

FALL 2009

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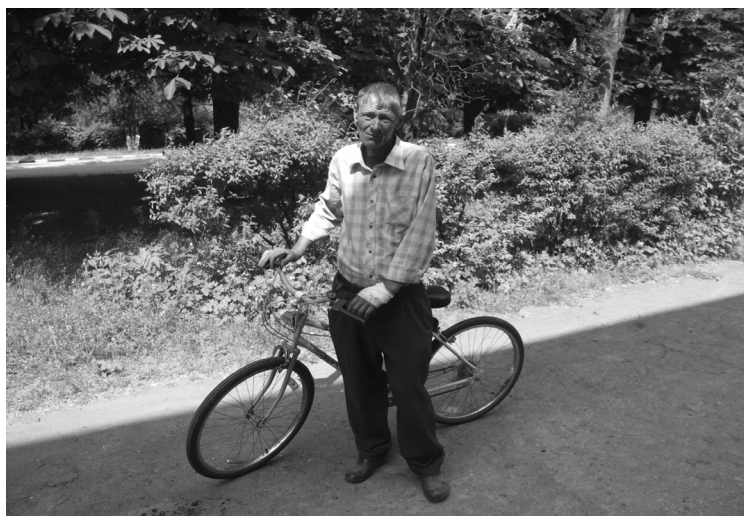
THE NEWSLETTER OF PEDALS FOR PROGRESS



A SECOND PROGRAM OPENS IN MOLDOVA

BY DARREN ENTERLINE, PCV

Few people outside of Europe have ever heard of the Republic of Moldova. What those few usually do know is that the former Soviet Republic has the dubious distinction of consistently being the poorest nation in Europe. While many of the former Soviet-controlled states have thrived as independent democracies, Moldova has never been able to progress out of the political chaos of the early 1990s and the economic crises that followed. In 2008 the United Nations Human Development Report ranked Moldova 113th out of 179 nations, between Mongolia and Vietnam.



Constant Surcanu travels to his farm by bicycle daily.

The failure of the Moldovan government to transition from a communist Soviet Republic to an independent capitalist democracy means that much of the population currently lives in poverty. While the capital, Chisinau, and larger cities have recently shown signs of economic recovery, the countryside still suffers greatly. The rural village where Pedals for Progress's partner organization is located is no exception. Pelinia, never a wealthy village, once supported industries such as brick manufacturing and food canning until the collapse of the Soviet Union. The ensuing privatization of state industries brought an end to those enterprises that couldn't survive the new market economy. Today, most villagers in Pelinia support themselves by farming the small plots of land given to them after the collective Soviet farms were privatized in 1996. Many depend solely on these plots, approximately 4 to 10 acres, for both their food and income. Oftentimes, these plots are several kilometers outside the village forcing villagers to use valuable time travelling to and from their land. To make matters worse, the roads used to reach the plots are unpaved and deeply rutted, making it slow going for the ancient cars and horse carts that use them. Because so many people

are involved in small scale, low income farming, the local government is chronically underfunded and unable to provide even the most basic services. All but a few houses do not have running water, making it necessary for many to walk to public wells to retrieve their water. Gas is also only available to a few households and is too expensive for many to use. Those that can't afford to buy wood or coal must travel outside the village to collect their own wood in order to heat their homes during the winter. Although Pelinia is a large village of over 8000 inhabitants, it is too small to offer public transportation. Villagers must provide their own means to travel to stores, markets and schools on roads that are not much better than the ones outside of the village. Basically, the villagers of Pelinia endure the same difficulties that impoverished people all over the world endure.

While these hardships are debilitating, they are not impossible to overcome and Pedals for Progress offers one of the best ways to assist the villagers of Pelinia. Consult-Nord, a local Moldovan NGO established to promote local economic development in Pelinia, saw the potential results that Pedals for Progress's bicycles could provide and requested to become a partner. Consult-Nord started selling bicycles this winter after receiving a shipment in late December of last year. The good quality, affordable bicycles now available at a shop set up by Consult-Nord, offer numerous opportunities to villagers that otherwise would be inaccessible to them. With a bicycle, farmers can efficiently travel to their fields and more easily transport their crops and tools. Villagers can collect water and fire wood with less effort. Students can arrive at school with more energy and villagers can independently travel throughout the village.

A great example of how bicycles can help the



Oleg Cerban uses his bike to get to and from school

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The work which is done by Pedals for Progress always seemed to me to be a logical effort. The whole concept just makes sense to me. When I first started almost 19 years ago, there was only one other group collecting bicycles and shipping them overseas. I have over the years aggressively spread our business model and there are now groups emulating our efforts across the United States and Canada as well as another dozen European and Asian countries. Our organization has a life of its own and I am constantly amazed how far and wide our efforts have spread.

