



*Relief for Human Need Worldwide*

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# A Warm Merry Christmas



Orphans say "Thank You"

Imagine yourself in the winter of 2009, in a small village in a former Soviet Republic, where people live in unthinkable circumstances. Many of the small, dilapidated homes have only a tiny wood burning stove, and limited, if any insulation. The bone chilling winter seems to last forever. Without adequate heat or warm clothing, only the sturdy ones last through the long brutal winter. Furnishings are meager, jobs are non-existent, and luxuries like a change of clothing, a pair of shoes with the sole intact, or a cup of warm tea are just a dream. The handicapped or disabled are

literally like prisoners, trapped in their homes, because wheelchairs are either not available, or are too expensive. In orphanages, the children are lined up three to a bed, clinging to each other for warmth. There is no escape. You are trapped in this helpless, hopeless state of poverty, with gnawing hunger as a constant companion.

Fast forward to late August of 2010. A request came for a shipment of humanitarian aid for those suffering people. Orphan Grain Train workers, moved by the accounts of the poverty, quickly assembled a shipment of requested items for the children

and families. A 40 ft. oceangoing container of humanitarian aid, containing quilts, mercy kits (hygiene kits), PETs™ (hand pedaled wheelchairs), winter clothing and medical supplies, arrived just in time to be an early Christmas present.

Wide smiles and tears of joy were the unmistakable signs of desperate people who were given hope with this shipment. Over 700 needy families and elderly people, and about 457 orphans living in unimaginable poverty benefitted from this life-preserving humanitarian aid. Read their stories on the next two pages.

# Thank You's from Our Recipients

The following stories and thank you's from our recipients have been translated into English by native Russian speakers there in the former Soviet republic. We hope you will find them to be heartwarming. These words of thanks contain a few grammatical and spelling errors, but are unedited, as we received them:



Gheorghe with his new PET™ wheelchair.

**Beregoi Gheorghe** 13 years old lives in the village of Rezeni, the boy lives with his mom and dad and 4 other brothers. Gheorghe is handicapped he can't walk he was born with his legs crippled (his heels are up) he really wants to go to school like other kids of his age but he can't walk and for his mom to carry him it's too far and too hard, so the teacher comes home to do home schooling with him, but Gheorghe's wish is to go to school like others, to go and watch how kids are playing soccer on the field not far from his house. In Beregoi family just the father works in construction but his salary is too small for 5 kids and 2 adults, they go through hard times they can't afford to many things.

Gheorghe was so happy to receive a PET wheelchair it was like his own car this is amazing the entire family is happy for him now he doesn't need somebody to carry him he can go where he wants to, it gives him more confidence and independence, finally he can get more freedom to do the things he couldn't do before. Maybe he will go to school now that he has the wheelchair. Thank you so much for sending PET wheelchairs this is a big help especially for handicapped people that can't use their legs but they can use their hands. Even the mayor and the social assistant of the village were impressed of the PET wheelchairs how accessible they are and with big wheels exactly for the village roads.

**Bostan family** from the village of Maximovca is a family with 3 children, 2 boys and a girl they live just with their mom because the father died a few month ago. After death of the father Ana the mother got into a bad depression and because of that she lost her job she got thick for a while, she is much better now. She doesn't know how she is going to raise 3 children alone with no job, they tried to sell what they had but there is no more thing to sell. Ana tries to smile even if she is going through a hard life she tries to do her best to be strong for her children. This family loved their clothes that they received and the blankets also. They can't afford to buy this, Ana smiled and thanked for what she got for her family we were happy to see a smile on Ana's face. Thank you for your generosity that brings happiness and smiles.



Grateful young widow with children

# Thank You From Our Recipients

**Oxana and Adrian Capatina from village of Rusestii Noi** (brother and sister from a very poor family): "I really wanted to have clothes like the girls in my class but I knew that mom can't afford them with her small salary. My heart was full of joy when I found in my box skirts and tops and pants and sweaters and many other things that I really needed and I couldn't dream about. Thank you so much for your generosity on behalf of my family."

**Orphanage of Tocuz has 87 kids** and after receiving blankets from Bible Mission the director Daranuta Lucheria wrote a thank you letter that says: "To our friends. The children from our orphanage from Tocuz district of Causeni express their thanks for your support, it came at the right moment. The blankets you sent us will be for use in the winter time when it's cold and chilly. You brought lots of happiness to the children that need affection

and spiritual help. The children promise that they will be good in school, to listen and to keep your love that you showed them through your gesture in their hearts. Thank you for the beautiful gift and we will pray to God to give you health. May that your conscience will always be lit by the godly purge who guides us to bring happiness and achievements. With much affection children of Tocuz orphanage and the director Daranuta Lucheria."



