



WINGS OF HOPE INTERNATIONAL

TRANSFORMING **the lives of people in MOLDOVA**

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Message from the President

I hope that this letter will find you and your family in good spirits. I would like to update you on some of the activities that we have performed through Wings of Hope International (WHI) during 2016. We continued to focus on the main aspects of our activities touching the lives of many children, elderly, sick, and other needy, and made progress on the new strategic direction that we informed you of last December.

This newsletter highlights some of the activities we implemented this year and provides an update on the Community Center. Much work has been done to finalize the building for the Community Center. All the repairs have been finalized and the majority of the equipment has been installed. In fact, our partner organization started to organize various children's activities this fall. We hope that all the details will be finalized in the near term and we will have an official opening. The finalization of the Community Center will provide us another way to continue to focus on our four major goals. We believe that this will be more meaningful for the recipients of our services.

On behalf of those in the village of Cobani, whose lives have been touched during the past year, I would like to express our sincerest thanks to each of you. You have generously given of your financial resources to contribute to the work of WHI over the past year. I hope that you will continue to support us in our new efforts to transform the lives of many needy Moldovans.

With hope for the Moldovan people,

Alec Zama, WHI Board President

Community Center Update

In our fall 2015 newsletter, we mentioned that WHI established a new strategic direction by deciding to open a Community Center in Cobani. We have been collaborating with a partner, NGO Neemia, who has been coordinating the efforts of building the center during the past year and a half. We mentioned that this will be a central place in the village where children, elderly and other needy could come and engage in various activities designed to add meaning to their lives. We will focus on five projects: a communal kitchen which can feed lunch to the elderly and children; various children's program with an emphasis on an afterschool program for children whose parents have gone in search of jobs outside of the country; a communal bathhouse where the elderly and other groups of people can come and take a shower (more than 90% of the homes in the village don't have running water or plumbing); a communal laundry mat where the elderly can wash and dry their clothes; and a set of programs to engage and educate children, teenagers and young adults.

We would like to inform you that the majority of the work on the building has been completed and all the needed furniture and equipment has been installed. Our partner, NGO Neemia, has been organizing some children's activities at the center over the past few months and we hope that the remaining details of the center will be finalized in the next few months and it will become fully functional for the remaining projects noted above.

We are excited about the children's programs that NGO Neemia has started offering at the community center. This past summer, they started teaching English to children in the village. They have two groups, one at a beginning level and one at an intermediate level, each which has 14 students that meet twice per week. Last summer they also started guitar lessons for groups of eight to nine members and these also meet twice a week.

This fall they started a boys club, a reading club, and a youth club for children ages 13 through 17 to focus on character development, good manners, good behavior, personal finances, problem solving, being a good citizen and other aspects of a healthy life style. The after school program will be started soon and up to 30 children will come to the Community Center three times a week after their regular classes. These children come from families where one or both parents work outside the country or from families with lower incomes and/or family problems.

It took our partner more than 1.5 years to complete the work and because of their persistence and dedication, we believe that the Community Center will be a transformational place for the young, the old, the needy, and even the curious in the village. Since there isn't such a building or services in the Cobani, we foresee wonderful opportunities and are excited to watch as lives are changed.

Would you to consider supporting the operations of the Community Center during the next calendar year? Please take a look at the amounts required for various aspects of running the center which are listed on the back of this newsletter and consider how you might play a part in changing lives.





A Hot Meal at Home for Elderly

During the first half of 2016 our partner started a program called A Hot Meal at Your Home, similar to the Meals on Wheels program. NGO Neemia signed a contract with a place that prepares hot meals and purchased meals for lunch, three times a week, for 40 elderly or individuals with disabilities. The program started in February and ran through the middle of July, when it was temporarily suspended while our partner organized and implemented summer camps for children in the village. This program was very well received by the recipients and the social workers in the village as these were the only warm meals that some would eat for the week. We hope to start preparing hot meals at the Community Center once it is opens and will offer to either deliver the meals to the homes of the elderly or for them to come to the Community Center. By coming to the center, they could socialize and enjoy the company of other individuals who come to eat at the Community Center.



Two Children's Projects

During the summer of 2017 WHI was a participant in two projects for the children in Cobani. For the first, WHI contributed to bringing running water to the school cafeteria. A decision was made earlier this year by the school administration to consolidate students studying in several buildings into two buildings and now all K-12 students study in the same buildings in two shifts. In order to get approval from the government, the school administration had to convert some classrooms into the new cafeteria. We were able to cover a portion of the expenses to bring running water into the cafeteria and the work was finalized in time for the start of the school year. The school now has a cafeteria with running water that the cooks can use for preparing meals and washing dishes and students can use instead of running outside to the well to get water. On an interesting note, both the students and the teachers still have to use outhouses!

For the second project we contributed to the organization of a soccer day camp in July that lasted six days. The camp was organized for about 40 children from Cobani, ages 8



through 13, who were divided into two teams, each with its own coach for practices. Each day the coaches organized two practices, the first from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and the second from 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. The activities during each of these days included: learning basic soccer skills in the morning while learning some aspects of character development, teamwork and other civic lessons in the afternoon, and then playing soccer in the evenings. During the last day of the camp we organized a daylong soccer tournament for which we invited teams from four neighboring villages with about 100 participants.

This is the first time something like this was organized in the village of Cobani. All the children and coaches who participated in the events for the camp and tournament—as well as their parents—were very thankful for this opportunity. Since this was the first time such an event was organized, the county TV station produced a segment on the camp (the segment is posted on Youtube) and the county newspaper wrote an article on the impact of the camp on the children.

Thank You and WHI Goals for 2017

On behalf of those who benefited from the services of WHI during the past year, I would like to thank you for your generous support. WHI will continue to improve the lives of the most needy in Moldova in 2017. We will focus on improving educational opportunities for children, improving access to quality healthcare and assisting the elderly. Here are the fundraising goals for the upcoming year:

- Community Center - \$18,000**
- Children projects - \$2,500**
- Healthcare projects - \$2,000**
- Elderly projects - \$2,500**

Please join us in achieving these goals and remember, your WHI contribution is tax-deductible!



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