

# THE SUNFLOWER

Newsletter of the International Children's Aid Foundation  
July 2004

## Emanuel Hosts First "Spring Break" Team

ICAF hosted a team of 21 people to Romania during Spring Break in March. One student from Gordon College in Boston and 20 students and teachers from Wesleyan High School in Atlanta spent a wonderful week of mission work. They painted the new Christian Center, taught English in the Brad High School, held English Club and teen evangelism meetings almost every day, and filled in with numerous small acts of service.

"We have hosted more short-term mission teams than I can count," said ICAF President David C. Forward, "but none of them have ever been more helpful, cooperative, or committed to God's plan for our ministry."

"God's Plan" was revealed in another wonderful way during this trip, when he called Wesleyan's English teacher, Gabe Pethtel, to return to Romania with his wife and two young sons for a longer period. After much prayer, the Pethtels have committed to a two-year mission with us beginning in September, 2004. More details about the Pethtels will be released in the next



issue of *The Sunflower*.

During one event, in which the mission team opened the Christian Center, before a standing-room only crowd of seventy people from the community, there was testimony, Christian fellow-

ship, and testimony for almost two hours. One of the songs the team chose was *God is in this Place*. Looking at how God had used this ministry to change the lives of those on the team and those seekers who had accepted the invitation that day, made the words to that song ring more true than ever before.

*I need to say  
That God is in this place  
And God is right by your side  
You need to know  
That anywhere you go  
Just by faith  
His love will abide.*

# A Progress Report from ICAF's

Dear Family in Christ,

How can it be June and the first day of summer arriving in just a few days? Oh my, how can it be!!! As the cliché goes, "time sure flies" but the flight has been awesome, to say the least.

As I've said before, it's difficult to condense all that the Lord has been doing in and through His ministry in Romania but the following should give you a bit of an idea.

## **Bright Beginnings**

Three days a week I have the privilege of spending two hours a day with abandon/orphaned babies in Hunedoara, which is about a 50 minute drive from where I live. The children I work with range in age from 4 weeks to 2 years. They are precious but of course, they aren't without their problems, e.g. under developed, various illnesses, etc. However, with the increased attention, care and therapy provided by the ICAF educators, they are improving more than they would otherwise. I have the joy of holding them, feeding and spending play time with them – they are starved for attention, as you can imagine, and I love giving it to them. When there are a few free minutes, I work with the educators on their English skill development.

## **Bright Futures**

I have just finished teaching Life Skills to teens from the state orphanage in Deva. These courses consisted of communication skills, health & wellness, money management, character building and employment development, to name a few. Each child was also given a Bible and it was refreshing to openly discuss our faith and application to

everyday life with scripture references. The children were eager to learn and appreciated the guidance. Fortunately, they do have exposure to some basic Christian principles through the state orphanage and religion classes at school.

## **Bible Study**

Currently, we are without a Youth Pastor-Director at the Christian Center. But of course, the Lord provides!!! A semi-retired Pastor from the Baptist church has agreed to continue the adult Bible study and beginning June 21<sup>st</sup>, we will have a weekly youth Bible study, led by none other than yours truly. We will also have a children's Bible lesson and crafts led by some of the older teens of Emanuel Orphanage. We anticipate an average attendance on Mondays, with all three classes, to be 20-25. Our search continues for a Pastor/Director....your prayers would be appreciated!

## **English Lessons**

At the Christian Center, two evenings a week, we have anywhere from 4-20 students (depending on weather, gardening activities, etc.). The group is made up of youth, men and women who love the English language and want to learn as much as they can for various reasons. Recently, a new manufacturer (British owned) located in the area and I've been working with two students in particular to interviewing in English. One of the two asked for a Bible in English and he returned with a friend for Bible study the following Monday. Alleluia!!!!

We now have new curtains in the Christian Center, thanks to a donation from my home church.

## **Emanuel Orphanage**

Recently, my focus here has been on human resources issues. I've been working with the

# Missionary in Brad, Debbie Bowen

management team to develop an organizational chart and update job descriptions. We will also be developing and implementing performance standards for semi-annual reviews. We'd like to get all of these in place before I leave in early August. My intent is to return in November for approximately 3-4 weeks to help with the evaluation process.

Also, I'm still trying to spend more one-on-one time with the older children and in particular, those who will be graduating from high school next year or two. We will be developing plans for their continuing education or career goals.

St. John's, my home church, continues to be a blessing to these children through various sponsors and specific contributions. With the extra money that was contributed while I was home, we purchased a food mixer, paid for some of the auto/Van repairs, and took the children on a couple of field trips while on Spring break.

We are looking forward to the teams arriving in late July. Right now, we have two from the East coast who will stay until the end of June. It's always encouraging to the children and people of this community to see that others care about them. They're looking forward to the extra love and attention!

My role will be changing a little after August (I return August 8<sup>th</sup>). I've been asked to serve on the International Children's Aid Foundation Board as the person responsible for and overseeing Emanuel Orphanage. I anticipate the need to be involved on a regular basis and to make 2 or 3 trips a year to the orphanage to monitor our objectives. It would be great to have a "mini" team come with me once in awhile to rejuvenate the atmosphere in all of

the ministries that have been mentioned. I'll keep you posted on the dates as things develop and please let ICAF know if you have an interest in a short-term trip.

