

HOLIDAY BLESSINGS

From Romania

by Felicia, Casa Mea's Coordinator & Educator, for the first Prejmer Charity Ball!

What do we do as a society?

I have recently become fed up with children singing Christmas carols on the buses or in front of the supermarkets, begging each passerby for money during this holiday season. This was the only thing I saw on my way to work each morning! I felt as though I wanted the begging children to just disappear, for me not to see them anymore and become depressed. I was not alone in my thoughts. Another person said to the children "what do you need? I did not conceive you!" As sleepy as I was, his remark woke me up to the cruel reality. None of us have conceived these children, but they weren't conceived alone, they didn't ask to be conceived. We are a civilized society. We cannot leave children abandoned, to die on the streets, just because they don't belong to us. We are far beyond this jungle mentality. And if some day, we might not be as lucky as we are now and we might not be able to work anymore, I want to believe that people won't say "it is not my responsibility you ended up like this."

Begging is not the solution. There is an alternative to this – donations to charities which use your money in a responsible way.

When we think about orphans or abandoned children, we always think that as long as they are not abused and have something to eat and a place to sleep, we have accomplished our role. We leave these things for the government to deal with and this is good, this is how it should be! We pay lots of taxes! However, what these governmental institutions do not provide are such things as love, a solid education, sports, games, art, music, all of which



Romania

develop the children's imaginations and talents and show the children that they can do something with their lives. These things are not provided by the government because they are perceived as luxuries. Therefore, what can a child expect from his society, his government, his family all of whom have offered him very little opportunity for either growth or personal development!

What does a child need?

Well, brace yourself. Come to CASA MEA. This is a place in Romania, where abandoned children, with their own unique and sad stories, have a HOME.

They have more than the bare necessities of life. They have opportunity! What are the bare necessities for an abandoned child? Is it a bed with a roof over their heads? Something to eat? Clothes? What kind of life is this for a child? What kind of life is this for anybody in a civilized society? I refuse to think that this all we can offer! And I am really happy that children at CASA MEA have more than this, because of YOU!



Robert & Vlad at Karate

The children at CASA MEA have more than the bare necessities. They have responsibilities and opportunities both of which are lacking in the governmental institutions. They know how to spend money, they know the prices, they know where they can buy quality items inexpensively, when and where there are sales. I am impressed with the maturity they exhibit in dealing with their funds. Further, although the staff cares for them,

nobody has to ask them to clean their rooms, to help with the laundry, to clean the kitchen. They take turns doing chores according to their specific age. That is exactly what an educated child should do. What is surprising is that they have fun doing the chores. They are learning to be responsible!

I believe because of small opportunities such as these, they will become responsible adults. I realize how important it is for the children to be responsible. They are not told that there is a wonderful world out there waiting for them. They are told that there will be a time when they need to work, to spend their hard earned money wisely, that they will need to create their own wonderful world.

And when they are 18?

Beside all these things, there is one more important thing. They are not just some unwanted children who survived in a depressed environment, with a little food, some warm place to sleep with some warm clothes as is the situation in most governmental institutions for such children, where the children just survive in these places. As adults, who will care for them then since they never learned to be responsible for themselves? How will they survive? We feel sorry for them because no adult helped them to discover their talents or encouraged them. They had no opportunities to explore their unique gifts and talents. And so they beg and due to our guilt, we throw some money at them. But CASA MEA'S children have opportunities to develop to their fullest potential. Besides school and home responsibilities, they are fortunate enough to participate in extracurricular activities such as swimming, soccer, bike riding, dance classes, painting, karate, chess, anything that they are interested in. These opportunities all push them away from the gut wrenching truth - that they are abandoned by their own parents/-families. Regardless, they understand that somebody loves them and they are respected. People at CASA MEA think of new possibilities all the time, not only to assure the children's wellbeing and development, but also to provide a future for these children. Raul, the soccer player, wants to become a professional when he grows up - he tells me this from his heart. Or maybe he changes his mind. But he knows that he can be whatever he chooses to be. The important thing is that he feels loved and secure enough to explore his options. He has opportunities! This is a major thing!

AND SO?

This is the CASA MEA children's story, this is their everyday life. They get ready to become young people, who at 18, are ready for the moment when they won't be somebody else's responsibility, but their own. And when that time comes, they will know they have many options. The world will open for them, because of those people who take care of them at CASA MEA and because of YOU!

I hope that by telling you what happens at CASA MEA, I have shown you that the money you donate is properly used for the purpose of providing the children with opportunities so that they will learn to become responsible adults, not just victims of a family or society who did not want them.

During this holiday season, the children want to thank you for your help. Because of YOU they have love and security, education, activities, responsibilities. But most importantly for having a place they can call home. All because of YOU!

Craciun Fericit si Un An Nou Fericit!

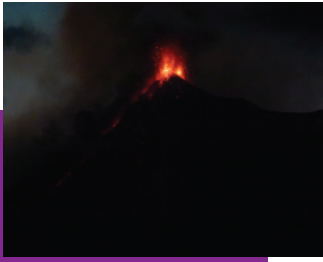


Cristina & Ana with their homemade pies

From Mi Casita

by Jessica, Mi Casita's Administrator

WOW! Look what is erupting in Guatemala! Finally, we had our house inspection and



Our neighborhood
volcano

now wait for our certificate to bring abandoned children into our home. We had hoped that we would have at least one child by Christmas but the government does not move that quickly! We are so grateful though that our house has passed its inspection. All thanks to YOU!



Mi Casita's house is
ready!

My mom Christien and her friend Ank raised 135 Euros for Mi Casita at the Christmas market in the Netherlands. We are so grateful to them both for their hard work on behalf of MI CASITA.

Thanks to all of you for your help this year. Because of YOU we were able to get the house totally furnished and ready to receive children from birth to 3 years old. We hope we can count on your support next year.

Feliz navidad y prospero año nuevo!



Christmas market
in the NL



Ana, Robert,
and Santa

THANK YOU!

To send your financial gift to Casa Mea...

- By Check: Payable to **Casa Mea** at 6705 Shadow Crest Drive, Plano, TX 75093
- By Credit Card: Donate online by clicking [HERE](#) or visit www.casamea.org and click on "Make a Donation"
- Other Donations: Contact Jan at 612-227-3239 or email jan@casamea.org to arrange for a monthly automatic bank withdrawal, donation of appreciated stock, or other type of financial donation.

All contributions to Casa Mea are tax-deductible. Thank you!