

2004:

THANKSGIVING A-LA-ROUMAINE

Mult stimati si preaiubiti colegi,/ Ipak dam de shtire ca:/ Am "hotarat" (sesizati ghilimetele, rogu-va!) sa celebram preasfanta zi de Thanksgiving a-la-roumaine!/ Adicatelea: printr-o claca (recte truda voluntara, munca patriotica, "in beneficiul...", etcaetera)./ Drept pentru care: tata lumea sa auda si sa inteleaga: Joi, 25 noiembrie, la ORL 17, la Sediul Asociatiei Alunnoilor si Alumnitselor Fulbright, se va executa o adunare, voluntara (!), in vederea curateniei generale si a transformarii salii in sediu utilizabil. Sfertul de parchet care e compromis va fi ridicat manual si depozitat (stim noi unde) in vederea curatirii sale ulterioare si a reasternerii pe pat de cement; podeaua se va curata frumos in vederea reasternerii pe deasupra a carpetei, pana la data turnarii shapei si a repunerii parchetului. Totodata, se va repara ghivetta (cauzatoare de flood). In felul acesta, sediul devine utilizabil iar permanenta (fiecare joi? tot a doua joi?) devine sfanta./ Dupa ce tata lumea aude, pricepe, eventual da mai departe (why not?), sa vina cine-o putea. Cum ziceam: intru celebratiunea sfantului Thanksgiving./ Asa sa ne ajute Ishtenem!/ (al domniilor voastre, Marin)



To: Fulbright Alumni Organizations Worldwide. Subject: Thanksgiving "a la Roumaine"
Romanians have a long tradition of volunteering, called, prior to 1990, "patriotic work" -- actually, forced labor -- which was performed during festive days./ Ironizing the late idea, we decided to make usable again the hall used as headquarters of the Romanian Fulbright Alumni by doing the fixing up work ourselves. The hall got flooded and the floor heavily damaged many months ago, turning the place unusable. And since the necessity for having a meeting space was urgent... it happened on the Thanksgiving night. As you can see from the pictures, there was no turkey, but the joy we did it./ Marin Marian Balasa

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you and congratulations on doing an excellent job in tearing down... we want to see the finished result!!! (just joking...) We will remember you when we have our floors done!!! Again, Happy Thanksgiving to all / Eliane Van Stichel / International Secretary / Belgium

Dear Marin Marian Balasa,/ Congratulations on your wonderful volunteering accomplishment! And thank you for sharing this great news with all of us! I work with NGO leaders from around the world, and a topic of discussion that repeatedly comes up is the one of "volunteerism" and how difficult it is for NGOs in some countries to mobilize volunteers when the very word "volunteer" has negative associations with "forced labor"./ If you don't mind, I would like to use your example of finding empowerment in irony with the NGO leaders I work with in Romania and other Eastern European countries. I think they would be quite inspired by your example! For more information about the program that I have the privilege of directing, please visit: www.92y.org/ford / All best, / Alison Gardy, Membership Chair, Board of Directors, US Fulbright Association