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\$1/\$2 in Ukraine

Rep. Schaffer introduces bill to lift Jackson-Vanik restrictions on Ukraine

WASHINGTON — Rep. Bob Schaffer (R-Colo.) on March 13 introduced legislation (H.R. 3953) in the House of Representatives to permanently lift U.S. government trade restrictions against Ukraine. Supported by several business and trade organizations engaged in commerce with Ukraine, the legislation is associated with a similar bill involving trade with Russia.

"It is well-documented that Ukraine has made as much progress as Russia in the area of open emigration policies," noted Michael Bleyzer, president of SigmaBleyzer, the largest equity investor in Ukraine. "Ukraine is on an irreversible and accelerating course towards market economy and democracy," he added.

H.R. 3953 graduates Ukraine from Jackson-Vanik restrictions, which prohibit the United States from establishing trade relations with countries that do not allow their citizens to freely emigrate. Specifically, the bill recognizes Ukraine's "substantial progress" in the area of human rights, as well as Ukraine's cooperation in the "global struggle against international terrorism."

"The graduation of Ukraine from Jackson-Vanik at this crucial stage of its post-Soviet development will be a powerful

sign "that the U.S. government and the U.S. business community fully recognize, appreciate and support Ukraine's commitment towards guaranteeing fundamental human rights and preventing racial, ethnic and religious intolerance," said Jorge Zukoski, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine.

The bill gives the president the power to extend "non-discriminatory treatment (normal trade relations) to the products of Ukraine," effectively terminating the application of Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974 against the former Soviet republic. The bill is part of a larger move toward normalizing trade relations with the Commonwealth of the Independent States.

"Since gaining independence in 1991, Ukraine has made the kind of progress required for a stable democracy with a free-market economy," Rep. Schaffer said. "Though Ukraine faces several unanswered economic challenges, it's time to lift the trade restrictions against this friend of the United States."

Rep. Schaffer is a co-chairman of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus.

For a related news story on Ukrainian American and Jewish American groups' discussions on the removal of the Jackson-Vanik restrictions, see page 6.

OSCE observers file complaint of election law violation in Ukraine

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — Official election observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) filed a complaint of a breach of election law with Ukraine's Central Election Commission on March 11, charging the government's main television network, UT-1, with limiting political advertising on its airwaves during the campaign period to a single political organization.

The action came a little more than two weeks prior to elections to Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada, with the run-up entering the home stretch and polls showing that support for Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine election bloc among voters is continuing to increase.

CEC Chairman Mykhailo Riabets said the complaint filed by the OSCE did not specify the political organization, except to state that "only one bloc" has had access to airtime.

OSCE observers made the charges the day Adrian Severin, the president of its

Parliamentary Assembly, arrived in Kyiv to meet with Ukrainian officials, leading candidates and political leaders and get a first-hand look at the election process.

During a press conference on the final day of his three-day visit, Mr. Severin avoided commenting on the specifics of the complaint. He did, however, acknowledge that the OSCE had heard serious allegations and had legitimate concerns about whether the March 31 elections to Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada would be free and fair.

Mr. Severin, a Romanian who said in Kyiv that he has Ukrainian roots, expressed concern over mistrust in the election process and the large degree of skepticism voiced by some candidates as to whether the elections would be truly free and fair.

"We are urging all those involved in the elections to assure a balanced exposure to the media for all candidates," said Mr. Severin. "We also think that one should refrain from using administrative

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Astronaut Stefanyshyn-Piper named to shuttle mission in 2003

PARSIPPANY, N.J. — Cmdr. Heidemarie M. Stefanyshyn-Piper (U.S. Navy), who completed NASA's astronaut training program in April of 1998, has been assigned to a space shuttle mission now scheduled for April 2003, and thus will become the first Ukrainian American to fly in space.

Cmdr. Stefanyshyn-Piper, 39, was named to the six-member crew of the STS-115 mission, led by veteran shuttle commander Brent W. Jett Jr. (commander-select, U.S. Navy). Cmdr. Jett's crew also includes his pilot, Christopher J. Ferguson (commander, U.S. Navy), who will make his first flight into space, and veteran astronauts Joseph R. Tanner, Daniel C. Burbank (commander, U.S. Coast Guard) and Steven G. MacLean, Ph.D., (Canadian Space Agency). The mission will deliver and attach the second port truss segment to the International Space Station.

The announcement of the STS-115 crew came on February 26; also named was the crew for STS 116, also scheduled for 2003.

Cmdr. Stefanyshyn-Piper was named an astronaut candidate by NASA in April

1996, and reported to the Johnson Space Center that August. She then completed two years of training and evaluation, after which she was qualified and was eagerly awaiting a flight assignment on either the space shuttle, or the International Space Station as a mission

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Cmdr. Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper

Various polls show Yushchenko's bloc in the lead

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

KYIV — Most Ukrainian pollsters released their final prognoses for the elections to the Verkhovna Rada on March 14, which showed that the Our Ukraine election bloc has continued to gather popularity among voters and slowly has moved away from its nearest competitor, the Communist Party of Ukraine.

While there still are two weeks left before the March 31 parliamentary elections, Ukrainian law demands that a polling blackout begin on March 16. The final surveys showed that six to 10 parties had a chance to gather at least 4 percent of the electoral vote and win seating allotments in the 450-member Verkhovna Rada. They also showed that, even with government and media resources at their disposal, the two most powerful political organizations, the For a United Ukraine Bloc and the Social Democratic Party (United), still have managed to obtain only between 5 and 8.5 percent electoral support.

One of the most respected polls, prepared by the Razumkov Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies, found that 23.9 percent of 2,010 respondents questioned favored Our Ukraine.

The Communist Party came next in the poll at 16.8 percent, with the Social Democratic Party (United) following at 8 percent. After them came the For a United Ukraine bloc at 7 percent, the Green Party (Partia Zelenykh Ukrainy) at 5.5 percent and the Union of Women for the Future at

4.1 percent. The Razumkov Center poll, with a margin of error of 2.3 percent, showed that the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, the Democratic Party/Democratic Union, the Unity Bloc and the Yabluko Party still have a chance to surpass the 4 percent barrier.

Our Ukraine, led by ex-Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, looked strongest in a poll conducted by the SOCIS Center for Political and Electoral Studies and commissioned by Democratic Initiatives, a Ukrainian civic organization. It showed Our Ukraine performing at an approval rating of 25.3 percent popular support. The Communist Party came in a distant second at 12.5 percent, followed by the For a United Ukraine bloc in third at 7 percent, Women for the Future next at 6.2 percent and the Social Democratic Party (United) at 5.7 percent.

The survey had a 3 percent margin of error, which means that the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc at 3.7 percent and the Green party at 3.1 percent also had a chance to break through.

A third poll, this one by the Center for Social Monitoring and the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research, gave an indication as to the rating tendencies of the various political organizations over the last several months. It determined that the popularity of the Our Ukraine Bloc had fallen from a peak rating of 25.2 percent at the end of February to 21.3 percent in the second week of March. However, the poll

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ANALYSIS

Gender issues hijacked by "party of power"

by **Taras Kuzio**
RFE/RL Newsline

The authorities have manifested a clear policy to only allow one women's and one "green" party linked to the "party of power" to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections on March 31. The Party of Greens of Ukraine (PZU) and Women for the Future are both financed by Vasyl Khmelnytskyi, No. 3 on the PZU's election list and the director of the Zaporizhstal plant, who has close ties to First Lady Liudmyla Kuchma.

In February, the Central Election Commission annulled its previous decision to register the alternative Women of Ukraine party and the Raiduha (Rainbow) green election bloc, and forced Larysa Skoryk's Women for the Future of Children party to re-register as the All Ukrainian Party of Interethnic Understanding.

In the late Soviet era, fixed quotas ensured that one-half of the seats in local councils and a third of the seats in Ukraine's Supreme Soviet (on Council) were allocated to women. In Ukraine's three Parliaments elected in 1990, 1994 and 1998, female representation initially declined but then slightly increased from 2.9 to 4.6 to its current 8 percent. But it still lags far behind that of the Soviet and Gorbachev eras. Nevertheless, women's issues continue to remain marginal to the concerns of mainstream politicians in Ukraine.

In the March 1998 parliamentary elections, only one party – the All Ukrainian Party Women's Initiative – campaigned on a gender platform. Its result of 0.58 percent of the vote placed it 22nd on the list of 30 blocs and parties competing in that ballot.

In contrast, Women for the Future, one of two election groups in the current election campaign with a gender platform, has

scored far more impressive results in opinion polls, which have averaged between 6 and 7 percent. These figures suggest that the group will easily pass the 4 percent voting barrier to qualify for the distribution of 225 seats contested under a proportional system. According to a January poll by the Ukrainian Institute for Social Studies, 10 percent of women and 2 percent of men will vote for Women for the Future.

Of Ukraine's 130 registered political parties, five are devoted to women's issues. Women's Initiative, registered in October 1997, is the oldest of the five. It is also the only party based outside Kyiv, in Kharkiv. Three others are also small parties – the Women's Party of Ukraine (registered in March 1997), the Women's Peoples Party United (September 1998) and the Solidarity with Women Party (December 1999).

Women for the Future's rise to third place in popularity among the 36 election blocs and parties has been meteoric. Its registration on March 30 of last year was suspiciously just one day before the deadline for parties to be registered for the March 31 parliamentary elections of 2002. Within less than a year, Women for the Future has managed to attract 360,000 members in 500 branches – an impressive figure when compared to the Communist Party's 140,000 members.

Women for the Future is led by individuals with ties to the former Soviet Ukrainian nomenklatura and to Leonid Kuchma when he was prime minister in 1992-1993. According to Alexandra Hrycak, a Western expert on gender issues in Ukraine, the ideology of Women for the Future is Soviet and not in tune with gender issues and the women's rights movement in the West. Women for the Future

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Greens, oligarchs and elections

by **Taras Kuzio**
RFE/RL Newsline

Of Ukraine's 130 registered parties, seven claim to be "green." These include the All-Ukrainian Chernobyl People's Party (registered in October 1998), the Green Ecological Party (February 2001), the Green Party of Ukraine, the Ecological Party, the Ecological Party Defense (all in March 2001) and the Green Party – 21st Century (April 2001).

Six of Ukraine's seven green parties have little influence in comparison to the oldest, the Party of Greens of Ukraine (PZU), which was registered far ahead of the others on May 24, 1991. Until its electoral success in 1998, the ZPU faced little competition from other greens, but another five green parties were registered between the winter of 2000 and the spring of 2001.

The greens underwent a similar process that took place within other Ukrainian political parties. In 1994-1998, some centrist and national democratic parties were gradually taken over by oligarchs who needed to convert their newly found economic clout back into political influence. After the PZU and the National Democratic Party (NDP) were taken over by them, those members of both parties who stayed loyal to their original pre-oligarch ideology left to create other parties or join existing ones. Those non-oligarchic parties have joined the Our Ukraine or Yulia Tymoshenko blocs, while the PZU and NDP support the oligarchs and Kuchma.

Taras Kuzio is a research associate at the Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Toronto.

Of the 34 parties and blocs originally registered for the election campaign, only two are green, and both are supported by competing oligarchs. The Raiduha (Rainbow) election bloc included the Ecological Party of Ukraine Defense and is financed by Vadym Rabynovych, an oligarch who was recently accused of acting as a middleman in the sale of Ukrainian tanks to the Taliban in the mid-1990s. Mr. Rabynovych holds dual Israeli-Ukrainian citizenship, is the head of one of two competing Jewish organizations in Ukraine, and is persona non grata in the United States. The title of this bloc is also meant to appeal to the gay community, whose international flag is made up of the colors of the rainbow.

Mr. Rabynovych went ahead and created his own election bloc after falling out with the PZU, which he helped to finance in its successful return to Ukrainian politics in the March 1998 parliamentary elections. In an interview in August 2001 in Stolichnye Novosti, a newspaper funded by Mr. Rabynovych, Ukrainian Ambassador to Canada Yuri Shcherbak initially toyed with the idea of heading the Rainbow coalition as an alternative green bloc to the PZU. Dr. Shcherbak founded the Green World Association in 1986 and was the first head of the PZU, which he now accuses of having betrayed green ideology. Mr. Rabynovych and Dr. Shcherbak have known each other since the early 1990s, when the latter was Ukraine's first ambassador to Israel.

On February 20, the Central Election

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NEWSBRIEFS**Election in Ukraine subject of TV link**

WASHINGTON – U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said in a live television link between Washington and Kyiv on March 4 that the United States is watching Ukraine's election campaign very carefully in order to assess "whether Ukraine will show in a clear way that it is ready to be a member of the international community of democratic states," 1+1 Television reported. Dr. Rice suggested that the further improvement of U.S.-Ukrainian relations is dependent on whether the election will be fair and democratic. She also rejected a Ukrainian journalist's suggestion that Washington is trying to influence the Ukrainian election campaign in an effort to place pro-U.S. politicians in government. In answer to a question about a possible meeting between U.S. President George W. Bush and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, Dr. Rice said such a possibility will be considered by Washington after the election, provided that "there is an opportunity to move the U.S.-Ukrainian relations forward." Dr. Rice also said the U.S. is interested in seeing the completion of the investigation into journalist Heorhii Gongadze's murder, adding that a team of FBI experts will arrive in Ukraine in April to assist the investigation. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Blocs to conduct alternate vote count

KYIV – The Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine, and the Socialist Party headed by Oleksander Moroz have pooled their efforts to organize an alternate vote count in the March 31 parliamentary election, UNIAN reported on February 27. The news was communicated to journalists in Kharkiv by Ms. Tymoshenko, who said the collection of the officially confirmed voting results from polling stations will allow the three blocs to announce election results ahead of the Central Election Commission and, in this way, "to prevent [the commission] from falsifying the results as they did in the past election." Ms. Tymoshenko added that one should expect falsification of election results primarily from the For a United Ukraine bloc, which has 0 percent support among voters but will obtain 10 to 12 percent of the vote "owing to compulsion and force [applied to] people." (RFE/RL Newsline)

HIV spreads alarmingly in Ukraine

WASHINGTON – An editor's note in the American Journal of Public Health (AJPH) on "The Global Spread of HIV" noted that an epidemic in former Soviet

countries may be imminent. The article cites The New York Times of January 23, which reported: "Ukraine is a case in point. While HIV is still spreading fastest via shared needles and sex work, there has been a clear shift to the larger population." AJPH Editor-in-Chief Mary Northridge, Ph.D., M.P.H., added: "Health officials are alarmed by the inability of the cash-strapped government to rein in the spread of HIV despite relatively progressive policies, including using police officers to hand out syringes to injection drug users. The moment to act is now as HIV bores deeper into the Ukrainian population." (American Journal of Public Health)

A warning about "dead souls"

KYIV – The Our Ukraine election bloc has warned that the authorities may take advantage of some 1.5 million "dead souls" to rig the March 31 parliamentary election, UNIAN reported on March 9. Our Ukraine campaign chief Petro Poroshenko noted that, according to official data, there are currently 38 million eligible voters in Ukraine. "This is strange, since such a figure was cited at both the previous parliamentary [1998] and presidential [1999] elections," Mr. Poroshenko commented, adding that last year's census showed that Ukraine's population has "considerably" decreased over the past years. According to Mr. Poroshenko, the number of voters may have decreased by as many as 1.5 million. He noted that the authorities may rig the vote by adding votes to the "party of power" from the cadre of 1.5 million "dead souls." (RFE/RL Newsline)

TV slams Our Ukraine's campaign ...

KYIV – ICTV Television on March 6 accused the Our Ukraine election bloc led by former Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko of planning reprisals in the event it wins the March 31 ballot. "The bloc's campaign has developed two new trends: threats and intimidation," ICTV presenter Dmitrii Kiselev told viewers. The station then broadcast a report from the campaign rally of Our Ukraine's candidate Roman Zvarych in Ivano-Frankivsk that showed Mr. Zvarych saying, "the bloc of Viktor Yushchenko will present an ultimatum to the president and those concerned that the districts where we won over 50 percent should be governed by our people." A correspondent added: "This is what awaits voters after the election." ICTV is part owned by Viktor Pinchuk, an election candidate of the pro-government For a United Ukraine

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INTERVIEW: Kateryna Chumachenko Yushchenko on life in Ukraine, and as a politician's wife

Kateryna Chumachenko Yushchenko, wife of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko, was born in America, but considers Ukraine her homeland. Mrs. Yushchenko was interviewed for *The Ukrainian Weekly* by free-lance journalist Vasyl Zorya of Kyiv.

Last week, in the first part of this two-part interview, Mrs. Yushchenko spoke on such topics as how she identifies herself, how she made the move to Ukraine, and differences between Ukrainian Americans and Ukrainians. The conclusion of the interview follows.

(Readers will note that the family's surname, previously rendered in this newspaper as "Yuschenko," in accordance with the official transliteration system adopted by the government of Ukraine, now appears as "Yushchenko." According to Mrs. Yushchenko, this is the correct spelling.)

CONCLUSION

How difficult is it to get used to the fact that there is a significant difference between Western understanding of democratic principles and Ukrainian practice?

The difference is indeed striking. There are different understandings of what democracy is, what should be the role of the citizen and voter in society, and what role the government and mass media should play in the election process.

For example, I was used to the concept that a politician's personal life should be more transparent than that of an average citizen. But I was not used to the idea that it is acceptable to consciously disseminate false information. Media here provide obvious disinformation or a biased party line while claiming it to be an independent view. In Ukraine there should be freedom of speech, but not freedom to spread lies.

I think, however, that people in Ukraine have begun to view politics more wisely, and it is now more difficult to fool them or buy them with promises.

You went to court when you first encountered lies in the media. Are you happy with the court's decision?

In the spring of 2001, in the middle of the campaign to remove Viktor from his position as prime minister, the Russian government TV station ORT broadcast a program anchored by Mykhail Leontiev called "Odnako." In it Leontiev claimed that I was an American spy who worked for Zbigniew Brzezinski, that I had been sent to Ukraine to meet Viktor Yushchenko and bring him to power, that he was nothing until I came along and made him what he was today – basically an American lackey. They implied that the tape scandal was all a part of this vast American conspiracy. The show was rebroadcast the next day by the Ukrainian television station INTER and the newspaper Kievsky Vedomosti (both of which are affiliated with the Social Democratic Party (United)).