Orphan girl with comfortable quilts.



Orphans happy to have quilts.

## Will You Help?

It is obvious that the people of these former Soviet republics are in dire need of the basics of life, clothing, blankets, hygiene kits, medical and hospital supplies. Even in their unbelievable need, they are grateful to God for what they have.

God has made a commitment to His people

in that place, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you **hope** and a **future**." Jeremiah 29:10-12 (NIV)

Maybe you would like to partner with Orphan Grain Train to bring hope to people living in poverty, throughout the world. Your gift of just

\$10 will ship a box the size of an apple crate, filled with relief supplies, to someone desperate for help. Orphan Grain Train's distribution partners will hand deliver it to an orphan or needy family. Wherever those relief supplies are delivered, God's Word of hope and forgiveness is also shared.

# Kyrgyzstan Firefighters Say Thanks



Colonel Arzymamatov with firefighter gear.

Firefighters in Kyrgyzstan now have firefighter gear, thanks to the Westbend, Iowa Fire Department. The fire department recently purchased new gear, and decided to donate their old gear (24 suits) to Orphan Grain Train. The following is a thank you from our recipient in Kyrgyzstan: (Note: OGT 1115G is the shipping container number)

*Today we gave out the firefighting clothing that was received with the OGT 1115G to the Firefighting service under the Ministry on Emergency Situations of the Kyrgyz Republic. Colonel Arzymamatov, the Head of the Material Support Dept. of the Firefighting service, personally came to our Fund in order to collect the equipment. He said, all 24 firefighting clothing sets would be sent to the newly established Fire Department of the Jelal-Abad oblasts of Kyrgyzstan. In June, 2010 political and ethnical tensions caused mass riots and bloodshed in the Osh and*

*Jelal-Abad oblasts of Kyrgyzstan. Hundreds of people were killed and thousands of buildings were burnt down in those clashes. Now the Ministry on Emergency Situations is reinforcing the firefighting service in those oblasts and the firefighting equipment from OGT 1115 came in handy. All in all, the firefighting service of Kyrgyzstan counts about 3000 firemen. Blessings.*

The Fire Chief from Westbend, Iowa said, "The smiles on those guys faces is priceless. I was so glad that we could find a use for the gear..."

In addition to the firefighter gear, the Orphan Grain Train shipment contained dental chairs, hospital beds, hospital equipment, linens, orthopedic supplies, all terrain, hand pedal (PET™) wheelchairs, school desks, school supplies, quilts and clothing. Kyrgyzstan is another former Soviet republic in dire need of the basics of life.

## Convention News

If you are one of our many fans who have enjoyed the convention in the past, hold on to your hats! Orphan Grain Train's board of directors has recently decided to make the convention even better, by going to a bi-annual convention. Previous attendees have enjoyed the motivating speakers, informative break-out sessions, and uplifting stories. It is hoped, that with this change, even more people will be able to take advantage of the Orphan Grain Train Convention experience. The convention will be held on the even numbered years, beginning in 2012. Mark your calendars now for the next convention to be held in Norfolk, Nebraska on September 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012. (Note: There will be no 2011 Convention)

## Daily Updates Available

Thousands of people have enjoyed following our daily updates now available on Facebook. Information about shipments, recipients, prayer requests, photos, or Orphan Grain Train trivia is posted each day. Get onboard, and check us out.



## Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thrivent's charitable gift program, THRIVENT CHOICE, has an easy way to find out if you have Choice Dollars, and to direct those dollars to ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN, INC.

### 1... CALL 1-800-847-4836

An automated system will answer the phone with a message that ends with the words, "Briefly, how can I help you today?"

### 2... Speak the Words: "CHOICE DOLLARS"

The receptionist will come on the line and ask a few questions to verify your account information.

### 3... Please select ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN, INC.

As your charitable organization

Thank you for your past and present support. God Bless You.

# Tornado Alley

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Joplin, Missouri, was miraculously spared heavy damage from the recent tornado that wreaked havoc on nearly a third of the city. Only a block from the church, homes were destroyed. Church members responded to the death and destruction with an act of service. Knowing that God would provide, they took a leap of faith and opened their church and school to everyone who needed help. Volunteers organized and manned a relief center, complete with donated supplies, meals, medical and spiritual care. It seems that this church was spared so that it could serve as the oasis of hope in a time of desperate need.

