



NARCISA AND SERGIU ON THE FRONT STEPS OF THE THERAPEUTIC HOME "CASA JULIANA"

# The Livada Orphan Care Quarterly

SPRINGING FORWARD MARCH-MAY 2015

## Heart To Heart: A Romanian Love Story

### Narcisa & Sergiu

Narcisa and Sergiu both have broken hearts. Both have come to us as abandoned preschoolers who have major heart conditions. Originally, we were told that Sergiu needed a heart transplant. After three months in our care the heart surgeon told us, "I don't know what you are feeding him at your home, but keep it up. It looks like he will no longer need a heart transplant!" Simultaneously, Narcisa had been sent to Targu Mures for heart surgery from Child Protective Services in another county. She and Sergiu became buddies and clearly Narcisa had a crush on Sergiu. After the doctors saw Sergiu's progress, they asked us if we would consider taking Narcisa into our care as well. As an orphan they knew that if she was shipped back to the other county's state care system she would probably not receive the nurture necessary for a full recovery.

By God's grace, all of the paperwork made it through the court system. Both of them are recovering well and enjoying being playmates for this season at our Casa Juliana Therapeutic Transition Home.

Other great news is that there is a foster family that is going to take Sergiu and his two siblings into their care on their farm by summer. There is also a doctor whose family is considering taking Narcisa into their family soon as well.

Please keep these two wounded hearts in your prayers for physical healing, quick adjustments to family placement, and for God's heart for them to be known.

### Another Kind of Heart to Heart

As Livada's local ministry continues to deepen and as our national ministry through Romania Without Orphans Alliance (ARFO) continues to expand, our operating costs increase. We LOVE our ministry partners and appreciate the prayers, financial support, direct helping hands, and encouragement you give us. IF you are reading this and are already giving, "THANK YOU." IF you are reading this and are able to give to support our ministry to abandoned and at-risk Romanian orphans, please prayerfully consider going to our website at livada.org and donating to this work monthly or annually. We could really use your support at this time.

### Urgent Need by July

We are using our margins right now to cover the extra costs for 2015's rapid expansion. We need to raise an extra \$50,000 by the end of July to help us cover these costs. We are praying for the following donors. Please consider if you will be the one led to give towards:

- ♥ One gift of \$10,000
- ♥ Two Gifts of \$5000
- ♥ Four Gifts of \$2500
- ♥ Ten Gifts of \$1000
- ♥ One Hundred Gifts of \$100



After being in the hospital for a year, Narcisa has decided that she wants to be a doctor when she grows up. Pray for her to be healed and that she would become a healer for others in Jesus' name.

### WAYS YOU CAN HELP?

Right now we have 41 kids in our full time care: 14 at Casa Ana-Nadia/Rebeca, 5 orphan grads in transition, 14 in Foster Care, 8 at Casa Juliana. We serve around 700 other kids through weekly interventions and outreach. **WE COULD REALLY USE YOUR HELP.** Please consider sponsoring a Livada kid today. There are three types of SPONSORSHIP: Full Time LOC Kids, LOC Foster Kids, and LOC Club Kids. Whatever you can provide will be a blessing to help these kids experience God's word and to have their practical life needs met.

PLEASE CONTACT MIRA OR TRIPP FOR DETAILS  
 sponsorship@livada.org or 972.941.4416

## Intense LOC Foster Parent Training

*The Road to Healing Children from Complex Developmental Trauma*

*by Alina Muntean & Cerasela Perianu*



Because of the severe impact of trauma on child development that comes from difficult environments, we deepened our training for LOC Foster parents. This "TBRI" type of training has been adapted from Dr. Karyn Purvis and Dr. David Cross' research and the TCU Institute of Child Development in Texas.

The training is five weeks long, one module per week, and is held in the foster homes. We wish to develop a new structured and educational relationship based culture among families, based on trust, which will enable children to feel "safe." After the parents are trained, the children are invited to participate in an interaction through play. So far we have implemented two modules in which both theoretical concepts and practical ways of intervention were presented.

The families are open to new information, acknowledging the profound impact of the trauma and they are embracing these concepts.

During the sessions we have Nurture Group meetings with the children and the foster parents and we teach, through play, principles and values that empower the children and help create child - parent connections and correct the inappropriate behavior of the child.

**Please keep this "healing ministry" in your prayers. We want to see the kids and the parents experience God's miracles in their lives through this therapeutic intervention both now and as we follow up with them weekly.**

## The Newest LOC Kids Arrive

We just received a call from Child Protective Services this week. Costin (5) and Attila (9) were in need of a home and had come from a very abusive situation. Our staff needs wisdom to know how to help these boys walk through their past neglect, deal with the separation from their birth parents, and put together the puzzle of their past so that they can begin to move forward with counseling, education, and permanent placement planning.

**Please pray with us that they will adjust well to Casa Juliana, be healed from their abuse, and be able to be placed into a stable, safe, loving family soon.**



## Casa Rene's Facelift



Our multi-purpose ministry center, called Casa Rene, has received a few "facelift" this spring. We received a grant from our Dutch partners that has enabled us to add solar panels, repair/replace the entire roof and drainage system, and renovate the playground outside for our Casa Juliana kids. This facility is used daily to house five orphan grads, one missionary, Casa Juliana kids and used weekly for some of our orphan and Gypsy kids clubs. Seasonally it is used for caregiver training conferences, Romania Without Orphans Alliance (ARFO) Board meetings, and housing of short-term mission teams. Thank God with us for His gracious provision and that this facility will be able to expand this year. We have grant requests pending that will allow us to offer caregiver training year round.