The Shevchenko Raion court partially ruled on my behalf regarding my case to, in legal terms, "defend my honor and dignity" and "not interfere in my private life." The court found the Russian television program "Odnako" to be libelous. Leontiev was found to have libeled me, to have violated my privacy and harmed my honor and dignity, and was fined 2500 hrv and told that he had to do another show of the exact same length admitting that what he had said was untrue. But the court did not hold the two Ukrainian media outlets to be guilty for rebroadcasting and printing this program.

The Russian anchor of the program has already refused in the most insulting and chauvinistic manner to carry out the court's decision and to admit to his lies on television. That is why I have filed an appeal to a



Kateryna Chumachenko Yushchenko

higher court against the television station Inter and the newspaper Kievsky Vedomosti.

You were insulted by the lies on Russian television. What would you say if one day your daughter in Kyiv speaks with her friends in Russian?

First of all, I am not against having my children learn Russian. My father always taught me that every language you learn makes you a head taller. But I want them to do this consciously, and not because they are unconsciously ashamed of the Ukrainian language. I am very upset by this widespread tendency in Ukrainian society. Viktor and I are raising our children to be proud of the Ukrainian language.

They should know Russian just like English, French and other languages. Currently our Sophika attends a pre-school in Kyiv that teaches French. She already understands English from me. I would like my children to know various languages fluently and naturally.

I think that when our children are grown, the tensions surrounding the language issue will subside and the use of the Ukrainian language in Kyiv will be the norm. This is not an impossible dream. Ten years ago, some of my family and friends here did not know any Ukrainian, and now they speak it beautifully. No one forced them – they themselves came to the conclusion that it is beneficial to know it.

The television program "Odnako" represented you as a wife who greatly influences her husband. Everyone indeed wants to know, what influence do you have over Viktor Yushchenko?

My husband is a very self-confident and independent individual. He is intelligent and professional, and does a lot of good for his country. I am very proud of him.

Given the strength of his convictions, it is not possible for me or anyone else to really change his views. Sometimes I find it difficult to influence even family decisions.

Contrary to the negative reports, I did not press my husband to go into politics, and even the opposite – as his wife and mother of his children, I often think that it would be better if he were in a different profession and away from politics. Because in Ukraine, politics is dirty and dangerous. But fate led him to this path, and I have to support his choice.

Returning to current political events, what is your prognosis for Ukraine's future in light of the upcoming March elections?

I have great hopes that Ukrainians will go to the polls, that the elections will be honest and transparent, and that people will be satisfied with the results of the new Parliament's work. Unfortunately, to date the current elections have been plagued with violations.

Right now you have completely left

your professional career and are concentrating on raising your children. What are your impressions from this change of activity?

I never expected so much satisfaction from raising children. I am trying to convince my husband that we should have more. It has been a year and a half since I left my job, but I have to admit that I have still not begun to miss work.

My husband and I try to give as much attention as possible to our children. We want to raise them to be honest, kind, polite, patriotic people with spiritual values. It is very important to me that my children feel that they can achieve anything in life, as long as they are willing to study and work for it. In the families in which Viktor and I grew up, love of work was a very important value.

Come to think of it, what really matters when a person is on his deathbed and thinks back on his life? It usually isn't that he didn't work enough or get involved enough in politics – it is that he should have spent more time with his family.

What were Sophika's first words?

Sophika's first word was "mama" and her first sentence was "tata ma," which was her way of saying "tato's not here." She is very attached to her father and often watches television hoping to see him. Sometimes it seems quite funny to me that she considers it natural to see her father on television every day.

What sort of education are you planning for your girls?

I think that grade school education is better in Ukraine than in America. Thus, I am very glad that our children will go to a Ukrainian grade school.

What do you like best amongst household activities?

I like to cook both Ukrainian and foreign

foods. My husband, however, is not very demanding when it comes to food. As long as there is borsch, vegetables and herring with potatoes in the house, he is happy!

I have always loved architecture and home design, and have to spend a lot of time with my husband's collection of Ukrainian antiques. We often entertain. But I consider my main task today to learn as much as I can about raising children, so I do it as well as possible.

In the near future, however, I hope to dedicate myself also to my husband's new foundation [the Viktor Yushchenko Foundation], which will focus on various issues, including cultural preservation, social and educational development.

Do you find time to shop?

In the time I have spent in Ukraine, I think my tastes have changed, they have become "Europeanized."

My latest interest in this area is getting to know Ukrainian designers. I was invited for the first time to the fall season of Ukrainian fashion shows where I saw the collections of Anna Babenko, Victoria Gres, Lilia Pustovit. I was very pleasantly surprised. I liked their work and am proud to wear Ukrainian designs.

Ukrainian women, especially in Kyiv, spend a lot of their time and money trying to look their best. How do you take care of yourself?

To tell the truth, this has never been a priority for me. I think that there have to be limits on this. A woman who spends too much time on herself becomes boring, both to others and to herself. I think that a woman's best asset is not her appearance, but her personality, her behavior, her internal harmony.

I have learned a lot from Ukrainian women, though, who manage to look lovely even while their lives are very difficult. I

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Canada-Ukraine Advisory Committee to Ukraine's ambassador is established

OTTAWA – Prominent members of the Ukrainian community in Canada held a meeting on February 22 in Ottawa at the residence of the ambassador of Ukraine to Canada, Dr. Yuri M. Shcherbak, to discuss the state of affairs and future directions of Canada-Ukraine relations.

Members shared their views on the contributions of the Ukrainian Canadian community to the relationship between both countries. They also discussed the situation related to the parliamentary elections being held on March 31 in Ukraine, and the possible organization of a major Canada-Ukraine forum in Canada this fall, with the participation of prominent politicians, businessmen, scientists and artists.

The outcome of the discussion was the establishment of a Canada-Ukraine Advisory Committee to the ambassador of Ukraine. The main goal of this committee is to contribute to the strengthening of bilateral Canada-Ukraine relations in all spheres of cooperation, including supporting Ukraine's initiatives in the democratization of society, economic development and integration into the European Community; partnering in the organization of a wide range of the educational, scientific, cultural and economic workshops, conferences and other events related to current and future Canada-Ukraine relations; promoting Ukrainian masterpieces of tangible and intangible heritage; and informing Canadians about

these activities.

Members of the Canada-Ukraine Advisory Committee are: James C. Temerty, president of Northland Power Inc. (tapped by committee participants as coordinator); Erast Huculak, president and chairman of the board, Medical Pharmacies Group Inc.; Orest V. Nowakiwsky, executive director, Canadian Bank Note Co. Ltd.; Mary Szkambara, president, Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Toronto Branch; Rostyslav Kysil, president Meest Corp. Inc.; Orest Dubas, director, Ukraine-Canada Policy and Trade Center; Oksana Bashuk-Hepburn, president, Ukraine-Canada Relations Inc.; Prof. Ostap Hawaleshka, president, Canada-Ukraine Foundation; Prof. Orest Subtelny, York University; Dmytro Cipywnyk, chair, Advisory Committee on Saskatchewan-Ukraine Relations; Viktor Pedenko, secretary-general, Ukrainian World Congress; Bud Convey, representative of the Alberta-Ukraine Council; and John Woychysyn, president, Oleh Olzhych World Foundation, Canadian Branch.

The Advisory Committee made a decision to hold its meetings twice a year, alternately in Ottawa and Toronto, and to include not only Ukrainian Canadians but also prominent representatives of Canadian society in its membership.

For additional information call Yurii Nykytiuk, first secretary of the Embassy of Ukraine in Canada, (613) 230-2961.

FOR THE RECORD: NDI statement on Ukraine's elections

This statement released in Kyiv, on February 17, was offered by an international pre-election delegation headed by National Democratic Institute (NDI) Chairman and former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright. The delegation included: NDI President Kenneth Wollack; former U.S. Rep. Sam Gejdenson; former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine William Green Miller; a former assistant secretary-general of the United Nations, Cedric Thornberry; the director of Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Casimir Yost; a former advisor to the president of the National Assembly of Slovenia, Mjusa Sever; international trade consultant Robin Carnahan; and NDI Senior Advisor Laura Jewett.

Summary

At this moment, it is unclear whether the March 31 elections will mark a step forward for Ukraine's democratic future. Despite significant improvements in the election law, the delegation is concerned about how those laws are being applied. Most significantly, the delegation observed or received credible reports of intimidation of journalists, denial of access to the media, unbalanced news coverage, abuse of power and illegal use of public funds and facilities. Immediate steps need to be taken, primarily by government authorities, to reverse the historical trend of seriously flawed elections in Ukraine and to build public confidence in the country's political system.

A strong, independent, democratic and prosperous Ukraine is vital not only to the citizens of the country, but to the stability and development of the entire region. Therefore, the election process, as a means to advance and deepen democracy, has drawn the attention of the international community. Ukrainians with whom the delegation met defined the conduct of these elections as pivotal for Ukraine and a determinant of its place in the community of democracies.

The delegation and its work

The purposes of NDI's multinational delegation are to demonstrate the international community's interest and support for a genuine democratic election process in Ukraine, and report on the environment surrounding the March 31, 2002, parliamentary and local elections, and preparations for the polls.

The delegation conducted more than 70 meetings in different regions of the country. These included meetings with government officials at all levels, including President Leonid Kuchma, election officials, leaders of political parties, candidates, and representatives of the news media and civic organizations. The delegation would like to express its appreciation to all those with whom it met for their warm reception and for sharing their insights.

The methodology of NDI for monitoring elections is based on the premise that all aspects of the process must be considered to accurately assess an election. This includes the period leading up to election day and the broader political environment in which an election takes place. At the same time, NDI recognizes that it is ultimately the people of Ukraine who will judge the conduct of the elections and the nature of the mandate they provide.

NDI has conducted similar pre-election missions in dozens of countries in every region of the world. The institute has been working in Ukraine since 1992 to support the development of democratic processes and institutions. The Ukrainian government, political parties and civic organizations have welcomed this and other international observer efforts.

Background

Ukraine's presidential election in 1994 resulted in a peaceful transfer of power. Unfortunately, subsequent elections were increasingly marred by procedural irregularities and violations of political rights that called into question the integrity of the process. The international community and local observers noted that the 1998 parliamentary elections and the 1999 presidential elections were characterized by politically motivated violence and intimidation, media bias and abuse of public office, and legal and administrative problems. The integrity of the 2000 referendum was called into particular question by falsified signatures, abuses of early voting and inflated voter turnout.

The electoral history has undermined public confidence in the country's political processes. This is reflected in recent public opinion polls showing that there are more people who believe the upcoming elections will be unfair than people who believe they will be fair.

International experience demonstrates that in countries where doubts have been raised about the conduct of elections in the past, as is the case in Ukraine, it is necessary

to take extraordinary steps to build or restore public trust in the process. Confidence in the electoral system and the perception of its fairness are as important as the letter of the law.

Observations

The 2002 parliamentary election law incorporates a number of positive changes that provide opportunities for a more democratic electoral process. It spells out rights for party, candidate and international observers. It provides for multi-party representation on election commissions. It calls for equal opportunities for all electoral contestants and equal access for them to the media. It sets rules for posting protocols of results at polling stations. It outlines rights of appeal and specifies administrative penalties for violations.

Regrettably, the opportunities created by these legal changes are not being realized in a number of significant areas, and the election law still fails to meet Ukraine's international commitments in at least one important respect: the right of citizens to act as nonpartisan domestic monitors on election day. The delegation was most concerned about the following violations of the letter and spirit of the law.

Access to the news media and coverage of the election

- Some media outlets, critical of government or business interests, have been subjected to harassment, including financial investigations, and abrupt suspension of licenses.
- Journalists have been subjected to intimidation and violence.
- The state-controlled media have demonstrated a pro-government bias.
- Candidates have been denied the opportunity to purchase paid advertising time.

The use of "administrative resources"

The term "administrative resources," which is widely used in Ukraine, is meant to describe abuses of power and illegal expenditure of public funds by government authorities.

- Government spaces have been used for campaign purposes.
- Public employees have been working on political campaigns and citizens have been pressured to join parties or blocs, or to work for certain candidates.
- Government authorities have interfered in campaigns; government authorities have denied public facilities and services to candidates, parties or blocs.

These problems undermine the perceived independence of those overseeing election procedures, advantage some participants over others and deny voters the information and freedom required to make informed political decisions.

Recommendations

Reflecting its discussions with Ukrainians, and in the spirit of international cooperation, the delegation would offer recommendations to help improve the prospects for credible elections on March 31. Beyond the legal framework, political will is now necessary to create a democratic environment in the remaining weeks of the campaign.

The responsibility for addressing many of the problems outlined above lies disproportionately with government authorities. They must use all means at their disposal to educate employees at all levels about their responsi-

bilities under the election law. They should compel government officials and state institutions, including the state-run media, to comply with the letter and spirit of provisions of the law that require strict impartiality toward all political parties, blocs and candidates, that prohibit interference with the election process and that bar the use of state resources for the advantage of particular electoral contestants. They should investigate expeditiously all credible reports of improprieties and violations, and be prepared to impose swift disciplinary action.

Additionally, candidates, political parties and blocs, civic groups and individual citizens should make use of electoral complaint mechanisms to bring matters before appropriate law enforcement bodies for prompt review and resolution. They should work cooperatively, along

At this moment, it is unclear whether the March 31 elections will mark a step forward for Ukraine's democratic future.

with government authorities, to support the work of journalists to combat an environment of fear and intimidation.

The delegation noted significant confusion surrounding the new election law and procedures in meetings at the district level. We recognize that it is early in the campaign period and many planned training and education programs are not yet under way. Nevertheless, poorly administered elections can create opportunities for misconduct. Given the new law and the number of elections taking place on March 31, the Central Election Commission and relevant NGOs should redouble their efforts to train and support commissioners and poll-watchers so they can fulfill their duties professionally and efficiently.

Conclusion

The delegation was inspired by the dedication and engagement of many party activists and candidates, who have sought to offer voters a range of choices. Equally impressive has been the work of civic activists, who have sought to promote and protect the integrity of the election process. In particular, the long-term observer effort by the Committee of Voters of Ukraine has made an important contribution to the understanding of challenges that must be overcome prior to election day. The work of NGOs to educate the citizenry, solve local problems, shape national policies and hold their elected representatives accountable contributes measurably to the political life of the country. These political and civic activists have sought to offer voters a real choice and to protect the integrity of the process. They represent the greatest hope for Ukraine's democratic future.

An election that allows parties and candidates to compete on a level playing field, gives voters the news and information they need to make informed decisions, and provides citizens with confidence that their ballots will be counted accurately would provide the foundation for public trust in government and would signal a clear commitment to a democratic course for Ukraine.

IRI report assesses pre-election climate in Ukraine

WASHINGTON – The International Republican Institute (IRI) on March 8 released a report assessing the pre-election political climate in Ukraine. The eight-member IRI delegation to Ukraine evaluated the impact of the country's new parliamentary election law on the pre-election environment and determined that while the legal framework for the elections has improved, there are still concerns regarding the lack of an established independent media and the use of government resources for partisan purposes.

Nevertheless, the IRI report said the organization believes that the new provisions of the law, which allow political party representatives to serve as members of election commissions, is a dramatic improvement both in terms of election administration and as a deterrent to election fraud.

"Ukraine has come a long way systematically in terms of developing a legislative framework for conducting elections," IRI Eurasia Director Stephen Nix said. "However, the possibility of having local authorities use administrative

resources to benefit certain candidates could be a threat to the integrity of the elections," Mr. Nix added.

The IRI's eight-member delegation conducted the pre-election assessment on February 4-9 and interviewed 85 representatives from the government media, election commissions, political parties and NGOs. The delegation conducted the assessment in the following cities: Odesa, Chernihiv, Kharkiv and Ivano-Frankivsk. (To view the complete report, please visit www.iri.org.)

The IRI is a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing democracy worldwide. Its programs span the globe and include training on civic responsibility and the legislative process, and strategies for building political parties and election campaigns. The IRI is a non-partisan organization, funded through the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), grants from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and donations from individuals, corporations and foundations.

Helsinki Commission briefing examines Ukraine's parliamentary elections

by Orest Deychakiwsky

WASHINGTON — The Helsinki Commission on February 27 held a public briefing that examined the upcoming Ukrainian parliamentary elections.

Commission Chief of Staff Ron McNamara noted the commitments undertaken by the 55 participating states of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), including Ukraine, to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only form of government for our nations. The reason for congressional interest in Ukraine, as most recently manifested by the Senate and House resolutions introduced by a bipartisan group of Helsinki commissioners, he observed is "because an independent, secure, democratic, economically stable Ukraine is important, and we want to encourage Ukraine in realizing its own goal of integration into Europe." The measures call for Ukraine to ensure a democratic, transparent and fair election process.

Mr. McNamara underscored the potential impact of the elections, "The parliamentary elections, along with local elections taking place on the same day, will chart Ukraine's course over the next four years, including on the presidential elections scheduled for 2004."

Three experts — former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine William Green Miller, Ambassador Nelson Ledsky of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Stephen Nix of the International Republican Institute (IRI) — addressed both the positive and negative features of the election process and campaign. All three highlighted the importance of these elections being as free and fair as possible.

Ambassador Miller stated: "This election is a crucial election. And it's very important for Ukraine, for its government, for its system of governance, to

Orest Deychakiwsky is staff advisor of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission). This article was originally written for the CSCE Digest and is reprinted with permission.

have as free and fair an election as possible. It's crucial to its international reputation and to the dignity of its own people."

Ambassador Miller described the roles of the various blocs running for the elections, observing that, based on what the polls indicate at this point, the probable outcome reflects the reality of Ukrainian politics in 2002. He did note problem areas, stating that the smaller parties of Yulia Tymoshenko and Oleksander Moroz are the ones to watch, "and that's where much of the pressure on preventing their crossing the 4 percent threshold will be evident." These two parties are in open opposition to President Leonid Kuchma.

