

Those of you who have visited Dorohoi will know how important the Volkswagen van is to the work. In addition to maintaining the delivery of items to the office and the shop, it is essential for larger items such as beds, mattresses, wheelchairs and other bulky or heavy items. The vehicle has done some 400,000km over some very difficult road conditions. An engine fire in early December meant that it was out of action during part of the pre-Christmas period. A specific donation from a supporter covered the cost of the immediate repairs but the steering pump, starter motor and injector pump still need replacing.



At this time of year there is the additional task, and pleasure, of distributing the Christmas gift boxes to schools, families and to the Downs Syndrome support centre in Dorohoi. When delivering to one school, Beni found he had been given a new job - as Santa Claus. *More photos on our website.*



Forthcoming Events

These dates are correct as at the time of preparing this newsletter - please check!

05th Feb - Lorry from Billingshurst,

12th Mar - Harp Concert, St Francis's Church, Balcombe Road, Horley.

19th Mar - Lorry from Lampeter.

13-17 May - Sponsored cycle ride; East Anglia to South Wales.

28th May - Lorry from Lampeter.

September - Project team in Dorohoi.

26th Nov - Target date for 'Joy in a Box' 2011.

03rd Dec - 2011 Christmas Lorry.

The Romanian Aid Foundation and **Asociația Neemia**

179 Albert Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7HS, UK.

Strada Spiru Haret Nr.9, Dorohoi, Botosani, Romania



The Romanian Aid Foundation

with

Asociația Neemia

Newsletter, January 2011



It is a widely-held view that 2010 was not a good year for many people. The effects of crises both economic and political finally became apparent whilst any hopeful green shoots of recovery were quickly smothered. According to Forbes magazine, the 400 richest Americans increased their collective wealth by some 8%, but nearly a third of them were worse off than they had been a year earlier. If people with such resources are affected, what is it like for those who had virtually no income to begin with? RoAF and AN have suffered their own share of disappointments but there have been great encouragements too. We trust that what appeared to be set-backs in 2010 will prove to have been just preparing the foundations for greater achievements during 2011.

After about three and a half years of sharing premises with Furnistore in Horley, we were advised that they would be ending their lease and it would be necessary for RoAF to find new premises. The relationship with Furnistore was one of great benefit and we would like to record our thanks for their help and hospitality. Overleaf our treasurer, Graham Howard, writes about how the need for a new warehouse was resolved.

The new warehouse does mean higher costs in terms of rent and rates, and it is not so convenient for those based in Horley. However, it does offer greater potential, both in terms of allowing us to spread out a bit and sort the goods more effectively, and also to spread the word about the needs in Romania to a wider audience.

Friday packing has continued throughout the year, with the usual breaks for holidays. Ena Humphreys has retired from leading this group but she has been succeeded by Brian and Pat Gawn. The group meets on most Friday afternoons at Horley Baptist Church, between 13:45 and 15:45, and concentrates on the sorting and packing of clothing, bedding and soft toys ready for transfer to the warehouse. Visitors are welcome to bring such items to the church for packing, or to leave them in the deposit box in the church car park at other times.

People in Romania are still in need so the work of RoAF and AN continues into another year. Thank you all for your interest and support.

The Romanian Aid Foundation and **Asociația Neemia**

Working with Romanian people to bring help to the needy,

Hope through the Christian message and co-operation through joint ventures

Miracles Are Not Coincidences

Some five months ago RoAF had the news that we would have to leave our premises in Horley. During the time since then, not much was achieved in finding a new home for our aid items. As the time grew nearer for our move, with an ever increasing amount of aid arriving, desperation took over in our minds. We looked at numerous warehouses with the same result, too much rent. We asked God for something we may have thought impossible; to give us a warehouse. We wanted a Christian person who had an empty warehouse that we could use.

We eventually found small barn-type premises on a farm. Without realising it immediately, farms mean mess, dampness and vermin, but we managed to get everything transferred. Amid the snow in December a lorry was loaded and sent to Dorohoi. Many hundred Christmas boxes were included.



During our HBC's Got Talent show a man by the name of Jeremy approached us and told us that he owns an empty warehouse, which he wanted to use to finance his ministry as an evangelist but it has remained empty for two and a half years. Twice he has had it almost sold, but on both occasions he did not feel at peace with the proposed purchasers. Were we interested? The warehouse is in Billingshurst. The size is big; two thousand five hundred square feet. The rent will be just over twice that which we have paid in the past, but still half the going rate. The decision was taken to go ahead, we have moved in! God could not have made it clearer to us. He knows both the needs in Dorohoi and in Horley.

Do miracles need confirmation? If they do, we realised that one of our regular Saturday warehousemen lives just 15 minutes away from Billingshurst. The costs of the move from the farm and the first month's rent at the new premises were both covered within days of taking the decision to move. Then a couple who are good supporters donated the cost of a complete lorry for our next load.

Friends, we are living in God's miracle. It just did not come like writing on a wall. It came because we who prayed were desperate for help. We put our trust in God and we were not afraid to ask the impossible. We could be thinking that all this is a coincidence but because we asked God, it is no longer coincidence but a miracle. God will cause us to grow on the faith that we have shown.

Yes, eleven thousand pounds every year is a lot of money, to you and me. Not to our Father. We expect Him to lead us into 2011, showing us Churches and groups with Romania interest in Sussex, Kent and Surrey who might partner with RoAF. God has shown us that this work should continue - could we even pray for an opportunity to buy the warehouse?

Graham Howard

The opening hours are 09:30 to 12:30 each Saturday except during August; the contact phone number is 07515 284797 or 07815 341975.

Activities in Romania

The two-week period prior to Christmas each year is the busiest period for the staff of Asociația Neemia in Dorohoi. It is at this time of year that more people came to the office, asking for help with winter clothing or food; in particular, many people will also ask for help with the cost of heating their homes or buying extra medicines. Typically, about 30 people per day come to the office asking for help; in December this increases by about 50%. It is not possible to address every need but the average donation of clothing, food or other items is worth about £20 per visit. During 2010, goods to the value of approximately £80,000 were given to people asking for help. These items need to be stored and prepared for distribution to their recipients and the team has worked well together to ensure that as many people as possible get the help they need. With impending cuts in the state pension it is inevitable that the number of applicants will continue to rise.

Many of those who were victims of the Dorohoi floods during the summer still do not have proper replacement accommodation whilst others have fallen into debt due to the cost of repairing their houses. Several dozen families are still living in converted containers, with external toilets and communal water supplies. At this time of year, the temperatures are normally well below freezing making these conditions even more difficult.

However, the flood did lead to a new collaboration with a Dutch charity that was able to provide in bulk a variety of foodstuffs such as vegetables and biscuits. These items have been given out to people affected by the flooding and to other people in need, as requested by the donor charity. Asociația Neemia has a number of similar arrangements, using its accumulated local knowledge to offer advice and providing storage and distribution facilities for personal sponsors and similarly-minded charities.

During the autumn the office was extended, to provide a lobby for those awaiting attention. Together with the refurbishment earlier in the year, this has produced a better working environment for the team as well as more privacy, and warmth, for those seeking our help.