Orphan Grain Train's involvement with the Joplin tornado relief effort began as soon as word of the disaster was received. While waiting for permission from FEMA to enter the area, supplies were gathered, boxed and loaded on pallets for shipping. Generous people all over the country

donated enough tarps, tools, hygiene kits, bottled water and other needed items to fill two semi-loads. In addition to these large shipments, Orphan Grain Train hauled in three mobile storage units. Over the next days and weeks, the relief center will gradually be moved from the school to these storage units.

In order to begin the set-up of a volunteer village, for the long term process of rebuilding, Orphan Grain Train has brought in the first mobile unit, outfitted with showers.

Other units such as mobile bunk bed units and an industrial kitchen unit are possibilities for the future. These provisions will allow volunteers to stay in Joplin to help rebuild, without burdening the people they are trying to help.

Orphan Grain Train continues to work to meet the needs of the tornado victims, not only in Joplin, but also in Birmingham. As in past disasters, Orphan Grain Train will be there for the long haul, no matter how long that may be.



Aftermath of Joplin tornado.

# Where is Orphan Grain Train?

The role of Orphan Grain Train in disaster relief is a unique one. Immediately following a large domestic disaster, FEMA and the Red Cross are the first responders. While the search for survivors is methodically conducted, the Red Cross provides food, water, and shelter. Other relief agencies are not allowed in until this process is complete. During this time, Orphan Grain's disaster coordinators are in constant contact with FEMA, with church leaders, and with people in the area, so that they know exactly what help is needed. A plea is then

sent out to the vast network of volunteers across the country as well as newspapers and radio stations for the needed items. Within days, the wheels of Orphan Grain Train are ready to roll.

In major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, and now Joplin, Missouri, Orphan Grain Train sets up a mobile volunteer village so that volunteers can stay for days or weeks, to rebuild the area, without being a burden to anyone. A volunteer village consists of mobile units that have been outfitted with bunk beds, showers,

or laundry facilities. There is even a mobile unit that houses an institutional kitchen, for feeding large groups of volunteers. In the aftermath of the tornado that struck Greensburg, Kansas, a mobile chapel was constructed, which remains there, and is being used. Mobile units are in use today for volunteers still rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina. Orphan Grain Train does a fantastic job of helping with the long haul, sometimes years after the Red Cross and other agencies have left.

# Dominican Republic Thanks

Two 40 ft. shipping containers of relief supplies, bound for the Dominican Republic were loaded in January at Orphan Grain Train branches in St. Louis, and Wisconsin. They arrived at Iglesia Evangelica Luterna in February, and contained everything from hospital linens and medical equipment, to school desks and supplies. The following is a portion of a thank you from a missionary in the Dominican Republic:



Toddler now has clothing and food.

We received the container into our hands on the 25th of February. The missionaries along with some church members from Palmar Arriba unloaded it into the night!

We are making wonderful use of the desks, book shelves, filing cabinets, and fridge at our school. These have been a real blessing to the 90+ children that attend and will help us to expand next year and the years to come to include a Jr. High, High School, and vocational training programs for adults.

The mattresses could not have come at a better time for our orphan children with developmental disabilities in our group home in Palmar. The 'mattresses' they had were used 3" foam pads. They are sleeping much more comfortably. They are also sporting new clothes which were also very much needed since the children were handed over to us with no clothing or possessions. Stephanie is making use of one of the walkers which we adapted so that she can learn how to walk!

We have made use of the padded chairs in our mission office as well as one of the kitchen tables that was sent. The books that were sent down (Arch Books and Hear Me Read books) will be organized into sets and then distributed to our school classrooms, our missions, and churches.

We thank you again for all that you and your church and team of volunteers did to serve our mission in the D.R. May the Lord continue to bless your efforts of evangelism and service in your community and around the world. Blessings.



Thank you for new shoes.

