



A Report to Friends

December 2018

**Thanks to two remarkable women...
we are breaking ground on the second largest
private individual-funded construction
project since we began in 1998.**

While visiting Moldova in September, Faith was inspired by Irina's passionate commitment to helping the children of her country. Faith could see firsthand the tremendously positive impact of Irina's ten years of service directing Moldova World Children's Fund (MWCF) in-country operations.

The major obstacle to Moldova's development has been the intentional disruption of its fledgling economy by a neighboring power. The situation has forced many able bodied adults to seek employment abroad, leaving children to be raised by single parents or grandparents. This works to varying degrees until the youngsters outgrow their inclination to play and explore at home. After class hours and school closure periods present distractions which invariably lead to unwise choices, frequently resulting in destructive behavior, derailing constructive growth. A second consecutive generation is at risk, threatening the future of the small republic.

Faith is blessed with a splendid capacity for good: an ability to comprehend the essence of a challenge and to help develop a reasonable solution; while possessing the wherewithal to bring a good plan to life. She has made a substantial gift to MWCF for the construction of a locally staffed, structured recreation and learning facility to serve multiple rural villages...on one condition...



Faith Baker **Irina Rusanovschi**
Hendersonville, NC Ruseni and Chisinau,
& St. Petersburg, FL Republic of Moldova



Old building front



Backyard grading begun



Long range planning committee #2 hard at work

that it be officially named the Irina Rusanovschi Community Center. Work has already begun renovating an abandoned historical site in Irina's hometown of Ruseni.

**With trusted eyes focused
and capable boots on the
ground engaged, we expect
nothing less than solid
return on Faith's generous
investment.**

John and Chandler Boyd off the beaten path in Moldova

Chan and I began our 2018 adventure from Greenville, SC to Moldova on May 22nd driving to Charlotte for an overnight 22-hour trek of airports and airplanes. Actually, our journey began twenty years earlier at Kanuga Conference Center as we heard Ray West describe needs in the new Republic of Moldova. Listening to Ray introduced us to the eventual Moldova World Children's Fund.

Meeting us at the Chisinau airport was Ray, non-profit PHOENIX president Irina Rusanovschi and Natalia Culai. Irina is the "boots on the ground" for MWCF, overseeing its projects. Irina choreographed our every move, making the visit easy. Natalia, our ample translator and guide, escorted us to our hotel in the capital's heart. Pediatrician Jim and Mayor Barbara Volk of Hendersonville soon flew in to join us for dinner and a preview of our itinerary.



Natalia, Jim, Chan, John, Barb, Irina, Ray

The next morning, along with ambassadors and dignitaries aplenty, we attended a program awarding Moldovan foreign language teachers. MWCF was recognized for enabling the NC-Moldova Bilateral Partnership to provide classroom materials including thousands of books for their students.



Later Thursday afternoon on our first field trip, we quickly were awed by the beautiful countryside and surprised by the lack of farm machines and the hand labor necessary. Arriving in the village of Gratiesti we visited Center Nicusor, begun by the mother of a disabled son unable to attend the village school. Though the boy later died, she continued pursuing her dream for other handicapped children. The village provided a building which MWCF helped expand and renovate with the addition of a handicapped bathroom, enabling immobile children who could not use the remote outside toilet to attend. We met Michael, who was unable to walk when he first enrolled, and now with regular therapy is much improved. He greeted us in English and entertained by playing classical melodies on the piano. Amazingly, he taught himself to play piano at the Center.



Game time, let's play two

Friday, we were on the road again to the special village of Ruseni...special because it is Irina's hometown and where her parents live. We visited a kindergarten where MWCF has replaced the floors in the building and added solar panels. The teachers are volunteers and their care for the children allows other parents to work family farms. We loved seeing the joy on the children's faces as we handed out math kits and soccer balls.



Michael in concert

Next we visited Ruseni's grade school where MWCF has replaced windows and flooring throughout. Great appreciation was expressed to us as we delivered school supplies. Another highlight was lunch with Irina's parents in their home. We then drove to Drochia to visit Ana Fortuna. Many of you will know the Fortuna names from Ray's first years in Moldova. We were brought up to date on the children at the orphanage and Ana's ongoing cancer treatment.



Kindergarten math looks like fun



Keeping step with school renovation



Fortuna gang eager to learn

We were joined by Bill and Judy Wilkes of Hendersonville for excursions on Saturday, visiting Scoreni village and Mayor Svetlana Tabacari. She is proud of her community and grateful for MWCF-supplied children's library books and a new restroom, provided by the efforts of their beloved Peace Corps Volunteer and MWCF. It is the only indoor public toilet in the village.

