



Greetings dear Supporters of Mission Without Borders!

I trust this Focus News finds you well and weathering the storm of the international financial crisis okay. We are ever so thankful for your support despite these hard times. All your support, both financial and prayerful, means a tremendous amount to us here in Australia, and particularly in our field countries in Eastern Europe!

I would like to make a special welcome to those supporters discovering us for the first time, through the great work of Christian Mission International Aid (CMI Aid). As CMI Aid refines their ministry, Matthew Hillier has decided to close down the aid side of ministry. We had established a partnership with CMI Aid in 2008 and we are thankful for the aid or 'Gift in Kind' items they donated in 2008 – two containers worth! For those who would like to continue to knit and donate aid directly to us in 2009, we would love your support! We work with more than 200 Children's Homes and thousands of families and elderly in six field countries – Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine. We always work in partnership with local churches and all of our workers are nationals, they just need our support.

Please, if you would like to find out more about us, we are happy to supply you with some literature and a DVD that explains who we are and what we are achieving by God's grace and with the support of Christians around the world. If you would like someone to come and speak to your church or group about MWB, please contact our office. Australia is one of 11 supporting countries and we would love to have you join the huge band of supporters already blessing our ministry with their generosity! Please make contact with our office and we will happily answer your questions and send



Tanya during a computer class

you literature to get you up to speed with who we are and what we are trying to achieve!

As hard times bite, we are mindful and thankful for a strong economy and the wealth of opportunities and support Australia offers the young and old. When I look at my own children, I am thankful to God we have access to great education to meet their very different needs, and we need not fear these opportunities will ever be out of our grasp. Educational opportunities beyond high school abound; for the academic, a university education is an option; and an ever increasing number of options are also available to acquire skills for employment at many other tertiary institutions. Computer skills and literacy are a given and even my 2 year old is handy with a mouse! In stark comparison, our field countries continue to endure tremendous hardship. We live in a global economy and as the crisis hit at the end of 2008, millions lost jobs within weeks and the future looks bleak. We are doing our best to try and meet the needs of those in our programs, for they are struggling more than ever before.



Pastor Ivan praying for Anton as he accepted Jesus.

In meeting the holistic needs of our beneficiaries and preparing them for lives of self-sufficiency, education continues to be a priority. The Vocational Training projects in Russe, Bulgaria have proven very successful for the many children, younger and older, who are in dire need of educational input, and who also do not enjoy the love and care of a family. It is such a blessing to work in close partnership with local churches in all our field countries. This ensures we are able to capitalise on the Vocational Training Courses, but also address the critical emotional, social and spiritual needs of those we are caring for, with wonderful results! ►

Alexander and Angelina Alexandrov – the MWB coordinator family in Russe Bulgaria, have focused their efforts on building long-term relationships and reaching out to abandoned children. Their efforts bore fruit soon after they began and it continues to blossom! Many children have received Christ, all Vocational students heard the Gospel, saw positive examples of Christian attitude and behavior, friendships were started, and all of this has come hand in hand with learning vital computer skills and beginning their English language study!

Following the highly successful integration of Computer Courses in the Boys' Home in Russe, 2008 saw the introduction of English classes at the Community Centre in Russe, run in partnership with MWB and the local church. Rather than wait for children to become teenagers without these vital skills, they intentionally aimed the English classes at children aged 3-7 years old. From two local Children's Homes, they chose a fun program, 'The Reader's Digest Disney Magic English Curriculum', which captivates them as they learn English with the help of their favourite cartoon characters. They started at the beginning of the school year with a group of 8 children from Nadejda Children's Home. Every week the group grew, not only with more children, but also with volunteers keen to help. They not only teach English as a foreign language, but also apply social skills training and Christian principles. Disney characters help convey biblical values; teach children what is good, what is evil, what is right and what offends God.



