



One Heart Bulgaria

HOPE • LIFE • FUTURE
for Orphans

Volume 6, Issue 2

Fall 2008

The Stringhams love the children of Gorna Koznitsa

The Scott and Kathy Stringham family have been dedicated sponsors for the Gorna Koznitsa orphanage since 2003. Gorna Koznitsa is home to 52 mentally handicapped and disabled children ages 7-19. The dilapidated facility is tucked away in a remote village making it difficult to access. The small orphanage staff at Gorna Koznitsa is constantly overwhelmed and discouraged by the children's many needs. Most of the children wet the beds and tear at their mattresses, creating a lot of mess and laundry, not to mention bathing time.

When asked why they chose to sponsor Gorna Koznitsa, Scott Stringham replied: **"...we wanted to help those children who can't help themselves. Having children of our own, it is heart breaking to see that there are children who don't have parents or families to love and take care of them."**

With the help of the Stringham family's sponsorship, One Heart Bulgaria has been able to help alleviate some of the strains and needs at the orphanage by providing boiler repairs for the heating system, water heaters, and a large washing machine. Their sponsorship has also regularly provided for medicines, hygiene supplies, mattress replacements/covers, fresh fruits and vegetables, and detergents.

The Stringham family has enjoyed being in touch with their orphanage, commenting: "It has been rewarding to be involved with the One Heart Bulgaria organization. We've been able to see pictures of the orphanage and the children we have sponsored and it feels good to know we are helping to make their lives a little better. We know these children will receive their reward in heaven."



The Scott and Kathy Stringham family, orphanage sponsors

The Stringhams explain how they first learned about One Heart Bulgaria through a newspaper article a friend showed them. "The article talked about One Heart Bulgaria and their amazing efforts given to the orphanages in Bulgaria. We were impressed by the returned sister missionaries who operated the organization and their selfless service and dedication to orphans in Bulgaria."

One Heart Bulgaria is sincerely grateful for the Stringham family and their dedication to help the children at Gorna Koznitsa have a better life. It is through the good efforts of people like them that One Heart Bulgaria is able to help Bulgarian orphans.

To become an orphanage sponsor please contact Donna Dushku donna.dushku@oneheart-bg.org or call 435-764-3093

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Kids make an impact with their fundraising



Alice Koltchev, age 10, from Campbell, CA, raised funds for musical instruments for the Pravets orphanage because, she

says, "Music programs have always been a part of my education at school and that is why I thought that by helping to raise money to buy instruments, I will help orphans have an outlet for their creativity." Alice designed a wonderful flyer and asked permission to give presentations at school and sell wristbands for \$2 each.

Of her success in raising \$230, Alice says, "I feel really good about what I did to help Pravets/Razliv orphanage. I feel like I'm doing something really beneficial to help kids in need. I've always felt



sad about seeing or hearing about homeless or poor people and I've wanted to help. I feel happy because I have just helped so many kids that don't have a life as good as mine...they at least have to be happy and try to enjoy their life as much as they can....We are planning to travel to Bulgaria next summer and I hope we will have a chance to visit Pravets and meet the kids."

... and so do the grown-ups

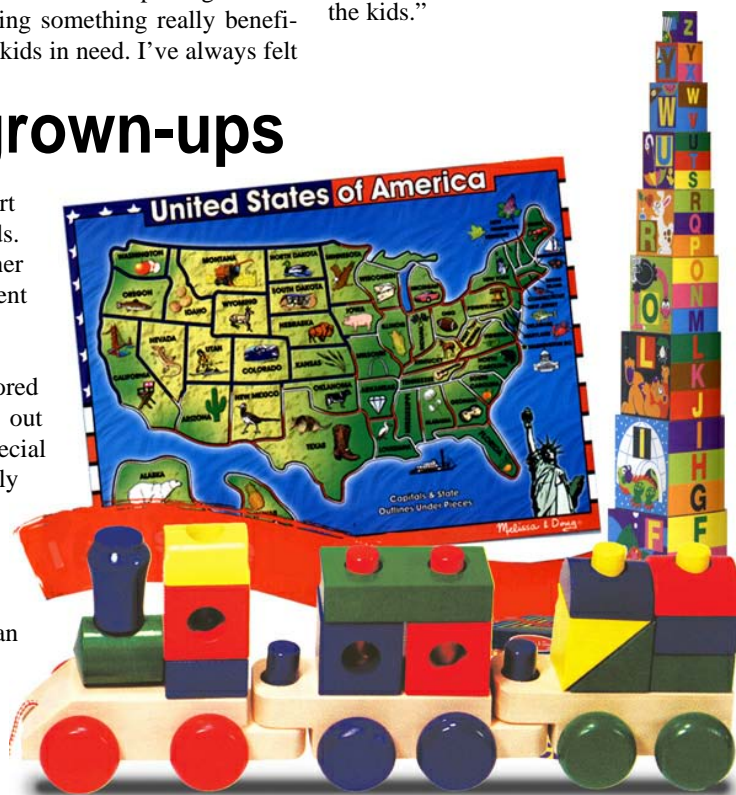
Brittany Daw of Herriman, UT, a longtime One Heart Bulgaria supporter, holds an annual toy sale to raise funds. This year, in a technological twist, she advertised on her blog, informing family and friends of the openhouse event to be held on an evening in October.

