



A little help - a big difference

# Support for Kids Organization, Inc

Volume/Issue 31

April 2014

## Letter from the founder

Dear readers and supporters,

This is our first issue of 2014. I apologize for the delay with this newsletter but I was extremely busy for the last few months.

In early November, I received an offer from SDSU Language Acquisition Resource Center (LARC) to teach Georgian language to US Marines who will be working with Georgian allied troops in Afghanistan. The actual time for the teaching was just 6 weeks, but I had been given additional time to create curriculum for this course. Unfortunately there is no such thing as a textbook for beginners that I could have referred to. In this short period of time, I have been asked to teach not only the conversational language, but also a military terminology (which I had to learn myself), some medical terms, situation role play and the Georgian alphabet as well. In my earlier newsletters, I introduced you to the Georgian Alphabet and if you remember it is not a trivial matter, it does not look anything you have seen before. It took us almost a year in high school to learn how to read and write and now the same thing was required to be done in 6 weeks! In the section “Georgia up-close” I re-posted the information about the language and alphabet.

The course called “intensive” and it truly was intense - every day from 8 am until 4 pm for 6 weeks Georgian language was the only form of communication allowed in the classroom. If this type of torture was not enough, at the end of the course the Marines were required to take Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) via a phone.

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## Letter from the founder (continued)



As hard as it was, the experience and the outcome was worth all of my energy, frustrations at times and efforts - “my boys” passed the test brilliantly and on the final presentation (which we videotaped) some of them were so fluent (even phonetically) that it was hard to believe that they acquired this knowledge in just 6 weeks.

I am so very proud of them and just wish them all the best and most importantly - a

very safe return.

I don't know if there will be a request for the Georgian courses in the future, it all depends on the Department of Defense and their demands.

As for now, I am back to normal life and back to Support For Kids Organization Inc.

Thanks as always for your support and for your trust in our organization. Happy Spring!

Sincerely, *Ani Mdivani-Morrow*



## Update on the Kids

As you all know our special project for the last year was to help and support the orphans of the Georgian soldiers killed in Afghanistan . We set some goals that we were hoping to achieve together with the Ministry of Defense and the Department of the Veterans Affairs of Georgia. Unfortunately, not everything was accomplished due to the lack of cooperation from the Georgian side. It's not that they don't want to cooperate , the problem is the bureaucracy and unending replacements of the officials we dealt with before. The Department of Veterans Affairs has a new boss and apparently we have to redo our Memorandum of Cooperation with them. Certain things needed to be done with their involvement even though we were funding it.



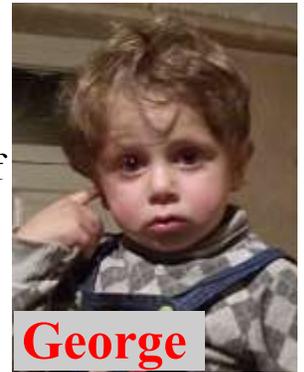
For example, for 2 years old Zacro we wanted to arrange 1 week stay at a health resort. The kid desperately needs it, he has asthma. We could not just send money to his mother (first of all we couldn't control it and second, under the agreement we couldn't bypass the DVA and arrange the stay without their knowledge and take all the responsibilities). It should have been done through the Department of Veteran's Affairs, they should have arranged the resort and transportation. Our job was to fund this. Unfortunately it did not happen and I feel so bad that I could not keep my promise to little Zacro and his mother.

## Update on the Kids



More frustrating is that they couldn't even deliver the Christmas presents I left for the kids. Our representative Manana could't deliver bikes all by herself. The kids are spread out in the different parts of the country and I guess little Saba, George, Zacro and Lizie will have a little Christmas during our visit in September.

At least some of our goals still were accomplished:



Tazo and Dima both are continuing their private English classes, Dima is doing great (his teacher is very pleased), the soccer player - Tazo is less focused on his English but we will forgive him as long as he is going to be a big soccer star one day, Gio (he is Tazo's younger brother) gets his English in the American Corner and little Lizie is in the Art school that her daddy wanted her to

attend.

## Our Future Plans

In the beginning of September Mike and I are going to Georgia for 3 weeks. We are hoping to visit the kids of fallen soldiers again, extend the group and include the kids of the wounded soldiers as well.

I also want to visit the areas were the big orphanages used to be, especially ones in Aspindza and Mestia. I am still in touch with the director of Aspindza orphanage who is now taking care of a small group of disadvantage kids by herself.

We want to continue the support of vocational training; just a month ago 10 more students graduated from Auto-Life (if you remember we supplied them with uniforms and computers).

Our previous goals with emphasis on education and to fund English classes will remain unchanged.

We will try to make a better arrangements on certain issues that we could not accomplish before. For example, the summer camps for the kids once a year, health resort stay, etc.

Hopefully we will get a better idea when we get there. We are here to help and support the kids in need. The recent events in Ukraine made us consider to extend our activities to orphanages in that area and this might be the topic for the next issue of our newsletter.



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Please help

## GEORGIAN LANGUAGE

The Georgian language is one of the oldest living languages in the world, it is rooted to 4 or 5th century BC and according to one theory it might be the closest to *Aramaic*



language, language of Christ. At the same time, Georgian is an "ergative"\* language, like *Basque*, the surviving non-Indo-European language of Western Europe, which could well have been related to the known ancient non-Indo-European language, *Etruscan*.

Georgian is non-Indo-European language and it's very unique .

\*In ergative languages, the *subject* of *intransitive* verbs is marked in the same case ("absolute") as the *objects* of *transitive* verbs.

The Georgian alphabet was created in the 3rd century BC and it is just one of the 14 existing alphabets throughout the world. The origins of Georgian writing are uncertain, though it was presumably a free adaptation of the Greek alphabet, with new characters invented for the sounds peculiar to Georgian.

The earliest attestation of the language is an inscription of AD 430 in a church in Palestine.

Georgian has a rich literary tradition. The oldest surviving literary work in Georgian is the "[Martyrdom of the Holy Queen Shushanik](#)" from the 5th century AD. The Georgian national epic, "[The Knight in the Panther's Skin](#)" by [Shota Rustaveli](#), dates from the 12th century.



I hope this explains why Georgians get upset when someone calls their language a Russian dialect. The fact that the Georgian language has endured throughout this country's turbulent history is perhaps one of the most important factors in the survival of Georgians and Georgia as a nation.

There is a very interesting short video about Georgian language on the CNN website:

<http://edition.cnn.com/video/#/video/world/2010/04/23/ilist.clancy.georgia.language.cnn>