Anton is eager to have his work checked by his English teacher, Gayla

This fun program has also proven very successful with some young adults who have intellectual disabilities and live in two local government Homes. Angelina explains "Despite the widely held opinion that an intellectual disability inhibits a person's ability to have an understanding of God's love and what Jesus has done for them, we have seen changes in their lives. We have sown God's love in the many meetings and events we organise for them, including the computer and English classes. This summer we brought some of the youth on our Christian youth camp. It was there that 23 year old Tatyana and 26 year old Anton made the decision to follow Christ. With the sincerity of children, they believed in Christ and met their caring Heavenly Father. Tatyana is originally from the town of Silistra. She was abandoned by her parents when she was very young and has been raised in institutions ever since. She knows her parents, who are divorced, but has not seen them for many years. Since 2005, she has lived in the Home in Russe. She graduated from the Vocational High School, specialising in cooking. She is very friendly,

and is not shy in standing up for herself. She is eager to learn new skills, hardworking, diligent and determined to complete any task she is given. Anton was born in the town of Isperih. Just like Tanya, he has spent all his life in Children's Homes. He was abandoned at birth and knows nothing of his relatives. He has now completed his study in a Vocational School for the metal processing industry. Tatyana, Anton and all the youth from their Home have now joined the Youth Group in the church attached to the Community Centre and it is here that they have found friendship, acceptance, support and counsel. Anton was so excited to meet many new and true friends in Christ during the youth camp last summer. Now he belongs to God's family, he has other friends to share his interests in drawing and cooking".

Oftentimes, people take their family and friends for granted. Unfortunately, Christians can do this with God, too. In the eyes of an abandoned child, when they receive attention and true friendship for the first time, they finally discover the deep meaning of love and care and the importance of a genuine relationship. In the faith of those children, there is much more than just recognising Christ as Saviour – they finally meet their perfect Heavenly Father, who will love them unconditionally and will always be faithful, a precious gift for children who have never enjoyed an earthly father. In God's family, in their new church home, they find a place to belong and the support that is so essential for their future. And just like little children with no doubt or fear, their hearts are wholeheartedly committed to God. Tanya never misses a night without talking to her friend and Saviour. Together with Anton, they read from the Bible and ask questions when they don't understand the meaning of scripture.

What wonderful stories of skills learnt, and faith; faith grasping the love of a Heavenly Father and salvation through His Son! Thank you for the support that makes these wonderful ministries possible! We have the willing staff and many, many volunteers who love these children and adults and want to share their skills and faith in Jesus. They simply need our support, both prayerful and financial, to ensure these courses run effectively and can be expanded to meet the growing demand. Thanks for supporting where you can. And



Fellowship meeting in Russe Children's Home - Anton and Tanya are now part of the church youth group



Sergiy is passionate about his carpentry lessons

don't forget to pray for these wonderful teachers and coordinators, as well as the children and young adults who have discovered the love of their Heavenly Father and are taking baby steps in their new Christian faith!

Education is the key to overcoming disadvantage and opening the door of opportunity. However, we never want to assume that that is all we need to offer. Your continued support of Mission Without Borders will ensure we meet the holistic needs of the children and adults in our programs. Education without self-esteem, life skills, a support base and an opportunity to hear about their Heavenly Father and salvation through His Son leaves young people in precarious positions we want to avoid. We have Vocational Training Courses operating in all six field countries; many through the Community Centres we are operating in partnership with local churches and all Children's Homes are passionate and dedicated to providing Vocational Skills for their children, because they know their future is very bleak if they graduate without skills and constantly appeal for our help. Agriculture, Beekeeping, Carpentry, Car Mechanics, Computers, English, Hairdressing, and Sewing are some of the courses now



two sisters dedicated to their new profession

made possible thanks to your support. If you can, we would appreciate your financial gift this month to ensure these programs can continue to meet the ever-increasing demand. We promise to continue to share the wonderful success stories of skills gained and faith grasped! If you would like to contribute to these wonderful courses on an ongoing basis and become part of our Vocational Pledge Program, where we will keep you up to date with the courses changing lives, contact us for more details.

Stop Press! We are Moving!

Thanks to great growth in all areas of our ministry, we are moving. We will be combining our office and 'Gift in Kind' in Sydney to one location. We also want to have room to have you visit us and hear more about our work.

We will inform you of the new contact details as soon as they become available, but redirection will ensure all mail and phone calls are forwarded to us. We would ask for your patience in this time of transition. We will try and make it as smooth as possible, as we want to ensure our ministry and the ultimate blessing of our work in Eastern Europe goes unhindered.

With a new office/warehouse in Sydney, we are putting out the call for more volunteers. The 'Gift in Kind' part of our ministry is rapidly expanding in size, as people hear about our ministry and want to become involved. So if you would like to become involved in the packing of the aid, on a weekly basis, or whenever you can, we would love your help. For those who are not able to pack boxes, we would love to have your help on a monthly basis to pack the Focus News we send out to you.

