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U.S. grants asylum to Melnychenko, Myroslava Gongadze

by Roman Woronowycz
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – The wife of Heorhii Gongadze, the missing journalist feared dead who is at the center of a huge political crisis in Kyiv, and a former presidential bodyguard who produced tape recordings that seemingly implicate the president in the disappearance have received political asylum in the United States, revealed the U.S. State Department on April 16.

The decision to extend political asylum, particularly to Maj. Mykola Melnychenko, formerly of the Security Service, of Ukraine, who made hundreds of hours of digital tape recordings while assigned to guard the president and his offices, shocked Ukrainian authorities. Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement in response to the announcement expressing its "deep astonishment" at the development.

"[The U.S. decision] is viewed by Ukraine as failing to correspond to the spirit of the Ukrainian American partnership and as creating obstacles in the way of a criminal investigation," read a statement issued by the ministry.

On August 16, ministry officials requested the appearance of U.S. Ambassador Carlos Pascual to explain the U.S. action.

Officially the U.S. government has attempted to make clear that the decision by its Immigration and Naturalization Service was an independent act of that particular U.S. agency and not meant to be a political statement on the Gongadze case in Ukraine.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said in Washington on April 16 that Mr. Melnychenko's application was received and processed as any other, and that the decision was "based on standard international practice and international procedures and criteria."

Two days later, Ambassador Pascual explained in Kyiv that the granting of political asylum did not mean a change in U.S. policy towards Ukraine.

"The U.S. is still committed to working closely with Ukraine as a partner in Central Europe. We are still committed to a vision of an independent, democratic and market-oriented Ukraine," said Mr. Pascual.

He said the procedure for extension of political asylum is "described in law and is very specific as to how it applies."

National Deputy Oleksander Zinchenko of the Social Democratic Party (United), which has supported President Leonid Kuchma in the political crisis that has consumed Kyiv, said the U.S. could support its words with actions and show good faith by "bringing Mr. Melnychenko to justice for stealing state secrets," and obtaining the original digital recordings and returning

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Yuschenko government hangs on, for now

by Roman Woronowycz
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – The government of Victor Yuschenko was left hanging by a thread on April 19 after Ukraine's Parliament voted in support of a resolution criticizing the work of his Cabinet in 2000 as unsatisfactory. The lawmakers decided to schedule a vote on a motion of no confidence within a week, which if passed would lead automatically to the dissolution of the government.

The stormy session was marked by a near tragedy as National Deputy Lilia Hryhorovych of the Rukh faction doused herself with an unspecified liquid believed to be gasoline minutes before the vote. She was whisked away before she set herself afire.

The same factions who successfully carried the resolution condemning the work of the Cabinet of Ministers by a vote of 283-65, namely the Communists, the Social Democratic Party (United) Labor Ukraine, also drove the petition for a vote of no confidence. The Democratic Union faction (formerly Revival of the Regions) also supported the petition-signing campaign, as did members of the Green faction, although members of these two factions split on the vote condemning the government.

The motion itself came from the Communist Party faction in the Verkhovna

Rada, which last week submitted 237 lawmakers' signatures in support of the proposal. A simple majority of 226 signatures was needed to table the proposal. The parliamentary session accepted the motion on April 17 prior to a report by Prime Minister Yuschenko on the progress made in 2000 on implementation of the government's economic revival plan, called "Reforms for Well-Being."

The Social Democrats (United), Labor Ukraine and the Democratic Union are considered the bastions of the business oligarchs and are led respectively, by Viktor Medvedchuk, Viktor Pinchuk and Oleksander Volkov.

Mr. Yuschenko strove determinedly in the 16 months since President Leonid Kuchma appointed him to head the government, to bring the economy out of the shadows. He ended most barter operations and brought sectors that have existed at the edge of market conditions, such as the energy sector, under stricter government regulation. While achieving a good amount of success, he also developed political enemies among the oligarchs whose cozy and shady business dealings he disrupted.

In the days before Mr. Yuschenko gave his report on the state of government reforms – which he had agreed to do a year ago in return for a one-year moratorium on just the sort of vote of no confidence he is



Yaro Bihun

Victor Yuschenko

now facing – some political experts said the prime minister successfully had steered away from a political crisis and predicted he would survive a vote of no confidence. Now the outlook is not so clear.

Earlier President Kuchma had given

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Fifteen years after Chernobyl: new issues

by Roman Woronowycz
Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV – Today the Chernobyl nuclear power station is out of commission, fifteen years after a test procedure in the fourth reactor went awry. The resulting explosion sent a huge radioactive cloud over northern Europe and contaminated a good portion of the territories of Ukraine and Belarus. The last Chernobyl reactor was idled on December 15, 2000, but that does not mean that the last of the problems have been resolved.

In closing the nuclear power plant the government in Kyiv rid itself of both internal and external political pressure. It fulfilled promises it had made to the West to mothball the nuclear complex by the beginning of the second millennium. It also silenced those within the country who maintained that the power plant could remain a safe and effective electricity generator for this energy-hungry country for another decade.

Today the clean-up operation has begun. It involves not only de-commissioning the plant – the removal of thousands of nuclear fuel rods and their reprocessing, a process that will take another seven years – but also the rebuilding of the crumbling cover over

the fourth reactor, the clean-up of the irradiated surrounding area, including a cooling pond and the most acute current problem, the relocation and retraining of the thousands of Chernobyl workers.

It is the last issue that is causing much consternation among Ukrainian politicians. Four months after a worker at Chernobyl flipped the toggle switch that halted the last functioning reactor there is an uneasy feeling here that the world, having attained its objective to close the hazardous complex, is quickly forgetting that while the plant may be out of service Ukraine continues to need help with the aftereffects.

Ukraine's President Leonid Kuchma traveled in March to the site of the world's worst nuclear accident to review the situation himself. Afterwards he reminded journalists that much still needs to be done.

"I am not all that satisfied with the pace of the closing," said President Kuchma, who has pledged to take the plight of the workers under his patronage and not allow for a single man to go unemployed.

In addition to citing the West's failure thus far to approve financing to support the completion of two new nuclear reactors – one at Khmelnytskyi and the other at Rivne – to offset the

energy-producing lost with the shutdown of Chernobyl, the president said he was disappointed with the way worker retraining and relocation was proceeding.

Unemployment in Slavutych – the city hastily built to house the Chernobyl workers after the 1986 disaster left Prypiat, their home until then, uninhabitable – today stands at 21 percent, a figure that will continue to rise. The tidy factory town about an hour's ride northeast of the doomed nuclear plant is threatened with obsolescence if it doesn't find a further reason to exist and, most importantly, a commercial base.

Ukraine and the West have put together a nine-point plan for saving Slavutych, which did not even exist prior to 1987, but a year later had a population of more than 15,000 inhabitants.

The main thrust of the redevelopment plan is the retraining and relocation of Chernobyl workers. The upside of this effort is that the work force is considered among the most highly skilled in Ukraine. The downside is that most have a very specialized skill within a very specialized industry. The hope is that a good portion of the

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INTERVIEW

President Kuchma speaks with RFE/RL correspondent

Below is the conclusion of a live telephone interview given by President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine to RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service on April 3. Part I was published in the previous issue.

Leonid Danylovych, don't you think there is a tiny chance that Heorhiy Gongadze is alive?

I have always believed in this chance. I'd like this chance to be a reality, I give you my word of honor. You know, I was glad when [lawmaker Serhii] Holovaty made public the results of German genetic tests saying that [the tested samples] were not from Gongadze's body. God willing, this may be true, there have already been [similar] examples. It was reported by our neighbors that a person disappeared and was found later. (Ed. note: Possibly, Kuchma's referring to the disappearance of former National Bank Chairwoman Tamara Vinnikava in Belarus, who subsequently emerged in Great Britain.) God willing, this may be true, then a lot of problems could be resolved.

And what, in your opinion, must be specifically done in the Gongadze case in order to unravel this mystery?

First and foremost, it is necessary to stop speculating on the Gongadze case. You know, there have actually been a lot of mysteries since the first day. I don't want to dwell on them, journalists dwell on them in their investigations very often.

As regards the authorities. ... You know that we have invited FBI [experts]; some independent groups from Russia are also working in Ukraine. We are fully open, you're welcome, let's investigate the case together instead of doing what we have done thus far: blackmailing; psychological warfare against Ukraine, against the state. The point is not [personally] with Kuchma – you should realize that – but with the president of a country, and with Ukraine herself. Many do not want to understand that.

But do you have specific grounds to believe that there is a chance that Gongadze is alive?

In general, as long as the tests are inconclusive, hope is the last to die. I always proceed from this [premise].

This is grounded only in your feelings, not in some specific. ...

I have no grounds [to believe otherwise]. When Russian expert Ivanov announced that there is a 99 [percent of certitude that the body found is Gongadze's], I said I'm a man who deals with certitudes, therefore I cannot doubt [Ivanov's finding, I cannot assume] that such an expert as Ivanov may resort to a falsification. Because this is [his] professional domain, in which he will never allow himself to act against his ethics.

I have begun [to think that Gongadze may be alive] after some people told investigators in Lviv, Vinnytsia, [and] the Volyn region that they saw him after [his disappearance]. Particularly since those statements were made by people who studied with him. Were those statements deliberately [falsified], or what? Up until now they have not withdrawn [their statements]. Second, the German experts questioned [the identity of the discovered corpse]. God willing, [Gongadze may be alive]. Let's hope for something anyway.

Has the tape case brought anything positive to you personally?

The positive thing is that I've seen who is who. I've seen people who work with me, not only in my closest entourage. First of all, those on Pechersky Pahorby where the offices of the government, the Parliament and the presidential administration are located.

Does this mean that the case somewhat helped you to introduce order in the realm of presidential security?

No, I've never placed my security above all other issues. I've never paid any attention to that. The protection service of the Ukrainian president is perhaps the least numerous not only in Europe but also in the post-Soviet area. It is not I who should handle [my own] protection. There is a service that should protect and be accountable. They handled it badly, and I fired the head of the state protection service. This was made [not for the sake of showing my authority], this was an example that one needs to carry out one's duties conscientiously.

Did you plan to oust [former Security Service head Leonid] Derkach and [former Internal Affairs Minister Yuri] Kravchenko, or was [their sacking] the result of some emergency situation in Ukraine? Are they responsible for what happened?

The Security Service is responsible for that. It is unambiguous.

Responsible for what?

For what. ... If such things take place. ... This is state security, this is national security, [Melnychenko's deed was] practically at the level of [state] treason, at the level of spying. I do not accuse Maj. [Mykola] Melnychenko, or former major, to be exact. I do not accuse [him], I [only] say that these are traits [of his anti-state activities]. These traits should be evaluated in court. But that was a concern of the Security Service. If the president feels discomfort in this issue, then the Security Service failed in its role, didn't it? That was their duty. If the president was eavesdropped on in actual fact, then was that not a concern of the Security Service?

Apart from Melnychenko, was anybody else eavesdropping on you in your office?

I don't know of anybody else. I have great doubts that it was Melnychenko who eavesdropped [on me]. In my view, Melnychenko was a tool who was used and subsequently thrown out, that's all.

Mr. President, I simply couldn't believe when I read an announcement that Mr. [Volodymyr] Radchenko, head of the Security Service of Ukraine, is willing to meet with Melnychenko. Is this true?

And why not? I said on several occasions that we guarantee Melnychenko's security and that he may come back, but he will be held accountable under Ukrainian law. But if [Radchenko] is willing to meet with Melnychenko, let them meet.

Incidentally, are you willing to meet with Melnychenko?

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NEWSBRIEFS

Gongadze's wife says Kuchma responsible

KYIV – Myroslava Gongadze said on April 17 that, until investigators find the people responsible for the disappearance and presumed murder of her husband, Heorhii, she will consider President Leonid Kuchma guilty. Reuters reported that speaking at a press conference in Warsaw, Ms. Gongadze said: "If the people who have been accused – the president and his entourage – had wanted, then I think this investigation would have been more effective." Ms. Gongadze said prosecutors still are denying her access to information about the beheaded corpse that was found in November 2000, which many believe to be her husband's. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Kyiv criticizes U.S. asylum decision

KYIV – Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Ministry called U.S. Ambassador Carlos Pascual on April 14 to demand an explanation for the granting of asylum to Maj. Mykola Melnychenko and the wife and twin daughters of Heorhii Gongadze, and to express its "deep amazement regarding the decision," the Associated Press reported. The Procurator General's Office said that Mr. Melnychenko has been charged with libel and forgery, and that the decision to grant him asylum "runs counter to the spirit of Ukrainian-U.S. partnership." (RFE/RL Newsline)

Thousands rally to support Yushchenko

KYIV – Some 2,000 people demonstrated outside the Verkhovna Rada in Kyiv on April 17 to show support for embattled Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reported. Mr. Yushchenko, who was to issue a report to the Parliament on the government's work later in the day, faces a vote of no-confidence later this month. Some 217 national deputies signed a petition last week calling for the government to be removed. A no-confidence vote by 226 deputies is needed for the government to be ousted. Prime Minister Yushchenko is regarded favorably by the West because of his attempts at reforming the country's economy. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Radio Kontinent may be saved

KYIV – The German news agency DPA reported on April 13 that President Kuchma instructed the National Council for Television and Radio to make a second review of the debts of Kyiv's Radio Kontinent before rescinding its broadcasting frequency. Earlier in the day, Mykyta Poturaiev, the vice-chairman of the council, declared that Radio Kontinent's frequency would be given to another station because the station has failed to repay a 400,000 hrv

(approximately \$300,000 at the time) credit it received from a state bank in 1996. Radio Kontinent Director Serhii Sholokh said his station will appeal the decision, which he said is politically motivated. The independent Radio Kontinent has original music programs but rebroadcasts news from Deutsche Welle, the BBC and the Voice of America. (RFE/RL Newsline)

PM: Cabinet's ouster may impair economy

KYIV – Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko on April 12 said the possible ouster of the current Cabinet following a no-confidence vote in the Parliament will negatively affect the country's economy, Interfax reported. Asked about the prospects of a possible new Cabinet of Ministers, Mr. Yushchenko said: "It is hard to forecast, but I don't see anything good [in such a development] either for the economy or social policy, or in terms of the harmonization of political forces [in Ukraine]." Interfax reported that as of April 12, 238 deputies had signed a motion to hold a no-confidence vote in the Yushchenko Cabinet (226 votes are necessary to dismiss it). (RFE/RL Newsline)

Communist-oligarchic majority in Rada?

KYIV – Viktor Pynzenyk, leader of the Reforms and Order Party, said a new parliamentary majority of "Communists and oligarchs has already become an obvious fact," Interfax reported on April 12. Mr. Pynzenyk noted that the motion to hold a no-confidence vote in the government was jointly signed by lawmakers from the Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party (United), the Labor Ukraine Party, the Democratic Union and the Yabluko parliamentary group. At the same time, Mr. Pynzenyk added that the fate of Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko's Cabinet "does not depend on the Parliament but on the president's decision." (RFE/RL Newsline)

Opposition leaders under threat?

KYIV – Oleksander Skrypnyk, spokesman of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), said the SBU is checking on information that unidentified assailants are plotting attempts on the life of Ukrainian opposition leaders Yulia Tymoshenko, Taras Chornovil and Oleksander Turchynov. The news came via the Internet from the Aleksandr Zhilin Russian Analytical Center, which claims that the alleged killings will subsequently be blamed on President Leonid Kuchma in order to provoke mass anti-presidential protests in Ukraine, oust Mr. Kuchma, and install Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko as president and Socialist Party leader

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ANALYSIS: As Kyiv goes, so goes the East

The article below appeared in The Wall Street Journal's European edition on March 30-31 under the headline "As Kiev Goes, So Goes the East." Reprinted with permission of The Wall Street Journal © 2001, Dow Jones & Co. Inc. All rights reserved.

by Roman Solchanyk

A pesky investigative journalist who criticized the president found decapitated. Concealed tapes that seem to implicate the president in political murder. A clumsy attempt by authorities to stonewall a criminal investigation. Opposition parties demanding the president's resignation. Demonstrators and police clashing in the streets. And, most alarmingly, Soviet-style preventive arrests of student activists.

These are the main ingredients of Kuchmagate, a political scandal named after Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma that has grown into a full-blown political crisis in a country of 50 million that the West has come to view as a linchpin of stability and security in an otherwise precarious zone between Russia and the rest of Europe. With Europe steadily shifting its borders eastward and Russia determined to assert its great power ambitions, the future of this geostrategic post-Soviet state may determine the future frontiers of Europe itself.

The U.S. has led the way in providing both financial and political support to Ukraine. Kiev has long been the third-leading recipient of American aid, after Israel and Egypt. It is the only former Soviet republic besides Russia that has a

formal "special relationship" with NATO. But it is also quite clear that, with the exception of the Baltic states, for the time being the new Europe will stop at the borders of the old Soviet Union. The key question for European security is whether this will be a temporary or permanent state of affairs.

Even a cursory glance at the old Soviet neighborhood reveals why Western policy planners believe Ukraine will either be the solid keystone in a regional arch, or become the place where the curtain on the East may come down for good.

Belarus, which like Ukraine shares borders with both Russia and Europe, is run by an outspokenly anti-Western leader who has threatened to redeploy nuclear weapons on its territory in response to NATO enlargement. Miensk and Moscow have been moving toward reunification, a decision that makes little economic or political sense except in terms of a pointed warning to the West. Neighboring Moldova has largely been dysfunctional since gaining its independence because of the Russian-supported separatist movement in its Transdnister province. Last month's parliamentary elections there witnessed a first in the so-called post-Soviet space — a near total victory for the Communists, who want to bring Moldova into the Russia-Belarus union state.

The three Transcaucasian states — Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan — have all been shaken by intermittent and violent domestic crises, and all are embroiled in ethnically fueled territorial conflicts with no end in sight. Armenia is locked into a tight political and military alliance with Moscow. Until recently, most of Central Asia was able to avoid the ethnic strife and political volatility characteristic of many of the other former Soviet republics. But the price for this apparent stability has been the progressive institutionalization of

authoritarian, one-man rule throughout the region. Meanwhile, the threat to Central Asia from Islamic rebels has translated into increased dependency on Russian military support, which, of course, comes with a political pricetag.

And then there is Russia itself, where the Kremlin, apart from all else, seems unable to cope with one basic reality: Russia is no longer the Soviet Union. The frustration that comes with being unable to realize global ambitions on a national budget that is less than what the department store chain Kmart takes in annually from American shoppers leaves Moscow playing the role of international spoiler. The latest example is the resumption of arms sales and nuclear know-how to Iran.

Against this background — and compared to most of the other post-Soviet states — Ukraine has had all the markings of a more or less "normal" country. Since its declaration of independence in 1991, Ukraine has held three presidential elections, all of which witnessed the peaceful and constitutionally sanctioned transfer of power. Parliamentary elections were held in 1994 and 1998, and they too passed without incident — no boycotts by the opposition and no tanks in the streets. Although corruption is rife and economic reform is painfully slow, last year GDP increased by 6 percent after a decade of decline. Western financial institutions expect further economic growth this year.

The country has not fallen apart along regional, ethnic and linguistic cleavages, as was widely predicted in the West after 1991. Ukraine is an enthusiastic participant in NATO's Partnership for Peace Program, and its official policy is aimed at integration into European political, security and economic structures, including membership in the European Union.

This "normalcy," however, is only sur-

face deep. What Kuchmagate reveals is that Ukraine is burdened by the same fundamental transition problems stemming from Sovietization as are its neighbors Belarus, Moldova and Russia.

For instance, Ukraine has an unreconstructed and thoroughly Soviet ruling elite that is equally comfortable under conditions of "communism" and "democracy," and that continues to excel at what it knows best — namely, manipulating the levers of state power for the sole purpose of self-aggrandizement. It has a splintered and ineffective national democratic opposition that has proved unable to mobilize either its national or democratic components. It has a mass of citizenry that, after 10 years of pseudo-reforms, largely equates democracy and free markets with impoverishment.

Ultimately, what Kuchmagate reveals is that it is time for the Western allies to undertake a long-overdue review of their policies toward Ukraine and, indeed, the region as a whole. It is in their own interest to move beyond sound bites like "strategic partnership" and on to something that more closely approximates policies that promote, dare I say it, nation-building.

Washington in particular needs to understand that nation-building — including the nurturing of civil and legal society, institutions and democratic norms — is not the same as peacekeeping. Nation-building, as the concept is well understood in Europe, is what can make peacekeeping unnecessary.

The alternative here is to contemplate the possibility that Ukraine will go the way of Belarus and Moldova, which means the consolidation of an unstable gray zone on the periphery of Europe that we can imagine in terms of a "New Eastern Europe." Moscow has already made its choice.

