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# THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

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## UNA General Assembly holds pre-convention annual meeting

by Roma Hadzewycz

KERHONKSON, N.Y. — The Ukrainian National Association's General Assembly met here at the UNA estate, Soyuzivka, on November 6-8 for its annual meeting — its last before the regular convention of the largest Ukrainian fraternal benefit society, which is scheduled to take place in May of next year in Toronto.

During its three days of deliberations, the UNA General Assembly, the highest decision-making body of the UNA between its quadrennial conventions, took the following actions:

- examined and approved merger agreements with the Ukrainian National Aid Association and the Ukrainian Fraternal Association, which will be presented for final approval to the UNA convention;
- discussed and approved several proposed amendments to the UNA By-Laws that will be presented to convention dele-

gates (who must ratify any changes by a two-thirds majority);

- adopted a budget for 1998 of \$10,774,000 in income and \$11,024,000 in expenses;

- confirmed the Executive Committee's acceptance of a request made by Treasurer Alexander Blahitka for a leave of absence for medical reasons, effective immediately through June 30, 1998.

The General Assembly also adopted a mission statement of the Ukrainian National Association that underlines the principles enumerated in the UNA's charter and renews the fraternal commitments made therein. The mission statement is designed to serve as both a shortened version and an updated restatement of the organizational purposes delineated in the UNA charter.

Present at the annual session were: President Ulana Diachuk, Vice-President

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## October Revolution Day marked by clashes

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — Nationalists and Communists clashed in Lviv on November 7 during demonstrations and rallies on the 80th anniversary of the October Revolution. Five people were injured and five others have been arrested.

The violence began when some 300 Communists and Socialists veered away from a protest route approved by city authorities, which was to take them to the Monument of Glory, and instead made their way to the Ivan Franko monument, according to Interfax-Ukraine. They were attacked there by scores of youths, members of the Social-National Party who had gathered there for their own commemoration — this one to Ukrainian cultural figures shot during the Stalin purges of the 1930s. The five injured people, who received cuts and bruises, were leftist demonstrators, including the leader of the Lviv city Communist Party, Oleksander Holub. The arrested belonged to the Social-National Party.

With more than 80,000 people taking part in various demonstrations and commemorations throughout Ukraine, some to commemorate the Bolshevik October Revolution and others the slaughter of thousands of Ukrainians during the 1930s in what is called the Fusilladed Renaissance (Rozstriliane Vidrodzhennia), the violence in Lviv was relatively minor. However, it caused an outcry from Communists in the Verkhovna Rada, who refused to register for the November 11 Parliament session and demanded an inquiry into the events by Ukraine's Procurator General's Office and dismissal of the mayor of Lviv.

National Deputy Petro Symonenko, leader of the Communist Party, told the legislature, "An anti-Communist campaign is unfolding, it is part of the election struggle." He blamed the Kuchma government for the Lviv violence and said that "the government has officially embarked on a path of dictatorship, and aids the Social-Nationalists in committing their outrages." He demanded that a special parliamentary commission be appointed to investigate the incident and others he alleges have occurred in western Ukrainian cities in the last months.

Acting Procurator General Oleh Lytvak has agreed to investigate only the specific incident in Lviv. He explained that the Verkhovna Rada has more than once attempted to draw his office into what he

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## UNA blesses new headquarters in Parsippany

by Roma Hadzewycz

PARSIPPANY, N.J. — More than 160 persons helped the Ukrainian National Association celebrate the blessing of its new headquarters building in this Morris County town on Sunday, November 9.

The rite was conducted by clergy of the Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches: the Rev. Marian Struc, pastor of St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Jersey City, N.J. (home to the UNA's former headquarters); the Rev. Oleh Hucul, pastor of Holy Ascension Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Maplewood, N.J.; and the Rev. Myron Stasiw, a UNA advisor who is pastor of Holy Protectress Ukrainian Catholic Church in Toronto. The blessing took place in the two-story building's spacious atrium, with the guests gathered in the atrium and on a balcony overlooking the ground floor.

After blessing the atrium, the priests headed upstairs, where they blessed the offices of the Ukrainian National Association, Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly.

Among the guests were representatives of many Ukrainian community organizations, as well as district and branch officers from the tri-state New York, New Jersey and Connecticut region, including the chairpersons of the New York, Northern New Jersey and New Haven district committees, respectively, Barbara Bachynsky, Eugene Oscislowski and Ihor Hayda. Also present were the two honorary chairmen of the Northern New Jersey District Committee, Walter Bilyk and John Chomko, and the vice-chairman of the New York District, Yuri Kostiw.

The organizations represented included the

(Continued on page 7)



Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox clergy bless the new UNA headquarters.

## Verkhovna Rada approves members of Election Commission

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — Another threat to Verkhovna Rada elections proceeding normally was overcome on November 12 when the Verkhovna Rada finally approved a sufficient number of members to the Central Election Commission to allow it to begin its work.

Last week the Ukrainian Parliament twice rejected all but six of President Leonid Kuchma's nominees, even after meetings had been held between the president's representatives and Verkhovna Rada faction leaders in the hope that the members would be elected quickly. On November 12 five additional candidates were approved, for a total of 11 members, which still leaves the CEC four short of a full complement of 15 members.

Without an election commission, the law on elections passed in September could not have been fully implemented. Only the commission has the right to realign the 450 current electoral districts into the 225

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## Peace Channel exercises held on Black Sea



Efrem Lukatsky

Officers salute sailors who perished in World War II during a service conducted as part of the Russian-Ukrainian joint naval exercises called Peace Channel held on October 31-November 2 on the Black Sea.

## FOR THE RECORD: Embassy's statement responding to Lazarenko

Following is the full text of a statement issued on November 12 by the Press Service of the Embassy of Ukraine to the United States.

Several Russian-language newspapers in Ukraine have disseminated information about the visit to the United States of the former prime minister of Ukraine, Pavlo Lazarenko. Quoting Michael Sawkiw Jr., director of the Ukrainian National Information Service in Washington, these publications alleged that the Ukrainian Embassy in the United States attempted to impede Pavlo Lazarenko's meetings with U.S. officials and the Ukrainian community, and presented a distorted picture of the Embassy's activities, claiming that for the last two to three years, "98 Embassy employees and the Consulate General in New York have practically not worked even with the Ukrainian diaspora." Although Mr. Sawkiw categorically rebuffed these allegations during his meeting with Ambassador Yuri Shcherbak, the Embassy would like to further clarify this issue.

The Embassy made no attempts whatsoever to prevent Mr. Lazarenko's planned meetings. Moreover, it is the Embassy's policy to assist all Ukrainian politicians, regardless of their political orientation, when they come to Washington. The Embassy represents Ukraine, not any political forces within it.

We resolutely reject any attempts to place the Ukrainian Embassy in juxtaposition to the Ukrainian community in the U.S. The Embassy and Ukrainian American public associations differ in their tasks, functions and possibilities. The Embassy serves to expand a mutually advantageous relationship between Ukraine and the U.S. in various fields, including political, military, commercial, scientific and technological cooperation. It works to provide a legal basis for such cooperation and offers necessary assistance to Ukrainian citizens in the U.S. The mere fact that Ukrainian-U.S. relations were upgraded to the level of a strategic partnership speaks for itself.

In this diverse and multifaceted round-the-clock work, the Embassy has enjoyed support from Ukrainian Americans who have always cooperated with the Embassy's undersized staff. Every impartial observer familiar with the situation can confirm the enormous number of events organized by the Embassy for the Ukrainian community and with the Ukrainian community.

The very idea that 20 diplomats, including the office of military attaché, trade mission and consular department, should "work" with nearly a million Ukrainian Americans is not very sound. The Embassy values its relationship with Ukrainian Americans, and is always open to cooperation for the sake of an independent, secure, democratic and prosperous Ukraine.

## NEWSBRIEFS

### U.S. ambassador to Ukraine confirmed

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate late on November 6 confirmed more than two dozen new U.S. ambassadors to international organizations and foreign countries. Among them was Steven Pifer, who was named ambassador to Ukraine. (Congressional News Service)

### 1814, 1917 - it's all the same

SYMFEROPOL — Confused schoolchildren in Crimea think that Napoleon or Adolf Hitler led the 1917 Russian Revolution. The children showed a lack of knowledge about Lenin that in some periods of Soviet history would have been suicidal. About 150 pupils took part in the poll, local journalists reported on November 10. Less than 50 percent knew that the Russian Revolution led by Lenin took place 80 years ago, and one in 10 did not know who started it. Twenty percent of final-year students said "kommuniaky" — a derogatory word for Communists rather like "com-mies" — organized it. A few fifth-grade students said Napoleon, Hitler or Joseph Stalin was behind the revolt. Some guessed its date as 1814. Less than 50 percent of the younger group, age 10-11, approved of Lenin. Of the older group of 16- and 17-year-olds, one-fifth wrote that the revolution did no good and only 7 percent judged Lenin a "great historical figure." The findings highlighted a generation gap in the former Soviet Union: older people were out in force last week to mark the revolution's 80th anniversary. (Reuters)

### Compromise urged for democrats

KYIV — At a press conference on November 12, Pavlo Movchan, head of the organization "Prosvita," announced along with Ivan Drach, head of the Congress of Ukrainian Intellectuals, that a coordinating meeting would be held on November 25, sponsored by the two organizations, for representatives of national-democratic parties to gather, discuss compromises and select one candidate per voting district they all would support. According to both Mr. Movchan and Mr. Drach, early indications from proposed candidate lists for next spring's elections show that national-democratic parties risk competing with each other, thereby splitting the vote and throwing favor to the one Communist Party candidate running in the district. (Respublika)

### Steps taken to unify Orthodox Church

KYIV — Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Metropolitan Petro Petrus of Lviv announced on October 29 that he is joining the Ukrainian Orthodox Church—Kyiv Patriarchate, citing a desire to see one unified Orthodox Church in Ukraine. On

October 28 150 parishes of the UAOC under the Lviv metropolia also agreed to join the UOC-KP for the same reason. (Respublika)

### Ukraine admits executions

KYIV — The Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs acknowledged to the Council of Europe on November 7 that Kyiv has executed 13 convicted criminals this year, despite public assurances from senior Ukrainian officials that all such actions have been halted. But the Internal Affairs Ministry is reported to have now issued orders suspending all executions. Only China exceeds Ukraine in number of executions this year. (RFE/RL Newline, Eastern Economist)

### New center to attract foreign investment

KYIV — Head of the South Korean Daewoo group Kim Woo-Choong and Kyiv City Administrator Oleksander Omelchenko marked the beginning of construction of the International Business Center (IBC) in Kyiv's central Bessarabskyi district in a stone-laying ceremony on November 6. The Kyiv City Administration owns 49 percent of the complex, Daewoo owns 51 percent. Daewoo will invest approximately \$280 million in construction of the IBC. This is the biggest foreign investment to date for Kyiv. The IBC will cover 16,500 square meters and will include 5,000 square meters of office space, 10,000 square meters for apartments, as well as 15,000 square meters for a shopping complex. There will also be a 5-star hotel and underground parking. Construction will last for 40 months and will also include restoration and reconstruction of the architectural memorials on the territory of the new business center. (Eastern Economist)

### Interpol hindered by the lack of treaties

KYIV — According to the National Interpol Bureau, the majority of criminals presently hiding abroad are suspected of large-scale theft, tax evasion, fraud and robbery. Most are hiding in the U.S., Germany, Israel and CIS countries. The biggest problem concerning the return of these criminals to Ukraine's law enforcement agencies is the absence of inter-governmental agreements, including extradition treaties, between Ukraine and other countries. The problem is aggravated by the fact that suspected criminals from other countries also use Ukraine as a haven. Three resolutions on fighting money laundering were approved by the 66th Interpol General Assembly that took place in late October.

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# INTERVIEW: Rudenko-Desniak on Association of Ukrainians in

by Roman Woronowycz  
Kyiv Press Bureau

Oleksander Rudenko-Desniak is a principal founder and the president of the Association of Ukrainians in Russia (AUR). The 61-year-old journalist was born in Chernihiv and moved to Russia in 1954. For almost 40 years he worked in Moscow as a literary critic, most recently for the magazine *Druzhba Narodiv*, where he was national literature editor. He has published a book, "Domivka v Dolyni vid Domivky," about the waves of Ukrainian emigration to the West.

The interview with Mr. Rudenko-Desniak took place during the Second Congress of Ukrainians in Russia, held in Moscow on October 23-24. In the first part of this interview Mr. Rudenko-Desniak discussed national cultural autonomy, a status that the AUR is currently working to achieve with the Russian government. This second part deals with relations between the AUR and the western diaspora, as well as with Ukraine and the recent World Forum of Ukrainians.

## CONCLUSION

**What type of relationship do you have with the government of Ukraine? You said earlier today that it hasn't been very helpful.**

I established a newspaper here in Moscow and traveled to Kyiv in search of funding. I got no response. I started a television program in Moscow and received no help.

This is an objective problem, one that is not as simple as it may seem. From my point of view, we have no experience living in a civil society. Our experience is life in a Soviet society. In 1990 we were still Soviet man. Miracles don't happen.

The diaspora in Canada, or the United States, was built through the course of 100 years. We have been building for five. So we don't have that experience.

The Ukrainian state has no experience in normal relations with the diaspora. This is the terrible penalty for the historic lack of a state. There is no awareness that the diaspora exists in the world as an extension of yourself, such as it is with the Germans or the Jews.

That's one thing. There is another price for the lack of a country for so many years. I myself am from a village, as were my forefathers. We still maintain a peasant mentality.

Ukraine does not understand what it takes to live in the information age. If you want the world to know about you, you go into the world and announce your existence. But I, as the Ukrainian, wait for the world to come to me, bow before me and tell me just how smart I am.

Not knowing how to live in the information age has caused Ukraine many problems. I had a very simple idea. In Russia the Ukrainian intellectual potential is vast. Pardon me for saying this, but "metropolias" tend to gather the best. In the last 300 years a vast Ukrainian intellectual potential has amassed here. It must be harnessed — in the sphere of culture, of information.

At the first and second World Forum of Ukrainians and at the congress I said that our diaspora needs to become a channel for information about Ukraine into the Russian media world: objective information about history, culture, current affairs, to destroy the myths about Ukraine that remain in the mind of the average Russian. This avenue must be utilized through publications, through television stations and computer channels.

So I thought that when I began publishing this Ukrainian newspaper, probably the first Ukrainian newspaper in the history of Moscow, and traveled to Kyiv, it would cause some excitement there. Okay, it was



Delegates to the Second Congress of Ukrainians in Russia during a meeting of the committee on cultural expansion.

a small newspaper, but at least a trickle had begun.

There was no reaction. They did not understand the point: why was it needed?

The English, who live on a small island, built one of the great empires only because they went into the world to conquer it. Today America is conquering the information age. There is no argument here. Today they are winning in Russia, in the post-Soviet space: American cinema, American music, American advertising, etc. They are winning the war in the information age, and there is no need to send armies.

They have institutes that work to develop the American image across the world. Americans realize you have to support this information invasion.

As for young Ukraine, it needs to conquer its place under the sun, its information space, at whatever price. If it wins the battle in the world of information it will gain

much in terms of the economy, and in politics it goes without saying.