The Hudson Institute, Center for Global Prosperity annually publishes "The Index of Global Philanthropy and Remittances". This publication details the sources and magnitude of private giving to the developing world. The index reframes the discussion about the roles of the private and public sectors in foreign aid by showing that the full-scale of countries generosity is measured not just by government aid but by private giving as well. It is an outstanding publication and is available at <www.global.prosperity.org>.

I was greatly honored this year by the Hudson Institute, in the category "Individuals Making a Difference" the first individual is me and Pedals for Progress. Page 34 has an excellent description of our program and a picture of a bicycle collected by the Westfield New Jersey Rotary Club at its new home in rural Ghana. I took this photograph because this particular bicycle had a large sticker on it from Jays Bike Shop in Westfield. I cannot often trace where a bike came from once it is overseas.

My original goal had been to collect twelve bicycles, 120,000+ bicycles later Pedals for Progress has a life of its own. P4P has taught me so much. I wish to sincerely thank all of you, the donors, who have made it possible for me to pursue this initiative. P4P is a small drop in a very large bucket but it is our small drop towards a more equitable world and the entire staff is proud of what we have been able to accomplish. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

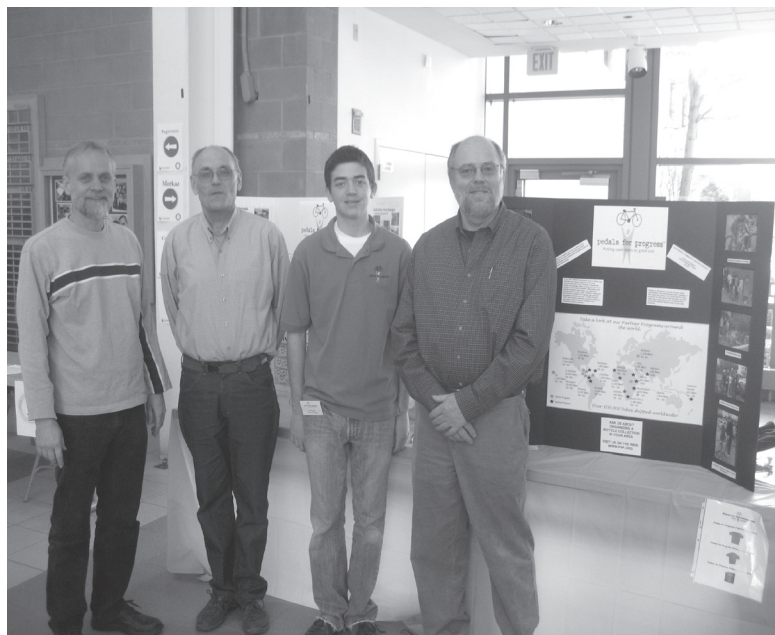
Dave Schweidenback
Founder and President
Pedals for Progress

villagers of Pelinia comes from Constant Surcanu. He is a 53 year old farmer who regularly travels outside the village to work on his land. He bought a bicycle so he can reach his fields with more time to spare and so that he can also visit his relatives living throughout the village. He told us that he especially appreciates his bicycle's wide, sturdy tires that can handle the demanding village roads. Another satisfied customer is Oleg Cerban. He is a 13 year old student at the local middle school who bought a mountain bike so he could use it to get to school, to go on errands around the village for his family, and, of course, to visit his friends. These two examples show a few ways how bicycles can help the people of Pelinia. Simply put, bicycles in Pelinia provide what they provide to people all over the developing world, a simple means to independently better their lives.

MITZVOT MALL

by Helaine Neiman

The annual Mitzvot of MetroWest was held Sunday, January 25th at the Alex Aidekman Jewish Community Campus. Over 900 parents, children and Hebrew school teachers came to learn about Mitzvah Project ideas from 28 organizations. Participants came from over 24 synagogue



Gary Michel, Andre Sucharew, Eric Neiman and Dave Schweidnback

schools, day schools and other families who wanted to participate in Mitzvah projects with their children prior to their Bar/Bat-Mitzvah. Coordinated by UJC's Jewish Identity-shaping agency, The Partnership for Jewish Learning and Life, Mitzvot of MetroWest acts in partnership with the synagogues and day schools to "Bring Jewish Learning to Life."

