



## **RCHF Review of 2013**

*Within this review you can see some of our voluntary work achieved in Romania in 2013*

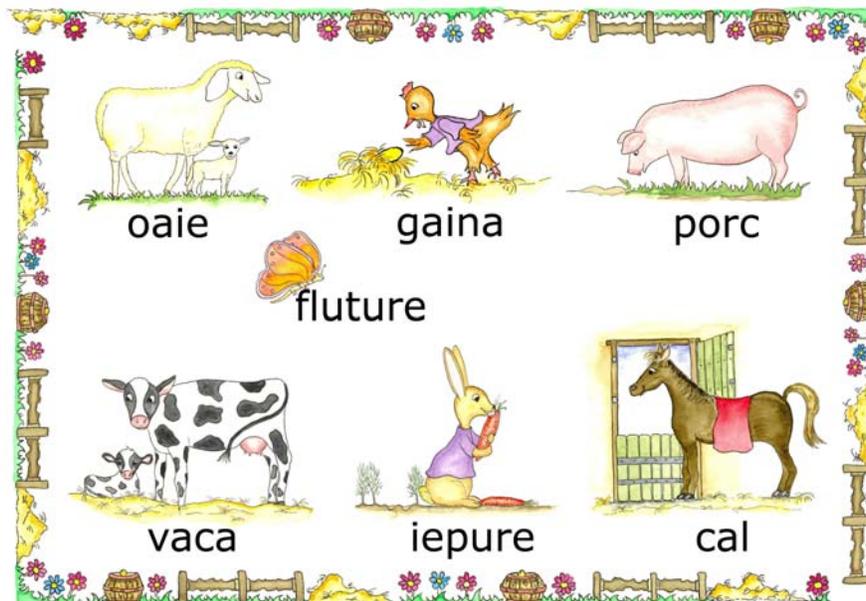


The Year started with first 2013 project (as in previous years also) to reach as many children living in families with either reduced or no income with essential school requisites purchased from both RCHF funds and Wings of Angels at local outlets and then delivered direct to the hands of these needy children at their homes across north east Romania. The result meant that all of the children on our social list were able to start their new school or kindergarten term and enter into class ready and equipped to learn!

## Timmetje Muis (Timmy Mouse) trials are a success in North East Romanian learning establishments



After months on end of hard unseen work in her home studio in The Netherlands throughout the last year 2012 and into 2013 Dutch artist and RCHF president Mrs Miriam Charmant had a range of educational books all with superb own artworks and in the Romanian language along with a few books in English language aimed at helping children to learn easier in class produced and ready to be tested in classes. Within the spring and early summer months these wonderful learning tools that make learning both easy and enjoyable and assist the child with difficulties also were tested with great success by children in North East Romanian kindergartens, schools and in Dorohoi hospital children's ward also. The result was amazing with children showing great interest in the Timmy Mouse theme, eagerness to learn at all level's and teaching staff showing full approval also. Within public health education RCHF also continued to use in school health and education lessons the RCHF basic hygiene book again based on the Timmy Mouse theme created by Miriam Charmant and again children very soon became acquainted with this lovely mouse family of characters and the story they tell, in this case about personal and home hygiene.



Above is a page from a Timmy Mouse pre schoolbook to help young children to identify and speak the names of animals!

In a country with massive poverty resulting in a minimum 20% educational abandonment rate amongst children it is essential that we help every child we can reach and via Timmy Mouse books we are better prepared to achieve our task. It is essential even more so in a country like Romanian with such a poor education system and combined poverty in many a family that every child gains a full education via modern, attractive and basic methods to stand them in stead for a better future than their parents had in their time and prepare them for the new opportunities that will arrive within the country in years ahead. In 2014 we hope to attract enough funds to have Timmy mouse educational books in mainstream education in kindergartens and schools after the outstanding success of the 2013 trials.

### Tuberculosis remains in Romania



The Romanian health authorities in the last 24 years have failed to address the huge public health problem faced by the nation as has every post communist Government. The result is that year after year Romanian records the highest rates of people infected with TB in all of Europe, but more worrying is the numbers that are not recorded or miss recorded within a weak system of healthcare. Free TB treatment was a good start a few years ago but other hidden costs mean that patients all to easily renounce of life saving TB treatment in a country with no social back up for the family left at home in poverty whilst a breadwinner is hospitalized for essential TB treatment. The end result is a stark rise in Multi Drug Resistant TB (MDR-TB) which is life threatening and much more difficult to be cured from because of its resistant to most first line TB drugs.

