



"...serve one another in love." Galatians 5:13

May 2008 Newsletter

Hello family and friends,

I have just returned from a most interesting four days in the Carpathian Mountains, located in the northwestern portion of Ukraine. After a late breakfast in Borislav Friday morning, my translator, Tanya, and I visited the orphanage for children with Cerebral Palsy. There are 103 children who live here during the school year receiving care, education, and habilitation. Less than half are true orphans. They are sent to another orphanage and to camp during the summer months.

We took about \$100 worth of crafts (21 items), purchased in Odessa at the 7th kilometer market at a very nice 18% discount. Each was chosen to compliment manual dexterity training. Olga, the Senior Educator, was called to the director's office to look through the items; she began to determine which class of children each of the crafts should go to. The craft items were greatly appreciated. After more discussion with the director, Tanya and I proceeded to meet with the massage therapist, physical training and speech therapists, the psychologist, and the biology teacher. All were interesting to me, but most interesting were the physical training room and the psychologist's sensory stimulation rooms. (This orphanage has received a lot of community financial sponsorship. It is really wonderful to see!)

The assistant director, Bogdan, (meaning gift from God) caught up with us as the Senior Educator took us to the classes to share the craft items with the children. He most enthusiastically talked with me in English about each class. After about 2 or 3 hours, we returned to the director's office. We discussed a potential "meeting of the minds" in Illichevsk. The Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities in Illichevsk will open May 30th. Each of the therapies that we visited here will be a significant part of the Center in Illichevsk as time goes on. So my plan is to begin with the massage and the physical training therapists coming to Illichevsk to meet with our therapists and talk with the parents. The director sees this as an opportunity for each team to learn something from the other. I see it as a great opportunity, also. We will try to make this happen in August of 2008.

On Saturday Pastor Volodya took us to Dobromel, 100 kilometers west northwest of Borislav, to visit the children at the orphanage for children with physical and mental disabilities, where some of our Christmas Fund Raiser money is being used. The director listened with interest as I shared about MUCH. Then he shared his top three dreams for his children. I found the second to be most interesting. He is in the process of remodeling a three-room apartment to be used as a transition house for boys as they enter the world from a life of 10 years or more at the orphanage. Pastor Volodya has been actively involved in changing the spiritual, emotional, and nutritional lives of the children of this orphanage for about seven and a half years. He has a deep love for the children. I hope that MUCH will be able to find money for 2009 to help him continue his work with the children, the program that we are supporting for this year.

Ira's Insights

Have you ever been told that you have made a difference? I'd like to tell you about some of the events that will happen in Illichevsk. Some new things in our town can be connected to the initiatives of MUCH and its financial sponsors. I am sure that God has used them to speak in non-verbal ways to the society of our town. God has been speaking through MUCH for a long time but

today we have good fruits because of this.

This Friday the Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities will open. The director (the owner and main sponsor) of the center has many great dreams. This center is the desire of many parents of our town and its region. It is not a secret that many mothers don't have time to go for a walk with their husbands because of the needs of their children. Many of them would like to work part time to earn some money for their family but they can't leave their children alone at home (even if they are adults). Odessa, about 25 miles away, has a respite center for special children and young adults, but there was nothing in Illichevsk. Very soon the desires of many parents will be fulfilled. The director plans to have different activities that will allow parents to leave their children at the center.

Another event that will happen in our town is a camp for the disabled. This time the camp will be held by the local Baptist church. God has committed hearts of some people at that church to donate some money to hold this camp for special people of our town. This camp will be held June, 9-13.

If you remember, it was MUCH that held the first camp for the disabled in our town. Nowadays we can see how people in Illichevsk have responded to the ministries of MUCH through Mark. All these good results please my heart. I want to express my gratitude to everybody who has helped to change attitudes and has given our society new eyes to see people with disabilities.

Until next time,

Ira

Looking at MUCH from a different angle, I would like to comment on the financial exchange rate. When I first came to Ukraine, \$1 was worth 5.25 grevnya (the Ukrainian currency). Because the value of the dollar has decreased recently, \$1 is now worth 4.7 grevnya. It changes daily, up or down, but has been going down recently. It had been steady at \$1 for 5 grevnya for a few years. I am sharing this so that you are aware of what is happening here and what your financial contributions are able to do. We continue to look to God for guidance and provision.

Blessings of love and healing,

Mark

**Illichevsk Massage Therapy Clinic Marganets Orphanage
Emmaus Children's Food Program**

**If you would like to support this ministry financially,
You may contribute online from our website,
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OR

**Your gift may be mailed to:
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