The issue in the next month, according to Ambassador Miller, is "whether the shortcomings that have been identified by various people — Ukrainians and sympathetic foreigners — will be attended to. But, I would say, given the complexion of the polling now, that there is very little that can be done to alter what seems to be the likely outcome."

Ambassador Ledsky pointed to pre-election violations documented by the Committee of Voters of Ukraine (CVU) over the last four months which fall into two broad categories: one relating to access to the media and coverage of the elections, and the second to the misuse of administrative resources as part of the campaign process. Violations with respect to administrative resources include: government spaces being used for campaign purposes, which is contrary to Ukrainian law; public employees working on political campaigns and citizens pressured to join parties and blocs; the interference of government authorities in the campaigning; and the denial by officials of public facilities and services to candidates, parties and blocs. (On election day, the CVU is aiming at fielding 20,000 observers to complement the OSCE observation effort, which plans to include over 250 international observers.)

Ambassador Ledsky also emphasized "two distinct contests" going on in Ukraine: the first is the contest for the 225 proportional representation seats in which the parties vying need to surpass the 4 percent threshold; the second contest is for the 225 single-mandate seats.

"And here," according to Ambassador Ledsky, "what we are seeing is that the battle is going on behind the scenes in each district, in each oblast, in each constituency. And there administrative resources are being used illegally and with subtlety to make sure that the single mandate seats move in one direction."

In response to a question about Russian involvement, Ambassador Ledsky noted the "more extensive, more prominent, more visible" level of Russian involvement in this campaign. He underscored the importance of the elections, stating that "We believe very fervently that a correction in the course of the last two or three elections is very badly needed to put Ukraine back on the democratic path."

Mr. Nix, focusing his remarks on procedural, administrative and legal issues surrounding the elections, praised the new elections law passed by the Verkhovna Rada as being "very progressive and a huge improvement over previous law." Focusing on how election-related disputes will be handled (current

election law provides dual remedies, both administrative and legal; if a similar complaint is filed both with the administrative agency and with the courts, the court shall issue a stay), Mr. Nix expressed concern, based on IRI's recent pre-election assessment mission to Ukraine, that many judges didn't appear to understand "that they had the right, in fact the duty, to take jurisdiction of these cases and order the administrative actions to cease."

Mr. Nix observed that a key difference in this election is that political parties now largely staff constituency (district) election commissions and, to a lesser extent, polling station (precinct) commissions — this can be a deterrent to fraud — and noted the IRI's role in training members of these commissions. While parties for the most part have gotten people on the polling station commissions, there is concern that some areas in rural villages aren't covered, he said, concluding that places in which parties are not represented have "to be a big focus of the monitoring effort."



Ambassador William Green Miller speaks at the Helsinki Commission briefing, as Commission Chief of Staff Ron McNamara looks on.

OSCE observers...

(Continued from page 1)

resources in this campaign in favor of one or another candidate."

Mr. Severin said the OSCE was calling for transparency in the counting process as well and had asked President Kuchma to assure that the official protocols containing the vote counts would be published in all cities and villages.

He explained that what is needed is a move away from political confrontation and towards political dialogue in the election process. However, he emphasized that dialogue includes the right to disagree, which he said is an essential element of democracy.

"There can be no strong government without a strong opposition. There can be no strong democracy without a strong opposition," said Mr. Severin.

While the CEC head and the president of the OSCE were unwilling to name the political bloc addressed in the complaint, it was obvious after even a cursory viewing of the channel that the reference was to the For a United Ukraine election bloc, a political coalition of several parties close to President Leonid Kuchma that is chaired by the president's chief of staff, Volodymyr Lytvyn.

Several politicians have already

accused the bloc of manipulating government resources to give it more public exposure while working to stifle the public relations efforts of its competitors, including blocking access to local government channels and refusing permission to utilize government buildings and meeting halls for campaign meetings.

Most recently Viktor Yushchenko alleged that government workers in the port town of Mariupol, located in the Donetsk Oblast, had turned off the lights to the hall in which he was holding a large rally, forcing the meeting to proceed in candlelight.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs said on March 11 that it had a total of 148 reports of violations of the election law from various candidates — most of them minor infractions. Valerii Varenko, state secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, said 37 criminal investigations were under way in response to the various allegations.

Meanwhile, Stepan Havrysh, second vice-chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, sounded a dire warning the same day when he said that it is "absolutely possible" that election returns could be rigged on March 31 with the use of voters lists that included the names of the recently deceased.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Severin, who said that his

organization would withhold judgment on elections in Ukraine until after the vote count was completed, nonetheless emphasized that free, fair and transparent elections — which he underscored include equal opportunities for all the candidates — would do much in helping to consolidate the rifts in Ukrainian society and would be a major stride towards European integration for the country.

The OSCE leader also rebutted accusations by pro-leftist political forces in Ukraine made earlier in the campaign season that international observers from the West are tools of interference in Ukraine's internal processes.

Mr. Severin emphasized that the OSCE was invited into the country by the Ukrainian government and that its presence in Ukraine does not imply the country is guilty of anything.

"We are not policemen of democracy," explained Mr. Severin. "We are here as partners."

Mr. Severin explained that Ukrainians must remember they willingly entered the OSCE as part of the country's aspiration to move closer to Europe. He called the 55-member organization "a community of values" and a "community of commitments."

The OSCE observer team will be the largest single group of the more than 500 observers representing dozens of interna-

tional organizations that have been invited to watch how the parliamentary elections take place in Ukraine. The OSCE team includes up to 400 short-term observers who will begin their work in the last days before elections and 36 long-term observers who are already in place.

Ukraine's CEC has already registered a total of 220 foreign observers, which includes representatives of most of the CIS countries and all of the countries neighboring Ukraine. Among the observers from the United States who are already working here are representatives of the National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems.

The Ukrainian World Congress and the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, two leading organizations from the Ukrainian diaspora, also have observers on hand.

As it has in past elections, the Committee of Voters of Ukraine will conduct its own domestic election day monitoring with the support of 24,000 trained observers in all the regions of Ukraine. The respected civic group will also train 4,000 members of various Ukrainian political parties to be observers.

Ukrainian and Jewish groups meet to discuss Jackson-Vanik restrictions on Ukraine

Ukrainian American Coordinating Council

WASHINGTON – Action Ukraine Coalition leaders, Dr. Zenia Chernyk, chair of the Ukrainian Federation of America, and Ihor Gawdiak, president of the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council – met in Washington on February 14 with Jewish leaders to discuss the removal of the Jackson-Vanik restrictions that hamper extension of normal trade relations to Ukraine.

Among the Jewish community leaders at the meeting were Rabbi Andrew Baker, director of international Jewish affairs in the American Jewish Committee; Mark B. Levin, executive director, and Shai A. Franklin, director of governmental relations, of the Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States and Eurasia (formerly known as the National Council for Soviet Jewry); and Guy Billauer and Leonard Grossman from the American Jewish Committee.

During a frank and open exchange of views that lasted well over an hour, the Ukrainian leaders expressed their concerns about the recent introduction in the U.S. Congress of a bill which would free only Russia from Jackson-Vanik restrictions. They pointed out that the Jackson-Vanik Amendment aimed at the Soviet Union was enacted during the Cold War days and that its provisions should not be

binding on Ukraine, a free and independent state not responsible for Soviet violations of human and religious rights.

Furthermore, they argued that Ukraine's present record on ethnic and religious rights, including its treatment of Jews, is far better than that of any other state on the territory of the former Soviet Union, including Russia. Finally, they asked if American Jewish organizations would support a bill freeing Ukraine from the Jackson-Vanik restrictions. The bill was introduced on March 13 in the House by Rep. Bob Schaffer, one of the co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus.

The Jewish leaders agreed in principle with the arguments put forward by Dr. Chernyk and Mr. Gawdiak, but raised the question of the restitution of Jewish communal property in Ukraine. The Ukrainian leaders responded that the Ukrainian government has in fact passed legislation mandating the restitution of communal property to its legitimate owners and that the great difficulties – political, social and economic – that hinder the Ukrainian government from carrying out this program, apply not only to the restitution of Jewish property but to the return of the communal property of other religious denominations as well.

When asked whether the Jewish American community would oppose such

a bill in Congress today, the Jewish leaders stated that they need to poll their member-organizations before they could give a definitive response. Subsequently, on March 7, representatives from the Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia,

Ukraine, the Baltic States and Eurasia and the American Jewish Committee informed the Ukrainian American community that their organizations would not oppose extension of permanent normal trade relations to Ukraine.

ACTION ITEM

Trade relations with Ukraine

It is urgent that the Ukrainian American community make itself heard on an issue of critical importance to Ukraine – i.e., extension of permanent normal trade relations to Ukraine.

Rep. Bob Schaffer of Colorado, one of the co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, on March 13 introduced a bill (H.R. 3953) in the House extending permanent normal trade relations (formerly designated "most favored nation" or MFN status) to Ukraine. This bill will not move through Congress without your help.

Therefore, we appeal to you to immediately contact your representative and senators to urge them to support this vital legislation. Due to security considerations with incoming mail, we recommend that you e-mail, call or fax your congressional representatives.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council's headquarters in Washington by phone, (202) 737-6090; fax, (202) 737-6091; or e-mail, uaccw@aol.com.

Thank you for your attention to this issue and your help for Ukraine. Ukraine needs this help now.

– submitted by the Ukrainian American Coordinating Council on behalf of the Action Ukraine Coalition.

Astronaut Stefanyshyn-Piper...

(Continued from page 1)

specialist.

Two years ago, the astronaut-in-waiting told The Ukrainian Weekly that since she holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, she could be tapped as a flight engineer on the crew.

Cmdr. Stefanyshyn-Piper received her commission from the Navy ROTC Program at MIT in June 1985. She completed training at the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center in Panama City, Fla., as a Navy basic diving officer and salvage offi-

cer. She completed several tours of duty as an engineering duty officer in the area of ship maintenance and repair, qualified as a surface warfare officer, and is a qualified and experienced salvage officer.

Cmdr. Stefanyshyn-Piper was born in St. Paul, Minn., on February 7, 1963, and was an active member of the Twin Cities Ukrainian community in her youth – most notably in the Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization (she is featured in the Plast film celebrating the youth organization's 50th anniversary in the United States), the local Ukrainian dance ensemble, the school of Ukrainian studies and St. Constantine Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Her mother, Adelheid Stefanyshyn, continues to reside in St. Paul; her father, Michael Stefanyshyn, is deceased. In addition to her involvement in the Minneapolis Ukrainian community, Ms. Stefanyshyn-Piper cultivated her German roots as her mother was a German immigrant. Thus, she has spoken both Ukrainian and German fluently since childhood.

In the Houston area, where she now resides with her husband, fellow astronaut Glenn A. Piper, and their son, she is a member of the Ukrainian American Cultural Club of Houston.

In 1996, after she was selected for the astronaut training program, Cmdr.

Stefanyshyn-Piper told a Navy publication that she had joined the space program for the same reason she became a diver: "I was looking for something challenging that would broaden my horizons." She said her work as a diver had given her a chance to work in a foreign environment, adding that "space is the ultimate foreign environment, and it really is the final frontier."

Two years later, after completing her training, she said her dream was "to do a space walk." She explained to a Weekly reporter that she hoped to complete a space walk with a division of the EVA (Extra Vehicular Activities) at the International Space Station.

Various polls...

(Continued from page 1)

showed that the decline had occurred after Our Ukraine had watched its rating rise through the high teens into the twenties in the first part of this year.

Meanwhile the Communists, whose popularity had been declining for the last several months from a high of 18.1 percent in October of last year, saw a gain of several points from 11.9 percent in late February to 15.2 percent in early March.

The pro-presidential For a United Ukraine bloc also watched its fortunes improve in March. The bloc's rating climbed from a late February figure of 6.2 percent to 8.5 percent. Meanwhile the Social Democratic Party (United) has slowly moved up over the last months from a 4.4 percent rating at the beginning of the year to 7.8 percent in March.

According to the polls, the Ukrainian Parliament could lose two pro-leftist parties, which had been influential for nearly a decade but have seen their fortunes decline in the last two years. Today the Socialist Party of Ukraine, chaired by Oleksander Moroz, and the Progressive Socialist Party of Natalia Vitrenko (Natalia Vitrenko Bloc) are in danger of failing to gain 4 percent of the popular vote, which would exclude them from the Verkhovna Rada. In most polls they are hovering at between 2 and 4 percent.

A factor that could play to their benefit and strengthen the situation of the

Communist Party as well, is the relatively large number of voters who are still undecided as to how they will vote on election day. In the Razumkov Center poll 12.5 percent of the respondents had yet to decide whom they would support. The SOCIS poll put that figure at 16.6 percent, while the Center for Social Monitoring/Ukrainian Institute for Social Research poll found 12.2 percent of respondents still undecided. Another poll, issued by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, had the number as high as 30 percent.

A political consensus exists that a good portion of the undecided voters are pro-leftist supporters who for historical and other reasons are leery of revealing their true intentions. Some political experts believe that if they come out of the political woodwork they could raise the final Communist tally to at least 25 percent.

However, the Razumkov Center survey suggested that a good portion of the Ukrainian populace would disagree with such an assertion. In one question the respondents were asked whether they

believe their votes would affect the outcome of the March 31 tally. Fully 54 percent said that their vote did not matter, while just over 33 percent said they believe they could affect change.

In another poll the respondents were even more cynical. A survey by the Center for Political Analysis and Consultation revealed that 53.6 percent of Ukrainians believe the political playing field for these elections is not level, while 49.5 percent think that some sort of vote fraud will occur on March 31.

RAZUMKOV CENTER'S LATEST PRE-ELECTION POLL RESULTS

Name of party or political bloc	Approval rating of party/bloc % of those who will vote			Approval rating of leader % of respondents
	February 1/30-2/6	February 2/9-2/27	March 2/28-3/6	March 2/28-3/6
Our Ukraine bloc (Yushchenko)	18.8	20.1	23.9	29.3
Communist Party of Ukraine	15.2	14.5	16.8	15.9
Social Democratic Party (United)	5.3	8.0	8.0	9.6
For a United Ukraine	3.9	6.5	7.0	4.4
Women for the Future	5.3	5.0	4.1	3.8
Party of Greens of Ukraine	6.0	4.2	5.5	5.6
Natalia Vitrenko Bloc	1.7	3.3	2.8	7.0
Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc	3.5	3.2	3.9	9.5
Socialist Party of Ukraine	3.1	2.6	3.7	8.5
Yabluko Party	1.5	2.3	1.7	2.7
Unity Bloc	1.0	1.4	0.7	5.3
Democratic Party of Ukraine Bloc/				
Democratic Union Party	1.3	1.1	0.7	2.3
Other	8.7	4.5	4.2	
Would vote against all parties/blocs	6.2	6.9	4.5	
Difficult to answer	18.5	15.4	12.5	

THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FORUM

Philadelphia-based credit union supports "Copies for Congress" project

PARSIPPANY, N.J. – The Ukrainian Selfreliance Federal Credit Union based in Philadelphia has contributed \$1,000 to The Ukrainian Weekly's "Copies for Congress" project. The donation arrived at The Weekly's offices in early March.

In a letter to The Weekly's editor-in-chief, Alex Tyshovnytsky, CEO, wrote: "I am pleased to inform you that the board of directors of the Ukrainian Selfreliance Federal Credit Union in Philadelphia has approved a donation of \$1,000 towards the 'Copies for Congress' program. This program is very worthwhile and we are very pleased to be able to provide financial support for this important endeavor."

"I appreciate the excellent work you are doing at The Ukrainian Weekly and read your newspaper faithfully each week," he stated.

The Weekly's editor-in-chief had written to the Ukrainian American community's strongest financial institutions, its credit unions, as well as leading

Ukrainian community institutions and organizations to solicit donations for the "Copies for Congress" project.

Thus far, six Ukrainian American credit unions, one Ukrainian American institution – the Ukrainian Institute of America, and two individuals have responded to The Ukrainian Weekly's letter of November 16, 2001, soliciting donations for its "Copies for Congress" project, which provides free subscriptions to all members of the U.S. Congress. The Weekly has now received \$6,100 in donations to this project.

The credit unions that previously contributed to "Copies for Congress" include: Self Reliance (NY) Federal Credit Union, New York; Cleveland Selfreliance Federal Credit Union, Parma, Ohio; SUMA (Yonkers) Federal Credit Union, Yonkers, N.Y.; Selfreliance Baltimore Federal Credit Union, Baltimore; and Ukrainian National Federal Credit Union, New York City.

UNA Seniors Conference slated for June 9-14 at Soyuzivka resort

by Anna Chopek

KERHONKSON, N.Y. – The annual Ukrainian National Association Seniors Conference will take place at Soyuzivka on June 9-14.

This year is a special time to come to Soyuzivka because the resort is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

We promise you a good time. The program includes a few sessions, a discussion of current events in Ukraine, a talk on medical and legal matters of interest to seniors, a welcoming wine and cheese party, a Ukrainian sing-along, a free bingo night, an auction of Ukrainian items, evenings of card games and Ukrainian videos, an Odesa dinner featuring various seafood entrees and

a cocktail party on the Veselka deck prior to an elegant banquet.

Seniors are asked to bring Ukrainian items to the auction; all proceeds from the auction go to Ukrainian charities. Also it would be appreciated if seniors wear Ukrainian blouses, shirts or ties to the banquet.

What a wonderful time to spend time with friends you have met at various Soyuzivka gatherings over the past 50 years!

Since this is a well-attended affair, call Soyuzivka, (845) 626-5641, or write to Ukrainian National Estate, P.O. Box 529 Kerhonkson, NY 12446 for a reservation. UNA members are eligible for a special rate at Soyuzivka.

Betty Pankiw, 71, secretary of UNA Branch 237, dies

WILMINGTON, Del. – Betty C. Pankiw, former secretary of Ukrainian National Association Branch 237 in Chester, Pa., passed away on February 25, at Manor Care Health Center.

She was a secretary of Branch 237 from 1990 to 1997, when due to her husband's illness she was forced to resign her position. Mrs. Pankiw was born in Chester, Pa., on October 31, 1930, and became a UNA member in 1947.

