



Salutare Moldova

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTERS OF PROJECTS ABROAD MOLDOVA



Issue XI November 2011

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Inside –Out

Trip to Rascani

On 21st October Projects Abroad Moldova organized a trip to Rascani District from the North of the country. On this trip volunteers and the staff were accompanied by Teodor Obada (the Principal Expert on Mammoths and Archaeologist) and Cristina Cosciuc (Vice Rector of the State Agrarian University). The trip was for the whole day and it took 4 hours to get there. Teachers and students from Agriculture College from Rascani prepared several surprises for us. Students dressed in Moldovan traditional clothes met us with bread and sold who is the old Moldovan custom. They danced for us; one of the dances was the "hora" and a song about Moldova of a famous singer Vitalie Dani from Moldova. Volunteers were invited to join "hora" with students and teachers. After a short presentation of the Moldovan culture, the main profession of Moldovan ancestors which survived the time, we went in one of the classes where we had our presentation. Students from Rascani and the teachers presented the History of Rascani and the archeological places they have near by. Projects Abroad Moldova volunteers were also well prepared for this unforgettable meeting.



The themes of the speeches of Projects Abroad Moldova volunteers were:

1. Stephen Leather from Australia: "Welcome to the land down under".
2. Simon Daneault from Canada: "Things to see in Canada".
3. Paul Thomason from United Kingdom: "My children work in London".
4. David Parkin from United Kingdom: "Multicultural schools/Britain".
5. Michelle Braud Delsaux from France: "A la rencontre de la France" (A meeting with France).

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David's questions made students and teachers think of the future of multicultural society. Stephen made all the students and teachers laugh with his unusual presentation full of humor and simplicity. Paul's PowerPoint presentation was a musical exchange of experiences. He spoke about his work with the kids from UK and showed many photos with the children. Simon and Michelle presented the famous places for tourism and monuments from Canada and France.



After the speech we were invited to a rich table full of traditional Moldovan dishes: sarmale (forcemeat rolls in cabbage leaves), dumplings with cheese, chicken soup, many fruits and sweets, etc.

Later, we went to Duruitoarea Veche which is an archeological museum in the open air, a historical place because of the famous cave where the first human fossils from Moldova territory were found. All the way from Rascani to Duruitoarea 6 students described the 6 villages we were passing on the way to the boarder of the Prut River. Teodor Obada, the Principal Expert on Mammoths and Archaeologistan has told us about the importance of the cave discovered in Duruitoarea Veche. We came back late in the evening, but all of us were very satisfied with the day.



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Non-English Stories Care Italian Article

By Silvia Barresi, Care Project

Due mesi in Moldova!

