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Russia massing in Kursk

Russia massing thousands of troops in Kursk, Ukraine says

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

Russia has massed some 45,000 troops in Kursk likely in preparation of a counter-offensive to expel Ukrainian forces from the region, Ukrainian Commander in Chief Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy said on November 6, adding that Moscow was also seeking to beef up its effectiveness with North Korean soldiers.

Mr. Syrskiy's comments on social media came the same day that Russia's upper house of parliament, the Federation Council, ratified a treaty with Pyongyang envisioning mutual military assistance, a move that comes as Washington has confirmed the deployment of 10,000 North Korean troops to Russia.

"The enemy concentrated about 45,000 troops there. And it is trying to increase

their number. Russia's own troops are not enough in this direction, so they are trying to attract military personnel from North Korea there," Mr. Syrskiy wrote on Telegram.

Ukraine claims to control more than 386 square miles of territory in Kursk following a surprise incursion inside the Russian region bordering Ukraine that began August 6.

Kyiv's move came as a surprise as its depleted forces were struggling in Ukraine's east against a grinding offensive by more numerous, better-equipped, and better-armed Russian forces.

Mr. Syrskiy said the incursion was needed as a preemptive strike against an expected Russian attack from Kursk into

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Ukraine reacts as Trump wins US presidency

Zelenskyy congratulates president-elect

by Todd Prince
RFE/RL

WASHINGTON – Following the U.S. presidential election on November 5, the decision by Americans to return Donald Trump to the White House has reverberated around the world.

Ukraine, whose defense against Russia is heavily dependent on U.S. military, financial and diplomatic support, may feel the effects more than any other foreign country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has a long and complicated history with Mr. Trump, said he spoke by phone with the U.S. president-elect and congratulated him on his election victory.

Mr. Zelenskyy said on X on November 6 that he told Mr. Trump that his "tremendous campaign" made the result possible and also "praised his family and team for their great work."

He congratulated Mr. Trump "on his impressive election victory," adding, "I recall our great meeting with President Trump back in September when we discussed in detail the Ukraine-U.S. strategic partnership, the victory plan and ways to put an end to Russian aggression against Ukraine."

He said he and Mr. Trump agreed to maintain close dialogue and advance coop-

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Okean Elzy marks 30th anniversary with world tour, fundraising for 30 ambulances for front-line medics



Members of the band Okean Elzy (from left to right: Milos Jelic, Denys Hlinin, Denys Dudko and Sviatoslav Vakarchuk) pass along the keys of an ambulance to Ukrainian military medics as part of the Drive for Life project.

by Roman Tymotsko and Andrew Nynka

BOSTON and LVIV, Ukraine – Marking three decades as one of Ukraine's most iconic rock bands, Okean Elzy is celebrating its 30th anniversary with an ambitious tour across Ukraine, Europe, North America, and even as far as Australia and New Zealand.

They filled Ukraine's largest venue in Kyiv, the Palace of Sports, four times in

October, and on November 7, after performing 11 shows across America, they capped off the U.S. leg of their tour in Los Angeles.

In addition to celebrating their milestone, Okean Elzy is using the tour to raise funds that will be used to purchase 30 ambulances for medics working on the front lines of the war in Ukraine.

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As Russia's war on Ukraine nears 1,000th day, North Koreans enter battlefield

US sees record-breaking investment in defense industry



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (seated, second from the right) attends the European Political Community Summit in Budapest on November 7.

by Mark Raczkiewicz

CHICAGO – Russia has lost more than an estimated 700,000 military personnel since February 24, 2022, but that has not stopped Kremlin leader Vladimir Putin from continuing to pursue his attempt at subjugating Ukraine.

What was supposed to be a swift all-out invasion has turned into a war of attrition, and Russia's main objectives, accompanied by war crimes and genocidal acts that violate internationally recognized rules of

warfare, remain unchanged even as the full-scale war nears its 1,000th day.

Three years into the European continent's largest war since World War II and Ukraine's forces and its civilian population are reportedly exhausted. Western security assistance has been slow to reach the battlefield and Kyiv continues to face restrictions from its Western allies on conducting strikes inside Russia. Russia has used those restrictions against Ukraine as it has con-

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NEWS ANALYSIS

To combat demographic decline, Moscow must focus on mortality rather than fertility

Paul Goble
Eurasia Daily Monitor

Demography is not destiny, but declining demographic trends impose limits on what a country can do in the long term. Russia's population decline is becoming its most pressing issue, and one Russian newspaper warned that demography is now the Kremlin's most serious constraint (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, October 24, 2023; NG.ru, April 18). Unsurprisingly, President Vladimir Putin has sought to limit the demographic decline's effects on Russia. In response, Putin has been importing migrant workers, an approach that is becoming increasingly unpopular among Russians in large part because of Moscow-promoted nationalist policies (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, February 6, May 15, October 22). Most recently, Putin has enlisted North Korean troops to fight in his war in Ukraine (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, October 30; The Kyiv Independent, October 31). He has sought to squeeze more work and military

service out of the existing population by allowing older men to serve and boosting signing bonuses (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, October 24; Window on Eurasia, October 30). In addition, Putin is requiring the elderly to go back to work and those in the workforce to do overtime; neither group is enthusiastic about the state's rising demands on them and their time (Iarex.ru, October 29; Moscow Times, September 9). Over the last several years, Putin has focused on boosting Russia's birthrate by promoting the image of large families as the Russian ideal, paying women to have children, and making both abortion and divorce more difficult (Window on Eurasia, August 7; see Eurasia Daily Monitor, October 1).

Putin has not done anything to address the country's increasingly high mortality rate despite Moscow's seeming priority to control its population decline. Russian demographers say that Russia's most significant bottleneck lies in its mortality rate,

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Putin and Kim look for opportunities amid US election turmoil

by Pavel K. Baev
Eurasia Daily Monitor

The U.S. presidential election, which has been dominating the global news, came to its natural culmination on November 5, even though the outcome was expected to remain uncertain for many more days. Even in Russia, where war and inflation are major concerns, official sources report that more than 60 percent of adults are following the U.S. elections. Independent polls show that only about 19 percent are following closely, however (TASS, October 31). While around half of Russians think that the election's outcome is of little importance to their country, those who do care about the result strongly prefer former President Donald Trump (Levada.ru, October 31). The Kremlin appears to have the same preference – and few reservations against acting on it – all while decrying the United States' accusations of Russian interference as slander (Izvestiya, November 2).

Mainstream political experts in Moscow produce competent analyses of the issues at stake in the U.S. elections, emphasizing the depth of divisions between the elites and society and assessing the dynamics of U.S. disengagement from European affairs (Rossiiskaya Gazeta, October 29). The Russian leadership, however, is less interested in the long-term trends and more focused on grasping the opportunities created by the Biden administration's extreme preoccupation with gaining potential votes in battleground states and avoiding controversial actions in its foreign policy (Nezavisimaya Gazeta, October 31). In this opportunistic maneuvering, Russian President Vladimir Putin has a useful partner in North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un, who has abandoned the traditional mantra of Korean reunification and is keen to play fast and loose in the space left open by U.S. inattentiveness (RIAC, September 2).

This maneuvering includes the arrival of North Korean troops in Russia (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, October 30). The plan, most likely agreed on during Putin's visit to Pyongyang last June and enacted in mid-

October, envisaged the "export" of some 1,500 elite special forces initially and then around 10,000-15,000 "light infantry" soldiers to Russia for quick training and subsequent use in combat operations (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, June 24; Svoboda.org, October 21). In hindsight, this arrangement is entirely logical. Putin is determined to sustain the offensive push in Donbas Oblast, and every tactical advance consumes tons of artillery shells and hundreds of lives (Republic.ru, October 30). Much in the same way, as trainloads of munitions from North Korea are needed to supplement Russia's domestic production, battalions of obedient soldiers will compensate for diminishing recruitment, which already is causing an acute shortage of industrial labor and brewing social discontent (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, August 7, October 10; Meduza, October 28). At the current rate of Russian casualties, 10,000 new recruits must be attained every week. When visiting Moscow last week, Choe Son Hui, the foreign affairs minister of North Korea, confirmed that Mr. Kim ordered Russia to be granted all necessary support in its "sacred war" (RBC, November 1; NV.ua, November 2).