**So, then let's turn to the West. What are your relations with the diaspora in Canada and the United States?**

I have visited Canada and the States twice. The relationship between them and us is a peculiar one. I first visited five years ago and returned two years back. I had great meetings at Harvard University, in Washington, Chicago. I met my colleagues from the Ukrainian World Congress. We had very interesting exchanges. But today we have no contact. None.

I look for a reason, but I can't find one. I don't blame anybody. I believe that part of the reason is that these are older people with a well-developed world sense.

**You mean you have no contact with the leader of the Ukrainian World**

**Congress, Dmytro Cipiwnyk?**

We meet at forums, we get along fabulously. In that sense there are contacts.

But the crux of the matter is that they have no desire to travel here. For them Moscow is a symbol of the worst that happened in their lives. I'm not judging them. I understand them.

I met a Ukrainian from Argentina in Kyiv and invited him to Moscow. He said, "No way, Moscow is a hyena on fire." I told him, "Oh yeah, well we live there."

It is difficult to overcome that, it is their view of the world.

I have invited Cipiwnyk here and [Yaroslav] Sokolyk and others. We do have contact on an individual basis. But there is no ongoing organizational contact, and that's too bad.

I say this directly because I am not a

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## Ukrainian community in Russia: steadily blossoming

by Roman Woronowycz  
Kyiv Press Bureau

MOSCOW — The cultural and community life of Ukrainians in Russia, if not yet in full bloom, is steadily blossoming. You can be sure of that. There are educational centers, music salons, libraries, Sunday schools for kids, and a steadily developing network of local organizations spread across the vast reaches of the Russian Federation that are united under the Association of Ukrainians in Russia.

Since the demise of Soviet Union in 1991, civil society in Russia has slowly taken shape, but according to the president of the association, Oleksander Rudenko-Desniak, it has some way to go before it reaches the state of community development that exists in the United States or Canada.

"The diaspora in Canada or the United States was built through the course of 100 years. We have been building for five [years]. So we don't have that experience," explained Mr. Rudenko-Desniak.

"About five or six years ago there was a fascination with national self-identification. Traditional dance and song became popular, as did a sense of nostalgia. This wave then somehow died. Today, new processes have begun, new organizations are emerging. But today they are being created with a certain sense of professionalism."

Mr. Rudenko-Desniak said that in Moscow a Ukrainian Institute, comparable to the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University, has been established at the Moscow Pedagogical Institute, while in Perm, a city located in Siberia, an educational organization was recently started.

He explained that, given time, professional organizations of lawyers, doctors and teachers are sure to arise. "Ukrainians will continue to gather, let's say during Christmas or whenever, but the everyday work of the community will take on a specialized

character. One group will deal with religious matters, others with social services, and so on," explained Mr. Rudenko-Desniak.

Five million Ukrainians are scattered throughout Russia. They live in the major cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg as well as in outlying regions, most notably in the oil and gas regions of Tiumen. There are communities in Zelenyi Klyn, at the eastern edge of Russia, where many Ukrainians settled in the last century; in Perm, where the notorious concentration camps for political prisoners were located; and in the Kuban region, a land that historically was Ukrainian. They are organized at a level far higher than one would expect merely seven years after something approaching democracy was established in Russia. Following is a look at three communities.

### Ukrainian life in Moscow

Russian government statistics state that 265,000 people who identify themselves as Ukrainian live in Moscow, although many people here say that it is really closer to 1.5 million. Ukrainians here have developed a community infrastructure centered around the Ukrainian National Educational Center, whose building is currently under construction on the Arbat, the center of the old market district of Moscow located in the shadow of the Kremlin. Just as the development of Ukrainian institutions will take time, so will the construction of the center of Ukrainian life in Moscow. Leaders of the Ukrainian community here expect to wait another couple of years before the building is finished. The reason? "As usual, the issue is a lack of money," explained the president of the Association of Ukrainians in Moscow, Valerii Symonenko.

Mr. Symonenko said his organization has been legally registered in Moscow since October 1992 and currently represents 15 organizations. It does not have its own offices but works out of

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Assembly members listen to executive officers' reports.



Acting Treasurer Stefan Kaczaraj (left) and President Ulana Diachuk answer questions regarding the financial report. On the right is Director for Canada Peter Savaryn.

## UNA General Assembly...

(Continued from page 1)

Nestor Olesnycky, Director for Canada Peter Savaryn, Vice-Presidentess Anya Dydyk-Petrenko, Secretary Martha Lysko, Treasurer Alexander Blahitka, Auditors Stefan Hawrysz, William Pastuszek, Stefania Hewryk, Anatole Doroshenko and Iwan Wynnyk, and Advisors Roma Hadzewycz, Tekla Moroz, Stefko Kuropas, Walter Korchynsky, Eugene Iwanciw, Stefanie Hawryluk, Taras Szmagala Jr., Alexander Serafyn, Andrew Keybida, Anne Remick, Roman Kuropas and the Rev. Myron Stasiw. Advisor Alex Chudolij was unable to be present during the Thursday and Friday sessions, but was present on Saturday. Also participating was Acting Treasurer Stefan Kaczaraj. (Advisor Nick Diakowsky excused his absence.)

Also in attendance were honorary members of the UNA General Assembly Stepan Kuropas, Anna Chopek, Mary Dushnyck, Anna Haras, Walter Sochan, John O. Flis, Joseph Lesawyer and Wasyl Didiuk, as well as the editors-in-chief of the Ukrainian

language daily newspaper Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly, respectively, Zenon Snylyk and Ms. Hadzewycz. (Honorary member Genevieve Zerebniak resigned from the General Assembly due to poor health.)

The annual session, held Thursday through Saturday, November 6-8, was shortened by one day, as all General Assembly members attended the official blessing of the UNA's new headquarters building in Parsippany, N.J., on Sunday, November 9. As a result, the Assembly scheduled evening sessions in order to complete its agenda, which included reports of executive officers, advisors and auditors, as well as editors-in-chief of Svoboda and The Weekly and Soyuzivka Manager John A. Flis; a review of fraternal operations, reports of assembly committees and acceptance of the 1998 budget. The annual meeting culminated in the traditional banquet for General Assembly members and guests.

The annual meeting began with the traditional ceremony near Soyuzivka's monument to Taras Shevchenko, the patron of the Ukrainian National

Association, conducted by Vice-Presidentess Dydyk-Petrenko. In a brief address, Ms. Dydyk-Petrenko prompted General Assembly members to consider the fact that "we are standing on the threshold of a new century" and called on them to look to the future. She also reminded Assembly members that the next UNA convention is almost upon us and asked them to ask themselves: "Did we accomplish everything we pledged to do? Did we devote enough attention, time and expertise to significant matters?"

The vice-presidentess noted that the UNA today is facing "moments of crisis," the most important of which is declining membership, as members pass on and their ranks are not replenished. Ms. Dydyk-Petrenko exhorted the assembly: "This matter demands our immediate attention, otherwise we will betray those generations that will follow us."

The ceremony concluded with the U.S., Canadian and Ukrainian national anthems and with the singing of Shevchenko's "Testament."

General Assembly members then proceeded to the Main House library, where their sessions began with brief remarks by President Diachuk, who called for a moment of silence in honor of the late former Supreme Vice-Presidentess Anne Herman and former Supreme Advisor Walter Kwas, as well as all branch and district officers and members who had died during the past year.

An invocation was offered by the Rev. Stasiw, who asked that God "grant the members clear consciences so that these deliberations are held in peace and for the good of the UNA."

After greetings from Michigan Gov. John Engler were read, the agenda was adopted and the minutes of the last annual meeting were approved, General Assembly members turned to the business at hand.

Mrs. Diachuk immediately reported that the treasurer had requested a medical leave of absence through the end of the current term of office. She said the UNA Executive Committee, meeting that morning, had unanimously decided to

grant Mr. Blahitka's request and to continue paying his full salary throughout the period of his leave. The members of the assembly were asked to vote on approving the executives' decision, which they did with two abstentions.

The president then announced that, acting in accordance with the UNA By-Laws, the Executive Committee had appointed an acting treasurer. He is Stefan Kaczaraj, C.P.A., who has been the UNA's chief accountant for the past four years, and prior to that had served as an outside auditor for the UNA. Mr. Kaczaraj will serve out the remainder of the treasurer's term. (The officers elected at the 1998 convention assume office on July 1.)

Most of the day was then devoted to reports of General Assembly members, which consisted of addenda to their written reports, copies of which were distributed to all present, and a discussion of those reports. Among the major topics of discussion were UNA dividends, which had been suspended by UNA executives for 1997 due to the expenses of upcoming mergers with two other Ukrainian fraternal organizations, and the UNA scholarship program, including how scholarship funds are paid out to students in the United States and Canada.

The evening session on the first day of deliberations was set aside for a meeting of the Mission Statement Committee. Once all the members agreed that the statement should underscore the purposes set forth in the UNA's charter dating to its beginnings as a fraternal benefit society, they worked to fine-tune the wording of a statement that would update the organization's founding principles in a concise and clear manner. The committee reported its proposal for the UNA Mission Statement the next day, and the wording was unanimously approved by all members of the General Assembly.

The Mission Statement reads as follows:

"The Ukrainian National Association exists: to promote the principles of fraternalism; to preserve the Ukrainian,

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Taras Szmagala Jr. reports on proposed amendments to the UNA By-Laws. On the left are Vice-Presidentess Anya Dydyk-Petrenko and Vice-President Nestor Olesnycky.



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## UNA General Assembly...

(Continued from page 4)

Ukrainian American and Ukrainian Canadian heritage and culture; and to provide quality financial services and products to its members.

"As a fraternal insurance society, the Ukrainian National Association reinvests its earnings for the benefit of its members and the Ukrainian community."

The Friday's agenda included the matter of mergers involving two other Ukrainian fraternal organizations. Assembly members reviewed the details of merger agreements with the Ukrainian National Aid Association of America (UNAAA) and the Ukrainian Fraternal Association (UFA). The General Assembly voted in both cases to authorize the Executive Committee to execute the agreement of merger.

In the case of the UFA, however, there was the additional provision of a new name for the merged entity, as the Ukrainian Fraternal Association insists that the new organization be called the Ukrainian National Fraternal Association. Members of the General Assembly discussed and debated the issue of the name change and then voted 12 to 9 (with one abstention) to accept the UFA's proposed name change. However, that provision has to be approved by a two-thirds majority at the 1998 convention of the UNA since it involves an amendment to the UNA By-Laws.

There is some concern that the issue of the name change could be the downfall of the proposed merger as many members of the UNA feel strongly that the Ukrainian National Association should retain its name. The General Assembly voted to go ahead with the UNA-UFA merger even if the name change is not passed by the UNA convention, and decided that such a contingency should be written into the agreement of merger.

The remainder of Friday's daytime session was taken up by reports of the Soyuzivka manager, and the Svoboda and Weekly editors-in-chief, as well as a review of fraternal operations — the UNA's two newspapers, its print shop, scholarships, awards to students of Ukrainian studies schools, pedagogical courses at Soyuzivka, the Kyiv Press Bureau and the Fund for the Rebirth of Ukraine. The examination of fraternal benefits continued into the next day.

The Friday evening session was devoted to a meeting of the General Assembly's By-Laws Committee, which examined amendments to the UNA By-Laws suggested by members of the organization's Standing Committee on the By-Laws. The deliberations were chaired by Mr. Szmagala.

Among the proposed changes subsequently approved by the entire Assembly — which will be presented for the action of convention delegates next year — were the following:

- to create the position of senior vice-president as a full-time salaried executive position that will be reserved in 1998 for a representative of the Ukrainian Fraternal Association (this provision eliminates one of the two existing non-salaried vice-presidents' positions);

- to reserve three advisors' seats and one auditor's seat for UFA candidates;

- beginning with the year 2002, to change the executive structure of the UNA to a corporate structure, whereby the convention would elect an 11-member board of directors, which would then hire executives to run the day-to-day business of the UNA; the board of directors would meet quarterly and would elect a chairman of the board;

- to increase fraternal dues from 15 cents to \$1 per month;

- to eliminate references to a specific date (month) for the annual meeting of the General Assembly;

- to add provisions for two convention recorders, that is, paid professionals who would record the minutes of the proceedings; and

- beginning with 2002, to provide for automatic honorary membership on the board of advisors for any elected national officer with 20 years of service to the UNA; the board of advisors would meet annually to advise the board of directors.

Among the proposals rejected by the By-Laws Committee:

- that the secretary and treasurer of the UNA be hired, not elective, positions, subject to appointment by the General Assembly, which determines the terms of their employment;

- that the position of general counsel be added to the Executive Committee, thus enlarging that body to seven members, that the position be subject to the approval of the General Assembly (as proposed in the cases of the treasurer and secretary), and that the general counsel be allowed to maintain a private practice;

## Mission Statement

The Ukrainian National Association exists:

- to promote the principles of fraternalism;
- to preserve the Ukrainian, Ukrainian American and **Ukrainian Canadian heritage and culture; and**
- to provide quality financial services and products **to its members.**

As a fraternal insurance society, the Ukrainian National Association reinvests its earnings for the benefit of its members and the Ukrainian community.

- that no auditor, advisor, senior vice-president, vice-president or director for Canada could be employed by the UNA on a full-time basis.

On the final day of deliberations the General Assembly heard the financial report prepared by Acting Treasurer Kaczaraj, who reported the following losses incurred during 1996: Ukrainian National Urban Renewal Corp. (UNURC — the UNA headquarters building in Jersey City), \$1,142,923; Soyuzivka, \$554,471; Toronto Sales Office, \$536,010; and Svoboda, \$489,521; for a total loss of \$2,722,925. Furthermore, Mr. Kaczaraj reported that the UNA had lost \$877,912 during the first nine months of operations in 1997. He emphasized that it is imperative that something be done in order to increase the UNA's revenues and to reduce expenses.

Mr. Kaczaraj also reported on the finances of the UNURC, noting that the Jersey City Home Office had been sold for \$21.2 million, but after adjustments to the sale price (\$801,750) and selling expenses (\$698,651), the sale brought in \$19,699,597 (i.e., amount realized). When the book value of the building (\$14.66 million) is deducted from the amount realized, the net gain from the sale was \$5,035,760. He added that there still are rents in arrears for 1995-1997 totaling approximately \$522,000. The UNA's new building in Parsippany, N.J., he reported, was purchased for \$4,931,250, but additional expenditures for build-out of the UNA's space and renovations will bring the cost to \$6,137,403.

The acting treasurer's report elicited an extended discussion about the work of the Toronto Sales Office, which is head-

ed by Robert Cook, as well as about the fate of the Svoboda daily newspaper. Also a topic of discussion was the announcement that the UNA Executive Committee, at its meeting a day prior to the General Assembly's annual meeting, had voted to close down the print shop and go to an outside contractor to print the UNA's two official publications, Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly.

At the conclusion of Mr. Kaczaraj's report, it was the auditors' turn to report to the General Assembly. The auditors expressed satisfaction with the work of UNA executives, with the exception of Treasurer Blahitka. A motion to accept the reports was made by the auditing committee and accepted by the members of the General Assembly.

Reports of the Assembly's Seniors' Committee and Sports Committee were delivered and unanimously accepted.

The annual meeting concluded with miscellaneous matters, including a discussion of whether a resolution should be adopted regarding a code of ethics for members of the UNA General Assembly.

