



# Update Newsletter

*Number 4*

**August 2012:**

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## Making a Difference!

- **Orphanage Restructuring:** In our last newsletter we shared concerns that a restructuring of orphanages in Ukraine might result in the closing of the facility we've been working with. We have some great news to share! The government is happy with the progress being made as a result of the work you've enabled us to do. The orphanage will remain open and will expand its impact in the region. Typically orphanages in Ukraine only provide a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education, after which children are sent to live in technical schools. This orphanage provides a full high school education and opportunities to attend college. Now orphans from other locations will be transferred here to take advantage of this school.



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## Plans for the fall trip

The dates are still TBD

Goals-

in Izmail spend time with the kids in technical school, get winter shoes for many; check on last trips projects, continue developing partnership with a local church group that will work with us on befriending orphans, guiding them and advocating for them.

In Odessa region orphanage: spend time with kids, check on projects, new project to start- heating system and a bathroom for one of the dorms (see page...),

We have a great opportunity to bring fresh produce to the kids in the winter month by building green houses. We will partner up with initiators of this project and travel the region to several orphanages working on details of making this project come to life.

Kolyas sergery: This month Kolya, age 10, will travel with a nurse from the orphanage to Kharkov, where he will get bloodwork and extrays done in preparations for a badly needed sergery. He needs a ancle joint rplased, or in the next 6-12 month he will become wheelchair bound for the rest of his life. See more of Kolyas story in our August 2012 newsletter. This sergery in NOT covered by the government. So, we are starting a madical program and are raising funds to make this happen. This fund will in the future help with medical expenss for the orphans.

# Time with the Children

I arrived just in time for graduation. The graduates presented me with flowers, and the director asked me to address the graduating class.



We mailed ahead dolls for the younger girls and cars for the boys as well as several boxes of toys to be given as presents for b-days and clothing.



*The girls are enjoying gifts of dolls and doll clothing that I brought from America for them.*

# Time with the Children

I spent a lot of time walking around with the children and talking about life. We had movie nights with ice cream. We goofed around a lot, some tried to tickle me while others took pictures. While others took pictures.



I read a Bible to the group of younger kids, they were fascinated with the stories, had many questions and fun things to tell me to. After reading I prayed with the children and tucked each one of them into bed with a goodnight hug and kiss. Liza, a girl on my right on the picture, bursted into tears and told me that she misses her mom. All the kids asked me to come back the next day, and do the same, which I did.



## Sharing the Faith



I was able to share my Testimony with a group of about 50 kids. At the end I invited them to talk with me afterwards one on one.

During the course of the trip over all I was able to talk with several kids about their beliefs and share my faith with them. Some now trust me enough to admit their hardships, their lack of faith. It is at this point, when they open their hearts, we can start to address deeper issues.

After the graduation ceremony I spent some time with a local pastor I had been trying to meet. We had a wonderful conversation about how to reach out to the children, what the local church is doing already. He invited me to the Sunday service and we talked some more afterwards.

I also met with a man named Igor, who runs camps for the kids in the summer, and a bible study program during the school year. We talked about our visions and possible partnerships. He has had a good impact on the children who attend, and we'd like to be able to sponsor other programs for more children in the future.



# Izmail

Close to 100 orphans reside in dorms at this technical school. They graduated from different orphanages in the area at 9<sup>th</sup> grade and their education continues here. The children are ages 15-19 and they get a small government money allowance, a dorm room to share, and some minimal adult supervision.

I stayed with the children in the dorms, and we enjoyed walking, talking, shopping, and cooking together. A group of us had a great time at the movies.



The director and I chose to remodel 2 dorm rooms (our fall newsletter details the conditions). I connected with a local church group willing to help the kids by making friends with them, seeing to their needs, and bringing them closer to God.

I visited an orphanage in the city of Izmail. Two kids I know from another orphanage were transferred there and I wanted to check on them. I brought a girl from the dorms along whose 2 sisters are there. She has not been able to visit them for a while due to travel costs and it was a happy reunion for them.





# Visit to Transnistria

*I entered Transnistria at 6am, crossing the border on foot from the Ukraine.*

*Transnistria is a small country on the west of Ukraine. They declared their independence after USSR fell, but no other country has recognized them, that causes lots of problems, including 80 % unemployment and lots of children in orphanages.*

***My guides and hosts were an organization "Help the Children"***

<http://helpthechildren.md>

At night I visited with the kids in a life training program, we had tea and sandwiches . We talked and got to know each other a bit.



*We visited 2 orphanages to talk with their directors, purchase some supplies, and evaluate how we could be of help in the future.*



One orphanage with 250 kids needed a freezer, which we purchased. Another, a boiler. That school had 80 kids and the hot water for washing had to be carried from the kitchen every day for washing since their hot water boiler was out of commission for over a year. In addition to the 2 large items we have purchased sports equipment, soccer balls, hula hoops, volley balls, etc.

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## Kolya's Story

I first met Kolya during my visit to the orphanage in December, 2010. This sweet, confident, smart, and energetic boy with a limp made a lasting impression on me. His leg was broken when he was young at his ankle. He was still with his family at the time and never received proper care.

In May 2012, I visited him in the hospital where he had been for most of the past year. They performed some minor reconstructive surgery and put him in a brace in hopes of healing his leg, however the joint continued to deteriorate. His doctors are now recommending an artificial joint replacement. There is a hospital in Kharkov that specializes in that type of operation, however the expenses are not covered by the government. Without the joint replacement doctors expect him to be wheelchair bound for the rest of his life within 6 months to a year.