For many years RCHF has worked in collaboration with the University clinic hospital of Pneumologie in Iasi including outreach work to educate on the TB subject, speaking at medical conferences and making presentation including at the US embassy TB workshop conference in Bucharest in March 2013 and in May at the Sovata medical TB conference in Harghita county, plus international INSPIR conference in the fall in Iasi City.

To address TB in Romania its route causes need first addressing, but this is unlikely to happen in coming years as the Political class shows little interest in this major health subject that takes innocent lives each year. RCHF will continue to advocate and educate on the TB subject including in schools as in the photos above of children in class learning about TB prevention via the RCHF TB board game. Our RCHF TB report on Romania has been published and copies have gone to the World Health Organization Stop TB department and EU officials also for attention, plus many medics working in the TB domain.



## Dorohoi children support 2013

Since 2010 RCHF has supported many a family in Dorohoi and the surrounding area. Within this once thriving small town were all were employed in the Communist times, now the vast majority is out of work after the closure of state factories many years ago and also in recent years closures of private enterprises that have folded. This all leaves families struggling to survive including mono parent families and pensioners alike. The town still also suffers from the effects of the massive flooding disaster of June 2010 with many buildings still affected by water damage and even new buildings affected as were constructed often by improper methods.

Children suffer in poverty as do parents who are both ashamed and stressed at seeing their children without basics including food as is the case in Dorohoi in many social families were funds simply do not meet a food budget that will support the healthy needs of a growing child. I know families were at best there is simply only enough funds for one very basic mea a day and other families were fresh meat or fresh fish are a luxury, hence because of low finances within these families the cheapest food is purchased often food that is not of a good quality health wise and as such in the long term children's health is affected including in later years. Going to school on an empty stomach is not the best way to be prepared to learn, but is a reality for many a child. With all of this in mind and knowing the social families concerned RCHF thanks to support from Charmant Beheer, S&Q Europe BV, Dorcas aid and also our own RCHF funds, plus Wings of Angels are able to not only help with top up food supplies and other essential items throughout the year but also help in resolving many problems that appear in families were there is stress and worry all of which affects children within the family and their ability to be happy overall as are children in families with means. Our help also includes purchase of school bus fares as many a Dorohoi child attends schools outside of the town as in the case of high school students, whose parents simply have not the funds to get their children to these out of town schools because of a lack of family finances.

In 2013 thanks to a donation of vegetable seeds from The Netherlands we were able to start a help yourself project including in Dorohoi were families with low incomes and unemployment within the family who could not afford fresh vegetables on a regular basis were given packs of high quality donated seeds. They prepared with pride their land, planted the seeds and by the summer were weeding and watering their growing plants so that by harvest time each family had a good crop of vegetables that they themselves had grown and gave them vegetables for around 2 months in the fall as well as summer supplies direct from their land strips by their small dwellings.



With over 120 families in the project and considering that in 90% crops were grown with success the project proved a worthy one both in terms of food supply and family self-esteem for the families hard work in growing their own rather than being given supplies as aid!

Children in Dorohoi also received 1<sup>st</sup> of March treats as is traditional in Romania, plus were not forgotten by RCHF at Easter, St Nicholas day or Christmas with presents and extra aid to families with the greatest needs, plus help with medical bills in some cases within the year 2013. In 2014 we will continue our work within Dorohoi municipal were there are great gaps in the basic standard of living for far too many families affecting children and pensioners in particular.\

### **Sick children need stimulation!**

Working in the medical domain for many years RCHF understands the basic fact that a part of recovery from illness is within the mind and mental state of the sick person. After all if we feel comfortable and well cared for we blossom and this helps our recovery and in the case of a child especially those children whose parents are too poor to visit them whilst they are in a children's ward recovering from illness or an accident the trauma can if not addressed affect recovery, not to mention the loss of education for longer stays in hospital that many a child endures in Romania.

In 1999 RCHF built an education and playroom for children infected with TB at the pediatric TB hospital near Iasi and the benefits were plain to see with children occupied, out of their beds and actually forgetting their worries all of which helped recovery in a positive manner.

In 2013 with a grant from Give EUR-hope Bun Sunday funds raised in Brussels we were able to produce a new education and playroom at Dorohoi municipal hospital were conditions are grim to say the least on the large pediatric ward, thus children can now lean and play daily all helping in their recover! Timmy mouse educational books were also included in the education & playroom to help children learn with ease.



### **Dorohoi Ambulance Service & RCHF.**



RCHF continues to its friendship with Dorohoi Ambulance service and again in 2013 Ambulance man Petrica Parascan who's wife Mihaela is a nurse at the hospital helped RCHF with directing aid to needy families, free accommodation for Brian Douglas on many overnight stop-overs especially in winter nights with extreme weather conditions and help with getting medical aid including a wheelchair to a disabled girl in a nearby village. We thank Both Mihaela & Petrica for their support and friendship, which will continue in 2014.

