



**PER
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**MONDO
MIGLIORE**

Change Your World

October 2011 No. 43

*Would you like to
volunteer to help us change
the world?*

You can contribute to this work by:

- directly participating in our projects as a part-time volunteer;
- donating needed materials or funds;
- supporting us through your prayers;
- advertising our products, shows or seminars to your friends and associates.

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Feature: A Volunteer's Journal



Per un mondo migliore
Newsletter No.43

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Dearest friends,

Though summer colors and emotions are slowly fading and giving way to long months of winter, with this newsletter we aim to revive and preserve their warmth and liveliness.

The format of this magazine is slightly unusual, yet I wager that few of us would mind taking a peek into the diary of a friend. "A volunteer's journal" will take you step-by-step through the marvelous and miraculous summer months lived in our community, letting you relive their meaning and emotion together with us.

Thank you all, who in some way participated and helped make this summer what it was - whether in person, or through your support and prayers! We're in this all together, making a better world!

Love,

Anna

There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of the people you love. When you learn to tap into this source, you will have truly defeated aging.

- Sophia Loren

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A Volunteer's Journal



This memorable summer our center hosted 7 camps and 120 attendees. Another 30 came to visit for a day, or get involved in projects. "Smile therapy" echoed 9 times in 2 Homes for the elderly, 3 Homes for children and one Club for the disabled. Murals and walls painted, flooring replaced and garden work done changed the faces of 4 institutions: Dom za odgoj for delinquent minors, Dom Turnic for the elderly, Klub Srce for the disabled, and Udruga "Koraci". More than 20 disadvantaged families in Vojnic, Rijeka and Mostar received visits, and humanitarian assistance. Here's how it all played out:

Week One

Summer, here we come! Are you ready? I'm sure you are, you're bright and sunny, and we are waiting with bated breath for our first family of visitors: Fabio and Serena from Trento, their daughter Chiara, and the first grandmother to visit us from far away - Lidia, Fabio's mother.

Fabio and Serena will be bringing a group of 22 young people from Trento next month! They

were with us last year already for a week, but this is Chiara's and grandmother Lidia's first visit. They come well prepared, like all our friends from Trento, whose sense of organization we admire – they have bought big quantities of flour, oil, pasta and other basic staples for the refugee families we plan to visit together in the area of Vojnic. Then we will talk about details to organize the coming Trento youth camp...

Week Two And Three

This week we are a total of 28! Two families with seven children – Ivan and Francesca, Manuela and Claudio, and their friend Laura arrive to experience communal living, and, as all people from Trento, with another good work purpose: to build a pizza oven in our new center. But that's not all - 4 other young people from Italy also join us this week.

The men work at the construction site every day under the hottest sun so far, while the women and children and other volunteers cook, clean, play, try out “clown therapy” at a home for the elderly, paint murals and enjoy the

“I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that, then I realized I was somebody.”

—Lily Tomlin



I am convinced that all our hard work, sweat, laughter and the completed project were not in vain, but all needed ingredients for this new center in Veprinac, where many people will unite in friendship and joy to help build a better world. Jako dobro!

***Ivan,
Trento
(pizza oven
builder)***

beach. “Our children never want to wash dishes at home,” says one of the mothers, “but look at them now, they've lined up on their own initiative.”

The pizza oven takes ten days to complete instead of

the planned three... Claudio and Ivan spend all their vacation days working, taking only one day off at the beach with their families. They still leave with tears in their eyes, and eager to return to the community at first chance.



Week Four



This is the biggest group so far – we rearrange the balcony (our summer dining room) with four separate tables, and there's hardly any room to pass... There's no free floor space in the living room during the morning meetings, and you can't open the doors... 22 young people from Trento, and 7 young educators are ready for a week of work and fun. A few more young people join us – some from Italy, some from Croatia.

They paint murals and do garden work in Dom za odgoj, renovate the top floor terrace murals in Dom Turnic, dress up as clowns and



cheer up people in institutions, share "Free hugs", and visit the area of Vojnic and Krnjak (Karlovac). The elementary school in Krnjak, as a result of their visit, sports two freshly colored walls at its entrance, and villages around Karlovac are infected with joy and youthful color.