The scope of Russian demand is relatively clear, but the character of its supply to North Korea remains uncertain. It is rather improbable that the export of oil and wheat, necessary as these commodities are, provides sufficient compensation for using another nation's soldiers as cannon fodder (Novaya Gazeta Europe, October 23). Feasibly, it could have been a coincidence that North Korea made a successful launch of the Malligyong-1 reconnaissance satellite in November 2023, two months after the cordial meeting between Putin and Mr. Kim at the Vostochny Cosmodrome (Interfax, May 28). It could be another coincidence that on October 31, as the first North Korean troops arrived in Kursk Oblast, Mr. Kim took his daughter to observe the test launch of the heavy intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasong-19

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NEWSBRIEFS

Zelenskyy criticized West's weak response

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on November 1 criticized Kyiv's partners for a lack of action in response to Russia's deployment of North Korean troops. Ukraine knows where Russia is building up soldiers from North Korea on its territory, and it would be possible to strike preemptively if Kyiv were not restricted, Mr. Zelenskyy said. The United States said on October 31 that it has information that some 8,000 North Korean soldiers are now in Russia's Kursk region near the border with Ukraine, and Russia "fully intends" to deploy them in combat against Ukrainian troops. Mr. Zelenskyy complained on Telegram that instead of granting Ukraine permission to use U.S.-supplied long-range weapons to hit military targets inside Russia, the United States and other allies are simply watching. "Everyone is just waiting for the North Korean military to start attacking Ukrainians as well," he said. He added that all countries who want the war not to expand and not spread to other regions of the world "need to act." Mr. Zelenskyy for months has called on Ukraine's allies to allow its forces to use advanced Western weapons to hit deeper inside Russia. He reiterated the plea in the aftermath of a Russian strike on Kharkiv on October 31 that left three people dead and at least 36 wounded. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said in September that the use of donated U.S. weapons for long-range strikes into Russia would not turn the tide of the war in Ukraine's favor. The United States and its allies previously ruled out their use to strike deep into Russia over fears that it could result in retaliation with nuclear weapons. Mr. Austin and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken held talks with their South Korean counterparts on October 31 in Washington to discuss the deployment and Pyongyang's test-firing of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) early on October 31. "We strongly urge [North Korea] to immediately cease its series of provocative and destabilizing actions that threaten peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and beyond," they said in a joint statement that did not mention Ukraine. The Pentagon previously

expressed concern over Russia's involvement of North Korean troops in the war and said they would become "legitimate military targets" if they were deployed to the battlefield. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

EU, Seoul condemn North Korean involvement

The European Union and South Korea condemned "in the strongest possible terms" North Korea's transfer of weapons to Russia and the deployment of special forces to help the Kremlin with its "unlawful war of aggression" against Ukraine. The statement came after the bloc's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, and his South Korean counterpart, Cho Tae-yul, met in Seoul on November 4 as fears grow over Pyongyang's role in the war triggered by Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. "This constitutes a serious breach of international law, including the most fundamental principles of the UN [United Nations] Charter," the statement said. "Such cooperation between the DPRK [North Korea] and Russia is not only in flagrant violation of multiple UNSC [United Nations Security Council] resolutions, but it also prolongs the suffering of the Ukrainian people and threatens the security of the world, including that of the Republic of Korea and Europe." After weeks of intelligence reports warning that thousands of North Korean troops were heading to Russia, confirmation from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) came late last month that Pyongyang's soldiers are not only on Russian soil but have already been deployed in a western region bordering Ukraine. The Kremlin has neither denied nor directly confirmed the presence of North Korean troops on its soil. The deployment not only raised fears of a potential escalation of the war in Ukraine, but sent shock waves through the Indo-Pacific region over what the Kremlin may be supplying Pyongyang in return. "We are closely monitoring what Russia provides to the DPRK in return for its provision of arms and military personnel, including Russia's possible provision of materials and technology to the DPRK in support of

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Zelenskyy warns EU leaders that capitulation to Putin is 'suicidal'

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has warned European leaders that capitulation to Russia after it invaded Ukraine would be "suicidal" for Europe, just hours after Kyiv and the Black Sea port of Odesa were rocked by an unusually intense wave of Russian air strikes.

Speaking at a meeting of the European Political Community in Budapest on November 7, Mr. Zelenskyy renewed his appeals for more support for his war-torn country ahead of an informal European Union summit the next day to be hosted by Hungary, which currently holds the 27-member bloc's rotating presidency.

He also said that he has already spoken with U.S. President-elect Donald Trump about how both the United States and Europe need to be strong for each other's benefit amid the "many challenges" facing the world.

"There has been much talk about the need to yield to Putin, to back down, to make some concessions. It's unacceptable for Ukraine and suicidal for all Europe," Mr. Zelenskyy said in his speech, which came two days after Mr. Trump won the U.S. presidential election.

Trepidation has swept across Europe since the victory given Mr. Trump's oft-stated skepticism over U.S. military



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (front row, third from the left) and other European leaders meet during the European Political Community Summit in Budapest on November 7.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (left) shakes hands with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who has maintained close ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin and has spoken against European Union sanctions on Moscow, during a meeting of the European Political Community Summit in Budapest on November 7.

support for Ukraine.

"The concept of 'peace through strength' has proven itself and is needed now. Showing weakness or selling out Europe's positions won't buy a just peace. Peace is the reward only for the strong," Mr. Zelenskyy added.

Mr. Zelenskyy was welcomed to the meeting by right-wing Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who has maintained close ties with Putin and has spoken against E.U. sanctions on Moscow. Mr. Orbán also has close relations with Mr. Trump.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) chief Mark Rutte, in a pitch to secure Mr. Trump's support for Ukraine, told journalists upon arrival in Budapest that the sending of troops by North Korea to aid Russia in Ukraine posed a direct threat to the United States.

"What we see more and more is that North Korea, Iran, China and of course Russia are working together, working together against Ukraine," Mr. Rutte said.

"At the same time, Russia has to pay for this, and one of the things they are doing is delivering technology to North Korea, which is now threatening in the future the mainland of the U.S., continental Europe," he warned.

"I look forward to sit down with Donald Trump to discuss how we can face these threats collectively," Mr. Rutte said.

The gathering in Budapest came as Ukraine shot down 74 of the 106 drones that Russia launched early on

November 7 at targets in 9 Ukrainian regions – Odesa, Mykolayiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Sumy, Poltava, Kharkiv, Kirovohrad, Zhytomyr, Cherkasy and Chernihiv – while 22 others were lost after being jammed by Ukrainian electronic warfare systems.

Russian strikes early on November 7 sparked fires and caused damage in five districts of Kyiv, which was under Russian attack for eight hours, Mayor Vitali Klitschko reported on Telegram.

Drone debris fell in the districts of Pechersk, Holosiyivskiy, Solomyansk, Obolonsk and Podilsk, Mr. Klitschko said, adding that two people were injured by falling drone debris.

Mr. Klitschko reported that the upper floors of a multi-story building in Pechersk were burning, and residents were being evacuated.

In Odesa, a high-rise apartment building was damaged and one man was injured by falling debris after Ukrainian air defenses shot down Russian drones over the Black Sea port, regional Gov. Oleh Kiper reported.

Telegram channels published a video of a fire on the first floor of a nine-story building in Odesa.

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Early peace plan shows Russia's intent to neutralize Ukraine

RFE/RL's Systema and Yelizaveta Surnacheva

Early in peace talks that began days after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Moscow proposed a treaty whose one-sided conditions amounted to Kyiv's surrender, according to a draft obtained by Systema, RFE/RL's Russian investigative unit.

Acceptance of the proposal would have left Ukraine a neutral nation with a tiny, toothless army, no recourse to protection by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) states, and no chance of regaining control over Crimea or the Donbas, where it would have had to recognize the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in their entirety, including the large portions still under Kyiv's control at the time.