Dr. Roman Solchanyk is an international security policy analyst in Santa Monica, Calif., and the author of "Ukraine and Russia: The Post-Soviet Transition" (Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

UCCLA delegation meets with Canadian opposition leader

OTTAWA — A delegation of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association met on March 28 with Stockwell Day, leader of the Canadian Alliance and of the Official Opposition in the House of Commons.

Mr. Day was briefed on the Ukrainian Canadian community's calls for an official recognition of the injustice of Canada's first national internment operations and for an accounting of what happened with that portion of the internees' confiscated wealth never returned by the government of Canada.

The UCCLA's director of research, Dr. Lubomyr Luciuk, and Calgary's Roman Zakaluzny of Calgary provided a historical overview of the traumatic impact of the internment operations on Canada's Ukrainians and other Europeans.

Mr. Day was also told that the UCCLA endorses the Ukrainian Canadian Restitution Act introduced by Member of Parliament Inky Mark (Dauphin-Swan River, Manitoba), a Canadian Alliance member.

Listening carefully to the delegation's presentation, Mr. Day promised to review the submitted materials and to respond with a clear statement of where the Canadian Alliance stands on the Ukrainian Canadian community's requests. Mr. Day was also reminded how the Chrétien, while himself still leader of the Opposition, in June 1993 promised his personal support and that of the Liberal Party of Canada for redress. The delegation urged Mr. Day to seek all-party support for Mr. Mark's bill.

Commenting on this meeting — the first between the leader of the Opposition and the Ukrainian Canadian community — Mr. Zakaluzny said: "Mr. Day was generous with his time in meeting the delegation. He listened attentively, reviewed the briefing notes and asked questions that were on point.

The Calgary activist also noted that the Canadian Alliance leader seemed to appreciate UCCLA's endorsement of Mr. Mark's Ukrainian Canadian Restitution Act. "He said he would definitely give us a clear statement of what his party's position on our requests is, sooner rather than later. While he could not, obviously, commit himself without more consideration of the issues, we were encouraged by the forthright, sympathetic and intelligent style with which he responded to our presentation."

Ukrainian Canadians welcome Restitution Act

TORONTO — Canada's Ukrainian community has welcomed the tabling of a private member's bill, C-331, the Ukrainian Canadian Restitution Act, by Inky Mark, member of Parliament for Dauphin-Swan River Manitoba, in the House of Commons on April 4.

Commenting on the bill, the chairman of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association, John B. Gregorovich, said: "A few elderly survivors of Canada's first national internment operations are still alive. Passing MP Mark's bill would ensure that the nation remembers what they needlessly endured. By providing for historical markers at all of the internment camp sites and for the development of educational materials and a permanent museum recalling this unfortunate episode in Canada's history, this act would resolve our community's calls for acknowledgment and restitution and do so in a timely and honorable fashion. We call upon the Prime Minister, the Right Honorable Jean Chrétien, who in 1993 promised his personal support and that of the Liberal Party of Canada for redress to the Ukrainian Canadian community, to support Mr. Mark's initiative. We also ask all MPs in the House of Commons to recognize that the passage of this act will help make certain that no other Canadian ethnic, religious or racial minority ever suffers as Canada's Ukrainians once did."

"Passing Mr. Mark's bill would finally bring closure to our calls for the righting of this historical injustice," the UCCLA chairman underlined.

The Ukrainian Canadian Professional and Business Federation also expressed support for Bill C-331. President Oksana Bashuk Hepburn noted that "It is important for the government of Canada to bring closure to this long-standing injustice."

On March 1, the UCPBF wrote to Minister of Heritage Sheila Copps about this matter, calling upon the government to initiate a restitution package that includes:

- compensation that will have universal benefit by creating a world-class policy and research center dealing with Ukraine to ensure a better understanding of its unique role in global peace and security;
- compensation that will serve all Canadians by creating chairs of multiculturalism at post-secondary levels including internment study in history, civil societies, justice and human rights studies, and developing products for the public including documentaries, exhibits, literature, national/international commemorative prizes;
- compensation that will serve Ukrainian Canadians by enhancing the well-being and growth of Ukrainian Canadians through creation of a fund for public programming, heritage language programs, and funding research of the contributions of the Ukrainians to Canada;
- compensation that will serve the individual by, wherever possible, providing the option to the survivors or their relatives to receive some compensation.

The UCPBF president wrote: "We are very pleased that finally there is some action on this item. The Ukrainian Canadians have been making Canada the success story that it is today for nearly 120 years. They felt that the government has failed them for nearly a century in this matter. We hope that the government will support the Ukrainian Canadian Restitution Act."

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CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

Remember Chernobyl

The 15th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, it seems, is being commemorated rather quietly in Ukraine and in the diaspora. Five years ago there was much activity in conjunction with the 10th anniversary, while today ... well, most of the commemorations are low-key: a memorial service here, a conference there ...

But that should not affect how we respond to the needs of the victims of the world's worst nuclear accident, a "disaster of global proportions," as it has been called.

Five years ago, Dr. Yuri Shcherbak, a physician and writer who at the time was Ukraine's ambassador to the U.S. (and today is its envoy to Canada) cited Ministry of Health and Greenpeace statistics indicating that 8,000 to 32,000 people have died as a result of Chernobyl. He explained the wide discrepancies as "not maliciousness, but a result of the exceptional complexity of the disaster, multiple factors and unpredictability."

At the same time, Dr. David Marples, who has extensively studied and researched Chernobyl and its aftermath, noted: "The disaster ... contaminated an area of about 100,000 square miles. This area encompassed about 20 percent of the territory of Belarus; about 8 percent of Ukraine; and about .5 to 1 percent of the Russian Federation." Dr. Marples went on to note the dramatic rise in thyroid cancer among children in Ukraine and Belarus, as well as the severe health problems affecting the "liquidators," as Chernobyl clean-up workers are known, and the generally poor state of health of the populace of Ukraine and Belarus.

Attempting last year to sum up what we know about the Chernobyl accident, Alex Kuzma, executive director of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, wrote: "We know that the accident released more than 185 million curies of radiation over a heavily populated area. We know that thyroid cancer among children has exploded to levels 10 times higher than normal in Ukraine, and in some areas, more than 80 times higher than normal. We know that the accident has caused significant chromosome damage and that birth defects have doubled since 1986." All sobering statistics.

But, he added, there is much we do not know about the aftereffects of Chernobyl. "The debate over Chernobyl's effects will continue for many years to come," he noted, adding that some "experts may cling to the fantasy that the current health crisis in Ukraine and Belarus is nothing more than a symptom of a failing economy."

As a result, as Dr. Marples pointed out in a speech prepared for the 15th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, "there is no consensus on the impact of Chernobyl on health, ... there is no widely accepted study on the health consequences of the accident. There is no agreement on the number of victims. ... The populations of both republics [Ukraine and Belarus] have fallen to disquieting levels."

Perhaps the best approach then is the one advocated by Mr. Kuzma, who argued: "Whether a birth defect or child's cancer is caused by Chernobyl or by some other environmental factor is a secondary issue. What is undisputed and far more relevant is the fact that here in the West we have the resources, the know-how and financial clout to make a significant difference in the lives of thousands of Ukrainian youngsters and their families."

And that, dear readers, is precisely where we come in. It is surely within our power, as we solemnly observe the 15th anniversary of the nuclear calamity known around the globe simply as "Chernobyl," to support institutions and organizations that strive to help the people of Ukraine deal with the medical and social crises they face on a daily basis, to help ease their very real pain, to help give new generations a better tomorrow. Indeed, that would be the best way for all of us to continue to remember Chernobyl.



Scene from a 1992 protest in Kyiv calling on the public to remember April 26, 1986.

April
25-28
1986

Turning the pages back...

Several books have been published about the Chernobyl nuclear accident since the tragic explosion 15 years ago. Below is a montage of passages from three such books describing the events leading up to and immediately following the catastrophe.

the catastrophe.

"It all began on Friday, **April 25, 1986**, with an experiment on the fourth unit at the Chernobyl nuclear power station. Its purpose was to improve safety – more precisely to insure a constant supply of electricity to the pumps that circulated cooling water around the reactor's uranium fuel rods. Should these pumps' normal electricity source – the reactor's turbine generators – fail, the water would stop circulating, and the fuel rods would overheat, melt and explode. Ironically, an experiment designed to avoid such an event actually caused it to occur."

"The Chernobyl Disaster: The True Story of a Catastrophe – An Unanswerable Indictment of Nuclear Power," Viktor Haynes & Marko Bojcin. London: The Hogarth Press, 1988.

"At 1 a.m. on **April 26, 1986**, as a result of crude pressure from the deputy chief engineer, Dyatlov, the power of the reactor in No. 4 unit had been stabilized at 200 megawatts (thermal). The reactor continued to be poisoned by decay products; a further increase in power was impossible; the operational reactivity reserve was far below the level prescribed in the rules and, as I have pointed out, stood at 18 rods, according to Toptunov, the senior reactor control engineer. Those figures were provided by the Skala computer 7 minutes before the AZ (emergency power reduction) button was pressed.

"At this time, of course, the reactor was out of control and in danger of exploding. Thus, pressing the AZ button at any of the moments remaining until the historic point X would have led to a fatal uncontrollable power surge. There was no way of influencing the reactivity.

"Seventeen minutes and 40 seconds were now left before the explosion – a long time, practically an eternity. A historic eternity. Thought travels at the speed of light. Throughout those 17 minutes and 40 seconds one could think back over an entire lifetime, over the whole history of mankind. Unfortunately the workers at Chernobyl had time only to unleash the explosion."

"The Truth About Chernobyl," by Grigori Medvedev. USA: Basic Books, Inc., 1991.

"On **April 28, 1986**, at 21:00 hours, Radio Moscow made a terse announcement:

"An accident has occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant – one of the atomic reactors has been damaged. Measures are being undertaken to liquidate the consequences of the accident. Those affected are being given aid, and a government commission has been created."

"The announcement came about eight hours after Swedish officials discovered high levels of radiation on the monitoring equipment at a nuclear power plant near Stockholm.

"... The USSR Council of Ministers statement was reported in the major Kyiv-based newspapers, but not in positions of prominence. Pravda Ukrainy placed it at the foot of page three, beneath an article about two sickly pensioners who were trying to acquire a telephone in their homes. Robitnycha Hazeta gave the statement a similar location, this time below the Soviet soccer league tables and reports about a chess competition.

"In the evening TASS made a second announcement which gave the following details: an accident had occurred at the Chernobyl nuclear plant, which is located 130 kilometers north of Kyiv; a government commission, headed by Borys Shcherbina, deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, had been established, which included 'heads of ministries and departments.' The accident had occurred 'in one of the areas of the fourth power-generating unit and resulted in the destruction of part of the structural elements of the building housing the reactor.' Two people had been killed during the accident. The remaining three reactors had been shut down, and the residents at the reactor site [Prypiat] and three neighboring population points had been evacuated."

"Chernobyl & Nuclear Power In the USSR," by David R. Marples. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986.

CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

FOR THE RECORD: President Kuchma on the shutdown of Chornobyl

Following is the text of the address by President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine on the occasion of the closure of the Chornobyl nuclear power station on December 15, 2000. (The English-language text, released by the Embassy of Ukraine in Canada, was edited for clarity by The Weekly.)

I address the Ukrainian people, heads of states, governments and parliaments of foreign countries, and the whole world community in connection with an event that has milestone significance for mankind, for everyone who lives and will live on our Earth.

Today, on December 15, 2000 years after the birth of Christ, I issued an instruction to stop the third power unit, the last of those functioning at the Chornobyl nuclear power station.

This signifies the closure of the facility that entered history as the [site of the] biggest and the most horrible catastrophe.

Fifteen years have passed since the day when the fire at the destroyed nuclear reactor illuminated a new phase in civilization, which in all languages was dubbed the "post-Chornobyl" era.

Since April 26, 1986, the name of this small town in Polissia lost its original, geographical meaning and obtained a global political and ecological sense.

It joined the symbolic list of tremendous and devastating cataclysms that entered history as the distinctive marks of their epochs: Pompei, Guernica, Hiroshima.

The words "Chornobyl nuclear power station" epitomize a new phenomenon: nuclear energy that went out of control, a practical materialization of the threatening warnings that nature had sent many times to humankind for their frivolous, thoughtless and felonious treatment.

For Ukraine the act of decommissioning the Chornobyl nuclear power station is, from many points of view and without exaggeration, an event of epochal importance.

In so doing we, first of all, pay tribute to the memory of those who died of the diseases caused by this catastrophe while eliminating the consequences of the disaster.

Secondly, we confirm once more that we are fully committed to our obligations to the world.

Thirdly, we are finally parting with the totalitarian legacy and its tyranny, indifference and cruelty to human beings, society and nature.

And fourthly, we reiterate our intention to build our future responsibly, guided by our European choice, as well as concern for the future generations of the Ukrainian people and the whole of humanity.

This decision was conceived by the harrowing experience of the previous 15 years. Ukraine has to pay bills it has not signed and to do penance for sins it has not committed.

Its citizens were the first to step into the fire and into the invisible yet murderous field of radiation with the aim of protecting the whole planet from the disastrous fire at the cost of their own lives.

And by their experience they paid the most expensive price in order to give mankind the key to solving such unprecedented problems.

What is Chornobyl for Ukraine?

It is nearly 3.5 billion people affected by the catastrophe and its consequences.

It is almost 10 percent of the territory affected by direct radiation.

It is 160,000 people from 170 localities, who had to abandon their homes and move to other places.

By quoting these sad statistics we do not forget about other countries and peoples on

whose lives the greatest technological catastrophe of the 20th century also has left its ominous mark.

Fate and history have decreed that our state has to bear its Chornobyl cross mostly by itself, dealing alone with its difficulties and trials.

The total economic expenses related to

wrecked reactor and contaminated radioactive zone, or thousands of kilometers away.

An area that is desolate, silent and hostile to all that is living and normal, located several dozen kilometers away from the Ukrainian capital is the real picture – not one created by one's imagination or by computer – of what could happen to the

completely turned over. Chornobyl's cataclysms remain, but they have been transferred into a new dimension.

Beyond the turn of the centuries and millenniums there is a new era awaiting us, a new one in the post-Chornobyl sense as well. Yet, it raises more questions than gives answers.

Before us is the great, complicated and long task of bringing the station out of operation and transforming it into an ecologically secure system with a "shelter" above the damaged fourth energy unit.

Before us are social security issues – ensuring the well-being of the station's workers who are being dismissed and the members of their families, determining and planning the future of the city of Savutychev where they all live.

Not one of these people, not a single family, is to be abandoned.

All of this requires great funds that Ukraine at the moment does not have at its disposal.

We, as both a state and a nation that have suffered the most from the Chornobyl catastrophe and its consequences, have the right to rely on the support of the international community – the support of international assistance programs that are of vital importance as well as of human compassion and an understanding of the problems we face.

Firstly, the decision on the Chornobyl nuclear power station has been adopted and implemented under the guarantees of such assistance – first and foremost on the part of G-7 member-states.

Secondly, there is a need, that increases with each passing day, for mankind to unify all efforts for safe existence in harmony with nature, in preventing technogenic catastrophes of global and regional scales,

(Continued on page 6)

What is Chornobyl for Ukraine?

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- **It is almost 10 percent of the territory affected by direct radiation.**
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the catastrophe at the Chornobyl station have already totaled \$130 billion.

We are compelled to further expend enormous material and financial resources, first of all, to protect the affected population and rehabilitate the natural environment.

In some years such expenses reached 12 percent of the state budget – a sum that considerably exceeds budget allocations for science and culture. I would like all of you to pay attention to this.

I would like the following fact to be considered as well. Ukraine is losing the Chornobyl nuclear power plant at a time when its economy with its extremely deformed structure and vast power consumption has just started to recover after a long crisis in difficult conditions in the realm of fuel and energy and in the winter period.

To these factors extremely adverse weather conditions were added, and on extensive territories this has become a kind of natural disaster.

Thus, to lose a minimum of 5 percent of generating capacities means being ready, not only for significant additional losses, but also for considerable risk – especially since after its closure the Chornobyl nuclear power plant is transformed from a producer of electric power to a consumer.

All of that is true, but Ukraine is taking this step consciously and voluntarily, in accordance with the highest priority interests of our people and the international community.

We realize that Chornobyl is a threat to the entire world. Consequently, we are ready to sacrifice a part of our national interests for the sake of global safety.

The implementation of the decision on the Chornobyl plant's closure that was declared in the beginning of the 1990s and confirmed five years ago in the Ottawa memorandum is the second unprecedented good will act by the Ukrainian state. Before that came the renunciation of the world's third largest nuclear arsenal.

I hope the world appreciates the importance and humanity of such approaches – and is assured of our transfer of nuclear security problems from the sphere of declarations to the level of real, practical actions.

I emphasize this with regard to another, probably the most dreadful and tragic, Chornobyl consequence.

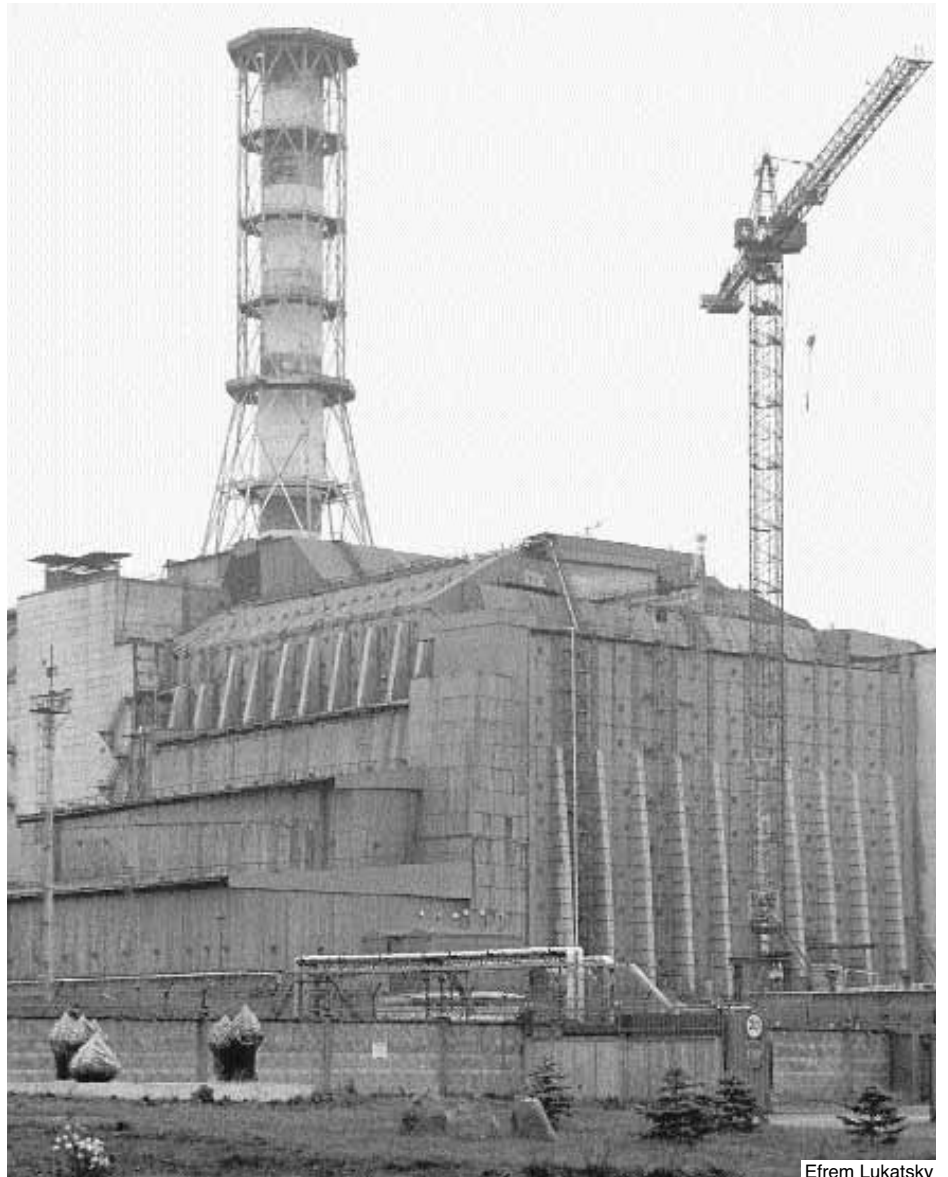
This is the constant fear of the people for their lives and health, for the fate of their children and grandchildren, for the ecology of the lands and forests, seas and rivers, subterranean waters. The fear that exists regardless of where they live – near the

planet if people lack reason and caution in their conduct with the achievements of science and technology.