That evening General Assembly members and guests gathered in the Main House dining room for a banquet with Vice-Presidentess Dydyk-Petrenko and Vice-President Olesnycky acting as masters of ceremonies. Stepán Stépan, lead baritone of the Lviv Opera, entertained guests with renditions of operatic works and folk songs; piano accompaniment was provided by Volodymyr Vynnytsky.

The next day UNA executive officers, auditors, advisors and honorary members of the General Assembly traveled to Parsippany, N.J., for the official blessing of the UNA's new corporate headquarters.

## Auditors complete review of UNA operations



The Ukrainian National Association's Auditing Committee conducted a review of UNA operations on November 3-5, on the eve of the annual meeting of the association's General Assembly. Seen above (from left) at the UNA's new headquarters in Parsippany, N.J., are: Iwan Wynnyk, William Pastuszek, Stefania Hewryk, Stefan Hawrysz and Anatole Doroshenko.

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## THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION'S NEW HEADQUARTERS IN PARSIPPANY



Moving day: Trucks line up outside the UNA's old headquarters building in Jersey City, N.J.

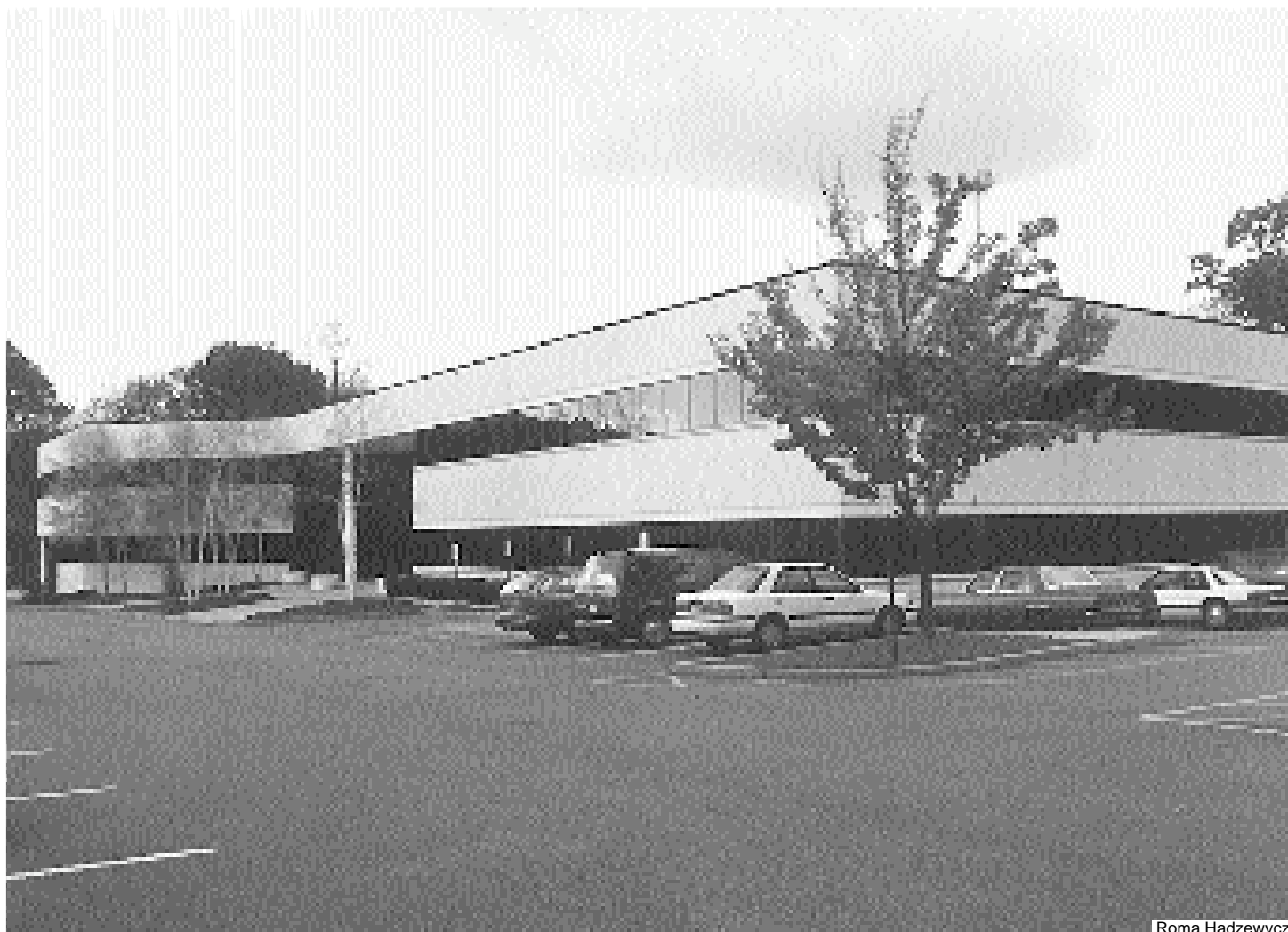


UNA'ers and community representatives gather in the atrium for the blessing of the new Home Office.

### Branch secretaries attend ceremonies

*The branch secretaries present at the blessing of the UNA's new Home Office included:*

Julian Kotlar, Branch 42  
 Maria Haluszczak, Branch 70  
 Andre Worobec, Branch 76  
 Nadia Demczur, Branch 86  
 George Yurkiw, Branch 130  
 Yaroslav Zaviysky, Branch 155  
 Maria Rejnarowycz, Branch 158  
 Walter Bilyk, Branch 170  
 Genevieve Kufta, Branch 171  
 Lon Staruch, Branch 172  
 Barbara Bachynsky, Branch 184  
 Lesia Goy, Branch 194  
 John Pryhoda, Branch 200  
 Mychajlo Spontak, Branch 204  
 Eugene Oscislawski, Branch 234  
 Cyril Bezkorowajny, Branch 256  
 Andrew Keybida, Branch 322  
 Olga Liteplo, Branch 361



Roma Hadzewycz

The UNA's new corporate headquarters in ParsIPPany, N.J., located at 2200 Route 10 (westbound).

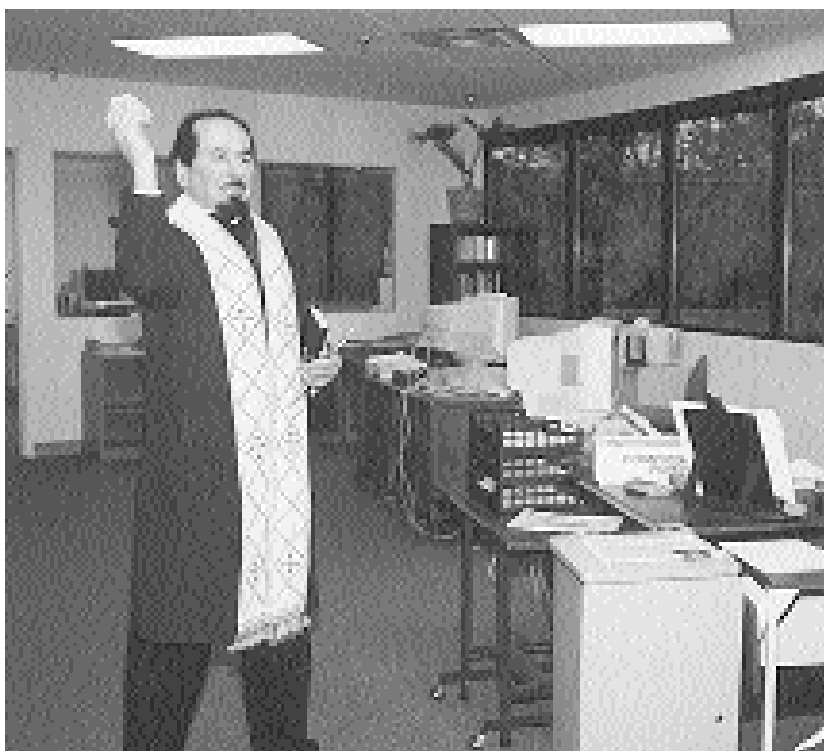




UNA, Svoboda and The Weekly employees pose for a photograph outside their new office building.



Clergy conduct the blessing service; they are (from left): the Rev. Marian Struc, the Rev. Myron Stasiw and the Rev. Oleh Hucul.



The Rev. Myron Stasiw blesses the offices of The Ukrainian Weekly.



Raising a toast to the UNA in its new home are: (from left) Nestor Olesnycky, Jaroslaw Fedun, Walter Sochan, Michael Halibej and Jerry Kuzemczak.

## UNA blesses...

(Continued from page 1)

Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Ukrainian American Coordinating Council, Coordinating Committee to Aid Ukraine, Ukrainian Medical Association of North America, The Ukrainian Museum, Ukrainian Free University, Organization for the Democratic Rebirth of Ukraine, Ukrainian American Bar Association, Americans for Human Rights in Ukraine, Plast Ukrainian Youth Organization (Newark, N.J., Branch), Ukrainian American Youth Association (Whippany, N.J., Branch), Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (Morris County Chapter), Ukrainian American Professionals and **Businesspersons** Association of New York and New Jersey, Self Reliance credit unions of New York, Jersey City, Newark and Passaic-Clifton-Whippany, N.J., St. John Ukrainian Catholic Church of Whippany and others.

Almost all the members of the UNA General Assembly — UNA executive officers, auditors, advisors and honorary members — who had just completed their annual deliberations at the Soyuzivka resort the previous day attended the ceremonies. Also present were many employees of the UNA and its two official publications, Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly, and their families.

The event began with welcoming remarks by President Ulana Diachuk, who then turned the proceedings over to the masters of ceremonies, Vice-President Nestor Olesnycky and Vice-President Anya Dydyk-Petrenko. Brief congratulatory messages were delivered by several representatives of Ukrainian organizations and institutions.

A concert program featuring the Lvivian vocal-instrumental ensemble, with soloist Volodymyr Tsimura, and bandurist Alla Kutsevych of Lviv.

Afterwards guests proceeded to the second floor, where the offices of the UNA and its publications are located, for a reception. Guests toasted the UNA's new home with champagne, and sampled chocolate-flavored vodka, hors d'oeuvres and a hot buffet prepared by the nearby Ramada Hotel of East Hanover, N.J., whose general manager is Orest Fedash. The reception was sponsored by the Self Reliance Federal Credit Union of Newark, N.J. According to President /CEO Ihor Laszok, the credit union plans to open a branch office in the UNA headquarters building in spring 1998.

The UNA's new home office is located at 2200 Route 10 (westbound); the building was formerly known as Executive 10.

## THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

### Our veterans

As you, dear readers, have probably noticed, this issue contains a significant amount of material about veterans and the military. That, of course, is by design, as we had decided to honor our veterans with a special section in the issue published immediately after Veterans' Day and Remembrance Day, both marked on November 11. Since 1954, following an act of the U.S. Congress, November 11 became a day to honor veterans of the armed forces. (Originally, the date of November 11 date was set aside in the United States as Armistice Day to commemorate the signing in 1918 of the armistice ending World War I.) Meanwhile, in Canada, November 11 is Remembrance Day — a day observed to recall those who were killed in world wars.

Therefore, it is appropriate that we have printed articles recalling and honoring veterans and others who survived the great cataclysms of this century, and remembering those who served and serve their countries in the armed forces.

This issue also focuses on two very visible and active Ukrainian organizations: the Ukrainian American Military Association, which this year marks the first anniversary of its founding by a particularly active group of U.S. military personnel, and the Ukrainian American Veterans, who began celebrations of their 50th anniversary at their recent convention held at Soyuzivka.

The Ukrainian American Military Association was established by active and reserve personnel from various military services who were already using their Ukrainian heritage to bridge contacts between the United States and Ukraine. Members of the UAMA provide Ukrainian military interpreters for missions between their land and the land of their forefathers. Thus, they have a very special role to play in the relationship between the U.S. and Ukraine. The organization earlier this year officially became affiliated with the UAV.

The Ukrainian American Veterans organization unites more than 500 veterans who served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf. Its goals are to promote veterans' concerns and also, as noted in the organization's mission statement, "to sustain the Constitution, government and laws of the United States." As noted in its constitution, one of the purposes of the UAV is "to aid the Ukrainian people in promoting the growth of democracy in the newly proclaimed Ukraine, and to acquaint the people of the United States with the true allegiance and fidelity of all Ukrainians to the principles of the government of the United States, its Constitution and laws..." As well, the UAV seeks "to maintain the Ukrainian nationality in a status of high esteem and respect in these, our United States."

The organization traces its roots to the 1947 convention of the Ukrainian Youth League of North America, where a group of activists took steps toward the establishment of a permanent national veterans' organization (Ukrainian Americans veterans' posts date back to the period after World War I). Their idea became reality when the founding convention was held on Memorial Day 1948.

Since then, the UAV has been active in many spheres, from annually organizing observances of Memorial Day to helping provide hospitals in Ukraine with the tools they need to take care of the Ukrainian populace's health. It has embraced community-wide initiatives like the erection of the Taras Shevchenko monument in Washington, and it has been involved in veterans' causes, for example, placing a UAV memorial plaque in Pearl Harbor.

Both the UAMA and the UAV are active in patriotic American endeavors, and both are fully involved in Ukrainian community life. Both organizations — one new and eager to contribute to our country, the other a venerable old hand composed of persons who have already contributed much to the United States — deserve our attention and our support on Veterans Day and always.

Nov.  
13  
1954

### Turning the pages back...

Following is the full text of The Ukrainian Weekly's editorial about the first observance of Veterans' Day in 1954, after an act of Congress designated November 11 as the day to honor

all veterans who fought in defense of the United States. The editorial appeared on the front page of The Weekly on November 13, 1954.

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Last Thursday, November 11, marked our nation's first "Veterans' Day."

For nearly 30 years we have commemorated November 11, the anniversary of the ending of World War I, by paying tribute to the heroes of that tragic struggle by rededicating ourselves to the cause of peace.

Recognizing that the United States since World War I has been involved in two other major conflicts, which have added millions of veterans living and dead to the honor rolls of our nation, Congress, in an act approved on June 1, 1954, officially changed the November 11 legal holiday from Armistice to Veterans' Day.

And so last Thursday Americans everywhere, here and abroad, for the first time observed Veterans' Day. A day, in the words of President Eisenhower's proclamation, on which a grateful nation paid and will pay each year on the same day "appropriate homage to the veterans of all wars who have contributed so much to the preservation of this nation."

The freedom and liberty which are our heritage today have been preserved only through the sacrifices of our veterans. On nine occasions since the founding of our country, Americans have had to shoulder arms in wartime defense of their nation.

We must always remember that nearly 1 million of the defenders never returned from battle.

We must never let the passage of time obscure or minimize this nation's eternal debt of gratitude to all our veterans, for our United States of America exists today — free, proud and unafraid — because of their sacrifices in time of national peril.

Sources: "Weekly Commentator: Veterans' Day Salute," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, November 13, 1954.

## ON VETERANS' DAY: A tale

by M. P. Kusen

Over 50 years ago during World War II, two American soldiers of Ukrainian descent had a chance meeting in a little town in eastern France. They were in different military units that just happened to converge on the same small town at the same time. When they met they smiled, embraced and spoke Ukrainian to each other. It was a little respite from the harshness and daily drudgeries of the war. But more than that it was a minor miracle, because they were brothers, William and Steve Kusen from New York City.

