

SRW's Assistance in Moldova

Submitted by Adam Ptacin

On February 15th, 2007, after a two month journey beginning in Madison, Wisconsin, the container, shipped within the framework of North Moldova Assistance Project #52 - CTP 6301-001 - arrived at Moldovan customs in Drochia Raion. This container, with an approximate net worth of \$148,000, has been an eight-month joint effort between Peace Corps Volunteer, Adam Ptacin, Sharing Resources Worldwide (SRW), Mrs. Kathleen Ptacin (SRW volunteer), Counterpart International in Moldova, and a Fortuna Civic Association.

Some of the words of appreciation from those who benefited from the donations sent in this shipment follow: This is only a portion of the report returned to SRW.

Zinaida Zgureanu from Drochia

Zinaida is a happy mother, who has just delivered a cute girl. She knows for sure what the difference between old and recently received beds is. "The new beds are large enough for me

to lie together with my girl. This allows me to concentrate more on the baby, to pay her more attention without being afraid that my baby may fall down, without thinking about the position I am lying and without having pains in my back when lying motionless for hours. I am so grateful to you for providing the hospital with these beds, as this made me feel home and forget that I am at hospital. Indeed, I am sipping every single moment of this pleasure lying besides my baby and feeling every single breath of this new start of life just on my cheek!"

Eduard Mocanu, director of Zguritsa Medical Center

"Because there were no medical equipment and supplies in the center, we haven't even been able to provide minimal primary medical services. Due to your generous support, we can offer a large spectrum of medical services, as well as provide in-door treatment. We could thus reduce the treating period and save more lives than we did before.

Elena Dimitrov, 1 group disabled

"I have dreamt of having a wheelchair. But I have never had resources enough to buy one. Now my dreams came true, and I have been distributed a wheelchair. It will make me flexible, free to meet many people, with those who are in a similar condition, and what is most important, it will considerably help those people who ordinarily help me. Thanks for giving me a hand of help and a ray of hope."

The second recipient of these materials was the Gribova retirement home, which received several water-repellent mattresses.

These mattresses are a dramatic quality, if recalling the normal, cotton-fiber mattresses previously used. Newer ones are also easy to clean. As a result, sanitary conditions at the asylum have improved.



Panciuc, Zguritsa School student

"We couldn't get any primary medical services until today. Many students happen to have smaller injuries and wounds after their physical training or professional training classes, and these should be treated immediately, avoiding more serious complications. Now we can be certain that we wouldn't lose any time to get to the Raion Hospital to make us treated there. We will be free to come to our medical center and get there primary emergency medical services. We will live every single moment of our childhood. Thank you."

Josan Doina, Chief of Cardiology Ward

"There are moments, when in our Cardiology Ward every second means a man's life. The old defibrillator was frequently going out of order and could not be used in critical situations. Even though we used it sometimes, it was not working properly. With the new defibrillator, which is much more performing and multifunctional, we can not only resuscitate patients, but also monitor their condition. Now we would be able to save at least three human lives

a day, which was not possible earlier, and this will bring joy and hope for patients and their families."

Anatolii Litovcenco, Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgical Ward

"Pediatric neurosurgeries cannot be based solely on surgeon's knowledge, qualification and enthusiasm. There is also a need of specialized surgical instruments and medical equipment. We have received all these, a fact for which I would like to thank you cordially and sincerely. We will be finally able to accomplish those difficult surgeries that we haven't been able to accomplish before, to provide more qualitative medical services and save more children's lives, contributing to a healthy future of our country."

"She's a happy girl."

By Amber Schauske,
Casa Hogar Juan Pablo 11, Peru

What happens if your daughter is born with a deformation of some kind, or a tendency to infection that leads to significant health problems? What happens if she can't hear very well and, as a consequence, isolates herself from the rest of the family, has problems with classmates and falls behind in school? What if you find out that her problem can be fixed, but you don't have the money? What happens if, for years, you pinch your pennies to save for her operation only to lose your husband to cancer, and then have to spend that money on his funeral arrangements? What happens if things get so bad that you have to place your daughter and her older sister into the care of an orphanage?