Mrs. Pankiw was an active member of the community. Not only was she a UNA branch secretary, but she was a member of the New Castle County Board of Elections and the Claymont Youth Athletic Association. She was active in St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

She was also a former Sunday school teacher. She served as president of the Ukrainian National Home Association and worked in many other organizations. Before her retirement she worked as a secretary in the Brandywine School District.

Funeral services were held at St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Chester and burial followed at Lawn Croft Cemetery on Friday, March 1.

Mrs. Pankiw was the widow of Peter Pankiw, who died last August. She is survived by her sons David, Robert and Greg Pankiw, five grandchildren and a brother, William Happy.

The entire family belongs to the Ukrainian National Association.

To the UNA membership:

- In accordance with the UNA By-Laws, Article 17, all branches, district committees and individual members are invited to submit their proposals for the good and welfare of the association to the UNA Executive Committee. These proposals will be reviewed, and approved or revised, by the Executive Committee, which will then recommend them to the UNA convention's Committee on Revision of By-Laws for its consideration. That committee will then recommend to the convention what action should be taken. Please address such proposals to: Ukrainian National Association, Att'n: Executive Committee, 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

- Any proposals for amendments to the UNA By-Laws are to be submitted to the Committee on Revision of By-Laws, which will consider the advisability of the change or revision suggested, and will then present its recommendation for consideration by the convention. Such proposals are to be submitted to the chairperson of the Pre-Convention By-Laws Committee, Taras Szmagala Jr. Please address proposals regarding by-laws changes to: Ukrainian National Association, Att'n: Taras Szmagala Jr., 2200 Route 10, P.O. Box 280, Parsippany, NJ 07054.

– UNA Executive Committee

MEMORANDUM

The Syracuse District's Annual Meeting has been rescheduled for Saturday, April 6, 2002, at 2 p.m., at the Ukrainian National Home, 1317 West Fayette St., Syracuse, NY.

– UNA Executive Committee

Mission Statement

The Ukrainian National Association exists:

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

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

Young UNA'ers



Roman and Sasha Dijak, sons of Vasyl and Nicole Dijak of Houston, were enrolled into UNA Branch 176 in Chicago by their uncle, UNA First Vice-President Stefko Kuropas.



Nicholas Chapman della Cava, son of Courtney and Marco della Cava, is a new member of UNA Branch 450 in New York City, a branch affiliated with the Plast Ukrainian Youth Organization. He was enrolled by his grandparents Olha (née Dyhdalevych) and Rafael della Cava.

THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

Scrap Jackson-Vanik restrictions

The 1974 Jackson-Vanik Amendment was a landmark piece of legislation aimed at securing a fundamental human right. Sponsored by Sen. Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) and Rep. Charles Vanik (D-Ohio), it prohibited the extension of U.S. government credits and most-favored-nation trade status to any country without a market economy that didn't allow its citizens to emigrate freely. Its original target was the Soviet Union, whose emigration restrictions for Jews created countless numbers of what came to be known as "refuseniks." Linking freedom of emigration to U.S.-Soviet trade, the law succeeded, helping tens of thousands of Soviet Jews emigrate.

Today, however, the USSR is gone. And the situation in what at first were called the "former Soviet republics," then the "newly independent states," has changed dramatically. U.S. legislation, therefore, has to be brought up to speed. That's why we say it's time to scrap the Jackson-Vanik restrictions that prevent Ukraine from obtaining permanent normal trade relations (PNTR, to those who love the lingo of bureaucracy), formerly known as most-favored-nation trade status, with the United States.

The Baltic states were "graduated out" of the Jackson-Vanik restrictions early on, back in 1991; Kyrgyzstan and Georgia were graduated in 2002. And there has been much talk of doing away with Jackson-Vanik restrictions for Russia, as in November 2001 President George W. Bush acknowledged that Russia had made "important strides on emigration and the protection of religious and ethnic minorities, including Russia's Jewish community."

As reported in *The Washington Post* early this year, the administration lists eight other former Soviet republics it wants Congress to exempt from Jackson-Vanik: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Moldova, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. (Though the latter two have less than stellar human rights records, post 9/11 they are important allies in the international anti-terrorist coalition.) Belarus, however, remains off the list, thanks mostly to its autocratic leader, Alyaksandr Lukashenka. How to go about removing the Jackson-Vanik restrictions has been the subject of much discussion, and among the issues is whether this should be done country-by-country, or as a group.

On March 13 Rep. Bob Schaffer, a co-chair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, introduced legislation (H.R. 3953) specifically aimed at graduating Ukraine from Jackson-Vanik restrictions in recognition of the country's "substantial progress" in the area of human rights as well as its cooperation in the "global struggle against international terrorism."

We hail Rep. Schaffer's initiative, and we urge others in Congress to support this important legislation. Ukraine, which has one of the best records of protecting minorities' rights among states once part of the USSR, has earned its graduation.

March
20
1983

Turning the pages back...

Twenty years ago, 10 Soviet political prisoners wrote an open letter to U.S. President Ronald Reagan. The letter reached the West months later and was the subject of a news story in *The Ukrainian Weekly* on March 20, 1983. The prisoners of Camp No. 36, part of a vast penal complex in Perm, Russian SFSR,

asked Mr. Reagan to help form an international commission to inspect Soviet labor camps.

The letter, a copy of which was provided by the External Representation of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, was signed by Mykola Rudenko, Oles Shevchenko, Myroslav Marynovych, Viktor Nekipelov, Alexander Ogorodnikov, Henrich Altunian, Antanas Terliatskas, Viktor Niytsoo, Norair Grygorian and Vladimir Balakhonov. They said that Soviet abuses of political prisoners were "so widespread that it is no longer merely a question of violations of human rights, but of premeditated inhumanity, of physical and psychological torture, of terrorizing the spirit and exhibiting moral contempt for culture."

Mr. Rudenko, then 62, a founding member of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, was sentenced in 1977 to seven years in a labor camp and five years' internal exile, a form of enforced residence. Mr. Marynovych, another member of the group, was sentenced a year later to an identical sentence. The other Ukrainian, Mr. Shevchenko, was sentenced in 1980, also to 12 years' labor camp and exile. The other prisoners were from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (Estonian, Lithuanian, Russian, Armenian) and dissident movements.

The political prisoners wrote: "It is often difficult for a resident of the West to imagine the atmosphere of lawlessness in which the inmates of Soviet political prison camps exist today. Recently (end of 1981 – first half of 1982) the conditions of our imprisonment have worsened so sharply that we feel compelled to appeal to you. It is probable that this 'tightening of the screws,' or, as the saying went during the Stalin years, 'clamp-down,' is equally the result of individual instances in which the regime has disgraced itself (Poland, Afghanistan) and of the general crisis that the system is undergoing. The invariable companions of a tyranny growing decrepit – cruelty and absurdity – today permeate all spheres of our life, all aspects of our prison existence."

The dissidents suggested the formation of "an impartial commission of independent and politically unaffiliated Western humanitarians – writers and lawyers" who, "after visiting the camps of any country ... could draw up an authoritative conclusion about the contingent of prisoners here and, consequently, about the moral right of the government of this country to condemn others for using imprisonment to suppress dissent."

"Knowing of your resoluteness in the defense of freedom and humanity in the world, Mr. President, we appeal to you to support the creation of such a commission," they wrote. "The existence of political prisoners in our enlightened age is as anachronistic as the slave trade. The champions of the primacy of morality in the whole world have long since known that no measures or spheres of trust can be extended to a country that incarcerates in prisons and camps its political, national, religious and moral opposition."

Source: "Political prisoners seek Reagan's aid in urging inspection of Soviet camps," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, March 20, 1983, Vol. LI, No. 12.

Rough draft

by Roman Woronowycz

Kyiv Press Bureau

Ukraine endures political games

Ukrainian campaign politics is an incredible game – perhaps the only one of its kind in the world. With two weeks left before the country votes on a new Parliament, the events of the campaign season have been tainted with irregularities, violations of law, cut-throat maneuvering, mudslinging and disinformation. But, given Ukraine's electoral history, it can only be called business as usual.

It is as if a bunch of merry jesters had sold their souls to the devil and been given free rein of the country for a three-month period, like a Fellini film, but twisted from an absurd to a cynical point. In the final weeks of campaigning, where else would the president of the country be accused of illegal arms sales, while two other high-ranking officials were said to have utilized their government positions for personal gain? Where else would a regional leader call his court-ordered removal from the electoral process sufficient reason to cancel the elections and begin a move to have his region secede from the country?

Then there is the relatively more banal (though very detrimental) stuff: the use of government authority and resources to deny candidates access to television broadcast time and impede the organization of campaign meetings and rallies.

If the point were to entertain the nation, instead of pick legislators to clean up the mess left by more than 70 years of Soviet rule and the additional 10 years of mostly irresponsible rule that has followed, everyone would be enjoying the show that Ukraine's politicians are putting on. The problem here is that there are dire consequences if the game ends badly. The goal must be to build democracy and an open society, and that begins with free and fair elections. From that perspective, it is a tragic contest that we are witnessing.

While Adrian Severin, president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, said in Kyiv on March 13 that he believes the elections in Ukraine could still be considered free and fair if what is left of the process evolves properly, his organization has already said that there is strong evidence that campaign improprieties are occurring. On March 11 the OSCE filed the first complaint by an accredited international observer organization with Ukraine's Central Election Commission to protest the monopoly that one political bloc has over political advertising on the government channel UT-1.

While the OSCE did not name the organization, perhaps only a few cloistered monks deep in the caves of the Pecherska Lavra could not have known that the European organization meant the For a United Ukraine election bloc.

The bloc, led by President Leonid Kuchma's Chief of Staff Volodymyr Lytvyn, has utilized its access to power and government resources to effectively control government-owned newspapers, radio and television. Oblast governors and municipal mayors who support the political bloc strictly control the type of advertising allowed on local billboards and even on telephone polls.

On March 4, after returning from a campaign swing through the eastern oblasts, Viktor Yushchenko, the leader of the Our Ukraine Bloc, complained that in

Mariupol the lights at a public hall where he was holding a rally were turned off. Speaking at a press conference a week later, he said that in Donetsk he could not find a single campaign banner, poster or billboard in support of any political organization other than the For a United Ukraine Bloc. He said that only on the road from the airport into town his delegation counted hundreds of their ads.

On the other hand, the Social Democratic Party (United) [SDPU] – another group of what are called "the oligarchs" – which in the past was adroit at grabbing many privately held media outlets, including national and local newspapers and three national television networks, is now exploiting the strategic advantage it enjoys in the mass media.

Today it controls the two most popular networks in the country, Inter and Studio 1+1, and has advertised extensively there while giving other parties no more than token access to the airwaves it controls.

Meanwhile, Kyiv Mayor Oleksander Omelchenko has been accused of utilizing his own questionable version of tactical gamesmanship in ordering municipal workers to tear down posters of candidates not part of his Unity Party, or at least having them pasted over with Unity Party campaign information.

The election season began with a disenchanted Ukrainian National Rukh Party press secretary revealing audiotapes of a private conversation between Mr. Yushchenko and Mayor Omelchenko, in which they allegedly were conspiring to remove Verkhovna Rada First Vice-Chairman Viktor Medvedchuk, who is also the chairman of the SDPU, from his parliamentary post. That was followed by a court order barring Yulia Tymoshenko, a former first vice prime minister who today heads the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and a prime opponent of President Kuchma, from leaving Kyiv due to charges of corruption that have never been resolved, which was followed by another court order removing the first one. While she is currently campaigning actively throughout Ukraine, authorities have effectively blackballed her from television. Today no ads by her or her party are shown on the small screen.

In the last week the games and tactical moves have gotten a bit more desperate, and the players still shriller. Here are a few examples.

National Deputy Oleksander Zhyr, an ex-general in the Security Service of Ukraine, accused President Kuchma of being complicit in the illegal sale of arms to Iraq. Mr. Zhyr, a strong critic of the president who heads the ad hoc parliamentary committee investigating the death of journalist Heorhii Gongadze, said on March 13 that he has documented proof to support his allegation.

On March 6, Mr. Zhyr's associate, Hryhorii Omelchenko, accused Mr. Lytvyn, President Kuchma's chief of staff and head of the For a United Ukraine Bloc, of abuse of authority in lobbying commercial interests on his own behalf. Mr. Omelchenko, who like Mr. Zhyr also once held a high position in the Security Service of Ukraine, leveled the same charges against Mykola Azarov, the head of the Tax

(Continued on page 11)

A thank-you from Ukraine's Mission to the United Nations

To the Editor-in-Chief of The Ukrainian Weekly:

With great pleasure I want to convey to you expressions of sincere thanks from Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs Anatolii Zlenko, who during the recent collegium of our ministry dedicated to reviewing the work of Ukraine's delegation at the United Nations Security Council in 2000-2001 gave high praise to the cooperation between Ukrainian diplomats at the U.N. and your respected publication.

In the name of all staffers of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations, and from me personally I would like to sincerely thank you, esteemed madam editor, for your amicable assistance and support, which we felt at times of intense activity on the Security Council.

Thanks to materials published in the columns of your newspaper, which we read and value, information about the work of Ukrainian diplomats on the Security Council reached a wide circle of American and Ukrainian readers, whose friendly response gave us added motivation and energy.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, please allow me to express gratitude to all readers of The Ukrainian Weekly and to wish them good health and good fortune. Our Permanent Mission was and will always be open for cooperation with you, friendly mutual support and assistance.

Valeriy Kuchinsky
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the United Nations

Faces and Places

by Myron B. Kuropas



Connecting the dots: Ukraine's parliamentary elections

With Ukraine's parliamentary elections less than two weeks away, allow me to attempt to connect some dots.

As of right now, the election is too close to call. How about that for waffling?

It's true, however. Time Europe reports that, according to an opinion poll conducted in mid-February by the Liberty Fund, "the unreformed Communist Party currently leads with 19 percent of the potential voters. Yushchenko's Our Ukraine is second with 17.4 percent, while the pro-presidential Social Democratic Party of Ukraine has 6.7 percent. The vote is highly fragmented, as 35 blocs and parties are standing in the election."

According to Vitaly Sych of the Kyiv Post, many pundits believed that the Communist Party's strong showing in the 1994 parliamentary elections was a temporary phenomenon. Analysts were convinced that the Communist Party's supporters were mostly old people, nostalgic for Soviet times. As they died off, so would communism. This didn't happen.

Valery Mishura, Communist Party ideologue, now claims that the party has reoccupied all of the regional city and district party offices it commanded prior to its being officially banned between 1991 and 1993. Part of its present allure, no doubt, is the fact that Communists now support private business (many of them have become rich after the fall of the USSR, so why wouldn't they?) freedom of worship, and a multi-party Ukraine.

The Social Democratic Party (United) is a different story. According to a recent issue of The Ukraine Insider, SDPU "is not a political party at all in the Western sense but a 'financial-industrial group' or clan, masquerading as a party. The core of the SDPU is formed by a group of businessmen known as 'the magnificent seven.'" It is led by Hryhorii Surkis whose brother, Ihor, has alleged ties to the Russian/Ukrainian mafiya. It was Mr. Surkis who used his contacts in the U.S. and Israel to create a business conglomerate named variously as "Ometa," which now has vast interests in Ukraine's petroleum and metallurgical sectors.

During the 1994 election the SDPU supported Leonid Kravchuk. When Mr. Kravchuk lost, the oligarchs brought him into the fold while romancing Leonid Kuchma. Messrs. Kravchuk and Kuchma eventually made up and Mr. Kuchma was embraced by the oligarchs. Among its many controlling interests, according to The Ukraine Insider, the SDPU dominates the Zhydachiv Cellulose Paper Factory, Ukraine's only mass producer of newspaper print, the national TV channel 1 + 1, a Kyiv regional TV channel, "TET," and the newspaper Kievskiy Vedomosti.

According to Dr. Taras Kuzio of the University of Toronto Center for Russian and East European Studies, the SDPU has ties to Russia's Fund for Effective Politics (FEP), which supports stronger economic ties among Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. It was the SDPU, with help from the FEP, which floated the so-called "Brzezinski Plan," a supposed conspiracy on the part of the United States to engineer a Milosevic-like overthrow of President Kuchma and replace him with Viktor Yushchenko. The SDPU wants Russia to be Ukraine's official second language and lends financial support to the extreme nationalist, anti-Western and pro-Kuchma National Rukh for Unity (NRU-Ye) Party.

Mr. Yushchenko, meanwhile, is fighting

an uphill battle to be heard. Government control of TV has prevented his people from purchasing television time in Kirovohrad, Mykolaiv and Poltava. That's the least of Mr. Yushchenko's problems, however. If the "auto accident" suffered by Yulia Tymoshenko, head of her own electoral bloc, and other anti-Kuchma candidates who have been found dead or injured are any indication of what lies ahead, Mr. Yushchenko needs to be careful indeed. Critics of Mr. Kuchma are exceedingly accident-prone; some even lose their heads.

Still, there is reason to hope that Mr. Kuchma will be more circumspect in targeting his enemies during the next few days if not longer. FBI forensic experts recently ruled that the audio recordings made by one of Mr. Kuchma's bodyguards implicating the Ukrainian president in the disappearance of Heorhii Gongadze were authentic. This prompted Ukraine's Parliament to order an investigation into the possibility of criminal acts carried out by Mr. Kuchma.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's economy is improving. According to an article by Natalia Feduschak in The Washington Times, "Ukraine had one of the fastest growing economies in Europe last year." A 9 percent growth rate in 2001 combined with an inflation rate of 6 percent create a reason to rejoice. These numbers contrast favorably with an inflation rate of 26 percent in 2000 and 19 percent in 1999. A recent Economic Intelligence Unit country brief reports that "The economic upturn of the last two years in Ukraine has brought into existence a definable, and growing middle class with money to spend on non-essential items." Western-style supermarkets have opened in Kyiv, mobile phone usage now includes the top 20 percent of the population, private home construction is growing, and credit cards are becoming more common.