Sono arrivata a Chisinau il 10 settembre, accolta meravigliosamente dallo staff di Project Abroad e dalla mia nuova famiglia, o almeno quella che sarebbe stata tale per due mesi. Avevo deciso di partire perché, finita l'università, non avendo trovato lavoro, avevo bisogno di dare in qualche modo una svolta alla mia vita. Per il budget a mia disposizione, per il tempo che mi volevo regalare e amando i paesi dell'est europa, ho pensato che fare le valigie per la Moldova era la migliore delle decisioni possibili. Fare del volontariato era da sempre stato uno dei miei sogni e Projects Abroad mi ha permesso di realizzarlo a pieno. Inizialmente pensavo di aver fatto una scelta un po' azzardata: l'obiettivo era lavorare al centro Start, per persone affette da disabilità mentali, fra le quali la sindrome di Down. Non sono del campo, nè avevo mai fatto un'esperienza di volontariato di questo tipo e, naturalmente, ero un po' preoccupata; ma non appena sono arrivata al centro, tutto è diventato indimenticabile: sono stata accolta a braccia aperte e tutto il tempo coccolata dai ragazzi che io stessa dovevo coccolare. Tra giochi, studio e risate il tempo è passato così velocemente che due mesi si sono rivelati due giorni. E se all'inizio tutto poteva sembrarmi difficile, l'amore, la gioia di vivere, la passione e l'unicità di ognuno di loro, ha reso ogni mio giorno indimenticabile. Due mesi pieni di allegria, organizzando giochi, studiando con loro, provando ad insegnare loro qualcosa, benché sia stata più io ad imparare e loro ad insegnarmi, soprattutto ad insegnarmi a sorridere, qualsiasi cosa succeda. Ogni mattina mi svegliavo viziata dalla mia famiglia con un'ottima colazione e mi preparavo per andare a prendere il mio trolley con il quale arrivavo al centro e ogni giorno i ragazzi mi venivano incontro, mi abbracciavano, mi accoglievano con un affetto che mai avrei potuto immaginare. Tutti, senza distinzione, allo stesso modo e con la stessa galanteria. E così la mia giornata, iniziata con mille sorrisi (a volte sdentati), proseguita con giochi, studio e altro ancora, finiva allo stesso modo, sempre con un enorme sorriso: il mio. Non dimenticherò mai nulla di tutto quello che ho ricevuto, di tutto quello che ho passato e di tutto quello che ho imparato. Per sempre ringrazierò la Moldavia con i suoi bellissimi villaggi e le sue nascoste meraviglie, scoperte grazie al lavoro e allo staff di Project Abroad. Per sempre ringrazierò quest'esperienza per avermi fatto conoscere questa terra attraverso il calore di una famiglia, nella sua intima profondità. E per sempre ringrazierò il centro Start, una terza famiglia per me, all'interno della quale è impossibile sentirsi soli e perché mai tanto amore e divertimento mi era stato offerto attraverso una forte serietà e professionalità.



Multumesc Moldova!

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Journalism Project

By Kirsten Hall, Journalism project, 2 months.

An Americans first impressions of Moldova

PART 1:

CHISINAU-- When I first told my American friends and family that I wanted to do an internship program in Moldova the first thing that everyone said to me was, "Moldova, where is that?" Truthfully, I was not quite sure myself but I knew that it was in Europe and I wanted to experience a new culture and gain experience for my career as a journalist.



My first impressions of Chisinau were not great. The city seemed to be struggling; poor and run-down. However, it took less than a day to change my opinion. The people were unlike anywhere else I had ever been; resilient and strong but still very welcoming and friendly. Even without speaking the language, I quickly grew to respect the Moldavians and love their city.

Even though I am just a foreigner, I believe that I can see a lot of promise and hope in this country. For me, the educational system of any nation is the key to changing the socioeconomic status. I am eager to learn more about the educational system of Moldova and also to hopefully share some of the hardships facing our education systems in America.

Having gone through grade school and also attending both private and public universities, I have experienced the American system first-hand. My family has also been a large contributing factor for me. My father is the Associate Dean of Graduate Education at Indiana Wesleyan University and my mother teaches fifth grade at a public school. You might say it runs in my blood.

Education is a field which spans all international boundaries and relies heavily on integration. Hopefully by sharing some of my knowledge and personal experiences I can help to bring a sense of awareness and cultural understanding to Moldavian educators. Some topics which will be presented in this column during the next several weeks include standardized testing for college placement, public vs. private educational institutions, budgets cuts/financial issues in the public sector, and also some comparisons between American education and the current system here in Moldova.

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PART 2:

Let me begin this first edition of my weekly column by letting you all know a little bit about myself and my background. I am a 22 year-old college student working towards my Bachelor's Degree in Journalism at Indiana University. However, this semester I strayed from my traditional route and took the semester off to come to Europe for nearly 5 months. Since late August I have been traveling and visiting friends and family in Germany, France, Belgium, Holland and the Czech Republic. I am currently participating in a volunteer journalism program through Projects Abroad here in Chisinau.

My life and upbringing are rather unique in comparison to the typical American girl. My father was a liaison officer with the United States Army so I was born near his post in Bückeberg, Germany. While I was still young, my parents relocated to Charlotte, North Carolina where I spent most of my childhood until moving to Marion, Indiana in middle school. After high school I attended a private Christian college for two years, Azusa Pacific University, in Los Angeles, California.

