



Open Doors Foundation, Medgidia, Romania. Nov. 2014 an email to Open Doors Foundation from Delia, a volunteer.

Peace!

We did not have enough time to talk after camp, so I thought I could write you an email telling you how it went. I think it was one of the biggest responsibilities I have ever had.



Older group of children who attended a camp this summer

All week I counted continuously. " 24 kids. Let's see, 12 girls, 12 boys. In a line, one by one." I can't believe how convinced I was when I told the parents that their children behaved. And they really did. We didn't have any major problem with them. There were times when all of them were going crazy, jumping all over the place, running, and screaming, but I think those moments were normal.

At the beginning it was hard to keep them in order and have them listen to us (the volunteers) but by the end, that was not such a big problem. We ended up loving them all

very much. The kids have such great potential that dwindles over time because of the lack of education and resources.



Touring the mighty Danube delta the children spotted this beautiful wild swan, an unforgettable experience.

The trip on the Danube delta was a great blessing for all the children and volunteers. I was very inspired to see how the children listen to sister Beti. I knew how things were, from last year, but this year they were more obedient and at first I thought we would lose them in the city, or at the delta. When we were on the Danube, in the boat, I was very happy to see Marian Nichifor being so amazed by everything around us. When he was seeing a bird, I could hear him say "Ce frumooooos!" (So beautiful!). It was a great joy to see how the children listen to you (Hardi), and that they love you, both!



Children enjoyed making crafts like this ring and bracelet. "Look what I made!"

I saw the differences between the children from Casa Alba (White House) and from Casa Ciobanului (The Shepherd's House). The ones from Casa Alba think they are superior and fight more often. They are also the leaders and have to be first at everything, (first in the

line for games and meals) but in the end all of the children were friends. We tried very hard not to treat the children differently, no Casa Alba or Casa Ciobanului, but all our children.

On the last night, all the boys wanted to sleep in one room. Six boys in a double bed, and six in a bunk bed. That was their greatest joy! The girls from Casa Alba and Casa Ciobanului were in two different rooms. But in the following days they started visiting each others' rooms and being friends. That was nice to see!



Delia with the children (left) who loved the aquarium and these deadly Lion fish. (right)

The wake-up call was at 8 o'clock in the morning, but on the first day the kids were up and ready at 6 o'clock. I thought that if that was how it would be the entire week, it would be very tiring for us, but on the days that followed we had to go wake them up.

In the first evening, the boys from Casa Alba, Geaner, Gesur and Acnur cried, saying they missed home, but in the end we made them laugh, and the tears went away. On Thursday the girls from Casa Alba cried too, but of the girls from Casa Ciobanului, only Camelia Turcanu said she missed home. She was quiet and a bit lonely. She never played the group games. When we were outside, we couldn't get much from Camelia, but once she was in her room she was another person, singing and playing with the other girls.

The Bible lesson we taught them was about Joseph. We highlighted the fact that he was very obedient and did anything his father asked him to do. He went with his brother to get food even though he knew they hated him for his dreams, and because their father loved him more. Then we told the children about Joseph being sold in Egypt as a slave and that he did not become insolent, and disobedient because he knew that God was with him and was his helper. In the house of Potiphar Joseph was the best slave. He did his job very well, and the Lord blessed him. We emphasized that he didn't steal, curse or fight with other slaves, because he knew God saw him. And we told the kids many times that God sees them. Joseph also loved God, and that's why he didn't sin with Potiphar's wife. When he went to prison he remained a good person because he knew that God loved him and that He was taking care of him. In the end, God rewarded Joseph and he became the second man in the kingdom, after Pharaoh. So, we emphasized the fact that God rewards his faithful children.

Sometimes the children were paying attention, and sometimes they weren't. Andreea Covalenco was very attentive and fast in learning the verses, too. We taught them John 8:36 and Philippians 4:13.

We saw the children's big need for attention. I think that the most serious behavior problems were in Iulian Covalenco and Maria Patrascuta. Maria was not violent at all but she knew too much for her age. It was obvious that she spends too much time in front of the TV. When the other girls in the room picked on her, Maria didn't react normally. Instead of crying loudly and coming to a volunteer to tell them what happened, she just laid on her bed with a toy on her face, silently crying. The other girls told me what happened but Maria wouldn't answer our questions. When I tried to take her in my arms she wouldn't let me, she would tense her body and clench her eyes and for a while, we couldn't talk to her. There were times when Maria looked like she was enjoying the games, like she was happy, but those moments were rare. Usually she had a serious, concerning look on her face.

Iulian had the same look. Sometimes he was violent and he had very foul language. It was hard to work with him, because he was silent when the volunteers were there, or when we would ask him anything. When Iulian was with the other kids though, he was different. Every child is special in his or her own way.



This honorable boy found an expensive smart phone and turned it in.

I wish we had had more time to invest in each of them individually. Each volunteer had 6-7 children to take care of. I spent more time with the girls in Casa Alba and took care of them at the table, during the afternoon nap and at the shower., so I talked with them more than the others. I realized that their future looks quite dark. Didina told me that her father was in jail. Seila said that her father was dead, but the other girls told me he had left Seila's family and went to Spain. Their lives are hard, and they don't seem to improve.

I said earlier that during the camp I counted constantly. On the way back to Medgidia, after we got all the children in the train, I said I should count them one more time. Claudiu and I

were the last ones to get on, so I knew that all the kids were on board. I counted them, but there were 22. I counted again, and again, and still 22. I was very scared. Claudiu was on his way to stop the train, when another passenger told us to look on the other side of the wagon. There we found Didina and Eniza. That was a scary experience.



Boarding the train to return to Medgidia. Time for a head count.

I'm very happy I volunteered at this camp. Now I can only pray for the children, the week in Cataloi was a good one. My prayer is that they would not forget what we taught them, and apply it to their lives. Claudiu, Irina, Nicky and I, did our best, and now it's God's turn to work in their lives. The team was small, we were only four volunteers but I'm sure that it was actually bigger, with all those who prayed for us. In our weakness the Lord's strength was made perfect.

May the Lord bless you, and give you strength in your work!

In Christ,

Delia

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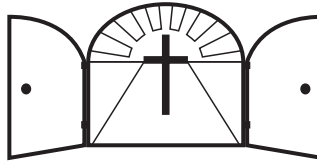
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