



A Report to Friends

December 2025



Moldova World Children's Fund (MWCF) sends out in December a recap of the year's activities in hopes that readers will be drawn to the idea of helping children in need...and to see that when they do donate to our efforts in Moldova their gift dollars are being put to good use.

MWCF began 2025 with a fury of winter activity, responding to heightened Russian assaults on Ukraine and Moldova energy supplies. Though having cultural differences, Moldovans and Ukrainians share space as neighbors and face common threats.

Jim & Kitty Olson of Flat Rock, NC stepped up quickly, enabling the purchase and installation of emergency generators in several selected sites where MWCF is actively engaged...the Fortuna orphanage in Drochia, a center for handicapped children in Chisinau, and Hospice of North Carolina in Zubresti, to name just three. Unfortunately, most of our supported facilities fell victim to the reality of having to prioritize limited funds. The shutdown of USAID soon followed and a project to connect Moldova to the Western Europe electric grid by late 2025 was halted. A

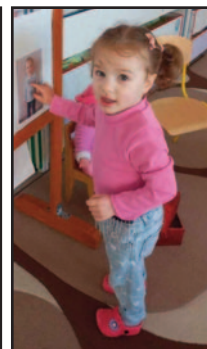
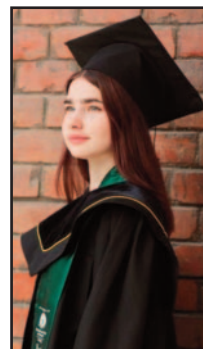
shame indeed...Moldova is positioned on a latitude equal to that of Montreal, Canada and it can get mighty cold there. Each portable fossil fuel electric generator or solar battery unit, powerful enough to carry the load, costs between \$3,500 and \$5,000.

Single mom Tatiana, unable to manage both a major increase in heating bills and mortgage payments on a one-bedroom apartment, received a reprieve when MWCF paid off her loan balance.



Casa Irina, a community center serving villages in northern Moldova, is completing its first full year of operations. Funds needed to handle initial construction were donated by Faith Baker & Darrell Menscer of Hendersonville, NC. The task of finding gifts to pay for annual operating

expenses is now a major challenge. Fortunately, regional agribusiness logistics company Trans-Oil group contributed enough to get us through 2025. Ongoing annual support in the amount of \$35,000 is needed, beginning in 2026.





The return on investment at Casa Irina has been remarkable. A combination of quality coaching and determined youngsters resulted in multiple medals being awarded local wrestlers in regional competition. A teenage girl took second at a national singing contest in the capital city of Chisinau. Homework tutoring has led to improvement of school marks and the growth of self-esteem. English classes are productively attended. All ages participate in teaching and learning traditional crafts. Involvement in song and dance routines is a thrill to behold. And to think that up until a year ago so many of these village children had little constructive to do after school, over the weekend, and during summer vacation.



In the spring the North Carolina-Moldova Partnership (begun over 25 years ago) headed up by N.C. Secretary of State Elaine Marshall and amply administered by NCSOS International Liaison Lora Sinigur worked with MWCF and International Center for Collaboration and Development



“PHOENIX” president Irina Rusanovschi in shipping two large seaborne containers with 40,000 lbs of medical equipment & supplies and school books & classroom materials...Raleigh, NC — Norfolk, VA — Constanta, Romania — Chisinau, Moldova. Trans-Atlantic shipping and associated overland trucking of a full-sized container to our PHOENIX warehouses in Moldova costs around \$8,000. St. John In The Wilderness Episcopal Church in Flat Rock, NC has committed to pay for our next shipment. We have been sending at least one container per year.



Over the course of the year, Dutch non-profit charity SMHO provided another 9 large trucks of medical hospital and dental equipment to Moldova and Ukraine, collaborating with the PHOENIX/MWCF logistics team for trans-European transportation, import administration, monetary, and distribution services.



Four years of war have affected children in many ways. Faced with the risk of falling behind in their education, refugee K-12 students in the Moldovan town of Criuleni have had a virtual classroom equipped for them with laptops, enabling all grades to continue their schooling on-line in their native Ukrainian language. These children need a future and only \$4,000 per year covers the expense of support staff.



In some cases, the infusions of refugees have grown resident school enrollment; increasing the wear on cafeteria kitchen utensils...many large stove pots already in need of replacement. MWCF has been delighted to help.