That evening, visitors chatted, munched goodies and pored over a Melissa and Doug Company catalog, picking out excellent quality toys at a 25% discount. Through a special arrangement with Melissa and Doug, they were not only able to get a good deal, they also had the pleasure of knowing that one third of the purchase price would go directly to help the orphans of Bulgaria.

After choosing their toys, the participants filled out an order form and paid for their order. After only a couple of weeks, the toys will have arrived at Brittany's house and she will call the buyers to come get them. Easiest Christmas shopping ever!

Brittany reports that the participants ordered over \$1,500 worth of toys, netting \$500 for One Heart Bulgaria.

A friend of Brittany, Simone Whitney, holds a Christmas party each year, to which she invites her neighbors there in Herriman. Everyone brings one plate of goodies to share during the evening of fun and friendliness and they agree to donate to One



Heart Bulgaria rather than giving "neighbor gifts" to each other. They don't actually need to spend any more than they would have, but they know that the "gift" they are giving is truly needed and appreciated rather than over-filling expanding tummies or gathering dust on a shelf. What fund-raising ideas would work for you this Christmas season?

Second graders raise \$300 for play equipment



Michael watches admiringly as his friend Davin reads a presentation on Bulgaria

explaining that all money would go to the poor orphanages in Bulgaria. We suggested that people donate \$20. The response we got was wonderful! We had about 14 children who came to our pizza and movie night held at our house." Michael said, "Davin and I have a goal. Our goal is to host more fundraiser events to raise enough money to provide playground equipment for all the orphanages supported by One-Heart Bulgaria!"

Eight year olds Davin and Michael also made large posters and did a presentation on Oliver Twist and their fundraiser at a local home schooling parents' meeting. They encouraged

After reading the Oliver Twist story as part of his home schooling curriculum, Davin's mom explained to him that there are still orphans and orphanages in the world today, such as those in Bulgaria. Davin explained, "I was shocked to hear that some of these kids were poorly cared for. I wanted to do something to help." After looking up One Heart Bulgaria on the internet, Davin said, "My heart was filled with compassion for the children....I wanted to help them to have a better life. We decided to do a fundraiser with my friend Michael and his mom so that we could do something to make their lives a little brighter."

Michael added his thoughts, "I learned that no one is too young or unable to help those in need. You don't have to be a grown-up or wealthy to make a difference in someone's life." Davin continued, "So, together we planned a pizza and movie night fundraiser for neighbors and friends. I handmade invitations



other home schooling parents to try this project with their own children and were able to collect additional donations and hand out information about One Heart Bulgaria and the orphans.



Are you looking for a gift for someone who has everything?

Give a gift in their name to someone who has nothing.

The perfect gift may be a donation to One Heart Bulgaria for craft supplies, a year's worth of monthly birthday parties, diapers, medical needs, or just the general fund. Send your donation to 165 North Main, Providence, UT 84332, with information about the person you are honoring and what purpose you want the donation used for. One Heart Bulgaria will send them a card announcing your donation in their name and wishing them joy of the season. To talk to someone personally about your gift, call Deborah Gardner at 435-764-3093.

Family Dynamics International reports successful training trip, October 2008

Following up an April assessment, Roberta Stapley and Valerie Randall



An example of the original artwork created by Becky Johnson for the Goodness Character Curriculum picture packet.

completed a very successful training trip to Bulgaria in October in conjunction with One Heart Bulgaria. Ms. Stapley, CEO of Family Dynamics International (FDI), and her associate, Ms. Randall, created a 96-page Caregiver Training Manual for workers in Bulgarian orphanages, as well as a Goodness Character Curriculum for use with the children. Countless hours of donated time and energy, including beautiful original drawings by Becky Johnson, went into the development of the program, which was carefully translated to ensure proper use of the language and representation of the culture.

