

The project for the deaf orphans took place on Sunday April 2, 2006. The grant from the Yamanaka grant became the seed money for this project. Another donor donated approximately \$115 for art supplies, stationary, crayons, coloring books, and stuffed animals for the kids. My primary site, Khmelnytsky Regional Welfare Fund, Hesel-Besht, also donated clothes and food for the kids. A group of 7 people traveled to the small village of Nove Ushitsa in the southwestern area of the Khmelnytsky Oblast. The other people who went there were the project manager for Podillya Pershyi (my secondary site and the organization which organized this project), two staff members from Hesel-Besht, my star pupil from my American Sign Language class (Valya) and her daughter (Sveta). There is also a PCV in Nove Ushitsa who joined us for the day.

It is hard to imagine what life is like for a deaf orphan in a small Ukrainian village. We arrived and the kids were thrilled to have visitors. It was quite clear that they do not get many visitors and they welcomed us very warmly. Valya and her daughter Sveta took the lead with the kids since they speak Russian Sign Language. We played a variety of games with the kids. At one point, we were playing musical chairs – by clapping out hands and stomping our feet to get them to feel when they needed to sit. We made sure that every kid won at one of the games and got a small prize. Valya and I then spoke in American Sign Language and the kids were FASCINATED to see that English and Russian signs are not all the same. This was the first time they were ever exposed to another type of sign language and this had a tremendous impact on them. They were very sad to see us leave and they all wanted hugs and kisses.

Since we were not able to purchase pillows and blankets for all of the kids, the director will give them out on an as needed basis.

In a separate e-mail - I will send you a link to my photos from the events, which have been uploaded at www.snapfish.com.

I will be returning to the US on April 7. I will spend a couple of weeks on the east coast with my family and then return to Los Angeles on April 20.

Attached are also scanned copies of the receipts. (I will mail the actual receipts once I get back to the US.) Please note that \$1 was equal to 5.11 Ukrainian hryvin (rph) on March 26, 2006 – the day when the money was converted. Although the Yamanka grant was for \$185 – I copied receipts that total more than that amount as the receipts do not equal that exact amount. I did not scan the other receipts for everything that we purchased with money from other donors.

6 Pillows – 28 rph each = \$32.88
2 Blankets – 70 rph each = \$27.40
2 Blankets – 60 phh each = \$23.48
2 blankets – 60 rph each = \$23.48
Water paints / pencils/ coloring books - 245.90 rph = \$48.12
Paper / colored paper / pencils - 208.01 rph = \$40.70
Total \$196.06

Thanks so much again for this grant. I look forward to getting involved with the RPCVLA group soon.

Jeffrey Janis