

❖ **The volunteer project *Just as precious!* and other activities**

The volunteer project is different this academic year compared to other years. We are having a smaller group with not only university students, but also high school students involved. Beside that, the personal program of the volunteers doesn't allow them to be very flexible, which makes it very difficult to run the activities with the children in the same organized way as we were used to do it.



Presents at Ciresarii

We decided that until February 2017 we'll do occasional activities not only with the new volunteers, but also with the people that are available: old volunteers and friends. In this way those that subscribed this year will attend when they are free. We also hope that by that time everyone will figure out how much time they can invest into this.

So till now we met the children several times and we offered training to the new volunteers. On the Saint's Nicholas holiday (6th of December) we organized a special meeting with games and presents for the kids at *Ciresarii* (at-risk children's home). The largest event though was a field trip to *Ferma animalelor* in Bucharest. The group was made of thirty-one children (of which twenty-one with disabilities) and almost thirty volunteers. The kids were happy even though the weather was quite cold. We looked at and fed farm animals, we observed how to milk a cow (a new thing for most of them), and we had lunch together at the farm's restaurant. This week is the last one before the holidays in which we'll have some activities.



Ferma animalelor



Besides the activities with the children we organized creative workshops in a high school in our town. We especially made Christmas decorations with them and Christmas cards for their teachers. The high school students were very proud of the results, while their teachers were absolutely surprised!



Workshop with high school students

We also organized a couple of meetings through which we want to keep our friendships with our old volunteers. In these meetings we talked together (about how life is going), we laughed with each other, we went for a walk. So... we had a good quality time together!



❖ **Summer teams (USA and The Netherlands)**

In summer 2017 we will have with us a team from US for two weeks. Since September we've been constantly working to make a summer camp happen where we'll bring together people with whom we have been collaborating in the last nine years. Our purpose is to reestablish connections, develop personally, build teams, and teach English. Some days ago we visited possible destinations and we hope we can book the place by Christmas.

The youth from the Netherlands that visited us two years ago would like to visit again in summer and bring along their friends for a week. We intend to organize a series of events in our region for people of similar age: these events will broaden intercultural exchange and service-learning.

May the holiday of the birth of Jesus fill you with peace, joy and love! Merry Christmas!

Warm greetings from Ploiesti,
Laurentiu and Carmen
(D3 Generations, Romania)

