



Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world  
who live and die in poverty and hunger.

Give them through our hands this day their daily bread,  
and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.

Mother Teresa



***Together we built a state-of-the-art  
playground and sports court and hired  
8 full-time caregivers to hold and cuddle babies.  
We couldn't have done it without your support.  
Multumesc!***







❄️ 2004 ❄️

HAPPY HOLIDAYS ❄️

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🗣️ **We completed a state-of-the-art sports court and playground at the Rupea orphanage, near Brasov, where 70 children ages 4 to 18 have had no place to play for years.**

Since December 2003 when Mrs. Kate Capshaw-Spielberg made a significant donation to our foundation, we have decided to do everything possible to raise additional funds and build a state of the art playground at one of the twelve orphanages that most needed it, in the region of Brasov, Romania.

Thanks to the substantial funds raised during our May 16th fundraising gala, Blue Heron completed the remaining sum needed to make the playground a reality. In July, we started the work on the "*Spielberg Playmountain*," a sports court and playground built at the Rupea orphanage, 45 miles outside Brasov and completed in October. The mayor of Rupea, Mr. Flavius Dumitrescu, donated the land adjacent to the orphanage for the construction of this playground.

Thanks to the Executive Director of the twelve orphanages in the region of Brasov, Ms. Luminita Olteanu, and Mr. Cristi Balacescu, Blue Heron's representative in Brasov, the project was completed in time and within budget. Blue Heron President, Stefania Magidson, and Vice President, Mike Costache traveled to Romania for the opening of the playground in October 2004. Interviewed by several local newspapers, Stefania Magidson declared, "We are so proud to have finished this playground on time and within budget. We did everything by the book, bidding the project at a public auction where the most capable contractor won, and signing a carefully written contract."

It was important for us to demonstrate to the American, Romanian and Romanian-American communities that the money was carefully spent and that it went where it made the most difference. She later added, "My happiest moment was to see these 70 children play basketball, and have fun on the swings and slides. We were trying to get a picture of the playground without the children, to have an after photo of the place, but they were so excited, there was no way they were going to get off the equipment."

The abandoned children of the Rupea orphanage prepared a very moving artistic program with songs and dances, expressing their gratitude and joy for what had been done for them. We are indebted for your contribution and we wish to also send you these children's gratitude and joy for bringing light into their impoverished but courageous lives. Thank you, we did it together!

LAMULTI ANI





04



LA MULTI ANI



2004



**Since January 2004, as part of our Loving Arms program, we hired 8 caregivers to hold, cuddle and work with special needs orphans, newborns to 3 years of age, at the Micul Print orphanage, in Brasov.**

What can leave a more positive and lasting mark in someone's life than the loving touch and attention of another human being? In the cramped Micul Print orphanage where over 200 abandoned children, newborns to age 3, struggle to face life each day without the guidance of a parent, the need for being touched and talked to was a critical problem. That is why, Blue Heron decided to hire 8 additional qualified caregivers to hold and cuddle babies, starting in January 2004. At \$150 a month for a full time, qualified caregiver, this program has made a tremendous impact in the lives of these children.

During our visit to Romania in October, we met with Mariana Negrea, Flavius Gavena, Alina Garbacea, Alina Dragan and Simona Dumitrescu, five of the caretakers hired by Blue Heron. Their energy, patience and ability to work with this special group of children was striking, and we were moved to tears by the children who ran into our arms and wouldn't leave our laps; we could tell that they had received affection and care, that they were becoming affectionate and loving.

Mr. Calaican, Blue Heron's representative at Micul Print, Brasov, has met monthly with the caregivers who kept detailed journals about the progress of each child assigned in their care. Alina Garbacea, who lovingly supported many of these children to take their first steps, writes in her journal: "We have to give these children a lot of attention and encouragement as they approach the unique event of walking; they need a lot of encouragement and affection so they can gather up courage and take their first steps." Monica Gomescu, another caregiver hired by us, mentions the challenges she encountered with a more difficult child, a 20 month old girl: "When I try to show her how a toy works, she is seldom interested, and prefers to throw it wherever she can. I explain to her that we don't throw things and then I try to establish eye contact and connect with her. She is quite stubborn and she seldom listens to directions; however, I take her by the hand often and talk to her, caressing her on the head, making her understand that she is very important to me; I try to establish eye contact often and get her to connect and relate to me." A month later, Monica writes excitedly about the same little girl "today she started to say the word 'mama' correctly."

To all our supporters, we want you to know that you have made an incredible difference in the lives of over 100 young abandoned children. Even though they may never meet their real mother or even an adoptive one, they have Monica for now, who they can count on giving a hug five days a week, and calling her mama. Based on the success we have had so far, we intend to continue the Loving Arms program indefinitely. Thank you for your continued support!





2005

### ***Message from the President:***

Nothing has come close to the experience I had in October of this year during my trip to Romania. It was a rich, concentrated and irreplaceable journey. While visiting ten orphanages and talking to numerous children, I often found *myself* crying like a child. I felt that our decision to not look away, and to commit to making a positive and lasting change in their lives was all worth it; I also cried tears of admiration for these children's courage to face life with so much dignity.

I wished you all could witness the incredible difference you have made in their lives through your contributions. Two of the orphanages I visited were private homes, lovingly cared by Pastor Paul Havsgaard and his wife. I asked him, "Paul, with all the problems we encounter in the United States with our own children, what do you tell a person who asks you why you're helping the Romanian orphans?" His answer was simple, "All I can say is that I've helped children in the U.S., I've helped orphans in Croatia and every time I came to Romania to help, these children tugged at my soul and I had to come back and help." And that is how I feel. I am involved with numerous children's causes in the U.S. and I greatly and lovingly support them with time and money. But for whatever reason that only my heart can explain, the soul of Romanian abandoned children tug at my heart, and I cannot *not* do something about it. Thank you all for being touched by this cause and for your contributions in 2004. We are counting on your continuous support in the future! *Stefania Magidson*

### ***Our Intentions For 2005:***

While visiting orphanages throughout Romania and talking to abandoned children and their caretakers, it became obvious to us that adolescents were petrified at the thought of being put in the streets at the tender age of 18. With few employment opportunities, unprepared to fend for themselves, often having children of their own and being unable to care for them, taking them back to the orphanages, the cycle often continues. We are now in the process of assessing a program that will provide scholarships to gifted students to attend college, or vocational programs. Through this program, students will gain the skills necessary to help them become productive, self-sufficient individuals. We are also planning to establish computer labs at various orphanages and we're looking for corporations to donate their older computer models as they upgrade. We will keep you posted and we thank you for the anticipated support!