Also encouraging is the fact that the international investment bank JP Morgan has listed Ukraine as one of the most attractive countries for investors. Ukraine returned a phenomenal 57.1 percent of profit in 2001. In addition, the rating agency Moody's upgraded Ukraine's foreign currency ceiling for bonds and bank deposits.

At the same time, however, Ukraine's standard of living lags behind Russia, Parliament hasn't passed a rational tax code, and continued corruption continues to scare off potential investors and supporters. Following a visit on February 15, the World Bank has decided not to grant another loan to Ukraine until after the March 31 election.

According to Dr. Kuzio, Ukraine has lost ground with Western governments, especially the United States. Given America's growing relationship with Russia, Ukraine can no longer position itself as a buffer against "Russian imperialism." The United States has lost faith in repeated declarations by Ukraine's government officials regarding their commitment to democratic values and European integration. In private, writes Dr. Kuzio, "U.S. officials sometimes describe Ukraine as 'Kuchmestan.'"

Much will be decided on March 31. Ukraine will either have free and open elections, restore Western confidence and take another step towards European integration, or the elections will be rigged, and Ukraine will continue to drift towards greater economic dependence on Russia and even more mob control.

Myron Kuropas' e-mail address is: mbkuropas@compuserve.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congratulations on growing website

Dear Editor:

Congratulations on your official website, which now contains over 11,000 full-text articles.

Your website is an invaluable tool for anyone doing research on Ukraine, U.S.-Ukraine relations and the Ukrainian American community.

Orest Deychakiwsky
Beltsville, Md.

Ukraine's destiny its own to determine

Dear Editor:

The Ukrainian Weekly on Sunday, February 3, printed an article titled "Ukraine's transformation on the European model: how the United States can assist the process" by Dr. Bohdan Hawrylyshyn, based on the keynote address he delivered on November 1, 2001, at the conference "Ukraine's Quest for Mature Nation Statehood" held in Washington. In his article Dr. Hawrylyshyn poses questions on the above subject and expresses the need for Ukraine's transformation.

I will not comment on the need and feasibility for such transformation, but address only the following questions posed by Dr. Hawrylyshyn. How the U.S. can assist the process? How can the U.S. help? Will the U.S. help? The questions are valid, but perhaps the timing is off.

Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the U.S. and the subsequent war on terrorism, the political and economic situation and the atmosphere in the United States have changed. U.S. foreign policy changes are seen, for example, in warming up to and trying to form an alliance with Russia (to combat terrorism) followed by a hint from the United States for a closer relationship between Russia and Ukraine.

At present U.S. foreign policy is absorbed and dedicated mainly to combating the global terrorist threat, leaving very little room for "parochial" problems, such as Ukraine's transformation on the European model.

Most important however is the question of economics. Dr. Hawrylyshyn's statement: "In terms of economics, the bulk of Ukraine's trade will be with European Union countries," will be perceived in the United States by traders and merchants as an indication that Ukraine will become less accessible and marginal for American business ventures, especially at this time, when the introduction of the euro is considered by some to be a challenge to the dollar.

Dr. Hawrylyshyn in his last paragraph certainly answers the above-mentioned questions: "It is, of course, Ukraine that has to transform itself on the European model. Its destiny is mainly in its own hands."

G. Myroslaw Burbelo, M.D.
Westerly, R.I.

Become involved in grassroots politics

Dear Editor:

I encourage readers to become precinct delegates. We the people have a responsibility to life, family, friends, community and democracy.

Our basic privilege and right to vote is taken for granted because some people don't want to be involved.

For an application form to become a precinct delegate, please contact your city or town hall (the city or county clerk's office) or the Department of State in your state (Bureau of Election).

We are the grassroots. A duty of precinct delegates is to represent his or her precinct at county conventions where delegates and alternates to the state convention are elected.

Get involved, expand opportunity, protect freedom and vote.

Roman Kuropas
Warren, Mich.

The Ukrainian Weekly welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be typed (double-spaced) and signed; they must be originals, not photocopies. The daytime phone number and address of the letter-writer must be given for verification purposes.

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University of Illinois renews Fogarty Program in Ukraine

CHICAGO – The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) recently renewed its competitive grant from the Fogarty International Center at the National Institutes of Health for “International Research and Training in Occupational and Environmental Health in Ukraine” (ITREOH). The grant provides renewed five-year funding for Ukrainian visiting scientists, Ukrainian scientific conferences, and collaborative research with U.S. institutions. The principal investigator of this grant is Dr. Daniel Hryhorczuk, professor and director of the Great Lakes Centers for Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health at the University of Illinois School of Public Health.

During its first five-year Fogarty cycle, which ended in 2001, the university’s ITREOH program was recognized as a highly successful model by the National Institutes of Health. Ukrainian partners included the Institute of Occupational Medicine; the Institute of Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology; the Scientific Center for Hygiene; the Institute for Medico-Ecologic Problems; and Kyiv State Medical University.

The ITREOH program trained 14 Ukrainian visiting scientists through one-to-three month training visits at the University of Illinois and at U.S. governmental research institutes. The program conducted five scientific conferences and seven seminars in Ukraine, including the NATO Workshop on Public Health

Aspects of Environmental Pollution in Lviv in 1995; the International Congress on Agricultural Safety and Health in Kyiv in 1998; and the first National Congress on Bioethics in Kyiv in 2001.

A major focus of the ITREOH program has been collaborative research and capacity-building of Ukrainian research institutes. The program has continued to support the Family and Children of Ukraine research program, which is the Ukrainian component of the European Longitudinal Study of Pregnancy and Childhood.

This research program was initiated by Lida Truchly and Dr. Susan Monaghan and incorporated into the activities of the UIC ITREOH program when both Ms. Truchly and Dr. Monaghan joined the team. The ITREOH program helped support the establishment of the Louise Hamilton Center for Children’s Environmental Health in Ukraine, which is the research hub for the Family and Children of Ukraine research program.

In 1998 UIC and its Ukrainian partners carried out the sole environmental health study under the auspices of the Kuchma-Gore commission. This study, called “Environmental Pollutants and Health Status of Children,” assessed the influence of environmental factors on the health of children living in Mariupol and Kyiv. The UIC also helped support Ukraine’s Ministry of Environment and Nuclear Protection in the development of Ukraine’s National Environmental Health

Action Plan.

The UIC’s ITREOH plan for the new five-year cycle again focuses on bringing in visiting scientists, supporting in-country conferences and conducting collaborative research. The major Fogarty partners in Ukraine include academicians Yuri Kundiev (director of the Institute of Occupational Medicine), Andriy Serdiuk (former minister of health and director of the Scientific Center for Hygiene), Elena Lukyanova (director of the Institute of Pediatrics, Obstetrics, and Gynecology), Mykola Prodanchuk (director of the Institute of Ecohygiene and Toxicology), and Mykola Tronko (director of the Institute of Endocrinology and Metabolism).

The UIC Fogarty team has grown to include Dr. Irina Dardynskaia, Irene Oliynyk, Dr. Robert Cohen, Dr. Peter Scheff and Dr. Lorraine Conroy.

In addition to Family and Children of Ukraine, UIC has established a new research initiative on the health of coal miners in Donbas, supported in part by the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. UIC has established a second research center, called the Chernobyl Data Management Center, at the Institute of Endocrinology in Kyiv. This data center is supported by a contract from the U.S. National Cancer Institute which assists in managing data from the U.S.-Ukrainian study of thyroid cancer among children following the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The ITRE-

OH grant also supports the publication of the Ukrainian-language journal Environment and Health.

UIC involvement in environmental health problems in Ukraine began in 1990, when Dr. Hryhorczuk and his UIC colleagues were asked to assist in the investigation of the outbreak of chemical illness among children in Chernivtsi.

In 1992 the UIC initiated the Ukrainian Environmental Health Project with a \$10,000 grant from the Ukrainian National Credit Union Association. Since then, the UIC Great Lakes Center has successfully raised over \$2 million in competitive U.S. grant funds to help improve occupational and environmental health in Ukraine.

On April 13, the Great Lakes Center will be celebrating its 25th anniversary with a gala celebration at the Chicago Science and Industry Museum. Honorary Chairs for this event include Illinois Gov. George Ryan, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and Cook County Board President John Stroger.

Since collaboration with Ukrainian scientific institutes has been such an important component of its activities, the celebration will include a Chernobyl exhibit, Ukrainian food and a performance by the Ukrainian dance group Hromovytsia.

Readers wishing to learn more about the UIC ITREOH program or about the April 13 celebration may consult the UIC GLC website at www.uic.edu/sph/glakes.



Joseph Main, director of health and safety for the United Mine Workers of America, meets with a Ukrainian coal miner.



A researcher measures PCB levels in Mariupol children as part of the health research program “Environmental Pollutants and Health Status of Children” conducted by the University of Illinois at Chicago in Mariupol and Kyiv.

Ukraine endures...

(Continued from page 8)

Administration and a leading member of Mr. Lytvyn’s electoral bloc. While the charges against the president and his two officials are very serious, one must wonder about the timing in releasing the information two weeks before election day. It must be noted that both Mr. Zhyr and Mr. Omelchenko are aligned with Ms. Tymoshenko in the parliamentary race.

Ukrainians witnessed another pre-election tactic last week, one that ultimately failed, after Leonid Hrach, chairman of the Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the leading Communist Party figure there, was banned from taking part in elections to the regional legislative body by a local court for allegedly filing a false financial statement. After the ruling, he stated that he would not allow elections on the

peninsula to proceed and would call for a referendum to have Crimea joined with Russia. He has since backed off on both threats, but is yet to be reinstated as a local candidate.

Then, on March 13 in Nikopol, an unknown person threw a Molotov cocktail through a window of the Kanal 5 tele-radio station, destroying communications equipment and setting ablaze one of its cars. The incident occurred the same day that Robert Menard of the international human rights group Reporters Without Borders asked President Kuchma to intervene to determine why police action was taken after Mr. Yushchenko of Our Ukraine was given airtime on the channel in that eastern Ukrainian city.

The ubiquitous and irascible Progressive Socialist Natalia Vitrenko, who is running for Parliament as the leader of the Natalia Vitrenko Bloc, got into the act on March 8 when she took part in a television debate, but only

briefly. After accusing the Studio 1+1 television network on which she was appearing of being “a tool of the United States” and then several times calling her opponent, Yulia Tymoshenko, a “bandit,” she stomped off the stage, having added to her reputation as unpredictable, controversial and a public relations master.

Viktor Chernomyrdin, Russia’s former prime minister and current ambassador to Ukraine, put his imprint on the election process as well when he commented on March 5 that the “mass visits” by Western leaders in the weeks leading up to the elections were a “humiliation and an insult to Ukraine.” He did not explain, however, how the undue influence he believed the West was trying to have on the elections differed from his own free access to President Kuchma or the close ties he has with many of Ukraine’s political leaders.

What has made these elections so closely contested and so fraught with electoral improprieties, at the least, is that

the national deputies chosen on March 31 will have much to say about how presidential elections shape up two years hence. The successes, or failures, the leaders of the major political parties and blocs achieve will determine how they will be positioned in the bigger race: the run to achieve the highest office in the land. In this country, where the presidency has extensive powers, winning that election campaign is akin to a coronation.

The Lytvyns, Medvedchuks and Yushchenkos are not campaigning merely to gain seats for their people and themselves in the next Verkhovna Rada, they are also jousting with their opponents to determine who has the political power and prowess to gain the psychological and electoral edge as the presidential campaign nears. Some of them believe that gaining that advantage is worth pushing democracy aside. For them it is an all-out war in which the end justifies the means. Unfortunately this is what Ukraine continues to endure.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK: An inside look at the 2002 Games

by Andrew Nynka

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah – At the closing ceremony Mitt Romney declared Salt Lake City's handling, and the overall outcome, of the 19th Winter Olympic Games a tremendous success. His pat on the back sounded good booming out of the loudspeakers but, although Games organizers did have much to be proud of, the view was different from the ground for The Weekly's one-man Olympic "staff."

Without question, Mr. Romney and his Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC) should be commended for their handling of security issues during the games. Be it the Air National Guard helicopters flying overhead, the multitude of secret service personnel patrolling Olympic venues or the security screening and x-ray points established at seemingly every turn, I never felt more secure.

But the Games had a different feel than the tightly knit winter wonderland portrayed on TV. Olympic venues were a scattered circle with an approximate radius of over 60 miles and the city of Salt Lake its center. I was looking to find a quaint village nestled in a mountain resort with everybody milling around some rustic Main Street, but the best I could find was Park City.

However, calling the silver-mining boomtown the hotbed of Olympic activity would be inaccurate, considering the home of the Sundance Film Festival hosted only six of the combined 78 Olympic medal events.

With the necessity of post 9/11 security in the United States, it's not unreasonable to claim that the rest of the venues – enclosed like mini-fortresses and guarded by small armies – also lacked a certain small-town, Winter Olympic feel.

And perhaps because of this new era of high security, delivered to us by the realization that terrorism can touch us all, the Winter Olympic Games may never again come tightly wrapped around Barcelona's mysterious streets (1992) or charming Norwegian villages (1994).

Indeed, the Games are expanding and will almost certainly continue to do so. Claims of Salt Lake City being the largest Winter Games will last only until 2006, when Torino, Italy, seems destined to take the title.

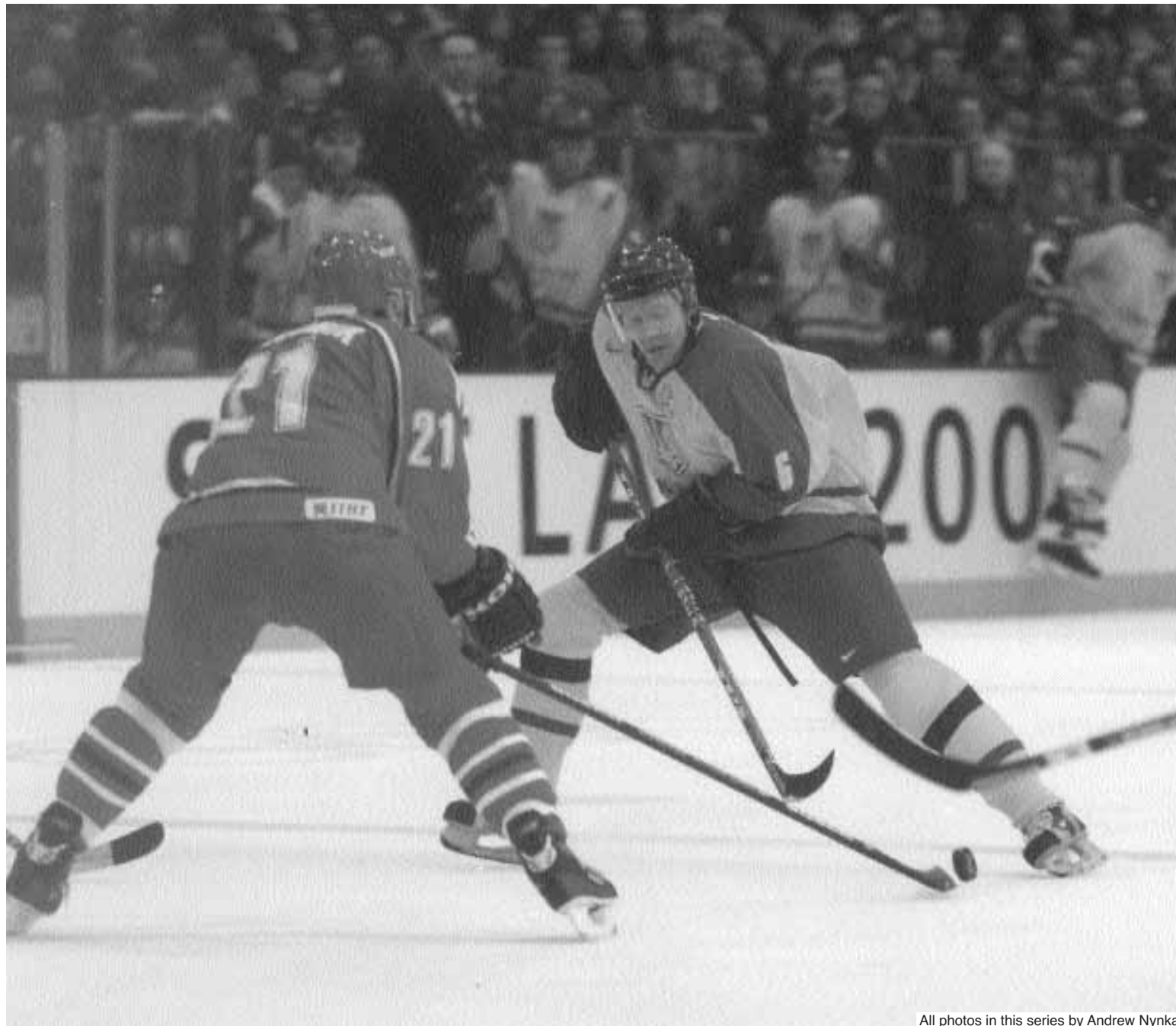
Even the high-security residential zone of the Olympic Village, where athletes could eat, sleep, train and mingle amongst themselves, was separate from Olympic activity.

It was precisely this distance and separation between events and venues that made manning The Weekly's one-man "bureau" a logistical challenge as the assignment involved shooting photos, covering and writing stories, conducting interviews and traversing the distance between events, the hotel and the Main Media Center.

Although there was no one specific city square or main boulevard containing a special "Olympic magic" where all gathered, it was most definitely in the air.