Our adventurous next day began at our new warehouse, replacement of the one destroyed by fire. We met Dr. Vasile Suruceanu and helped him load medical supplies and equipment for the country's busy and only resident Hospice. In route to rural Zubresti village we purchased a washing machine and detergent. Hospice of North Carolina built the facility with MWCF help on the condition that provision be made for dying children as well as adults. We were warmly met with staff and villagers with traditional bread and song. We inspected a newly completed special needs shower room, compliments of Rotarian Robert Newton of Greensboro, NC. There was obvious need for a morgue.



Two mayors



Bread with a taste of salt



A most joyful reception



A comfortable shower

Our last full day began with a visit to a school for autistic children...greeted by Mariana Druc, the school's founder and Director. Like so many things we have seen, Mariana started the school because of a need in her own family, beginning with other volunteer parents. They are renovating the three floors one at a time. MWCF has furnished new windows and furniture as it continues support. There is no doubt Mariana will persevere and the children will be helped, someday, somehow.



Teaming up for an Autism center



Dots depicting 20 years of construction projects and MWCF activities of the first six months of 2018

This journey touched our souls and for certain made Chan and I want to do more. Moldova is a land of warm people and many issues...a nation of contrasts for sure. At our July board meeting, Ray posted a twenty year sampling of MWCF projects...an entire country map full of push pins. Much has been done and yet there is so much more to accomplish. Please help us make things happen for Moldova.



Happy sharing the load

John H. Boyd, Jr.
Board of Directors, MWCF

Newest Member of the Board



U.S. Ambassador **Michael D. Kirby** joined MWCF's leadership effective 01 January 2018. Michael joined the Foreign Service in 1980, twice serving as Ambassador, to Moldova 2006-2008 and Serbia 2012-2016. Between ambassador stints, he was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA). With a staff of 11,000, CA processes all visas for people to enter the U.S., issues all American passports, and helps Americans abroad. Other overseas postings included Consul General in Seoul, South Korea and Warsaw, Poland; Consul in Frankfurt, Germany, Copenhagen, Denmark, and Krakow, Poland; Vice Consul in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Georgetown, Guyana. Other Washington assignments were with Office of Caribbean Affairs and Bureau of Intelligence and Research. His last Department of State job was Deputy Transparency Coordinator looking into the retention of email and dealing with the Freedom of Information Act process, retiring in 2017. Parents of two adult daughters, Michael and wife Sara live in Fairfax, VA.

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Town of Colibasi Recreational Center...BEFORE & AFTER

Moldova World Children's Fund (MWCF), with 20 years of service in its rearview mirror, continues to march forward balancing signature construction projects with other yearly humanitarian efforts.

HEALTH CARE: Urgent, life-saving operations are occasionally beyond the capacity of Moldova's medical system. Desperate parents look for expensive, time critical assistance for their children from others willing and able to help. The North Carolina - Moldova Bilateral Partnership donates tons of supplies and equipment which are passed to medical facilities across the country by MWCF and its reliable partners.



Melania Busuic and her mom following successful heart surgery in Kiev, Ukraine



Maia Tara's eldest daughter survived a major poisoning scare with surgery and follow-on care.



EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE: An endless line of deserving students receive college and university support, while much of Moldova's public school system benefits from a steady flow of books and school materials. MWCF teams up with the North Carolina offices of Secretary of State and Public Instruction, NC medical centers, the Moldovan non-profit PHOENIX, and occasionally the Air National Guard in shipping and distributing classroom essentials throughout Moldova.



Sea Land Container: North Carolina to Norfolk, VA to Constanta, Romania to Chisinau, Moldova



*Diana Ghirghirc, former Leova orphanage student
College sponsored by
MWCF donor Joyce Jolly*



A portion of the tons of educational and medical supplies & equipment, small farmer support, and other humanitarian assistance shipped yearly



Former Board Member Nancy Duvall & Bishop Charles



Founding Board Member NCSOS Elaine Marshall & hubby Tommy



Present Board Member Desmond Brooks

On the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, the Board of Directors celebrated the annual meeting in the Hendersonville and Flat Rock, NC area...where the mission began and Moldova World Children's Fund (MWCF) continues to be headquartered. Special guests were in abundance... over 100 participated in the 27-29 July weekend: too many to individually acknowledge here in limited space.



Traditional Moldovan food much appreciated



Complimentary Purcari wine brought from Moldova by the John Maxemchuk



Mia West, for 20+ years The Enabler

Business Session Highlights

- Election of Officers and the re-election of Charles Brady of Alexandria, VA for another 3-year term.
- Budgets were accepted and financial reports projected 2018 to be our all-time record year for gifts.
- A growing list of current and future projects were discussed and plans for the future fell into place.



Good friend previous US Ambassador to Moldova Asif Chaudhry



New friends & Navy buddies Mike Covell & Danny Thomason



Moldovan Ambassador to the US H.E. Cristina Balan flanked by MWCF's West & Kirby



...future beneficiaries

Heartfelt thanks for the folks who have sustained our work through the past two decades...and in hopeful anticipation of new and continuing support as we move forward.

Ray F. West, Jr.
President, MWCF