

The average U.S. Peace Corps volunteer spends about 800 days serving in a foreign country.

News and perspectives of Rîșcani and the Republic of Moldova • Mark Gilchrist, U.S. Peace Corps volunteer

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May brings out the best in Moldovans



Above and center, students carry a traditional garland of boughs and flowers to the WWII monument in Rîșcani, Moldova for a Victory Day service May 9, and many people carry photographs of loved ones who served. Left, a what they have learned this dancer performs during a May year.



6 dedication of a monument at the district offices honoring Gheorghe Râșcanu-Derojinski, an early leader and benefactor of the city. Right, students perform a ballroom dance to celebrate spring and show others they have learned this dancer performs during a May year.



Monument dedicated

For 138 years after his death in 1879, people here have honored landowner and benefactor Gheorghe Râșcanu-Derojinski in many ways, ultimately naming the city and district after him. On May 6, they dedicated a permanent monument to him. The bronze casting atop a stone pedestal greets visitors to the district offices in the City of Rîșcani.

Attended by about 200 people, the dedication ceremony included comments by civic leaders, music and dance performances by school children, a blessing from Priest Tudor, and an address delivered by one of the namesake's descendants, Dan Rîșcanu of Germany. **Photos: Click**



War veterans honored

Moldovans who lived through World War II experienced something Americans have never known; occupation by a hostile, foreign force. Nazi Germany had overrun Eastern Europe with its sites set on nothing short of conquering the world.

On May 9, Moldovans recognized the day in 1945 when Allied Forces, including the Russian Army, (their Army, essentially,) having driven the Nazis out of their territory and decimated their ranks, forced them to give up the fight.

The treaty was signed on May 7 and called for surrender on May 8, which is celebrated in Europe as "Europe Day." But



The Russian military's St. George's ribbon.

Germans who had feared being taken prisoner kept fighting in Eastern Europe for another day. Joseph Stalin declared Russia's victory on May 9.

These dates are largely ignored in America, where Veterans Day is not an official holiday. Nov. 11 was first known as Armistice Day, or the end of World War I in 1918.

Many nations fought in WWII, but the Russian Army is largely credited around here, and May 9 is a tribute to Russia. Because of this, many Moldovans who promote closer ties with the European Union, and weaker ties with Russia have traditionally ignored this event. **Photos: Click**

Dance performance

The Mostenitorii dance group of Rîșcani city school students presented its spring dance recital May 7 in the city's performing arts center. The show highlighted talents and skills the students have developed over years of training and practice.

The theme this year celebrated 415 years of this community, with traditional Moldovan folk dances, Roma, or "Gypsy" dances, and a classical ballroom number. The Mostenitorii group competes in international competitions and has won several awards. **Photos: Click**



I asked 100 Moldovans about their favorite food. Nearly half of them said zeama, (soup,) while a fifth like friptura, (grilled meat). Placinte, (cabbage, cheese, or potato pastry,) followed close behind, and sarmale, (cabbage roll,) and mamaliga, (soft polenta,) are enjoyed by about one in 10 people here.



Above, performers of Mostenitorii (The Heirs) on stage after the finale of their spring program. Right, with a soldier standing guard, a woman places flowers on the monument in Rîșcani's war memorial park after a service commemorating the anniversary of Germany's surrender in World War II.



For Teachers
"You can count the seeds in an apple, but you can't count the apples in a seed."

JOKE OF THE MONTH
A joke that is funny only in Romanian
Question: What do you call a shepherd who lost a sheep?
Answer: Oaie-less!
What?: "Oaie" is Romanian for "sheep" and is pronounced "wire," so the shepherd is "wireless." Haha. ;)

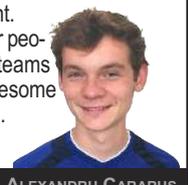
May

	1st	31st
Day length	14:26 hrs.	15:37 hrs
Sunrise	5:49 am	5:14 am
Sunset	20:15 pm	20:51 pm
Full Moon		11th
Avg. Temp.		61°F
Rainfall		3 inches

Holidays & Special Days

- 1 - Int'l Day of Solidarity of Workers
- 9 - Victory Day
- 13 - Special Working Day
- 20 - Special School Day
- 15 - Europe Day & Family Day
- 19 - Soccer fundraiser in Riscani stadium
- 28 - Dniester Day

MOLDOVAN OF THE MONTH
A passion for helping his community, and a talent for energizing people make "Sandru" Cararus our Moldovan of the Month. Cararus leads the **Tara Verde** ONG efforts to bring recycling to Rîșcani while motivating students and adults to help our environment.



ALEXANDRU CARARUS

CORRECTION: The Moldovan president who visited Rîșcani in 2010 was incorrectly reported here. The president at the time was Marian Lupu.

Photographs and Videos, at:
www.Markstrail.com