William and Steve Kusen grew up together in uptown Manhattan on Madison Avenue along with their brother Joseph Kusen who served in the Pacific.

William, the oldest, was drafted into the Army first, on March 28, 1941. Shortly thereafter, Steve was also drafted into the Army, and Joseph was drafted into the Army Air Force.

William was assigned to the 152nd Signal Company of the 12th Armored Division — a tank corp nicknamed the "Hellcats." William reached the rank of technical sergeant as a radio repair specialist. His unit crossed the English Channel in early November 1944 and established an assembly area in Auuffey, France, by mid-November. The Allied military forces were moving swiftly across France, and in early December the Hellcats had reached a staging area for an offensive into Germany. It was the town of Luneville in the province of Lorraine, about 100 miles from the Rhine River and the city of Strasbourg, Germany. And it was there that the two brothers met.

William and Steve Kusen hadn't seen each other for more than two years since they both had furloughs in New York. Now, it seemed like a gift from fate that these two brothers should have this chance meeting just before the Allied forces final assault into Germany. And the two brothers made the most of their time together in Luneville. Their reminiscing was enhanced by their singing as William played the mandolin, and they even managed to find and share a kovbasa. Yet, unknown to them, Hitler was about to put up his last ferocious attempt to defend Germany. The German High Command was planning the "Ardennes Offensive," or as we Americans came to call it, "The Battle of the Bulge."

Fortunately, both brothers survived the final days of those European battles. And remarkably all three brothers came home uninjured and were noted for meritorious service. William was additionally awarded three bronze stars.

After the war each brother resumed his civilian life and eventually each married and had a family: William had a son and two daughters, Steve had two sons, and Joseph had three sons and two daughters. They were living the American dream amid postwar prosperity — each eventually bought a home and moved away from the congested city apartment life in which they grew up. But as they uprooted themselves, they also drifted apart. Over the years, their children (10 cousins) grew up barely knowing each other. And with the passing of time, one by one, the brothers died: William in 1967 in New York City; Joseph in 1981 on Long Island, and Steve died just four years ago in Fayetteville, Tenn. With Steve Kusen's death, the last paternal link for the 10 cousins was gone.

But perhaps another minor miracle could happen for the Kusen family, like that chance meeting in Luneville, France, all those years ago. And that is what did happen when Elisha Kusen (son of Steve) picked up the phone to try to find his cousin Michael (son of William). Elisha grew up in Tennessee where he still currently lives with his wife and son. In mid-March 1997 Elisha was in New York City on business when he'd decided to try to find out if Michael was still living in New York. After a few calls and messages Elisha's hopes were answered when Michael returned his call.

"Hello," Elisha said in a slight southern accent.

"Is this Elisha Kusen?" Michael asked.

"Yes it is."

"My God," replied Michael, "I haven't seen you since you were about 8 years old. I have a vague memory of you running around in my mother's yard. How old are you now?"

"Forty-two," Elisha answered.

"You're 42, I'm 50. I can't believe how much time has gone by."

The reminiscing went on, and the next day the two estranged cousins had lunch together in a Brooklyn restaurant. That's when Michael learned that Elisha had also contacted their cousin Peter, the eldest son of their Uncle Joseph.

Peter lives in Newark, N.J., with his wife and three children. Peter had invited Elisha to his home that Saturday. And from Peter's invitation an impromptu cousin's reunion began to form in the next few days as Peter contacted his brothers and sisters.

On Saturday, March 15, Peter Kusen and his wife, Patty, hosted a cousin's reunion filled with stories and questions and the full dynamics of a family rediscovering itself after so many lost years. There was laughter and a new generation of children running about and the exchanging of photos and addresses. There was talk of recording the family history and invitations and plans for other gatherings. It is a very heart-warming experience to rekindle the feeling of belonging to an extended family. After such a long absence, to look into the faces of cousins and see the resemblance of deceased uncles and aunts creates a tender bond. I know because my name is Michael Kusen, and the next reunion was at my house.



Brothers William (left) and Steve Kusen as they met in France during World War II.



# ON REMEMBRANCE DAY: Voices from the camps

by **Andrij J. Semotiuk**

Finally the train stopped. After four days of starvation and thirst, sealed and wired shut in stench and filth with 120 other prisoners in a boxcar with no toilets or water, John Lahola was apprehensive, but relieved, that his uncertain journey was over. For four days and nights the fearful occupants jointly recited prayers in Polish as they anxiously awaited their fate. Four days earlier the prisoners had been forcibly taken from Gestapo headquarters in Nazi-occupied Lviv and loaded on to this train bound for an unknown destination. It did not matter that most of them were Jews and Ukrainians – in Polish prayer they all found common solace. Now, as the SS guards flung open the boxcar doors, a welcome burst of fresh air flooded the compartment. But then the prisoners realized where they had arrived: Auschwitz.

It was now more than three months since John Lahola was arrested for his support of the partisan underground resistance to the Nazi occupation of Ukraine. For a split second while the Gestapo was placing him under arrest in Lviv, he caught a glimpse of his mother across the street. As Mr. Lahola sought to wave goodbye, he was struck over the head by the butt of the soldier's gun. Mr. Lahola did not know then that, in that place, at that moment, and in that manner, he was parting from his mother forever. With his arrest began the relentless march of events that now ended here, with these fellow prisoners, in this – the most notorious death camp of Nazi Germany.

"Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp which has turned my life into one long night seven times cursed and seven times sealed," wrote Elie Wiesel, one of the former inmates of Auschwitz. Like Mr. Lahola and countless other former prisoners who experienced the horror of Auschwitz, Mr. Wiesel is tormented by his memories of the camp.

It was under these conditions that psychiatrist Victor

*Andrij J. Semotiuk is a former United Nations correspondent, and Canadian Human Rights Commission Tribunal Panel member. Mr. Semotiuk is a member of both the American and Canadian bars, and practices law in Edmonton with the law firm of Hansma and Associates.*

Frankl, also a former Auschwitz inmate, was able to develop a deeper understanding of the human mind and the foundation of his theory of human survival. Frankl observed that while many inmates perished, some Auschwitz inmates managed to survive despite the hardships and privations. He asked why? This was a good question. How did people like John Lahola manage to survive in such inhumane conditions?

In his book "Man's Search for Meaning," Frankl states that the answer was to be found in the prisoner's attachment to some larger explanation of his existence – some higher purpose to his life. Frankl hypothesized that the difference between those who perished and those who survived was to be found in the manner in which the inmates translated the meaning of their suffering to themselves. Those inmates who lived with higher purpose in life were able to endure the hardships and sacrifices because they could be explained as necessary evils that had to be surmounted for the sake of the higher end. Those inmates who lived without a larger philosophical framework through which to interpret their suffering died. This knowledge armed Frankl with a weapon he could employ in helping fellow inmates.

Whenever a fellow inmate would turn to Frankl exhibiting signs of depression or resignation, Frankl would ask the prisoner why he doesn't just give up – throw in the towel so to speak. Frankl would then intently listen to the prisoner's response, which would usually be something along the lines of "I would give up, but I have a wife or a child, or maybe a political cause or religious belief, etc." Whatever the prisoner would proffer in that moment, Frankl would seize upon as the anchor to that inmate's continued survival.

Perhaps this explains how John Lahola survived the death camps. He wore a red triangle on his prison garb signifying that he was a "political prisoner." Could it be that his passionate devotion to a "free Ukraine" helped him overcome the camp repression? After all, there was so much to endure. He recounted some of his experiences for us in his video memories.

Upon arrival at Auschwitz, each prisoner was registered and assigned a number. While two others held on, a prison guard roughly tattooed a number on the prisoner's arm with three needles. The number permanently branded onto Mr. Lahola's arm was 154820, which became his new name. By

the time the ordeal was over, Mr. Lahola was drenched in blood. He was then forced to join the others who were led to the barracks.

Silence ruled the barracks. It was clear that a complaint meant instant death. A "punishment hole" where prisoners were beaten until dead served as an effective reminder of the futility of complaining.

There were no beds. The prisoners were jammed together on shelves just large enough for four prisoners to lay down on their sides one way, while four lay the other. Latrine breaks occurred only in the early morning during which the guards shouted at the inmates to get up and then beat them to hurry them along. Then there was the routine roll call in the courtyard when the prisoners were required to stand naked in the snow without a single piece of clothing to protect themselves against the cold.

Each prisoner was issued one pair of pants, one shirt and one jacket. If he was ever discovered with anything else, he was beaten to death. As soon as a weaker prisoner fell, he was thrown into ice water – an instant death. By nightfall each day, there was always a pile of human corpses waiting to be burned. Resistance was impossible.

For two weeks newcomers were "initiated" to Auschwitz. First they were divided into groups of 100. Then, to induce terror and submission to camp authority, every 10th man was shot arbitrarily – for no reason. Then some of the prisoners were strapped down to benches especially made for this purpose. They were beaten by the Gestapo so badly that their screams didn't sound human.

As the SS guards cut back on food rations, famine stalked the camps. In the face of death, the pursuit of any form of nourishment became a never-ending obsession, virtually no price was too high to satisfy the hunger pangs constantly tormenting them.

Enforced starvation turned Mr. Lahola into a scavenger. Whenever a camp guard threw away an empty can of food he would scoop it up and clean it out with his fingers. Such a can meant two or three days of nourishment. Once while searching through the personal effects of some prisoners who had been removed by the guards, Mr. Lahola found a

(Continued on page 16)

## Ukrainian Canadian soldiers and the battle for Hong Kong

by **Myron Momryk**

The transfer of Hong Kong from British to Chinese administration dominated the news for many months in 1997. For the older generation of Ukrainian Canadians, particularly those who remember World War II, Hong Kong evokes a profoundly emotional response. This is particularly true for the Ukrainian Canadian community in Winnipeg.

The Winnipeg Grenadiers were a militia regiment, and several young Ukrainian Canadians from the city and other parts of Manitoba joined the local unit in the 1920s and 1930s. Others joined during the Depression of the 1930s to supplement their income. There was a large influx of new recruits in September 1939, when war was declared against Nazi Germany. Among this number was Ivan Slipchenko, an older recruit who was 36 years old and married.

Mr. Slipchenko was born in Stebliv, a town near Kyiv, on March 7, 1903. He completed two years at an agricultural college in 1923. With his cousin, he left Stebliv on May 10, 1923, and traveled across Siberia to China. Settling in Harbin, along with a large community of Ukrainians and other exiles and refugees from the Russian Revolution, he worked as a bus driver for two years.

On February, 25, 1925, Mr. Slipchenko immigrated to Canada, where he had relatives. He worked as a farm laborer near Edmonton, then near Yorkton, Saskatchewan, for a year. He then enrolled at an agricultural college in Winnipeg, worked in a garage in his spare time, and later set up his own operation, which he ran until 1931.

*Myron Momryk is project archivist, Manuscript Division, at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa.*

In the meantime, in 1928, Mr. Slipchenko joined the Winnipeg Grenadiers as a machine gun instructor and mechanic, and remained within the unit until 1932. On September 12, 1939, Mr. Slipchenko re-enlisted with the Winnipeg Grenadiers when the militia unit was placed on active service. On his attestation form, Mr. Slipchenko stated that his religion was Greek Orthodox and that he spoke Ukrainian, Russian and Polish, in addition to English. After basic training, the Winnipeg Grenadiers were sent, in May 1940, for garrison duty in Bermuda and Jamaica to replace a British unit. In Jamaica, the battalion performed guard duties at an internment camp and had only limited opportunities to continue their training. The battalion experienced further difficulties due to a heavy incidence of malaria and dengue fever among the troops.

Mr. Slipchenko spent over a month in the hospital due to illness. The battalion was stationed in Jamaica until September 13, 1941, when the unit returned to Canada. At the end of the two-week leave, Mr. Slipchenko and the other members of the Winnipeg Grenadiers embarked from Vancouver on October 27, 1941, for Hong Kong.

There was a shortage of soldiers, and volunteers were sought from other units which were added prior to departure. A number of Ukrainian Canadian soldiers joined the Winnipeg Grenadiers at this time. In total, there were an estimated 81 soldiers of Ukrainian origin in the unit – most were from Manitoba, but a few were from other parts of Canada.

The 1,975 soldiers of the Canadian contingent of two battalions, the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada, arrived in Hong Kong on November 16, 1941, to bolster the British garrison. Compared to the other British and Indian

units, they were virtually untrained and lacked proper equipment. The Japanese were still officially at peace with the British Commonwealth, and the Canadian and British military authorities hoped that the two Canadian battalions would have sufficient time for additional training in Hong Kong. During this brief period, Mr. Slipchenko had the opportunity to become acquainted with the small community of Russian exiles who had fled Siberia to Hong Kong after the Russian Revolution. Following the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Canada and the rest of the British Empire and Commonwealth joined the U.S. in declaring war on Japan. On December 8-17, 1941, the Japanese military attacked the Chinese mainland near Hong Kong, and on December 18 crossed to the island of Hong Kong.

The battle for Hong Kong was fierce. On December 25 the governor of Hong Kong surrendered to the Japanese armed forces. A total of 130 Winnipeg Grenadiers were killed in this action, including six Ukrainian Canadian servicemen.

The fall of Hong Kong came as a shock to the friends and families of the Winnipeg unit. After this date, there was rarely any reliable news about the fate of the Canadian soldiers who had fought in this engagement until the war in the Pacific ended in August 1945. In the chaos of battle, Mr. Slipchenko could have found refuge among the Russian exiles in Hong Kong, but decided to remain with his unit instead. Thus, he shared the fate of the other Canadian prisoners of war.

The Japanese held all prisoners of war in complete contempt, and the Canadians became convinced that they would all be executed sooner or later. The lack of food, medicine and proper clothing compounded the suffering of captivity. Conditions in the Japanese camps were severe, and disease,

cold and despair claimed many victims. Survival was a daily struggle. Some of the Ukrainian soldiers managed to acquire garlic, which proved very useful as medicine. Other Ukrainian prisoners made crafts which they exchanged for additional food with the other prisoners.

The preoccupation with food and survival tested the most enduring friendships among the Canadian soldiers, including the Ukrainian Canadians, which in some cases were rooted in the community organizations and halls in Winnipeg.

The Japanese guards visited various forms of physical punishment and abuse on all of their prisoners, and many Canadians were particularly offended by the Japanese practice of slapping their captives' faces. Ukrainian soldiers, who were familiar with similar practices in the Russian Army, tried to allay their comrades' outrage by explaining that this was a cultural practice in certain Asian and East European armies and not a punishment specifically targeted at the Canadians. The Japanese treated their own soldiers and civilians in the same way. While such explanations calmed some outbursts of temper, they could not completely erase the strong resentment these and other physical punishments aroused.

There were various plans to escape to the mainland. George Berzenski, with three other Canadians, made an attempt on August 20, 1942. Mr. Berzenski had asked Mr. Slipchenko to join in the escape so they could use his contacts among the Russian community in Hong Kong, but Mr. Slipchenko refused and tried to dissuade Mr. Berzenski from his rashness. The attempt failed when the boat the escapees had commandeered capsized, leading to their capture. All four were executed on August 23, 1942.