The Chornobyl firefighters and liquidators have shielded mankind from such a possibility – as their predecessors from Kyivan Rus' safeguarded Europe at the dawn of the Renaissance from alien incursions.

Today's act, having eliminated the delayed-action nuclear mine in the heart of Europe, is the beginning of relief from the Chornobyl syndrome in Ukraine as well as globally. The sword of Damocles that all these years has been hanging above us is passing into oblivion.

At the same time, this dreadful page of modern history cannot be considered to be



Efrem Lukatsky

The sarcophagus that covers Chornobyl's reactor No. 4, destroyed as a result of the April 26, 1986, disaster, is seen in this file photo taken on November 16, 2000.

CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

ANALYSIS: Chornobyl's shutdown was a symbolic end

by **Jeremy Bransten**

RFE/RL Poland, Belarus and Ukraine Report

PRAGUE – In the early hours of April 26, 1986, technicians at the Chornobyl nuclear power station – 135 kilometers north of Kyiv – were running a test of the plant's No. 4 reactor. They disregarded safety procedures as they proceeded.

Within minutes, fuel rods in the reactor's core experienced a sudden loss of cooling water. The meltdown had begun. At 1:23 a.m., the chain reaction in the reactor spun out of control, causing explosions and a fireball that blew off the building's roof.

A plume of radiation gradually swept north of the plant, across the rich farmlands of northern Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic states into Scandinavia. Despite Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's newly proclaimed policy of "glasnost," or openness, Moscow continued its past practice and initially kept silent about the accident.

It was only when heightened radiation levels triggered alarms at a Swedish nuclear power plant that the Soviet leadership admitted that something was amiss. Two days after the accident, Soviet television finally announced that an accident had occurred at Chornobyl. Despite the spread of radiation, outdoor May Day parades in nearby Kyiv went ahead. A decision to evacuate people living within a 30-kilometer radius of the plant was not made until the next day.

Slowly, over the next two weeks, information about the scale of the disaster began to trickle through government censors. Mr. Gorbachev did not appear on television to discuss the disaster until May 15. All the while the stricken reactor continued to spew radiation into the atmosphere.

To slow the outflow, fire-fighting units made up of men called "liquidators" ran relays onto the plant's mangled roof, dumping shovelfuls of hot graphite into the gaping hole. After two weeks the opening was closed. Eventually, the entire reactor was sealed within a 300,000-ton concrete and metal sarcophagus.

Thirty-one people died in the immediate aftermath of the accident, of acute radiation poisoning. But over the next four years more than 600,000 people took part in clean-up efforts inside the 30-kilometer

exclusion zone around the plant. Many still face long-term health consequences.

According to government figures cited in Kyiv in December 2000, more than 4,000 people who took part in clean-up work have died to date from Chornobyl-related illnesses. Another 70,000 have been disabled. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Anan noted recently that according to U.N. specialists, 3 million children in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia require treatment as a result of radiation exposure, and many of

them are expected to die prematurely of thyroid and other cancers.

In addition to the medical consequences, hundreds of thousands of people have been uprooted from their homes. More than 150,000 people were evacuated from the immediate radiation fallout zone in Ukraine; another 130,000 people across the border in Belarus were forced to relocate.

The Chornobyl accident changed perceptions of nuclear power around the world, reinforcing public fears of atomic energy

and prompting several European countries to rethink their nuclear power strategies. But Hans Friederich Meyer, spokesman for the U.N.'s Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that, paradoxically, the accident also had a beneficial impact, leading to new international safety conventions.

"The Chornobyl accident was really a big event and in the field of nuclear safety, it created a new awareness and, from our point of view, from the point of view of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in the longer run, a real improvement in the safety culture," Mr. Meyer told RFE/RL.

Although the design of the Chornobyl plant is considered less safe than the layout of plants operating in Western Europe, many countries, including Germany, have now adopted plans to gradually phase out their reliance on nuclear power. Among the European Union's 15 member-states, only France remains fully committed to the technology.

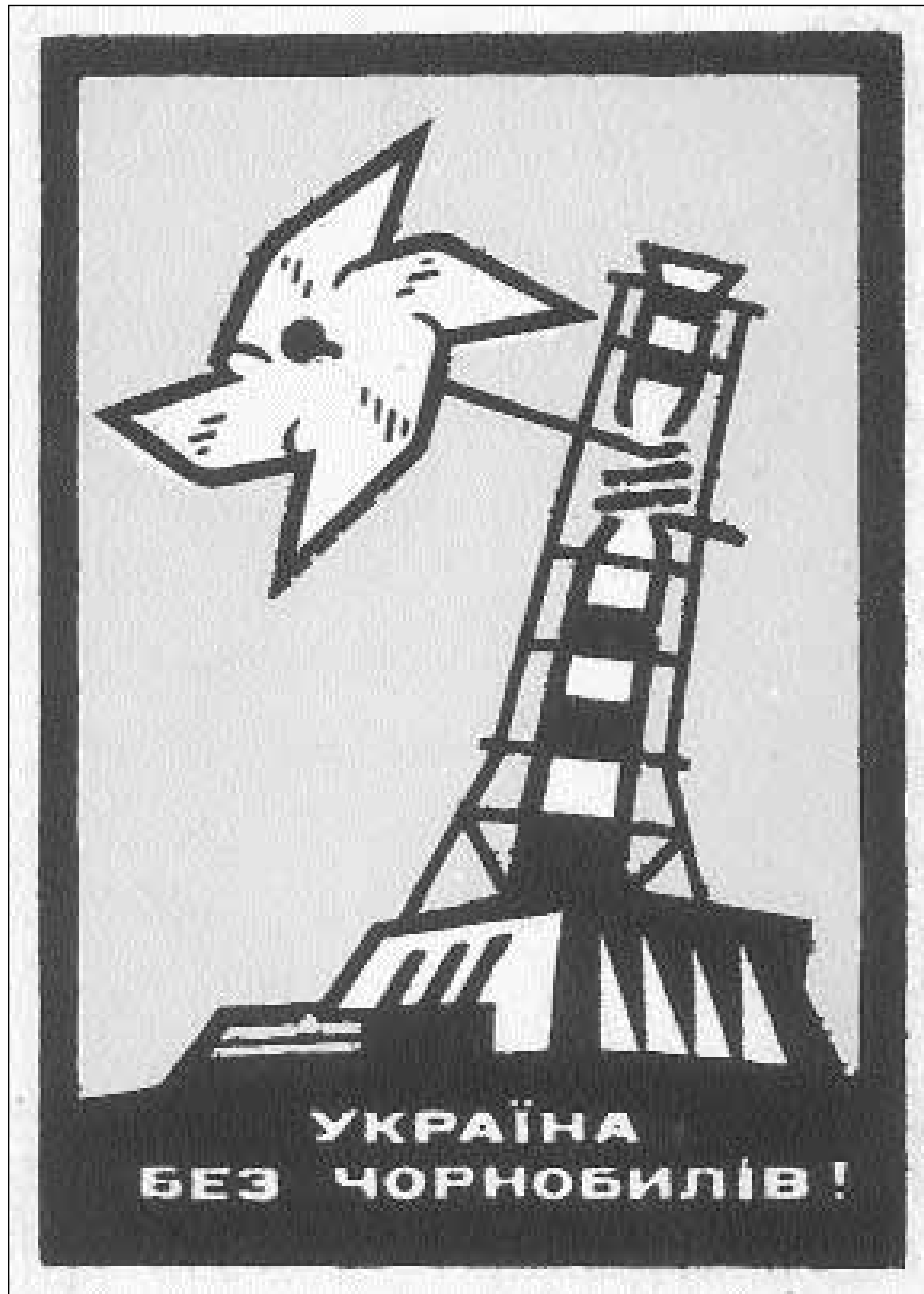
Despite their announced intentions, Mr. Meyer noted that Western European countries will have a difficult time weaning themselves off nuclear power, at least in the short term. For the moment there are few non-polluting alternatives that can provide sufficient supplies of electricity.

"If we look to the global warming question and climate change, it is very difficult for European countries to close down a great number of their nuclear power plants. One must take into account that in many Western European countries, the share of nuclear electricity is quite high," he noted.

President Leonid Kuchma's order to shut down Chornobyl put a symbolic end to a plant that had become a byword for catastrophe. "The world will become a safer place. People will sleep in peace," Mr. Kuchma said during a ceremony marking the shutdown on December 15, 2000.

But this is not the end of nuclear power not yet. What will happen to similar plants in other post-Soviet states that continue to operate – among them the Ignalina power station in Lithuania – remains unresolved.

In an ironic final twist to the Chornobyl saga, technicians had to restart the plant's last operating reactor on December 14 – it had been shut down due to a minor malfunction – so that President Kuchma could order the cessation of operations. Nuclear safety is one thing, but losing face is quite another.



"Ukraine Without Chornobyls" says a card issued in 1990 by environmental activists.

Jeremy Bransten, is an RFE/RL journalist based in Prague.

President Kuchma...

(Continued from page 5)

in [halting] proliferation of nuclear technologies.

Chornobyl is the most obvious, but not the only, evidence of such a necessity.

The consequences of accidents at civilian and military nuclear facilities, chemical and other enterprises, do not recognize any state borders. The danger emanating from them is common to all of us, as is our living environment.

Let us remember that globalization and other post-industrial realities make the present world still tighter and more interconnected. This world does not end with the threshold of our houses and the boundaries of our states.

According to one scientist/physicist, we have the only copy of the Universe, which we cannot experiment with.

Let us repeat – paraphrasing great thinkers – that wisdom is the daughter of experience.

And experience testifies that the content and consequences of technogenic disasters rise above scientific and political, and other differences. They demand the employment of all channels of international cooperation, so that nowhere, never and under no circumstances should a man-made disaster happen on our planet.

And that, in my mind, is the main lesson of Chornobyl.

The lesson is sad, painful and tragic. Nevertheless, we must learn it.

Today, I would like to reiterate the idea declared during the 1997 session of the United Nations General Assembly – the idea of establishing the Ecological Security Council of the United Nations, the International Ecological Court and the International Ecological Bank.

I believe the time has come to put this proposal on a practical foundation. That would enable us to act together, in a concerted and coordinated manner, to concentrate the costs and resources when some countries are not able to cope on their own with the consequences of natural and technogenic disasters.

Ukraine stands up for signing the convention on the creation of an international mechanism of ecological monitoring and control, and for the implementation of a range of other measures that would guarantee healthy and clean living conditions for all people in every corner of the world.

On our part, we are ready to freely and generally transmit to the international community our unique, although very bitter, experience gained over the years of elimination of the consequences of the Chornobyl catastrophe.

We propose that the nuclear power plant that is being shut down and the territory adjacent to it be used as a test ground for an international scientific-research center to work out technologies of nuclear safety improvement, alleviation and elimination of the consequences of catastrophes at nuclear plants, and rehabilitation of the environment.

As we approach the shutdown of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant, we are renouncing even the most basic necessities. We are not awaiting applause, but constructive attention and cooperation. We demand not tips or alms, but equality, respect and understanding.

We are convinced that the solidarity of nations and states, and the humanism of contemporary civilization will not abandon Ukraine without assistance. We are grateful in advance to all who will render it.

Mankind approaches the future while looking back to the past. This is the unchanging law of history.

What has already happened cannot be changed. But, at the same time, it cannot be forgotten.

Then let the word "Chornobyl," in the name of coming generations, become an instant and severe reminder of responsibility for all that is created by wisdom and made by hands.

Let December 15, 2000, be taken by the world as one of the clear manifestations of this responsibility.

Let us listen to the words of the Holy Scriptures that came to us from the deepness of the ages: "A wise person knows his own path ..."

To conclude this message I express confidence and hope that states and peoples – all mankind – will have enough wisdom, will and responsibility to keep moving ahead on a reasonable and well-thought-out path free of such ominous landmarks as Chornobyl.

Let it be so from now on and forever.

CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund streamlines its life-saving mission

by Andrew Nynka

SHORT HILLS, N.J. – Fifteen years after the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund (CCRF) celebrates the 10th anniversary of its founding convention and continues to provide humanitarian aid to Ukraine's needy.

According to CCRF co-founder and board of directors liaison Nadia Matkiwsky, the fund's initial plan was "to help with the immediate health risks" that were directly associated with the fallout of radiation from the reactor's meltdown. The initial response was formed as a result of a "very emotional reaction on the part of CCRF towards the environmental catastrophe."

When asked about the change in focus of CCRF's work during its 10-year-plus period of existence, Mrs. Matkiwsky stressed that "as the years progressed and medical problems increased, we've become more focused towards what our needs are, more focused on neonatology and more focused and streamlined as we realized the problem in Ukraine, specifically with infant mortality." She added that CCRF's efforts are now aimed at "dealing with newborn infants who have suffered from the radiation fallout."

Experts have realized that the full extent of the tragedy would only come to light over time. CCRF's efforts now have "shifted from the aftermath in Chernobyl to all of Ukraine – helping all of the relocated victims who have spread out across all of Ukraine." Mrs. Matkiwsky explained.

Mrs. Matkiwsky stressed that "Ukraine is a modern, progressive and well-educated country, but is struggling with an inadequate infrastructure." She added that Ukraine is not in need of simple donations of second- or third-hand items, but of quality equipment that is necessary in order to implement the current Western medical instruction its professionals have been receiving since the country gained independence in 1991.

Mrs. Matkiwsky underlined the role CCRF now plays in improving the medical and societal infrastructure in Ukraine through activities such as installing the first U.S.-built magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system in Ukraine (at the Kyiv Emergency Hospital and Trauma Center), modernizing seven neonatal intensive care units with respirators, transport incubators and pulse oximeters, and establishing a state-of-the-art blood diagnostic laboratory



CCRF founders Dr. Zenon and Nadia Matkiwsky with neonatologists from all oblasts of Ukraine at a medical conference organized by CCRF in 1999 in Kyiv.

at the Lviv Regional Specialized Pediatric Clinic in Ukraine.

As an organization receiving donations from the public, CCRF wants to dispell the myth of corruption. "Just as in a marriage between two individuals, partners must choose wisely," Mrs. Matkiwsky said. It is the responsibility of the organization to carefully evaluate its beneficiaries to ensure that aid given is used in an honest manner. She emphasized: "We carefully select our aid recipients."

CCRF's founders have testified as expert witnesses before Congressional hearings and United Nations forums on the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. They were the first U.S. citizens to receive Ukraine's Presidential Medal of Honor and were the winners of the 1995 New Jersey Governor's Volunteer Award.

When asked about the future, Mrs. Matkiwsky replied that CCRF is looking for interested individuals or large corporate sponsors who could help Ukraine develop the infrastructure it badly needs through contacts or donations of modern, high-quality equipment and supplies in order to continue its work for children throughout Ukraine.

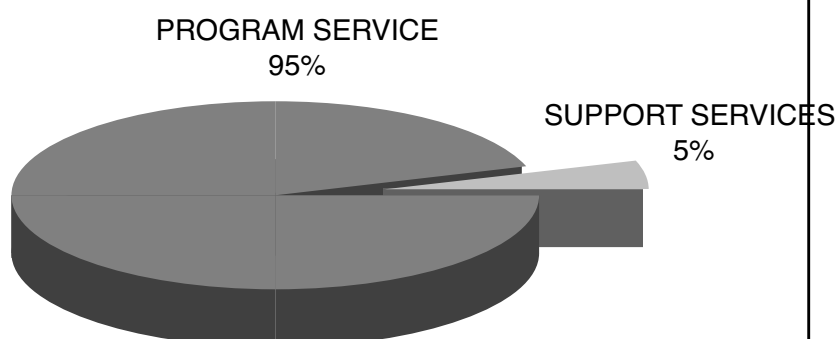


Joseph Sywenkyj

A newborn receives medical care at the Volyn Oblast Children's Hospital in Lutsk, which has been supplied with equipment sent by CCRF.

Allocation of funds

- 95 percent of CCRF's expenses are allocated for medical programs, humanitarian aid and health education.
- Only 5 percent of total expenses are allocated for administrative support services.



Since 1990, CCRF has maintained a very high standard of cost-efficiency. For every \$1 in donations received, CCRF has delivered \$14 worth of in-kind products (medicines, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals, hospital supplies) and voluntary services.

For information contact: Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, 272 Old Short Hills Road, Short Hills, NJ 07078; telephone, (973) 376-5140.

CCRF's track record

- Twenty-six major airlifts and nine sea shipments with medical aid valued at \$45 million delivered to Ukrainian hospitals, maternity centers, clinics and orphanages in 14 oblasts (provinces).
- Innovative programs to correct life-threatening birth defects.
- Delivery of life-saving medication and surgical supplies for hundreds of children with thyroid cancer and blood disorders.
- The finest regional biochemistry laboratory in Eastern Europe certified in 1997.
- The best-equipped treatment center in Ukraine for children suffering from leukemia and various blood disorders.
- The first MRI system in Kyiv serving over 10,000 patients.
- Model neonatal centers in Dnipropetrovsk, Lutsk, Lviv and Chernihiv.
- Physicians' training program for specialists in neonatology, pediatrics, cardiac and orthopedic surgery, radiology and other specialties.
- State-of-the-art cancer screenings for over 6,000 patients.
- Publication of health booklets and community outreach programs to educate young mothers on proper prenatal care.

CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Chornobyl chronology

1986

April 26: At 1:23 a.m., an experiment goes catastrophically awry at the V.I. Lenin Atomic Electrical Station near Chornobyl, some 60 miles north of Kyiv. Reactor No. 4 explodes and catches fire, spewing a vast cloud of radioactive fallout throughout Belarus, Ukraine and most of Europe.

April 27: A full 36 hours after the explosion, evacuations begin at Prypiat, a town built to house Chornobyl workers. Residents are given time only to pack enough belongings for a "short trip" and are told they will return in a matter of days.

April 28: A terse, four-sentence announcement by TASS, the official Soviet news agency, that an accident has occurred at Chornobyl is the first acknowledgment by the USSR government of the disaster. The TASS report makes no mention of the nature of the accident, nor of the enormous amount of radiation released.

May 1: Ignoring internal and Western reports confirming the severity of the radiation release, Soviet officials stage the annual May Day parade; hundreds of Kyiv schoolchildren march down the city's contaminated streets as the Communist elite sends its offspring to safe havens. Several days later, panic-stricken parents swamp Moscow-bound trains with their children.

November 17: Construction of a 195-foot-high steel and concrete "sarcophagus" is completed at reactor No. 4. Pravda reports the containment vessel will last "for centuries," but the hastily built structure starts sinking and develops cracks almost immediately following its completion.

1988

April 26: More than 500 people march along the Khreshchatyk. They hold a demonstration protesting the cover-up of the Chornobyl disaster and advocating the discontinuation of nuclear power generation and the transformation of Ukraine into a nuclear-free zone. Sponsored by the Ukrainian Culturological Club (UCC), the protest is the first ecologically oriented demonstration in Kyiv.

November 13: An officially sanctioned ecological demonstration attended by 10,000 people in Kyiv calls on the Soviet government to tell "All the Truth about Chornobyl." The rally is cut short by authorities after speakers start addressing questions of political freedom. Twenty demonstrators are detained.

1990

February 10: First shipment of humanitarian aid by the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund arrives at Kyiv-Boryspil aboard the "Ruslan" Antonov-124 transport aircraft.

July 13: The United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization adopts a resolution appealing for worldwide cooperation on aid to mitigate the consequences of Chornobyl. The action comes after the USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR formally request help from the international community.

1991

May 21: A report released by the International Atomic Energy Agency attributes all medical conditions from the Chornobyl disaster to psychological prob-

(Continued on page 10)

An appeal to the Ukrainian American community

Fifteen years ago, on April 26, 1986, the world experienced the worst nuclear catastrophe in history. On that day, the explosion at the Chornobyl nuclear reactor No. 4 brought untold devastation to thousands of families across Ukraine. It spread radiation and contamination as far as the Nordic countries, northern England, and parts of the United States, including coastal Alaska and northern California.

When the fourth reactor at the Chornobyl nuclear power plant exploded, it spewed radiation into the atmosphere. A deadly silence followed the explosion. As the radiation silently permeated the atmosphere, the ground below it and everything living, a second silent killer – an information vacuum – was effectively imposed by Gorbachev and Soviet authorities. The Soviet deception had begun.

Now, 15 years later, the environmental and human consequences are still being calculated. Even by the most conservative estimates, the nuclear explosion at Chornobyl released more radiation than 90 Hiroshima-sized bombs. While most of this fallout blanketed heavily populated areas of northern Ukraine, the damage to Ukraine's leading water supply, the Dnipro River, has also affected other vastly populated regions of Ukraine.