Welcome to the world of Candy's mother. Candy and her sister Joselyn arrived to Casa Hogar Juan Pablo 11 (an orphanage in Peru) in early 2006. Both girls adjusted fairly quickly to their new surroundings, but it was harder for Candy. Candy was very dependent on her older sister because she couldn't hear others well and, therefore, didn't understand instructions or, for that matter, simple conversations. Furthermore, as a result of her poor hearing, Candy had speech problems; she couldn't pronounce certain letters and often confused the letters "L" and "R." As a way of dealing with her problem, Candy often spent time alone, which in turn inhibited her ability to form relationships.

To make matters worse, Candy had hear-

ing problems in both ears. In 2006, she was operated on to repair her right eardrum at a hospital in Lima. After a long healing process, Candy's hearing improved minimally, but her ear still succumbed to infection. Early 2007 marked her second operation. This time, it was on her left ear, and it was through the annual Sharing Resources Worldwide medical mission to Peru. The result of the operation was much more favorable; Candy's hearing improved dramatically.

Now, Candy can hear instructions only whispered to her; her school grades have improved dramatically; she actively participates in family meetings and discussions; she no longer isolates herself from the rest of her family; she sings, she dances. As summed up by her Family Teachers, "She is a happy girl!"

Isn't that what every parent wants to their child to be? Happy? Though Candy is not our daughter, she is our spiritual daughter and we want her to grow and develop as a child who was born into opportunity.

As a spiritual mother to Candy, and to many others, I would like to say thank you to everyone who somehow forms a part of the SRW team. Candy is a new girl; instead of living in the shadows of others, she is smiling and singing and dancing.

Through your sacrifices, you have changed her life... and the lives of many others. I have been fortunate to partake in many missions. The smile on the face of a child when he or she sees him or herself in the mirror for the first time after surgery or upon hearing well is



Dr Sieck carries Candy to recovery after surgery.

amazingly uplifting; the humble tears of gratitude and happiness of parents bring tears to your own eyes as you realize you've given their child a new opportunity at life. God bless you for your selflessness and may you continue to use your talents to improve the lives of others.

SRW accepts gifts of appreciated stocks and mutual fund shares. Your gift of such qualifies for a tax deduction based on full market value of your stock or mutual fund shares plus you avoid the capital gains tax that would otherwise arise from the sale of stock or mutual fund shares.

Windows of the Soul

By Leslie Hill, Missionary
September 2007.

Not knowing what to expect, we waited at the airport to receive a medical team from SRW. Part of the team was coming to make prosthetic eyes, and part to put the clinic in order for the January orthopedics team.



Carrie Messer and Daniela.

We really didn't have a clue as to what to expect on this mission because Mary Dowling, SRW co-director, said we would need to see the process in order to understand it. My eye doctor and friend informed me that there are no ophthalmologists in Honduras (ophthalmologists make prosthetic eyes). She was quite excited and interested in the opportunity to observe.

Carrie Messer was the ophthalmologist on the team, and for that matter she was the eye team! This lady has a God-given talent, compassion and understanding for her patients. Those of us who observed the making of prosthetic eyes

were a little surprised at the equipment and the process. When she said, "It's time to cook the eyes" ... Well, need I say more?

The process from beginning to completion takes about twelve hours. It starts with Carrie's evaluation of the patient. There are many more steps for Carrie, but only hours of waiting for the children and their parents. She called a child in at one point to sit before her, while she hand-painted the iris of the new eye to match her natural color. In the passing of a day and a half we all had the privilege of getting to know 22-month-old Zaida and her mother. She was just one of 12 patients who received prosthetics that week. We all played and talked with Zaida, enjoying this

sweet little person. When Carrie called her and her mother in for the final time, we all were present to witness the moment. The moment her prosthetic eyes were in place, we all were instantly introduced to her soul! Of course, to Zaida everything was just the same, but for the rest of us there was a different connection. We saw into the window of her soul!



Zaida and her mother—both happy with her new eyes!

The mother of 10-year-old Cerwin, sighted in one eye, said, "Now he can go to school without being ridiculed." These are only two examples of the 12 lives touched by the efforts of SRW.

Thank you all for all



Marcela and her mother are very pleased with her new eye and appearance.

you do for the people of Honduras and the world. What a blessing and honor to work with you all.

Founded in January 2002, Sharing Resources Worldwide makes surplus and recycled medical supplies, durable medical equipment, and related items and activities available to needy populations around the world. SRW endeavors to improve the health and quality of life of its recipients and to empower them to live with increased dignity, independence, and hope.