It's difficult coming back to my routine, after having been through this intense experience with you!... I hope to be able to spread that enthusiasm that you have injected into me, and I hope I'll be able to come again, to work and laugh with you!

Big hug!
Gloria, 16



Young people are not vases to fill, but rather torches to be lit. - Aristotele



*Even when life seems like
a struggle against the windmills,
a hero becomes the one who will not
give up, the one who gets up after every
fall and continues his journey, not caring
for the obstacles, unaffected by the defeat.
Invincible is he who has inherited the
perseverance of Don Quixote.
(Erri de Luca)*



Week Five

Irene, Cristina and Davide, who came for a volunteer camp in 2003, are bringing 10 new young people this week! They want to experience “Smile therapy” and volunteering first hand!

Alongside their learning to cheer others up, they also help change the look and function of two institutions: with its new floor and now newly painted white walls by these volunteers, Udruga “Koraci” has had a complete transformation. “Klub Srce”, situated on the corner of a busy street in town, needs protection from city noise and smog – the volunteers plant a hedge around the fence, and paint lively colorful images around the window frames.

I will simply say “Until we meet again!” because I want to come back to this magic place as soon as possible. There are millions of things to thank you for; they’ll all turn into precious memories I will always store inside my heart, and which will help me to make the most important decisions in life. There are few things I am certain of; but one of them is that after this adventure I am a changed person (hopefully a better one) God bless you!
Sara, 17

Greetings to all from Rijeka, thank you so much for coming to Klub Srce! We had a great time with you! You are all such positive and nice people and I’m so glad to have met you!

Tanya von Ness, Rijeka



In The Meantime...

Liam Anthony is born to Jeff and Arielle on 15th July in the hospital in Rijeka!

“Tony and friends” perform 2 times on the island of Losinj – for the senior citizens in Veli, and for a group of handicapped vacationers in Nerezine!

Two teachers, Giovanni and Maria, and school administrator Emanuela from Bardolino (Verona), who took part in our Italian “volunteering awareness in the schools” program, visit our center on two occasions.

Elena, Chiara, Giulia and Francesca from Molina (Verona) return for their 10th year anniversary of volunteering with “Per un mondo migliore”!

When the girls first

came in 2001 with a few friends, they were young and shy, wondering what on earth they’d come to Croatia for (their parents had begged us to take them for a volunteering experience).

This is how our 10-year friendship, and the project of organizing volunteer camps began. Since that day, the girls from Molina have come back every summer to take part in volunteer programs.

Not only did they prompt us to start a new project which since that day has grown in all proportions, but they themselves have grown to become mature young women with the will to keep helping others in the course of daily life.

Their interviews are featured in “Vivere Davvero” – (Experience Life) – in the “video” section of www.perunmondomigliore.org!

It’s been an amazingly busy week, and every moment of it was life lived to the full! It felt like finding real happiness there among you, it was right there so easy to reach... I thank you for sharing some of it with me.

Giacomo, Scout, 20

My god, I already miss you all... you gave me a taste of life lived for others, of being paid in smiles and I almost envy you, because they’re much better than any pay check. I would have loved to have stayed there with you. For now though, let’s keep in touch... if you need anything, please let us know, all of us scouts will be at your service!

Marco, Scout, 20

The people I met while there with you, their looks, their will to live that rubbed off on me: they’re all incomparable riches that will help me face the new year in which I need to make important decisions... big hug,

Giovanni, Scout, 31

Week six

Another week, another camp. This time it’s a group of Scouts from Edolo, the “Famiglia Cuore” from Torino, and two school teachers!

These young people are great workers – they do whatever is needed without much persuasion: from sorting humanitarian aid, visiting families and institutions, and dressing up as clowns, to painting and digging under the hot sun...

They even organize a special evening in the open, where they do everything: cook, clean, entertain...

And, a big hand to the masters of smile therapy, “Famiglia cuore” – a beautiful family and happy show troupe all in one!



Week Seven

Our veterans from Cloz, 18 young people and 2 priests are coming for the 3rd year in a row! The project, started during the previous camp of renovating the hallway/staircase in Dom za odgoj, goes on with zeal during the first 2 days. It's a long project, we'll still be painting even after they're gone!

Another group willingly digs the channels needed for the construction in the new center... Lots of hours under the sun!