As the world observes the 15th anniversary of the Chornobyl nuclear disaster, Ukraine has repeatedly reaffirmed its commitment to the G-7 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed on December 20, 1995.

"We (the leaders of the seven major industrial nations (G-7) and the President of the European Commission) met on April 20, 1996, with President Kuchma of Ukraine and together

examined a wide range of issues to improve nuclear safety and security. We agreed to continue our bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation with Ukraine in this field." – Statement by G-7 leaders, Halifax, Nova Scotia, December 20, 1995.

The MOU calls for major international financial organizations to assist Ukraine in closing down the Chornobyl nuclear power plant. International experts have concluded that the aggregate costs of closing Chornobyl, which entails the development of non-nuclear energy sources, is estimated at \$4 billion. As of today, Ukraine has only received a fraction of the promised assistance.

While the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA) and the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council (UACC) welcomed the closure of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant, we would like to stress the need for continued humanitarian assistance, including medical, environmental and social aid programs. Since this disaster, the Ukrainian American community has contributed hundreds of hours, and millions of dollars in assisting the victims of the Chornobyl tragedy. Nonetheless, Ukraine still needs our help to alleviate the dreadful consequences of that disaster for the Ukrainian nation.

As we mark the 15th anniversary of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant explosion, the UCCA and the UACC appeal to the Ukrainian American community to continue to provide assistance to those afflicted by this disaster. Let us honor the memory of the victims by helping those who are still afflicted.

Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!

Michael Sawkiw, Jr.
President
Ukrainian Congress Committee of America

Ihor Gawdiak
President
Ukrainian American Coordinating Council

Western Union donates to CCRF fund for Odesa clinic

MONTVALE, N.J. – Newborn infants in Odesa will have a fighting chance to beat the odds against neonatal complications, thanks in part with help from Western Union. The company recently donated \$9,400 for the purchase of medical equipment and supplies, including an infant warmer, to the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund. The contribution is part of the Western Union Helping Hands initiative, a worldwide community relations effort, and will help to equip the Viktor Petrenko Neonatal Intensive Care Clinic in Odesa.

In the years since the 1986 nuclear disaster, children in the regions affected by Chornobyl have suffered a variety of medical ailments, including cancer, birth defects, high infant mortality rates and birth complications. The Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund is a non-profit organization dedicated to "protecting and saving the lives

of children confronting the human legacy of the world's worst environmental disaster." The organization's efforts were brought to the attention of Western Union by world-champion skater Viktor Petrenko and the donation was made at the recent "Viktory for Kids" charity program at the International Skating Center of Connecticut.

"The Western Union Helping Hands program was established to further the company's commitment to our customers," said Alexander Gomellya, assistant marketing manager, Eastern European Region. "Odesa is home to many of our customers who regularly send money to friends and family there, and it seemed a natural step to team with a reputable organization, like the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund, to provide this much-needed medical support."

Created in 1999, the Western Union Helping Hands initiative was designed to

respond to the growing needs of Western Union consumers around the world. Through the program, Western Union assesses the needs of different communities and provides assistance to immigrant groups in a variety of areas, ranging from education to health. This donation is the second gift the Western Union Helping Hands program has made to the people of Ukraine in 2001.

Western Union Financial Services, Inc., a subsidiary of First Data Corp. (NYSE: FDC), is a worldwide leader in consumer money transfer services with 101,000 agent locations in more than 185 countries and territories. Famous for its pioneering telegraph service, the original Western Union dates back to 1851 and introduced electronic money transfer service in 1871. Western Union is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2001.



Erenay L. Jackson of Western Union speaks at the VIP reception held in conjunction with the "Viktory on Ice" show. Looking on (from left) are Col. Charles Hardesty of the U.S. Department of State, Viktor Petrenko, Ukraine's Acting Consul General in New York Serhiy Pohoreltzev, Alexander Kuzma of the CCRF and Natalie Korsheniuk Pollock, a community activist.

CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Living in the “exclusion zone”: a tale from Novyi Myr

by Danylo Kulyniak

NOVYI MYR, Ukraine – Beyond the rivers and marshes, beyond the beaver dams, lost in the pre-Chornobyl forest, hides an ancient Polissian village with a rather pretentious name: Novyi Myr. (New World). Actually it was once known as Barany, but the campaigns of the 1930s of renaming locations left their mark and Barany became Novyi Myr.

After the Chornobyl disaster, the village's inhabitants were evacuated to points far removed as this land fell within the exclusion zone.

Exclusion – from what and from whom? These are painful questions that demand an answer. Novyi Myr would have become a ghost town, devoid of people and home to beavers, wild boars, wolves, bison and other fauna, if not for one resident, Volodymyr Liudvihovych Zhankovskiy.

Long past his 60th birthday, he has lived the better part of his life in Novyi Myr. He is, in his own words “the president's representative in the village of Novyi Myr” – the one who guards his village from all matter of mishaps, “until the people grow smarter and return to their native lands.” He is certain this will happen, and when it does, it will be the happiest day of his life. But until that day arrives, Mr. Zhankovskiy lives here as the good spirit of these parts, the king of the forest.

He is master of this land and lives here thanks to everything that this unique and unbelievably beautiful land gives back to him. He resides in harmony with his natural surroundings and with his mares Kalyna and Zorya, two dogs, a cat, a tamed fox, and the 10-year-old pig Borys, which surely weighs nearly half a ton.

Oh, and let's not forget the storks in the linden trees and the beavers in the lake and river – it was the beavers that built a dam on the ditch-like slope beside the road leading into the village and thereby created the lake. The forest provides Mr. Zhankovskiy with berries and mushrooms; the waters with fish; the garden with passable potatoes and other vegetables.

And so, life goes on in this community, this place “where the devil says good night.” Life is at its toughest here when the winter snows blanket everything. The nearest human neighbors live in Vilcha, located 15 kilometers from Novyi Myr. There you will find a few dozen employees of Chornobyl Lis, police, customs, a railway station – by local standards it is almost a capital. But even Vilcha is almost a ghost town today, since its former residents were resettled in the Kharkiv Oblast.

From time to time Mr. Zhankovskiy goes forth to the people, meaning he comes to Vilcha and from there by rail to Ovruch. There he sells his simple wares and products: birch and linden brooms, mushrooms and berries. There he buys all that he needs. There he downs a mug of beer and shoots the breeze with whomever he comes across. There he sees and is seen by others. There he buys a fresh newspaper, for he lives in Novyi Myr as if on an island, without radio and television (as there is no electricity).

Mr. Zhankovskiy's thirst for news is nearly unquenchable, and his love for books know no bounds: he has read all the books left behind in Novyi Myr after the evacuation and is now working his way through the textbooks he has found. He is an intellectual, no doubt,



Volodymyr Zhankovskiy of Novyi Myr, located in Polissia, with one of his fellow residents.

and no grizzled geezer either, as he exudes strength and energy. He loves company and is always ready to welcome guests.

After dusk settles, Mr. Zhankovskiy sings songs of his own creation about his life these days. He has even dedicated one song to his former fellow villagers. After the Easter of 2000 many of these people visited their ancestors' graves –

now that was a true holiday and there were plenty of tears of joy all around as a result of the rendezvous, he recalls.

Among the visitors were Mr. Zhankovskiy's wife, daughters and grandchildren. The visitors implored him to leave with them for greener pastures, but parting was difficult. And how could Novyi Myr be left without its presidential representative?

Mr. Zhankovskiy expects that some of the former residents will return, and so he waits. His hearth and orchard are in order, the household is tidy.

Beyond the forests, rivers and marshes, life goes on 15 years after the Chornobyl disaster in the old and unique village of Novyi Myr, shrouded in mists and immersed in the scents of the forests and bogs of Polissia.

BOOK REVIEW: A fictional account of survival

“*The Sky Unwashed*” by Irene Zabytko. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2000. 263 pp., \$22.95 (hardcover).

by Wolodymyr T. Zyla

Reading Irene Zabytko's “The Sky Unwashed” is like viewing a slide show as images flash before our eyes and we watch closely, fascinated. But, as fascinated as we are by the frequently changing images on the screen, we also occasionally wish that we could move closer and slow down the pace of the projector, learn more about each slide, and make connections between the images. The novel thus captivates the reader and is well worth reading. Indeed, it is hard to believe that “The Sky Unwashed” is Irene Zabytko's first book.

The novel starts with a portrayal of life in a small Ukrainian village, the fictional Strylis, on the outskirts of Chornobyl, which will be etched forever into human history. It is the scene of a man-made disaster – the full implications of which are still not known. Exactly what happened on April 26, 1986, for some time remained a mystery, but when the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, the people of Ukraine were free to talk about what they knew.

The horror of the Chornobyl accident and the mishandling of the situation by the Soviet government were disturbing. There was considerable speculation about the levels of radiation, the number of deaths and the severity of other

effects. What areas needed to be evacuated, and what levels of radiation were acceptable for human habitation?

Being close to the plant, the village of Strylis was deeply contaminated and for that reason the Soviet government announced an evacuation, promising “Don't worry, you will be compensated. You will be back in a few days.” But this never happened.

On the contrary, strict orders were issued that the evacuees were not allowed to go outside the hospital because they “could infect Kyiv.” In the meantime, hundreds of children of Soviet officials were leaving Kyiv because of radiation.

Marusia, the main character of the novel, whose grandchildren had already left for Moscow and whose son Yurko died from radiation, decided that she had no other alternative than to return to the contaminated Strylis. The problem was money for a train ticket. She waited in line all night and registered again as a new evacuee at the hospital. They gave her a new blanket, a pillow and six rubles.

Getting to Strylis was not easy; no one wanted to help Marusia. They called her crazy and told her that “nobody goes there anymore.” But she got there, despite physical ailments. When her physical misery subsided, she was plagued by loneliness.

Alone in this deserted place, Marusia struggled up into the church belltower to ring the bells twice every day, just in case someone else had returned. And the “babusi” did – one by one. Soon the

village grew into a small community of 15 people.

Most interesting and tragic was the last day of Marusia's life. The author sets the scene: air was dry and the sun's scorching rays shone down. It was so dry that even the animals' tongues hung from their mouths twitching for invisible water.

The author ends the novel by sadly saying: “Now that her prayers were answered, her knowledge complete, her last breath coupled with the still air.”

The characters of the novel are fascinating – especially the tenacious old women, “babusi,” who endure so much hardship in their lives. Their strength shines through as they perceive radiation poisoning as just another hurdle of their lives that must be overcome.

Marusia dominates the narrative from the beginning to the end. She is pious, sincere and courageous; she defies the Soviet regime on many occasions. She is a widow, a dedicated mother and a grandmother who loves her family.

The novel itself is shocking, clever, ironic and in some cases heart-breaking. Mrs. Zabytko is a very capable writer who reproduces with great ingenuity the small isolated tragedies that lie at the core of the novel and are a significant part of this work.

“The Sky Unwashed,” without a doubt, is a unique piece of art in which the legacy of Chornobyl will live forever, despite the closure of the infamous atomic energy station.

CHORNOBYL: THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY

Chornobyl chronology

(Continued from page 8)

lems among an ignorant and misinformed population.

October 29: The Ukrainian Parliament votes to shut down the Chornobyl plant completely by the end of 1993.

December 11: The Ukrainian Parliament passes a resolution demanding the prosecution of Soviet leaders for the Chornobyl cover-up. Among those named are Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov, former Ukrainian Communist Party First Secretary Volodymyr Shcherbytsky and Ukrainian Health Minister Anatoliy Romanenko.

1992

April 22: The Ministry of Chornobyl releases a statement estimating deaths attributable to the Chornobyl disaster at 6,000-8,000.

1993

October 21: In the midst of a severe energy shortage, with widespread, daily brownouts common, Parliament votes to keep Chornobyl open and to lift the moratorium on construction of new nuclear plants.

1994

July 8-10: The Group of Seven summit in Naples pledges \$200 million in grant aid to strengthen Ukraine's energy sector and close down Chornobyl.

1995

July: A G-7 summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia, at the suggestion of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, agrees to hold a summit in Moscow on nuclear issues, including the shut-down of the Chornobyl plant.

December 13: The United Nations General Assembly designates April 26, 1996, as International Day in Memory of Chornobyl and seeks improved international cooperation on providing aid to Chornobyl's victims and studying its aftermath.

December 20: Ukraine's Minister of the Environment Yuriy Kostenko, visiting Ottawa, signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Sheila Copps, Canada's vice-premier and secretary of the environment, acting on behalf of the G-7. Members of the G-7 are to provide \$2.3 billion to close down Chornobyl by 2000. No funds are allocated for the second sarcophagus.

1996

April 21: At the G-7 summit in Moscow, President Leonid Kuchma reaffirms the decision to shut Chornobyl down. G-7 countries promise to study ways to replace the cracking sarcophagus, but make no new commitments of financial assistance.

April 26: This day Ukrainian communities worldwide commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Chornobyl nuclear disaster.

1997

November 20: President Leonid Kuchma participates in

a Chornobyl Pledging Conference organized by the United States as that year's chairman of the G-7. Thirteen countries pledged \$36.25 million for the rebuilding of the sarcophagus encasing reactor No. 4.

1998

July 23: Vice President Al Gore visits the Chornobyl nuclear power plant, becoming the highest ranking U.S. government official to ever visit Chornobyl.

1999

April 19: The Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund honors First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton with its Lifetime Humanitarian Achievement Award during a special ceremony at the Ukrainian Institute of America in New York. Mrs. Clinton receives a 14-inch bronze sculpture of the Berehynia (protectress) in recognition of her commitment to improving the health of women and children in Ukraine.

2000

December 15: While hundreds of representatives of the international diplomatic community watch at the Ukraina Palace concert hall, President Leonid Kuchma gives the command to shut down Chornobyl's last functioning reactor once and for all. The audience views the control room of reactor No. 3 via a live feed on a large monitor at the concert hall, while an engineer at Chornobyl throws the switch that halts the huge turbine.

(Based on a compilation by Yarema A. Bachynsky updated by The Weekly staff.)

Fifteen years after...

(Continued from page 1)

workers will relocate to the Rivne and Khmelnytskyi areas and work at newly finished reactors there, if they ever do get completed.

Others are looking for work outside Ukraine, in Russia, Iran, India and China. The last three countries have dynamically expanding nuclear industries and have a shortage of skilled labor. However, for Ukraine such relocation means an unwanted brain drain, which authorities are hoping to prevent.

The Slavutych redevelopment plan also calls for constructing a state university and an extensive international research institute on the medical aspects of nuclear radiation. It foresees the development of a fund to finance the final phase of the already existing International Chornobyl Center as well as a \$100 million credit line to develop 5,000 jobs in Slavutych. In 2000, even before Chornobyl closed, Slavutych lost 1,000 residents, although 585 were replaced with new arrivals.

Another no less immediate problem is a much-reduced municipal revenue base after the closure of Chornobyl. This year the city expects a 60 percent drop in revenues from 40 million hryv to 17 million hryv.

Volodymyr Udovychenko, the fast-talking, upbeat and outspoken mayor of Slavutych, told The Ukrainian Weekly on April 13 that the city needs to reform its infrastructure immediately to absorb the financial hit it is taking.

"The city has more social support structures than it can afford today," said Mr. Udovychenko.

He also said officials need to undertake an analysis to determine what types of employers the city might attract. Mayor Udovychenko said Slavutych has a powerful tool to attract commercial firms in its designation as a free trade zone. In the last few months alone it has created 284 new jobs. Currently there are five commercial projects underway, which would provide up to \$30 million in new investments and 1,770 additional jobs if they are completed.

Although that number would not fully replace the more than 5,000 jobs that will be lost, the mayor acknowledged that it would go a long way towards securing the city's future.

He admitted that outside investment has been slow in coming, mainly because foreigners seek more guarantees than the government is willing to provide, including the desire to own the land on which their businesses stand. Nonetheless, the mayor criticized the West for its timidity and its failure to follow-up with promised financing programs.

"Even the micro-crediting program is not going forward," said Mr. Udovychenko, referring to a plan to offer small-credits to potential small business entrepreneurs.

He said that a dialogue continues and plans have been

laid with TACIS, the European Union's aid organization, and with the U.S. Agency for International Development, but thus far there has been little follow through.

"We need plans to be activated, to be realized. We need credits – not tranches" explained the frustrated mayor.

At a conference of the International Federation of Chemical Energy and Mine Workers held in Kyiv on April 9, Raina Hurki, representative of the trade union, said the West may be suffering from "Chornobyl fatigue" as donor countries of the West have been saturated with the issue of Chornobyl over the last year and need some respite before re-engaging in Chornobyl support activities. He also said there is a feeling among some nations that Ukraine continues to present an endless shopping list, which intimidates them.

"You need to show the West that you are working," Mr. Hurki told the audience of Ukrainian nuclear power industry workers.

Another international conference, focused on a review of what the world has learned from Chornobyl and held in Kyiv in the run up to 15th anniversary commemorations, echoed that sentiment, with several Western organizations confirming that they are not

abandoning Ukraine, but re-gearing to continue to help.

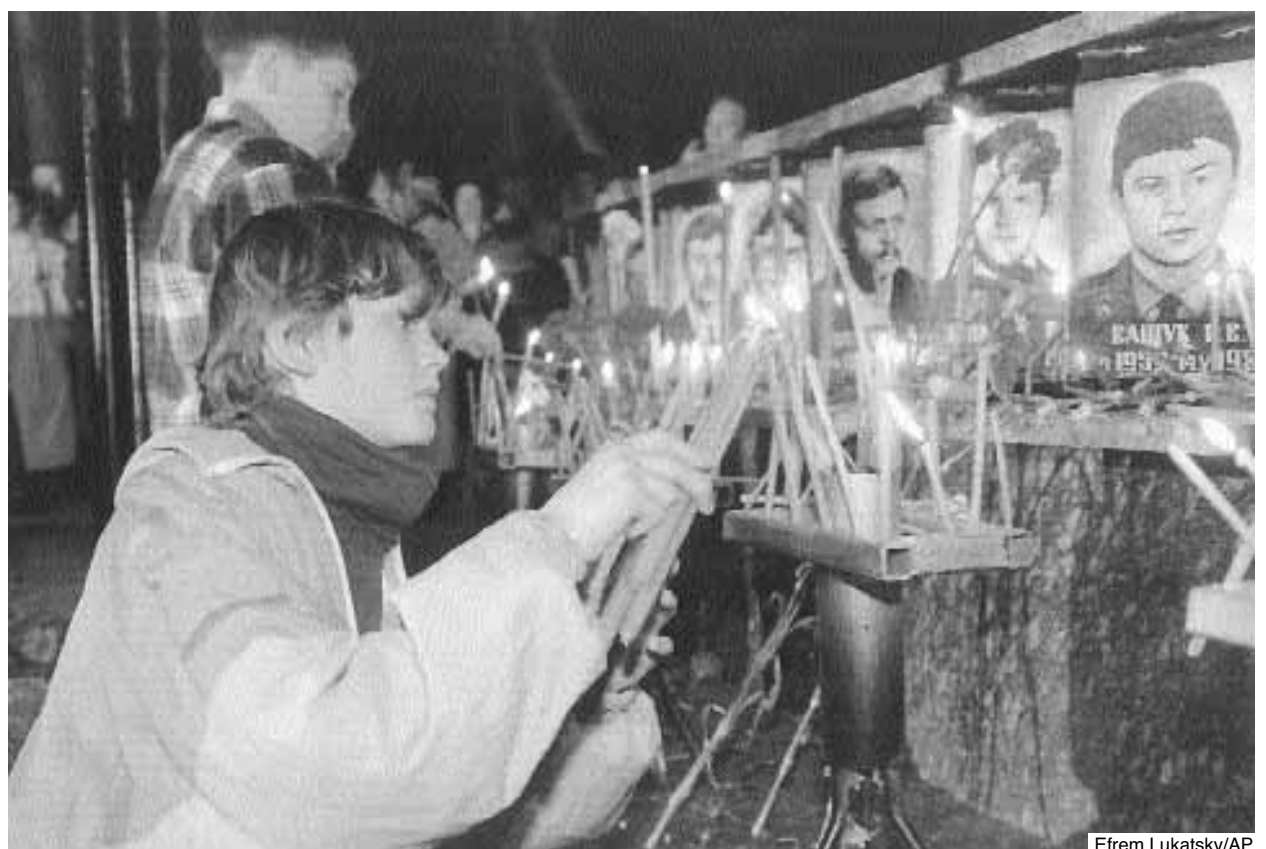
"The resettled population needs long-term economic support. International help is still needed," said European Commission General Secretary Andre von Hauerben in remarks at the opening of the conference.