Training seminars were attended by orphanage directors, caregivers, social workers, psychologists, and government officials representing orphanages in Sofia, Plovdiv, Bratsigovo, Naretchen, and the Rodopi Mountains as well as areas outlying the main cities. The training sessions, which were attended by approximately 100 workers, were wel-



One of the caregivers from Plovdiv who participated in the training.

comed also by several vice-mayors as well as the mayor of Bratsigovo, who rolled out the red carpet with wonderful training facilities and accommodations.

"We were deeply touched by the tears
(Continued on following page)



Participants in the Family Dynamics International/One Heart Bulgaria training program.

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Above: Bratisgovo director Ana Gizdova, left, with One Heart field director Nikolai Gavazov and Family Dynamics International CEO Roberta Stapley. Below: at a training session.

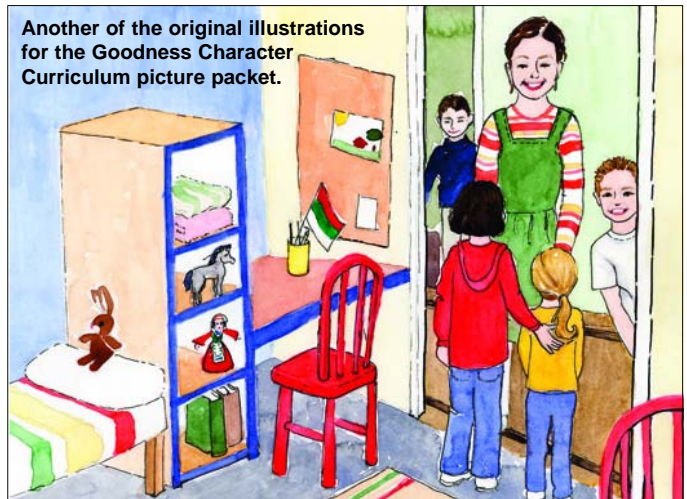


shed by many of the participants in each of the cities as we closed the seminars," remarked Ms. Stapley. "We were overwhelmed with their sincere gratitude and expressions of heartfelt thanks for what had been taught and shared." Many participants expressed their desire for follow-up meetings, and a psychologist from Slaveikov orphanage request-

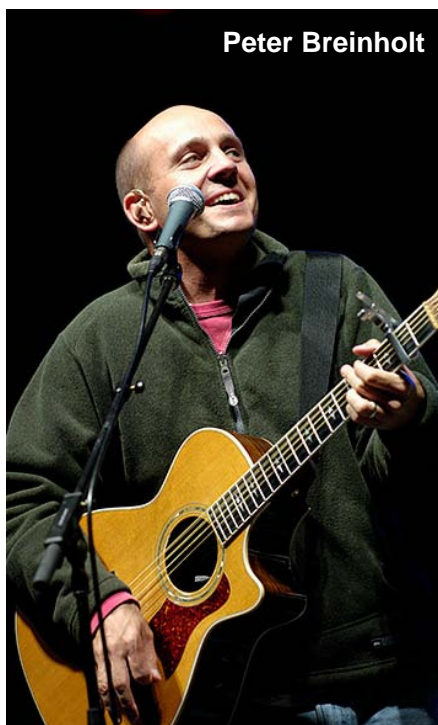
ed extra training manuals so that she could share the training she received with others.

Pending pilot assessments, FDI has committed to produce five more months of "Goodness Character" curriculum for the orphans, targeted for completion in the spring of 2009.

Another of the original illustrations for the Goodness Character Curriculum picture packet.



Popular singers to tour, perform in aid of One Heart Bulgaria



Peter Breinholt

A trio of well-known singers will tour Bulgaria and perform at ten orphanages March 10-18, 2009, to inspire the children through music. Peter Breinholt, Mindy Gledhill and Sam Payne are donating their time and talents for this wonderful project. A photographer will accompany the music group and take pictures that will later be shown at a benefit concert at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. One Heart Bulgaria would be glad to accept donations of Sky Miles for the artists' travel. (To donate miles or travel funds, please contact Deborah Gardner at 435-764-3093.)

One Heart Bulgaria will give out wristbands and treats after the performances at the orphanages and hopes to follow up with music programs for the children.

The follow-up benefit concert is planned for April 14, 2009. Ticket prices will be: Students - \$10 Public - \$12 At door - \$15. Plan now to attend!