The proposed pact sheds light on Russian President Vladimir Putin's goals in the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, none of which he has publicly renounced, and which he has repeatedly asserted will be achieved. It comes as the all-out war heads toward its fourth year with no clear sign of an end in sight but amid indications that peace talks could potentially be in the cards in 2025 or later.

The draft – titled "Treaty on the Resolution of the Situation in Ukraine and the Neutrality of Ukraine" – is dated March 7, 2022, 11 days after Russia launched the invasion and a week after talks between Ukraine and Russia began.

Composed in Moscow and handed to the Ukrainian delegation that day, at the third round of talks, in a town in the Belavezha forest in Belarus, it is the first known document

laying out Russia's conditions for a peace deal after the start of the full-scale invasion.

Systema obtained the draft from a Ukrainian source familiar with the negotiations, and a Russian source close to the talks confirmed its authenticity. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

The talks began on February 28, 2022, at a time when Russian forces had seized swaths of territory in the south, east and north of Ukraine, where they had advanced close to Kyiv after pouring across the border from Russia and Belarus. Some sessions were held in person, while others were conducted online.

The process petered out in late April of the same year, as the sides wrangled over major points of dispute and following revelations of atrocities committed by Russian soldiers in Bucha, a city outside Kyiv that the invading forces had abandoned as they withdrew from northern Ukraine after failing to capture the capital or force Ukraine's capitulation.

'Not neutrality, but neutralization'

The Russian proposal sets out terms for Ukraine's neutrality, a status Kyiv appeared ready to accept at the time. But Eric Ciaramella, a senior fellow in the Russia and Eurasia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said that Putin seems to have been seeking "something more radical – not neutrality, but the neutralization of Ukraine as an independent state. Russia's goal from the very beginning was to destroy Ukraine's ability to defend itself."

A country "can be neutral and have a very strong army and be capable of self-defense. ... But that's not what Russia had in mind here," he said.

"The document was structured as if Ukraine were the aggressor defeated on the battlefield, which, of course, did not reflect reality," Mr. Ciaramella said of the Russian draft dated March 7, 2022, which he read at Systema's request. "It's hard to say whether this was a genuine attempt to negotiate, as such terms would be unacceptable to any Ukrainian. They would have neutralized Ukraine to the point of making it defenseless."

The draft called for Ukraine to shrink its army to no more than 50,000 personnel, about five times fewer than it had in 2022, and would have barred Ukraine from developing or deploying missiles with a range of over 155 miles. Moscow would have been able to prohibit other types of weapons in the future.

It also called for the removal of all sanctions imposed on Russia by Ukraine or the West since 2014, when Russia seized Crimea and fomented war in the Donbas.

Ukraine would have been forced to formally recognize Crimea as Russian and the Donetsk and Luhansk regions as independent. Kyiv would have had to pay for reconstruction in the Donbas.

'Deeply erroneous logic'

The pact would have left a truncated Ukraine highly vulnerable, with Russian forces remaining in place and no

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Britain slaps massive sanctions package on Russia

RFE/RL

Britain on November 7 announced its largest package of Russia sanctions in one and a half years, slapping punitive measures on 56 people and entities linked to Moscow’s war machine, including mercenary groups active in Africa and an individual accused of involvement in a 2018 Novichok attack.

The announcement comes as British Prime Minister Keir Starmer is preparing to discuss moves to counter Russian malign activities in Europe with other European leaders at a summit in Budapest on November 7 and reaffirm London’s iron-clad support for Ukraine, the Foreign Affairs Office said in a statement.

“Today’s action disrupts the supply of vital equipment for [Russian President Vladimir] Putin’s war machine and bears

down on Russian malign activity globally, exposing the corrupt activities of Russian proxy military groups in Africa,” the statement said.

Three mercenary groups with links to the Kremlin – Africa Corps, Bears Brigade and PMC Espanola – have been placed under sanctions.

Africa Corps is the successor to the notorious Wagner mercenary group, which under late Putin associate Yevgeny Prigozhin took part in the invasion of Ukraine.

After Mr. Prigozhin’s death following the group’s short-lived mutiny last year, the newly renamed Africa Corps expanded Wagner’s operations in Africa, in countries such as Libya, the Central African Republic (C.A.R.), Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, where its fighters helped prop up military dictatorships.

“These sanctions will bear down on Russian malign activity in Libya, Mali and C.A.R., exposing and combatting Russia’s illicit activity in Africa, as it attempts to exploit the fragile security environments and natural resources in these countries for its gain and expand the Kremlin’s sphere of influence,” the statement said.

Russian military intelligence officer Denis Sergeyev, one of the three Russian operatives that British police have charged

over the attempted murder of former Russian double agent Sergei Skripal in Salisbury, England, using the nerve agent Novichok, was also placed on the sanctions list.

Mr. Skripal and his daughter, Yulia, were found unconscious on a bench in a park in the southern English city in March 2018.

British authorities have established that

(Continued on page 16)

FOR THE RECORD

UCCA issues statement on US elections, congratulates president-elect

The following statement was released by the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America on November 7.

The Ukrainian Congress Committee of America (UCCA), the representative organization of 2-plus million Americans of Ukrainian descent, congratulates President-elect Donald J. Trump and the incoming members of the 119th United States Congress on their respective victories at the conclusion of this year’s U.S. election cycle. In acknowledging President Trump’s longstanding commitment to a “peace through strength” approach in global affairs, UCCA joins with [Ukrainian] President [Volodymyr] Zelenskyy and the Ukrainian nation in achieving a sustainable victory in Ukraine. As Americans, we believe that a demo-

cratic, independent and sovereign Ukraine is in the national security interests of the United States. With a record of authorizing the first transfer of defensive lethal weapons to Ukraine, as well as formally instituting a U.S. foreign policy of non-recognition of Russia’s attempted annexation of Crimea, the incoming administration and their counterparts in Ukraine are well-positioned to move toward specific bilateral goals, based on the shared belief that the security of the United States and Ukraine rests with the expansion of democracy and mutual security guarantees, not the appeasement of imperial states.

UCCA remains committed to fostering additional cooperation with elected officials to continue our nation’s proud tradition of bipartisan support for Ukraine.

Putin congratulates Trump on US election victory

RFE/RL

Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated Donald Trump on winning the U.S. presidential election and said Moscow is open to talks with the Republican president-elect.

“I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his election as president of the United States of America,” Putin said after speaking to an international conference in the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

Mr. Trump said during the campaign that he could quickly end the war in Ukraine if he was elected but gave few details. Putin said those comments deserved attention, adding that if Mr. Trump wanted to resume contacts, then Russia was ready for discussion.

Putin also said he was impressed with how Mr. Trump, who decisively defeated Vice President Kamala Harris in the November 5 election, handled himself in the moments after an assassination attempt in July, describing Mr. Trump as a brave man.

Mr. Trump said he was also prepared for a conversation with Putin.

“I think we’ll speak,” he said in an interview with NBC News. He said that he had spoken with “probably” 70 world leaders since the morning of November 6 but that

Putin was not among them.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said earlier on November 7 that he could not rule out the possibility of talks between Putin and Mr. Trump before his inauguration in January.

When asked by journalists whether such communication was off the table, Mr. Peskov responded: “Why? It is not ruled out. [Mr. Trump] said that he would call Putin before the inauguration. Those are his words.”

He was referring to previous statements made by Mr. Trump about reaching out to Putin ahead of taking office.

Mr. Peskov also addressed questions regarding any official contact between the Russian authorities and Mr. Trump’s campaign following the U.S. election.

“No. Why should we contact them?” he replied, further clarifying that the Russian administration had not made any direct outreach.

