

(This article has been read by the Office of Examination of Foreign Correspondence and determined to be suitable for church newsletters.

In January of this year, just before coming back to the states, I asked a local tv journalist named Julia Gorodedskaya to make a short film of children who live on the streets. "I'll pay you \$200." I said. "I need something to show people back in the states."

So one weekday, we went together to the holes where children live. We spent the afternoon filming. Weeks passed, I kept asking for final cut and it was only days before leaving that Julia handed me the film. There wasn't any time to argue over what should or should not be in it.

How to say this... the film is graphic and complicated. It shows children who are really not grateful for the food they receive... they are too busy sniffing glue. It shows a wealthy woman in fur who tries to knock the camera out of Julia's hands because she doesn't want Americans to see children on Odessa streets. It's full of cursing and swearing.... and unless you understand that even children in happy families are not grateful and that children are children and not completely responsible for their choices ... well I decided not to show the film in America.

But the film had a kind of quality to it and brutal honesty that people many who live here understand. So it was chosen as one of 15 short films for a film festival in Odessa. And Last night I was invited by Julia to attend the first showing.

The theater was packed with people. It's one thing to see your face in a video on the laptop; it's another to see it in on a theater screen. Julia, of course, is ecstatic. Her film is the only documentary in a list of otherwise very artsy films.

So the film will go on tour to Kiev, Karkov and Donetsk. The link below is to the website for Future Shorts.... it's in Russian, but if you scroll down to the bottom and count up 4 films, you will see the little promotional poster for the film. It shows my face looking down the hole at the kids.



I never thought \$200 would be such a spectacular investment. Here's the link:

http://www.promoplus.com.ua/futureshorts_odessa.htm

In other news, a big thanks to Fred Shambach who came all the way from Collierville, TN, near Memphis, to spend 12 days here. He helped with the children and also gave us some help as we think about knocking down some buildings and rebuilding a dormitory. We are hoping for help from the Japanese government and other funds.

See Fred's photo attached. IF YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO WISHES TO FUND A BUILDING PROJECT... well write me.

Im very pleased with the way things are going here. Several kids from the streets who have been living here for the past month are doing very well. I'm surprised. ... I never thought they would stay.

Here we are eating the May Day meal. And there's a picture of the meal! Remember all those Russian tank parades. Well they don't have that here in Odessa.

Right now I'm spending money on a ventilation system for the gymnasium (sportshall they call it)... I just bought a new stove for the kitchen; I'm going to pay for some more dental work. And I'm helping with the salary of a new position I helped create which I call : Program Director for the children. This will put more energy and time into discerning each child's needs and interests... and also enhance the community life of children. The Way Home pays him \$150 a month and I pay \$100. Don't be shocked, a lot of people over here are working for \$250 a month.



I close with this. Today is Saturday; and Lera broke her back tooth. I took her to the dentist. First she went in one door and came out 10 minutes later. A woman came out. You have to pay for her xray. How much is it?

Five grevnas (one dollar).

Oh ok.

Fifteen minutes later the dentist came back from the local pharmacy. (why doesn't his assistant go? Because he has no assistant). He called me in.

With an interpreter I understood that this procedure could be done for less money if I go to the government hospital on Monday. How much will it be I asked the interpreter?

He turned to me with a look that said, I'm afraid to tell you this, "The dentist says it will cost fifty grevnas" (ten dollars).

"I think we will go ahead and do it."

grace and peace,

--

Dr. Robert Gamble, D.Min. Th.M.
thischildhere.org
+380958425307

This Child Here,
C/O Doroga K Domy (The Way Home)
Str. Sofievskaya 10
Odessa, 65082,Ukraine