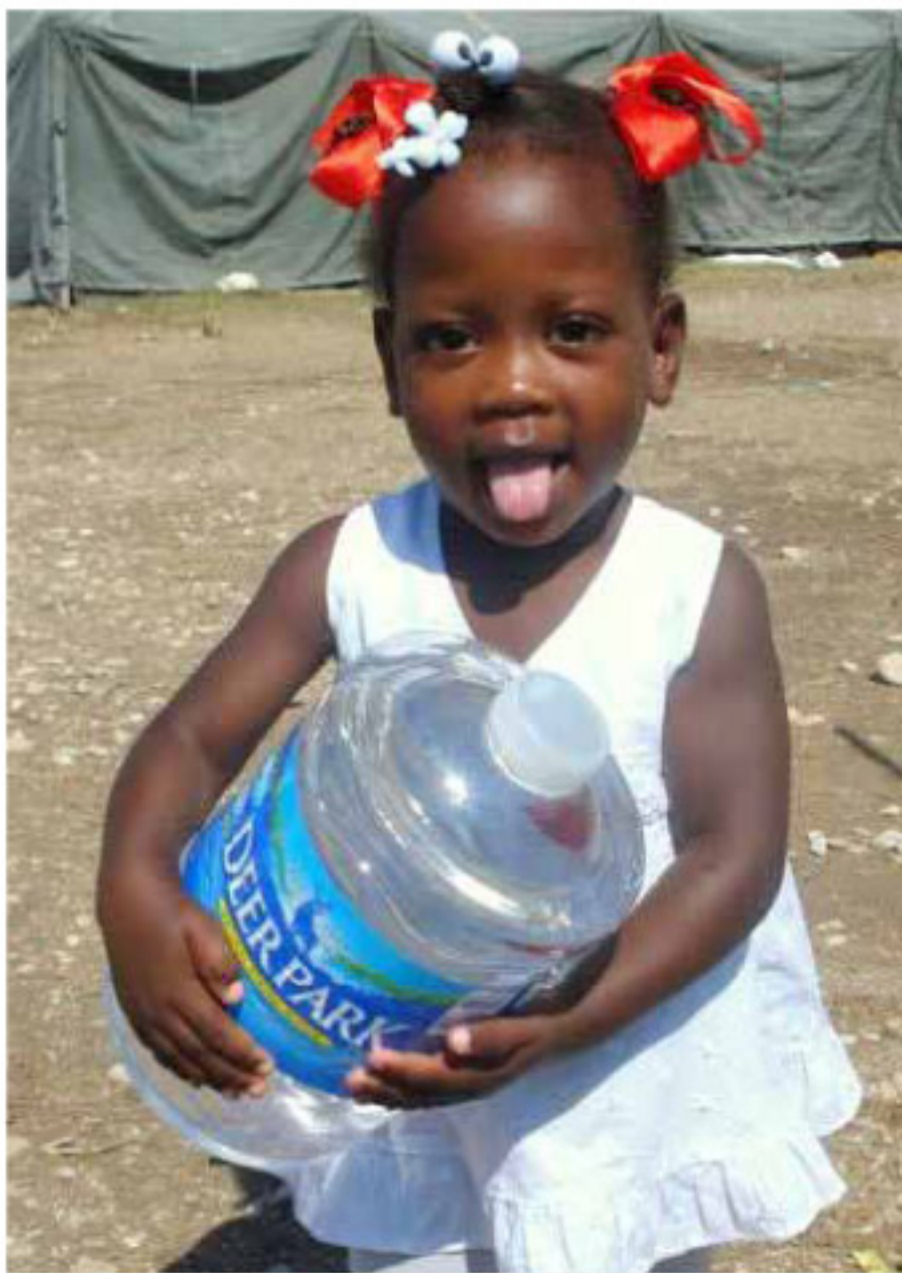
# Project Scrub Bucket

In response to the current flooding across several states in the mid-west, and the risk of much more to come, Orphan Grain Train is announcing Project Scrub Bucket, 5-gallon buckets filled with cleaning supplies for flood cleanup.

Donations of any of the following items would be appreciated:

- 5-gallon buckets
- Lysol™ or other liquid cleaner
- Bleach (1 gallon size)
- Windex™ or other glass cleaner
- Scrub brush
- Rubber gloves
- Roll of paper towels
- Broom and/or Mop
- Comet™ or other cleansing powder
- Monetary Donations

Project Scrub Bucket items are being collected at the Orphan Grain Train Warehouse, 606 W. Phillip, Norfolk, Nebraska 68701, and at participating branch offices across the country. Please visit our website [www.ogt.org](http://www.ogt.org) to find contact information for the branch office nearest you.



Relief for a thirsty little girl.

# Convention Ingathering

Lutheran Women's Missionary League, also known as LWML, opened their hearts to Orphan Grain Train at their 2011 National Convention held in Peoria, Illinois. The goal of the mission minded group of attendees was to fill the Orphan Grain Train semi, on site at the

convention, with quilts and other items. With 2587 quilts, thousands of Bible story books and children's Bibles, packages of underwear, pillowcase dresses, crutches, bandages and even a walker, they certainly met their goal of filling the semi. As Donna Gruel, LWML Human

Care Chairman said, "As we were loading trucks on Saturday morning items just kept coming in. What an awesome God we serve." Thank you, ladies, for partnering with Orphan Grain Train to ease human suffering around the world.



*Relief for Human Need Worldwide*

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*Thank You  
Edition*



Orphan Grain Train serves 58 orphanages and 5 hospitals in Russia and former Soviet Republics. One of the hospitals is a children's burn unit.