(With reporting by NBC News, Reuters, AP and AFP)

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The Ukrainian Weekly Press Fund: September 2024

Amount	Name	City	State	Amount	Name	City	State	Amount	Name	City	State
\$115	Dekajlo, Oleh & Innesa	East Meadow	NY	\$30	Makarushka Kolodij, O	Maplewood	NJ	\$15	Bejger, Bohdan	Buffalo	NY
\$105	Marushak, L	Cerritos	CA	\$25	Dubno, Luba	New Haven	CT		Maksymenko, G	Springfield	VA
\$100	Courtney, Laryssa	Washington	DC		Harhaj, Bohdan & Maria	Freehold	NJ		Pakula, Lida	Dearborn	MI
	Ivanonko, Zenon	Vestal	NY		Obuch, Nina	Simi Valley	CA		Puzyk, Bohdan	Osprey	FL
	Lytwyn, Ted	Short Hills	NJ		Vena, Tanya	West Orange	NJ		Stanko, George	Basking Ridge	NJ
\$60	Heltsley, Myra	Escondido	CA		Wasylyn, Lidia	Edmonton	AB	\$10	Lobachevsky, Oksana	Somerset	NJ
	Yemetz, George	Burbank	CA	\$20	Galonzka, Antin & Julianne	Walpole	MA		Niepritzky, Tamara	St Paul	MN
\$55	Breslawec, Halyna	Potomac	MD		Hotz, Michael	Watertown	MA		Terkun, Walter	Chantilly	VA
\$50	Hawryliw, Adrian	Philadelphia	PA		Klem, Walter	Troy	NY	\$5	Kernitsky, Lydia	Midlothian	VA
	Ivanonko, Zenon	Vestal	NY		Mutlos, George	Hollandale Beach	FL		Movchan-Novak, Ola	Warren	MI
	Kihiczak, Maria	Sherman Oaks	CA		Paslowsky, Helen	North Brunswick	NJ		Zaluckyj, Kristina	Chicago	IL
	Szafranski, Joseph	West Bloomfield	MI		Warshona, M	Mayfield	NY				
					Wowczuk, Yuriy	Pittsburgh	PA				

TOTAL: \$1,310

The Ukrainian Weekly Press Fund: October 2024

Amount	Name	City	State	Amount	Name	City	State	Amount	Name	City	State
\$115	Holowinsky, Yuriy	Maryville	TN		Krywolap, George	Coopersburg	PA		Murskyj, L	Troy	MI
\$110	Kashuba, Ostap	Chicago	IL		Wakulowska, Wictoria	Philadelphia	PA		Platosz, Adam	New Britain	CT
\$100	Bandriwsky, Pavlo	Park Ridge	IL	\$25	Hordinsky, Martha	Oklahoma City	OK		Rasiak, Ruslan	Leesburg	VA
	Baran, Andriy	Saratoga Spgs	NY		Rishiy, Christina	Trenton	NJ		Saciuk, Olena	San German	PR
	Kurylko, Daria	New Providence	NJ		Skubiak, Oleh	Chicago	IL	\$10	Gebet, Gary	El Cajon	CA
	Mulyk, Michael	Holmdel	NJ	\$20	Bekersky, Lesia	Whitesboro	NY				
	Szczupak, Wolodymyr	New York	NY		Bellinger, Marian	Riverton	WY				
	Tymkiw, Stephan	Millersville	MD		Futey, Bohdan	Annapolis	MD				
	Zaplitny, Paul	Richmond Hill	NY		Holowaty, Gerald	Warren	MI				
\$75	Mcgrath, Michael	Franklin Square	NY		Kohut, Anna	St Petersburg	FL				
\$60	Klufas, Oksana	San Antonio	TX		Lychyk, Victor	Alexandria	VA				
\$50	Bonacorsa, Christine	Belleville	NJ		Nychka, Andrew & Renata	Armonk	NY				
	Kondratiuk, Bg Leonid	Belmont	MA		Prokopovych, Irynej	Calabasas	CA				
					Sokolyk, Stephen	Richardson	TX				
				\$15	Gudz, Myron	Hartford	CT				

TOTAL: \$1,600

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Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Youngstown, Ohio, celebrates centennial

UOC of the U.S.A.

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio – Saints Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Parish in Youngstown, Ohio, celebrated the centennial of its founding on September 15. After 100 years of dedicated ministry, prayer and service, the community stands at the threshold of a new chapter for the next 100 years, filled with anticipation and hope.

Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Archbishop Daniel in the presence of Metropolitan Antony and the clergy of local and visiting communities. Among the concelebrants

was Fr. Charles Baxter, chancellor and president of the Consistory of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and a former pastor of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish. Clergy from New Jersey, Ohio, Michigan, Canada, Pennsylvania, Minnesota and other states gathered for the occasion, bringing with them their spouses and children.

During Divine Liturgy, the Gospel was chanted by Deacon Maksym Zhuravchyk and the homily by Archbishop Daniel underscored the journey of faith each of us must take – a journey of surrender, faith and love.



uocofusa.org/Mykola Stefanyk

Archbishop Daniel explains the meaning of the ecclesiastical sword being awarded to Fr. Mykola Zomchak during the centennial of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Youngstown, Ohio, on September 15.



uocofusa.org/Mykola Stefanyk

Metropolitan Antony (right) congratulates Fr. Mykola Zomchak of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Youngstown, Ohio, during the parish's centennial celebrations on September 15.



uocofusa.org/Mykola Stefanyk

Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church's exterior is decorated for its centennial celebration, held on September 15.

Also during Divine Liturgy, with the blessing of Metropolitan Antony, Archbishop Daniel awarded Fr. Mykola Zomchak, the pastor of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, with his first ecclesiastical priestly award: the spiritual sword.

This award, a symbol of Fr. Mykola's dedication, leadership and strong faith, was a recognition of his tireless efforts to guide and protect the flock entrusted to his care. The spiritual sword represents the pastor's role as a defender of the faith, one who is called not only to preach the Gospel but to stand firm in the face of adversity, explaining and sharing the truths of Orthodoxy with clarity and love.

One of the most beautiful aspects of the centennial celebration was the sense of

camaraderie and brotherhood felt among the clergy, their families and the faithful.

At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, all in attendance were invited to a special centennial luncheon held in honor of the first day of the new era for Ss. Peter and Paul parish. The atmosphere was one of joy and fellowship as parishioners and guests gathered to share a meal and reflect on the spiritual significance of the day. The luncheon was not merely a celebration of the past but a time to look forward with hope to the future.

Throughout the luncheon, parishioners expressed their gratitude to the hierarchs, the clergy and one another for the love and

(Continued on page 19)

St. Vladimir Cathedral celebrates centennial, praying with 250 students from Ukrainian school

UOC-U.S.A.

PARMA, Ohio – The joyful sound of prayers filled the sacred space of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Parma, Ohio, as clergy, parishioners, students and families gathered to celebrate a significant milestone in the life of their spiritual home: 100 years of faithful service and dedication to God and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The centennial celebration held on October 12-13, led by Metropolitan Antony, began with a special visit by Archbishop Daniel, the spiritual father of the Western Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A., to the Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies, an institution deeply intertwined with the cathedral's history that is also celebrating its 100th anniversary.

The event was marked not only by a reflection on the past century but by a heartfelt acknowledgment of the role that faith, culture and tradition play in shaping the future of Ukrainian Orthodoxy in the diaspora.

Fr. Michael Hontaruk, pastor of St. Vladimir Cathedral, along with the clergy and faithful, joined Archbishop Daniel for the celebration of a Moleben, a service of supplication, to Christ the savior for the children, teachers and parents of the Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies.

The presence of Archbishop Daniel underscored the deep spiritual connection between the faithful of St. Vladimir Cathedral and the larger Ukrainian Orthodox Church. His visit to the school was a poignant reminder of the church's



Mykola Stefanyk/uocofusa.org

St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Parma, Ohio, with Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel (center right and center left, respectively), are pictured during the parish's centennial celebrations on October 12-13.

enduring commitment to fostering faith, education and the preservation of Ukrainian heritage across generations.

In concelebration with Fr. Michael Hontaruk, Fr. Petro Levko of St. George Ukrainian Orthodox Parish in Yardville, N.J., and Protodeacon Ihor Mahlay of St. Vladimir parish, alongside Fr. John Nakonachny, pastor-emeritus of St. Vladimir Cathedral, and Deacon Maksym Zhuravchyk of the Three Holy Hierarchs Chapel at St. Sophia Seminary in Somerset, N.J., led the prayers, asking Christ to bless and guide the youth who represent the future of the church.