The 2025 MWCF Board of Directors annual meeting... was held on 15 November in Flat Rock, NC at the home of Jim & Kitty Olson, the Episcopal Church of St. John In The Wilderness, and the Kenmure Country Club.

Director Emeritus Mason G. Alexander (1932-2025), a MWCF founding member, was appreciatively eulogized.



Albert Gooch in Moldova

NCSOS Elaine Marshall registered that:

On November 1, 2005, Dr. Albert S. Gooch, Jr., helped found Moldova World Children's Fund, Inc. serving as inaugural Chairman of the Board of Directors. Since its inception, the international charity has remained steadfast in its mission to alleviate suffering and enrich lives. Thanks to his unwavering dedication, countless individuals in Moldova and beyond have hope. Following two decades of serving as Board Chairman, Albert is elevated to the honorary position of Chairman Emeritus, effective the first day of January, 2026. Albert's humanity and contributions are celebrated by a world grateful for his enduring legacy.



Jim & Kitty

Jim Olson was elected Chairman-Elect. John Culp and Ron Hollmeier were elected board members for initial three-year terms.

Charlotte born **John D. Culp** left home to pursue a career, eventually settling in Waynesville, NC eight years ago. He is a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel with 30 years in the military and 19 years of additional service with the Central Intelligence Agency. John and his wife Donna, also a veteran, are members of the Special Forces Association and Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) for which Donna currently serves as President of the North Carolina Council of Chapters. They regularly provide logistical support and financial assistance to MWCF and have visited Moldova on several occasions, including the 2024 MWCF Board of Directors meeting and renewal of the Moldova-North Carolina Partnership. John & Donna have volunteered in Ukraine since 2022 as bomb disposal specialists and are presently supporting development of a rehabilitation facility for war veterans and their families in Kryvyi Rih.



Donna & John Culp



Ron Hollmeier

Ronald J. Hollmeier is originally from the Chicago, IL area...receiving a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering at Northwestern University and a MBA from the University of Chicago. His professional experience encompassed 35 years at electric power generating plants for various USA utilities including pressurized water reactor nuclear, gas, oil and coal fueled industrial units. He specialized as a computer programmer in simulating electric generating system operations. Ron created and managed analytical engineering departments supporting the design and functioning of both nuclear and fossil fueled facilities. While assigned to Beijing, China he helped develop turnkey powerplant projects. Following his retirement, Ron lived and traveled widely in China for 15 years prior to retiring in Flat Rock.

Newly appointed Moldova Ambassador to the United States H.E. Vlad Kulminski keynoted our traditional donor appreciation dinner program.

N.C. Secretary of State Elaine Marshall announced that MWCF board members former International Dentist of the Year Dr. Stephen B. Mackler and Captain Ray F. West, Jr. USNR (Ret) had received 2025 Jim Fain NC Global Ambassador Awards and that N.C. Governor Josh Stein had bestowed both with The Order of the Long Leaf Pine.



Ambassador Kulminski and colleagues Lora, Elaine, and Irina



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The year is finishing up much like it began as crisis relief remains paramount. Rejecting international attempts to bring peace to the region, Putin chose to increase missile and drone attacks on Ukraine cities. This resulted in substantially more casualties requiring emergency medical evacuation. Ukraine's Ambassador to Moldova mentioned to MWCF in September the need for off-road civilian automobiles which could be refitted for relocating critically wounded patients. The vehicles best not appear to be obvious ambulances, since that despicably makes them more attractive targets for Russian attack drone operators.



Thanks primarily to the generosity of Waynesville's John & Donna Culp, an appropriate SUV was purchased in October by MWCF's in-country team. The life-saving transport was fully functioning inside Ukraine by early November. A used SUV in good condition and suitable for the task costs \$7,000-\$8,500 to purchase.



Please consider contributing now to MWCF's decades-long purpose of relieving suffering and improving lives. Additionally, bequest arrangements in your will supporting our work would be wonderful. Just because the families we serve live far away doesn't make them any less real...their lives are as valuable as the ones closer to home. You are encouraged to visit our website www.moldovawcf.org to donate via PayPal or postal mail checks to the address below.



Thank you,

Ray West

Ray West, Founder MWCF