Zygmund Domaretsky of the International Atomic Energy Agency added that the focus of Western aid must shift. "The Chornobyl accident is usually discussed in technological terms. Rarely is the human element considered: the farmer who can no longer farm his land; the mother whose child has thyroid cancer," explained Mr. Domaretsky.

It is this sort of paradigm shift that will be required if Slavutych is to avoid the fate of Prypiat, the city that housed the Chornobyl workers before the man-made disaster occurred, and which today sits barren of humanity and with no future.

Mayor Udovychenko is guardedly optimistic that his town will avoid Prypiat's fate and 10 years hence it will continue to be a thriving community.

"I hope there will be security here, that we will no longer be considering Hamlet's refrain: 'To be, or not to be.' We are sure the answer is 'to be,'" Mr. Udovychenko underscored.



Efrem Lukatsky/AP

In 1996, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Chornobyl disaster, a boy lights a candle at a monument erected in Slavutych to the 30 firefighters and workers who died while trying to contain the fire at the Chornobyl nuclear power plant in 1986.

NEWS AND VIEWS

New UNA By-Laws: Is this the answer?

by Alexander Chudolij

It is now time for all the delegates to the previous convention of the Ukrainian National Association to piece together all of their thoughts and make an honest decision on the proposed changes to the UNA By-Laws based primarily upon what they have read in *The Ukrainian Weekly* and *Svoboda* written by a handful of authors, as well as what they have heard at their local UNA district meetings.

The problem with this is that there has been no way for the delegates to fully discuss their views among themselves. What are the chances that a delegate from Canada or Florida will really be contacting a delegate from New Jersey to discuss the proposed by-laws changes?

But, in the same hall at the convention, distances are bridged and everyone can be heard by everyone else at the same time. Anything less than this becomes an inefficient system where communication is in bits and pieces and the delegates are segregated – kept apart from each other.

Unfortunately, because of lack of time at the previous convention in 1998, we now have community activists like Dr. Myron Kuropas saying that “the UNA is at a crossroads” and Taras Szmagala Jr. warning that “we cannot wait any longer.” If this is the case, then why didn’t the previous UNA executives involved in preparation of the convention agenda make sure that these proposed by-laws changes were at or near the top of the agenda?

I have to conclude that it is because they did not really want to have this topic discussed freely at a convention. An exchange of ideas among convention delegates is, in my opinion, the best, fairest and most democratic way for any or all of the delegates to be heard – both leading up to and during the actual vote. Every delegate is in attendance and already sitting in the same convention hall. It is the perfect setting for an exchange of views, opinions and understanding of the issue at hand. In fact, it’s exactly what conventions are for!

I had previously stated that I was undecided about which way to vote on this issue of whether to change to a board of directors governance system or to retain the historic way the UNA has chosen its leadership, that is, by directly electing the new (or re-electing the previous) executive officers and the General Assembly. I am now ready to contribute my thoughts to this topic.

I can understand the arguments made by both the proponents and opponents of this proposal. However, the first question I found myself having to answer is not whether to vote yes or no, but to determine what exactly is the real problem at hand. What is causing the difficulties the UNA is currently experiencing and has been experiencing for many years, ever since our reserves started to erode and membership goals became more and more difficult to achieve? Are these problems due to the system of leadership with which the UNA was born and had worked so well up to a point in time? If so, then the system should have been changed many years ago. Why wasn’t it changed? Up until the past two conventions, the governance structure was never even mentioned as being a problem. The system we had apparently was just fine, and

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the problems we were having would be taken care of by a professional sales force and by other measures.

What I find interesting is that many of those same people who now urgently implore us to change our present governance system are the ones who had no problem with it even into the 1990s. Some of them were not vocally against our current system even through the last convention, where many of them were re-elected by the current rules.

I have always believed that it does not matter as much what type of system we use to elect our UNA leaders, but that it matters whom we elect and what resources they have to get the job done. Does anyone really think that all of our problems will turn around if we elect a board of directors?

There has not been any statement of how or why a board of directors with a CEO elected by six to 11 votes (of the board) and his or her appointed, not elected, staff will be in any better position to increase the UNA reserves, improve our membership base, bring Soyuzivka back to prosperity and be fraternally beneficial to our fraternal organization. The quality of the board will be a critical factor (but not the only one) in determining how good a CEO its members choose. The CEO will then appoint a team that he or she can work with well.

How does this give the UNA membership more of a voice in the UNA? Under the current system at least we elect delegates who directly represent the membership and are able to attend meetings and caucuses, and actually listen to candidates who may be running the organization in the coming term, as well as directly elect many more members of the General Assembly who, although rather powerless, still have the opportunity to voice their views as well as those of the membership at the General Assembly’s annual meetings. Very good recommendations are often made within the General Assembly; resolutions and proposals are passed which can help the organization. However, it is the Executive Committee that turns these General Assembly resolutions into mere pipe dreams.

I can certainly see amending the UNA By-Laws to give more teeth to the General Assembly so that it can do the job it is being asked to do. This can be done under the current structure, which allows for more representation. The General Assembly should exercise the right to impeach an executive officer if it finds that a member of the executive is having a detrimental impact on the well-being of the organization. There’s your power in the current system.

The UNA’s convention delegates now are the ultimate “board of directors” for the UNA. They have the right to directly elect or reject any or all of the members of the Executive Committee and the General Assembly every four years. Under the proposed board of directors system, the delegates to the convention, for the first time in UNA history, would not have the right to elect the UNA’s chief executive officer, treasurer, national secretary, etc., nor any of the critical personnel responsible for the UNA’s day-to-day operations.

We would elect 11 board members, all of whom would have only a periodic, part-time responsibility of overseeing possibly the only person whom they would elect – the CEO. They will not elect the other full-time officers – they would only “approve” of the CEO’s decision to hire

(Continued on page 19)

**The things we do...**

by Orysia Paszczak Tracz

Pysanky from Shevchenko’s homeland

For unrepentant and certifiable pysanka nuts (yours truly being a prominent member), the appearance of a book on pysanky is truly a major event. New books are not that common, and not all published are really worthwhile. Just because someone has amassed a collection of pysanky or has come up with a “new” explanation of what the symbols mean does not make a book noteworthy.

For me at least, there needs to be that connection to the origins of pysanky and the beliefs surrounding them, and the respect for what they have meant to Ukrainians over the millennia. I’m not necessarily a traditionalist in this case, and am in awe of someone like Tania Osadca, Oksana Liaturynska or Nadia Nowytski, or the younger pysanka writers (some exhibited last year at The Ukrainian Museum in New York). These original artists take the essence of our precious folk art to a new, higher level, and do it so well because they understand its roots.

Last month, I received as a gift the book “Pysanka” by Vadym Mytsyk and Oles Fysun, published by Rodovid in 1992 in Kyiv (60 pp., \$9 U.S.). This is a small book about the pysanky of the Cherkasy Province, the land where Shevchenko was born and spent his childhood. This book is the first regional publication about this miniature of Ukrainian folk art, and covers pysanky from the times of Kyivan Rus’ to the present. It is the result of extensive, lengthy research and presents the talents, worldview, and love of their homeland’s beauty of the people of Shevchenko’s land.

Someone hoping to find a collection of ornate, super intricate pysanka designs will be disappointed. Those pysanky are not the Hutsul ones, or the even more intricate North American ones (sometimes pysanka writers do not know when to stop, and think that the busier the design is, the better it is). No, the pysanky from the central regions of Ukraine, including Cherkasy, are much simpler in design, with fewer colors. And the lines are not even always straight!

But these pysanky are truly traditional – from the time when it was the symbol on the shell that was important, and not the fineness of the lines. The color plates are arranged by the pysanka writer, with a separate list of names and locations. Mr. Fesun, an artist living in Kyiv, is the compiler and illustrator of the pysanky reproduced in the book.

He writes: “Through the language of the pysanka, countless creators have brought to us, through time, the genetic memory of the Ukrainian people, visibly preserving [our ancestors’] thoughts about the world and their ancient faith. After having analyzed for over 20 years the wealth of pysanka riches, I have often thought that in these wondrous lines we may be able to uncover the pre-Slavic or even the earliest Ukrainian written language.”

The author of the seven-page text is Mr. Mytsyk, an ethnographer who writes that “the Ukrainian pysanka is sunlight and the world of the soul, the breath of heaven and the soul of the earth, the genius of our people. From the pysanka, as from the unattainable Yaitse-Raitse of folktales, there flows an endless stream of creative power of our folk artists.”

These quotes are from the page giving the two authors’ photographs. Within the text, they no longer wax poetic, but pro-

vide straight facts. Mr. Mytsyk discusses the ceramic pysanky from medieval Kyivan times uncovered in archaeological digs in regions on both banks of the Dnipro. These pysanky contained a bead inside and were used as rattles to make noise for spring [Slava Gerulak of New York had recreated some of these quite a few years ago]. The author gives other examples of this ritual noise-making.

He mentions the work of Danylo Scherbakivsky, the ethnographer, archaeologist and museologist who committed suicide in 1927 as a protest against the desecration and destruction of Ukrainian art and artifacts by the Soviets. In examining pysanky from this region, Mr. Scherbakivsky had written that “the most archaic examples of pysanky come from, of course, Pravoberezhia [the right bank of the Dnipro].”

Mr. Mytsyk notes that the totalitarian ideology of Communism caused great harm to pysanka writing. “Beginning with the 1930s through the 1980s, pysanky were spurned by the official government as something connected to the Christian religion. Many folk artists were forced to abandon their art.” But not all. It is ironic that the pre-Christian pysanka became such a “danger” to the Soviets. This writer’s theory is that it is not so much the Christian symbolism that threatened the Russians, although that played a role. Because the Russians do not have pysanky in their tradition, this was one folk art that they could not claim as their own, the way they have done with so much of Ukrainian heritage. But, “folk art, including pysanka writing, is a living thing. It cannot be stopped, just as you cannot stop the flow of water.” Mr. Mytsyk explains.

As the book “Pysanka” underscores, “Small in size, but deep in meaning, the Ukrainian pysanka became the personification of the image of the world and of the folk artist and her world view.”

* * *

Rodovid Publishers, owned by Lida Lykhach, publishes the journal *Rodovid*, which features scholarly articles on Ukraine’s cultural history as well as commentary on historical and cultural problems and projects.

Among the fine books published by Rodovid are: “Ukrainian Folk Icons from the Land of Shevchenko,” “Sviatynia” (a popular history of Kaniv Hill, the location of Shevchenko’s grave and museum), “Transformation in Civil Society: An Oral History of Ukrainian Peasant Culture in the 1920-1930s” (in Ukrainian), “Kholmschyna i Pidliashia” (ethnographic description, in Ukrainian), and “Vyshyvka Kozatskoyi Starshyny 17-18 Stolit” (Embroidery of the Kozak nobility of the 17-18th centuries in Ukrainian; this work to be published in English in the future). There is a possibility that “Pysanka” also will be published in English.

The webpage of this publishing house is www.rodovid.net. Orders may be placed through the U.S. office, or through Kyiv – information is given on the webpage. The American address is: 18000 S. Mullen Road, Belton, MO 64012; fax, (816) 322-4228; e-mail, rodovid2@aol.com. In Kyiv, the address is: vul. Ivana Mazepi 29, Kyiv 01015; fax, (380-44) 254-3237 or 290-2931; e-mail, rodovid@carrier.kiev.ua.

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CONCERT NOTES

An eclectic tribute to Taras Shevchenko

by Helena Lysyj Melnitchenko

WASHINGTON – The Washington Ukrainian community paid a musical tribute to the bard of Ukraine on his the 187th anniversary of his birth, which fell this year on Friday, March 9. The concert took place on Monday, March 5, a day on which two feet of snow were predicted in Washington – snow that did not materialize here, but which made the performers coming from New York late.

Under the auspices of The Washington Group, a group of Ukrainian professionals, and in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine, this was the fourth in a series of five concerts sponsored by TWG's Cultural Fund which is raising money for musical instruments for the Lviv Conservatory. The three preceding concerts concentrated on classical music; the tribute to Taras Shevchenko was an eclectic mix of folk and classical music. It featured four performers from Lviv: Alla Kutsevych, Anna Bachynska, Roman Tsymbala and Volodymyr Vynnytsky, as well as Ludmilla Hrabovskiy from Rivne.

The bare stage was dominated by a grand piano and an image of a severe Taras Shevchenko, a copy of Ilya Repin's famous portrait painted a year before Shevchenko's death in 1861. No tribute to "The Great Bard" is complete

without the bandura and Ms. Kutsevych played the complex many-stringed instrument expertly and sang together with Ms. Hrabovskiy. The two young women, in traditional Ukrainian dress, have delicate voices well-suited to the intimate setting of the Rosslyn Spectrum Theater, which was three-quarters full on this cold March night. The concert began with Shevchenko's well-loved poems set to music, among them "Princess," "Lament of Yaroslavna" and "Lilea," and progressed to three Italian opera pieces, as well as Schubert's "Ave Maria." The classical music was performed by tenor Roman Tsymbala and soprano Anna Bachynska, accompanied by the pianist Volodymyr Vynnytsky.

After the intermission, the Ukrainian ambassador to the United States, Kostyantyn Gryshchenko, who was accompanied by his wife, spoke briefly in both English and Ukrainian about Taras Shevchenko as "a unifying hero."

Appreciative applause greeted Ms. Hrabovskiy and Ms. Kutsevych when they opened the second half with Shevchenko's well-known, plaintive "Poplar," accompanied by the bandura. Shevchenko's poems set to the music of the bandura are uniformly sad with their themes of loneliness, orphanhood and early death. Ms. Hrabovskiy's declamation of the second stanza gave depth to the early poem.

"The Sun, Low in the Sky," a solo from Lysenko's operetta "Natalka Poltavka," was sung by Mr. Tsymbala, whose voice, both strong and expressive, belongs in grand concert halls. Indeed, he has performed at Carnegie Hall. Mr. Tsymbala followed this popular Ukrainian aria with Puccini's challenging "Nesun Dorma," from Turandot. The concert closed with a duet from Hulak-Artemovsky's operetta "Kozak Beyond the Danube," sung by Ms. Bachynska and Mr. Tsymbala. The operatic experience of both artists was evident in their performances, which were notable not only for their strong, well-schooled voices, but for their expressive emoting.

The accompanying pianist, Mr. Vynnytsky, is a musician in his own right, a winner of the Thibault International Piano Competition in Paris in 1983 and was featured in the first concert of this series. He was appropriately and graciously recognized each time by both soloists. His skill was evident in his seemingly effortless performance.

A reception followed the concert. The varied nature of the concert was commented on in both Ukrainian and English. That eclecticism, nevertheless, had a theme. All the better-known composers, both Ukrainian and Italian, were Shevchenko's contemporaries and it can be surmised that he was familiar with their music. Taras Shevchenko was not only Ukraine's greatest poet, as well as a painter, but also Ukraine's bard. His collected works are titled "Kobzar" – the term for a wandering musician who sings his own poems. Like all great artists, he had music in his soul.

These high-quality benefit concert series are a great showcase for contemporary Ukrainian musical talent. The last event in the series on April 23 will feature New York City Opera soprano Oksana Krovlytska.

Andrukhovych recites at Library of Congress



WASHINGTON – Yuri Andrukhovych (above), a leading Ukrainian poet and writer, recited his poetry at the Library of Congress on March 9. The literary program, sponsored by the European Division of the Library of Congress, included actor Michael Bernosky, who read some of Mr. Andrukhovych's poetry and prose, which was translated by Prof. Michael Naydan of Penn State University. Mr. Andrukhovych, currently a Fulbright scholar in residence at Penn State, is compiling and translating an anthology of American poetry of the 1950s and 1960s.

– Yaro Bihun

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- ✦ News stories should be sent in **not later than 10 days** after the occurrence of a given event.
- ✦ All materials must be typed (or legibly hand-printed) and double-spaced.
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- ✦ Information about upcoming events must be received one week before the date of The Weekly edition in which the information is to be published.
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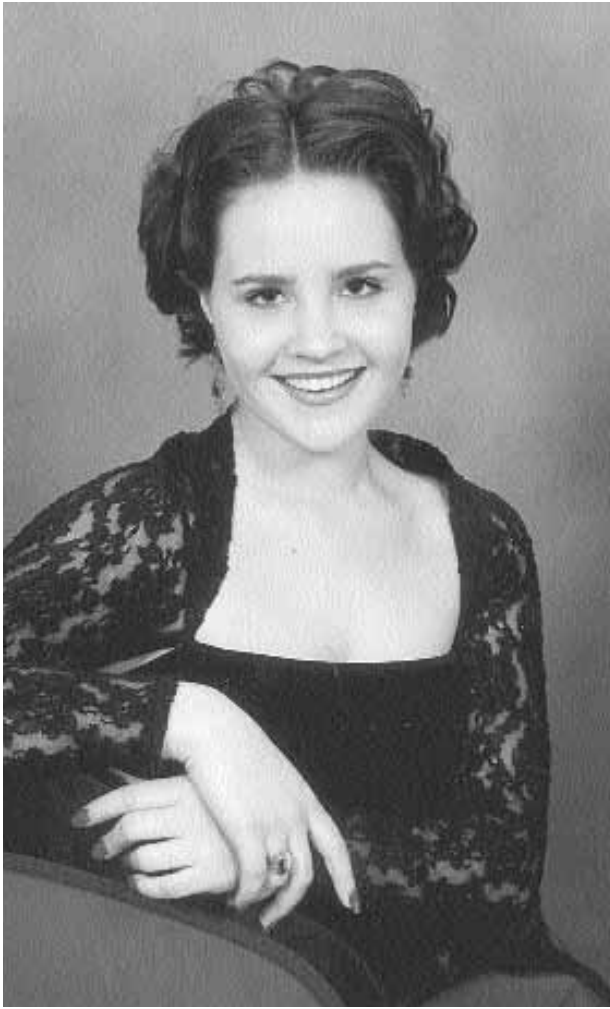
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THE ARTS

Ukrainian-born soprano Stefania Dovhan to perform in Washington

STEVENSON, Md. – Stefania Dovhan, a 21-year-old Ukrainian-born soprano, will perform in a series of recitals and memorial masses in Washington, and throughout Maryland to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the death of the legendary American soprano, Rosa Ponselle.



Soprano Stefania Dovhan

Ms. Dovhan was awarded the Rosa Ponselle Gold Medallion in the year 2000 "Young Classical Singers" competition. Her recital program has been prepared with Maestro Igor Chichagov, a Ponselle colleague of over 30 years and music director of the Rosa Ponselle Foundation. The program will include works by Handel, Mozart, Schubert, Bellini, Rossini, Glinka, Poulenc, Leoncavallo, as well as Ukrainian art songs. Ms. Dovhan's accompanist will be Pin-Huey Wang.

Ms. Dovhan joins the ranks of two previous Ponselle Gold Medalists, who now enjoy major international careers, American soprano Deborah Voight and Russian mezzo-soprano Olga Borodina.

Ms. Dovhan was born in 1979 in Kyiv, into an artistic family. As a youngster she took piano lessons and was accepted to the Youth Choir at the Kyiv State Conservatory, where she sang for nearly 12 years. In 1991-1992 she lived and studied in Munich, Germany, and subsequently emigrated to the United States in 1995, where she attended the Baltimore School for the Arts studying vocal performance with Joyce Hubbard, and graduated as salutatorian.

Ms. Dovhan is a member of the Ukrainian National Association and in 1998, was crowned Miss Soyuzivka.

Currently she is a student at the University of Maryland College Park School of Music on a full performing arts scholarship. Her vocal teacher is Martha Randall, who received the Rosa Ponselle Teacher of the Year Award in 2000. Ms. Dovhan has been a recipient of various awards, including first prizes in the local and regional National Association of Teachers of Singing competitions in 1999 and 2000.

Ms. Dovhan will appear as guest recitalist in the following concerts and celebratory masses; the public is invited to attend each of the programs without charge.

- Saturday, May 12, The Dumbarton Church, Dumbarton Avenue off Wisconsin Avenue, Washington, 7 p.m. The recital is jointly sponsored under the patronage of the Rosa Ponselle Foundation and The Washington Group Cultural Fund, and with the cooperation of the Embassy of Ukraine.

- Thursday, May 17: The Baltimore School for the

Arts, Recital Hall, 712 Cathedral St., 2:30 p.m.;

- Sunday, May 20: The University of Maryland, College Park; Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, Guildenhorn Recital Hall, 4 p.m.;

- Sunday, May 27: special Memorial Weekend high mass to be held in the Basilica of the Assumption, Cathedral and Mulberry streets; celebrated by Msgr. James Hobbs, with the chorus of the basilica under the direction of Malinda Lachica, and guest soloists former Rosa Ponselle Competition Gold Medalist Kenneitha Mitchell and Ms. Dovhan.