## RCHF YOUTH CLUB FOR CHILDREN & PENSIONER CENTER



In 2013 RCHF thanks to its sponsors Give EUR-Hope for this project were able provide a place of safety for children in the form of a youth club to be enjoyed in their free time in Ciocanesti village in Suceava County. Within the project we also included high backed chairs so that pensioners could all benefit from the facility one afternoon a week, meet and chat plus make activities suitable to their age group. The Club was filled to capacity on opening night and has continued to be full 3 nights a week since opening night, thus providing children with a far better and more constructive way to spend their free time than as was before on the streets and in village bars!



## RCHF camping holiday at Botos 2013.



In 2013 like in 2012 we were able despite a shortage of funds to provide a holiday for children in families who had no means to provide even a days holiday away from home. In the photograph above can be seen UK volunteers Ioana Medelet and Freddie Michell who also helped at the 2012 RCHF camp for children. It's all about bringing joy and sheer happiness to children in a safe setting and in Botos in the Suhard Mountains of Suceava County is a wonderful location.

Camping under canvas in a tent is exciting as is playing organized games, nature walks and good solid camp food, plus nightly camp get together's with signing of songs around the camp fire until bedtime! Children loved the camp and it let each child know that they are special and valued not matter what level of finances their family have or have not. Thank you Ioana and Freddie for your great support!



## Creating a better future for children with our partners

In 2013 we gain worked hard with our partners to create a better safer future for children in Romania. Our partners include the Inspectorate of Police in Suceava County, EURAD –Europe against drugs, Wings of Angels, Timmy Mouse artwork and educational books, Give EUR-Hope and many kind Romanians who gave their free time to help who we approved of also. Our sincere thanks to all of you as you helped make a difference to needy children in northeast Romania in 2013.



Children above are seen with Inspector Ionut Epureanu of Suceava Police Inspectorate just after a lecture on adolescent relationships in partnership with RCHF.

Only by education can we bring a better safer world daily to our children is a motto of RCHF and all of our partners support this theme in support of our work with children. Today it's easy with parents busy for children to fall into bad company and before they know it ruins their lives. We teach about the serious dangers to health of alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse as children need to know these subjects well before they appear in the child's face and how to react, plus were to get help at anytime when they feel unsafe.

Likewise children who grow up knowing their local police officer know they can get help when required without fear for themselves, their families and friends or strangers they may see in difficulty at any time, thus joining in to make a safer society overall.



Brian Douglas of RCHF seen speaking with vulnerable children above and judging with Inspector Ionut Epureanu a series of children's crime prevention posters made by children in care homes.



## RCHF road safety initiative

Horses and carts are a major mode of transport in Romania and are even used on main roads, thus the mix of fast moving vehicles and slow moving traction drawn carts with horses is a recipe for disaster!

Dangers especially appear, as do horrific accidents with very high death and serious injury toll in both human and animal terms at night and in bad weather when visibility is well reduced. UK volunteer Freddie Michell's Mother visited Romania and spent some time with Brian Douglas in 2012 and both agreed to look at a way to help reduce the high number of horse and cart road accidents. Highly visible reflectors were the answer to be placed on horse carts and sponsorship was gained for to produce 5000 initial reflectors via SPANA charity in the UK. Brian Douglas RCHF working in collaboration with the Suceava Police Inspectorate by mid 2013 was able to source a supplier of 3M highly reflective materials and had this mounted on metal plates the size of a car number plate. In the fall of 2013 Brian and Police officers from all over Suceava county stopped and fitted these reflectors to horse carts providing also instructions on road safety at the same time. The arrival of winter weather stopped the project but if more sponsorship can be found in 2014 we aim to cover all the horse carts in the North East Counties of Romanian in a real effort to save lives both human and animal.



## Bringing Christmas Joy!

It wouldn't be Christmas for children without a nativity play, Christmas prayers and also Christmas presents!

Sadly though for many Romanian children Christmas brings few joys because again of family hardship in all too many families, but thanks to wonderful students at the Anglia university in the UK we again received shoe boxes filled with treats for both children and pensioners this year and delivered these to the most worthy children we know aided by The Romanian Police as in previous years who also provided packs of treats for children. Our sincere thanks go to every person who out of their own funds filled a box for a very needy Romanian child and pensioner in Suceava County, Botosani County and a few in Iasi County also thus bringing a truly happy Christmas to each child who received a box and pensioner alike!



In 2013 thanks to your support we helped bring joy and happiness to many a child in difficulty and their family also. If you would like to support us in 2014 please contact us on

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[www.rchf.eu](http://www.rchf.eu)