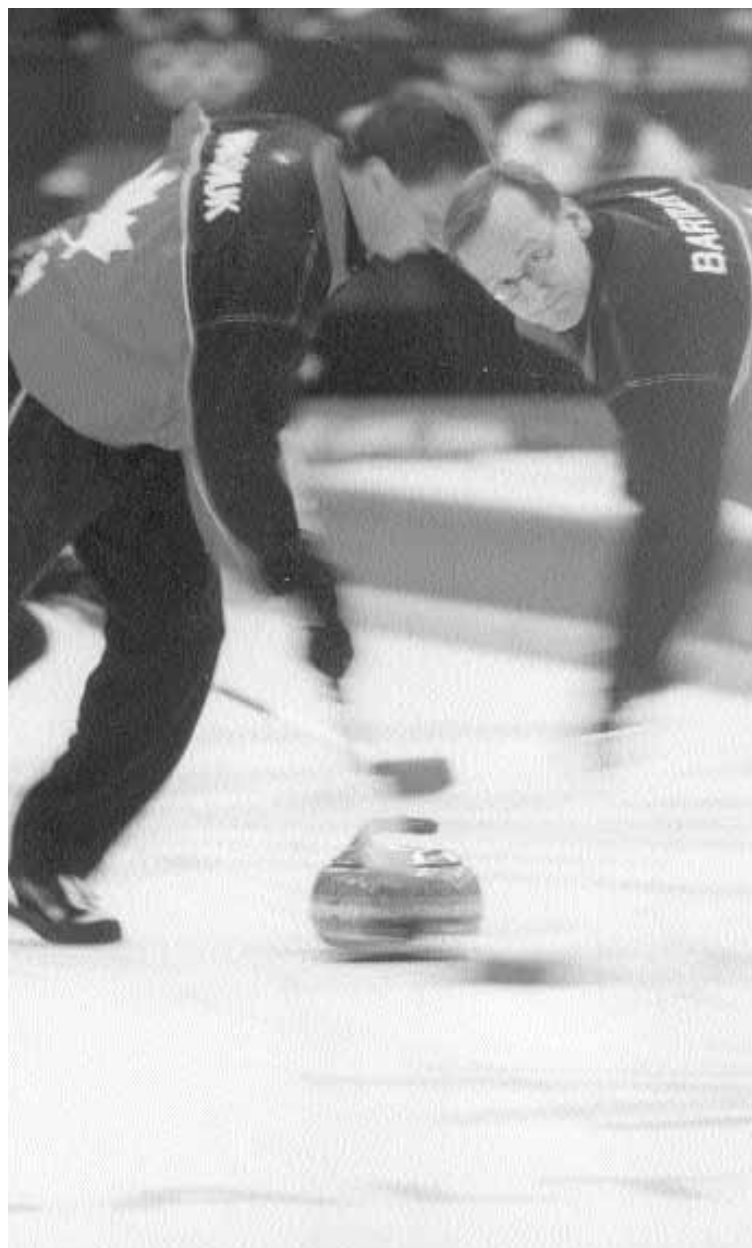
You could feel it walking in downtown Salt Lake City – it was evident in the expressions and well wishes of the 25,000 (mostly Mormon) volunteers as they tried, usually unsuccessfully, to help me navigate the seemingly endless routes of shuttles traveling the half an hour north to the Ice Sheet or Snowbasin ski area in Ogden, the hour ride south to the Peaks Ice Arena in Provo or the hour-and-a-half ride east to Deer Valley Resort that hosted alpine and freestyle skiing events.

Perhaps, in this year of fervently strong American patriotism, the distance was actually a positive factor for the Games – better for the hundreds of international tourists who came to be a part of the Olympic ideal, a celebration of various



All photos in this series by Andrew Nynka

Andrii Sriubko (No. 6) of Ukraine takes on a Belarusian defenseman in Ukraine's Olympic ice hockey debut.



Members of the Canadian curling team compete during the finals.



Leonid Solovii of Ukraine supporting the women's biathlon team.



Jacob Davis of Brigham Young University's International Dance Ensemble performs during the Hopak.



Members of the Brigham Young University International Dance Ensemble following their performance at the Ethnic Village.



A Ukrainian forward moves the puck on a Latvian defenseman. Ukraine lost 9-2, taking 10th place in the final ice hockey standings.

cultures and backgrounds, and not an American football pep rally.

The venues themselves were fine. Some were well-planned, while others seemed a nightmare with lines of tourists, media and VIPs waiting their turn to be thoroughly poked and prodded by guards at security checkpoints. The VIPs came with skis and free passes in hand, while I awaited my call to another three-hour round-trip shuttle ride to cover the next event.

The best organized were the E Center and Peaks ice arenas, where the world's greatest hockey players stretched their skills on the larger Olympic ice and left memorable women's and men's final showdowns between the United States and Canada (in case you missed it, Canada won both games).

However, some of the most skilled and fastest hockey came in the early rounds where East European teams, composed almost solely of amateurs, such as Latvia and Slovenia, clashed on the wide open European ice.

The National Hockey League decided it would suspend play for only the final round of Olympic competition, in order to offer its players the ability to represent their national clubs. However, the move left those national teams most in need of professional talent without some of their best players during the preliminary rounds. It's thanks to Bobby Clark, general manager for the NHL's Philadelphia Flyers, that one of Ukraine's top scorers, Ruslan Fedotenko, was able to split his time during the preliminary round playing for his national team and his professional club team. Mr. Fedotenko was joined on the Ukrainian team by fellow NHLers Dmitri Khristich, Sergei Varlamov and Alexei Ponikarovsky.

I'm left wondering what might have been if Ukraine had faced Belarus armed with its professional players – the same ones who helped upset Switzerland and later went on to beat France.

Or if athletes such as luger Lilia Ludan and men's aerialist Stanislav Kravchuk, who finished sixth and fifth, respectively, only had that little break go their way.

Though only a small number of Ukraine's athletes were near medal contention, they still managed significant fan-based support – most of it from Mormon youngsters with blue-and-yellow flags and hockey jerseys. Many of them reminisced to *The Weekly* of their missionary days spent in the eastern Donbas or central Kyivan regions.

And yet, one of the trip's more memorable moments had nothing to do with sport. With the Hopak as its highlight and signature piece, the Brigham Young University International Folk Dance Ensemble entertained Salt Lake and its visitors with the color and artistry of Ukrainian dance at the Ethnic Village located on the corner of State Street and 400 South. It's almost astonishing to note that not one of the troupe's members had more than four years of training in Ukrainian dance.

A moment should be taken here to specifically thank Laryssa Barabash-Temple who was able to secure what surely would have otherwise been impossible. It was through her efforts that *The Ukrainian Weekly* was accredited among the press covering the 19th Winter Olympic Games.

All in all, Ukraine's athletes took part in 12 of the total 15 events – many of them performing above expectations. And yet we can't help think about the dismal women's biathlon performance.

Perhaps in the future, as Ukraine's bureaucrats realize their athletes need better support, both financially and emotionally, we'll not only see more Ukrainians on the medals platforms but the introduction of – my personal dream – a Ukrainian national curling team.

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NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

bloc in a single-seat constituency in Dnipropetrovsk and the husband of President Leonid Kuchma's daughter. (RFE/RL Newsline)

... warns against Western plot

KYIV – ICTV presenter Dmitrii Kiselev suggested to viewers on March 7 that the row in the Verkhovna Rada over Mykola Melnychenko's tapes, the death of state-owned arms exporter Ukrspetsseksport General Director Valeriy Maleyev and the reported agreement by former presidential bodyguard Mr. Melnychenko to testify in the trial of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko in California may be different elements of a single international plot to thwart the Ukrainian parliamentary election. "All this is happening in one week, three weeks before the end of the election campaign. It is obvious that only a super-powerful structure could be strong enough to carry out such a global-scale coordination ... The West is paving the way, well in advance, for the future non-recognition of parliamentary election results. The U.S. ambassador [to Ukraine], Carlos Pascual, obviously with a view to the future, has already voiced U.S. concerns about bias on television and administrative pressure," Mr. Kiselev said. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Has voting already started?

KYIV – Our Ukraine's press service reported on March 7 that the election commission in a constituency in Kirovohrad, central Ukraine, has already inaugurated a voting process by collecting signatures from voters confirming that they were given ballots. Our Ukraine warns that such a practice is illegal and may lead to vote falsification, arguing that if the voters who signed the voting lists fail to appear at the polls on March 31, their ballots will be filled and cast by the commission. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Deputy charges presidential complicity

KYIV – National Deputy Oleksander Zhyr, the head of the temporary parliamentary commission dealing with the murder of journalist Heorhii Gongadze, told the Verkhovna Rada on March 7 that the commission possesses materials testifying to illegal arms trade, UNIAN reported. Mr. Zhyr said such information is on audio recordings made by former presidential bodyguard Mykola Melnychenko, adding that the authenticity of the audiotapes was confirmed by a recent U.S. expert examination. National Deputy Oleksander Yeliashkevych proposed to give Mr. Zhyr's commission the right to deal with issues connected with President Kuchma's impeachment, but fellow deputies declined the proposal. Mr. Zhyr subsequently proposed that the Parliament hold a special session on March 12 to discuss the situation in Ukraine in view of the fact that the Melnychenko tapes were confirmed as authentic, but lawmakers rejected that motion as well. (RFE/RL Newsline)

CEC warns Socialist Party on video

KYIV – The Central Election Commission has warned the Socialist Party for broadcasting an election campaign video on Ukrainian Television on February 21 in which President Leonid Kuchma, presidential staff chief Volodymyr Lytvyn and former Internal Affairs Minister Yuriy Kravchenko were accused of involvement in the disappearance of journalist Heorhii Gongadze, UNIAN

(Continued on page 15)

NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 14)

reported. The commission said the video violated the constitutional right of every citizen to be presumed innocent until found guilty by a court ruling. The Socialist Party's video presented excerpts from the tapes of Mykola Melnychenko, in which Messrs. Kuchma, Lytvyn and Kravchenko appear to discuss how to get rid of Gongadze. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Station closed after Yushchenko speech

NIKOPOL – The Kanal-5 local television channel in Nikopol, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, has been closed after broadcasting an address by Our Ukraine bloc leader Viktor Yushchenko on March 2, the Our Ukraine press service reported on March 6. Kanal-5 Director Kostiantyn Liaschenko, who is running for Nikopol mayor, said Mr. Yushchenko was denied airtime on other channels; therefore, he gave some of his own airtime for Mr. Yushchenko's address when the former prime minister was visiting Nikopol. Mr. Liaschenko added that the local state electricity board unlawfully switched off the television company's transmitter on March 5. (RFE/RL Newsline)

PACE comments on election campaign

KYIV – Summing up her visit to Ukraine, Hanne Severinsen, the head of a monitoring mission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), told journalists in Kyiv on March 1 that the parliamentary election campaign has been marred by fear, harassment and intimidation, Reuters reported. "Sixty percent of local electoral committees are controlled by pro-presidential parties ... And [we are] very concerned over repeated statements about the misuse of power resulting from illegal usage of administrative resources by pro-presidential forces, particularly in the regions," Ms. Severinsen noted. "There is absolutely no political dialogue, there is just fear," she added. However, Ms. Severinsen also said the current campaign is more democratic than the 1999 presidential election, adding that candidates now have more freedom to declare their views and protest violations in courts. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Ukrainian opposition activist attacked

DONETSK – Lawmaker Valentyn Zubov, the head of the opposition Fatherland Party's regional branch in Donetsk, was attacked in Sloviansk, Donetsk Oblast, on March 2, UNIAN reported. The attack took place at the town's railway station in front of a wagon of the Kyiv-Luhansk train just as Mr. Zubov was receiving a parcel containing the plan and route for Fatherland Party leader Yulia Tymoshenko's tour of the region planned for March 5-6. The attackers were three athletically built men who knocked Mr. Zubov over, beat him and snatched the parcel from his hands. Mr. Zubov views the attack as designed to acquire information about the tour in order to disrupt Ms. Tymoshenko's visit to the Donetsk Oblast. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Supreme Court reinstates Raiduha bloc

KYIV – The Supreme Court on February 28 ruled that the decision of the Central Election Commission on the annulment of the registration of the Raiduha (Rainbow) environmental bloc was illegitimate, Interfax reported. There are currently 33 parties and blocs on the ballot in the country's parliamentary elections scheduled for March 31. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Crimean commission ousts 30 candidates

SYMFEROPOL – The Election Commission of the Autonomous

Republic of Crimea on February 26 canceled the registration of 30 candidates seeking mandates in the 100-member Crimean legislature in the March 31 ballot, the UNIAN news service reported. A majority of those ejected from the election belong to two groups opposing the Crimean Bloc of Leonid Hrach: the Kunitsyn Team and the Transparent Power Civic Committee. The ousted candidates include former Crimean Premier Serhii Kunitsyn, who heads the election bloc bearing his name. The previous day, a court in Symferopol had annulled the registration of Mr. Hrach, the leader of the Crimean branch of the Communist Party of Ukraine. Crimean Election Commission Chairman Ivan Poliakov denied that the commission took Mr. Hrach's side by canceling the registration of his key political opponents, Interfax reported on February 27. Meanwhile, Crimean Communists have pitched seven tents on Symferopol's central square, protesting the annulment of Mr. Hrach's registration. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Tensions mount over Hrach case

SYMFEROPOL – Addressing a crowd of more than 1,000 supporters in Symferopol on February 27, the chairman of the Crimean Parliament and leader of the local Communist Party Leonid Hrach suggested that he will appeal to Crimean residents to boycott the March 31 legislative election if he is not reinstated as a candidate for a seat in the Crimean legislature, Interfax reported. "The election in Crimea will take place only if Hrach and his bloc participate in it as candidates," he said. Mr. Hrach was banned from running by a court decision. He did not rule out the possibility of holding a referendum in Crimea to accede to the Russian Federation. "If Kyiv and its vassals continue what they are doing by bringing unprecedented political and legal pressure to bear on us, we will reserve the right, in particular, to speak of a referendum," Mr. Hrach said. Moreover, Mr. Hrach announced that he intends to run in the presidential election in 2004. "Let them fear me," he told the rally in Symferopol. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Idea of separatist referendum rebuffed

KYIV – Verkhovna Rada Vice-Chairman Stepan Havrysh said on February 28 that Crimean Parliament Chairman Leonid Hrach's suggestion that a referendum be held on acceding Crimea to the Russian Federation is "an impetuous, ill-considered and totally groundless statement that sounds like blackmail," New Channel Television reported. "It is an extremely dangerous way to add fuel to the artificial conflict on the Crimean Peninsula," Mr. Havrysh added. "Hrach should understand that, apart from political slogans, there is responsibility – not only political – for calls beyond the limits of current legislation," presidential administration chief Volodymyr Lytvyn commented. Mr. Lytvyn said the situation in Crimea is stable and under control, adding that statements about thousand-strong rallies in support of Mr. Hrach have nothing to do with reality. A court decision last month annulled Mr. Hrach's election bid in Crimea, provoking tension and protests. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Russian politicians appeal to Kuchma

KYIV – A group of prominent Russian politicians – Sergei Shoigu, Yuriy Luzhkov, Gennadii Zyuganov, Boris Nemtsov and Gennadii Raikov – have appealed to Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma to "restore justice" with regard to Leonid Hrach by giving him the opportunity to take part in the upcoming election, ITAR-TASS reported on

February 27. "The removal from the electoral campaign under invented pretexts of Leonid Hrach, the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic [of Crimea], is evidence of the activation of the forces that intend to undermine the relations between Ukraine and Russia," the agency quoted from the appeal. UNIAN quoted presidential administration chief Volodymyr Lytvyn as saying that statements of "some Russian politicians" regarding the ban on Mr. Hrach's election bid "are coming close to interference in Ukraine's internal affairs." (RFE/RL Newsline)

Hrach opponents complain of 'revenge'

SYMFEROPOL – Transparent Government Civic Committee head Andrii Senchenko on February 27 said the decision of the Election Commission of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to cancel the registration of 30 candidates from his group and the Kunitsyn Team is Leonid Hrach's "revenge" for the court decision annulling his election bid, UNIAN reported. Former Crimean Prime Minister Serhii Kunitsyn, who leads the election bloc bearing his name, expressed a similar view by saying that Crimea's Election Commission is being "controlled" by Mr. Hrach. "What is going on in Crimea is an attempt to exert pressure on and to blackmail the Ukrainian political authorities. Can you imagine a governor banished from the race somewhere in Russia threatening with a referendum to join Ukraine or some other country?" New Channel Television quoted Mr. Kunitsyn as saying. (RFE/RL Newsline)

Hrach appeals disqualification

SYMFEROPOL – Crimean Supreme Council Chairman Leonid Hrach on March 6 said he has filed an appeal with

the Crimean Court of Appeals against the decision of the Central District Court in Symferopol to rescind his registration as a Crimean parliamentary candidate, UNIAN reported. Speaking on ICTV Television the same day, Mr. Hrach said the annulment of his election registration in Crimea is an attempt at his "political assassination." ICTV reported that the work of the Crimean Election Commission has been paralyzed because of continuing sick leaves of five commission members, who are supporters of the Hrach-led Crimean Communist Party. Meanwhile, the acting head of Ukraine's Supreme Court, Volodymyr Stefaniuk, told UNIAN that the annulment of Mr. Hrach's registration as a candidate in Crimea cannot be rescinded by any authority, since the court decision on this was final and not subject to appeal. (RFE/RL Newsline)

CEC leaves Hrach leader in Rada race

KYIV – The Central Election Commission on March 11 rejected a motion by candidate Tetiana Korobova to annul the registration of Crimean Parliament Chairman Leonid Hrach as a candidate to the Verkhovna Rada on the list of the Communist Party, UNIAN reported. Ms. Korobova argued that Mr. Hrach violated Ukrainian legislation by providing false information about his property and income as well as by using his position as Crimean Parliament chairman to promote his election bid. Earlier a court in Symferopol had disqualified Mr. Hrach as a candidate to Crimea's Supreme Council by saying he committed exactly the same offenses. The commission in Kyiv ruled, however, that Mr. Hrach did not misinform it about his possessions and income, and did not take advantage of his official post for election campaign purposes. (RFE/RL Newsline)

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COMMUNITY CHRONICLE

Museum's malanka: a new community tradition



Mistress of ceremonies Roma Slobodian Odulak (left) with guests at The Ukrainian Museum's malanka at Tavern on the Green.

by Marta Baczynsky

NEW YORK – Elegant, sophisticated and delightfully merry, The Ukrainian Museum's Malanka 2002 fund-raiser once again treated its guests to an evening of splendid dining and dancing at the Tavern on the Green. Situated in New York's Central Park, the world's most expensive piece of real estate, the world-famous restaurant provided a fantasy setting for the modern-day celebration of a traditional holiday, the Ukrainian New Year's Eve.