(Continued on page 18)

# Ukrainian-American Military Association meets at Soyuzivka

by Yaromyr Oryshkevych

KERHONKSON, N.Y. — The weekend of September 26-28 was a historic one at Soyuzivka: it was the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Ukrainian American Veterans (UAV), the first anniversary of the Ukrainian-American Military Association (UAMA) and the 50th anniversary of the Great Raid of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA).

The hall was full at the Saturday night banquet, which featured the installation of the new UAV officers and the official announcement of the UAMA's affiliation with the UAV. But the Saturday morning UAV/UAMA joint session was the main attraction of the weekend.

It was the culmination of a year during which UAMA members participated in many missions to and from Ukraine. Many of those who participated were present to give slide presentations, and reports on their activities and the significance of those missions.

The sole purpose of the existence of the UAMA is to provide Ukrainian military interpreters for missions between the United States and Ukraine. Lt. Col. Yaromyr Oryshkevych (DCANG), outgoing UAMA president, made opening remarks in which he presented three challenges to the UAMA/UAV membership: 1) contacting senators and representatives to have them put pressure on the Defense Language Institute to reopen the recently closed Ukrainian section; 2) including the Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox Churches in the list of religions that can be printed on military identification (dog) tags; and 3) influencing the American Automobile Association and other similar organizations to change their perception of and terminology about Ukraine (and stop referring to it as a member of the Russian Federation, as is the case in the 1997 edition of AAA's Europe Travelbook).

Lt. Col. Walter Chyterbok (USAR) was program chairman and presented the remainder of the speakers.

Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Pylypiak (USAR) accompanied a delegation of California National Guard members to Ukraine, where they had an opportunity to visit the Chernobyl nuclear power plant and see some of the consequences of the accident. His report stirred considerable emotion among the listeners.

Capt. Yuri Holowinsky (USAFR) talked about his participation in the Reserve Attaché Program, which accepts students from all services and various ranks. The unfortunate aspect of this program is that the desk officer under whom the Ukrainian reserve attaché works speaks no Ukrainian and has never been to Ukraine.



Ukrainian American Military Association members get ready for a 10-mile march marking the 50th anniversary of the Great Raid of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.

This notwithstanding, Capt. Holowinsky represented the defense attaché in Kyiv when he went to Yavoriv, Ukraine, to participate in Cooperative Neighbor '97 exercises in early July. The NATO-sanctioned military exercise had 1,000 participants from Ukraine, the U.S., Greece, Georgia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Moldova and Romania. It was an exercise in which U.S. officers tried to bring Ukrainian officers up to U.S./NATO standards. They used Ukrainian equipment and were trained to use each others' weapons. Secretary of Defense William Cohen was present for the closing ceremonies.

Maj. Roman Golash (USAR), along with Lt. Col. Inia Yevich (USAR), went to Ukraine on a military medical mission to study infectious diseases. Maj. Golash reflected on his mission participation over the previous four to five years, and that it was in the national interests of the U.S. to maintain peace in Eastern Europe.

What was interesting is how the language situation has changed. Several years ago, their hosts in Ukraine made a sincere effort, with some apologies for Russian words, to speak Ukrainian. Maj. Golash even cited an instance during Peace Shield '95 when some Russian journalists questioned when and with whom the U.S. and Ukraine were preparing to fight. There was also the implication that U.S. arrangements for such mis-

sions should be done through Moscow and not through Kyiv. Most recently Maj. Golash and Lt. Col. Yevich experienced first hand the difficulty of communicating with individuals who insist on using Russian, when American interpreters were sent there to translate into Ukrainian; this is tantamount to a new brand of Russification, said Maj. Golash.

Col. Eugene Sydor (USAR) spoke of his involvement in the 1994 celebration of the 50th anniversary of the refueling base in Poltava, in which several other Ukrainian interpreters (Master Sgt. Bohdan Cholach [USAR], Maj. Taras Myhowych [USAR]) took part. Several crew members from 1944 missions participated. U.S. linguists interpreted many questions and answers about American B-52 and B-1 bombers, and answered many personal questions (about life in the United States) from local Ukrainians.

The Poltava base was short-lived, because once the Germans discovered where the American bombers were being refueled, the base was bombed, and then Stalin didn't want it re-opened because he desired no American presence in his "worker's paradise" after the front went further west.

Col. Sydor also noted that he possesses a computer program that simultaneously translates Ukrainian into English and vice versa. This can be of invaluable assistance to interpreters in the field who may be tasked to translate technical documents necessary for their missions.

Col. Askold Mosijczuk (USA) also spoke about a WRAMC medical mission to Ukraine, and the high-level delegation that he accompanied to the Kyiv military medical center. They found that very few vaccinations were available for children in the past, and that left the current military population very vulnerable to various infections.

Other topics included: disarmament of nuclear missiles and the ramifications of exposure to personnel (e.g. those who fought the fire, and performed the clean-up at Chernobyl). They discussed the possibility of setting up telemedicine conferencing between the U.S. and Ukraine. Another area of discussion was the purity of the blood supply to prevent transmission of the AIDS virus.

Sgt. Maj. Danylo Zahody (USA) described the several-month-long joint training his unit had in Washington state with the Russian spetsnaz (special forces),

and the competition in which they engaged in Siberia (using only Russian equipment, weapons and techniques). He was able to quite confidently dispel the myth of the superiority of the Russian spetsnaz. Sgt. Maj. Zahody also encouraged young Ukrainian Americans to join the U.S. military and become future interpreters.

Lt. Ihor Kobryn talked of his involvement with Peace Shield '96 held in western Ukraine. The Ukrainian interpreters involved were able to create a glossary of military terms. The Ukrainian troops considered the U.S. troops in awe, and were impressed with the NCO corps.

At this point, Col. Vasyl Sydorenko (military attaché at the Ukrainian Mission to the United Nations) arrived, and had an opportunity to greet the assembled military and veterans.

Finally, Sgt. Mark Iwankiw described his role in Cooperative Nugget 97 (which included Master Sgt. Cholach), recently concluded at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Ft. Polk, La., which involved the U.S. and Ukrainian armies. Sgt. Iwankiw interpreted for dignitaries and for the commanders. During his presentation he provided everyone with colorful photos and a detailed description of the field of operation and the plan of the exercise (which included 15 nations), whose basic purpose was to enhance peacekeeping readiness training. Russian was still used in many Ukrainian units, but they were impressed with the Americans' Ukrainian interpreters when they expected Russian.

During pauses in the presentations, the audience had an opportunity to examine photo albums of Autumn Allies 95, in which Capt. Oleh Bula (USMC) and Master Sgt. Cholach were interpreters for 200 Ukrainian marines participating in joint maneuvers in Camp LeJeune, N.C.

Lt. Col. Oryshkevych concluded the activities with a mention of the work done by Col. Ihor Kotlarczuk (USAR) in helping the Ukrainian military begin to formulate its version of the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Other UAMA members who were absent but participated in foreign missions were: Sgt. Andy Midzak (USAF), who flew with Maj. Orest Jowyk (USAF) and Lt. Mark Brykowskych (USAF) to Uzyn, Ukraine, to participate in an air show, which stimulated significant interest. Capt. Ihor Balaban (USAR) flew to Kazakstan to participate

(Continued on page 17)



Sgt. Maj. Danylo Zahody presents coins commemorating the UPA's Great Raid to UAV National Commander Dmytro Bodnarczuk (right) and UPA Veteran Michael Kowalczyk (second from right).



## Ukrainian American Veterans hold golden anniversary convention



The 1st Battalion, 156th Field Artillery of the New York Army National Guard prepares for a six-gun salute on the Veselka veranda.

by Stephen M. Wichar Sr.

KERHONKSON, N.Y. – The 50th anniversary of the Ukrainian American Veterans – an organization that unites soldiers who served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm – was marked at the Ukrainian National Association's Soyuzivka resort on September 26-28.

The golden anniversary convention proved to be a milestone in UAV history, as the convention committee, under the leadership of Steven Szewczuk, used all resources to make this veteran's gathering memorable and exciting. More than 60 delegates, representing 500 veterans across America, assembled for deliberations. They came from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Ohio, Florida and Michigan.

In addition, the Ukrainian American Military Association, a unit composed of officers and non-commissioned officers on active duty, met at Soyuzivka for the first time as an affiliate of the UAV.

Michigan led the delegates' roster with 11 representatives. In addition to assigned delegates from UAV Post 101, the Michigan State Department, with Stephen Wichar as commander, sponsored and organized a chartered bus for the convention. As a result, Michigan made up one-third of the Soyuzivka population that weekend. Incorporated into this contingent was the Zoloti Dzvony song ensemble.

On Friday morning after registration, UAV officials raised their military standards and National Commander Dmytro Bodnarczuk called the convention to order. Although most of the morning session was devoted to reports by retiring officers, delegates also voiced their concerns about veteran problems, encouraged a greater commitment to serving the American veteran-oriented programs, building a greater scholarship program, revitalizing the national charter, etc. How to foster growth in membership became a key issue after veterans admitted a shrinking and serious decline in membership.

After routine matters (minutes, credentials, reports, etc.) were completed, delegates were assigned to the following committees: Adopt a Hospital Program, Auditing, Constitution and By-Laws, Credentials, Finance and Budget, Future Conventions, Membership, Nominations, Publicity/Public Relations, Raffle, Research and Documentation, Resolutions, Rituals/Service, Scholarship Fund, Ways and Means/New Product Development, and Welfare.

Commander Bodnarczuk then suspended the afternoon assembly so that committees could meet in conference and prepare reports for the following business day.

On Friday evening a traditional hospitality night was held for all delegates and guests. After an extravagant steak dinner, the remainder of the evening was in the capable hands of the versatile Zoloti Dzvony ensemble from Warren, Mich., with Olga Dubrivny-Solovey conducting. Attired in Ukrainian costumes, the 16 singers dazzled the audience with their electrifying renditions of Ukrainian folk songs, in addition to American and Ukrainian military favorites.

Afterwards the audience was invited to continue an "evening glow" at the Halych building, compliments of the singing ensemble. The evening belonged to the Zoloti Dzvony.



Master of ceremonies Stephen M. Wichar Sr. introduces Rep. Benjamin Gilman (left). The new national commander of the UAV, Stephen Szewczuk, is seen on the right.

On Saturday morning the committee chairmen began presenting their findings and recommendations. Midway through the morning meeting, the Ukrainian American Military Association presented a slate of speakers in a seminar-like session. Beginning with Lt. Col. Yaromyr Oryshkevych, president, the speakers effectively described their roles in the UAMA. All the speakers emphasized their unity of purpose in apprising the military that Ukrainians have capable and competent personnel who are both fluent and knowledgeable in translation and interpretation of Ukrainian matters.

The Nominations Committee presented a list of candidates for the 1997-1999 term of office. The following were named and elected: National Commander Mr. Szewczuk (King's Park, N.Y.); Vice-Commander Mathew Koziak (Highland Park, N.J.); Finance Officer Wasyl Liscynsky (Parma, Ohio); Judge Advocate Miroslaus Malaniak (Buffalo, N.Y.); Publications and Public Relations Officer Mr. Wichar (Clinton Township, Mich.); Welfare Officer Bohdan Samokyszyn (Parma, Ohio); Quartermaster Roman Didycky (Grosse Pointe Woods, Mich.); Chaplain Myroslaw Pryjma (Warren, Mich.); Historian Vasyl Luchkiw (New City, N.Y.); Scholarship Officer Michael Demchuk (Seven Hills, Ohio); Immediate National Commander Dmytro Bodnarczuk (Albuquerque, N.M.)

Concurrently with the UAV conference, the National Ladies Auxiliary conducted its own business sessions. Their nominating committee named and elected the following to the Ladies Auxiliary executive board: President Irene Pryjma (Warren, Mich.); Senior Vice-President Ann Bezkorowajny (Monroe, N.Y.); Junior Vice-President Olga Wengryn (Passaic, N.J.); Secretary Alberta Cieply (Warren, Mich.); Treasurer

Amelia Berezowsky (Philadelphia); Judge Advocate Olga Pope (St. Charles, Mo.); Chaplain Pauline Pender (Farmington, Conn.); Historian Jeanne Elnick (Warren, Mich.); Service Officer Kay Brega (Spring Valley, N.Y.); Welfare Officer Natalie Chuma (New York) and Liaison Officer Helen Drabyk (West Palm Beach, Fla.).

The golden anniversary banquet was a sellout, and all of Soyuzivka participated. The presentation of colors was executed by a detail of soldiers from Headquarters Service Battery of the 1st Battalion, 156th Field Artillery, New York Army National Guard, under the command of 1st Sgt. Joseph C. Patti. After posting the colors, the Zoloti Dzvony ensemble sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "Sche Ne Vmerla Ukraina." An armed gun detail saluted the ceremonies with a volley of fire from six cannons stationed alongside the banquet hall. Taps were sounded.

Harold Bochonko, one of the UAV's most distinguished officers and vice-chairman of the convention committee, opened the ceremonies with statements of welcome and then introduced the master of ceremonies Mr. Wichar.

Mr. Wichar welcomed the delegates, members of the dais and guests. He said, "Today's 50th observance was a fitting occasion upon which to reflect the precepts which veterans embraced and upheld justice, liberty, democracy and the promotion of peace among free nations."

The MC called on Past National Commander (PNC) Eugene Sagasz to act as officer of the day, who in turn called on PNC Roman Rakowsky to be his aide-de-camp. This detail discharged the installation rituals for newly elected officers. The outgoing UAV commander,

(Continued on page 17)



The Zoloti Dzvony ensemble performs during the banquet.



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## UIA to feature music of Stankovych

NEW YORK — A concert featuring the music of Yevhen Stankovych, one of the central figures of contemporary Ukrainian music, will be held on November 22 at the Ukrainian Institute of America.

Performing at the concert are violinist Anatoliy Bazhenov, pianist Naida Magomedbekova, clarinetist David Gresham and composer/conductor Virko Baley leading the Music At The Institute (MATI) Chamber Ensemble with the Flux Quartet — Tom Chiu and Cornelius Dufallo, violins; Kenji Bunch, viola; and David Eggar, cello.

The concert, sponsored by Dr. W. Howard Hoffman, is being held as part of “Music at the Institute’s” presentation of “Composer’s Choice.”

The program features the Sonata Piccolo for violin and piano (1977, U.S. premiere); Triptych “In the Highlands” for violin and piano (1972); String Quartet (1973); “A Humble Pastoral” for violin, viola and cello (1996); and Chamber Symphony No. 5, “Secret Calls” for clarinet and strings (1995, U.S. premiere).

Composer Yevhen Stankovych was born in 1942 in Svaliava, in the Zakarpattia Oblast of Ukraine. A prolific composer, since 1966 he has authored 10 symphonies, six chamber symphonies, an opera (“When the Fern Blooms”), four ballets, a large number of works in the oratorical, vocal chamber and instrumental chamber genres, as well as incidental music to six music theater plays and over 100 films.

Stankovych studied at the Kyiv Conservatory under Borys Liatoshynsky and later under Myroslav Skoryk. Beginning with his first compositions, Stankovych declared himself as a composer of dramatic temperament. While his technique is contemporary, folkloric themes are paramount in his works (for example, the opera “When the Fern Blooms” (1978) and “Kaddish: Requiem for Babyn Yar” (1991).

