

## Extending a Vision of Hope Through Hands-On Christian Love

### Living Letters

*He is a Father to the Fatherless* by Jacqui Knight

**B**ut the only letter of recommendation we need is you yourselves! Your lives are a letter written in our hearts, and everyone can read it and recognize our good work among you. Clearly, you are a letter from Christ prepared by us. It is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on stone, but on human hearts.

-- 2nd Corinthians 3: 2-3 (New Living Translation)



Oana and Radu found themselves in an orphanage for the first time in 1999 when their father was sent to prison. They were 7 and 5 years old. Their parents had previously split, so when their mother—and every other living relative—claimed she wasn't able to care for them, they landed in the Romanian childcare system. In 2001, two years and two orphanages later, Oana and Radu (along with Rodi, Sanda and Simona) became part of the Global Hope family.



Oana, was 9 when she came to live at Ana's House in 2001.



Radu was 7 when he arrived at Ana's House.

What I remember most about the day they arrived is that all five of them each carried a trashbag that contained all of their earthly belongings. "Here we are. We belong to you now," they seemed to say. As we sorted through their clothes and put them away, I noticed that every single item was either stained or torn, and not worth ten cents in a yard sale. It made me all the more excited that they were finally here. We had been working hard all year on the new house, without knowing anything about the children who would soon live there.

Now that I knew them, I couldn't wait to show them their new home; new rooms with colorful rugs, brand new bunk beds and blankets, a dresser, and yes, new clothes to go in them. And most importantly, something too good for them to believe: a forever family.

However, Ana's House, wasn't quite ready to be lived in. For the first few weeks the girls spent their nights with me, just a few houses down the street, and their days at the House of Hope. We soon hammered out a nightly routine; playing Candyland, braiding hair, saying bedtime prayers, and telling stories about what they looked forward to most at their new home.

Oana quickly found a special place, all her own, in my heart. The other three girls were sisters, and when push came to shove (as it often did!), it was three against one in their favor. Oana quickly learned to defend herself, and her little brother, as well. Every night (no really, every night!), Oana would pray and ask God to be with her mom, to be with her dad, and that God would help her dad get out of prison so that they could be "a re-united family." If anyone ever doubted that all a child really wants is to be with her mom and dad, you only needed to be present at that moment to be convinced. I hope I never again have to experience the ache in my stomach as I listened to an innocent little girl pray for something she deserved, but would probably never receive.

Radu was a quiet and an extremely well mannered little boy. Unlike the other boys, Radu was made of "sugar and spice, and everything nice!" I remember one day when friends of mine from America came by with their new little boy, a 4 year-old they had just adopted from another orphanage. Radu took him by the hand and led him upstairs where

the toys were. He was so sweet. After all, he too had once been a scared little boy, moved about from one place to another.

When five year-old Robi moved in to Ana's House, Radu welcomed him with the same tenderness. Robi quickly became his new big brother's shadow. He followed him around the house and even managed to get Radu to lay next to him at night. Little Robi would stroke Radu's hair until he drifted off, and Radu would sneak up to the top bunk.

Parts of Oana's prayers were answered. Of course, I believe God was with her mom. He was with her dad, and her dad was eventually released from prison. They did not, however, become a re-united family. Dad came by to see Oana and Radu; he brought presents, he brought his new girlfriend and her kids to visit, too. But he would not give them what they really needed, their daddy back. One day he called to say he was moving to Western Europe. Their mom visited, too, and their grandparents lived less than three blocks away. But no one ever came to take them home.

The effects of this traumatic disappointment surfaced slowly in their lives, but surely. Oana's anger escalated and she lashed out at anyone who crossed her. Radu was occasionally found in his room, alone and crying. Constant love, honesty, and discipline from Tata Roni and Mama Rodi would see them through the ensuing years.

Oana and Radu both excelled at the Christian school in Arad, which has a very high academic standard. When I visit Arad I always buy them books—all the classics and whatever other fun novels I can find in Romanian—and they always read them faster than I can supply them. Radu has completed the *Chronicles of Narnia*, *The Lord of the Rings* series, and (we confess) *Harry Potter*. Oana loves the *Janette Oak*, *Love Came Softly* series. They keep in

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## Going Where God Leads by Marty Sheppard

*He guides me in paths of righteousness... Psalm 23:3*

**A**nxious anticipation filled us as we turned onto the dirt road. After a 40-minute van ride, we were now just minutes away from meeting the children living at the Global Hope sponsored Rescue Center (HOREC) near Ruai, outside of Nairobi, Kenya. Dressed in their best clothes, the children greeted us by singing, "Welcome, we are glad you are here!" as we pulled into the drive. A sense of calm overcame each team member and we knew this is where God wanted us to be for the week of Jan. 25 – Feb. 1st. Moments later we were hugging the 21 smiling children and getting to know each by name.

### *God blessed us in so many ways during the week*

- ∞ He sent us a strong breeze on the day we painted with oil based paints and transformed the girls' room walls from a bleak gray to a peach and the boys' room to a sky blue.
- ∞ God guided Thomas Agutu, a devout Christian to leave his office and be our driver for the week. He worked along side us and promised to bring food relief packages to the Rescue Center in the future. He became an important member of our team.
- ∞ Rains were welcome in this drought stricken area. However, the dirt road which led to the Rescue Center was transformed into mud. But our team was not deterred—we carried project supplies and food 1 ½ miles so we could continue our work.
- ∞ A teacher's strike in Nairobi made it possible to work and play with the children who were home all week. We interacted using Bible stories and songs, lessons in geography and good health practices. We jumped rope, kicked the soccer ball, and played bad mitten.