Pedals for Progress was one of many organizations represented at the event. Congregations Agudath Israel, Caldwell, NJ, Brothers of Israel, Newtown, PA, Adath Shalom, Morris Plains, NJ, and Temples B'nai Or, Morristown, NJ, Shalom Religious School, Succasunna, NJ all chose to host bicycle collections this spring collecting over two hundred bicycles between them and there is one more collection at Adath Shalom in November.

MISSION STATEMENT

TO DELIVER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AID BY
RECYCLING BICYCLES AND SEWING
MACHINES IN THE U.S. AND SHIPPING THEM TO
THE PEOPLE OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

SPRING 2009 COLLECTIONS



Teen Action Committee Congregation Agudath Israel
Caldwell, NJ



Dubuque Bicycle Club and the Hempstead High School Octagon
Club



Westchester Cycle Club with the Trinity Lutheran Church
Brewster, NY

A MAN ON A MISSION

There seems to be something special about Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Whether it is the values of a middle American farming community, the resonance of that fateful day seven score and four years ago when so many Americans lost their lives in the pursuit of a new American dream,



Dick Swisher in front of his workshop

or just something in the water, I can't tell.

The town of Gettysburg has produced some very outstanding individuals in its history. One of them is Dick Swisher. As he was about to retire in the late 1990's he realized that he needed something to occupy his time, a hobby of some sort that would keep him busy. He had always been good at fixing things and really enjoyed problem solving. He had once taken a repair course offered by the Singer Sewing Company, which he had really enjoyed. Maybe he could open a sewing machine repair shop, give himself something to do, and probably make some extra money.

The sewing machine repair business turned out not to be as time-consuming as he expected. Fewer Americans sew, and there was just not a strong demand for his services. Dick found he needed more work to keep himself busy, and then his old friend and fellow Gettysburger Ernie Simpson dropped by. Dick had always admired Ernie for, among other things, his philanthropic efforts. Ernie, now in his 90s, has collected, repaired, and prepared for shipping well over ten thousand bicycles for Pedals for Progress. An idea was born: while a bicycle will help a person in the developing world country to get to a job or school, a sewing machine is a job, period.

So, in 1999, Pedals for Progress began shipping sewing machines overseas to help create more employment opportunities in the towns to which we send bicycles. The first two sewing machines collected by Ernie, Dick agreed to go over them and check them out to be sure they were ready to work. He has been donating his time and expertise ever since. Pedals for Progress has now shipped in excess of

1,200 sewing machines and Dick Swisher has cleaned up and prepared for shipment over 750 of them.



Loading up the P4P truck

Pedals for Progress has since expanded the sewing machine projects beyond the towns to which we send bicycles and now has standalone sewing machine programs as far as way as Kyrgystan in Central Asia. While it is possible to quickly teach almost anyone to repair bicycles, the repair of sewing machines takes much more expertise due to the attention of the fine details and a much greater knowledge of the mechanics involved. Dick has been our most productive sewing machine volunteer and the key ingredient which has made our sewing machine programs successful.

Thank you, Dick, from Pedals for Progress and all the tailors and seamstresses in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Jamaica, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Uganda, Moldova and Kyrgystan whose lives you've touched and helped give the dignity of self employment.



Sewing machines ready to go

PROJECT OKURASE

A member of the Board of Project OKURASE contacted P4P earlier this year specifically looking for the donation of sewing machines. P4P was very interested in the project and wished to be of assistance. Through the good graces of our Ghanaian partner, WeBikes, we were able to get twelve sewing machines delivered to Project OKURASE. While this first donation has initiated the sewing job skills training program, it quickly became evident that the need was much greater.

P4P had fifty sewing machines that we wished to ship to Okurase, which included 3 manual foot pedal machines donated by Furniture Assist, a New Jersey nonprofit which collects used furniture that is donated to disadvantaged families in New Jersey. The standard problem presented itself; the goods were available here, needed there, but how to pay for the transportation costs.

The cost to airfreight sewing machines is very prohibitive. In fact the cost to ship these fifty machines air freight is not that much less than the cost of shipping a full container of bicycles. This is where Joey Penman, a strong supporter of Project OKURASE, and the Clif Bar Family Foundation, a major supporter of Pedals for Progress, came in. Together they donated enough funding that added to existing Project OKURASE funds made it possible to ship not only the fifty sewing machines, but to allow P4P to place those machines in among a full container of bicycles. Certainly receiving an unexpected 480 bicycles in addition to the 50 sewing machines will greatly change the small village of Okurase, located in the West Akyem district of the eastern region of Ghana.