We are trying to help Kolya to receive the surgery, and need to raise \$5,000 to pay for the surgery and travel expenses for him and the nurse from the orphanage who will accompany him.



*Dec. '10: Kolya, Marina, and Igor*



*May '12: Kolya, Marina, and Olya (his sister) visiting in the hospital*

***Will you partner  
with us to help this  
child?***



Donations can be made through our website, or by sending a check payable to *Marina's Kids* to 123 New Street, Glenside, PA 19038 and including a note indicating the donation is for the Marina's Kids Medical Program.

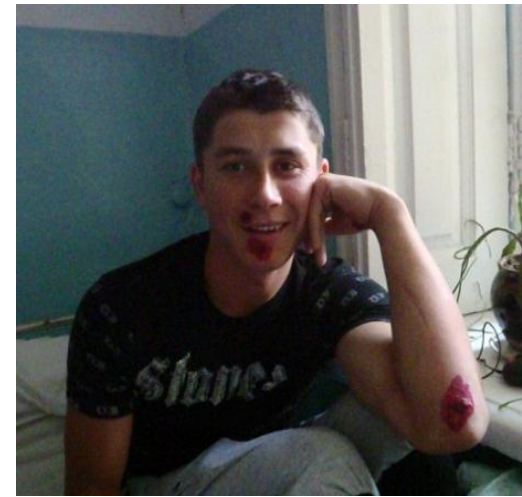
## Pavlic's Story

This was the second time I met Pavlic. He is 17, and a student at the technical school. The sores on his face caught my eye right away, as I looked closer I realize that they also crusted his arms and legs. I asked him about it and he told me that he had them for a month and they weren't going away. I asked him if he would let me take him to a doctor, and he accepted my offer.

The next morning we went to the clinic, where after a long wait we saw the doctor who referred Pavlic to another clinic. There we learned Pavlic is contagious and that he shouldn't return to the dorms.

Pavlic did **NOT** want to be admitted to the hospital. In the Ukraine hospitals smell bad, the mattresses are not very clean, and the food is terrible. He lacked the money for medicine (he gets free services from the government, but not free medicine). He needed two shots a day of antibiotic and medicine to cover his sores. He hated the hospital so much that he threatened to leave .

Worried about his need to complete the entire course of treatment I tried convincing the Doctor to treat him as an outpatient, but the doctor was adamant about his need to stay in the hospital. So I asked Pavlic if he would rather have sores all over his body in multiplying numbers over the next 6 months until I come back again, or suffer four days of the hospital treatment to be healthy. I promised that I would bring him better food, pay for medicine, and that he would have visitors.



*Pavlic in the hospital with purple medicine covered sores.*



# Pavlic's Story

Pavlic agreed to stay and complete his treatment. The next day, before I left to another location, I visited him and asked if the good of getting healthy outweighed the bad of the hospital. He smiled, and gave a slight nod. I asked him why he did not take care of it earlier. He told me "No adult cares, it's a long wait in the lobbies, you have to run around from one office to another, it smells bad, the medicine is expensive and I have no money for it".

When I returned to the dorm room the day he was admitted, and spoke with the supervisor on duty she asked if he was admitted because of the sores on his face. She hadn't noticed that they were all over his body for a month!

Our vision is to find caring people in the area where these graduates from the orphanages are. There are about 90 in the school/ dorms where Pavlic lives between the ages of 15 and 19. **Most have no adults they believe they can trust, and many adults believe that these kids are a lost cause.**



Before leaving I met with a church group who wants to build relationships with the students. We hope that with the love, care, and supervision of the church, children like Pavlic will see their needs cared for and met. We also pray that the church will be able to help the children understand the love of God. Your prayers are greatly appreciated.

## Big Projects Updates

Fall of 2011: we started a big project- installations of indoor bathrooms for the orphanage. There are 7 dorms in this orphanage and so far we installed 6 bathrooms complete with toile, 2 sinks, tiles for proper sanitation, a boiler for hot water, and upgraded electricity. Here are four pictures of the completed bathrooms.



Medical center bathroom that we installed a year ago got refinished walls and floor.



*Old outhouse bathrooms (see more in Dec. 2011 Newsletter)*



## ***Praise, Prayer, and Other Requests:***

- **Praise the lord for the work that has been done so far. And pray as we continue that he will give us clear direction, strength, and finances to do his will.**
- **Marina's Kids needs your help:** we are in need of an accountant; someone to look for grants; also collection and sorting of donated clothing
- **Kolya's K. surgery:** finances for it, doctors wisdom, fast recovery, success of the operation.
- **As we plan the "fall 2012": wisdom and finances** . To support us financially please send a check to: *Marina's Kids. 123 New St. Glenside, PA 19038* or donate through PayPal online at [www.marinaskids.org](http://www.marinaskids.org)



### ***Continue praying for:***

- **Orphans:** Their well being and good relationships with their caregivers, who are there to guide them. Wisdom and patience of the caregivers. Anxiety of unknown due to restructures in the systems.
- **Orphans who have aged out :** Their safety, wisdom, loving / guiding adults in their lives. They are only 15-16 when they leave- life is very hard for them.
- **Growing Relationships:** Of our organization and locals, most of all, our relationships with the children.
- **For more volunteers** in US and in Ukraine to work with these precious children of God.
- **Sharing Christ:** We are putting together a Bible study/ lessons to do with the kids. Please pray for wisdom as we develop the program, opportunities while we are there, open hearts of the children and the caregivers to the Word of God.

# Thank You

***For your support,***  
♥ ***Marina James***

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