



Brenna's Home - UKRAINE

Brenna Engle Foundation

Have FAITH, Provide HOPE, Demonstrate LOVE

"Our 10th Year of Service to Underprivileged Children"

November 25, 2015

Dear friends,

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever! (Psalm 107:1) I hope each of you has many things to be thankful for this Thanksgiving season. We certainly do! We are thankful for the opportunity to work at helping change the lives of children for the better. We are thankful to those who provide the resources to carry out this work. We are thankful for those "boots on the ground" that work so faithfully along side of us - here in Poughkeepsie, in Ukraine, and Ethiopia. We could never do this alone, and everyone who contributes in some small or large way matters to us. Thank you!

Shoebox Project for Vinnytsia, UKRAINE



We are especially thankful for the wonderful outpouring of support for the children's shoebox project we conducted for village and orphanage children near Vinnytsia, Ukraine. The initial request was for 150 shoeboxes and later we were asked if we could provide 250. We felt that 250 might be too ambitious, so we set 150 as our target. Thanks to your overwhelming response, we were able to ship 217 shoeboxes to the Kukushkin Family for their work with children. We have made new friends now in a different part of Ukraine. For one month our living room was turned into a shoebox assembly room, as we purchased items and packed 165 of those shoeboxes, then packed them for ocean shipment. They should arrive by December 12.



We are also thankful for our first "Brenna's Home wedding"! On November 14, Vanya B and Oksana were married (twice!). First, they were married in a civil ceremony, required for a legal wedding in Ukraine. An hour later was the church wedding. I (Rich) was so happy that I was able to go to Ukraine for this special event and walk my son up the aisle. Donna was unable to go on this trip, but I had a traveling companion in Brandon Spadaro, from our New Beginnings Church. He was on our summer camp trip and was interested in returning. Here are the bride and groom - and housemother Valya presenting their rings.



Here are few more wedding photos (more photos on the Brenna Engle Foundation Facebook page). Left - the entire Brenna's Home Family with Valya and Rich; Right - Vanya's with his siblings at Brenna's Home, Lilia and Yura.



Left - All the boys from Brenna's Home; Right - Oksana with her new father-in-law



Left - Rich walking Vanya down the aisle; Right - Best Man Kolya and Maid of Honor Sasha



We are excited for Vanya and Oksana as they begin their new life together!

While we were in Lutsk, we spent a lot of time with the kids when they weren't in school. We visited one of the schools where six of our children attend. We also visited the Lutsk Special Needs Children's Orphanage with some of our Brenna's Home teens. A woman from Wisconsin had knitted mittens for little children and wanted them to go to an orphanage in Ukraine. Here are some photos:



Another activity was visiting the English Language School operated by our friend Slava. She has translated for us along with some of her teachers, Anya and Ira. We enjoyed participating in three different classes with them, both children and adults.



Below, Rich walking Zhenya to school; Lunch with the Tabitha Children;



Brenna's Hope - Ethiopia

High School girls - Tigray Province

We work with Hope Community Services in Northern Ethiopia to provide monthly support for vulnerable high school girls to complete their education. In this region of Ethiopia, many girls walk two hours or more EACH WAY to attend high school. This means they face dangers while walking in darkness, and also makes it difficult for them to complete their studies. Consequently they may drop out of school and are frequently used as wives for arranged marriages, even as young as ages 13 to 17. If this happens and they become pregnant, they face challenges with childbirth because their bodies are not fully developed. This may result in a condition known as [fistula](#). Our focus is PREVENTION.

We sponsor 30 girls for this program and are still seeking a few more sponsors to meet our goal! Just \$25 a month will provide a shelter and food close to school or transportation services for these girls at great risk.

These girls are responsible for carrying water to their homes before they leave for school, or again after school.



Often these girls will walk together in groups for safety from those who might try to take advantage of them.



College girls - Tigray Province

Another opportunity also developed with Hope Community Services. Many girls graduating from high school who are orphans or from very poor families are excellent students and qualify for free tuition, room and board through a government program. However, the costs for travel and monthly hygiene expenses can be prohibitive for them to take advantage of the education. The cost for sending one of these girls to college is \$20/month (\$240/year). We provide sponsorship for 36 girls for this program and are seeking eight additional sponsors. Would you consider becoming a sponsor?

Hope House - Central Ethiopia

Our third project in Ethiopia is in conjunction with Ellilta Women at Risk and Mekane Yesus Church in Debre Zeit. Since Hope House was launched as a pilot program, there have been some significant developments. The leadership of the program decided that it would be necessary to reevaluate the program and has suspended the day to day operations. The program continues to support the women that completed the program, but will not be taking additional women into the program at this time. The Brenna Engle Foundation will continue to sponsor the seven children whose mothers entered and completed this program. We have sponsors committed to six of the children, but are still in need in one more sponsor for Birhan, the little girl below. Sponsorship for day care and education for these children is \$30/month, with a one year commitment. Hope House was set up as a holistic rehabilitation program to help women leave "working the streets". This organization has been functioning effectively in Addis Ababa for nearly 20 years, and this is a new extension of the work in the city of Debre Zeit. Please pray for these women and for the future direction of the program.



Birhan

Brenna's Basement - New York

We continue to accept quality donations of children's and adult clothing, baby equipment, toys, and small household items to provide to needy families in the area. If you want to donate items, please contact us. We receive referrals from more than 10 local agencies as well as word-of-mouth. All items are given away, not sold. And we have some awesome volunteers who help on Saturday mornings!

Special Thanks

- To **Steven Jones and Thrivent Financial** for nominating the Brenna Engle Foundation to receive Thrivent Financial Choice Dollars Grant Funds. We have received our first grant from them.
- To the **AmazonSmile Foundation** for the donations received as a result of individuals shopping with them.

Some words about financial contributions...

Hudson Valley FCU Members If you don't like writing checks, you can do member-to-member transfers to the Brenna Engle Foundation. Contact us for more information and account details.

PayPal Giving Fund Donors who have a PayPal account or eBay sellers can donate through PayPal Giving Fund at no charge to donor or recipient. The Brenna Engle Foundation is an approved not-for-profit to benefit from this service.

Billpay Many of our regular donors utilize a Billpay system through their financial institution for regular payments. If you are able to participate in such a program, we encourage you to do so. It eliminates the need to send out reminders.

We have been blessed year after year with what we need, and this has allowed our work to grow and prosper. When we receive extra gifts, it enables us to think about expanding what we do. If you are in a position to provide significant resources, or are willing to include the Brenna Engle Foundation in your estate planning, please contact us.

Wishing you all the best for Thanksgiving! With love, Rich and Donna

All US donations are tax-deductible. Checks should be payable to "Brenna Engle Foundation" and sent to 3 Albert Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Also on Facebook and YouTube:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Brenna-Engle-Foundation/101419966565747>

Youtube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ah0gHE6eLM>

And our website brennaenglefoundation.org

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