

Romania Project

Chimes have been ringing in Romania since 2001 thanks to a generous gift from Area 2, Malmark, Schulmerich, Volkwein and Jeffers. The chimes are in the town of Brad, located in the Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania (the northwest portion of the country). Area 2 continues to support the program financially and with visits to these wonderful ringers.

Who are these wonderful ringers? The original group was made up of orphans from Casa Emanuel in Criscior (built by the International Children's Aid Foundation – ICAF). Later, ringers were added from the high school in nearby Brad (7 km), creating a combined group of students which continues to ring regularly. This past August and September I had the opportunity to visit with the ringers, to meet and play with children from the orphanage, and to meet their director and learn more about the musical happenings in Brad and Criscior.

Two groups of ringers are currently practicing in the Christian Center in Brad. Beginning ringers are learning the rudiments of musical notation and proper ringing of handchimes. The more advanced group is working on level 2 music (occasionally level 3) and is busy preparing for concerts in the area. A third group is now being formed which will target members of the community who will be staying for more than the four years of high school.

The director, Cip (pronounced Chip), is an energetic and enthusiastic young man, as well as an outstanding teacher. He earned his Master's Degree in choral and orchestral conducting and is now the music teacher in the high school in Brad. He has neither a chorus nor an orchestra, but the handchimes have flourished under his guidance.

As we look to the future of our Romania Project, we hope to continue supporting the basic needs of the ringers, we hope to add to their music library, and we would like to introduce handbells into the program. The next mission trip to Criscior will be July 10-19, 2015 and if anyone from Area 2 is interested in going, please contact Rich Pinkerton or Marilyn Shenenberger. The program is strong, the leadership is outstanding, and these ensembles make a musical FAMILY for students in the orphanage! Based upon what I observed while visiting, the Area 2 investment of providing chimes for this program has certainly proven to be rewarding.

For more information on ICAF: <http://icafkids.org/home>

2012 Mission Trip: http://icafkids.org/latest_news

2006 Mission Trip: http://www.bhccml.com/web_docs/2006_01.pdf

** And if you know of a used 3 octave set of handbells that is available, please contact Rich Pinkerton at rich@spchurch.org or Marilyn Shenenberger at handbelle@comcast.net (or text her at: 609-502-3642).