Stankovych’s uniqueness lies in his pronounced affinity with the vernacular, his blending of folk motifs with orchestral colors, reproducing the unique aspects of the folk song and of multilayered polyphony.

Stankovych believes that a composer cannot create music in isolation from his cultural lifeline, and works to extend that lifeline to his audience.

Stankovych’s elaborate polyphonic textures and meditative lyricism are reminiscent of the strict instrumental style of Baroque music, while the full-bodied affected melodies with an obvious post-Romantic coloring give the music warmth and expressiveness. Stankovych’s music is remarkable in many respects, showing his emotional freedom, consummate technical mastery and flexibility of form.

As the Soviet Union collapsed, Stankovych wrote several monumental works commemorating Ukraine’s victims. His “Kaddish: Requiem for Babyn Yar” was the composer’s gift to the memory of Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis in Kyiv in September 1941 (the work was premiered in September 1991 in Kyiv); “Requiem For Those Who Died of Famine” commemorates the 6 million who perished of hunger in 1932-1933 in Ukraine (premiered in 1993 in Kyiv); and “Black Elegy” is a remembrance of the victims of the Chernobyl tragedy (premiered in 1991 in Winnipeg).

Stankovych is the recipient of several major awards. His Chamber Symphony No. 3 was selected by UNESCO’s World Tribune as one of the 10 best works of 1985. He has been recognized with several awards in Ukraine, including the country’s highest award for artistic creativity, the



Composer Yevhen Stankovych



Virko Baley

Ken Howard

Taras Shevchenko State Award.

The composer’s works have been performed in Canada, the U.S., Germany, France, Switzerland, Finland, Spain, China, the Philippines and Yugoslavia, in addition to the former USSR. His works have been recorded on the Melodiya, Analekta, ASV, Naxos and Troppe Note/Cambria labels.

Last year Stankovych was composer-in-residence in the canton of Bern, Switzerland.

Maestro Baley is the founder and music director of the Las Vegas Chamber Players and Nevada Symphony Orchestra, and principal guest conductor and artistic advisor of the Kyiv Camerata. He has recently returned from Moscow where he conducted the Russian National Orchestra with double chorus and soloists in Vyacheslav Artyomov’s “Requiem,” a work dedicated to the victims of communism in Russia, at Tchaikovsky Hall on November 7. The work became the first requiem mass to be broadcast over Moscow State Radio in 1988. While in Ukraine Maestro Baley conducted the Kyiv Camerata in a recording session of the ensemble’s third CD.

Tickets for the “The Music of Yevhen Stankovych” concert, to be held at the Ukrainian Institute of America, 2 E. 79th St., are \$20; \$10, senior citizens; \$5, students. For tickets call the institute at (212) 288-8600.



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# Leontovych String Quartet and Vynnytsky to perform at Weill Hall

NEW YORK — The Leontovych String Quartet and pianist Volodymyr Vynnytsky will appear in concert at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall on Monday, November 24, at 8 p.m. The concert is presented by the Musicians Corporate Management.

Quartet members are Yuri Mazurkevich, first violin; Yuri Kharenko, violin; Borys Deviatov, viola; and Volodymyr Panteleyev, cello.

The concert program will include the following: Skoryk, "Melody"; Shostakovich, Quartet in F-sharp Minor, No. 7, Op. 108; Brahms, String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 51, No. 2; and Franck, Quintet in F Minor for Piano and Strings.

The quartet is named after Mykola Leontovych, the 19th century Ukrainian composer and folk music collector, particularly noted for his choral arrangements of folk music.

Since its founding at the Kyiv Philharmonic in 1976, the Leontovych String Quartet has performed more than 2,000 concerts, appearing in major international festivals and concert halls throughout the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Germany and Italy.

The quartet made its American debut tour in 1988 with performances at the United Nations, Harvard University and Music Mountain Festival in Connecticut, the oldest continuing international music festival in the U.S. It has since appeared at Music Mountain for seven consecutive years, as well as at festivals and chamber music societies throughout the country.

A prize-winner of the Leo Weiner International String Quartet Competition in Budapest, the quartet was given the Lysenko Award in 1989 for popularizing Ukrainian chamber music, making this the first time the award was given to an ensemble rather than a composer. Some 13 works were written for the Leontovych String Quartet by Ukrainian and Russian composers, and the quartet has premiered works by such composers as Schnittke, Sylvestrov, Skoryk and Hrabovsky.

In the former Soviet Union, the quartet recorded more than 30 works for radio broadcast and Melodiya Records. In the U.S., it records for Greystone Records.

Yuri Mazurkevich, a native of Lviv, studied with the renowned violinist David Oistrakh in Moscow. He has appeared as a highly acclaimed soloist and member of the Pomerants-Mazurkevich violin duo in the former

USSR, the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia, Mexico, Hong Kong, Japan and China. In 1985 he was appointed professor of violin at Boston University, where he currently serves as chairman of the string department. Mr. Mazurkevich is a laureate of the Helsinki, Munich and Montreal international violin competitions. In 1990, 16 years after his emigration, he was invited to perform in Moscow, Kyiv, and Lviv. Mr. Mazurkevich has been a member of the Leontovych String Quartet since 1991.

Violinist Yuri Kharenko was born in Kyiv. A graduate of the Lysenko Special Music School, he went on to study with Prof. A. Shtern at the Kyiv Conservatory. He joined the Leontovych String Quartet in 1983 and has performed throughout the former Soviet Union and Europe. Mr. Kharenko has appeared at various international festivals, including Music Mountain, the Newport Festival in Rhode Island, the Texas Music Festival in Houston and in New York on radio station WQXR. In 1994 he appeared as a soloist at the Kyiv Music Fest. Prior to emigrating to the U.S. in 1991, he was on the faculty of the Kyiv Conservatory. Mr. Kharenko was named Outstanding Artist of Ukraine and is a recipient of the Lysenko Prize.

Violist Borys Deviatov was born in Vorkuta, Russia. He attended the Vorkuta Music School and the Cherkasy Music School in Ukraine. Mr. Deviatov studied with Prof. Olenych at the Lviv Conservatory in 1973-1978. He is the winner of several prizes as both violist and conductor, and has toured extensively since 1978 throughout the former Soviet Union, Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland in solo recitals and as soloist with orchestras. Mr. Deviatov joined the Leontovych String Quartet in 1990.

Cellist Volodymyr Panteleyev, co-founder of the Leontovych String Quartet, studied at the Kyiv



Concert bill designed by Ihor Barabakh featuring members of the Leontovych String Quartet and pianist Volodymyr Vynnytsky.

Conservatory and the Moscow Conservatory, where he received a doctorate degree in chamber music. He served as professor of cello and string quartet at the Kyiv Conservatory in 1976-1991. Mr. Panteleyev has appeared as soloist with the Kyiv Chamber Orchestra, performed many solo recitals, as well as given numerous master classes. He was named Outstanding Artist of

(Continued on page 15)

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## Yara to celebrate book's launch

NEW YORK — Yara Arts Group invites the public to an evening of wine, poetry and music to celebrate the publication of “Ten Years of Poetry from Yara Theatre Workshops at Harvard,” a hand-made volume of contemporary Ukrainian poetry in award-winning translations by Virlana Tkacz and Wanda Phipps.

The event, which commemorates 10 years of Yara's Theatre Workshops at the Harvard Ukrainian Summer Studies Program, will take place on Sunday November 23, at 7 p.m. at the Ukrainian Institute of America, 2 E. 79th St. The evening will feature bilingual poetry performances, music and a special sale of the book. Participants will include Yara actors, alumni from the theater workshops and musician Julian Kytasty on bandura.

The Yara Theatre Workshops at Harvard, begun by Virlana Tkacz in 1988, were the springboard for creating the Yara Arts Group, now a resident theater company with the La MaMa Experimental Theater in New York. Yara's trademark multilingual performances based on Ukrainian literature are well-known to the Ukrainian American community.

The Yara Arts Group has staged original theater productions annually at La MaMa since its debut in 1990, last winter presenting “Virtual Souls” at the La MaMa Annex.

It was the 1989 piece presented at Harvard, “Les Kurbas: Fragments in Performance,” that featured scenes from three Kurbas productions, including Shevchenko's “The Sky's Unwashed,” that provided the material and impetus to produce Yara's first performance at La

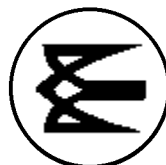
MaMa “A Light From the East” in 1990.

The summer studies program at Harvard, attended by Ukrainians from all over the world and non-Ukrainians from all walks of life, offer a unique cultural haven for the Yara theater workshop. They encourage students to be spontaneous and original in their interpretations of Ukrainian poetry, and it is the blending of interpretations, experiences and ideas that have elicited by a positive response from those students. Julian Zahalak, a graduate student at the University of Chicago enthused, “I was introduced to aspects of Ukrainian culture I didn't know existed.”

Over the last 10 years, with the help of designer Watoku Ueno and dramaturg/translator Wanda Phipps, Virlana Tkacz has brought the poetry of various Ukrainian authors and epochs to the students at Harvard beginning with the summer of 1988-1989 which focused on the works of Les Kurbas and also featured the poetry of Taras Shevchenko and Mykola Kulish, to this past summer, during which students performed “Seven Veils,” the works of seven contemporary Ukrainian poets: Mariana Sawka, Mykola Vorobiov, Anka Sereda, Viktor Neborak, Liudmyla Taran, Mykola Miroschnychenko and Oksana Zabuzhko.

## Correction

In The Ukrainian Museum's press release about the blessing of the cornerstone for its new building in New York City, which was published in The Weekly on October 26, the first name of Anna Alyskewycz was incorrectly rendered as Alma.



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# UCC donation helps flood vic-

WINNIPEG – Winter is just around the corner, but many Manitobans are still coping with the damage to their homes and personal possessions caused by last spring's historic flooding by the Red River.

Many residents of flooded communities have had their patience and finances stretched to the limit awaiting promised government assistance that, for those in desperate need, has been slow in coming.

Groups from sea-to-sea raised greatly needed funds to assist in Manitoba's flood relief effort. Of the numerous fund-raising efforts, one was conducted by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Toronto Branch, which raised a total of \$30,000.

A check for that amount was presented in Toronto to Oleh Romaniw, president of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Headquarters. Mr. Romaniw formally presented the check to Frank Pitura, minister of government services for the province of Manitoba.

## Leontovych...

(Continued from page 13)

Ukraine and is a recipient of the Lysenko Prize.

A laureate of the Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud International Piano Competition in Paris (1983), pianist Volodymyr Vynnytsky has established himself as a distinctive musical personality and has received critical and audience acclaim for his fresh and penetrating readings of the scores.

A native of Lviv, Mr. Vynnytsky studied at the Lviv Music School for Gifted Children under the tutelage of Lydia Golemba and later at the Moscow Conservatory with the distinguished pianist Evgeny Malinin. He received his doctorate in 1983 from the Moscow Conservatory and subsequently taught at the Kyiv Conservatory. Mr. Vynnytsky concertized extensively throughout Ukraine, the other republics of the former Soviet Union, and Europe. In addition, he actively promoted new music as a member of the Perpetuum Mobile Kyiv Chamber Orchestra, which performed works of 20th century composers, many of whom had never been heard in the former Soviet Union.

Mr. Vynnytsky's recordings include works by Mozart, Borntniansky, Chopin, and Liszt for Kobza Productions (Kyiv-Toronto), the works of modern Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk for Yevshan Records (Montreal), and archival recordings of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto and Britten's "Young Apollo" Concerto for the Ukrainian Broadcasting Corporation in Kyiv

In 1994, Mr. Vynnytsky and cellist Vagram Saradjian, performing as a duo, won the Distinguished Artists Award in New York and went on to make a critically acclaimed debut at Carnegie Hall.

Mr. Vynnytsky, who has been residing in the U.S. since 1991, is a visiting member of the piano faculty at State University of New York in Purchase, N.Y., and artist-in-residence at the Music and Art Center of Greene County in Hunter, N.Y.

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## Rudenko-Desniak...

(Continued from page 3)

good diplomat. I used to repeatedly invite our colleagues from the West and tell them, "Please visit because we have no experience about developing a national community in a democratic society. We simply have none. We don't know what to grab on to."

Today I no longer have this problem because in these past years we have been bruised in the head so often that we now do have our own experience. It is a bitter one, not all that sweet.

I can't tell you that the problem has been solved. We can't solve a problem in five years that developed over 500 years. There is a national mentality, a societal mentality. There exists a post-imperial syndrome.

The experience that we have gained in the last five years is personal experience. But I repeat, I would have been delighted to have greeted guests here from the States, from Canada. If they don't want to visit Moscow, they can go to Tiumen. If not Tiumen, they can travel to Vladivostok or to Cheliabinsk. Wherever they would like. They can visit St. Petersburg.

They should see life here today. It is not good, and it is not bad. This is the reality. We live it; there is no other.

I'd like to turn to the topic of the

**World Forum of Ukrainians that was held in Kyiv this past August. The reaction to it in the Western diaspora was pretty much negative. What were your impressions?**

To use a diplomatic word, I had "serious" impressions. It is difficult to be affronted by the people who organized the forum. You can't be offended, you must understand what went on.

We use many terms out of habit: "World Ukrainianism." But what does that mean? You see, we want to assure ourselves that membership in one nation assures us that all other problems will be solved. I'm exaggerating, of course, but you understand the situation.

But then when people gather it becomes apparent that they hold varied ideas as to societal interests, different ideas about the world in general. These are very different people. So if we are talking about world Ukrainianism, then there is a need to build a world system, not to declare that it exists. You can declare independence, not world Ukrainianism. That you must build.

Then you must unite. You asked me about contacts with the West. I have good friends there, I believe. But I have no contact with the Western diaspora. Private contacts and official organizational contacts are two very different things. I could have great

friends in the United Arab Emirates, but that would mean nothing.

If we want to make truly real this idea of world Ukrainianism we need to do a lot more. First, we have to identify the characteristics of each of these groups in the world Ukrainian movement. Ukrainians in the United States and Canada are one thing. Ukrainians in Western Europe are another. Ukrainians in the post-Soviet space are a third. And so on. We must determine what is essential for each of these groups.

Second, we must find the points at which our interests converge. The idea of building a Ukrainian state is a wonderful idea. It is supported on an emotional and philosophical level. But an organizational process also is needed.

If organizations form in Kyiv that take on coordinating responsibilities in these matters, they must then actually be coordinating organizations. They must gather the threads together. They have to create this thing just like with any organization – not like a state organization, but like an individual, cultural organization, as an organization of our efforts, of our links.

I think such an organization should be able to develop an exchange of individuals, let's say from here to Australia, or Argentina or the United States, and vice versa, not as a work exchange, but as an exchange of people who are interested in cultural ties and development and associated problems. This would be one way to begin an exchange of information, an exchange of our views on the world.

These issues cannot be resolved at a forum. The work must be done between forums not at the forum itself. This is what I want to convince my friends in Kyiv. I want

to tell them, "my dear friends, it is great that we gathered here, sat down together, drank a few toasts. But the forum ends and another one doesn't occur for five years. What do we do in the meantime?"

Everything that is essential must be done between forums. We must build on the work. If not, the idea of a world Ukrainian movement will end up an abstraction, a nostalgic abstraction. I would rather have it a reality, and it can be a reality.