Archbishop Daniel delivered words to the children, parents and teachers that served as both a spiritual charge and a call to action, encouraging the youth to uphold the rich traditions and cultural expressions

of the Ukrainian Orthodox faith. He reminded the faithful that, while the world around them may change, the unshakeable foundation of their spiritual life – rooted in Christ and upheld by the church – remains a source of strength and guidance.

Special prayers for the men and women of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, particularly the chaplains and clergy who minister to them in these trying times, were also offered by Archbishop Daniel. The congregation joined in fervent prayer for Ukraine's defenders, acknowledging the sacrifices they continue to make in the ongoing war to protect their homeland.

The archbishop's recognition of the chaplains in Ukraine, particularly those who minister to the military, resonated deeply with the congregation, many of

whom have loved ones affected by the war. These chaplains, representing the spiritual backbone of the military, bring hope and the light of Christ to those serving on the front lines, providing essential spiritual care amid great adversity.

As part of the centennial celebration, Archbishop Daniel took time to thank the principal of the Taras Shevchenko School, Halyna Yarema, and the dedicated teachers for their leadership and educational efforts. The school, an integral part of St. Vladimir Cathedral's mission, has been a beacon of light in the community, fostering not only academic excellence but also a deep love for the Ukrainian language, culture and Orthodox faith.

(Continued on page 12)

THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

A path of sober prudence

On November 5, the world watched the culmination of a hard-fought U.S. presidential election that laid bare our deep political and social divisions. For the Ukrainian diaspora, it also presented what many saw as a referendum on Ukraine's very survival, and the level of public discourse and passion reflected individual convictions that only a particular candidate will help our homeland win a brutal, existential war waged by a dictator hell-bent on destroying our shared homeland.

Amid such passion and conviction, it's easy to overlook a pillar that has sustained American democracy for centuries. Faced with differences that threatened to, and in the case of our Civil War, did tear our union apart, this democracy has survived because its citizens found a common path on which they might walk together. This quality is not a weakness. It takes more strength to walk alongside people with whom we have deep, fundamental political and social differences than to cast them aside and walk alone.

A commitment to compromise is at the heart of the Constitution itself. The Great Compromise of 1787 exemplifies this spirit of cooperation, balancing power between the House of Representatives and the Senate, representing both people and states. In setting this framework, our founders recognized that our government must be able to evolve and adapt through discussion and compromise rather than relying on the rigidity of one perspective. As James Madison wrote in "The Federalist Papers," "The spirit of moderation should always be cultivated" in order to make the system work.

Let us be clear, compromise is not capitulation; it is the mechanism by which democracies evolve and endure. By finding common ground, we enact policies that reflect the diverse voices and values of our nation. By believing that we can find common ground, we ignore the voices of extremists on either side of the political divide. By living on common ground, we learn from others that our positions may be flawed or wrong.

Throughout the U.S. presidential election campaign, we sought to reflect the different voices and positions in our diaspora, and, just as The Ukrainian Weekly has done throughout its 91-year history, we did not endorse a U.S. presidential candidate. As a result, passionate voices in our community made their displeasure known. Among them, one individual letter writer noted that, "In 1918, Svoboda supported the Bolsheviks." While we welcome criticism and different opinions, this statement is deeply misleading and an incorrect characterization of our sister publication. For those interested in understanding Svoboda's position regarding the Bolsheviks, we invite them to read "Ukrainian-American Citadel" by Myron B. Kuropas (particularly pages 163-172).

Moreover, in a commentary written in Ukrainian and English that was distributed online, this same letter writer made assertions for which he provided no evidence and questioned the journalistic integrity and professionalism of this newspaper. He and others should know that we will not be intimidated or bullied, and we will continue to be an independent voice for and mirror of the Ukrainian diaspora across America and beyond. The Ukrainian National Association's two newspapers – Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly – will pursue the mission of reporting factual information and providing a wide variety of commentary that accurately reflects the views of our diaspora. Knowing that independent journalism is the bedrock of a healthy, vibrant, plural democratic society, we will continue to report the truth without fear or favor, and we will not be bullied by governments, propagandists, populists or partisans of any kind.

Unity does not mean that we all agree, but rather that we all commit to sustaining the democratic process together, with respect for differing perspectives and a willingness to negotiate solutions. Today, as we face global challenges, economic shifts and political tensions, we must not lose sight of what has made the United States a beacon of democracy. The strength of the American experiment lies in our union and our capacity to compromise. As Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Let us not fear each other but instead embrace the spirit of unity and compromise that has kept us strong. Our democracy's future depends on it.

Nov.
10
2015

Turning the pages back...

Nine years ago, on November 10, 2015, the U.S. Senate approved a defense bill – the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 – that authorized up to \$50 million in lethal military aid for Ukraine and mandated a White House response if Russia is deemed to violate a key arms control treaty.

The defense policy bill allotted \$607 billion in total defense spending, and was expected to be signed into law by President Barack Obama. The House of Representatives passed a similar version of the bill on November 5.

An earlier version of the bill was vetoed by President Obama, who wanted to move the remaining prisoners at the Guantanamo Bay military base in Cuba to U.S. prisons. However, there did not seem to be a threat of veto on the latest version of the bill, despite no provisions on the transfer of prisoners from Cuba to the U.S.

The defense package appropriated \$300 million to help Ukraine following Russia's proxy forces taking control of administrative buildings in Luhansk and Donetsk, and, from those funds, \$50 million for lethal weaponry such as anti-armor weapon systems, mortars, grenade launchers, small arms and ammunition.

Mr. Obama was previously hesitant to provide Ukraine with lethal aid for fear it would provoke Russia. The legislation set a deadline for the administration to tell Congress whether Russia was in violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which eliminated an entire class of nuclear-capable missiles from Europe in the late 1980s.

(Continued on page 19)

Russia massing...

(Continued from page 1)

Ukraine's Sumy region.

"That is why it was decided to conduct a preemptive offensive operation with the transfer of hostilities to the territory of the enemy in the Kursk region," Mr. Syrskiy wrote.

He also claimed that since the start of Ukraine's incursion into Kursk, 7,905 Russian soldiers were killed, 12,220 were wounded and 717 were captured.

The figures advanced by Mr. Syrskiy could not be independently confirmed.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in his evening address on November 6 that he would visit Budapest on November 7 to take part in the fifth summit of the European Political Community at the invitation of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and European Council President Charles Michel.

Mr. Zelenskyy said the meeting will discuss security challenges in Europe, as well as "new opportunities for all partners."

Earlier on November 6, the foreign affairs ministers of some of Ukraine's most important Western partners issued a statement expressing concern about the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia.

North Korea's "direct support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, besides showing Russia's desperate efforts to compensate its losses, would mark a dangerous expansion of the conflict, with serious consequences for European and Indo-Pacific peace and security," the foreign affairs ministers of Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Britain, the United States and the High Representative of the European Union said.

They added that deployment of the troops in battle would be a further breach of international law, including the United Nations Charter. The foreign affairs ministers condemned the military cooperation between Moscow and Pyongyang "in the strongest possible terms."

Earlier on November 6, Ukraine's air defenses shot down 38 out of the 63 drones launched by Russia at nine regions – Odesa, Mykolayiv, Kyiv, Sumy, Kirovohrad, Zhytomyr, Cherkasy, Chernihiv and Zaporizhia – the air force reported on Telegram.

Twenty-two other drones were lost after their navigation systems were jammed by Ukrainian electronic warfare units, the air force added.

Separately, the governor of the southeastern region of Zaporizhia said that the number of casualties following a Russian missile strike on his region had grown to seven dead and 25 wounded.

Russia has stepped up its attacks on Ukraine's cities and energy infrastructure as a third winter of war draws near. Russia's Defense Ministry, meanwhile, said its air defenses downed three Ukrainian drones over the Kursk and Oryol regions.

Mr. Zelenskyy said on November 4 that 11,000 North Korean troops had reached Russia's Kursk region, according to Kyiv's intelligence agencies.

Mr. Zelenskyy said in his evening address that he had been briefed by Ukraine's intelligence agencies on the movements and regretted that Western allies had not reacted more firmly.

"There are already 11,000 [North Koreans] in the Kursk region," Mr. Zelenskyy said. "We see an increase in North Koreans and no increase in the reaction of our partners. Unfortunately."

