



## Freezing temps... snow... wind... Gotta luv it.

We rode in on snow, which was still flurrying (is that a word?), it was still -1000° Celsius, and the wind was still cutting to the bone. Yep, it's Christmas at Barskoe.

Christmas holidays mean fewer kids than normal at Barskoe Gorodische Orphanage. From about 100+ during the school year, the holidays will usually drop to 30-40. Many of the children have family of some type to spend the holidays with. It may be grandparents, uncle and aunts, even parents. Frequently, children are taken away from alcoholic or abusive parents. Some parents come drop them off when they can't, or don't want to, take care of the children. But, there are true orphans in the mix.

Last year, the director gave us a secret wish-list they had compiled from the kids. We went and bought everything the kids asked for, from greeting cards to jeans, dolls, and remote control cars. We planned to do the same this year.

**Sidebar:** It is an odd thing, you know? Over the years, as "new" Russians join or accompany us to orphanages, they are shocked. When Vitaly, our "main man in Russia", married his beautiful Alyona, she went with us to the Baby House in Dubovka. We had been there about ten minutes when Alyona started crying.

"What's wrong, Aly?" "I never knew our children lived like this," she said.

Orphans, like the physically and mentally handicapped, which you will never see in public, are the "Invisible People" of Russia. They are considered by the government, and many others, as an embarrassment and a drain on society. "Why do you concern yourself with our garbage?" one woman asked.

Treasures of the Heart will not be around long enough to change Russia. One of our goals is to help equip Russians to be able to provide long term care for these kids. We have networked a few groups to that end. Hopefully, more will follow. Others are taking the initiative.

Students from a college in Suzdal, about 20 minutes down the road, saw a TV report on the orphanage. They didn't even know such an orphanage was in their midst. Their hearts were moved to action. The director gave them the wish-list when they came to see what they could do to help. Once again, our plans changed.

We didn't have the list, but we had gifts galore. Each boy and girl got a pair of blue jeans. Cathedral's Singles Connection provided watches for all the boys and girls.

Another local church provided Barbie dolls for the girls and Hot Wheels for the boys, a lot of Hot Wheels. In fact, there were enough for all the boys to have 6-8 each. We still had Hot Wheels. The girls were looking at the little cars. So... the girls all got a couple of Hot Wheels. They loved them as much as the dolls.

There were piles of craft and school supplies on the tables. Their eyes dazzled at all the colored paper, ink pens, map colors, and related items. The government never provides such things. In fact, some years they get no basic school supplies unless families pay for them.

In addition, instead of smaller individual gifts, Treasures bought 10 bicycles, from little ones with training wheels, to full size. "Every summer, we watch other kids ride their bicycles down the road. We never had one of our own." They are thrilled. Oh! And sparklers! Everywhere! We bought about two jillion sparklers. We gave those kids enough pyrotechnics to level the joint. Well, not really, but they did love the sparklers.

St. Jude's Catholic Church's Youth Group baked sweet rolls and sold them to raise money for a Barskoe project. They took a picture we furnished and made beautiful, silk-screened T-shirts for the Barskoe kids.

Every time Treasures provides a meal for the kids, we watch with a small amount of amazement, and a lot of satisfaction, as the kids eat. The first time we brought a feast, they ate like...well...animals. They had never seen so much food in one place. Any food that hit the filthy floor was immediately grappled for. They ate like they would never have the chance again. It was heart-breaking, to say the least.

*Continued on the next page...*

Now, we see tables lined with well-mannered ladies and gentlemen. Diets, no, their lives, have been changed. You did it. Without your selfless giving, none of this would be possible. I keep saying Treasures did this, Treasures did that, but the truth is, it's God's provision through you. Thank you.

Anyway, I digress...

Barskoe's new director, Ivan, (There is no such Russian name as Ivan. Phonetically, it is Evon, accent on the second syllable. English transliterates it to Ivan. Just thought you wanted to know. ☺) met us at the market in Vladimir. We shopped for chickens, eggs, cheese, butter, oil, flour, fruit, vegetables, treats, you name it, we bought it. Once again, Christmas dinner was a real treat for them.