During my time in L.A. I cultivated my passion for writing and journalism. After my freshman year I took part in a summer internship with the national publication, LA Weekly, but remained at the paper as a freelance writer and research assistant for almost 4 months. A year later I participated in an intensive journalism course at the World Journalism Institute in New York City and wrote for the organizations' publication, The Times Observer. The following month I transferred from my school in California to Indiana University and wrote several articles for my hometown paper, The Marion Chronicle Tribune.

While I know that I am still young and unseasoned as a journalist I am eternally grateful to have experienced so much so early in my career. These two months in Moldova is a invaluable opportunity for me, not only to contribute to education through my writing but also to foster my own global awareness. It is my hope that this column will encourage cultural integration between all educators, both American and Moldavian.



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Volunteer corner

By Kirsten Hall. USA. Journalism, 1 months.

Halloween in Chisinau

Since I have been in Europe, American holidays that I once loved seem to slip by completely unnoticed. I thought Halloween would be no exception. Truthfully I was not even aware that it was rapidly approaching until I saw several friends bragging about their clever costume ideas on Facebook. Halloween costumes in America, especially in the college-age demographic, serve as an arena to showcase your creativity, artistic skill, and even bravery (in some cases). The most celebrated costumes are those which are unique and completely unexpected. Some of the best that I have witnessed include: Alan from the hangover, a beer box robot, Kanye West and Taylor Swift from the VMA incident and even last year a group of girls dressed in duck tape dresses which all resembled different flavors of Taco Bell sauce packets; when it comes to Halloween costumes, the crazier the better. So when the date began drawing ever nearer this year, I was harboring some feelings of foreboding. All of my clever costume ideas which would be instantly recognizable in the US such as Sarah Palin, Nikki Minaj, or even a very basic Snooki costume would have no cultural relevance in Moldova and the humor would be lost. Therefore, instead of wallowing in self-pity, I swallowed my pride, bought a tiara for 50 lei and decided to just go as a princess. Despite my reservations, I was pleasantly surprised by the outcome of other costume goers during the festivities of the weekend. Although for American standards the costumes were all rather cliché, witches, ghosts, police officers, pirates, etc., the turnout was extremely good. Everyone was in the Halloween spirit and really embraced the atmosphere of the holiday. While certainly Moldova still has a long way to go to truly celebrate the holiday properly, Halloween in Moldova shows definite promise. It just goes to show, going out and having a good time with your friends is great. However, going out and having a good time with your friends when everyone is dressed in ridiculous costumes is even better!



Me and my host sister, Dasha dressed in our Halloween costumes last Saturday.

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Project Update

Social Association "Atentie"

"Atentia" Social Association was created on 30 November 2005. Projects Abroad Moldova has collaborated with this center for the last 3 years. In the Social Association "Atentie", the director is Mrs Tamara Blanari. Several Projects Abroad Moldova volunteers from Germany, France, UK etc have worked in this centre. The beneficiaries here are children and young people with mental and physical disabilities. Projects Abroad Moldova volunteers have worked with children and young people with different syndromes. All these children and adolescents suffer from ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), dyslexia (child has learning problems: difficulty in recognizing and understanding written language) and dyspraxia (total or partial poor muscular coordination), including autism syndrome. In this center volunteers work as a Pedagogue, a Kineoterapeut, a Psychologist, a Medical Nurse, etc. There is a place for Occupational Therapy, a sports hall, a medical office, a kineoterapie room, a library and a dining room.



The aims of the association are:

1. The socialization and the integration of 20-30 children with mental disabilities;
2. To have 20-40 parents and relatives involved in the process of education;
3. To have 15-20 trainee volunteers;
4. To have 350 children from the community to benefit the Association's services;
5. To have 4 annual seminars for parents;
6. To have 5-6 excursions per year.



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Volunteer Updates

Details of upcoming volunteers and leavers

Three Care volunteers have finished their placements with us this month.

Martijn van de Belt from Netherland, 3 months Care project in Moldova has worked at "Casa Gavroche" Social Rehabilitation Center for children, Vadul lui Voda (summer campus outside the city), and at "Start" Community Center for young people with disabilities.