* * *

The Connecticut-born Rosa Ponselle made a historic operatic debut on November 15, 1918, at age 21 opposite Enrico Caruso in the Metropolitan Opera's premiere of Verdi's "La Forza del Destino." Although at her debut she had no previous formal vocal training nor operatic experience and had seen only one opera in her life, her unique, natural talent and unparalleled beautiful voice – described by critics as "molten gold" – established her instantly as "a Caruso in petticoats."

Ponselle was an acclaimed vaudevillian from age 16 and was appearing in a sister act at the Palace in New York City with her own real life sister, Carmela, when she was discovered by Caruso and brought to the Metropolitan Opera just five months later as his leading lady in his own debut in "La Forza del Destino." Because she became the first American opera singer to sing a major role at the Met without the benefit of European training or experience, she is credited with opening the doors of the Met to the American trained singer and, thereafter, was dubbed the foundress of our American operatic heritage.

Retiring at age 40, while still in her vocal prime, she married and moved to Baltimore's Green Spring Valley. Founding an opera company, she was to launch or coach generations of notable young talents in their careers. They included Beverly Sills, Spiro Malas, Sherrill Milnes, Placido Domingo, Leontyne Price, Samuel Ramey, William Warfield and Raina Kabaivanska.

World-class cimbalom player entrances audiences in Cleveland

by Nadia Tarnawsky and Michael Flohr

CLEVELAND – A plaintive melody is heard from a tylynka ... soon the soft tremolo of the cimbalom supports the shepherd's call ... within moments a fiery Hutsul dance ensues. This scene comes straight out of the Carpathian mountains ... or does it?

Alexander Fedoriouk, a world-class cimbalom player effortlessly creates this soundscape.

Tonight, an audience filled with hip young people at an art gallery near downtown Cleveland is transported to the Carpathians, and they are screaming and applauding as if it were a rock concert.

Peggy Latkovich of the Cleveland Free Times said of his performance "things really got cooking when Mr. Fedoriouk took hammers to the cimbalom. His fiery playing was jaw-droppingly fast, evoking gasps from the audience." While Mr. Fedoriouk is well known among many Cleveland and New York audiences, it is time to introduce the greater Ukrainian community to this talented performer on the eve of his first solo album.

Mr. Fedoriouk was born in Novy Rozdil, Ukraine, but spent most of his life living and working in Kolomyia. He chose to play the tsymbaly (cimbalom) over the trumpet or violin at the age of 6, setting his life on a path that would cross continents to folk festivals, jazz clubs, concert halls and appearances on over 17 albums and two films. As

Nadia Tarnawsky is an ethnomusicologist and professor at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Michael Flohr is a pianist and member of the American Federation of Musicians. The couple resides in Cleveland.

a child he studied in Kolomyia and in time went on to study tsymbaly performance with Georgy Agratina, national artist of Ukraine, at the Kyiv State Conservatory. Mr. Fedoriouk also "learned a lot of repertoire" by playing for weddings in the Carpathians. Keeping to Hutsul tradition, Mr. Fedoriouk also learned how to make and repair instruments. "Since my father used to make cimbalom sticks for me, I learned wood craft from him," he states. "Then I started making pan flutes and folk flutes." With this wealth of experience behind him, Mr. Fedoriouk began playing with the Ukrainian folk ensemble Cheres. Eventually the leader of Cheres arranged for a tour of the U.S. for the ensemble.

With Cheres, now based in New York City, Mr. Fedoriouk has performed in the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations as well as prominent cultural festivals. He also plays cimbalom with the Eastern European folk band, Harmonia, based in Cleveland. With this ensemble he has brought the music of Ukraine and Eastern Europe to audiences at the Kennedy Center for the Arts in Washington as well as other high profile performances in the United States.

One of his most notable collaborations has been with jazz flutist Herbie Mann at the Blue Note in New York City and on Mann's latest release, "Eastern European Roots." Besides performing jazz on his cimbalom, Mr. Fedoriouk has made appearances with symphonic orchestras on many important works. He recently performed with the world renowned Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall for Kurtag's "Grabstein für Stephan" in addition to serving as soloist for Kodaly's "Hary Janos Suite" for the Cleveland Orchestra's Youth

Orchestra. This collaboration brought Mr. Fedoriouk to New York's Carnegie Hall.

Through his varied performances, Mr. Fedoriouk has promoted the music and instruments of his homeland. It may have been unimaginable to him on the foothills of the Carpathian mountains, but here in the art galleries of Cleveland and the clubs of New York, there are endless possibilities.

His first solo album, "Cimbalom Traditions" presents the traditional folk music of Eastern Europe. The works selected reflect the varied cultures of the region and the multiple cultures which utilize the cimbalom such as the Ukrainian, Romanian, Hungarian, Rusyn, Slovak,

Moldovan and Gypsy. Featured on the album are the band Harmonia as well as special guests like Vasyl Heker, the spectacular violinist from Ukraine.

To obtain a copy of "Cimbalom Traditions," please send \$17 (\$15 for the CD and \$2 for shipping) to Folk Sounds Records, P.O. Box 609067, Cleveland, OH 44109; make checks payable to: Alexander Fedoriouk. For further information, check out Mr. Fedoriouk's website at <http://listen.to/cimbalom> or e-mail FolkSounds@yahoo.com

Mr. Fedoriouk will perform in concert with the folk band Harmonia, at INSIDE gallery in Cleveland on April 26 and 27.



Alexander Fedoriouk, a world-class cimbalom player.

DATELINE NEW YORK: Spring arrives in Little Ukraine

by Helen Smindak

The coming of spring was officially marked in New York's Little Ukraine on April 8 with a charming and sensitive presentation of Ukrainian songs known as "vesnianky," ritual folk songs sung by girls in combination with ceremonial dances and games from early spring until the Feast of the Holy Trinity in June. Bird calls and joyous melodies that used to echo through Ukrainian villages in the springtime breezed airily through the Ukrainian National Home on Second Avenue as a mixed chorus and an ensemble of wreath-crowned young women welcomed spring with songs and ritual circle dances, and youngsters zig-zagged through the audience handing out bird-shaped cookies, recreating ancient customs of Ukraine.

The delightful program was the brainchild of bandura teacher Alla Kutsevych, who brought together the Promin vocal ensemble, members of the recently formed Branch 125 of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America (composed of Fourth Wave émigrés) and their children for the time-honored spring celebration. Close to 45 young people in regional costumes, including a dozen youngsters age 7 to 12, performed lilting airs and humorous tunes from eastern regions of Ukraine – Kharkiv, Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr and Chernihiv – then turned their attention in the program's second half to the regions of Volyn, Ternopil, Stanyslaviv and Yavoriv in western Ukraine. A fanciful mural featuring long-legged storks in flight, flowers, vines and ribbons, the work of artist Erica Slutsky, formed an engaging backdrop.

Although the terms "vesnianky" and "hayivky" ("hahilky", "yahilky") are often used interchangeably, vesnianky are sung from the Annunciation to the Pentecost, while hayivky represent only those spring songs sung during the Easter holiday. Some community residents, believing that vesnianky/hayivky should not be sung before Easter, refused to attend the event, but a sizable crowd of onlookers was on hand nevertheless to cheer the performers enthusiastically.

Ms. Kutsevych served as artistic director and performed in many of the songs and dances, at one point leading a chain of performers that captivated the audience as it wove its way up and down the aisles before entering on stage. Several numbers, like "The Willow Tree," performed by Ms. Kutsevych, a mezzo-soprano, and alto Iryna Hrechko, and "The Cuckoo," sung by a quintet of women, serenaded birds, the harbingers of spring, in distinctive village style with the use of bilyi holos (white voice). The clear tones of Oksana Charuk Bodnar's soprano voice rang out in the repertoire of the Promin ensemble, directed by Bohdanna Wolansky, and in solo pieces like "The Green Grass" and "The Princess." Tania Turikova, Natalia Lemishka and Ludmilla Hrabovska, Branch 125 president, were the soloists for additional vesnianky.

Centered around the ritual portrayal of plant growth and farm work, many vesnianky hailed cucumbers, violets, millet and the oak on the hill. To salute the beetle, performers and members of the audience, standing in two parallel rows, joined arms at the shoulders in a constantly renewing line that enabled 5-year-old Theodore Bodnar to walk along a raised path from one end of the auditorium to the other, while 3-year-old Katrusia Woloshyn scampered through the tunnel below. Participating in several songs and dances were youngsters like Lydia and Gabriella Oros, Lviv's Chereshenky duo, who contributed a song about the pastor's oak tree. Other vesnianky, like the special "ryn-



Yaroslav Kulynych

A celebration of spring held at the Ukrainian National Home in New York City.

dzivky" sung at Eastertime by young men of the Yavoriv region, saw male performers bowing low to the women while singing about Easter Day and a worried partridge.

Clad in white, Chrytsia Gorski took center stage as Lady Spring for a circle dance performed with flower wreaths by the women, and later in the program executed a dreamy ballet sequence. Ms. Gorski, a member of the Syzokryli Ukrainian Dancers, was partnered by Ivan Makar, attired in an all-white Kozak costume, in idyllic, slow-moving dances from the Chernihiv and Podil regions.

Ms. Kutsevych, active in New York's Ukrainian cultural scene since coming to New York in 1996, produced a theatrically staged "Vertep" (manger scene) last January that featured a live baby in the crèche. The founder and director of the girls' bandura ensemble Vyshyvanka at the Ukrainian Music Institute in New York, she has become well-established in the community as a bandurist, bandura teacher and Promin singer. Ms. Kutsevych has a special knack for drawing together performers from varied community organizations and religious faiths into a genial cultural entity.

The Easter parade

A few blocks north of the National Home, The Ukrainian Museum continues to create beautiful displays and exhibits that instruct and elucidate on Ukrainian folk arts. For this Easter season, director Maria Shust and museum staffers mounted another exquisite showing of pysanky, grouping decorated eggs from each region of Ukraine in separate glass cases. A large case displays pysanky from all regions of Ukraine, with fine strings stretched taut between each egg and its corresponding location on a map of Ukraine outlined on the back wall of the case, clarifying and pointing up the wide diversity of patterns.

Three weekend workshops in March and April provided opportunities for adults and children to learn the art of making pysanky, using dyes, beeswax and a kystka (stylus); a demonstration by experienced artisans Sofia Zielyk of New York and Anna Gbur of Irvington, N.J., ran continuously during museum hours on April 7, together with a showing of Slavko Nowytski's award-winning film "Pysanka." As always, there were special

tours for school groups, and students from the Parsons School of Design who attended several workshops created some very beautiful pysanky.

A late March workshop on Ukrainian Easter traditions, directed by Lubow Wolynetz, with Christina Pevny assisting, offered anyone over the age of 16 a chance to learn about the unique customs and lore of Ukrainian Easter and partake in the hands-on baking of traditional Easter breads.

Ms. Zielyk, currently reading ostrich-egg pysanky for the Ukrainian street festival on May 18-20, led a two-hour pysanka workshop at St. John the Divine Cathedral in upper Manhattan on March 25, teaching the batik-decorating method to a group of fascinated would-be decorators. On April 9, at the invitation of the Ukrainian Students' Club at Pace University, she explained the history, legends and symbols of pysanky and demonstrated her craft for interested Pace University students.

A native New Yorker who learned the traditional craft from her mother, Ms. Zielyk has been accepted as a full-fledged member of the prestigious Association of

Folk Artists of Ukraine. She has been demonstrating her art for years at museums, festivals, craft fairs and department stores and on TV (NBC's "Today" show and ABC's "Home" show, among others). Her Easter eggs are on permanent display at New York's Ukrainian Museum and the Embassy of Ukraine in Washington. A traveling exhibit of 250 Zielyk pysanky has toured throughout Ukraine. Photographs of her work are prominently featured in the books "Festivals of the World: Ukraine" (Times Editions) and "Decorative Eggs" (Crescent Books) as well as in her bilingual book "The Art of the Pysanka," published in Ukraine in 1993.

Farewell to KTI

Skipping from the National Home to The Ukrainian Museum, I was brought up short at 157 Second Ave., the premises of Kobasniuk Travel Inc. I had heard that the travel agency had been closed, but the reality had not seeped in. Seeing the dark, iron-grated windows, the dim interior devoid of movement, brought home the

(Continued on page 16)



Al Seib

Juggler Viktor Kee from Ukraine performs with Cirque du Soleil.

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Spring arrives...

(Continued from page 15)

stark fact. The hand-lettered sign on the door – Travel Agency “ceased” doing business – put the final stamp on the matter. Despite the black-lettered name on the window that reads “Kobasniuk Travel Inc. Est. 1920” and the words below “Air Cruises Tours, Individual & Group Travel Arrangements,” KTI was no longer a viable, living institution.

It is sad to contemplate the end of the 80-year-old Ukrainian institution established by the Kowbasniuk family on the Lower East Side, the third oldest Ukrainian business in the United States. Stephan Kowbasniuk, an immigrant from Kolomyia, and his wife, Stephanie Starzynska Kowbasniuk, both school-teachers, founded the agency in 1920 to provide travel services for the Ukrainian American community. It soon broadened into much more. It became an information center for Ukrainian immigrants, an office that helped with correspondence, translated official documents, handled foreign remittances of funds and offered support and encouragement – a hub of warm humanity to which immigrants gravitated in their need to find knowledgeable, honest and responsible people to guide them.

Vera Kowbasniuk Shumeyko, who said she used to help out as a youngster “by stuffing envelopes and licking stamps, running errands to consulates and entertaining clients in the office by reciting Ukrainian poetry,” became chief executive officer in 1953. She continued her parents’ hard work, skill and dedication, so that the agency achieved an enviable position in the American and international travel and tourist industry. The name Kowbasniuk Travel was streamlined to Kobasniuk Travel, Inc., often referred to as KTI.

The postwar flood of new immigrants to the United States turned Kobasniuk Travel into a center for processing immigration documents, translating records, reuniting families and providing job information. In the early 1960s the agency processed over 15,000 displaced persons applications and more than 70,000 documents from Ukraine and Poland.

Group tours to Ukraine were instituted in 1960, soon growing to 21 a year, enabling tens of thousands of Ukrainians in the United States and Canada to visit their ancestral homeland and meet family members and relatives in Ukraine. With tour groups came the annual tour reunions at Soyuzivka, where hundreds of KTI alumni and tour escorts gathered on a mellow autumn weekend to show slides of their trips and share reminiscences about travel experiences in an atmosphere of music, fun and comfort.

The names and friendly faces of long-time KTI staffers come to mind – office manager Olga Kowbasniuk Stella, tour department manager Barbara Bachynsky, staff members Olya Shuhan, Halia Hirniak and Marta Danyluk, and Mariyka Helbig, who left KTI after several years to start her own successful business, Scope Travel, in New Jersey. These people are still with us, but Anthony Shumeyko, who had joined the company as its insurance broker, died in 1995, and Mrs. Shumeyko passed away last year after a serious illness. Mr. and Mrs. Shumeyko are remembered for their friendliness and warmth and their community dedication, for generous contributions to Ukrainian Churches, the Ukrainian Studies Chair at Harvard, The Ukrainian Museum, Plast, SUM-A, the Ukrainian National Women’s League of America, the School of Bandura in New York and other cultural institutions.

I stood there quietly, wondering: What will happen now with Shumeyko Insurance, which has been operated by Andriy Lastowecky since Mr.

Shumeyko’s death. Who will take over the building, and for what purpose? My reverie was interrupted by a honking car horn, and I resumed my walk solemnly.

Cirque du Soleil

A few days before Easter, I took a trip to the end of the rainbow. Starting at the World Trade Center, I boarded a PATH train headed for New Jersey, traveled through the Hudson River “tubes” and disembarked at Exchange Place in Jersey City, where I transferred to the automated Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Service for a short ride to Liberty State Park station. A five-minute shuttle bus ride brought me to the blue-and-yellow striped tent city that houses the world-renowned Cirque du Soleil’s new live production “Dralion,” a two-hour circus-art spectacle of iridescent-colored costumes, a fantastic metallic-glinting decor, music that is a fusion of sounds from around the world and often thunders with beating drums, and multi-talented performers with a variety of high-caliber acts.

Included among the acts – teeterboard, ballet on lights, hoop diving, bamboo poles, single handbalancing, double trapeze and skipping ropes – is the marvelous skill of a juggler from Ukraine. Viktor Kee is not your common, everyday juggler, keeping a few balls aloft in the air with his hands. A lean, muscular athlete, Mr. Kee gives a breathtaking performance that combines amazing balance and grace with sinuous movement as he juggles balls with his head, his torso and his toes.

Mr. Kee is an Adonis, a matinee idol, a charmer. With his short hair dyed red, and wearing a flesh-toned body suit that makes him appear to be naked except for red knee guards and a matching G-string cover, he rolls around a raised stage like an acrobat, balancing and juggling balls on his head and his back, balancing his whole body on one hand. Finally, when his contortions and juggling come to an end, he drops out of sight through the stage floor with a dramatic swoosh. Watching his performance is worth the price of admission, I feel, even though there are many more acts in this Canadian circus spectacle.

Members say that touring with the circus 52 weeks a year can be a trying existence – it’s moving from city to city, performing the same taxing stunts night after night, keeping the costumes clean and the sets safe. The people who work on the circus operate out of trailers and eat and share apartments together. But there are benefits: the cast and crew are fed three delicious meals daily from Cirque du Soleil’s kitchen, which has five chefs, and they can learn three languages (French, English and Mandarin) free, with Berlitz paid by the circus to go on site.

In addition to Dralion, six other Cirques exist around the world. Fourteen Ukrainian artists are currently touring with Cirques in Japan, Europe and Australia, while another 21 are performing with two permanent Cirque shows in Las Vegas and one permanent show in Orlando, Florida. For the dates of shows, log on to Cirque’s website cirquedusoleil.com.

Dralion opened at Liberty State Park in early April and will run through June 3, moving next to Chicago, with another year of traveling to go. Ticket prices range from \$63 to \$85 for adults and \$43.75 to \$59.50 for children. Information: by phone (800) 678-5440; on the web, cirquedusoleil.com. Travel by car via the Holland Tunnel and the New Jersey Turnpike Extension I-78, follow my route or use the New York Waterway’s ferry service from the World Financial Center in Lower Manhattan (the fastest route), but don’t miss Dralion and Viktor Kee.

Helen Smindak’s e-mail address is HaliaSmindak@aol.com.

Yuschenko government...

(Continued from page 1)

indications that he was satisfied with his prime minister's work. But that changed when he told journalists last week that Mr. Yuschenko must overcome his problems with the Parliament and find the compromises and consensus to continue to govern. That half-hearted backing by the president firmed up support for the ouster attempt among many members of the Labor Ukraine faction who had been wavering.

Mr. Yuschenko said now he expects that before a final vote on his government's future he will be given a chance to cut a deal for ministerial portfolios to accommodate his critics. By law, the prime minister has from five to 10 days to answer political charges and find a compromise before a vote of no confidence can take place. However, the prime minister did not sound hopeful that he could reach an agreement.

"I would say that the chance to do so does not lie with the government," explained Mr. Yuschenko. "I am sure that this government needs to be saved because of its value and effectiveness. But I also believe that it will not be saved. My feeling is that Ukraine and its leaders believe they do not need this type of government."

Mr. Yuschenko has waged a political struggle for the last two months with the three faction leaders who represent the business oligarchs, as well as with Serhii Tyhytko of Labor Ukraine, over their demands that he turn his Cabinet into a coalition government. The lawmakers have threatened to bring down the Cabinet if they are not given a good portion of the portfolios.

Their factions have joined with the Communists, the largest parliamentary caucus, to form a new informal majority to replace an earlier, more traditional center-right coalition that has disintegrated over the tape scandal and the Gongadze affair.

Mr. Yuschenko – who initially had resisted entering into negotiations over the issue, citing the absence of clear laws on the Cabinet of Ministers and parliamentary majority coalitions and their relations – finally succumbed, only to have the talks stall over serious constitutional issues about who could approve an agreement between the new majority and the

government, and what form it should take.

The prime minister has found support among the center-right parties that many politicians, including President Kuchma, blame for destroying the previous majority coalition in the Verkhovna Rada in their attempts to force the president's resignation over his alleged role in the disappearance of journalist Heorhii Gongadze.

Those parties, which include the two Rukhs, the Reforms and Order, Batkivschyna and Sobor parties and the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists failed, however, to solidly back a proposal calling for a positive assessment of the prime minister's economic reform plan. The lack of unity among the pro-Yuschenko lawmakers caused Rada Chairman Ivan Pliusch to mutter that they needed to get more discipline among their cadres.