We do this through three areas—medical missions, shipping and the wheelchair project.

All donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to

Sharing Resources Worldwide.

Sharing Resources Worldwide is incorporated in the state of Wisconsin and is a tax exempt charitable 501 (c) (3) organization.

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SRW Celebrates Our Volunteers

By Lisa Fernandez

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

—Mahatma Gandhi

Sharing Resources Worldwide hosted its 2007 Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on September 9th at the Avenue Bar in Madison, Wisconsin. What a great event! Over 70 people attended and we all enjoyed a delicious family-style dinner, a moving presentation by Amber Schauske on the work that SRW has facilitated in Peru, great door prizes, conversation, laughter, and more.

In the last year SRW's friends have volunteered more than 3,500 hours to our operations — both here and abroad. There truly would be no SRW without our volunteers, and there is no way to adequately express our gratitude for all they do. Our annual event is just a small token of our appreciation, and an opportunity for people who work for SRW in different capacities to meet and interact with each other. The volunteer who delivers supplies may not know the retired nurse who sorts them. The crew who shows up to load containers may not have met the members of the last SRW mission team. It is great for everyone to be able to see the other pieces of the whole, and to see just where they fit in the whole tapestry that is Sharing Resources Worldwide.

The crowd at the dinner was lively, and conversations and laughter flowed freely. The home-style food was hearty and delicious. All present received an SRW mug, matches, and pen — small tokens to be sure, but a way for us to convey our gratitude. Thanks to many generous donors, a large percentage of the guests received door prizes, ranging from a free tire rotation to a pedicure. We are so grateful to all the businesses and individuals who donated



door prizes.

Huge thanks is due Marita Menard, who orchestrated the entire event. She arranged everything from the table decorations, the venue, the food, the gifts for volunteers, the door prizes, the invitations and thank-yous, and much more. All of this required weeks of preparation and planning, and Marita carried it all off with style and grace. Marita, you are truly awesome!

This is an annual event that we all look forward to, and a chance for us all to celebrate the accomplishments of the year, and those who have made it all possible. Mary and I and the

SRW Board thank all our volunteers from the bottom of our hearts! YOU ROCK!

Sponsors for the dinner were Research Seeds (Olds Garden Seed Company); Baer Insurance; Genesis Painting; and Dr Stuart and Mary Banks Knechtle

Businesses that contributed door prizes and funds to subsidize the event include: Style X Hair Studio, Flower Gallery, Gina's Deli, Monona Car Care, Chet's Car Care, Atlanta Bread Company, Hair Studio and Day Spa, RZ and Company, The Oaks Golf Course, and Frugal Muse.

SRW Honors Volunteer of the Year for 2007

By Lisa Fernandez

Every year we highlight one of our volunteers and share with all of you their commitment and contribution to Sharing Resources Worldwide. Our Volunteer of the Year award this year went to Mary Jane Schuknecht. Mary Jane has been an integral part of the SRW team for over three years now, and has devoted countless hours to sorting the tons of medical supplies that we receive into our warehouse.

Ever wonder how hundreds of boxes of surplus and recycled medical supplies — some boxes a mishmash of unrelated items — get organized into the neat and labeled boxes of useful supplies that we load onto containers or into suitcases for transport to the developing world? This is a job that takes knowledge, patience, attention to detail, a great deal of organization, and a lot of stick-to-it-ness. The work is tedious and never-ending (if it ended, so would SRW!). Also required is a good strong medical background — the useful items

must be culled from those that are damaged, inappropriate for the developing world, or ineffective or unsafe for any reason. Mary Jane has all the skill required, and the commitment and caring heart to get the job done, week after week after week. She shares these skills with others by training new volunteers to participate in the sorting.

Mary Jane, now retired, brings to this daunting task 33 years of experience as an operating room nurse in both the inpatient and outpatient surgery departments at UW Hospital in Madison. Her career included a stint as a materials management supervisor in the outpatient surgery department. Sharing Resources Worldwide is now the very lucky and grateful beneficiary of the knowledge and skills she gained in her long and productive career

THANK YOU, MARY JANE. You are an invaluable asset to SRW, and an integral part of what makes our work possible.