**Y**ou have not lived until you have traveled 30 minutes in a van built for 8, but carrying 20 bodies instead! Destination: Marble City Restaurant. The children and staff, who had not had meat in several months, devoured large orders of yama choma (smoked goat meat), sausage, chicken, salsa, French fries, two sodas each, and ice cream cones. The children danced to music, played on a nearby playground, and returned home with smiles stretched from one side of their face to the other. All said, "This was a HAPPY DAY!"

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## Fatherless

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touch with their father and see him about once a year.

**I**n 2008, Oana was baptized. She wrote, "I'm happy to be part of a family that seeks God, and that takes time to read the Bible together." Radu is active in his church youth group and is no longer just a sweet little boy, but a gracious young man.

You don't need to look much farther than Oana and Radu to see God's faithfulness. They may never be a re-united family with their biological parents, but He's put them in a bigger family, with a mother and a father who will never leave them for another. He's given them a home where the gospel is taught, love flows freely, and faith is lived out, day by day. We continue to beseech His provision and grace for every child in Romania.



No longer a little girl, this picture was taken on Oana's 18th birthday.

**T**he day Oana and Radu showed up on our doorstep, each with a bag full of ragged clothes, serves as a gentle reminder to me. One day I will show up at heaven's door with nothing but a bag of my own rags of righteousness; nothing else to offer, except to claim that I belong to Him. The Lord will welcome me, and

show me the mansion He's been preparing for me—something more beautiful than I can believe—*my forever home.*



Radu, our 16 year-old gentleman. *Look out girls-- he's a heartbreaker!*





## Needs for the Rescue Center (HOREC)



Desperate medical attention for HIV+ children is received free of charge from a local medical clinic. However, transportation costs can run up to \$100/month.

Money for transporting the HIV+ children to the medical clinic bi-weekly for treatment. (Approximately \$100 US per month)



Brothers Danny and Joseph are newcomers to the Rescue Center. Their mother passed away in December 2008 of AIDS.



The Global Hope January 2009 Kenya mission team.

Tuition fees to send the older children to secondary school (9th-12th grade). Three children at the Rescue Center will need to enter secondary school in 2009. (Approximately \$500 US/child)

Funds to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables for the children. (Approximately \$25 US/week)

Playground equipment. (Approximately \$500 US)

### To Donate

If you wish to donate for any of the above needs, please send a check to:

Funds to build a retaining wall and dig proper drainage channels to protect the dormitory when the rains come. (Approximately \$600 US)

A well, which would provide clean drinking water for the children, and water they could sell to neighbors and help cover operation costs of the Center. (Approximately \$21,000 US)

Global Hope  
PO Box 1052  
Broomfield, CO 80032-1052

Special request: University exam fees for Salome, Christine's daughter. Christine founded the Rescue Center, and her husband was recently injured and cannot work. They do not have money to pay the fees for Salome's final exams. She is attending classes at the university and will start her 3rd year studying microbiology. (\$800 US/semester)

On the memo line indicate "Rescue Center" and which project you wish to designate your tax deductible gift to.

## God Leads

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Our team visited a school for 250 children living in the Spring Valley slum region of Nairobi. Pastor Stanley and his wife, both native Kenyans, have been present there for nearly eight years after learning that in 1999-2000, 418 children died of malnutrition in this area. We delivered food to some of the school children's homes, visited classes, helped serve them lunch, and on our last Sunday in Nairobi, we were privileged to worship with them.



Marty @ Spring Valley

Having returned home to Colorado, my heart is filled with renewed hope for the children and the Christians our team met while serving in Kenya. The simple things

we accomplished – for example, building a clothes line for the Rescue Center, gave the children and staff so much excitement and pleasure. Tears were shed as we prayed together and gave our last hugs. My promise to each of you who "think" you may want to travel to Romania or to Kenya to help the children....DO IT! Not only will you touch their lives—they will change yours forever. God's will be done.



*Marty Sheppard is a Global Hope short-term mission team member, and a member of the First United Methodist Church in Durango, CO. She has traveled to both Romania and Kenya.*

# Mission Trips 2009

*Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well. 1 Peter 4:10*

If you've never participated on a mission team, what are waiting for? If you've served before, we'd love to have you join us again! We have two opportunities scheduled so far this year:

## Romania July 2009

This team will conduct Vacation Bible School for the younger members of the Global Hope family and other children from the local community. We anticipate that this team will also have opportunities to visit and serve in several other state facilities during their trip. You'll be blessed by the opportunity to minister to these youngsters.

## Kenya November 6-17, 2009

This team will return to the Rescue Center to finish minor construction and landscape projects, and interact with the children there. Art projects, Bible songs and stories are a fun way to get to know these precious little ones, while sharing the love of Christ with them.



Mission trips have proven to be powerful, enriching, and transformational experiences for those answering God's call to serve. For more information about joining one of these teams, please contact Will Johnston at [willjohnston@earthlink.net](mailto:willjohnston@earthlink.net) or contact Global Hope by phone at 720-887-4673.



# Save the Date!

## Lawnmower Maintenance Fundraiser

Good News Church, Broomfield

April 25th

May 2nd

May 9th



# Global Hope Golf Tournament

Omni Interlocken Golf Club,  
Broomfield

August 22nd. (afternoon)