After all the food, all the gifts, all the fun and frolic, the Christmas Story was presented in a PowerPoint program.

Our parting shot, once again, was a beautiful GIANT Christmas cake for all the kids and workers.

As we prepared to leave, we asked the kids if they had any prayer requests. They were all too bashful to ask for personal prayer, but several asked for help in their education. They were most interested in prayer for access to college and other higher education, once they left the orphanage. Interesting priorities for those kids, don'tcha think? Some of them, at least, see a positive future.

Once again, our task was finished in Barskoe Gorodische, we returned to Moscow for our train ride to St. Petersburg to visit a new orphanage.

See photos of our Barskoe Gorodische orphans on page 3. Check out <http://treasuresoftheheart.org/2004-05mission.htm> for the whole story...

Until next time....

Howard, Donna, and Stephanie  
[www.treasuresoftheheart.org](http://www.treasuresoftheheart.org)

Written by Howard Barlow, Treasures Secretary, photographer, reporter, and historian.

## *2005 mission to Russia*

♥ June 3<sup>rd</sup> to June 17th 2005 ♥

Yes, it's that time again... our ministry suitcases are packed to overflowing, and our team is excited and ready to go...!

Please pray for us as we minister in the following areas.

THE NETHERLANDS - PICK UP MEDICAL EQUIPMENT  
VORONEZH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL  
DUBOVKA BABY HOUSE - BIRTH TO 4 YEARS  
BOBROV BOYS' PRISON FOR 14 TO 21 YEAR OLD

HOME VISITS WITH DESTITUTE FAMILIES  
BARSKOE GORODISCHE ORPHANAGE - 8 TO 14 YEARS  
RESTORE HOME FOR ORPHAN SIBLINGS  
TRAIN STATION KIDS – STREET CHILDREN

Shopping Ministry!?! Yes, that's part of our calling! It is usually cheaper to purchase most of our items in Russia. We negotiate the best prices, always valuing our donors' hard earned money. We'll buy lots of baby clothes for Dubovka Baby House, fresh fruit for all the orphanages, Boys' Prison, and the Children's Hospital. However, we are bringing two huge suitcases filled with over 500 pairs of American socks and 200 pairs of underwear. We will take these particular items with us, as they are far superior quality compared to the Russian items.

We will also shop at Valentino's, in Vladimir, for pots, pans, dishes, glasses, silver wear, table cloths, curtains, clock, bed linens, blankets, pillows, cleaning materials, buckets, mops, etc. for Zhanna and Andre's little home. They are seventeen and sixteen years old, respectively, and had to leave the orphanage (orphans have to leave the orphanage at age sixteen). Their deceased father left them a little hovel of a home, which Treasures is currently restoring. One of Treasures' sponsors is paying for them to go to University. This will give them a safe and decent home while they are attending college.

While in Russia, we received an email from the Netherlands. Mr. Nijkamp said that he had viewed our web site and noticed that one of our hospitals needed an EEG machine and a diathermy coagulator. They value at \$40,000. He has an equipment company and asked if we would like these items. Delightedly, we emailed back with a definite "yes". The pre-team will leave on May 24<sup>th</sup> and will pick up the equipment in Amsterdam. Because of its size, we will travel by train from Amsterdam to Berlin. Then take the Berlin/Moscow train via Poland and Belarus to Russia. It should be quite an adventure!

**Anyone wishing to donate, please make your checks payable to:  
Treasures of the Heart Inc. We are a 501(c)(3) charity and all donations are tax deductible**

*Thanks...*

for blessing the children with a wonderful Christmas ♥



Buying treats for our orphans



Fresh chickens...



Fresh eggs....



Christmas cake...



Christmas dinner...



Roasted chicken...



Happy orphans...!



Barbie dolls



Watches



Small cars for the boys



Surprise for our orphans



New bikes!



New t-shirts and blue jeans!



Happy girls!



and happy boys!