*Sharing Hands
Sharing Hearts
Sharing Hope
Sharing Resources Worldwide*

Donations

We thank Sylvia Boomsma for editing; Lisa Imhoff, Grey Horse Studio for layout; and SpectraPrint for printing this issue of the newsletter. Some of the businesses contributing inventory (supplies and equipment), services, and support to SRW programs:

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|--|------------------------------------|
| Alternative Copier | Wheelchair Recycling Program |
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Donation checks should be made out to Sharing Resources Worldwide.
Please return this card with your donation to the address above.

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Making a Difference in Nicaragua

By Ross Menard

Two boys are standing at the edge of a recently flooded river in the middle of a town checking out the debris along the banks. A recent flood had raised the water level 20 feet and sucked the personal effects of many families into the stream, making it a fertile hunting ground for items suitable for salvage. Their shirts reflected a Wisconsin connection...Muscoda T-Ball...Wisconsin AFSCME Council 24...Crazylegs 10 K

No, this wasn't the Kickapoo Valley in Western Wisconsin. This was in Matagalpa, Nicaragua, home of Sharing Resources Worldwide's Wisconsin / Nicaragua Wheelchair Project, where I spent the first week in November. I was visiting the facility which is run by a local non-profit, *Familias Especiales* (Special Families), which was formed by a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur. The Wheelchair Project has received over 1,100 used chairs from SRW over the years and distributes them free to needy people throughout the country. In addition to the wheelchairs, other items such as office furniture, school materials, and yes, even T-shirts are sent in containers that are unloaded in the street outside the workshop in the heart of a bustling city with a pop-

ulation of 100,000. The workshop operates out of a 1,000-square-foot room at the back of a café run by Special Families and employs six to eight people (most of whom are handicapped) who have been trained by SRW volunteers to fit the chairs for their users.

It really tugs at the tear glands to see mothers carrying convulsing spastic children in their arms off the street into the café to wait for their turn for their child to be fitted for their own wheelchair by a worker on crutches. Without SRW, the workers wouldn't have jobs and these children wouldn't have mobility.

So, volunteers, thanks for your efforts in gathering, sorting, and packing surplus items for use in needy parts of the world. Contributors, thanks for your financial contributions to pay for the warehouse rent and shipping costs (\$5,000 per container). Because of you, life is a little better in many parts of the world.

Mike Menard
 SRW Board Member

Addendum:

SRW provides crucial and continuing support to *Familias Especiales*, and never was it more evident or more needed than these past weeks. After 55 days of non-



Ross Menard surveys flood damage at a minor tributary of the main river in Matagalpa. During the rains, water reached 20 feet deep at this point.

stop rain, the Rio Grande in Matagalpa overflowed its banks and drove a crashing cascade of water into the surrounding barrios.

A 40-foot container of wheelchairs and other supplies arrived from SRW in the midst of this flooding. These supplies have proven crucial to the survival of many of those who lost their belongings. We saw bags being distributed of linens, bedding, clothes and household items that all were sent from Wisconsin. Household and school supplies,

furniture and personal care items were also all in great demand, and SRW had included many of these items in the container. Thanks to all of you for your efforts!!

Lisa Fernandez

Since our beginning in 2002

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	TOTALS
Number of containers shipped	12	16	19	22	16	85
Tons saved from landfills	180	192	281	368	270	1,291
Value of goods and medical services	\$1.2 mil	\$1.9 mil	\$2.1 mil	\$2.5 mil	\$1.8 mil	\$9.5 mil



Four missions completed in 2007

Medical Surgical Mission to Peru
 Medical Surgical Mission to Honduras
 Eye Prosthetic Mission to Honduras
 Wheelchair Project Mission to Nicaragua

Shipment and supply destinations:

Peru
 Russia
 Philippines
 Nicaragua
 Haiti
 Honduras
 Nepal
 Guatemala
 New Orleans
 Afghanistan
 Cuba
 Sierra Leone
 Ghana
 Guinea
 Viet Nam
 Moldova
 Local Homeless shelters

Thus far in 2007 shipments and supplies have gone to:

Haiti
 Local homeless shelters
 Cuba
 Panama
 Honduras
 Peru
 Nicaragua
 Ethiopia
 Ghana
 Mexico
 Tanzania
 Guatemala
 Philippines
 Liberia
 Ghana
 Bolivia
 Nepal
 Ecuador
 Moldova