 6QE

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financial report

by Keith Lownsbrough, Treasurer

The **cash balance** at the beginning of July stood at £7,224.32.

At the beginning of August we are due to transfer £10,000 to Romania to cover the full budget until the end of the year. This payment will be delayed by a couple of weeks in order to allow sufficient standing orders to come in to cover the payment. The reason for this situation is that costs in Romania are increasing rapidly, and we are trying to support them when we can. While the payment in December to cover January to April will be made in full (as our annual tax rebate will have been received by then) the April payment is looking uncertain.

In order to safeguard the charity activities, and continue the provision for the people in Romania, the trustees are actively seeking further fundin opportunities both in the UK and Romania.

Our **monthly income** of Standing Orders currently stands at £1,465.50 per month, up from £1,296.50 in Sept 2006. £580 is received per annum in quarterly or annual payments. Of this, £1,184.50 per month is given under the **gift aid scheme** giving a minimum tax rebate of £4,009 next year.

cash requirement

projections, in £ sterling:

SPV staff & assistants	12276
Taxes	6960
Building costs	1680
Other costs	4255
Car costs	1080
Residents costs	2400

Total £28,651

annual income

(less additional fundraising):

Standing orders	17580
Tax relief	4009

Total £21589

Recent **fund-raisers** include:

£235 William Leith Bakers Shop Collecting Tins (available free from secretary ejkeetley@hotmail.com), £2415 Edinburgh Ceilidh 2006, £180 Phil and Cath Barnton party donations instead of presents, £183 Willerby Methodist Wives Group, £15 Willerby Methodist Ladies Fellowship, £30 Whinfell Amenity Fund, £230 Work Initiative, £232 Chiene & Tate Chartered Accountants donations instead of Christmas Cards, £27 Moorgate Newsagent, £75 Cranswick Ladies Fellowship, £78 Carole Grant homemade cards sales, £309 Goodrington Methodist coffee evening, £200 Abu Bks Islamic School, £100 Wantage Methodist Church.

THANK YOU, as you can see fundraising is crucial!

The Team

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 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 produces the newsletter for the charity.

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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