According to estimates of the Main Intelligence Directorate of Ukraine's Defense Ministry, the number of North Korean troops transferred to Russia is now about 12,000, including 500 officers, three of them generals.

The Pentagon on November 4 estimated the number of North Korean troops in the Kursk region bordering Ukraine slightly lower, at 10,000.

The total number of North Korean forces in Russia "could be closer to around 11,000-12,000," Pentagon spokesman Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder told reporters at a briefing.

Top U.S. officials last week put the number of North Korean soldiers in Kursk at about 8,000 out of a total of 10,000 in Russia.

Mr. Ryder said the Pentagon could not at this point confirm reports that they had entered combat, but all North Korean forces are being issued Russian uniforms and Russian equipment.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said on October 31 that the troops were expected to be deployed into combat in the coming days. He said they would become legitimate military targets once they entered the battlefield.

European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell met earlier on November 4 in Seoul with South Korean Foreign Affairs Minister Cho Tae-yul. They issued a joint statement condemning in the "strongest possible terms" North Korea's deployment.

"We are also deeply concerned about the possibility for any transfer of nuclear- or ballistic missile-related technology to [North Korea], which would jeopardize the international nonproliferation efforts and threaten peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and across the globe," the statement said.

North Korea and Russia haven't confirmed the North Korean deployment, but they have argued that their military cooperation doesn't break international laws.

Russian President Vladimir Putin met North Korean Foreign Affairs Minister Choe Son Hui on November 4 in Moscow. State television showed them greeting each other.

Details of the meeting were not available, but Mr. Choe conveyed "sincere, warm, comradely greetings" from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

(With reporting by Reuters, AP and dpa)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Role of a weekly

Dear Editor:

In my humble opinion, in this time of war, which is critical for Ukraine, you could have played a leading role for the benefit of Ukraine. You did not play this role. What a pity!

In 1918 Svoboda supported the Bolsheviks. Today, you, Andrew [Andrew Nynka, editor-in-chief of Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly] did almost the same

thing. If you can sleep well, sleep well.

Askold S. Lozynskyy
New York

(Editor's note: Mr. Lozynskyy's letter, which was written in Ukrainian, was translated by Andrew Nynka. It came to us on November 2, after it was clear that Svoboda and The Ukrainian Weekly would not endorse a candidate in the U.S. presidential election. Mr. Lozynskyy's claim that Svoboda supported the Bolsheviks in 1918 is inaccurate and misleading. Our response to this claim can be found in this week's editorial.)

Ukraine’s forces are dangerously stretched. Will North Korean troops break them?

by Mike Eckel
RFE/RL

Outmanned, outgunned, exhausted, Ukrainian troops are stretched to the breaking point by a Russian Army willing and able to throw more men and more weaponry to overrun Kyiv’s defenses.

Now enter the North Koreans: more than 11,000 soldiers sent to Russia, a deployment that poses a serious risk to Ukrainian lines, with the potential to break through in one location or cause a cascade of losses.

With estimates of Russian casualties exceeding 600,000 and the Kremlin desperate to avoid a politically unpopular second mobilization, the introduction of North Korean troops may end up being exactly what Moscow needs to, among other things, end Ukraine’s embarrassing seizure of Russian territory in the Kursk region.

Andriy Kovalenko, who sits on Ukraine’s Security and Defense Council, said Ukrainian forces had already clashed with North Korean units fighting alongside Russian troops near Sudzha, a Kursk region town, though he did not specify when the fighting occurred.

“It’s death by a thousand cuts of small Russian infantry teams and lightly armored vehicle assaults against [Ukrainian forces] right now,” said Dara Massicot, an expert on Russia’s military at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. “Adding [North Korea] to that chaotic and taxing mix to areas like Kursk will strain [Ukraine’s] operations.”

South Korea’s intelligence agency, and later U.S. authorities, said that 3,000 North Korean troops had arrived at Russian training bases in early October, and as many as 12,000 soldiers – approximately four brigades’ worth – could ultimately be deployed to the Ukraine war. A top Ukrainian diplomat said the deployment was being commanded by three generals and about 500 officers.

Still, there are questions about the fighting ability of the North Koreans and what effect their presence will have on the battlefield.

North Korea’s army “has poor equipment, lacks needed resources for training, is underfed, and is often used as labor for construction projects and bringing in the fall harvest,” said Terence Roehrig, an expert at the U.S. Naval War College in Rhode Island.



“Most of the North Koreans likely do not speak Russian, and they do not have actual combat experience yet,” said Benjamin Young, who researches North Korea at the Rand Corporation. “They are also operating within a highly corrupt and undisciplined Russian military system. The North Koreans will not be used to the lack of discipline and regimentation among Russian conscripts.”

Buckling, not (yet) broken

On the front lines themselves, Ukrainian lines are already buckling against the onslaught of Russia’s offensives. After stunning Moscow by invading and seizing parts of the Kursk region, Ukrainian units are being pushed back and have lost nearly half of the total territory they initially captured.

To the southeast, the city of Kupiansk, in Ukraine’s Kharkiv region, is under serious threat after Russia cut Ukrainian defenses at the Oskil River in two. Russian forces are also pushing into the center of the height-of-land town of Chasiv Yar after crossing the Siverskiy Donets-Donbas canal in August.

Farther south, Russian troops are closing in on Pokrovsk, a major logistical hub for Ukrainian forces in the Donbas, having seized the town of Vuhledar last month and creeping toward a major highway.

Ukraine’s most recent struggles have stemmed in part from the slow supply of critical Western weaponry – Abrams M-1 tanks and ATACMS precision missiles, for example. Equally critical has been Kyiv’s inability to ramp up its recruiting and training efforts to replenish depleted and exhausted frontline units.

For its part, Russia has been able to keep pace with its eye-popping number of casualties with a steady supply of volunteers attracted by extraordinarily high wages and benefits. South Korean intelligence reports Russia will pay around \$2,000 a month per soldier, though most of that is likely to go to the North Korean government.

It’s “a significant commitment by North Korea and a serious escalation in the war,” Mr. Roehrig said. However, “these numbers will not be decisive on the battlefield. Given the reported current casualty rates of 1,000 casualties per day, the Russian military will burn through the North Korean force in one to two weeks.”

More worrisome for Ukraine, however, are South Korean intelligence reports saying the deployed troops include elite special forces soldiers from North Korea’s XI Corps, also known as the Storm Corps.

“These elite units are believed to be well-trained with better equipment that would be a more formidable force than many other elements of the North Korea military,” Mr. Roehrig said.

Ukraine’s military intelligence agency said the North Korean troops had been dubbed “special Buryats” – a reference to an ethnic minority from the Asian part of Russia – and had been equipped with mortars, sniper rifles, anti-tank missiles, night-vision goggles and other gear.

Intelligence reports indicated the North Korean troops were physically capable but needed to be trained in up-to-date tactics, said Park Sun-won, a South Korean lawmaker, on October 23.

“Russian instructors believe that North Korean soldiers are fit both physically and mentally, but they lack the understanding of modern warfare, such as drone attacks,”

North Korea's Military Capabilities

With almost 1.3 million active personnel, North Korea is considered to have the fourth-largest military in the world. Here's an overview of the country's estimated military power.

Category	Amount
Active personnel	1.3 million
Reservists	600,000
Worker/Peasant Red Guard reservists (paramilitary force)	5.7 million
Special operations force	200,000
Cyberwarfare personnel	6,800
Tanks and armored vehicles	6,900
Fighter aircraft	400
Transport aircraft	200
Surface vessels	470
Submarines	70
Defense spending (2010-20)	20-30% of annual GDP (\$7 billion-\$11 billion annually)

Note: The numbers are estimates
Sources: International Institute for Strategic Studies, South Korean Defense Ministry, The World Factbook

Mr. Park was quoted by the Yonhap news agency as saying. The North Koreans might also be ordered not into combat but in a supporting role, some observers said.

“Russian logistics are notoriously bad, and additional personnel might help. Combat support roles like drone operations are possible. North Korean special operations forces might train Russian special forces and replacements,” Mark Cancian and Chris Park, experts at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., said in a research note. “In whatever role, substituting North Koreans would free up Russian personnel for front-line service.”

