

One-to-One:

And so I hope this recounting of all the good things that are happening with the kids has delivered you from compassion fatigue. ARCHWAY Kids, Gica, Gabi, and I wish you all a very Happy Holiday season and the Best and Brightest New Year. We leave you with these images to make your season bright!



Un foarte Merry Crăciun și un an nou fericit, liniștit!

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Hello Friends,

I read an interesting article on “compassion fatigue” in a psychological journal the other day. Also known as secondary traumatic stress (STS), compassion fatigue is a condition characterized by a gradual lessening of compassion over time. I know I experience it with all the terrible things, over which we seemingly have no control, happening in the world. I also know that with all the horrible natural disasters that seem to be occurring every week, I am torn in myriad directions and feel helpless to make it stop. I kiddingly say to my friends and family that God must be angry at us for something! But I know it is not Him (He loves us too much) but simply a series of unfortunate events over which we do have control if we rise to the occasions and reach out our hands to one another.

Sufferers can exhibit several symptoms including hopelessness, a decrease in experiences of pleasure, constant stress and anxiety, sleeplessness or nightmares, and a pervasive negative attitude. Journalism analysts argue that the media has caused widespread compassion fatigue in society by saturating newspapers and news shows with often decontextualized images and stories of tragedy and suffering. This has caused the public to become cynical, or become resistant to helping people who are suffering. Now, this is not a happy or productive way to enter into the holiday season which is all about peace on earth and good will toward men

so we at ARCHWAY are here to try to lift your “compassion fatigue” so that you can go joyously into the New Year with renewed faith in the goodness of man in times of trial and the benevolence of a loving God. We’re going to tell you about all the positive things happening for our kids because of people like you!



Let’s start with Oana and the tragedies she endured last winter with the destruction of her little house and the death of her baby daughter. Oana is now in a new little house with a soba (gas heater) and windows and a door. The ARCHWAY gang built it for her using donations from you to buy supplies and necessities! Oana gave birth to a healthy little girl shown here being cuddled by our Gabi. Though she’ll never forget her baby girl that she lost, she has two children and a little place of her

own to take care of. She never shows her sadness, though I know it’s there; she shows us her strong and shiny nature and her gratitude for your kindnesses. Here is a picture of our Oana with her son and new baby daughter and she is sitting next to her new soba that will keep her family warm for the winter. Now there is no way that you can look at this picture and have even the littlest trace of compassion fatigue when your compassion has done this much good and brought such happiness!





The winter is upon us again and Gica is busy distributing warm clothing from the Williams' in Michigan, the Czech embassy in Bucharest, and Green Fairy Quilts from our friends in Utah. You can see Gica passing out the bright, warm, and wonderful quilts that Clint and his wife collect and send. The families treasure them and they add color to a drab winter existence. That does not mean that we have our delivery system down to a science but Gica already has his St. Nicholas hat on and he's doing his best to spread the cheer! He gets help sometimes from the smallest hands and that is why he loves this time of year!!!



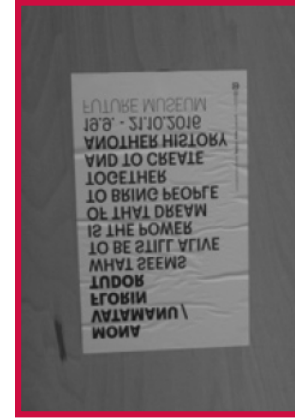
December 6th is St. Nicholas day and we gear up for Gica to deliver little toys and candy and fruit in preparation for the main Christmas holiday on December 25th.



We have a new collaboration thanks to Ursula of Fundatia Baza in Switzerland. She reached out to Gabi and Gica to arrange for a large shipment of hospital supplies, and other equipment such as bicycles and toys for our kids. It comes in time for Christmas and that is a huge blessing. Not only will we be able to celebrate the holiday and keep them warm we'll be able to donate some of the supplies to hospitals to keep our barter system up and running. It is amazing the kind of cooperation that can be sparked by a real hospital bed and other sophisticated equipment. It all came overland with travel arrangements made by Gica and paid for by the Baza Foundation. What are the odds that an organization for

Civil Society in Switzerland would find out about our little operation and want to help. You just never know where the help will come from!

So it will be a long winter – as usual; but we've got supplies from the wonderful, reliable sources we've depended on in the past and some new folks that have reached out to us. We've discovered more desperate families in need of our help and worked with the abandoned buildings ear-marked for our homeless to keep them warm and dry and give them an opportunity to enter the mainstream by looking for work with identity papers in hand. As I've said so many times in the past the identity papers are the key to this all. They will allow our children and families to assume the rights and services which they should have had all along. I reached out to a friend of mine for information and she said that the Romanian Government is now on a mission to get citizenship for all the people born in Romania regardless of heritage or ethnicity. It has been mandated by the European Union and, though it's been around for a long time, the pressure is now being applied to streamline the process and get rid of some of the corruption surrounding it. We are looking for a partner to join us in our efforts to make the undocumented and disenfranchised citizens of their own country.



This is a flier that we found on a fence next to the Czech Embassy and I think it sums up the feelings of a lot of people in the country of Romania. We just hope that the message is strong enough to dispel the dark history of the country and make it a shining example of the good that can be realized when decent people work together for the benefit of all. There is room for everyone to live peacefully in this and all countries and enough opportunity to allow for everyone to have a chance to be their best self without being persecuted or shunned because of the circumstances of their birth. Gica and Gabi and the ARCHWAY gang have been working hard to get identity papers for as many children and families as possible and the result is, among other civil rights, the opportunity for more children to go to school. Here are some of the many children going to school for the first time....



School Days came on September 15 and because of Gica's dogged determination to get as many kids into school as possible we have the pictures of some of our newer kids entering school or going back for a second year. I know there's an Einstein among them!



The biggest kid of all! Gica manages to put money aside for school supplies so that our kids are equipped to go to school.



One of our older boys ready to go!

Picking out school supplies, school clothes, and the all important backpack.



Love,
Sue