For those in Melbourne, packing and meeting together continues in our 'Workshop' in 8 Birch Avenue, Dandenong North, in Melbourne's East. (Directions: Just off Gladstone Road, it is easily accessed by bus (routes 850, 814, 848, 804) from Dandenong, Glen Waverley and Springvale Railway Stations or Chadstone, Brandon Park and Waverley Gardens shopping centres. It is close to Heatherton Road and the Eastlink/Monash Interchange). It will be open for drop offs, sorting, packing, or for coffee and a chat, on Fridays during school terms, 9.00am – 3.30pm and at other times by appointment. Visits from groups are welcome – Come and have a coffee, watch a DVD of our ministry and consider how you can become involved. Contact Jenny Grainger for further details: Phone (03) 9795 6141 or email: jenn.mwbvic@internode.on.net

'Gift in Kind' - including 'Operation Cover-Up'



As 2009 gets underway we would love your continued involvement in our 'Gift in Kind – Operation Cover-Up' ministry, and the list of what we can accept is below. For those new to Mission Without Borders, the donations of aid from individuals and companies falls under the banner of 'Gift in Kind' and our wonderful knitting contributions fall under the banner of 'Operation Cover-Up'.

In 2008, Mission Without Borders internationally delivered 240 container loads of 'Gift in Kind' into our field countries. Australia's contribution of seven containers was wonderful, and much of what we contributed was unique. Our field countries love the hand knitted and crocheted items, and have put all the material, sewing and knitting items to wonderful use in the families and Vocational Training projects.

Companies continue to play a very valuable role both here in Australia and particularly in Europe. This is also part of our

reasoning in refining the list of what we would like you to contribute. If companies can provide excess stock in huge quantities for items like food, hygiene items, clothing, shoes and school supplies, (and this has certainly been the case in Australia and internationally), we are best to use our limited resources to financially support our overall ministries and make contributions of knitted and crocheted items, as well as material, wool and all haberdashery items if you would like to be involved practically.

Please contact Jenny Grainger in Melbourne if you live in Melbourne or Victoria and would like to deliver items or arrange a visit to this wonderful new meeting place, or our office in Sydney for details for packing and collecting in Sydney and beyond. We are developing a good network of collection points and will share these developments with you soon.

The items we are now able to accept are the following:

All knitted and crocheted items:

- **Blankets – large and small.** The ideal blanket made with Size 8 needles, 8-ply yarn, and 40 stitch x 80 rows to make 56 squares, for a blanket 1.6m x 1.4m). Wool and/or acrylic are acceptable.
- **Jumpers** – Crew neck patterns are best for the harsh climate. All sizes are great, but teenagers & adults are most in need.
- **Scarves, beanies, bed socks and gloves.**
- **Please note** we are not able to accept the tiny sleeveless jumpers known as '**Aids Baby Jumpers**'.
- If you would like some guidance, knitting patterns are now available on request - contact Jenny Grainger (details below), our office or visit our Website: (www.mwb.org.au) for patterns now!

All items for knitting, sewing and embroidery: material, wool, needles etc.

COORDINATORS AND COLLECTION POINTS

For details on collection points, you are welcome to contact our office, alternatively listed below are coordinators and collection points we have organised (we are always looking for other volunteers!). We have a more comprehensive list of collection points available in our office. We can't guarantee an inexpensive collection point for you, but if you would like to find out your closet collection point, please contact our office or contact the closest contact from the list below:

Sheryl Rumball our NSW Coordinator:

71 Hastings Road
WARRAWEE NSW 2074
Phone: 0432 952 762
Email: sherylrumball@hotmail.com

Jenny Grainger is our Victorian Coordinator:

3 Exner Drive
DANDENONG VIC 3175
Phone: (03) 9795 6141
Email: jenn.mwbvic@internode.on.net

Leila Lydeamore in South Australia:

33 Ina Close
CRAIGMORE South Australia 5114
Phone: (08) 8255 0092
Email: leila@chariot.net.au

Debbi Wilson in Western Australia

5 Collier Street
APPLECROSS WA 6153
Phone: 0417 926 695
Email: wilson.debbi@gmail.com

Thanks so much for your partnership and God bless,

Michelle Dorey

Michelle Dorey
National Director