The four overarching goals of Project OKURASE are to develop:

1. A family-based model of caring for orphans and vulnerable children.
2. A model for job and skills training for youth, young adults, and women in the arts and building industry.
3. A model for family and village-based formal education with special emphasis on female children.
4. A model for a community of green design or sustainable architecture.

For more information: <http://www.projectokurase.org/events/new_sewing_center/>



Project Okurase 1 loaded on June 27, 2009



Loading Crew June 27, 2009 Andre Sucharew, David Stess, Michael Sabio, Jason Drew, Drew Decker

Project Okurase
A UNITED LINK FOR BETTER LIVES

P4P Active Partnerships as of June 2009

EL SALVADOR, San Salvador, Centro Salvadoreño de Tecnología Apropiable (CESTA)

Transport/small business/community development

23,316 bikes (1995-2009), 397 sewing machines (2000 - 2009)

GHANA, Accra, WEBikes

Transport/small business/community development

3,056 bikes (2006-2009), 82 sewing machines (2006 - 2009)

GHANA, Project Okurase

Community Development

513 bikes (2009), 57 sewing machines (2009)

GUATEMALA, Chimaltenango, Fundacion Integral de Desarrollo Sostenible y Medio Ambiente (FIDESMA)

Small business promotion/agricultural extension work

5,197 bikes (1999 - 2008), 78 sewing machines (2003 - 2009)

KYRGYSTAN, Cholpon-Ata, S.O.S, Kinderhoff

Small business promotion

25 sewing machines (2008)

MOLDOVA, Pelinia, Consult Nord

Transport/community development

477 bikes (2008), 15 sewing machines (2008)

NICARAGUA, Rivas EcoBici

Community development/reforestation

16,326 bikes (1992 - 2009), 137 sewing machines (2003 - 2009)

SIERRA LEONE, Kenema, Center for Research, Training, and Programme Development (CRTPD)

Transport/small business/community development

938 bikes (08- 09), 30 sewing machines (08 - 09)

UGANDA, Kampala, Entrepreneurship Institute of Applied and Appropriate Technology (EIAAT)

Transport/small business/community development

1,413 bikes (2006-2008), 137 sewing machines (06 - 09)

Other shipments of bicycles between 1991 and 2009 have gone to non-profit agencies in Appalachia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Eritrea, Fiji, Haiti, Honduras, India, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, New Guinea, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Senegal, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Venezuela as well as other unlisted groups in Ghana, Moldova & Nicaragua.

Other shipments of sewing machines between 1999 and 2009 have gone to non-profit agencies in the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Jamaica and Panama as well as other unlisted groups in El Salvador, Guatemala, Moldova, and Nicaragua.

Eighteen Year Bicycle Grand Total 121,082
Ten Year Sewing Machine Grand Total 1,305

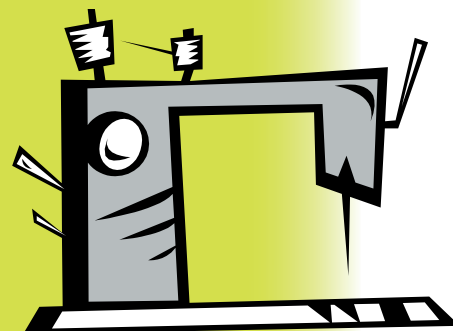


Bikes

2007 total: 7,622
2008 total: 6,098
2009 YTD 3,190

Sewing Machines

2007 total: 160
2008 total: 176
2009 YTD 168



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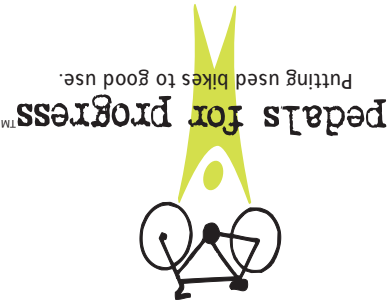
A STAND OUT STUDENT

Jake Werb, a 16-year old Scout from Sayreville, NJ, chose to organize a bike drive for Pedals for Progress as his Eagle Scout project. The bike drive on Saturday, June 6, was a great success! 110 bikes and 1 sewing machine were collected for Pedals for Progress.

The months leading to the drive, when Jake was not in school, playing baseball for the Sayreville Bombers' varsity team, or working as a lifeguard at the YMCA , Jake was collecting used bikes. Thinking of ways to ensure his project's success, Jake offered to pick up bikes from people's home. In fact, before the actual drive date he had collected 60 bikes all stored in his garage. The bike drive allowed Jake to engage people in the community to support his efforts to make a difference in the lives of others through Pedals for Progress' mission and goals.



For more information visit www.p4p.org.



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