‘It makes a difference’

Even if the fighting quality of the North Korean troops is suspect, the sheer quantity will pose a challenge – not unlike the presence of Russian prison inmates, who have been heavily used for infantry-wave-style assaults that overwhelm Ukrainian units.

“Let’s assume Ukraine has 25,000 people in Kursk. If you put there 10,000 Koreans on top of 30,000-40,000 Russians, then, yeah, it makes a difference,” said a Ukrainian Army reserve officer who uses the call sign Tatarigami.

“They can use them to exhaust our troops,” he told RFE/RL.

(Continued on page 9)

Putin and Kim...

(Continued from page 2)

from the Pyongyang region (RIA Novosti, November 1). Coincidences happen, but the fast progress of North Korea’s missile program is likely achieved with the help of Russian expertise and technology transfer (RE: Russia, October 28).

South Korea is the country most alarmed by the surging establishment of an axis between Moscow and Pyongyang. Defense Minister Kim Yong-Hyun traveled to Washington, D.C., to coordinate a response. Seoul’s reaction also involved sending a monitoring mission to Kyiv (Vedomosti, November 1). Japan and the United States moved air assets, including one B-1B strategic bomber, to conduct a trilateral military drill with South Korea to demonstrate unity. Still, it is rather obvious for Moscow that Washington’s primary concern at present is avoiding escalation (Kommersant, November 1). Many European politicians share this sentiment, but Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s argument that the deployment of North Korean troops constitutes an escalatory step that

endangers global security is irrefutable (Interfax Ukraine, November 1). All convenient doubts regarding North Korea’s involvement in Ukraine are now dispelled, as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Mark Rutte confirmed North Korean troops’ arrival, a clear signal of Putin’s desperation (News.ru, October 28).

Proper and proportional responses to this escalation are still being discussed, and Washington’s permission to Kyiv to deliver missile strikes on Moscow – as well as Pyongyang – with long-range weapons systems is still pending (The Moscow Times, October 28). Beijing is the only entity that can discourage Putin and Mr. Kim from escalating any further during the presumed window of opportunity provided by the U.S. elections (Kommersant, November 1). China is allegedly discontented by the swift transportation of North Korean troops to the Ukrainian front, which goes against its declared goal of negotiating a ceasefire and eventually a settlement to the war (Vedomosti, November 2; NV.ua, November 3). Russia feigns innocence in upsetting its senior strategic partner, all the while its pundits persist with assertions that Western attempts to provoke tensions in Russia-China relations are doomed to failure (RIAC, November 1).

Autocratic and rogue regimes of various persuasions have strikingly dissimilar anxieties on the stakes of the U.S. elections. China generally prefers stability and predictability, and Venezuela is quite content with more of the same, while Iran is so nervous about tipping the balance in the presumably close vote that it could potentially postpone its “retaliatory” strike on Israel (South China Morning Post; Venezuelanalysis, November 1; The Times of Israel, October 31, November 3; see Terrorism Monitor, September 11). However, it gives a new impetus to Western efforts at demonstrating solidarity, a source of strength, to which Putin and Mr. Kim have no access or understanding. Ukraine is on the receiving end of the Russian-North Korean experiments on boosting each other’s crucial capabilities, which are premised on the United States’ reluctance to commit to consequential decisions. Ukraine’s defiance has, nevertheless, become a force that encourages the Global West to stand together despite the disarray their democratic processes may produce.

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As Russia's war...

(Continued from page 1)

tinued to fire missiles and bombs into Ukraine from Russian territory.

Stretched thin, Ukraine's military still maintains a foothold in the Russian region of Kursk while Moscow's forces slowly, yet steadily, take more Ukrainian territory in the east and south of the country.

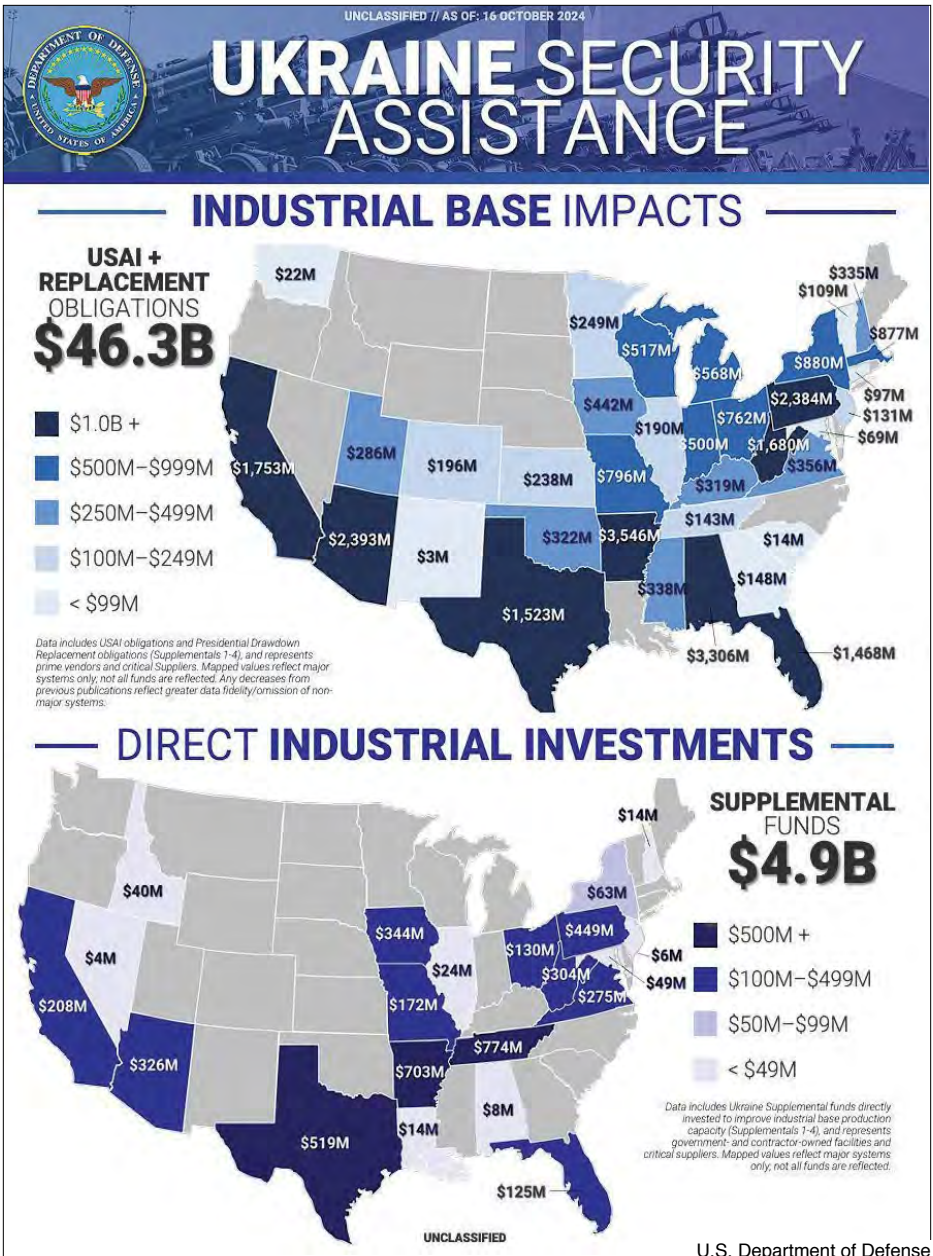
Nearly 18 percent of Ukrainian land is occupied by Russia as of November 1, according to open-intelligence source War Mapper. That number represents a month-on-month gain of 208 square miles of land, and includes the occupied Crimean Peninsula and parts of the easternmost regions of Luhansk and Donetsk, which were forcibly seized in 2014 when the Kremlin began its war on Ukraine.

About 63 percent of Ukrainians are still ready to endure Russia's ongoing war, according to a recent survey conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology. That figure has fallen below 70 percent for the first time since February 2022 when the all-out invasion began.

