



# WINGS OF HOPE INTERNATIONAL

TRANSFORMING **the lives of people in MOLDOVA**

Volume 1, Issue 4

Fall 2012

## Message from the President

It's been two years since our last newsletter, in large part because my energies were devoted to writing and successfully defending my doctoral dissertation. Still, during these two years, we implemented several projects for children, the elderly, then needy and the sick in the village of Cobani. This newsletter contains additional information about some of the projects.

To improve educational opportunities, Wings of Hope International (WHI) purchased school supplies, desks and chairs for students in high school; and purchased a set of educational materials for each of the 80 children attending the kindergarten.

To address the healthcare needs WHI joined other local entities to provide support for improving the physical condition of the health center.

Moldova was affected by its worst drought in 70 years during the summer of 2012. To tackle the needs of the elderly and needy which arose from this drought, WHI distributed food packages to 78 elderly individuals and families with disabled children. Over the past two years, many elderly also received firewood that kept them warm during the winter months.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the many people who have contributed financially and in-kind to the work of WHI over the past two years. I hope that you will choose to join us in improving the lives of the neediest Moldovans during the next year.

With hope for the Moldovan people,

Alec Zama, WHI Board President

## Food Packages Bring More Than Nutrition

*Contributed by Becky Zama*

It was a heart wrenching experience delivering food packages to 78 elderly and sick families in the village of Cobani in July 2012. As Alec, his brother, nephew and I went to each home, many elderly people shared that no one offered help to them nor came to visit them. The sick and disabled were left to lie in bed or confined to their home without the equipment we have in the U.S. to allow for greater mobility. You could see the loneliness etched in their faces and their tears and could hear the despair in their voices. We wished we had more time to listen to the stories of their lives. We didn't, so instead we would reach out with a simple touch to the shoulder or clasp of the hands.

Alec has mentioned the idea of opening a retirement and/or nursing home in the village. There have been empty buildings that he's considered for this purpose over the years. After our visits, I envisioned a place where community would chase away the loneliness, facilities would allow for wheelchairs or walkers, a community garden (a must where food is grown more than purchased) would prove the value of work in soothing the spirit. Culturally, I don't know if this would be well received; but the idea is weighing heavy on my heart.

I also want to mention that this was also a frustrating experience as we noted disabled individuals not on the official social services list. One explained since he was bed-ridden—and had been for four years—he couldn't get to the appropriate office to get added to the list. We noted other issues that were impeding delivery of services to the needy. The bureaucracy made me wonder if our contributions were enough, but then I would remember the eyes full of sorrow and knew we were making a difference.



## Community Building Takes Root

One of the major goals that WHI is striving to achieve is to empower local citizens to improve the quality of their own lives. One way we hope to achieve this goal is through various community building activities and this year we took the first step toward this goal. During the summer of 2012, Alec met several times with the mayor of Cobani and facilitated a joint meeting with the mayor, the directors of the health care center and kindergarten, and the high school principal. Although it has yet to be seen if these four parties will continue to collaborate on working together for the good of the community, at least we initiated a conversation and established expectations that we can build on next year.



In the near future we plan to organize trainings for community activists at local levels on the topics of community building and community development. We hope to share the results in our next newsletter.



## Educational Donations for Long Lasting Impact

The value of education is one of the founding principles of WHI; thus, every year the primary focus of WHI is placed on improving educational opportunities for children in Moldova.

In the spring of 2012, 50 students from low income families received essential school supplies for the second half of the academic year.

In addition, WHI purchased a table for table tennis and volleyballs for use by the high school students in their physical education classes and after school activities. Both of these purchases were highly beneficial as many students did not have anything to occupy their time after school, so these will provide them with positive opportunities.

This same spring, WHI donated 50 dictionaries for various languages to be used in the foreign language classes and 10 globes and 10 atlases for the geography classes.

During the summer of 2012 WHI purchased 20 desks for the computer lab in the high school. This was a very timely donation as the Moldovan Ministry of Education was threatening to close the computer lab if the administration of the school did not find new desks due to safety concerns. This would also have resulted in the elimination of computer science courses.



WHI also contributed to the purchase of 20 desks and 40 chairs for students who were transferred from another village to Cobani High School after their school was closed.

In addition, WHI purchased educational materials for 80 kindergarten students and has

contributed to the repairs of the kindergarten kitchen. We have received many words of gratitude from the students and parents, as well as from the school and kindergarten administrative staff, regarding these donations and hope these contributions will have a long lasting impact on the educational process of both institutions.

## Thank You to Grand View Students

*WHI would like to thank Campus Fellowship, a student organization at Grand View University (GV), for organizing the Hope Week fundraising events during the past two years and for donating all the proceeds to WHI projects. Also, we would like to thank the students in project management courses at GV for their willingness to raise funds for WHI.*

## Health Care Center Thank You

*Contributed by Livia Melnic, Director of Cobani Health Center*

On behalf of the Cobani Health Center (which services the following five villages: Cobani, Camenca, Butesti, Brinzeni and Molesti, with a combined population of over 5000 people), I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for your generous donation which has contributed to improving the healthcare services offered to the residents of these five villages.

Thanks to the willingness of the President, Mr. Alec Zama, and to the board of the directors of Wings of Hope International, we were able to implement two projects in 2012: replacing the windows and replacing the doors at Cobani Health Center. After the implementation of these two projects, we will be able to conserve the heat in the building during the winter months and therefore, the expenses for the electricity will go down. This will eliminate the need to use additional heaters during the winter months.

Also, I would like to thank you on behalf of Glodeni County Board of Supervisors for your previous donations to Cobani Health Center during the following years:

2012 – implementation of the above mentioned projects in the amount of 30,000 Moldovan Lei (about \$2,500)

2010 – donation of medical equipment and furniture in the amount of 20,000 Moldovan Lei (about \$1,700)

2009 – donation of medical equipment for physio-therapeutical procedures in the amount of 21,000 Moldovan Lei (about \$1,800)

Additionally, I would like to thank you on behalf of the employees of Cobani Health Center for the above mentioned donations. And finally, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You for your generosity, honesty and good will. We wish you much health, prosperity and much success.

## WHI Goals for 2013

WHI plans to raise the following funds for the upcoming year:

*Children projects - \$5,500  
Healthcare projects - \$3,500  
Elderly projects - \$2,500*

*Please join us in achieving these goals and remember, your WHI contribution is tax-deductible!*

**Please check our website at [www.whintl.org](http://www.whintl.org) for more pictures, testimonials and plans for 2013.**

### Board of Directors

**Alec Zama, President  
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