The effort to put pressure on the Parliament to keep Mr. Yuschenko was highlighted by another petition-gathering effort – this one of supporters of the prime minister, which resulted in 3.4 million signatures. The 50 odd boxes containing the petitions were placed before the Parliament's main rostrum minutes before Prime Minister Yuschenko gave his report to the lawmakers on April 19. As he spoke, another 3,000 or so supporters listened before speakers placed outside the Verkhovna Rada Building.

During his speech Mr. Yuschenko emphasized that 2000 was the most dynamic year of economic development and reform in independent Ukraine's 10-year history. He cited myriad figures to support his attestation, including a 6 percent growth in GDP and 16 percent industrial production growth; the repayment of 1.4 billion hrv in pension and wage arrears; the development of two balanced budgets; energy and agricultural sector reforms; foreign debt restructuring, which allowed Ukraine to avoid bankruptcy; a 53 percent increase in savings in the last year; a 42 percent rise in pensions.

He said that at the moment Ukraine is presented with a choice: "We will either become stronger and our possibilities will improve, or we will fail the test and fall into the abyss."

The vote to oust the prime minister is expected to take place on April 26 if the Verkhovna Rada presidium formally confirms it on April 24, as is expected.

Party, which is the leading supporter of beleaguered Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yuschenko, couldn't resist staying out of the political fray in Kyiv and said that if the prime minister is forced to resign she could not envision returning to Ukraine.

Ms. Gongadze also said that, until someone else is convicted, she would hold President Kuchma responsible for the murder of her husband.

"If the people who have been accused – the president and his entourage – had wanted, then I think this investigation would have been more effective," said Ms. Gongadze, according to Reuters.

She has repeatedly expressed her frustration with Ukrainian government officials over the way she maintains they have dragged their feet and covered up the investigation. She also has complained about being manipulated and refused access to evidentiary materials, which she says she has the right to view because a Kyiv court has extended her "victim" status.

Recently, however, some of the extensive fighting spirit she had shown in the seven months since her husband disappeared seems to have been replaced by a desire to go on with her life. In recent comments made to The Weekly, she said she now cares mostly that she and her twin daughters stop being repeatedly traumatized by the events that continue to swirl around her.

U.S. grants asylum...

(Continued from page 1)

them to Ukraine.

Ukrainian officials, who have desperately sought Mr. Melnychenko since he announced through opposition lawmakers in Ukraine's Parliament that he had in his possession tape recordings made with a digital recorder placed under a couch in the president's office, have charged the former bodyguard with "illegal taping" and "revealing state secrets."

At the beginning of April, the new head of the Security Service of Ukraine Volodymyr Radchenko, expressed concern about the extent of the state secrets the former employee had recorded, and suggested a meeting to simply determine what he knew. Mr. Melnychenko has been in hiding somewhere in Europe since the tape scandal broke. It is not known where he is or whether he has accepted the asylum offer.

Myroslava Gongadze, the 28-year-old wife of the missing reporter today thought to be dead, left Ukraine on the eve of the announcement. She turned up in Warsaw on April 17 where she gave a press conference. She said she still has not decided whether to accept the offer of asylum for herself and her two children.

Ms. Gongadze, who is the press spokesman for the Reforms and Order

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New UNA By-Laws...

(Continued from page 11)

these other officers. To be sure, they wouldn't have to wait four years to fire an officer, but what would be the contract payoff cost and practicality of actually firing the CEO or even one of the other officers? I would not be surprised if the board of directors were to decide to wait until a convention anyway (or at least until contract renewal time) to bring up any serious concerns about a CEO and/or another UNA officer's performance.

Concerns have been raised about certain Executive Committee officers and/or the way that certain dominant cliques or factions have formed throughout many administrations, but even at the four-year intervals when the convention delegates have had the opportunity to make changes, very often change is viewed as unpatriotic.

So, who is responsible for the current problems and concerns of the UNA? We all are. It is complacency at many levels of the organization that can be blamed.

However, it is the leadership that must set an example for the membership to follow. In the same way that the majority of a UNA Executive Committee can run the show and do things its way, it is absolutely the case that the majority of a board of directors also can run the show. There is nothing in the new by-laws proposal that would or could stop that.

The top officers of the UNA must not consider a critic to be an enemy. There is nothing in the new by-laws that, in itself, will change that. Censorship of the press reports, exclusion of the UNA's own press from covering quarterly meetings of the Executive Committee, and the executives' tendency to assume that they know best and that everyone else should just listen and fall into line all have contributed to the UNA being in the situation it is in today. There is nothing in the proposed by-laws that addresses such attitudes. Elected officials forget who elects them much too quickly. The board of directors also is elected. Do we know why the directors' memory of the election should be any different than that of the UNA officers elected the old-fashioned way?

Finally, some executives scold those of us who do or say things that they construe as being damaging to the UNA. However, the executives have been dismantling our fraternal pillars bit by bit for the past decade and more by reducing support for fraternal activities and leaving branch secretaries – many of whom see themselves as without a purpose or means to communicate with their membership because of the new direct-billing system – without anything more than a topical list of ideas, with no clear plan of how to fraternally energize the local membership. If the local membership were fraternally energized in the first place, maybe we would be in better shape today.

We are where we are because of decisions that were made and attitudes that existed or still exist, and they have nothing to do with the type of governance structure we have or should have, or the fact that we directly elect a president, vice-president, national secretary, and so forth. This is a people problem. People have attitudes. People make decisions. If they have bad attitudes or make bad decisions, then the delegates have a right to elect someone else to take their place.

So, will new by-laws ensure better times ahead. Not the way I see it. I wish I could have been convinced otherwise.

We must move forward, but we cannot afford the luxury of time to try out a new way of doing things. We know that it will take time to get this new corporate structure off the ground and working properly – if, indeed, that is ever possible. Just three years ago our UNA president

changed her mind and decided to run for re-election because she felt that it was too critical a time for the UNA to change paths and go with a new leadership. Can we now afford to change paths regarding our governance structure and risk giving away our power to elect those who will be in charge of running the UNA's day-to-day operations at a time when every day counts? If the new by-laws go into effect, after the convention ends you will not know who will be leading the UNA as your chief executive officer; you will not know if the UNA will be able to afford to pay the amount of money that a truly qualified CEO would demand in his or her contract.

It seems to me that my colleague Taras Szmagala Jr. has put a great deal of hard work into drafting the proposed by-laws. He did an amazing job (and continues to do so on the standing committee charged with drafting a plan for the UNA resort, Soyuzivka). However, I feel that it was unfair to place Mr. Szmagala in the position of having to draft the complete by-laws changes that were presented to convention delegates only via mail and the UNA's newspapers – not in person at the convention. If we had been allotted the time at the last convention to have an open and constructive discussion then we would have already known whether we will be electing executive officers or a board of directors a year from now, at the UNA convention in 2002. At the very least the proposed by-laws might have been tailored to address the concerns of the vast majority of the delegates.

As it now stands, it seems that this may prove to have been a tedious exercise that has taken away our attention from the real issues impacting the UNA. And those issues are not whether we change the governance rules as to how the UNA is run, but rather how we can get the UNA back to a positive, healthy prognosis. Our UNA treasurer has been able to do some positive things regarding the UNA's balance sheet – and this was done without any change in the by-laws.

It is people who make or break any organization. However, those people, despite all their good intentions, must be given the tools to do their jobs best. How many of the executives have undergone formal training in executive management? If none of them have such a background, how can they be expected to do things the best way? Does the UNA have a personnel department – or even a personnel manager? Not to my knowledge. So how can we expect to get the most productivity out of our work force and build morale? If management does not understand or know that such things are critical to the success of a corporation, then they need to listen to those who do and to address these matters. If they do know and still do nothing about enhancing their on-the-job effectiveness as managers and also the effectiveness of their work force, then they should be voted out of office. Do the new by-laws require any training for the board of directors members? No.

Let's not use the UNA By-Laws issue any longer as a smokescreen to take attention away from what is really at the heart of it all. Let's ask our UNA leaders what their real plans are for improving the UNA's position in the future. If it's purely through lowering costs, then we will definitely have fraternal atrophy and the organization will not continue to exist for the purpose envisioned by its founding fathers. If we are to prosper by increasing our revenues, then we should know more about such a plan and be told how, this time, we can be any more successful than we have been in the recent past.

That, my fellow UNA members and delegates, is the real issue on which we should be spending our time in discussion and debate.

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President Kuchma...

(Continued from page 2)

No. I only want to look in his eyes, because I don't remember him. To look in his eyes [to see] how they avoid looking in mine. I do not treat such people as humans. You know how he should be called.

By the way, he claims that he swore allegiance not to the president but to Ukraine.

Do not oversimplify. Who swears allegiance personally to President Kuchma? He swore to Ukraine. There is a law. Who swears allegiance to [U.S.] President [George] Bush? There is a law on state protection, and clear-cut duties are written down in it.

Derkach and Kravchenko quit the government, or more precisely, you helped them quit. Are you planning further replacements? There are many rumors in Ukraine that Prime Minister Viktor Yuschenko, [presidential staff head Volodymyr] Lytvyn, [State Tax Administration Chairman Mykola] Azarov, and [Procurator General Mykhailo] Potenko will quit in the same way. The list is very long.

The opposition proposes [its own] list: everybody should quit, the opposition should remain. But I want to ask the opposition: Is it only power that you want? And where is your program of what you want [to do]?

I announced more than once that I'm not going to dismiss Yuschenko. If I had wanted, I would have done this long ago. As for replacements, you know the way Cabinet changes are made: the prime minister makes proposals, we confer on them, then we make decisions. In this way, the minister of fuel and energy was recently replaced.

Surely, there will be replacements in the future as well. But this is a process, a sort of creative process. Some [officials] are unable to cope with what they have to cope with, others see that they are unfit for their jobs and quit the government of their own will. This is a permanent process, even though the change of personnel does not contribute to stability in both politics and economy.

Regarding [former Vice Prime Minister] Yulia Tymoshenko. Only one aspect. Can you imagine a woman ruling the Ukrainian state?

In the near future – no. I proceed from the mentality of Ukrainians. Look at statistics: the attempts of women's parties to win parliamentary seats have failed everywhere. Therefore, I rule out such [a development] for the time being. There is no woman at the Olympus [of Ukrainian politics] who could draw attention to herself with something positive, constructive, with her work, devotion to Ukraine, and not with her own interests.

Mr. President, what foreign trips are you planning? I ask because there is an opinion that many Western countries have closed their doors to you. Your opponents claim that you personally are in isolation.

Absolute nonsense. First, I have [taken] many trips in Ukraine. In June I am to be in Italy at a gathering of the Central European Initiative countries, in Naples. And in the near future – there is a meeting of countries of the Black Sea region in Romania.

Leonid Danylovych, are you planning a trip to the United States?

You know, I don't plan trips to the U.S., it is the U.S. that plans those meetings. I don't think Ukraine is a top priority for the

new U.S. administration. But the foreign minister has already paid a visit there. The defense minister is also scheduled to visit the U.S. There is an absolutely normal dialogue under way.

One more issue, Leonid Danylovych – while taking advantage of your forbearance with us – an important issue ...

I see that you want to do away with me on the birthday of my grandson. (Ed. note: Kuchma addresses the interviewer in second person singular, which is fairly informal, if not unkind, in the Ukrainian language on such occasions.)

No, no, I don't want to...

I will call you on the birthday of my granddaughter. (Ed. note: Again, the address is in second person singular.)

This is a very important issue: Russia and Ukraine. Your opponents voice fears that. ...

And why don't you listen to my supporters, why do you interview only my opponents? My supporters – I want to stress that – outnumber my opponents by thousands to one. Now let us look at who my opponents are. All of them have been asked [previously] to leave the government: ministers, vice prime ministers, and so on.

Leonid Danylovych, you may not believe it, but your supporters do not come to Radio Liberty for some reason, they are either afraid or ignore [the station]. Let them come, and we will gladly listen to them.

All of them will come.

We will listen to them with satisfaction.

I'm speaking seriously. Here is my press secretary sitting beside me, I'll instruct him to get in touch with you. Tell him whom he has to contact, a dialogue will be established without fail.

Very well. Thank you. We are taking you at your word. We will be reminding Mr. [Oleksander] Martynenko (Ed. note: Kuchma's press secretary), Mr. Lytvyn, [Vice-Chairman of Parliament Viktor] Medvedchuk, and everybody else that you urged to come to Radio Liberty.

You're welcome.

Thank you.

I will instruct Lytvyn today, as to Medvedchuk, I can only ask him, because he is from a different power branch.

Still, I have a question. [Some] opponents say Ukraine is losing its independence. Some even claim that you are personally pushing Ukraine into Russia's embrace. Could you say a few words about this?

I can say this is absolutely untrue. Untrue, as regards the loss of independence. I'm convinced today that [Russian President Vladimir] Putin is not pursuing the goal of subordinating Ukraine to himself. They cannot manage it [even] with Belarus, because of economic reasons. Besides, let us put things in their places.

Why should Ukraine – in whose trade turnover Russia's share has fallen to 40 or 39 percent – reject this [cooperation with Russia]? So why does all of Europe want to cooperate with Russia? Tell me, please.

I will tell you. Because both Ukraine and Europe are consuming Russian gas, without which we cannot manage. Russian oil, other Russian raw resources.

(Continued on page 21)

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Pittsburgh professionals elect officers

PITTSBURGH – The Ukrainian Technological Society held its 32nd annual general assembly and elections meeting on Sunday, February 25, at The University Club in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh.

Charles P. Kostecki chaired the meeting and thanked all the members for their support during his last three years as president. The treasurer's report for 2000 was given by Nickolas C. Kotow, and the Auditor's report was made by Bohdan Hryshchshyn. Standing Committee reports were received on the UTS Scholarship Program, the annual dinner-dance, the Ukrainian of the Year Award and the UTS Newsletter. The society created a new Friendship Award in 2000 to recognize significant efforts by non-Ukrainians in support of the Ukrainian community.

The following were elected to serve the society in 2001: president – Ihor Havryluk; vice-president – Debra A.

Walenchok; Secretary – Kristina Kincak; treasurer – Nickolas C. Kotow; immediate past president – Charles P. Kostecki; Executive Board members – Marta Pisetska Farley, Irene K. Grimm, Stephen Haluszczyk, Dr. James G. Huha, Daria Jakubowycz, Mark Jakubowycz, Michael Korchynsky, Karl Skutski, and Olga Perkun; and auditors – Peter G. Hlutkowsky, Bohdan Hryshchshyn, and Ted I. Sywy. The appointed liaison to the Federation of Ukrainian American Business and Professional Associations was Halya S. Polatajko.

President Havryluk set the goals for the society in 2001: leading the Pittsburgh Ukrainian community's plans for celebrating the 10th anniversary of Ukrainian independence in August (initial planning had begun under Mr. Kostecki, who will chair the new anniversary planning committee) and improving the UTS Scholarship Program.

Warren foundation offers scholarships

WARREN, Mich. – The Ukrainian American Center Foundation is now accepting applications for scholarship awards and organizational financial grants for the year 2001.

According to eligibility requirements, student scholarships are awarded to full-time undergraduate students attending accredited colleges and universities and to high school graduates who will be attending institutions of higher learning in this calendar year.

Applicants are judged on the basis of financial need, scholastic performance, involvement in the community (Ukrainian and/or American), and essay evaluation.

Students must be of Ukrainian ancestry and Michigan residents.

Organizational financial grants are awarded to organizations that have valid Ukrainian community objectives. They must be based in Michigan and prove financial need.

The Ukrainian American Center Foundation must receive all completed documents postmarked no later than June 30.

For additional information and application forms contact the Ukrainian American Center Foundation, P.O. Box 1443, Warren, MI 48090-1443, 530 Oxford Ct. Rochester Hills, MI 48307-4527; telephone, (248) 852-1570.

President Kuchma...

(Continued from page 20)

Moreover, [Russia] for Ukraine means a market [for Ukrainian products]. What, are we allowed into Europe [with our products]? Europe is closed for us. So, we should leave Russia. And go where? If one thinks seriously, if one is a serious politician, one cannot put this question in this way.

National interests lie exactly in this. The EU countries are taking exactly the same positions, believe me. Ukraine should have good relations with Russia [for the sake of] regional security, European security and, in general, stability on the European continent. All of us are interested in a stable Russia, all of us without exception, including Europe. So let us proceed from this. I think we will not come back to the Cold War era, even though the EU borders are advancing on us, so to say, every day. Therefore, it is necessary today to realize [the need for] cooperation.

Mr. President, let us return to the cassette case. As a conclusion, could you say a few words about the authenticity of those cassettes?

I will put it in the simplest way. Give me, please, original cassettes. I have no more questions. Give me original cassettes, then I will make conclusions, then conclusions will be made by the organs that can make them. By those that made conclusions regarding the first cassette, where everything was doctored. You know, I haven't listened to the cassettes, and I'm not going to listen to them. Because I said this was a provocation from the very beginning, this is the position I took and will stick to it.

I repeat once again: the material on the

first tapes, which were made public in the Parliament by Moroz, is a gross falsification, an absolute one. Unfortunately, [those recordings] do not include a lot of interesting issues that were discussed in my office and that I can recall. Or conversations with the head of the Verkhovna Rada, with the head of the government and so on. I have doubts all the time as to what is on those cassettes. Besides, I will say once again that Maj. Melnychenko was incapable of taping all that is publicized today. There are some powerful forces that had the possibility to tape that. But again, let us look at the original tapes.

Mr. President, I'd like to thank you for your interview. [As well as] for your consent and the time you devoted to meet with us. And I congratulate your grandson [on his birthday]. I congratulate you and your family. My best wishes.

I'd like to add something as a conclusion. I'm always ready for a dialogue. If some problematic questions appear, I'm ready to give an interview on any topic to any broadcaster, either by the phone or to a journalist beside me. And to answer frankly questions about the events that are taking place, to present my opinion on these events. I think [that following such interviews] there will be much more understanding between the Ukrainian authorities and Radio Liberty, and this means that we will have a broader view in the future.

We sincerely support your idea. Our people from the Kyiv bureau [of RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service] will quite soon contact you, so do not turn them away.

Agreed, I will not turn them away. I'm instructing my press secretary [in this regard].

10 РОКІВ НЕЗАЛЕЖНОСТІ

TOUR I
Aug. 10 - 25

LVIV (3)
Lv. Frankivsk/Saremsha (1)
KARJON/Karjanets Podolsky (1)
ODESA (1)
KHERSON (1)
SYMPEROPOL/Balkhysaray (1)
YALTA (2)
KYIV (5)

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TOUR II
Aug. 20 - Sept. 4

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KARJON/Karjanets Podolsky (1)
ODESA (1)
KHERSON (1)
SYMPEROPOL/Balkhysaray (1)
YALTA (2)

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GROUP B
KYIV/KYIV (3)
POLTAVA (2)
KHERSON/Chyhyryn (2)
ODESA (1)
KHERSON (1)
SYMPEROPOL/Balkhysaray (1)
YALTA (1)



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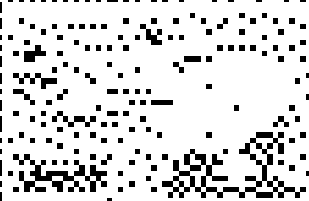
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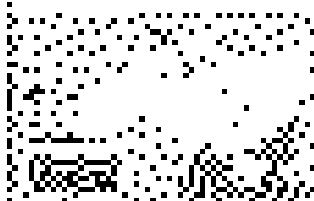
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Ukraine's western... CHAIKA... 10 days...



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Ukraine's eastern... LYBID... 10 days...



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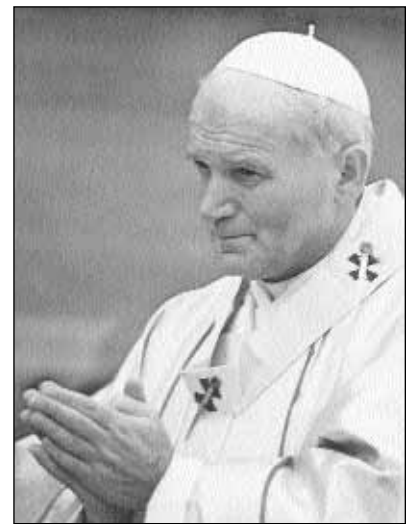
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Western NIS Enterprise Fund relocates to Chicago area

CHICAGO – The Western NIS Enterprise Fund (WNISEF), a \$150 million early-stage private equity fund that invests in small and medium-sized enterprises in Ukraine and Moldova, announced on February 20 that it is relocating its headquarters to the Chicago area from New York City.