On the third day the whole group of 20, and five of us, head to Bihac, in Bosnia – the primary focus of this camp.

Young people from Bihac, and those responsible for the Cultural center there, have already met "Tony and friends" last year, and are enthusiastic about our coming. Upon arrival we find out that we've had an influence – the young people we only saw once told us they had organized "Free hugs" in the center of Bihac shortly after our visit in November! The group of Italian young people paints a large mural "What everybody needs is love", performs Smile Therapy in Homes for children in Bihac, Cazin and Bosanska Krupa, and visits families in Mostar and the holy site in Medjugorje. Full immersion, complete volunteer experience!



The smallest action is always better than the noblest intentions.

R. Sharma

This is our third year with you, and again it filled our hearts with joy! Thank you for helping us discover Bosnia... I will always cherish the warmth and hospitality of the Bosnian people, who "push the walls a little farther" to make room for all the guests... their smiles in spite of adversity, their forgiveness of the past, and looking ahead with courage into the future. And thank you all who bring joy and hope wherever you go with your smiles and noble souls. Keep lighting candles of Jesus' love in every heart you touch! I miss you so much already, but there is no distance for the heart and there we can be closer than ever. I love you!

Mary, 20



And thus, since all good things must come to an end, so has our summer. But each end is also a beginning – the beginning of a new lease on life for all first-time volunteers, the beginning of being a force for good in your own families and surroundings, the beginning of autumn and winter volunteer drives, the beginning of our hope that you will come back again, and in greater numbers!

News and Projects

Volunteer festival in Verona 2011: in spite of the rainy weather, our little stand with many friends gathered around it spread rays of light into the cloudy surroundings. A lot of those who volunteered with us during the summer months, came for a happy autumn reunion!

After the completion of the project in six schools near Verona, we are now embarking on *two more similar school projects* - one in Verona, sponsored again by the Verona volunteer center, and another in the schools of Rijeka. The goal of these projects is to promote volunteering among youth, and to involve them directly in volunteer drives, thus helping them experience the joy of giving to others first-hand.

International day of *“Free hugs for world peace”*, on the 21st of September, saw more than 30 young people hugging passers-by on the Korzo of Rijeka (main walking street). The drive was organized by 17-year-old Elvis, the latest lively addition to our community.

In Kastav near Rijeka, we took part in the traditional *October wine festival* by performing a children’s show, and representing our work at a stand.

Building a bridge, Rovereto - Rijeka: Lidija from “Koraci” held creative workshops in the Retirement Home in Rovereto this September, and a group of the Home’s representatives, headed by dr. Andreatta came for a 2-day stay in Rijeka in October.

“I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.” --Martin Luther King, Jr.
(1929–1968)

Thank You!

“Paolo with us” association from Edolo organized another initiative, entitled **“Life is not optional”** - many more attendees showed up than expected, funds were raised and food was collected. Vero, Ornella and friends also came over to visit us in Croatia, and brought a pottery wheel for Lidija’s center **“Koraci”**.

Christmas is again knocking at our door, and somebody is preparing to perform... **Tony and Friends** will surprise us with new tricks, skits, songs and even new characters! If you are interested in booking **“Tony and friends”** for an event, please do so well in advance!

“Mottos for success” nr. 1, 2, and 3 is still available: you can order it as a meaningful Christmas present for friends and family, while at the same time helping to support our volunteer activities.

As you may already know, our volunteers live for others. We have all dedicated our full-time to serving fellows in need daily, and thanks to the help of many, we have been able to go on for years without a break (here at our mission in Croatia for 14 years). We are not a big or supported charity with large overheads, but rather spend very little in living expenses, dedicating most of our manpower and materials towards the projects of our mission.

Many of you may wonder, “How do you go on? Who is your sponsor?” Our answer is simple: Thanks to your help as well! We are, hence, extremely grateful for all the help we receive, both big and small, which enables us to continue our 24/7 service to those who need us most. Thank you from all our hearts, and may God bless you! And, of course, thank the Lord for His never-failing help and provision!

Our Present needs...

- * Donations, material and workers for the construction of our new center
- * Long life food items
- * Detergents and cleaning materials
- * Fuel to run our vehicles
- * Educational and office materials
- * Acrylic paints for our mural projects