Peace and Joy in the Lord Jesus,  
Debbie Bowen



*Debbie Bowen  
(R) with  
fellow church  
member Helen  
Rakow of  
Illinois in 2003*

## About Debbie . . .

Seldom have we met somebody with such a servant heart and willingness to heed God's call as Debbie Bowen.

Debbie is from suburban Chicago, where she is an active member of St. John's Lutheran Church and one of the driving forces in St. John's mission involvement. She has participated in several ICAF short-term mission teams to Romania, but about a year ago felt God calling her into longer-term service. She sold her house, quit her job as a human resources consultant, and moved to Romania in October. She lives in the apartment above our Christian Center in Brad.

Debbie has been an incredibly valuable resource to ICAF's ministry in Romania. Her professional expertise has led her to develop an organizational design with performance-based work standards for each of our employees in Romania—something we sorely needed, but could not implement from afar.

*(Continued on page 4)*

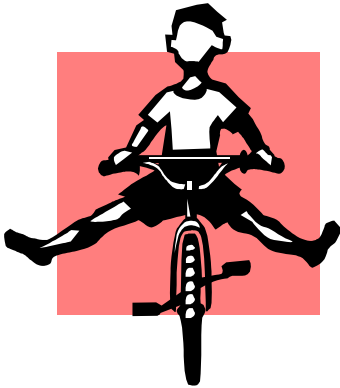


## Bikes for All!

## Two *Better* Ways to Make Your ICAF Pledge

As we were going to press with this issue of *The Sunflower*, we heard some wonderful news. ICAF's Romania country manager, Aurel Iuga (Lutsu), was introduced to an emissary from the mayor of Vienna, Austria. Having heard about the plight of Romania's orphaned children, the mayor wanted to know if the kids had bicycles—or if they could use some. Lutsu reported that only three of our children had a bicycle—and those were in dilapidated condition.

As a result, the mayor appealed to the citizens of Austria's capital to donate children's bicycles. The result was so positive that it almost overwhelmed City Hall—in fact, a new call had to be issued to not bring in any more bicycles!



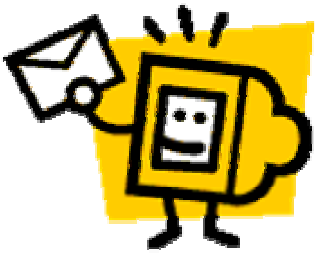
Lutsu traveled to Vienna as the guest of the city and was presented with dozens of bicycles at a reception attended by the national media. A second reception was held at the Romanian Embassy.

The mayor of Vienna even provided the truck to deliver all the bikes to Romania, and since there are far more bicycles than we have children at Emanuel, ICAF will donate the extras to poor and orphaned children throughout the Brad/Deva region.

According to ICAF Treasurer Bill McConnell, we can now send you your monthly pledge invoice by email. This really helps ICAF because we save the cost of the paper, envelope, and stamp to mail to you—and it reduces the time our volunteers need to send out the bills each month.

Do YOU have email? If so, please send Bill a quick message requesting that your future ICAF pledge invoices be sent to you electronically. His address is: [wr602x1023@aol.com](mailto:wr602x1023@aol.com)

Secondly, we are now able to process donations by credit card. So if you would like to avoid the trouble of writing a check and having to mail it to us, just notify Bill that you would like him to bill you credit card each month (or quarter, half-year, or year)—and it's as good as done.



*(Continued from page 3)*

She has been the driving force at our new Christian Center, holding small group meetings, adult Bible studies, and teaching the daily English Clubs for several different age groups. She travels to Hunedoara, an hour away, to teach English to the educators in our Bright Beginnings program, as well as to the teen students in Bright Futures.

Debbie has touched the hearts of so many people in Romania, becoming a much-needed mentor—a “mom” and “big sister”—to teenagers with no positive adult role models in their own lives.

Debbie will return to her home in August and will then go back to Romania three times a year for two months at a time beginning in October.

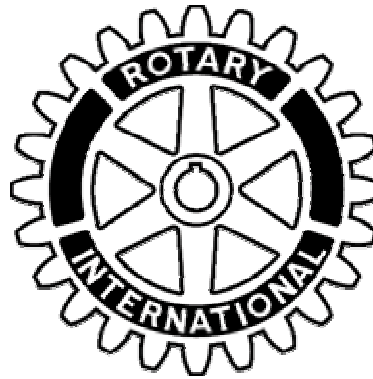


*Missionary and Occupational Therapist Linda Westlin has taken 6 weeks' unpaid leave from work to teach our educators techniques such as combining music and tactile stimulation to promote motor and speech skills*



*Four month-old Robert now receives daily love and early childhood development training thanks to ICAF's Bright Beginnings program at the Hunedara state orphanage where he was taken after he was abandoned.*

## Rotary provides a Helping Hand



Rotary International—the world's first nonsectarian service organization—celebrates its centennial this year. Rotarians in central New Jersey embraced the idea of showing their pride in Rotary by wearing commemorative tee-shirts – and TeenPride was pleased to help!