The Western NIS Enterprise Fund, capitalized initially by the U.S. government, was created to invest in small and medium-sized companies in Ukraine and Moldova. Since 1995, the fund has committed \$80.5 million to 20 portfolio companies in Ukraine and five in Moldova, which employ close to 11,000 local workers. Both countries were part of the Soviet Union until proclaiming their independence in late 1991.

The fund's move to the Chicago area (the new headquarters is located at 150 N. Martingale Road, Suite 830, in Schaumburg) coincides with its efforts to increase involvement by Chicago and other Midwestern-based businesses and financial organizations in investments in Ukraine and Moldova.

"We view our relocation to Chicago as coming 'home.' Chicago is home to one of the largest Ukrainian communities outside of Ukraine and is the sister city of Ukraine's capital Kyiv," stated WNISEF Executive Vice-President and Chief Investment Officer Natalie Jaresko, herself a Chicago native.

"We want to build upon the tremendous synergies created by the Chicago-Ukraine connection by introducing Chicago-area companies to investment opportunities in the region," stated Ms. Jaresko. "We believe that there are exciting ways for the fund to cooperate with local companies whether it be identifying investment opportunities in Ukraine and Moldova, establishing partnerships with Ukrainian or Moldovan firms, or becoming customers of the fund's portfolio companies."

The fund's 11-member board of directors, which held its first meeting in Chicago on February 6, is chaired by Dennis Johnson, former CEO of St. Paul Bank for Cooperatives, and boasts prominent Chicagoans among its members including Patrick Arbor, former chairman of the Chicago Board of Trade; Jaroslawa Zelinky Johnson, partner, Altheimel & Grey; and Jeffrey Neal, vice-chairman, Investment Banking, Merrill Lynch.

"The 10-year transition of Moldova from government-planned to free market oriented economies has been difficult," Mr. Arbor said. "However, the fund's strategy of capitalizing small private businesses run by entrepreneurs willing to play by internationally accepted business rules is now paying dividends. The fund's investments promote market competition and transparency, enabling these countries to more quickly complete their economic transition and rejoin Europe," he continued. "We anticipate expanding the fund's portfolio in Ukraine and Moldova and will be looking to the Chicago financial and business communities for partnership opportunities."

"The fund's investment strategy has been to identify the best companies operating in the fastest growing sectors of the region's emerging economies," Ms. Jaresko said. "This has brought the fund a strong competitive advantage over other financial investors in Ukraine and Moldova," continued Ms. Jaresko, "and has helped stimulate business growth within each of the fund's portfolio companies."

The Western NIS Enterprise Fund provides portfolio companies with capital and the necessary management tools to evolve from entrepreneurial ventures to profes-

sionally managed companies. The fund's equity investments range from \$1 million to \$7.5 million and are used primarily for restructuring and expansion. In addition, the fund helps implement policies and procedures for good corporate governance and management, and arranges for experienced Western executives to work with local management to prepare and position companies for growth.

Some of the fund's most prominent investments in Ukraine include:

- The fund's portfolio company SBK, a leading facade brick manufacturer that increased sales volume in 2000 by 79 percent, with sales totaling \$3.5 million. Today SBK produces 20 types of construction, facade and special shape bricks used throughout the country.

- The fund's AVK Confectionery, the second largest of Ukraine's 28 chocolate producers, increased sales volume in 2000 by 28 percent and in November, the enterprise launched a new line of elite candies "Talisman."

- The fund's portfolio company "EuroMart," the leading cash-and-carry supermarket chain in Ukraine, attracted additional equity investment from another venture capital fund, enabling the company to strengthen its position as the dominant supermarket chain in Ukraine. With five stores currently operating in the Ukrainian cities of Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Zaporizhia, Euromart plans to expand its retail sites in 2001 by four and expects to open 20 new stores within the next four years.

Ukraine firmly rebounded from the autumn 1998 financial crisis in the region and last year posted a 6 percent rise in gross domestic product over the previous year. Moldova posted a 1.9 percent rise in GDP last year.

Ukraine's food processing industry, a growing sector of the country's emerging market economy and a focus of the fund's early investments posted an annual growth rate of 26.5 percent, while retail sales rose 6.9 percent compared to the previous year.

In 2001, the fund will expand its investment strategy to the information and technology industry, which is forecast to be a growth industry in the region. As improvements in the economies of Ukraine and Moldova continue and the governments' attention to fostering new business development expands, the fund will continue to add value to its portfolio companies to sustain their strong and continuing growth.

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Newsbriefs

(Continued from page 2)

Oleksander Moroz as the head of government. Russian analysts believe that the United States is an "ideological inspirer of Ukrainian extremists" and that the current protests in Ukraine are being financed by Washington. Messrs. Turchynov and Moroz commented that the news about the planned killings is a provocation. Mr. Moroz suggested that it may have originated among President Kuchma's "image makers." (RFE/RL Newsline)

Prosecutor says tapes include state secret

KYIV – Deputy Procurator General Oleksii Bahanets said on April 12 that recordings made by Maj. Mykola Melnychenko, a former presidential bodyguard, include a state secret, Interfax reported. "A part of these recordings includes a state secret, while another part deals with confidential information that cannot be publicized," Mr. Bahanets told journalists. It is not clear whether Mr. Bahanets' statement is tantamount to an official acknowledgment that the Melnychenko tapes are authentic. The official added that the tapes will now be subjected to a "phonoscopic analysis." The Internet newsletter Ukrainska Pravda suggested that experts will now be trying to find whether Mr. Melnychenko doctored the tape to include a state secret on it or whether this secret was revealed by President Leonid Kuchma or one of his interlocutors. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Falling crane shuts Rivne N-plant

KYIV – A construction crane fell on two transformers at Ukraine's Rivne nuclear power plant on April 11, forcing the plant to shut down, officials in Kyiv said. According to the duty engineer at the Rivne power plant, nobody was hurt in the incident and there was no increase in radiation. An inves-

tigation has started into the crane's sudden collapse. (United Press International)

Ukraine agrees to restrict pipe exports

MOSCOW – After a 10-hour meeting with Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasianov on April 10-11, Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yuschenko agreed to restrict the export of Ukrainian metal pipes to Russia without the imposition of anti-dumping quotas, ITAR-TASS reported. Mr. Kasianov said that Russian producers will recover their losses from such imports during 2001. Mr. Yuschenko also said that Ukraine agrees to a "zero option" approach to the division of Soviet-era assets and liabilities, the Russian news agency said. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Ivan Pliusch is hospitalized

KYIV – Verkhovna Rada Chairman Ivan Pliusch's health is "progressively improving," but he will continue to be hospitalized over the Easter holidays, Interfax reported on April 11, quoting a hospital official. Mr. Pliusch was hospitalized on March 2 and diagnosed as suffering from radiculitis, the inflammation of the root of a spinal nerve. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Ukraine, Hungary confer on floods

KYIV – Prime Minister Viktor Yuschenko and his Hungarian counterpart Viktor Orban agreed in Uzhhorod on April 9 to set up a group of experts to work out a plan to prevent and fight floods in the Carpathian region. UNIAN quoted Mr. Yuschenko as saying that both sides also agreed to organize a joint battalion by October 1 to deal with consequences caused by natural and man-made disasters. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Ukraine's foreign minister in Slovakia

BRATISLAVA – Visiting Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Anatolii Zlenko on

April 9 told journalists after meeting his Slovak counterpart, Eduard Kukan, that they had discussed, among other things, "minimizing the consequences" of Slovakia's expected accession to the European Union on bilateral relations between the two countries. Mr. Kukan said that after the accession "it is possible that the Schengen border will extend to the border with Ukraine. We take that into consideration and we want that border to be a modern, European one, not to harm bilateral relations and cooperation." Mr. Zlenko professed surprise at the Slovak position. The two ministers also discussed the planned construction of a gas pipeline from Russia through Ukraine, a project in which Slovakia has said it is interested in participating and investing. Mr. Zlenko was also received by President Rudolf Schuster and Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda, CTK reported. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Kyiv to support Slovakia's Ukrainians

BRATISLAVA – Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Anatolii Zlenko on April 10 promised moral as well as financial assistance to Ukrainians living in Slovakia, CTK reported. Michal Kalinak, a representative of the Ukrainian minority, said Ukraine should particularly subsidize the minority press, publishers and cultural associations. Mr. Zlenko, who was on a two-day visit to Slovakia, was accompanied by 30 Ukrainian businessmen seeking to boost business cooperation between the two countries. TASR reported that Ukraine's current share of Slovakia's foreign trade is only 1.3 percent. (RFE/RL Newsline)

CPJ supports Gongadze relatives' request

NEW YORK – The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has recently become aware that Myroslava Gongadze, Lesia Gongadze and their lawyers have filed a request with the Pechersk raion court to obtain full access to the Pechersk raion

procuracy's autopsy and forensic reports on the body discovered in Tarascha. "The Committee to Protect Journalists fully supports the initiative taken by Miroslava Gongadze, Lesia Gongadze and their lawyers to obtain full access to the government's autopsy and forensic reports on the body discovered in Tarascha," said Alex Lupis, Europe and Central Asia Coordinator for the Committee to Protect Journalists. "The government's highly politicized investigation into the corpse found in Tarascha has only obstructed the truth surrounding the disappearance of Heorhii Gongadze. We believe that the government would be taking a positive first step by releasing all of these reports to Miroslava Gongadze, Lesia Gongadze and their lawyers." (Committee to Protect Journalists)

Kuchma suggests moving on beyond crisis

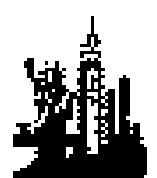
KYIV – President Leonid Kuchma called the political crisis in Ukraine a "well-planned action" and added that the country needs "to move on." Asked about the drop in Ukraine's image abroad due to the audiotape scandal and the purported murder of independent journalist Heorhii Gongadze, Mr. Kuchma said: "There is nothing to comment about, we need to stand up and go on." (RFE/RL Newsline)

President doubts Tymoshenko's abilities

KYIV – In a telephone interview with RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service on April 3, President Leonid Kuchma said he does not believe that former Vice Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, now his staunch opponent, can lead Ukraine. "I rule that out as of now. There is no woman on the Olympus [of Ukrainian politics] who could attract attention with positive ideas, with a constructive position, with her work, with her devotion to Ukraine, and not with her own interests," Mr. Kuchma told RFE/RL. (RFE/RL Newsline)



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PREVIEW OF EVENTS

(Continued from page 28)

titled "Magic Space In-Between: Works on Canvas and Paper" will be presented by Studio Montclair Inc. at the Montclair Public Library as part of the Meet the Artist Series. An opening reception will be held on Friday, May 4, at 6-8 p.m., with a slide presentation by the artist at 7 p.m. Admission to the event is free. The exhibit will be on view at the Montclair Public Library Gallery, 50 S. Fullerton Ave., from May 2 until May 26. For further information call Sharon Douglas at the library, (973) 744-0500 ext. 224, or see the artist's website at <http://members.home.net/aisaiev/>

Saturday, May 5

CLEVELAND: The Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus (UBC), conducted by Oleh Mahlay, will present a "Concert of Sacred Music" at Holy Family Catholic Church of Parma, Ohio, at 8 p.m. (Holy Family is located at 7367 York Road, near Pleasant Valley.) The concert, part of a sacred music series, will feature the mystical sounds of Eastern Europe's finest church music, including works by Berezovsky, Dyletsky and Bortniansky, along with the sounds of the bandura. Admission: free-will offering. For more information call (440) 915-4127 or visit the website www.bandura.org.

LOS ANGELES: The Ukrainian-produced film "The Undefeated," directed by Oles Yanchuk and starring Hryhoriy Hladiy, will be screened at the University of California at Los Angeles at the Melnitz Hall theater (northeast section of the campus) at 2 p.m. The film deals with a segment of modern Ukrainian history, focusing on the life of Roman Shukhevych, the intrepid general who led the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) from 1942 to 1950. The screening is jointly sponsored by the Ukrainian Students' Club at UCLA, the Hollywood Trident Network and the Ukrainian Culture Center. Tickets, which may be purchased at the door, are \$10; \$5, students.

Wednesday, May 11

TORONTO: The University of Toronto is pleased to announce the Danylo H. Struk Memorial Lecture, which will be delivered by Prof. George G. Grabowicz, Dmytro Cyzevskyi Professor of Ukrainian Literature, Harvard University, titled "Taras Shevchenko as a National Poet: A Comparison with Pushkin and Mickiewicz." The lecture will be held at University College, Room 140, at 7 p.m. It will be followed by a reception at the Croft Chapter House, University College, Room 183. Admission to the lecture and reception is free.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Sunday, May 20

MINNEAPOLIS: As their season finale, the Ukrainian American Youth Association Cheremosh Dance Ensemble will present a concert of Ukrainian folk dances that capture the spirit of Ukraine. The concert, featuring the ensemble's 71 dancers, will be held at the Ukrainian Community Center, 301 Main St. NE., at 4 p.m. Admission: \$7, adults; \$5, children age 12 and younger. For more information call (612) 379-1956, or e-mail minneapolis@cym.com

Wednesday-Sunday, June 20-24

PHOENIX, Ariz.: The 36th Scientific Convention and the 29th Assembly of Delegates of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America (UMANA) will take place at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa in Phoenix. A continuing medical education course will be presented for physicians, with Category I credit applied for attendance. The hotel, dubbed the "Jewel of the Desert," is characterized as having Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced design; it offers many activities for both adventure-some and sedate travelers. All interested medical professionals and their families are invited to attend. Deadline: May 1. For more information, call 1-888-RX-UMANA.



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Breakfast available at Main House Dining Room, served from 8 to 10 a.m.

Delight in hiking, antique shopping and other fun activities

BBQ at the Veselka Patio, 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Happy Hour in the Trembita Lounge, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. * All drinks discounted *

Dinner available at Main House Dining Room, served from 6 to 8 p.m.

10 p.m. - Dance featuring a Soyuzivka debut of VECHIRKA - \$10 at the door

SATURDAY

Breakfast available at Main House Dining Room, served from 8 to 10 a.m.

Spend your afternoon at a winery or visiting local boutiques

BBQ at the Veselka Patio, 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Happy Hour in the Trembita Lounge, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. * All drinks discounted *

Dinner available at Main House Dining Room, served from 6 to 8 p.m.

10 p.m. - Dance featuring FATA MORGANA - \$10 at the door

MONDAY

Savor morning coffee and danish in the Main House lobby from 8 to 10 a.m.

Brunch in the Main House Dining Room from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The students of St. Vladimir's College in Roblin, Manitoba, as part of their annual promotion-of-the-school-tour, will be performing at concerts in the following cities:

- **Flin Flon, Manitoba** – Wednesday, May 2, at 7 p.m., at the R.H. Channing Auditorium;
- **Pas, Manitoba** – Thursday, May 3, at 7:30 p.m., at the Mary Duncan School.

In addition, the students will sing Masses:

- **Pas, Manitoba** – Friday, May 4, at 9 a.m., at the Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church, 78 1st Street;
- **Russel, Manitoba** – Sunday, May 6, at 9 a.m., at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church;
- **Russel, Manitoba** – Sunday, May 6, at 11 a.m., at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church Hall – a Mini-Concert.

We encourage all parents and their children to attend these performances. Your attendance will not only support the honest efforts of these talented young Ukrainian students, but will help you consider St. Vladimir's College as the school of choice for your children's future High School education.

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PREVIEW OF EVENTS

Wednesday-Friday, April 25-27

NEW YORK: World Information Transfer Inc. will hold its 10th international conference titled "Health and Environment – Global Partners for Global Solution," at the United Nations headquarters. The conference is co-sponsored by the governments of Ukraine and Greece, and in collaboration with the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. The April 26 all-day session is dedicated to the 15th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The afternoon session on Wednesday, April 25, will cover a range of topics on health and globalization; the morning session on Friday, April 27, will focus on youth and media. The conference is free of charge; pre-registration is required. Contact World Information Transfer Inc., 451 Park Ave., S., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016; telephone, (212) 686-1996; fax, (212) 686-2172; e-mail: wit1986@aol.com. Separate lunch registration (at the UN Delegates Dining Room), April 26-27, at \$75 per lunch. For the registration with CCRF in Short Hills, N.J. call (973) 258 9464 or fax (973) 376-4988.

Thursday-Friday, April 26-27

CLEVELAND: Ukrainian cimbalist Alexander Fedoriouk will perform in concert with the East European folk band Harmonia at INSIDE gallery, 2393 Professor Ave., at 8 p.m. to mark the release of his CD, "Cimbalom Traditions." The new album features performances of traditional music from a variety of East European cultures – Ukrainian, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, Rusyn, Moldovan and Gypsy. Copies of the CD will be available for purchase at the show. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the concert begins at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$15, adults; \$10, students. For reservations or additional information, call (216) 281-8727 or e-mail mahovlich@juno.com. Reservations are highly recommended.

MATAWAN, N.J.: Ukrainian National Women's League of America Branch 98 of Holmdel-Middletown, is sponsoring a panel discussion titled "Trafficking in Women in Our Backyard" to be held at 171 Main St. (rear of building) at 7:30 p.m. NCB's "Dateline" video, with Maria Shriver as commentator, will be shown. Guest panelist will be Bozhena Olshaniwsky. Due to limited seating, for reservations call Ms. Jacus, (732) 264-8820, or Ms. Mischenko (732) 671-1914.

Saturday, April 28

NEW YORK: "Music at the Institute" presents "Reconstructing Beethoven," with Jeffrey Solow, cellist, Mykola Suk, pianist and the Temple University Viola Quintet – Gabriela Mandescu, violin, Veronica Pellegrini, violin, Sorin Guttman, viola, Braunwin Sheldrick, viola, and Sachino Tsinadze, cello. The concert will be held at the Ukrainian Institute of America, 2 E. 79th

St., at 8 p.m. The concert is sponsored by Tania Krawciw and the Ukrainian Institute of America. Donation: \$20; UIA members, \$15; senior citizens and students, \$10. For additional information call the institute, (212) 288-8660, or (973) 763-5730.

Saturday, April 28

NEW YORK: The Shevchenko Scientific Society is holding a presentation by Dr. Olexander Ponomariv, Kyiv University, on the state of orthography in present-day Ukraine. The presentation will be held at the society's building, 63 Fourth Ave. (between Ninth and 10th streets), at 4 p.m. For additional information call (212) 254-5130.

NEW YORK: The Ukrainian Medical Association of North America Metro chapter will hold its general meeting at the Ukrainian Institute of America, 2 E. 79th St. (corner of Fifth Avenue) at 5 p.m. Agenda will include election of officers and review of proposed chapter activities. Refreshments will follow. For further information call Dr. Lesia Kushnir, (860) 567-0490, or e-mail tadsend@attglobal.net.

Sunday, April 29

CARTERET, N.J.: The United Organizations of Carteret, N.J., will commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster with a memorial liturgy to be celebrated at 8:30 a.m. at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church, 719 Roosevelt Ave., followed by a short program, including a film screening, with guest speaker Oles Kuzma of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund.

NEW YORK: The Shevchenko Scientific Society will hold the third in a series of workshops on current Ukrainian orthography geared for teachers, editors, writers, translators as well as students of Slavic studies. The workshop, conducted by Prof. Oleksandr Ponomariv of Kyiv University, will be held at the society's building, 63 Fourth Ave. (between Ninth and 10th streets), at 5 p.m. For additional information call (212) 254-5130.

Monday, April 30

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.: The Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute will present a lecture by Ivanna Ibragimova of the Ukrainian Academy of Public Administration, Office of the President of Ukraine. The lecture, titled "Administrative Reform in Ukraine: Political Will and Reality," will be held in the institute seminar room, 1583 Massachusetts Ave., at 4-6 p.m. For more information contact the institute, (617) 495-4053.

Friday, May 4

MONTCLAIR, N.J.: An art exhibit and slide presentation by Alexandra Isaevych

(Continued on page 27)

PLEASE NOTE REQUIREMENTS:

Preview of Events is a listing of Ukrainian community events open to the public. It is a service provided at minimal cost (**\$10 per submission**) by The Ukrainian Weekly to the Ukrainian community. Payment must be received prior to publication.

To have an event listed in Preview of Events please send information, in English, written in Preview format, i.e., in a brief paragraph that includes the date, place, type of event, sponsor, admission, full names of persons and/or organizations involved, and a phone number to be published for readers who may require additional information. Items should be no more than 100 words long; all submissions are subject to editing. Items not written in Preview format or submitted without all required information will not be published.

Preview items must be received no later than one week before the desired date of publication. No information will be taken over the phone. Items will be published only once, unless otherwise indicated. Please include payment of \$10 for each time the item is to appear and indicate date(s) of issue(s) in which the item is to be published. Also, please include the phone number of a person who may be contacted by The Weekly during daytime hours. Information should be sent to: Preview of Events, The Ukrainian Weekly, 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.