

2 0 0 7 W I N T E R E D I T I O N

# in the SMALL corners



FRIENDS OF WARM HEARTH, INC. NEWSLETTER



## Sassoon

spent the last few years in and out of the psychiatric institutions. The progress that he has made since moving to Warm Hearth is astounding. He participates, to the extent that he is able in the daily celebrations and chores at Warm Hearth. When two doves that were to be sacrificed according to Armenian tradition were "saved" by our residents, Sassoon worked with Davit to clean out the chicken coop to make a home for the doves. Sassoon spent the afternoon holding the burlap sacks while Davit shoveled rubble into them. He takes pride in being included in the home, and learning to live with his fellow residents. He also continues to create, as he loves to draw and paint. He adored a former staff member, Ararat, and became his shadow. Ararat was probably the first man to invest so fully in Sassoon and to show him respect and consideration. It is such small gestures that have drastically changed the lives of our residents.

## ✧ Within our Reach ✧

*As we round the corner of our one-year anniversary, we reach for ways to provide our residents with sustainable care.*

### WIDENING OUR SCOPE & SERVICE

In November, it became clear to us that our residents with mental illness need stronger services and support. After a year in Warm Hearth they have adjusted well and made tremendous progress. Nevertheless there are still inevitable fluctuations in our residents with mental illness that deem our careful attention. A few of our residents have needed short-term intensive care since Warm Hearth opened and we have sought to provide them with the best local care available. However, in

order to better support our staff and allow our residents to live in the least-restrictive environment possible, we added another staff member in November. Anahit (pictured here with Roman) is a mental health specialist and has worked in psychiatric Day Centers for the last few years. She has a breadth of experience with this population and in conducting therapeutic activities. She also has a fierce commitment to providing a place that our residents with mental illness can stay and live and thrive.



## Open Doors

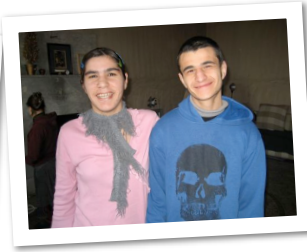
*"Human character is not defined or contained in the human body. This is most certain."*

These words were spoken by an Armenian, Hoveek Tovmasyan, after spending a day at the home. He was part of a group of Armenians and a former Peace

Corps Volunteer that visited Warm Hearth for the first time. It was a day of laughter, play, song and even dance. The residents showed their most recent artwork to the guests and showed them with hospitality and affection. It was a joyous day for our resi-

dents and visitors. The day was an affirmation to each one of us that the beauty of humanity takes many shapes and sizes. Warm Hearth has become a place of peace for our residents, a place that they are recognized for who they are, for their gifts and beauty.





## On Giving & Receiving

**By Patti Bortman, Peace Corps Encore! Volunteer & friend of Warm Hearth (pictured on far right)**

I spent three weeks at Warm Hearth in November. A psychiatric social worker, my assignment was to train and consult with the staff. I lived in Warm Hearth and ate most of my meals with the residents and staff. This allowed me to better understand the functioning of the group home and enabled them to see me as a person, not just an “expert” from the U.S.A. I learned while serving in Peace Corps Romania that you “get more than you receive” and this was clearly the case during my time at Warm

Hearth. I discovered that the residents and staff are generous and loving people. While this was a challenging assignment, what I will always remember is that Susanna shared her nail polish with me; Alina gave me some of her beautiful artwork; Anna made me coffee in the morning; Davit and I shared special moments in caring for Gina, the house puppy; Roman and I shared photos; Yulia allowed me to hug her, and Gayane and I took a special walk around the village. This was an amazing experience and one that I would repeat in a heartbeat!

SUSTAINABILITY  
IS ANOTHER  
WORD FOR  
JUSTICE.

*Providing a home for  
Armenian Orphans  
with Special Needs*

Your kindness  
makes all the  
difference.

MAIL DONATIONS TO:  
FRIENDS OF WARM HEARTH  
PO BOX 1037  
TEMPE, AZ 85280

(480) 921-1181

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[NATALIE.RIZZIERI@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NATALIE.RIZZIERI@GMAIL.COM)

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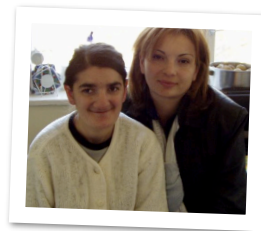
### VREZH'S STORY

Vrezh had been institutionalized in the Kapan Psychiatric Hospital for many years. He came to Warm Hearth in January of 2006. On our opening day, many of the local television stations were present, and Vrezh's parents saw his face on the screen having not known his whereabouts for quite some time. Vrezh is now living with his parents!



### RECONNECTING WITH FAMILY

A few of our residents have siblings, aunts and distant family spread throughout the nation of Armenia. Our staff has taken it upon themselves to encourage our residents to contact their relatives and



invite them to the home. Recently Alina (pictured above) was surprised by her sister's visit on her birthday. These reconnections, though often bittersweet, are a step towards healing.

### Fundraising Update

OUR DEEPEST  
GRATITUDE TO  
THOSE WHO MADE  
OUR FIRST YEAR  
OF OPERATION  
POSSIBLE.

FINANCIAL DETAILS  
CAN BE PROVIDED  
UPON REQUEST.

*Our 2007 Goals:  
6 new residents,  
improved care &  
\$125,000*

Please consider  
partnering with us.

*If you have questions, please  
contact Natalie Rizzieri.*