The second problem also is a serious one. It regards certain disagreements with my colleagues here in Moscow, in Russia. They asked me at one time, why, when the statutes of the Association of Ukrainians in Russia were being approved, was there no point made that an important goal of the AUR is the building of an independent Ukrainian state. Let me say first that the statutes were voted on before my time.

I told them that it is not a responsibility of Russian citizens to build the Ukrainian state. We founded this organization (the AUR) to protect our rights. First of all, it is an organization that should protect our rights and ensure our rights.

We wholeheartedly and spiritually support a normal Ukrainian state and visit our historical homeland with joy. But why should the building of a Ukrainian state be the main objective for citizens of Russia of Ukrainian descent, or of the United States? This is a very interesting question.

It is not an easy task to determine the formula for the existence of a truly worldwide Ukrainian community. It is easier to talk sweetly of it at gatherings. But gathering and working are not one and the same.

## October Revolution...

(Continued from page 1)

called "political battles" among the various political groups of the Parliament.

No disturbances were reported in other cities of Ukraine, including the nation's capital, where leftists and rightists also held separate rallies. In a sea of red flags, more than 3,000 mostly elderly people gathered in European Square to reaffirm their support for the Communist Party and the failed Soviet experiment. Less than a mile away, nearly 2,000 national democrats gathered in St. Sophia Square, where a memorial service was held in remembrance of those exterminated in the purges of the 1930s. After a procession down Volodymyrska Street, the commemoration continued in Shevchenko Park, located across the street from Shevchenko State University. There Ivan Drach, president of the Congress of Ukrainian Intellectuals, Rukh Chairman Vyacheslav Chornovil

and Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists leader Slava Stetsko remembered those who perished. Mr. Chornovil said he was willing to seek peace with leftists but not with those who will not admit that the Soviet Union "committed unspeakable acts of horror."

Ukraine still officially celebrates October Revolution Day, the Soviet holiday that commemorates the overthrow of the Kerensky provisional government and the beginning of the Bolshevik Revolution.

This year President Leonid Kuchma proposed that the holiday become a day of memory and reconciliation, and be reduced from two days to one. The president said restructuring the holiday would "reduce political and ideological confrontation." The president's effort backfired when the leftist forces of the Verkhovna Rada, led by Yurii Donchenko, who chairs the Committee on Social Policy and Labor, criticized the proposal for "encroaching on the right of the people to rest and recreation," and soundly defeated it.

## Voices from...

(Continued from page 9)

jar of goose fat. He was in heaven as he smeared the fat over his camp ration of bread over the next few days.

After months on a diet of subsistence and hunger, Mr. Lahola was told by the SS guards to unload a bread truck. To be caught stealing bread was instant death. Nonetheless, in an unattended moment, Mr. Lahola devoured as much bread as he could. Then he hid more bread away into his clothing to take back to the barracks. Luckily, that day he passed through the camp gates unchecked. However, his feeble body could not process the sudden onslaught of food. He became violently ill, vomiting everything he had eaten. He was so sick he gave whatever bread he smuggled into the camp to the other inmates, because he knew he wouldn't be able to eat it himself.

Shortly thereafter, Mr. Lahola hid among some prisoners assigned the task of peeling potatoes. The camp cook chose him to help in the kitchen. He was safe and in a place where he could attend to his hunger, albeit at great risk. His main job was to fill big pots with soup for the SS officers. He would carry the soup pots to the soldiers at meal times. He would wrap a rag around his hand to help carry the pot, and as he pretended to hurry along, would purposely spill some of that soup on to the rag. Later, back in the barracks, he would rinse the rag into his cup and drink the dribbles of soup for extra nourishment.

Every day for three years John Lahola and the others endured this torment. Every day more people died in the gas chambers.

Every day their bodies were stripped of jewelry and gold teeth and then piled up on carts to be wheeled over to the incinerators.

\*\*\*

Finally, the end drew near. For months rumors circulated in the camp that the Russian front was coming closer. A huge fire was built to destroy camp papers and documents. On January 18, 1945, prison

officials began removing the inmates. As a cook, Mr. Lahola was one of the last to leave since he had to prepare meals for German soldiers from the front.

The Nazis now engaged in a frantic three-month effort to hide the prisoners and transfer them from one concentration camp to another. Thus Mr. Lahola and others from his camp were forced to march westward for three days and nights until they reached the German border. There, as the men huddled together in the sleet and driving snow, they were loaded onto boxcars and transferred to Mauthausen, a concentration camp near Linz, Austria. Not long afterwards, they were again transferred, this time to Melk, a converted army camp where the prisoners worked in coal mines. Then again they were transferred, this time by tug boat into Germany to the Ebensee concentration camp. There, on May 6, 1945, liberation day, an American tank pulled through the gates of the camp, and the astonished soldiers informed the exhausted prisoners that they were finally free.

The prisoners went wild. In their rush to enter a bakery to get some bread, several of them were trampled to death. Others died from overeating at a time when their bodies were incapable of processing the food they hungrily consumed. The long nightmare, however, was finally over.

Today, more than 50 years later, John Lahola lives in North America. Yet even now he is still swept away with emotion whenever he reflects on these events. More than anything, his three years of incarceration in Nazi concentration camps exemplifies the fact that to live requires struggle – that resignation and surrender are the surest prescriptions for death. His experience demonstrates that the essence of life is not found in events that occur in our lives which, more often than not, are arbitrary or accidental. Rather, John Lahola's life shows that the real question is how to lead your life no matter what events life brings you. John Lahola believes his survival depended on dedicating himself to a larger cause that helped him find meaning in his suffering



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## Ukrainian American Veterans...

(Continued from page 11)

Mr. Bodnarczuk, was called to put a closure on the installation services. Mr. Szewczuk, commander-elect, and Ms. Pryjma, auxiliary president-elect, were called to make acceptance statements.

The Ukrainian diplomatic corps was represented by military advisers to Ukraine's Mission to the United Nations, Col. Vasyl Sydorenko and Maj. Vadym Yakhno. Both were invited to address the audience.

After the Rev. Oleksa Chouter was called to deliver an invocational. Vincent Dunn, chairman of the Economic Development and Promotion Committee in the Ulster County Legislature, was called to the podium to present a proclamation. Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) delivered a resounding speech about veterans, their rights and their important role in the American Ukrainian community.

During other introductions and acknowledgments, Mr. Wichar called on PNC Polche and Ms. Chuma to the main table for the presentation of a plaque honoring the late Ladies Auxiliary President Rosalie Polche. Ms. Pryjma,

the newly elected Ladies Auxiliary president, made the presentation.

An announcement was made recognizing Walter Berezowsky, Walter Senyshyn and Ted Zeniuk of Post 4, Joseph Lesawyer of Post 7 and Jules Zaharchuk of Post 2. All four gentlemen were present at the first UAV banquet held in Philadelphia 50 years ago.

Lt. Col. Oryshkevych, outgoing president of the Ukrainian American Military Association, was invited to speak on behalf of his organization. He thanked the UAV 50th anniversary convention for officially adopting the UAMA as a member-affiliate of the UAV.

Maj. Golash, the president-elect of the UAMA, underlined that the new merger "could only bring positive and productive results in common future endeavors."

The last speaker was UAV Scholarship Officer Demchuk, who announced the names of scholarship winners for 1997.

Mr. Wichar expressed his thanks to all participants and to Soyuzivka Manager John A. Flis for his extraordinary hospitality, and adjourned the banquet proceedings. He also invited the guests to stay for the Commanders Ball. Dance music was provided by the popular Lviviany orchestra from Ukraine.



Col. Vasyl Sydorenko and Maj. Vadym Yakhno, military advisers to Ukraine's Mission to the United Nations, with Christine Shumenko and John Melnyk of Michigan.

## Ukrainian-American Military...

(Continued from page 10)

in a parachute-jumping exercise.

After lunch about 10 UAMA members (several with full rucksacks and canteens) participated in a 10-mile commemorative hike over a measured course, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Great Raid of the UPA. Afterwards, the UAV and UAMA had a joint ceremony at which Maj. Golash read an account of the Great Raid, and Sgt. Maj. Zahody presented commemorative medals to participants of the Great Raid. Thus, the new generation of U.S. military honored the previous generation for its efforts and sacrifices.

On Sunday the UAMA members gathered to elect their new officers. The office of vice-president became de-facto the office of president-elect, as Vice-President Maj. Golash was elected to the presidency. Capt. Holowinsky was elected vice-president, and immediate Past President Lt. Col. Oryshkevych was elected membership chairman. The positions of secretary (Lt. Col. Chyterbok), treasurer (Lt. Cmdr. Chuck Dobra), historian (Lt. Col. Leonid Kondratiuk), and senior enlisted advisor (Sgt. Maj. Zahody) remain unchanged. The next UAMA conference will take place either in Boston or Washington, with details of dates and location to be announced.

\*\*\*

Ukrainian-speaking U.S. military who are in the Guard, Reserve or active components may contact Lt. Col. Oryshkevych at yaromyr@aol.com to get further details of membership in the UAMA or to submit information. Names of military members who have a qualifying Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) score in Ukrainian (and speak Ukrainian fluently) will be sent to Points of Contact (POCs) who organize missions to and from Ukraine, and may be given orders to participate in such missions.

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## Verkhovna Rada...

(Continued from page 1)

required by the new law, and to approve the candidate lists and voter petitions. It also is responsible for determining the budget for the elections, which comes from government coffers, as well as for drawing up and printing the official ballots and overseeing the actual elections.

Ivan Yemets, the outgoing director of the CEC, said after the Verkhovna Rada approved only five of the required 15 members on November 4 that "right now, nobody is working on developing the organization and making preparations for the elections."

Opponents of the president had claimed then that the president was packing the commission with his supporters and said that members of the president's administration should not take seats on the commission. In fact, three of the nine rejected candidates hold posts in the administration. The president's chief of staff, Yevhen Kushniarov, accused the Communists in the Parliament of blocking the election of the CEC by pocketing their ballots in what was a vote by secret ballot.

After two days of haggling between Parliament leaders and President Kuchma, during which the president said he would not withdraw his nominees, several of candidates were again presented for approval before the legislature. This time no additional members were selected. Only 288 of the 416 deputies registered for the day's session, chiefly because many lawmakers are preoccupied with election-year politics, which made it impossible to get the 226 majority of votes required to fill the nine vacancies to the CEC.

Finally, on November 12, after having decided to vote by computer in the routine

fashion, and after the factions had mobilized their troops, 280 lawmakers gave the nod to five additional candidates.

The commission's major task immediately will be to approve the candidate lists and the voter petitions for all the parties that wish to take part in the elections. According to the new law that process must be completed 120 days prior to the elections, which are scheduled for March 29.

To be officially registered for the March 1998 elections, parties must submit petitions with the signatures of 200,000 voters, of which 10,000 must be gathered from each of 14 various oblasts.

In the new mixed electoral system, voters will make two selections. They will first choose one candidate from a list of those running outside the party system and then make a party choice, presumably based on the party's platform and their candidate list.

Of the 450 Verkhovna Rada seats, 225 will go to the individual candidates selected in each of the 225 electoral districts of Ukraine, which are to be established by the CEC as one of its first orders of business. The other 225 seats will be divided among the parties that take at least 4 percent of the vote according to the percentage of votes they receive.

The party candidate lists rank the members of each party and determine in what order the parties will seat their candidates. Individuals on party candidate lists can withdraw their names after the elections, which then allows those below them to move up a notch.

Many political parties have packed their candidate lists with celebrities in the hope that name recognition will draw voters to their slates. However, it is expected that many of the candidates will be lopped from the lists, including celebrities with no political background, after having served their purpose.

## Ukrainian Canadian...

(Continued from page 9)

Mr. Berzenski was born in Rosburn, Manitoba, and worked as a mechanic in Russel, Manitoba, when he enlisted in the Winnipeg Grenadiers in September 1939. He was 26 years old and had married only days before his departure for Hong Kong.

In 1943 Canadian prisoners were sent to camps in Japan, where they were obliged to perform heavy labor in the country's mines and shipyards. Prisoners with technical skills (such as Mr. Slipchenko) were held in the Yokohama Camp and exploited at the shipyards. Others were held in camps in Fukuoka and Osaka.

In January 1945 some prisoners were chosen by lot to broadcast prepared texts over Japanese radio, saying that they were alive and had been taken prisoner by Japan. Mr. Slipchenko was among them, and when short-wave operators in Canada and the U.S. monitoring Japanese transmissions picked up his message, they forwarded it to his wife in Winnipeg. It was the first news of him she had received since Christmas 1941.

In all, members of the Canadian units of Hong Kong spent 44 months in Japanese captivity, and as mentioned above, the conditions they endured were harsh. The death rate among prisoners of war in Japanese camps was 27 percent, compared to 4 percent in German POW camps in Europe. By late July 1945, of the 1,975 Canadians who arrived in Hong Kong, 557 had succumbed to disease, exposure or despair, or had been murdered by their captors. Nine of these victims were Ukrainian Canadians.

On August 15, 1945, the Japanese guards informed the prisoners that the war was over. News of the Canadians' release arrived in Winnipeg during a meeting of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee. Among those released was Paul Arsenych, the son of Jaroslaw Arsenych, the UCC's secretary general. When Mr. Slipchenko was liberated by U.S. troops on September 15, 1945, he weighed under 100 pounds.

Mr. Slipchenko returned by ship to Seattle, Wash., and from there to Vancouver. He made his way back to Winnipeg on a hospital train and spent some time en route in a military hospital in Brandon, Manitoba. He was discharged

from the Canadian armed forces on March 2, 1946, and returned to his previous occupation as a garage operator. He was 43 years old.

Most of the Hong Kong veterans had difficulties adjusting to civilian life because the abuse they endured in the Japanese camps left most of them physically frail. At least two of the Ukrainian veterans volunteered again for the Canadian Army during the Korean War, and one was turned down outright for medical reasons. Steven Zacharko was accepted, but never went back to Asia. He served in Germany in the 1950s for several years before doffing his greens for the last time.

Mr. Slipchenko also suffered from the lingering effects of his incarceration particularly the severe malnutrition – and later on an industrial accident added to his misery. When he died, on April 24, 1972, Mr. Slipchenko was a member of the Hong Kong Veterans Association, Ukrainian Canadian Veterans Association Branch No. 141, the St. Andrew's Brotherhood Society, and was a parishioner at St. Mary the Protectress Cathedral in Winnipeg.

Canadian participation in the Hong Kong campaign was investigated by a Royal Commission in 1942, and was the subject of a number of other special investigations and reports over the years. The Hong Kong Veterans Association has regularly expressed its concern about the high rate of sickness and death among the survivors. Only 758 of the 1,418 survivors were still alive in 1987.

The role of Canadians in the battle for Hong Kong and the tragic conditions in the prisoner of war camps have remained a controversial topic for Canadian military historians. However, there is general consensus that the colony would have fallen to the Japanese regardless of the state of the contingent's military training and preparedness. Ukrainian Canadians who fell in the battle for Hong Kong are buried at the Sai Wan War Cemetery and the nearby Stanley Military Cemetery, now both under Chinese administration.

Every Remembrance Day, Ukrainian Canadians should make a special effort to keep the memory of their sacrifice alive.