The majestic elms surrounding the Tavern were already ablaze with thousands of glittering lights as the patrons, in fashionable evening dress, arrived to gather for a cocktail interlude prior to the main event – a

dinner-dance in the restaurant's Crystal Room. Decorated with its brilliant chandeliers and ceiling-to-floor windows that brought the outdoor magic to the dining tables, the ornate room precluded anyone from noticing that all that was lacking in this overall wonderland setting was snow.

This year the museum organized its third Malanka. Judging by the excellent turnout of mostly a younger crowd not only this evening, but during the two previously held New Year's Eve dances as well, it is evident that The Ukrainian Museum has established a new tradition in the greater New York community of Ukrainian Americans. What makes these events so unique is a compila-

(Continued on page 18)

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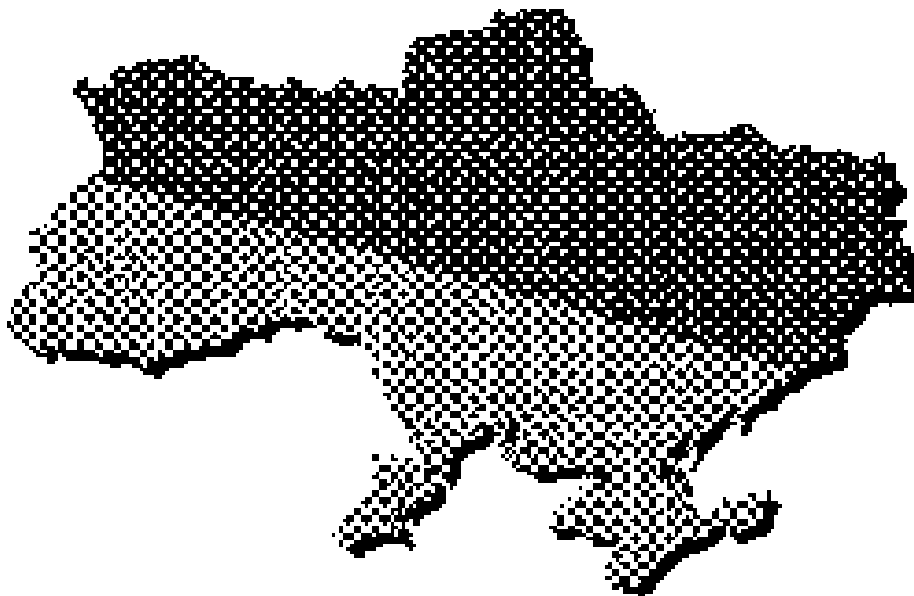
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NOTES ON PEOPLE

Named to top posts at Hackensack hospital

HACKENSACK, N.J. – Ihor S. Sawczuk, M.D., of Rockleigh, N.J., was recently named chairman of the Department of Urology and Chief of Urologic Oncology at Hackensack University Medical Center. In his new position, Dr. Sawczuk provides leadership for all of the department's expanded services that focus on specific urinary disorders, including Urological Oncology, The Continence Center, Cryosurgery, Endourology and Stone Center, Reproductive Medicine, The Sexual Function Center and The Pediatric Urology Center.

"On behalf of the executive staff, physicians and employees we are proud to welcome Dr. Sawczuk to our institution," said John P. Ferguson, president and chief executive officer at Hackensack University Medical Center. "The wealth of knowledge and experience that he brings to the medical center is a valuable asset to the entire Department of Urology and our patients."

Dr. Sawczuk is the former vice-chairman of urology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University in New York City, N.Y., and an attending in Urology at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York.

He received his medical degree from the Medical College of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and had a surgical internship and a residency at St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center in New York.

Dr. Sawczuk also completed a residency in adult and pediatric urology at the Squier Urological Clinic, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, and received his urologic oncology training as a fellow of the National Cancer Institute in the Departments of Urology and Human Genetics of Columbia University.

He was named a Ferdinand C. Valentine Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, a Burroughs Wellcome Scholar of the American Urological Association and an E.R. Squibb and Sons National Kidney Foundation Young Investigator. Dr. Sawczuk has received awards from the New York Academy of Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Heart Association, Society of Basic Urologic Research and the National Kidney Foundation.

In 1995 Dr. Sawczuk was presented the prestigious Russell and Mary Hugh Scott Education Award by the American Foundation of Urologic Disease. In 1996 the Office of First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton recognized Dr. Sawczuk for his humanitarian efforts in relief work related to the Chernobyl



Ihor S. Sawczuk, M.D., chairman of the Department of Urology and Chief of Urologic Oncology at Hackensack University Medical Center.

nuclear disaster. He is a past board member of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, was co-director of the International Cooperative Urological Education Program of the American Urological Association and co-director of the Chipovsky Grant for International Urologic Exchange. He is a past member of the Urology Advisory Board of the New York Academy of Medicine. Citations include: Who's Who Among Rising Young Americans, New York Magazine's feature article "Best Doctors in New York," Best Doctors: NY Metro Area and BestDocs.com.

Dr. Sawczuk is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and of the New York Academy of Medicine. He belongs to numerous urological associations, including the American Urological Association and the Society of Urologic Oncology, is board certified in urology and has authored/co-authored more than 200 abstracts, articles and chapters. Dr. Sawczuk specializes in the surgery and management of urologic cancers, including prostate, bladder and testes. His specific area of interest is the surgical and immunological management of renal cancer and he sits on the Medical Advisory Board of the National Kidney Cancer Associates.

Dr. Sawczuk is a member of the Ukrainian Medical Association of North America, as well as Ukrainian National Association Branch 194.

Hackensack University Medical Center, a teaching and research hospital affiliated with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – New Jersey Medical School and a member of the University Health System of New Jersey, is the largest provider of inpatient and outpatient services in the state of New Jersey.



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2002 camps and workshops at Soyuzivka

TENNIS CAMP, SATURDAY, JUNE 22 – THURSDAY, JULY 4

Intensive tennis instructions for boys and girls, ages 12-18.
Instructors' fees \$80.00 per child
Room and board: UNA members \$510.00/non-members \$560.00 for full session
Insurance \$30.00 per child per week
Instructors: George Sawchak and Lida Sawchak-Kopach. Limited to 45 students
Supervisor: Olya Czerkas – 24 hrs supervised

BOYS' AND GIRLS' RECREATIONAL CAMP, AGES 7-12, SATURDAY, JULY 6 – SATURDAY, JULY 20

Featuring hiking, swimming, games, Ukrainian songs and folklore, supervised 24 hr.
Room and board: UNA members \$330.00 per week/non-members \$380.00 per week
Counselor fee: \$30.00 per child per week. Limited to 45 campers per week
Insurance \$15.00 per child per week
Instructor and supervisors: Olya Czerkas

CHEMNEY FUN CENTER, SUNDAY, JULY 7 – FRIDAY, JULY 12 & SUNDAY, JULY 14 – FRIDAY, JULY 19

Geared to exposing the Ukrainian heritage to the English-speaking children, ages 4-8,
Daily sessions: 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Registration/counselor fee: \$135.00 if parents staying at Soyuzivka and pay the regular room rates.
Registration/counselor fee: \$175.00 if parents staying off premises
Registration fee includes T-shirts, child's lunch, and insurance fee of \$10.00 per child.

SOYUZIVKA SPORTS CAMP, SUNDAY, JULY 21 - SUNDAY, JULY 28

A new fun camp, where children will do all three sports and more.
Swimming, soccer, volleyball for boys and girls, ages 8-14.
Room and board: UNA members \$265.00/non-member \$315.00.
Instructor's fee \$100.00 per child; session limited to 45 students.
Insurance \$15.00 per child.
Instructors: Serge Nalywayko, Victor Cymbal, Andy Cymbal, Eugene Kruchowy

TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN FOLK DANCE CAMP, SUNDAY, AUGUST 4 - SATURDAY, AUGUST 17

Ukrainian folk dancing for beginners, intermediate and advanced students, ages 8-16
Room and board: UNA members \$580.00/non-member \$630.00 for full session
Insurance \$30.00 per child per week
Instructor's fee \$235.00 per child; Director: Roma Pryma Bohachevsky
Instructors fee for dance camp is to be made payable to: UCDA INC. and forwarded to Soyuzivka along with payment of room & board fee. **The director must approve acceptance into dance camp program, and no one will be accepted for less than the full session, unless it is with the approval of the director attendance limited to 60 students.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED BASIS UPON RECEIPT OF A \$75.00 DEPOSIT PER CHILD/PER CAMP. A REGISTRATION FEE OF \$100.00 (EXCEPT FOR CHEMNEY CAMP) PER CHILD/PER CAMP WILL APPLY TO ALL CHILDREN STAYING OFF SOYUZIVKA GROUNDS. THE DEPOSIT WILL BE APPLIED AGAINST THIS FEE.

BY ORDER OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT, ALL NECESSARY MEDICAL FORMS AND PERMISSION SLIPS MUST BE COMPLETED AND RECEIVED BY SOYUZIVKA TOGETHER WITH THE FULL PAYMENT OF INSTRUCTORS' FEES AND CAMP PAYMENTS NO LATER THAN 3 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE START OF THE CAMP SESSION. OTHERWISE, THE CHILD WILL LOOSE HIS OR HER PLACE IN CAMP. NO EXCEPTIONS.

SOYUZIVKA WILL APPLY A 10% DISCOUNT TO THE ROOM & BOARD FEES ONLY FOR THE 3rd AND 4th WEEK OF ATTENDANCE AT ONE OF OUR CAMPS, OR FOR A SECOND CHILD IN THE FAMILY ATTENDING THE SAME SESSION OF CAMP.

PAYMENTS FOR ROOM AND BOARD CAN BE MADE TO SOYUZIVKA BY CASH, CHECK, VISA, MASTERCARD, AMEX OR DISCOVER CARDS.
PAYMENTS FOR INSTRUCTOR/COUNSELOR FEES MUST BE MADE BY CHECK OR CASH.
CREDIT CARDS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE FORM OF PAYMENT FOR INSTRUCTORS' FEES.

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO UNA ESTATE - CAMP FEE, UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE. THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS TO STUDENTS LEAVING PRIOR TO THE END OF A CAMP FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER, AND NO CREDITS FOR LATE ARRIVALS.

PLEASE MAKE SURE TO HAVE YOUR CHILD'S UNA DISCOUNT CARD, OR DISCOUNT DOCUMENTATION FROM THE UNA HOME OFFICE OR THE BRANCH SECRETARY WITH YOU WHEN YOU PAY AND/OR BRING YOUR CHILD TO CAMP. IF NO PROOF OF MEMBERSHIP IS AVAILABLE – NO ADJUSTMENT CAN BE MADE.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE MANAGEMENT OF SOYUZIVKA. THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANYONE BASED ON AGE, RACE, CREED, SEX OR COLOR.

TO: ALL UNA MEMBERS

From January to March 2002, branches of the Ukrainian National Association will hold their annual meetings as mandated by the UNA By-Laws. It is very important that all members attend these meetings. This year, in preparation for the upcoming UNA Convention, branches will hold meetings for election of delegates. Branch meetings are announced in both The Ukrainian Weekly and Svoboda.

Participation of UNA members is important to the future of our organization.

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Museum's malanka...

(Continued from page 16)

tion of many factors.

At the beginning of each year it is the task of the Malanka organizer, the Special Events Committee on the museum's board of trustees, to research and locate that very special place in Manhattan that would answer its requirements. These were enumerated by the chair of the committee, Tatiana Tershakovec, who explained that the beauty and elegance of a setting, its cuisine, a central location, accessibility, on-site or nearby parking, and, of course, all at a reasonable cost, are the criteria that govern the selection process.

The members of the committee work hard to make sure that these considerations and their overall plans for the events result in their success, destined to be remembered with fondness by the participants for a long time.

This year's Malanka was the second such event held at the Central Park restaurant; the first was at the inimitable New York Water Club in 2000. It is worth speculating if Malanka 2003 will be held in a different "gem" of a setting, chosen from New York City's fabulous array of such similar venues.

Malanka 2002 was a wonderful event. More than 200 guests enjoyed the great ambiance, excellent food and each other's company. Their feet tapped, skipped and moved to the versatile music of the Montage orchestra, which provided with equal ease the fluid, romantic music of the tango and waltz, as well as the body-rocking beat of today's popular dances.

The articulate and charming young woman who most ably moderated the tempo of the evening was the mistress of ceremonies, Roma Slobodian Odulak. Dressed in a richly embroidered blouse from the Bukovyna region of Ukraine and a stylish long black skirt, Ms. Odulak gave the first indication, through her attire, that this Malanka was due for some traditional Ukrainian flavor.

It came with the emergence of four well-wishers, dressed in authentic Hutsul and Lemko costumes, lent for the occasion by Domka Rachlitska Slobodian of Montreal, mother of Ms. Odulak. The young men, Timish Hnateyko, Dr. Taras Odulak, Andriy Sonevitsky and Dr. Ihor Terleckyj, walked among the guests, chanting traditional Ukrainian New Year's wishes for health and

prosperity, while dispersing fists full of grain. This wonderful re-enactment of the beloved time-honored Ukrainian custom was a welcome reminder of the rich traditions of the Ukrainian historical and cultural legacy.

Malanka 2002 was honored with the presence of several special guests, among them the consul general of Ukraine in New York City, Serhiy Pohoreltzev, and his wife, Svitlana; the president of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Iryna Kurowyckyj; the president of the Ukrainian Institute of America, Walter Nazarewicz; and a former president of The Ukrainian Museum board, John Luchechko.

Malanka 2002 was sponsored by several friends of the museum. These individuals hold the institution in high esteem and their support of this event was an endorsement of the museum's agenda and goals. In her greeting to the guests, Board President Olha Hnateyko emphasized that the museum's successes and accomplishments in its 25-year history are due to the strong support base given to the institution by thousands of individuals and business concerns within our greater community in the United States. The start of construction of the new museum building in December 2001 is a testimony to that unfailing, continued support.

This year's sponsors of the Malanka were: Julian and Maria Baczynsky, Zenon Czernyk and Dr. Areta Podhorodecki, Lydia Ficalowych, Roman Hawrylak and Maria Tershakovec, Myron and Olha Hnateyko, Dr. Arthur and Irene Hryhorowych, Dr. Andrew and Tatiana Tershakovec, and Dr. Karl and Sofia Zaininger. The museum expressed gratitude for their patronage.

The success of such events as malanka 2002 is due to the long-term planning and work by members of the organizing committee, by volunteers, such as artist Ilona Sochynsky, who designed the invitation to the event, and members of the museum's administration. The joint, cooperative efforts of this team have proven to be very effective and productive on a larger scale as well, enhancing the museum's image, encouraging volunteerism and introducing the institution to a new audience.

The Malanka 2002 ended much too quickly. The music stopped; the guests departed with sighs of contentment. The lights dimmed and Central Park succumbed to the few hours of stillness that only a winter night could bring to the effervescent spirit of New York City.

Attention! Attention! Attention!

UNA BRANCH SECRETARIES, ORGANIZERS, ADVISORS, MEMBERS AND ELECTED DELEGATES TO THE 35TH UNA CONVENTION. THE UNA IS ANNOUNCING A PRECONVENTION ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN FROM JANUARY 2002 TO APRIL 30, 2002.

– FIRST PRIZE: \$500 coupon for travel to Ukraine (Dunwoodie Travel Agency) or

a \$500 UNA Annuity Policy.

Requirements: 15 new members with a minimum annual premium of \$2,000

– SECOND PRIZE: UNA Annuity Policy for \$300

Requirements: 10 new members with a minimum annual premium of \$1,500

– THIRD PRIZE: \$100

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Plast's Khmelnychenky honor Jakiw Shegryn on his 90th birthday

by Yaroslav I. Stanchak

WALTHAM, Mass. – On a spring-like day on Saturday, March 9, the Plast Fraternity of Khmelnychenky threw a surprise 90th birthday party for their long-time Plast mentor and Kozak brother, Jakiw Shegryn.

More than 30 members of the Sichovyí brotherhood travelled from near and far for this unique tribute and celebration hosted by the Boston “stezha” (branch) of the Khmelnychenky at the home of Evhen and Fran Muzyka. The arrival of Mr. Shegryn, known as “Druh” Jakiw, at the supposed meeting started the formal opening of activities.

Initially, Mr. Shegryn was somewhat perplexed as to the large number of members attending this particular meeting; this question was rapidly clarified after the opening formalities when the members burst out singing “Mnohaya Lita” in their inimitable fashion followed by laughter and much shouting of greetings.

Throughout the birthday song, Druh Jakiw’s expression displayed a wide range of emotions before finally settling into a beaming smile of delight and pleasure. This happiness continued throughout the course of the festivities that included presentations and greetings from near and far.

Mr. Shegryn, known as “Bratchyk” to his many friends, has been a key low-profile player in the Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization for the majority of his long life. He was instrumental in the development and implementation of many programs for beginning and young members



Andrew Hadzewycz

Members of the Kozak brotherhood of the Khmelnychenky Plast fraternity salute the long life and positive attitude of Jakiw Shegryn (standing, center), wishing him a “Mhohaya Lita” at a surprise 90th birthday gathering.

of Plast known as “novaky.” This was exemplified by his yearly commitment to running summertime Plast camps at both the Vovcha Trova and Bobrivka campgrounds. In the off-season he continued his efforts in the Plast branch of Boston.

This selfless service of over 50 years has positively influenced and shaped countless numbers of young people and adults. Mr. Shegryn has continued this commitment during his retirement by traveling to Ukraine for the past decade and taking part in its Plast camps.

In the words of Khmelnychenky member Borys Pawluk, “Druh Jakiw has always been the doer, with initiative and

action creating the reality and always taking precedence over garrulous words and lofty inaction. In a world of decorated generals, he is the master sergeant.”

Mr. Shegryn is planning to continue

his activities and will be traveling to Ukraine this summer to attend the Plast Jamboree 2002 that will celebrate the 90th anniversary of the youth organization’s founding in Lviv.

