



Dear Friends of The Harbor:

October, 2013

Eight years ago I was asked to write out our vision. At that time I wrote we need to own four residential apartments to house a total of 32 participants for our two year program. In addition, we needed to own two buildings. One would serve as our Vocational Training Center and the other would be a Cultural Club and offices. Lastly, we wanted to train and open similar programs in 200 cities throughout the Russian Federation. If this actually came about, thousands of young and teenaged orphans would be helped each year to find purpose and meaning for their lives. They would be given the skills and education to help realize this. They would find people dedicated to walking with them on their journey. They would be transformed!

This is how God works...

Story #1: It took us a long time to be able to purchase our first two apartments. Last year, our German partners strongly urged us to buy the third by fronting us 50% of the purchase price. We took the leap and the third apartment is purchased. Now enters a former orphan, Katya. Adopted from St. Petersburg when she was 7, and apparently a hand-full, she was relocated in the U. S. to two more families before she settled down. Katya had a radical transformation after coming to Christ and is now a graduate of Wheaton College in Russian Studies and International Public Policy and Justice. She is pursuing graduate studies in St. Petersburg and wants to work at The Harbor. In getting her documents together for graduate school, Katya was surprised to find out she owns the apartment of her birth-mother, who has since died. Katya told me she has no doubt in her mind that she is giving it to The Harbor, and she wants to begin the process with me on my next trip in November. Fourth apartment...check.

Story #2: I was looking for someone to help me develop some team-building materials. I was all over the Internet checking out various services, training sessions, etc. A good friend of mine said she knew a guy, Peter, right here in Minneapolis and introduced me to him. Peter is an answer to many prayers and is helping me develop amazing team-building materials. In the course of our discussions, Peter mentioned to me he has a good friend, David, with very high ranking connections in the Russian government. I immediately jumped on that contact. David said he will be meeting with his friend in the near future, and he will deliver my proposal for the Russian government to help us find a building. We will see, but this is the first time we have a legitimately solid connection in high places that actually could help us. The purchase of a building seems unrealistic, but there are many buildings sitting empty throughout the city. Connections are needed to get access to those. Perhaps, this is it? I'll keep you posted.

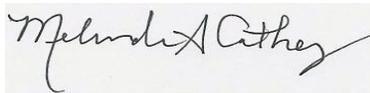
Story #3: I was at a wedding. My friend introduced me to another of her friends and told her what I do. This friend began to tell me of a young Russian woman, Zhanna, in her Bible study who has a heart for orphans. I called Zhanna and we met. She is from the city of Volgograd in southern Russia, tucked between the Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Zhanna was very involved in orphan work there for many years. It was through this that she met an American missionary, married him a year ago, and is now in Minneapolis. Zhanna became very distraught during this past year to learn that several of the teenaged orphans she had worked with are now dead.

One committed suicide, one was murdered, and others happened through bizarre situations. She knew that these orphans needed to be better prepared for life after the orphanage, but did not know how to accomplish this. Someone told Zhanna about The Harbor, and someone told me about Zhanna. Now, we are working to bring a group of their leaders to our training in March and we are hoping to open another program in Volgograd in the near future. In the last two years, God has brought to me someone from the furthest western Russian city, the furthest eastern city, and now one of the southernmost cities. We have trained 20 cities and five have opened programs. God is honoring our ridiculous prayer for 250 cities.

I am increasingly aware of the truth of Proverbs 16:9, "The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps." I am learning to rest in this and even greet each day with a little more anticipation. Any normal situation might be a connection to something extraordinary. God's ability to network is endless. In The Harbor's story, He uses faithful brothers and sisters just going about a normal day, open to His nudging, and obedient to follow through in the direction He nudges. He will accomplish His work, with whoever is open to hearing and being a part of it.

Thank you, everyone, for your participation in this amazing story that continues to be written!

Warmly,



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