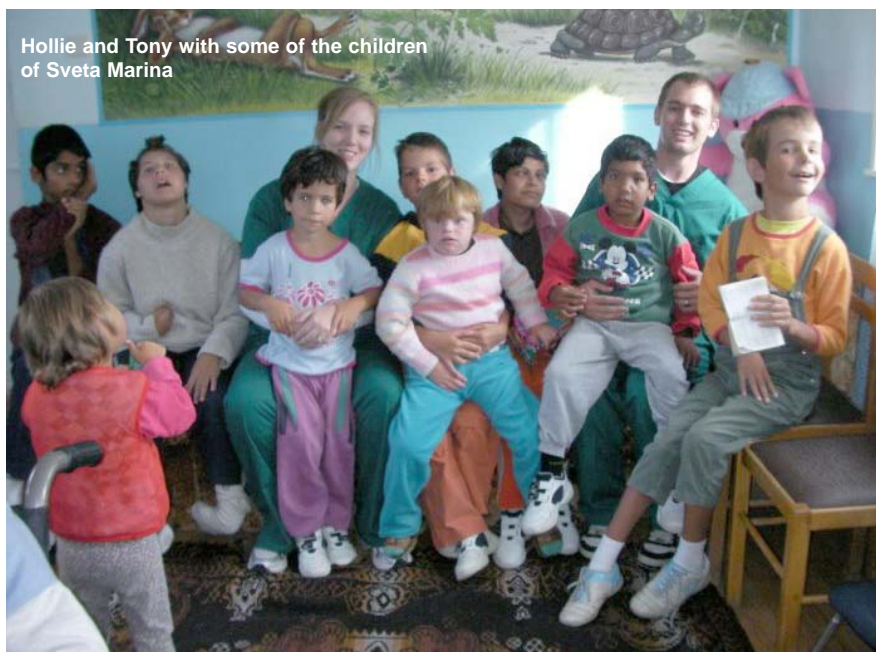


Mindy Gledhill



Sam Payne

Hollie and Tony in Bulgarian orphanages as OHB interns



Hollie and Tony with some of the children of Sveta Marina

Tony Anderson, an LDS returned missionary who served in Bulgaria, and Hollie, his wife of two years, are interns connected to One Heart Bulgaria. Hollie is the first Brigham Young University student to receive internship credit under this program.

Tony has been teaching Hollie to speak Bulgarian. They arrived in Bulgaria on Sept. 11, 2008 and have worked with the children of Sveta Marina and Bratsigovo orphanages. They will be in Bulgaria for a total of three months. Hollie tells about their experiences there:

I didn't know what to expect when I came to Bulgaria. I had learned a little bit about the culture from my husband and pre-internship courses at BYU, but I still didn't really know what kind of world I was entering. As I have come to know the people of this beautiful country, especially through the children in the orphanages I've been working in, I've grown to love them deeply and they have made their way into a special place in my heart.

As Tony and I spent our time in the Bratsigovo orphanage, home to mostly

teenage kids, we realized that they wanted so much to be with us and do things we like to do. One night as we were sitting and talking with them, they asked us about Halloween. We tried to explain the holiday to them the best that we could, but we could tell that they didn't really understand. We decided to plan a Halloween party for them, complete with all of the traditional Halloween rituals so that they could experience it for themselves.

We organized a party committee of kids in the orphanage, who were very excited to be in on the planning. We made decorations, doughnuts, and I even taught a group of girls Michael Jackson's "Thriller" dance, which we performed at both the younger kids' party and the older kids' party. It was amazing to me to see the proud looks of accomplishment on the face of Vasko, a 17-year-old boy, as he carved his very first Jack-O-Lantern. It touched my heart to form such close bonds with the small group of girls I taught the dance to, despite the language barrier. It was not only a huge relief, but so wonderful to see a large group of girls in the orphanage working together to prepare last minute decorations for the party.



Hollie and Tony put on a Halloween party for the children at Bratsigovo. At the party: trying to eat a donut hanging from a string can make you cross-eyed!



Tony played a scary monster for the kids at the Halloween party



These children never fail to warm my heart whenever I see them, and I am so happy that I am here with them. Everything I sacrificed to come seems so small and insignificant when I'm with these kids, and sometimes I wish I never had to leave them.

Thanks!!!

Message from One Heart Bulgaria president Deborah Dushku Gardner:

Are economic conditions affecting charitable donations?