Silvia Barresi from Italy, Care project, 2 months in Moldova worked at "Start" Community Center for young people with intellectual disabilities.

Paul Thomason from UK, Care project, 2 months in Moldova has worked at "Casa Gavroche" Social Rehabilitation Center for children.

On 21st November Cody Brown, a new volunteer from USA, will join us in a Business project for 1 month.

The logo for Projects Abroad features the word "Projects" in a dark green, sans-serif font, followed by "Abroad" in a larger, lighter green, sans-serif font. A stylized green airplane icon is positioned above the letter 'A' in "Abroad", with a curved line trailing from the bottom of the 'A' that loops back under the word "Abroad".

Projects Abroad

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Donation

November Donations

By Iana Balta, Social Assistant of Projects Abroad Moldova.

Paul Thomason is a volunteer from England; he worked in the “Casa Gavroche” orphanage during his 2 months in Moldova. However ‘worked’ is not the right word, because he had brought with him so much love and care for those children that you do not see very often. On Monday, his last day, Paul brought a present, a lot of cakes, sweets and drinks for the kids and created a little holiday. Later when the children had finished their cakes it was time to say goodbye, and it was a very emotional hour; there were many hugs and words, even some tears. I can say for sure that the children from “Casa Gavroche” will never forget a volunteer whose name was Paul, and everything he had done with them. The personnel from the placement will never forget his help and the benefit he brought for them. During the period he worked in Moldova Paul made a lot of good things for children from the orphanage, he tried to teach them good behavior, to share, to ask permission, be polite and even some English. Also we had a great time with kids at the creation center making origami and jewelry made of beads.



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Photos page

Volunteers' Happy Moments



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Events

Conference at Social Association "Atentie"

The staff of "Atentie" Social Association, for the children with physical and intellectual disabilities (e.g Autism syndrome), have organized a conference, to which Projects Abroad Moldova volunteers and the staff have been invited. At this meeting different people represented Orphanages, Daily Care Centers, those responsible for the Department of protection of the child, parents etc. After a short presentation of the center, Martijn van de Belt from the Netherlands (Projects Abroad Moldova volunteer from the Care project) has shared with the guests (Pedagogue, Psychologist, Therapists, and Orthopedist, etc.) some methods of work from his country for children with autism. Martijn worked in Moldova at "Start" Daily Care Center for young people with Downs syndrome during 3 months, so his experience was really useful. Michelle Braud Delsaux from France (Care project in Moldova, 1 month) had informed us about the methods of work with children with autism in France. Also, she said in working with this type of children the patience is fundamental. At the end of the speeches parents had many questions like: Will the children with autism later find a place of work? Is the society in France and the Netherlands open to these children with disabilities? Etc. At the end of this meeting, most of us were convinced that even if our countries are different we have the same goal, to protect and improve the life of the children with physical and intellectual disabilities from our country.

Thank you Michelle and Martijn for your participation and special presentations!



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Trips in November

In November Projects Abroad Moldova have organized several excursions and trips for volunteers in the most interesting places.

1st November: Medical Museums with human anomalies.

3rd November: Moldavian forest "Codrii", Ethnographic Museum "Casa Parinteasca " (House of parents) Frumoasa, Harbovat and Hirjauca Monasteries.

4th November: Meeting with volunteers at pizza.

12th November: Army Museum and Memorial Park.

**20th November: Theatre of Opera and Ballet. "Harlequin (Paiate)" by Rugiero Leoncavallo.
Drama in two acts with prologue.**





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Social Media

Join our official Facebook Group: Projects Abroad Moldova – The Official Group

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/Projectsabroad.moldova>

A monthly update with Projects Abroad Moldova Newsletters:

<http://www.projects-abroad.co.uk/volunteer-destinations/moldova/newsletters-from-moldova/>

and information about Projects Abroad Country Blog:

http://www.mytripblog.org/mod/blog/group_blogs.php?gl=true&group_guid=2943