## *Sri Lanka...*

To my amazement, two weeks after returning from Russia, I was standing on the beaches of Sri Lanka. I went as a team member with YWAM (Youth with a Mission), where I helped clean water wells.

We thought my mission was to travel across Sri Lanka, to the town of Batticaloa, to meet with Pastor Dayalan Sanders. Pastor Sanders and his boat load of orphans were saved from the tsunami by God and a tiny boat. It was a heart-warming meeting. I am sure we will be helping in some manner. But, God had another appointment in mind for Treasures.

Pastor Yogesh Mudalige designated the families whose wells needed cleaning. Over the 12 days I was there, a bond was formed with the pastor and his family. Their desire is to build an orphanage next to the new church they hope to purchase.

Several team members came home looking for ways to help raise the money to purchase the property and existing buildings. Praise God, with help from many different areas, the property will be purchased April 20.

I am hoping to return to Sri Lanka soon to help Pastor Yogesh. At this point, the government is not letting anyone open an orphanage. They are allowing him to care for orphans after school. At least, it is a beginning.

Pastor Yogesh, "Father", to the locals, and his wife, Angela, have a busy ministry to the Buddhist kids. They have after-school classes. They provide food, clothing, and Christian teaching. The kids love it. Treasures plans to help this program.

The government is worried about the motives of people taking in all the kids. They have good reason, as many of the tsunami orphans have been fraudulently claimed.

Hopefully, Pastor Yogesh will be able to start taking kids in soon. Treasures will be ready to furnish the facility with beds, school supplies, clothing, food, and other needs.

Pastor Yogesh and Angela have put their life on the line, literally, for the cause of Christ. They are the lone Christian lighthouse in their area. They boldly preach and live the Gospel to a Buddhist world.

One of the great blessings of my life is to have met the Mudalige family. I thank the Lord for that gift.

***Written by Howard Barlow***

<http://www.treasuresoftheheart.org/tsunami.asp>

## *Zhanna & Andrey*

With God's help, we have provided a healthy, safe environment for our Barskoe Gorodische kids until they reach the age of 16. At 16, they are ushered into the world, as prepared as an orphaned sixteen year old can be. The staff works hard to find technical schools for them to attend. But, some of the kids have a greater potential than tech school. They desire to attend college.

Our dream has been to provide a Treasures Home for these kids, where we could find house parents to care for them. They would have a home setting and a church family. We have found generous sponsors with the same vision and have been willing to sponsor orphans. It just has not worked out. When a dream does not happen, we stop and wait.

Treasures partnered with a church in Vladimir to care for three street kids. The oldest girl left the home for places unknown, but the two boys are thriving. They are smart kids and are doing well in school. The house mom is a precious young woman who has put her life on hold to care for these boys.

Zhanna "graduated" from BG this year, and her brother, Andre, has one more year of school. He is living in the school dorm. A couple, who joined us on our 2002 Dental Team, fell in love with these two kids. They have taken care of their needs for the past three years. By providing birthday and Christmas gifts, trips into town to visit with Vitaly and his family, meals, and school needs, the couple has shown them what family can mean.

Last year, their father died and left them an apartment. We received photos of the apartment. It was so disturbing, we knew we had to do something to help Zhanna and Andre. They have heat, but no bathroom, beds, or any furnishings. They must visit their aunt to shower, and it is unclear how far she lives from their apartment.

This year, we would like to remodel and furnish their apartment. If you would like to support this project, we will make the purchases on our June visit. We estimate \$2,000 more is needed to make this home livable. The bathroom problem will be addressed after they are in a safe environment.

[http://treasuresoftheheart.org/zhanna\\_andre.htm](http://treasuresoftheheart.org/zhanna_andre.htm)

♥ **E-mail [stephanie@treasuresoftheheart.org](mailto:stephanie@treasuresoftheheart.org) to request updates re Treasures adventures!** ♥

Executive Board: Stephanie Blackstone, President | Donna Barlow, Treasurer | Howard Barlow, Secretary  
We are a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Organization serving children around the globe.