



A little help - a big difference

Support for Kids Organization, Inc

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Dear readers and supporters,

Welcome to the first quarterly newsletter of 2013! I was hoping to have more news to share with you, but not much had happened since December. Unfortunately everything slows down in winter and it's not the most productive time in Georgia.

Our representative, Manana Sikharulidze, aka "Little Doll", is doing her best, trying to follow my directions and get things moving, she deals with legal issues, independent audit, banking, monthly stipend to our scholarship recipient, etc. We can't thank her enough for

the job she is doing for the fourth year for free, and on top of that she has to deal with me and my frustrations when the things are not done properly.

The part of the problem that the things are not moving at the pace we would like (besides the 'winter hibernation') are now the changes in the government (I believe I mentioned that since fall 2012 Georgia has a new government). Almost every department and the government agencies have a new appointees and a new staff. So it means that we have to make new contacts and re-introduce ourselves. Some departments, specifically the Child Care Agency, is in transition. At this point we can't even approach them and at the same time we can't do much without their 'blessing'. I'm hoping to establish some new contacts during my visit in September.

In meanwhile, we are trying to continue to support the project - "Skills for Life" which we are trying to accomplish together with one small organization "Life Chance", provide the basic needs to the kids and work on our future plans.

Thanks as always .

Sincerely, *Ani Mdivani-Morrow*



God Parenting Project

During our last fundraiser I mentioned the “God Parenting” Project. The idea is that some of you as an individual, or as an organization can become a God parent for a certain child. A child will be selected from a pool of the most needy kids I dealt with in the past. Some of them are from old orphanages who are now in different small group family homes around the country and the kids from ‘Skills for Life’ Project which consists of Re-Life and Auto-Life .

I have been thinking about this project for a long time and was trying to weigh all the pros and cons. I will list them below along with my thoughts and I would greatly appreciate your input on this topic.

PROS:

1. You can select a child you would like to support as this works with other organizations
2. You are supporting them not only financially, but you are helping his/her development as an individual
3. You are involved and aware of his/her everyday life
4. A child greatly benefits from your support not only financially; it will positively affect a mental well being knowing that somebody cares for him/her
5. \$30 per month per child would help to cover the cost of the daily necessities - they still need some basic clothing, shoes, medicine and items of personal hygiene. Some of this money can even cover and support creative activities like arts and crafts as well as sports and recreation. There are several classes – ceramics, woodwork, sawing, culinary where volunteers teach kids to be creative.

CONS:

1. Selection and management of selected kids. Selection of the needy kids and providing the feedback information to sponsors takes people and time to manage.
2. Receiving the monthly funds requires an automated system for direct deposit with a bank and then reporting to the sponsor. Doing the other bookkeeping required and then to manage it all over again when transferred to Georgia for distribution.
3. The actual distribution of funds and oversight in Georgia as we can’t give money directly to the kids All for that takes time and people to do and we have only volunteers including ourselves.
4. It would take several “pledged” sponsors before we would attempt to set up the system. These are my thoughts so we can try to test this project .

Scholarship Project

As you know, we currently provide monthly scholarship funds for 1 student who will be in his final year in 2014. He has been an amazing person as well as student and will eventually be a great lawyer. We are proud, like I am sure you are, to have been able to help him. We would like to have 2 more students with high potential that we will do the same for in the future but they need to be selected and monitored as we do now.

Agricultural Project

We have been interested in setting up a training program with an agricultural company or farmer who will take some kids at least part of the year as training/work students. We would have to provide transportation and supplement payment to the farm organization. This is still in the “idea” stage as we have not found a farm organization partner interested in taking on the responsibility of the kids.

We have also looked at getting a small plot of land in the city for the kids to plant their own gardens and learn some basic food growing skills. We need access to water for the plot so have yet to find one close to the kids with water available.

Supporting Skills for Life Project

As I mentioned at the beginning of this letter, we continue to support the project - “Skills for Life” which we are trying to accomplish together with the small organization “Life Chance”. There are 10 kids in that program who are studying a service industry (restaurant business) and accounting; it’s part of Re-Life program. The government promised to take care of transportation expense, but did not keep their promise and the City government stopped financing. The project was about to close for this very reason. It was devastating news – breaking a promise to the kids who are so eager to learn and be an equal member of a society. I couldn’t let the program die and during my last visit to Georgia we helped to cover the transportation expenses.

Just a few days ago, the founder of “Life Chance” asked for our financial support again to cover the basic meal expenses for the kids - 520 GEL (equivalent of \$ 325) per month for 3 month period. Breaking down is about \$1.25 per day per kid. There are 10 kids multiply by 26 days = 325. For 3 month period it will be \$975. We are extremely careful on how and on what we spent funds generated from your support. My biggest concern was that requested amount will satisfy the needs of only 10 kids, while the same amount could have been stretched to support a bigger project. But at the end we decided to help them at least for 2 months until the government steps in and some positive changes will be made in this direction.

Ongoing supply of basic clothes etc.

We will continue to get shoes, coats and other basic clothes for the kids in need at various locations. I will check with the Mestia kids [the mountain village kids] as I have contact with the lady who ran the orphanage until it closed and sent some kids back with relatives that could barely afford to feed them.

I stay in touch with some of the people that run the group homes and we will give them help in the form of goods where needed as the government funds were not sufficient to provide everything the kids need.

I will be checking all these things out in September when I visit to see where we can be of most help directly to the kids as always been our mission and with your continued support we have a chance to continue to make kids lives better where we can.



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BIG DIFFERENCE

Your tax-deductable financial gift is the most important action you can take to help this great cause. Please visit our site: www.supportforkids.org

Please help

The Gabriadze Marionette Theatre

The Gabriadze Marionette Theatre was founded over 30 years ago. It has gained a huge international fame and has toured the countries across the globe by participating in the world's biggest international theater festivals – in Avignon,



Edinburgh, New York, Toronto, even in San Diego. Rezo Gabriadze is a writer, stage and screen director, artist, sculptor, and puppeteer. He has directed more than 35 films, including the ones that are jewels of Georgian cinema.

The theater building was built in the 19th century. It is located in Tbilisi's historic centre next to the oldest church in the city.

Written in gold letters on an ornate plaque on the façade is Gabriadze's motto: *Extra Cepam Nihil Cogito Nos Lacrimare (Let Our Tears Come Only From Onions!)*.



One of the main attractions of the theater's architecture is the tower, built by Rezo in 2011. Whenever the tower's clock strikes the hour, two painted doors open and a golden-winged angel appears while a hammer strikes a bell. Twice a day, at 12 pm and at 7 pm, you can watch the marionette performance, *Circle of Life*, with puppets that were all made from Rezo's own sketches. On the lower part of the tower are two

tiled panels made of several hundred tiles, each fashioned and hand painted by him.

To the right of the tower is the entrance to Café Gabriadze, with a terrace in the summer months. Everything from the paintings and posters on the walls to the sculptures and ceramics, from the tables and chairs to the curtains on the windows, is designed by Rezo. All of the tables and chairs have been hand painted by him to show scenes and quotes from his movies and plays. There is even a heart-shaped table for couples in love. I highly recommend and invite you to visit this charming place - it's fun and it's very memorable.

