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BECK'S NEWSLETTER

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Dear friends,

Visiting an elderly couple from the Prejmer church, that we pastored the first years of our time in Romania, the lady looked at me and said in a serious voice: "Ebbe, you have aged"! It took me by surprise because neither me nor Elke feel like that. However our new family schedule tells us that a new phase of life has come: Common family meals have become rare. Andi goes to school in the morning, Jonathan and Anna in the afternoon. Jonathan returns only at half past 8 p.m. The positive part is that we have more freedom. Elke has now more time available. She takes presently a 6 month course to be certified as a professional cook and will take on more responsibility in the PDF ministry.

On our summer holiday, the family counsel decided on a "Tour de Germany" visiting old friends, Elke's brother and historical sites in the northern part of Germany. Our kids are Germans, but have never really seen that country. We saw the Dome in Cologne, spent a few days at the East Sea on Rügen, where the water was freezing compared to Romania, and enjoyed mostly visiting Berlin. Unluckily, we were not the only visitors there, and at the Reichstag there was a lineup of about 100 meters. Andi, our youngest, wanted to line up, so I joined him. Shortly after lining up a lady came up to us and asked: "Do you want to use the side entrance, we offer this possibility to families with small children." This special treatment felt so good, we enjoyed the view from the Reichstag double and learned that a small treat can produce a lot of satisfaction.

Over Christmas we spent 4 weeks in Austria and Germany at our parents place. One reason was Elke's Dad's 70th birthday in January. It was a great family reunion. We also enjoyed a few days of great skiing in Austria, where I attended Tauernhof's Ski Instructor Training.



MINISTRY 2007

Looking back on 2007 we are amazed and thankful about what our Lord Jesus has done.

In our social missionary work in **Block 14**, we were able to renovate the 3 rooms, put in a bathroom and offer an afternoon program for the older kids, helping them as well with their home work. Still, a problem remains the leaking roof. When it rains we have to collect the water in buckets, because the water runs all the way from the 5th floor to the ground floor. In the kid's club ministry "**Micii Exploratori**", we put an emphasis on leadership training. We discovered that mature and dedicated leaders are crucial for the development of the clubs. The summer training camps had a strong impact on our leaders.

In our **summer camp** season we experienced Jesus touching lives, especially in difficult circumstances. Unexpectedly in July a state control followed by two TV posts checked our camp due to a case of Salmonellae in another camp. Due to missing legislation for tent camps in Romania they applied hygienic standards for hotels and our camp kitchen did not match these standards, so it was closed down. About at the same time our neighbor that supplied us with electricity sold his house and the new owner cut off the electricity. We decided to still run the teenage camp with 120 persons using catering service and a generator. Certainly the camp was no financial success, but God talked in a very special way and there has been a lot of good counseling and life changing decisions.

A privilege and challenge at the same time was the opportunity to share the gospel to two Muslim groups from the Turkish minority in Romania, one at the kids camp, the other at the survival course. Most of them were illiterate, from very poor background. One guy hiked 100 km through rugged mountains wearing slippers.

In 2008 we plan to extend our outdoor ministry with the construction of a **ropes course**. Joseph Whipple, a young man from Alaska will join us in **April** to plan and coordinate this, and a group from Bethany Community Church Seattle, that has supported us already several years organizing an Outdoor Ministry Training, will help us with the construction in May.



