

May is beautiful with growth

After one of my longest winters since a childhood in the state of Maine, May greeted me with warm weather that I cherish, and the promise of several more months in which I can really enjoy Moldova.

I can't believe how fast time is passing – I have been in Moldova for a full year, and in Rîșcani for 10 months!

Having lived in both northern and southern climates, I believe that living in the north gives a person a strong character. Living here in the winter, a person must adapt and withstand the cruelties of cold, including discomfort, treacherous walking conditions, and damage to homes and yards.

Also, surviving long winters **strengthens a person's belief that life will always get better**, and it builds their endurance and optimism for spring.



He is risen

Thousands of people around Rîșcani gathered at their churches before dawn Easter Sunday, after all-night services, for the annual blessing of food. **More photos, [Here](#).**

Better business

Opportunities for Rîșcani businesses, workers and residents improved this month with a forum on better business practices offered by ministers of finance from the Netherlands, and a roundtable discussion on open governments hosted by the Localinvest Civic Association ONG.

With numerous resources, a capable and enthusiastic workforce, and an efficient global trade system available, Moldova can become competitive on the world market as it grows into the very complex market economy.



Dutch finance ministers, above, and an open-government roundtable, below.



Children danced during the celebration of Family Day.

Beautiful ceremonies

May was filled with beautiful ceremonies, both commemorating our past, and building our future.

The Victory Day service on May 9, in 1941-1945 (WWII) Park, was a somber occasion. It is commemorated in Europe for good reason, as that is the date that World War II ended here, even though allied forces continued to fight Japan.

Americans honor all military veterans on No-

vember 11, the day World War I ended, and, on Memorial Day later in the month, we honor all Americans killed in wars.

The plaza at the raion (county) council building was filled with people May 20, as the raion president and others unveiled a new monument honoring people deported from their homelands during the soviet occupation. A choir sang beautiful songs evoking

thoughts of courage, perseverance and sacrifice.

On May 15, the Women's club of Rîșcani held its annual banquet to celebrate the family. Married couples were recognized for their importance in raising children and strengthening our community. Several children danced and sang, and it was a very festive and entertaining afternoon.

For more photos, click [here](#).



Victory Day and unveiling of a monument for deportees from the Soviet period helped us remember struggles of our ancestors.

Other projects kept me busy in May.

I was stranded in Chisinau for a few days this month, after Romanian-language training, so I helped other Peace Corps volunteers with projects.

I visited Straseni, and photographed residents and clients of Castania, a facility for retired people run by the Neumanist ONG. I also photographed

beautiful cabins they rent as a fundraiser.

I went to Ungheni, where the city has more than 40 sculptures. I photographed the sculptures and discussed ideas for helping residents and visitors enjoy them more.

In Chisinau, I attended an event for the NovaTeca Maker-Space project. Our children's library in Rîșcani received a 2,000-piece Lego set that children can use to be creative and hone group skills.



Castania residents go for a walk, and a roll. For more photos, click [Here](#).