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ІНЖ. ІВАНА ШМОРГУНА

Родина сл. п. інж. Івана Шморгуна, який відійшов у вічність 9 грудня 2001 р. сердечно дякує всім, які брали участь в його останній дорозі. Особлива подяка

о. Володимиру Стелякові, парохіві катедри св. Андрія Первозваного у Сілвер Спрінг, Мд. та протодиякону Святославу Новицькому за їхню духовну опіку і всі похоронні відправи та Парастас 20 січня 2002 р. Рівнож велике спасибі о. Тарасові Лончині, парохіві парафії св. Тройці у Сілвер Спрінг, Мд., за духовну підтримку покійного Івася під час його хвороби.

Дякуємо хористам за чудовий спів хору катедри під керівництвом д-ра Ігоря Масника.

Я глибоко вдячна моїм чотирьом синам з дружинами і дітьми за їхню невтомну моральну і фізичну підтримку, а старшим Іванові і Євгенові – за глибокий і сердечний перегляд та підсумок життя з батьком та його вплив на їхнє особисте життя.

Зворушливо теплими словами прощали Івася д-р Ігор Масник, д-р Юрій Криволап, пані Слава і п. Микола Французенки, Осип Зінкевич, д-р Віталій Богданів, д-р Петро Чопівський і п. Любомир Козар.

Дякую Сестрицтву св. Ольги, дорогим відданим приятелям без допомоги яких не було б можливо так гарно все zorganizувати і всім, які словами і ділами облягували біль втрати.

Дякуємо за квіти, листи співчуття, щедри подарунки й пожертви в пам'ять могого незабутнього чоловіка, батька й дідуся.

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по 30 Ірина Ярославич, Валентин і Анна Забіяка;
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Gender issues...

(Continued from page 2)

does not oppose the Soviet era stereotype of the female role in politics being confined to areas such as maternal and child-welfare issues. As Zerkalo Nedeli/Dzerkalo Tyzhnia reported, Women for the Future "has no new ideology behind it either."

Valentyna Dovzhenko, the head of Women for the Future, also heads the All-Ukrainian Voluntary Fund of Hope and Good, as well as the State Committee of Family and Youth Affairs, which formerly was a ministry, and the parliamentary Committee on Family and Youth. The head of the controlling committee of the Fund of Hope and Good and the president of another NGO, the National Fund for the Social Defense of Mothers and Children, is Mrs. Kuchma. The Fund of Hope and Good was established by the Soviet-era Union of Ukrainian Women led by Maria Orlyk, a leading member of Women for the Future.

The reason that the Women for the Future Party has managed to become so popular so quickly is its access to "administrative resources, or closeness to centers of power, such as the executive, ensure high popularity and victory in Ukraine's elections. Independent, and thereby genuine, women's parties, such as the four women's parties other than the Women for the Future, stand little chance in elections when Women for the Future has executive support and, more importantly, the backing of Ukraine's first lady.

Women for the Future was created especially to ensure that another pro-presidential faction would exist in the next Parliament. Therefore, it will play the same role as the greens in the 1998 elections, who were able to win 5.43 percent of the vote by targeting floating voters, the undecided and those disillusioned with party politics. In this sense, Women for the Future campaigns on a platform of hostility to the very idea of the usefulness of party politics.

The platform of Women for the Future

and its traditional campaigning style appeals to women age 30-40 and centers on such issues as women's rights, health (e.g., breast cancer) and domestic violence. Women for the Future's closeness to Ukraine's first lady has also drawn comparisons to the Yugoslav United Party of the Left led by Slobodan Milosevic's wife, Mira Markovic.

Members of Women for the Future have been defined as "albinos" by the weekly Zerkalo Nedeli/Dzerkalo Tyzhnia because they are devoid of any ideological platform. The party's popularity has not grown because of advertising or rousing speeches in defense of women's rights; on the contrary, party members have instead traveled around Ukraine distributing material assistance at schools, military bases and factories. In the Sumy and Kharkiv oblasts, foodstuffs have been distributed free of charge. In every raion in Chernivtsi Oblast, "Photos for Mother" events were undertaken in schools, kindergartens, libraries and cultural clubs – during which free photos were taken of children standing next to Women for the Future party symbols. Afterward, presents were distributed free of charge to needy families.

According to the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, a third of the distribution of free assistance by election blocs in Ukraine is undertaken by Women for the Future. Grandiose concerts by Ukrainian and Russian pop stars in towns and villages throughout Ukraine organized by the party have cost some \$100,000, according to Zerkalo Nedeli/Dzerkalo Tyzhnia. Yet, the party is vague about its sources for the funds to finance the high cost of running such a brash campaign.

Women for the Future is likely to enter the next Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada. But the Soviet ideological influence on the party will likely mean that it will not advance women's rights in the sense understood by women's movements in the West. Instead, Ukraine will obtain another pro-presidential faction in Parliament that differs little from other oligarchic factions led by the opposite gender.

Kateryna Chumachenko...

(Continued from page 3)

guess what is most important is healthy food and healthy habits. One health ritual my husband taught me is the sauna. This winter I even rolled in the snow after one!

Which first lady do you admire most?

I suppose I would have to say Cheri Blair, since we have something in common – we both gave birth to a baby while our husbands were prime ministers. She is an intelligent and attractive woman who has a flourishing legal career and is considered an expert in her field in the United Kingdom. She gave birth to their fourth child when she was 45 years old. If you remember, she even influenced politics by forcing her husband to take maternity leave.

In general, I respect those women who have succeeded in their careers, whether it be writing, the sciences, politics, as well as those who have been able to create good homes for their families.

Women in Ukraine are heroines, period. They manage to keep a home, raise children, work in their profession, and sometimes they even engage in community activities. Often they work for a monthly salary that a woman in the West earns in a day or even an hour! It is a shame that such intelligent and hard-working women do not earn what they are worth.

Short Biography

Kateryna Chumachenko Yushchenko was born in Chicago in 1961. Her father, Mykhailo, an electrician, was born in the Donbas region, and her mother was from

the Kyiv region. Her parents met as forced laborers in Germany, where her sister Lydia was born in 1945, and then immigrated to the United States.

Ms. Chumachenko graduated with a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University in 1982, and received an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago in 1986. From 1982 to 1984 she worked as the Washington representative of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America. From 1986 to 1991 she worked in politically appointed positions at the State Department's Bureau for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, the White House Office of Public Liaison, the Treasury Department Office of Policy Management and the Joint Economic Committee of Congress.

In 1991 Ms. Chumachenko came to Ukraine as a founder and representative of the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation. In 1993 she became the resident advisor for the USAID-financed Bank Training Program managed by KPMG Barents Group, and worked as the country manager for the company until 2000.

She and her husband, Viktor Yushchenko, have two daughters, Sophia (born 1999) and Chrystyna (born 2000). Mrs. Yushchenko is currently home raising her children. Since 1995 she has been active in the organization Pryiateli Ditei, which helps orphans in Ukraine. She plans to become involved in her husband's new foundation, created in February 2002, which she says will be involved in cultural preservation, educational programs, particularly leadership training, and social programs that will be oriented towards "people helping people."

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COMMUNITY CHRONICLE

Clifton parish celebrates Valentine's Day



Enjoying the St. Valentine's Day celebration at St. Mary Church are: (from left) Anna Shevchenko, Anna Wojtiuk, Silvia Bilobron and Adriana Klaczany (seated).

by Silvia Bilobron

CLIFTON, N.J. - Although usually perceived as a mostly secular holiday, the reasons for celebrating Valentine's Day at St. Mary Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Church this year were far from that. The parish sisterhood hosted a family dinner/dance at the Clifton church on February 16 to celebrate its immense love of Ukrainian Orthodox tradition. More remarkably, perhaps, it commemorated a continuum of revival and new interest in this small community.

Established over 40 years ago, St. Mary Church on Washington Avenue was once quite an active, populous place. Founders and their families, remembering all too vividly the horrors of famine, war and displacement, worked to create a spiritual home for themselves; a place to gather to thank God for their new lives and to pray for a better future. Furthermore, the church

served not just as a place for worship, but also for social congregation with fellow fervent Ukrainians. As is mostly the norm for other centers, the parish, with its children, commemorated events like "Shevchenkivske Sviato," Mother's Day, and the feast day of St. Nicholas. There was a Ukrainian school and scheduled events such as picnics and varenyky sales. An impressive church choir meandered with the "koliada" (carolling) each season.

However, as is unfortunately the case for many of our establishments, as the years passed, action and enthusiasm waned. The elderly departed, others relocated, some intermarried and moved on. In fact, by the mid to late 1980s, not only was the church at its pinnacle of inactivity, membership was at an all-time low. Questions arose as to anticipated life expectancy. With insufficient funds and few people, how much

(Continued on page 23)

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We are looking for you together in a family - celebration to mark 50 years of Soyuzivka. We will be glad to work together to bring to life memories, experiences and shared stories we could all share with the exhibit to be shown during the anniversary.

Sign up at the Soyuzivka website - Soyuzivka Ukrainian Weekly - and special requests for additional information and updates.

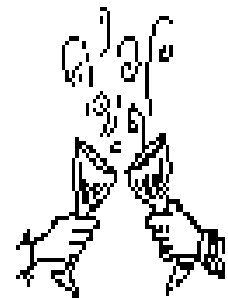
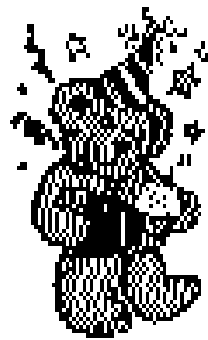
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Greens, oligarchs...

(Continued from page 2)

Commission cancelled the registration of Raiduha, following a verdict by a Kyiv district court saying that the bloc was formed in an illegitimate manner. This decision has left the PZU as the only group representing Ukrainian environmentalists in the elections.

Genuine green parties, in the same manner as genuine women's parties, find it impossible to be successful in Ukraine's political system. Only parties that have been captured by oligarchs (such as the PZU) or created especially by them for the elections (Women for the Future) can be successful because they have financing and, being pro-presidential, also have access to "administrative resources." The Raiduha bloc was not successful in winning popularity because Mr. Rabynovych was no longer on good terms with the executive. The Women of Ukraine Party, the only other registered gender party, also has failed to win support because it is backed by neither the oligarchs nor the executive.

Ukraine's largest green party, the PZU, grew out of the Green World Association, an ally of the Rukh nationalist movement in the late Soviet era. It is contemporary Ukraine's third-oldest political party, and at its inaugural congress in September 1990 it championed both "ecosocialism" and state independence. Its main base of support then was western and central Ukraine, the same as Rukh's.

After Ukraine became an independent state in 1991, the PZU began a long period of decline. In the eyes of Ukraine's elites, environmental problems became less important than ensuring sufficient energy supplies in the face of Russia's use of energy pressure, mounting debts and a shift in world prices. During the PZU's stagnation, in October 1993 it elected a new leader, Vitalii Kononov, who has remained in that position until today. In 1994, before the PZU was taken over by oligarchs, the PZU joined the European Federation of Green Parties.

The PZU re-entered the Ukrainian political scene in the March 1998 elections when it won 5.44 percent of the vote. The new PZU was very different

from that created in 1990-1991. At its peak the PZU held 25 parliamentary seats, which has since declined to 15, and it boasts 52,000 members - small by the standards of other oligarchic parties.

The PZU's 1998 success was due to two factors: a very effective Western-style advertising campaign, and a huge injection of new finances. As with the Women for the Future party in the current elections, the PZU campaigned in 1998 on an "anti-party" ticket with the slogan "Politicians Utilize Demagoguery." This attracted disaffected young people (the PZU was one of the youngest factions) and those easily turned off by politics.

The main financier of the PZU since 1998, as well as the Women for the Future whose campaign is building on the earlier success of the PZU, is Vasyl Khmelnytskyi, No. 3 on the PZU election list, and director of the huge Zaporizhstal plant. He was successful in recruiting other businessmen who needed a "krysha" (roof) to protect their business interests in telecommunications, banking, insurance, hotels and, more surprisingly, energy. Mr. Khmelnytskyi's additional support for Women for the Future has been made possible by his close relationship with President Leonid Kuchma and First Lady Liudmyla Kuchma.

Throughout the entire term of the 1998-2002 Parliament, the PZU remained loyal to the president without going overboard in its support, presumably so as not to turn off potential young voters. Only two minor government positions were granted to the PZU. Last year, Ambassador Shcherbak severely criticized the PZU's lack of legislative initiative in the current Verkhovna Rada.

The PZU has 9.9 and 7 percent support in southern and eastern Ukraine, respectively, and its two strongest bases are Zaporizhia and Odesa. Ironically, in western and central Ukraine, where the PZU began 10 years ago, its support is only 5.1 and 3 percent, respectively, according to a January poll by the Center for Economic and Political Studies. Mr. Khmelnytskyi's two pet projects, the PZU and Women for the Future, therefore, will enter the next Parliament, but neither is likely to promote green or gender issues.

Ukrainian music played for hours. Parish president Mary Yurcheniuk greeted all present and supplicated them to remain energetic in the life of our blessed church.

We once merely existed. Now, we live. For those involved, there could be no better reason to celebrate the holiday of love.

Clifton parish...

(Continued from page 21)

longer would St. Mary Church survive?

The Rev. Michael Zemlachenko, pastor of St. Mary Church for over 20 years, was instrumental in providing optimism and guidance at the height of the crisis. His constant encouragement paid off.

Following 1991, with the declaration of Ukrainian independence, came a fourth wave of immigrants searching for a spiritual haven where they could pray in their own language. St. Mary's proved to be such a place.

Over these past few years, the church has witnessed a steady trickle of new parishioners, including children, whose sound and voices had been absent for all too long. Although not voluminous by cathedral standards and still in need of capital structural repairs, there is once again talk of "the future."

Most notably, though, members feel a true sense of family and closeness. This assemblage has bonded in a beautiful way. Joys are celebrated together, sorrows are halved. Traditional rite continues and the church lives on.

This past Valentine's Day weekend, therefore, was a good enough occasion to rejoice. Under the leadership of sisterhood head Maria Wojtiuk, a tasty banquet was prepared. Youngsters helped decorate, and

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PREVIEW OF EVENTS

Saturday, March 16

NEW YORK: A presentation on the occasion of the publication of the 14-volume "One Thousand Years of Ukrainian Social and Political Thought," will take place at the Ukrainian Institute of America, 2 E. 79th St., at 3 p.m. Taking part in the presentation are Prof. Taras Hunczak, editor-in-chief; Oksana Slipushko, executive secretary for publication; and Prof. Lubomyr Wynnar, historical documentation. There will also be a video screening of the presentation held in Kyiv on January 18. The public is invited to attend.

Friday, March 22

NEW YORK: The Ukrainian Art and Literary Club and the New York Bandura Ensemble invite the public to the next concert of this year's "Bandura Downtown" series, "Translations: Music From Many Cultures, Times and Styles, Reworked for Bandura by Alla Kutsevych, Julian Kytasty, Michael Andrec and Yuriy Fedynsky." Donation: \$10. Reception with the artists to follow. The concert will take place at 7:30 p.m. at the Mayana Gallery, located at 136 Second Ave., fourth floor. On view in the gallery: the Oleksa Novakivsky Anniversary Exhibit. For information call (212) 915-2640, or e-mail nybandura@aol.com or ukrartlitclub@aol.com.

Saturday, March 23

NEW YORK: Dr. Lubomyr Hajda, associate director, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, will speak on Ukrainian themes in European opera. The presentation will be held at the Shevchenko Scientific Society, 63 Fourth Ave. (between Ninth and 10th streets) in New York, at 5 p.m. For information call: (212) 254-5130.

Saturday-Sunday, March 23-March 31

WOONSOCKET, R.I.: St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, 394 Blackstone St., Msgr. Roman Golemba, pastor, has announced its Easter schedule: Kvitna Nedila – Palm Sunday, vigil liturgy, 4 p.m.; Palm Sunday, liturgy, 11 a.m., blessing of pussy willows; Holy Thursday, March 28, Service of Passion, 12 Gospels – Strasty Isusa, 6 p.m.; Good Friday, March 29, vespers and burial service – Plaschentsia, 5 p.m.; Holy Saturday, March 30, blessing of Paska, 3 p.m.; Velykden – Easter, Utrenia and Easter liturgy, 7 a.m. For information call the parish, (401) 762-2733.

Sunday, March 24

OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA, Va.: The Embassy of Ukraine and The Washington Group Cultural Fund present the winners of the IV International Competition for Young Pianists in Memory of Vladimir Horowitz in a recital at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Performance begins at 3 p.m. and a reception will follow. Suggested donation is \$15, students free. For more information, contact Laryssa Courtney, (202) 363-3964.

PASSAIC, N.J.: The local branch of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America will hold a Pre-Easter Bazaar on Palm Sunday at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church at 223 President St. Articles available for purchase will include: fine art, folk art, Easter items and baked goods. Artists/vendors are advised to contact Christina Holowchak Debarry, (973) 377-4246.

Saturday, April 6

NEW YORK: The Ukrainian Medical Association of North America, New York Metropolitan Chapter, in cooperation with the Self Reliance Association of American Ukrainians, New York Branch, will hold the fourth in a series of community-based medical lectures at 2 p.m. The featured physicians include Dr. Lesya Muraszczuk, whose topic will be "Methods for Treatment of Periodontitis and Restoration of Teeth," and Dr. Oleh Slupchynsky, whose topic will be "Skin Cancer." The event will take place at 98 Second Ave. Admission is free and refreshments will be served. For further information please call Dr. Ihor Magun, (516) 766-5147.

Sunday, April 7

HILLSIDE, N.J.: Under the direction of Odarka Polanskyj-Stockert, children will have an opportunity to learn basic "hahilky" (traditional Easter songs and dances). An Easter egg hunt will also be held. All activities will be held immediately following the 9 a.m. divine liturgy at Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church, located at the intersection of Liberty Avenue and Bloy Street. If you would like to attend, please contact either Mike Szpyhulsky, (908) 289-0127, or Joe Shatynski, (973) 599-9381, by March 27. Refreshments will be served. For further information please view the "Parish News" section of the parish website: www.byzantines.net/immaculateconception.

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.

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