

# Children In Peril As Romania Struggles With Democracy

(Continued from Page B2)

shelf — a space occupied by precious family heirlooms — for the knife.

There is no new construction. People make do with what little they have.

The only tractors around were several tractors manufactured by Universal, in the country. Hardly any of them worked, according to Brubaker.

In one case, Brubaker saw that workers were spraying large amounts of insecticides. And the workers were not adequately protected.

The only herbicide in use is atrazine, if they are lucky enough to have some, according to Brubaker. The number one problem is quackgrass, which can destroy up to 100 percent of the harvest if not treated. If a herbicide is available, it is extremely difficult to find a clean supply of water to apply it.

Once, Brubaker had to pay a fine for not having a license to drive in Romania. The fine was several thousand "lei," which converted to only a few U.S.

dollars.

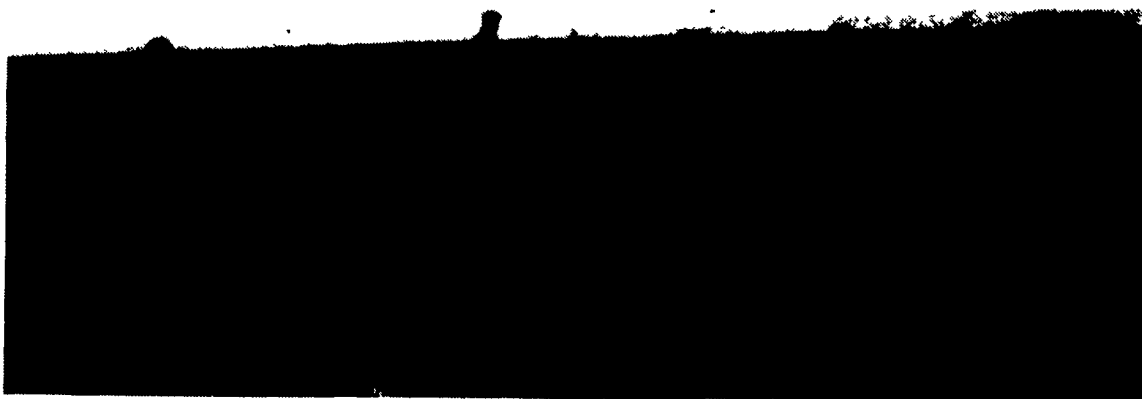
In a trip to a village, Brubaker showed some of the conditions that even the best of them live in.

Brubaker visited a village in which a family kept some kids in a corn crib, for lack of a babysitter. He also drank water from a "typical well," which may have been heavily polluted.

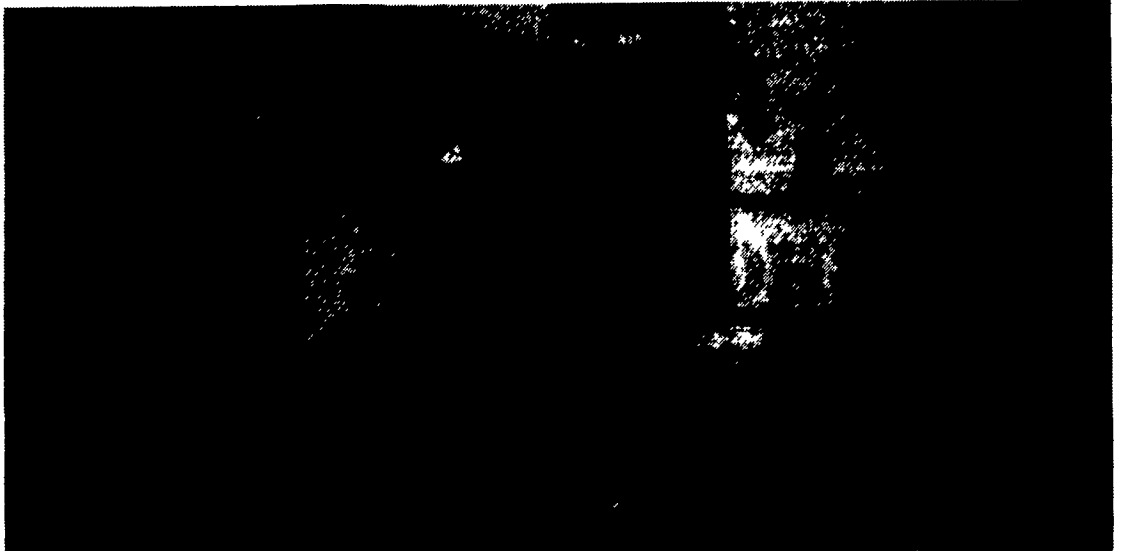
In one case, a family, supported by a father that works at an auto assembly plant in Detroit, does well by most standards. The average income is about \$20-\$30 a month in Romania. Making \$40 to \$50 in U.S. equivalent would be like earning an above average salary here.

Attempts to unite the father with the children in Romania proved very difficult because of the inability to declare political asylum anymore in the U.S. It's easier and a lot less hassle to simply sponsor programs over there, according to Brubaker.


Photos Courtesy Mike Brubaker



Most farming in Romania is primitive, dating to the turn of the century. Problems with weed control, obtaining seed, harvesting, and marketing abound.



A typical Romanian kitchen. Technology dates to the turn of the century.



## Ida's Notebook

**Ida Risser**

Have you ever spent a lot of time hunting some particular item? I like to think of myself as rather organized. You see, I keep track of everything that I put in the freezers and everything that I take out and use. That way I will know what is in short supply and can plant accordingly this spring.

A grocery list is prepared every week and I only buy what is on the list. I'm also responsible for putting notices in our church bulletin and newsletter on a particular day. Our calendar is kept up to date so that we don't forget an appointment.

The point of all these facts is

that I've misplaced some slides that my cousin took some 40 years ago. I wanted to show them to a friend of hers and now I cannot find them. I've looked high and low in all of our closets and drawers. Why, I even pulled down the steps to the attic and went through every box up there. Actually, I have not seen them since we moved into our new house two

years ago. It is so frustrating to spend hours looking when I'd sooner be doing something else.

My braided rug has finally been started. It is rather late in the season to find wool in stores and so I was able to get a piece of red material and one of blue material from a friend who also uses used garments to make rugs.

At least in hunting for the slides, I came across other things that I had not seen for a while. There was an aerial view of my birthplace and another big oval picture of a great uncle. Also discovered were some baby clothes from long ago and some clothes that my grandfather wore when he was a boy. You never know what will be in the bottom of a big box.



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