(I would like to thank Walter Slipchenko, the son of Ivan Slipchenko, for his comments on a draft of this article.)

## Newsbriefs

(Continued from page 2)

Furthermore, Interpol has helped to return Ukrainian women working abroad as prostitutes. The numbers of women involved in prostitution abroad has significantly decreased, according to Col. Viktor Radetsky, director of the National Interpol Bureau. (Eastern Economist)

### Harvest to exceed last year's low

KYIV — Ukraine's harvest is set to reach 37 million tons of grain, 12 million more than last year, said First Deputy Agriculture Minister Borys Supkhanov on November 11. Last year's total was one of the lowest in decades. He said 2.2 million tons of sunflower seeds will be harvested, also an increase over 1996. Up to 2.2 million tons of sugar are expected to be produced. (Respublika)

### Congressional site visit to Ukraine, Russia

WASHINGTON — Reps. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas) and Vic Snyder (D-Ark.), members of the House National Security Committee, recently returned from a five-day visit to former Soviet missile sites in Russia and Ukraine that are being dismantled as part of the Cooperative Threat Reduction program (CTR). So far, 66 SS-19 silos and 58 SS-19 missiles in Ukraine have been eliminated; each of these missiles carried six nuclear warheads. During the mission, the congressmen oversaw the partial elimination of an SS-19 mis-

sile launcher at Pervomaïsk, an ICBM base in Ukraine. All 132 SS-19 silos in Ukraine will be eliminated by the end of 1998, and the CTR program has begun preliminary work to eliminate all Ukrainian SS-24 missiles and launchers. Ukraine became nuclear-weapons-free on May 30, 1996, when the last nuclear warhead was sent to Russia for elimination. In Russia on October 18, the delegation toured the Research Institute of Chemical and Machine Building near Sergeiv Posad where SS-N-8 submarine-launched ballistic missiles are eliminated. (U.S. Department of Defense)

### Missiles to be used for commercial launches

KYIV — The Ukrainian-Russian joint venture Kosmotras was registered on November 11 and the consortium will specialize in modernizing SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missiles for commercial launches. The first commercial launch of a missile is expected to be carried out in 1998. Ukraine will handle most of the technical issues, according to Oleksander Serdiuk of Ukraine's National Security Agency. The Ukrainian side will consist of KB Pivdenne, PivdenMash and AT Khartron. Ukraine and Russia will each own 50 percent of shares in the joint venture. The new Dnipro missile could be included in the large-scale Teledisk project, which will involve the launching into orbit of 840 American satellites for the new generation global computer network. Modernization of the missiles is expected to cost more than \$100 million. (Eastern Economist)

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## Ukrainian community...

(Continued from page 3)

the temporary offices of the educational center, also located on the Arbat.

Mr. Symonenko said no Ukrainian churches exist in Moscow, and that the only Ukrainian church in the region, the Epiphany Cathedral of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church — Kyiv Patriarchate in Noginsk, 30 miles north of Moscow, was recently shut down by the Russian government. He explained that the cathedral catered mostly to Russians because few Ukrainians live in Noginsk.

He also said no official government-sponsored day schools exist in Moscow, but that the government sponsors one after-school program for Ukrainian kids and that there is a private Sunday school program.

For Ukrainians in Moscow seeking intellectual stimulation, in addition to the recently organized Ukrainian Institute at the Moscow Pedagogical University, there is the Library of Russian and Ukrainian Literature (soon to be renamed), which was given to the Association of Ukrainians in Russia this past July. It has been functioning since 1987 and has a collection of 30,000 Ukrainian books and periodicals from all over the world, according to the library's director, Oleksii Hryhorovych.

Mr. Hryhorovych said the library is actually an extension of a similar one established in Moscow in the 1920s by Lenin and shut down in 1936 by Stalin.

Meanwhile, those who want to hear Ukrainian music can turn to the Ukrainian Music Salon to satiate their thirst. The salon offers classical, theatrical and pop music in the Ukrainian language on a monthly basis, featuring performers from such renowned centers of music as the Bolshoi Theater and the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Moscow.

Mr. Symonenko said that although many Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians take part in Ukrainian cultural events, unfortunately, only several hundred of the thousands of Ukrainians in Moscow are active participants in Ukrainian life. "If there is a concert, many will show up, but when it comes to working there are only several hundred we can count on," explained Mr. Symonenko.

### Shevchenko to return to St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg can not be considered one of the centers of Ukrainian life in Russia. The city, long known for its artists, writers and the Hermitage, which houses the world's finest collection of art, has about 200,000 Ukrainians, few of whom are active. Many of them are the ancestors of Ukrainian Kozaks who worked and also died in the 17th century to build the city.

There are no Ukrainian schools in St. Petersburg and no churches. Zina Yolos, a delegate to the Congress of Ukrainians in Russia, said the two Ukrainian organizations in St. Petersburg are working to establish at least one school. "Right now we are doing what we can to have a Ukrainian language program." Her daughter, who was with her in Moscow at the congress, spoke halting Ukrainian, although her mother explained that she understood the language thoroughly. She said that most of that knowledge was a result of visits to Ms. Yolos' hometown of Poltava.

The two Ukrainian organizations of St. Petersburg, the Shevchenko Cultural-Educational Society and the Fund for Ukrainian Culture, are also working to complete an ambitious project to finally establish a monument to Taras Shevchenko in the city where he studied and achieved fame as an artist.

The two groups have commissioned a bust of the Ukrainian bard from the famous Ukrainian Canadian sculptor Leo Mol.

Ukrainians in St. Petersburg covered the cost of the work, which was a minor problem compared with finding a place to erect the monument. That had to be obtained through the city government. Ms. Yolos said the city of St. Petersburg finally gave them a square not far from Nevsky Prospect, the city's main thoroughfare. Currently the foundation for the monument is being erected. An unveiling is scheduled for March 1998.

### Life in the hinterlands

On the other side of the Ural Mountains, in the rich oil and gas fields of the Tiumen region of western Siberia, life for Ukrainians is not bad. More than 250,000 Ukrainians, many of whom spent time in the political prisoners' camps of western Russia and their families, as well as others who traveled to the region to work after oil and gas were discovered in 1954, live in the region today. They form the largest minority group in the Tiumen region, ahead of the Tatars and Bashkirs. But, more importantly, they earn an average of up to \$500 a month in the three large refineries located in the area, and the work is steady.

The president of the Association of National Cultural Autonomy of the Hantymantsivskiy autonomous district, Petro Yaremchuk, who arrived there in the early 1960s from Zhytomyr as part of the Komsomol movement that encouraged young people to move to Siberia to work in the oil and gas fields, said seven organizations fall under his umbrella organization, and they are all very active.

"In the city of Surgut, we have had a Sunday school for five years now," explained Mr. Yaremchuk. "More than 100 students attend every year. We have Russians who have come to us wanting to learn Ukrainian."

A major project for Mr. Yaremchuk's organization is the establishment of a day school in the city of Surgut, where many Ukrainians in this region live, which would be the first in Russia. "We are trying to have the regional authorities give us permission for one daily school that would teach Ukrainian," explained Mr. Yaremchuk.

He said a Ukrainian Cultural Center has been established in Surgut's Palace of Culture through the efforts of Hanna Lytvyn, who is assistant director of the palace. Ms. Lytvyn is also director of the Ukrainka Rodyna (Ukrainian Family) Society, which established the cultural center.

The center has its own choir, the Zoria Choral Ensemble of Slavic Music. The group performed in Great Britain during celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II.

But what truly binds the Ukrainian community in this region is the Ukrainian evenings sponsored by the cultural center. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, Ukrainians come together at the center for cultural events and concerts by Ukrainian performers. Not long ago Nina Matvienko performed, as has the Yavir Ensemble.

When there are no concerts, there are dozens of periodicals from Ukraine as well as videocassettes and audiocassettes, all courtesy of the Ukrainian Consulate located in Tiumen.

This community also has the benefit of a priest from Ukraine who travels here during Christmas and Easter, which is a rarity for Ukrainian communities in Russia. Oddly, he is a priest of the Greek-Catholic Church. But at least he is Ukrainian. "Some people don't like it because most people here are Orthodox. But they come to hear liturgy anyway," said Mr. Yaremchuk. As for a Ukrainian Orthodox Church presence here, Mr. Yaremchuk said, "we don't hear much from them."

That, however, appears to be a minor obstacle for this active Ukrainian community to overcome.



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## PREVIEW OF EVENTS

### Saturday, November 22

**NEW YORK:** The New York Branch of the Ukrainian American Youth Association (SUM-A) invites its members and friends to its traditional fall dance to be held at the Ukrainian National Home, 140 Second Ave., at 9 p.m. Music will be by Svitanok. Tickets: \$15, at the door. For table reservations call the Dibrova Ukrainian Club, (212) 473-2955.

### Sunday, November 23

**NEW YORK:** The Ukrainian Music Institute of America, New York Branch, is holding a 45th anniversary concert at the Ukrainian National Home, 140 Second Ave., at 2:30 p.m. The program will consist of classical and popular repertoire, featuring faculty and UMI alumni, among them: Daria Karanowycz, Thomas Hrynkiw, Oksana Charuk-Bodnar, Halyna Kolessa, Alla Kutsevych, Sonia Szereg, Andriy Dobriansky Jr., Yuri Furda, Natalka Honcharenko, Oles Kuzyszyn and M. Maczaj. Also appearing is the Promin vocal ensemble, under the direction of Bohdanna Wolansky, on the occasion of the ensemble's 25th anniversary. Admission: \$10; \$5, seniors and students. There will be a buffet reception following the concert. For additional information call (973) 498-0863.

**NEWARK, N.J.:** St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic School will host an open house at the parish hall (back meeting room), 719 Sanford Ave., at 11 a.m. The kindergarten curriculum, school mission and programs will be discussed. For additional information call Sister Chrysostom, school principal, (973) 373-9359.

**CHICAGO:** A multi-media exhibit titled "Winter Kaleidoscope" opens at the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, 2320 W. Chicago Ave. The exhibit features paintings, prints, fiber, sculpture, ceramics and drawings. Among participating artists are: Mikola Bagan, Ihor Bilinsky, Elena Diadenco, Valeriy Didur, Olexander Dubovyk, Nina Lapchuk, Wasyl Kacurovsky, Alexandra Kochman, Alexandra Kowenko, Jaroslawa Kuchma, Konstantyn Milonadis, Yuri Olishkevich, Volodymyr Pavlyk, Volodymyr Pavlevsky, Michajlo Urban and Wanda Urban. An opening reception will be held at noon-4 p.m. The exhibit runs through January 4. Gallery hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, noon-4 p.m.

### Monday, November 24

**CAMBRIDGE, Mass.:** The Harvard

Ukrainian Research Institute is holding a lecture by Henry Hale, adjunct assistant professor of international politics, Fletcher School of Diplomacy, titled "Ukraine and the Dissolution of the Soviet Union." The lecture will be held in the HURI seminar room, 1538 Massachusetts Ave., at 4 p.m.

### Friday, November 28

**NEW YORK:** The Ukrainian Art and Literary Club is sponsoring an exhibit of photographs and installations titled "The Mysteries of Eurasia" by Kyiv artist Oksana Chepelyk, winner of the 1996 Pierre Cardin Alta Moda Grand Prix and currently an ArtsLink Fellow at Maryland Art Place in Baltimore. The opening, which will take place at 7 p.m., will feature poetry reading by Yuriy Tarnawsky and will be followed by a wine and cheese reception. The event will be held at the Mayana Gallery, 136 Second Ave., fourth floor. For more information call Slava Gerulak, (212) 260-4490.

### Sunday, November 30

**CHICAGO:** The Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art presents a concert featuring violinist Anatolij Bazhenov. Mr. Bazhenov will be accompanied by his wife, pianist Naida Magomedbekova, and their son, violinist Alexander Bazhenov. The program includes works by Vivaldi, Bach, Lysenko, Ravel and Sarasate. The concert will be held at the institute, 2320 W. Chicago Ave., at 2 p.m.

### Monday, December 1

**CAMBRIDGE, Mass.:** The Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute is holding a lecture by Robert S. Kravchuk, assistant professor of political science, University of Connecticut, titled "From Hyperinflation to Stabilization in Ukraine, 1991-1996." The lecture will be held in the HURI seminar room, 1583 Massachusetts Ave., at 4-6 p.m.

### Saturday, December 6


**WARREN, Mich.:** The Ukrainian Cultural Center is hosting a meeting with Dr. Myron Kuropas, author of the recently published book "Ukrainian-American Citadel." The presentation will be followed by coffee and pastry. Among sponsors of the evening are: the Detroit District Committee of the Ukrainian National Association, the Shevchenko Scientific Society, the Association for the Advancement of Ukrainian Culture, and the Ukrainian Graduates of Detroit and Windsor. The event will be held at the center, 26601 Ryan Road, at 7 p.m. Admission: \$5.

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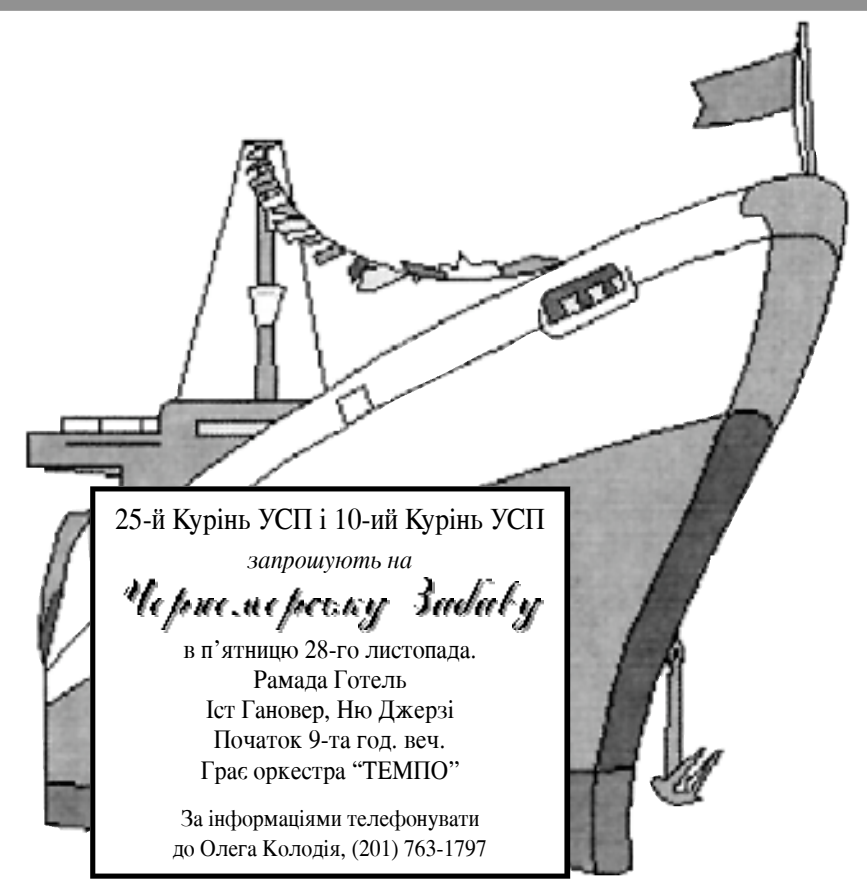


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