**Please pray with us for the Lord's timing and provision for this strategic expansion project.**

## Sorin Dodosi Wins The Olympics

Sorin is the oldest of four boys. His father only completed the fourth grade and his mother only the eighth. They are very poor Roma and live in a Roma village called "Ogra." Over 97% of the Roma community are unemployed and illiterate.

After his father's sudden unemployment, Sorin sought out ways that he could change his future. He knew that there were few opportunities in the short term. Simultaneously, he had been learning the history of his people in his school. It was the first time he realized that his ancestors were former slaves in Romania and that all the generations before him had always been uneducated and oppressed. He became very interested in the Roma traditions, literature and history. He had never known about any Roma who were educated and successful. It was just at that time that it was announced in his school that there would be a national Roma Literature Olympiad and that they were looking for kids to apply. No one from his village had ever competed in this event, and Sorin decided that maybe this would somehow help him chart a new course. Even though he was only in the eighth grade, Sorin won first place in the county. His hard work and study of the history and literature of the Roma people began to give him hope. Sorin was invited to the national Olympiad. The national competition was at a higher level and he only placed seventh. However, this did not discourage him. He was able to travel to the capital city of Bucharest and see that there were other Roma kids who were studying hard and dreaming, like him, to be different from the stereotypes that European society had placed on them.

Sorin (far right) & others he inspired to compete this year.



Out of all the Roma in his school finishing eighth grade last year, Sorin was the only one to apply to high school. Sorin was accepted into one of the top high schools in the county seat of Targu Mures, called "Gheorghe Marinescu" Theoretical High School. He has many dreams for his future. The high school he is attending focuses in bio-chemistry and many of its graduates go on to medical school or nursing school. Sorin passed all his classes with high marks. He competed this year in the in Roma History and Literature Olympiad and received first place again. Sorin will be competing in the national competition again later this Spring. Sorin continues to serve as a volunteer leader with Livada to inspiring other kids to action and to find faith in Christ. **Please keep Sorin and his aspirations in your prayers. Pray for the Lord to raise him up and others like him to change their village.**

## Prayers Needed for LOC Teen Daniel Simon



Daniel at age 6 before he came into our care.



Daniel two years ago at LOC Family Retreat

*Here is the latest urgent update on Daniel Simon, our now 18 year old "psychotic" Livada kid in Romania. This is a dramatic report. We appreciate your urgent prayers.*

Last week, we got Daniel released from the Psych ward where he had been strapped down and heavily sedated for DAYS. He had been placed there by our contract psychologist who felt Daniel was a danger to himself and others. As this was done in haste, he did not think through ramifications of the antiquated Romanian mental health system or consider the training that we had all just gone through again with our clinical staff on complex developmental trauma. However, miraculously we were able to get Daniel released. Since his return to his foster home, a complete overhaul of his care was attempted by our counselor Daniel Popescu and the Mentor Ministry Manager Dan Rotar.

During that time, Daniel was somehow found a way to leave the foster home unmonitored and broke into some neighbors homes. The small community is in an uproar and voicing their fears and complaints directly to the foster parents. The foster parents at their wits end and wanting to give up. All of this while we are trying to re-stabilize his meds and help him to feel "safe" again in his foster home.

Our staff has convinced another family in the community who already know Daniel and his issues, to take him in temporarily while we strive to help Daniel stabilize again. (Historically and miraculously, this can be done but it takes a lot of intense effort on the part of the family and the counselors involved.) Our attorney is working to help with the pending cases. Daniel's case is the most extreme that we have dealt with in our history but we are still fighting for him.

**Daniel needs a miracle to occur in his life again. It has happened before. He was stable for many, many years before his clinical supervision and placement situation were not being properly monitored and led to this debacle. Please, please pray with us for his stability to be regained.**

## REBECCA RASMUSSEN: MISSIONARY PREPARES TO RETURN TO AMERICA

Rebecca Rasmussen (aka "Bex") first came to serve in Romania in September of 2006. She was planning to stay for a year. After almost NINE years of faithful service, she is now engaged and will be transitioning back to the States this June.

We are thrilled for her and Liviu, fiancée, but she will leave a void that will be very hard to fill. She has been training and working with her right hand, Cristina Bichis, for the past year getting ready for this transition. The kids were informed last year and know that this time will be coming soon.

Bex has served in almost every department and capacity of leadership during her tenure with Livada. She initially led follow up ministry clubs at the Ludus orphanage, then was Follow Up Director, and ultimately landed as the Director of our LOC Group Homes. Her business savvy inherited from her parents Steve and Margarita Rasmussen coupled with her passionate leadership ability was the perfect blend to help Livada leadership weather several major storms through the years.

Her ministry has been very fruitful. There are dozens of orphan graduates from Ludus who attribute their salvation to Bex's outreach into their lives. Many of them have led others to Christ since then multiplying out Bex's faithful influence. The LOC kids were hitting adolescence as she took over their care. It has been an extremely daunting yet rewarding period. We sincerely do not know what we would have done without her. Bex's discernment has had a profound affect on the overall depth and direction of Livada as well. It has been one highlights or Livada's existence to have Rebecca Rasmussen as a partner, leader, advocate, and friend. We wish her the greatest blessings that the Lord can provide and look forward to keeping up with her in this new era of her life.

**Please keep Bex and Liviu in your prayers and please pray for Cristina and the staff as they prepare the kids for this next phase of life without Bex by their side every day.**