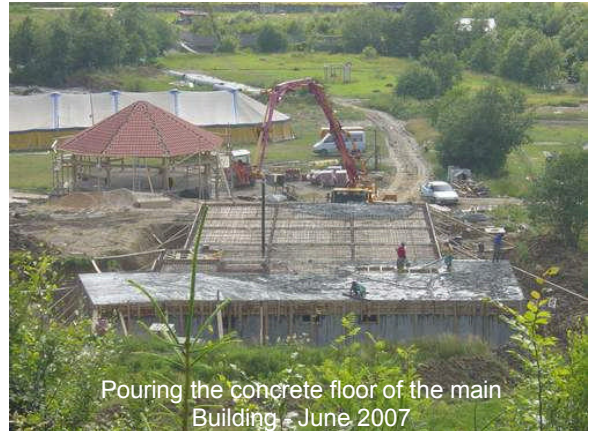
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BUILDING PROJECT

A SUMMER FILLED WITH CHALLENGES AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Last October, Sami Raducanu, joined our staff. He is an architect and took over the planning and contracting work for the building project. For 8 months I had this responsibility added to my other responsibilities, and I was at my limits. A few extracts from the construction diary:

- February 2007, we discover that the man from the Prejmer church that allowed us to store our construction wood in his barn sold the wood worth 4000Euros. He says he has no money to pay us back.
- June 2007, a group of 20 carpenters from the Stuttgart carpentry school arrived to construct the roof of the Pavilion, but the wood that was ordered in February is not there. For about two months we insisted with phone calls and visits at the saw mill and a lot of prayer. One day after the arrival of the group they finally delivered the wood.
- 27th of June, (I will never forget it because it was our 15th wedding day) we pour the concrete floor on the basement of the main building. The concrete arrives 6 hours later than agreed. The concrete pump driver installs his truck against our advice on a bad spot. By then it rained and the first truck slips into the ditch and blocks the road. We have to empty it manually. An angry construction worker threatens the driver of the concrete pump that he will cut his throat unless he moves his truck. Being scared the man demounts his truck and wants to leave. What a mess... but a cup of coffee and the Holy Spirit made it possible that we somehow managed to pour the 80m³ of concrete on that day.
- July, the company where we had ordered our windows got bankrupt. After 6 months of insisting we finally received all windows, some of them in pieces that we had to put together ourselves.



Pouring the concrete floor of the main Building - June 2007

In one of his books, Eugene Peterson, writes that “spiritual life happens not primarily in the church, but in every day life”. Jesus wants to shine through me in the midst of all these problems. It has been a learning process for me to let this happen during the last year, I failed quite a bit, and I learned to pray.

Our goal for 2007 was to finish the infrastructure and the ground floor of the main building so that our construction team can move there. By God’s help (and this is not just an empty phrase) we are close to that goal and hope to get there by April.

Our micro hydro power plant project has advanced and we hope to finish this year. This project is financed and built by a youth group from Germany, and they were greatly encouraged by receiving an award for this project that was given to them in Berlin by the president’s wife, Mrs Kohler.



Carpentry school Stuttgart
Construction of Pavilion Roof

Last summer we had all together around 120 construction volunteers on our site. Even though it was not always easy to coordinate this, they were a big encouragement to us. We were quite surprised to receive reports on how our Lord Jesus worked in the hearts of those volunteers through the messages they heard and presence of Christ they experienced working together with our staff. A divided youth group has reunited when returning to Germany. For 2008 we have already several groups announced, among them a group of 20 policemen from Germany. We are curious to see on how God will use the 2008 construction camps.

It is also encouraging that our construction team is growing. Last spring Denis was alone with one volunteer. Since October we have 3 volunteers and in August 2008 a carpenter from the US, Dean Sexton, will join us on long term staff on the construction site.

After returning to Romania in January, we found a lot of Christmas letters. We enjoy reading those, and we want to let you know what is going on in our lives here in Romania as well.

Eberhard and Elke with Jonathan, Anna, and Andreas.

For support use the following contacts:

From North America

you can write a check payable to Torchbearers and mail it to Torchbearers, PO Box 3340, Estes Park CO 80517. Please specify on the check or a note: “Torchbearers Romania, Project Center”.

To send support **from other countries**, you can wire money directly to our bank account in Romania:

As. Purtatorii de Facie, Banc: Banc Post Brasov, Str. M.Kogalniceanu 13, 500173 Brasov

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