It seems everyone has been affected by the economic conditions here in the U.S. Gas and food prices have skyrocketed. The housing market is in deep trouble. As the economy slows, companies large and small are laying people off, creating unemployment for thousands of families. Many have lost their homes. The stock market has lost over a third of its value, affecting 401Ks, pension plans, retirement plans, and even money markets - and no one knows when things will turn around. Some of the biggest and most famous investment banks in New York have collapsed or sold themselves to other institutions to avoid bankruptcy. It is predicted that nearly 1,000 small banks will close by the end of 2008. This is clearly a time of great financial uncertainty and even crisis. Little wonder people are anxious and concerned about their futures. So why are charitable donations are still trickling in?

Even though more and more individuals and families are finding themselves in financial struggles, many of them are still finding ways to give to others who are even more unfortunate than them-

selves. My heart is touched by the \$10 and \$25 donations that come in as well as the larger donations because I know many of you do not have much to spare at this time. My own family was under sever financial stress this past summer causing us to sell whatever valuable things we could and buying groceries on a credit card. It was a scary time and thankfully it did not last as long as it could have.

Donations have come in from many young children as well who have been touched by the knowledge that other children in the world have no parents and live in formidable conditions. Some of these children asked for donations instead of presents at their birthday parties. Some have sold things at school and others have put on talent show fundraisers. I want to thank the parents of these children for supporting them.

Bulgaria is also going through economical difficulties. Their gas prices are much higher than ours here in the USA and individuals' income is severely taxed. Their housing market has fallen and the

European Union has withdrawn millions of dollars of assistance due to corruption in the Bulgarian government. The Bulgarian government continues to skimp on the nutritional and medical needs of the orphans. Orphanage directors have turned to One Heart Bulgaria yet again for the children's immunizations and flu shots because the government will not pay for these expenses.

Giving to and helping these Bulgarian children feels so good! KNOWING you are making a difference in someone else's life brings great joy. THAT is why donations, however large or small, are still coming in. In addition, research has shown that when someone does a kind act serotonin is released in the brain, elevating their mood.

Also, when someone observes a kind act, the same reaction occurs in the brain. But I like to mainly focus on the feelings that come into my heart as each one of us pulls together to help these children. We are like their far away family. Thank you for all of your support and efforts to help!

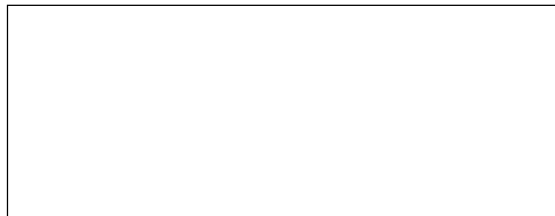
One Heart Bulgaria president honored with service award

Deborah Dushku Gardner, president and co-founder of One Heart Bulgaria, was awarded the Brigham Young University Distinguished Alumni Award in the area of Service to Families for her humanitarian efforts for the Bulgarian orphans.

The award ceremony took place in the newly dedicated Hinckley Center on BYU's campus during homecoming celebrations in September, 2007. In Deborah's acceptance speech she dedicated the award to the Bulgarian orphans who have taught her about hope and courage and who have changed her life.

She also gave due recognition to co-founder Heidi Brown Barker, former president of One Heart Bulgaria and dear friend. Heidi received a similar distinguished alumni award for humanitarian service at BYU Idaho in 2005. Both Deborah and Heidi were the youngest ever recipients of their particular awards.





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One Heart Bulgaria field director Nikolai Gavazov plays Santa for toddlers with hydrocephalus at Sveta Marina orphanage.



Christmas came early this year

Integra Lifesciences medical supply company has contacted One Heart Bulgaria to announce that they are going to donate 50 shunts for the hydrocephalus program. The shunts are valued at \$69,985.00.

This donation can mean fifty more children's lives saved! To date there have been fifty-four hydrocephalus surgeries done in connection with the One Heart Bulgaria hydrocephalus program.

You, too, can make Christmas last through the year for children suffering from hydrocephalus or

other medical problems with your own donation. Or you can make a donation for food, supplies or other purposes. It's all good!

TO SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION RIGHT NOW, CUT OUT AND MAIL TO 561 North 150 West, Centerville, UT 84014
Do you want to make automatic monthly donations? Visit www.oneheart-bg.org and click on "donate" to learn how.



I want to help! Enclosed is my donation to One Heart Bulgaria

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Email _____

Phone _____

☐ Please send me more information about One Heart Bulgaria, a non-profit tax-exempt charitable organization.



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