The teenage orphaned kids in our Bright Futures job-training program in Deva designed and manufactured the shirts and delivered them to Rotary for less than they could have bought them locally.

It was a classic win-win-win proposition: ICAF won by earning revenue that reduces our need for donations; the kids won by boosting their self esteem—and taking home a paycheck, and Rotary won by getting quality shirts at a good price.

If you or an organization (church, sports club, company) you know has a need for any type of imprinted clothing, bags, hats, pens, etc., please let our kids make it with pride.

**Call us at 856.988.1738.**



*Brothers Mirel and Ionut with Delia, Casa Emanuel manager*

## "Sadie Hawkins" day Follies Nets Fun and Profit for ICAF

On Leap Year Day, February 29, Faith Presbyterian church in Medford, New Jersey, held a Sadie Hawkins annual talent show and auction to benefit International Children's Aid Foundation. It was a wonderful afternoon of fun and fellowship. So many people contributed their time to plan the event, provide food, participate in the talent show, and donate—and bid for—the action items.

At the end of the day, the results were excitedly announced: Faith Follies generated a \$15,730 profit for our ministry! Praise the Lord!

## Emanuel Welcomes Three New Children



In late June, ICAF welcomed three beautiful new children into Casa Emanuel.

Adrian was born on 23 May 2001 and was abandoned by his mother, who has since taken up with another man and now has his child. She also abandoned Adrian's sister, Iza-

bela (born 4 October 1999), who has been with us at Emanuel for two years. Little Adrian has suffered from being institutionalized, without love or nurture since birth, and he is already responding to being with his sister and to the family atmosphere at Casa Emanuel.

The twins Andreea and Andrei were born on 24 June 2000 and were also abandoned by both parents. Their paternal grandparents loved them very much and raised them on their meager (\$40/mo) pension. In April, their house caught fire, killing their grandfather. The grandmother is still comatose. Miraculously, the twins were rescued, but with no means of support, were destined to be placed in a state orphanage. When ICAF was asked if we could take them, the immediate answer was "Of course!" Their traumatic recent experience is being partially offset by the good times they are having with their new playmates and a loving staff.



## Our Wish List

We need:

Furniture and appliances for apartment in Brad for Christian Center's new leader:  
\$1200

An LCD projector to show movies and teach at the Christian Center: \$1600

New van for ministry in Romania:  
\$19,000

Equipment for free dental clinic:  
\$450

Desk and storage cabinet for free clinic:  
\$300

New color printer for Teen *Pride* to make heat transfers:  
\$899

Playground for Emanuel orphanage:  
\$5500

Playground for Hunedoara orphanage:  
\$5500

Vitamin C tablets and multiple vitamins for one child at Emanuel for one year: \$50

Your prayers for our ministry: Priceless.





# INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S Aid FOUNDATION

www.ICAFKIDS.org

I know ICAF's ministry can only continue with tangible, tax-deductible support.  
Here's how I want to help:

Please check as applicable and mail this form, with checks payable to ICAF, to  
14 West Lake Avenue, Medford, NJ 08055-3249

\_\_\_\_\_ A gift of \$1000    \$500    \$100    \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward ICAF's ministry to be used for (please check):

\_\_\_\_\_ Bright Futures    \_\_\_\_\_ Bright Beginnings    \_\_\_\_\_ Emanuel Home    \_\_\_\_\_ Dental clinic    \_\_\_\_\_ where most needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I'll sponsor a Bright Beginnings child for \$25/month.\*

\_\_\_\_\_ I'll sponsor an Emanuel orphanage child for \$25/month.\*

\_\_\_\_\_ I'll sponsor the dental clinic for \$39/month\*

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to join an ICAF mission team. Please contact me.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like ICAF to present its ministry at my church or other group.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like information on including ICAF's ministry in my will.

\_\_\_\_\_ Other designation:



*\*I prefer to pay each month by (check one):*

\_\_\_\_\_ Having ICAF mail me a bill                      \_\_\_\_\_ Having ICAF e-mail me a bill

\_\_\_\_\_ Secure, automatic charges to the following American Express, MasterCard, or Visa

Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_/\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ A secure payment from my checking account. You will still receive a receipt for donations. Charge and automatic check pledges can be changed or canceled at any time. A \$1 fee will be added to each automatic check donation by the handling company so that ICAF receives your full donation. Just attach a voided unsigned blank check to set it up.

Please print name: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (City) \_\_\_\_\_ (State) \_\_\_\_\_ (Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for becoming a part of the International Children's Aid Foundation: we pledge that we will make the most of your donation to help children of Romania!**



# INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S AID FOUNDATION

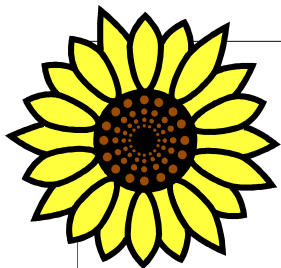
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You can view The Sunflower online and in color by checking our web site at [www.ICAFKids.org](http://www.ICAFKids.org).

Peruse past issues, too!