Among other milestones reached as the full-scale war approaches its 1,000th day is that at least 5,000 Russian officers, including seven generals, have been killed in that period, according to available Russian open sources.

It is not clear whether Kyiv's largest war-time donor, the United States, will continue to provide Ukraine with financial assistance after Donald Trump's victory in the U.S. presidential election this week.

The Republican Party he controls also regained a majority in the U.S. Senate, and Florida Sen. Marco Rubio characterized the war as being "stuck in a deadlock" and a "stalemate."



An informational graphic on the level of U.S. security assistance to Ukraine as of October 16 shows the economic impact that aid has had on America's industrial base.

"I think the Ukrainians have been incredibly brave and strong in standing up to Russia. But ultimately, what we're funding here is a stalemate, and it needs to be put to an end," Mr. Rubio said.

There are different scenarios to end the war among President-elect Trump's team, but they all invariably assume that Ukraine must cede some degree of conquered territory to Russia, a Wall Street Journal analysis said on November 7.

During his campaign, Mr. Trump said he would end the bloodshed before the January 2025 presidential inauguration, though he has not specified how.

"Freezing the Russian war in Ukraine on anything like the current [front] lines enormously advantages Russia and increases the risks and costs to Ukraine and the West of deterring, let alone defeating, future Russian attempts to fulfill Putin's aims by force," said George Barros, the leader of the Russia and geospatial intelligence team at the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War.

The "only outcome" that the U.S. and the West should accept is one where Ukraine is "strong enough to deter and defeat any future Russian aggression with an economy strong enough to prosper without large amounts of foreign aid," he added.

Security assistance

Billions of dollars in military aid has been pledged or given to Ukraine, mostly from the U.S. Outgoing U.S. President Joe Biden is rushing to get the last remaining authorized \$6 billion to be delivered before the January 20 presidential inauguration, according to reporting by Politico.

Once all the funds are appropriated, the U.S. defense industrial base – the majority

(Continued on page 9)

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STAND WITH UKRAINE

As Russia’s war...

(Continued from page 8)

recipient of the funds – will have received more than \$60 billion, according to the Acquisition and Sustainment Office of the U.S. Under Secretary of Defense.

Eight of the 10 states that have benefited the most from the assistance are those that voted for Mr. Trump in the vote this month: Arkansas, Alabama, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Texas, West Virginia, Florida and Missouri.

New war phase

Ukraine still maintains a foothold in the Kursk region of Russia, which it invaded in August. Putin has allegedly given orders to retake the occupied part of the region within three months. This week, Russia is reported to have launched a counter-offensive together with some 10,000 newly arrived North Korean soldiers.

Top diplomats from South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and the Group of Seven (G-7) nations, which includes the U.S., condemned the presence of those troops as an escalation.

In a joint statement this week, they said North Korea’s entry into the war is of “grave concern” and that it is a “dangerous expansion of the conflict.”

South Korea also warned that it is considering directly sending weapons to Ukraine amid the changing battlefield situation. Ukraine’s military confirmed that its soldiers have engaged North Korean troops in combat, though Kyiv has not specified where.

“South Korean officials worry that Russia may reward North Korea by giving it sophisticated weapons technologies that can boost the North’s nuclear and missile programs that target South Korea,” the Associated Press reported.

‘More weapons’ not talks

Meanwhile, while addressing the European Political Community Summit in Budapest on November 7, Mr. Zelenskyy voiced frustration over the pace with which Western weapons have been delivered to Ukraine.

“We are not defending ourselves from Russian words, but from Russian attacks. Therefore, we need a sufficient amount of weapons, not support in negotiations,” he said.

“Embraces with [Vladimir] Putin will not

help. Some of you have been embracing him for 20 years and things are only getting worse. He only thinks about wars and will not change. Only pressure can put him in his place,” Mr. Zelenskyy said.

Notably, his speech in Budapest was not shown in the official live stream of the summit.

According to a Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty correspondent, the Ukrainian president spoke second, after Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and before French President Emmanuel Macron. Both Messrs. Orban and Macron’s speeches were streamed live.

Near-constant drone attacks

Incessant Russian drone attacks on civilian targets are increasing and Kyiv has come under specific fire throughout October and up to a massive overnight barrage that occurred on November 7.

More than 100 drones targeted nearly a dozen regions that night and fragments and debris from drones fell across six Kyiv neighborhood districts. Residential buildings, a medical facility and a business center were damaged in five of these areas, according to the city’s military administration.

The attack lasted nearly nine hours and Ukraine’s Air Force reported intercepting more than 30 Russian drones, most of which were of Iranian origin.

“For 31 days in October, there was only one day without an air raid alert in the capital. On average, Kyiv residents heard sirens twice a day,” the capital’s military administration said.

Between August and October, Russia launched 4,300 Shahed-type drones and other decoy unmanned aerial vehicles designed to resemble real Shahed ones, according to Ukraine’s Air Force.

“Thanks to the coordinated efforts of Ukraine’s air defense forces, 3,063 enemy drones were shot down, accounting for 71 percent of the total,” the statement said.

The aerial barrages can serve two “military purposes, such as conserving missile stockpiles and intelligence-gathering. Additionally, they are part of a strategy of constant psychological pressure on the population to break their will to resist,” said Andrii Kovalenko, head of the Center for Countering Disinformation at Ukraine’s National Security and Defense Council.

As both warring sides learn to adapt, Kyiv has been investing in electronic war-



At least 5,000 Russian military officers have been killed since the start of Moscow’s full-scale war on Ukraine, including seven Russian generals, as of November 5, according to verified Russian open sources.



Soldiers from Ukraine’s 5th Assault Brigade are seen on patrol along the front line of the war in Ukraine during the first week of November.



A graphic shows the numbers of Russian losses in both people and military equipment since President Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale war on Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Ukraine’s forces...

(Continued from page 7)

U.S. officials, meanwhile, have all but threatened North Korea outright.

“Make no mistake: If these North Korean troops engage in combat or combat support operations against Ukraine, they would make themselves legitimate military targets,” U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said last week during a joint appearance in Washington with top South Korean officials.

That has already happened, Mr. Kovalenko said on November 6.

“North Koreans are gradually joining Russian units,” he told Current Time. “They are being trained to operate drones. The North Korean officers present are learning how to interact with the military in the conditions of a modern war.”

Jonas Ohman, a Swedish filmmaker who runs Blue/Yellow, a Lithuanian-based non-governmental organization that works

fare systems to jam the signals of incoming drones.

“This is significant because, while missiles cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and bursts of cannon fire cost thousands, the electronic jammers cost virtually nothing to operate and never run out of ammunition,” a Forbes magazine report says.

closely with frontline Ukrainian units, said his contacts reported a clash sometime around October 25 in the Kursk region with numerous North Korean casualties. He shared a photograph from a Ukrainian drone video feed that showed a dead soldier with a North Korean flag on the helmet.

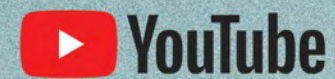
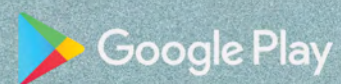
Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy used the appearance of the North Koreans to vent frustration with restraints on using Western weaponry to hit deeper into Russia.

“We see an increase in North Korean forces, but, unfortunately, we do not see an increase in response from our partners,” he said.

(With reporting by Michael Scollon)

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Okean Elzy...

(Continued from page 1)

Speaking in English onstage during Okean Elzy's performance in Boston, the band's frontman, Sviatoslav Vakarchuk, said he wanted "to express from myself and the hearts of my friends on the stage how grateful we are for all of the support the American people give Ukraine. Thank you very much. It makes a huge difference, and please keep doing that."

Addressing the band's 30th anniversary, Mr. Vakarchuk said, "Thank you very much for this friendship, love, understanding, and everything. Let's have another 30 years."

Mr. Vakarchuk, speaking at first in Ukrainian, said, "Tonight there will be a lot of Ukrainian and English; I'll be speaking a lot in English because it's important to get the message to everyone what's happening in our country and why we're here and why we need to be united."

The U.S. leg of the tour was also meant to promote the band's newest album, *Lighthouse* – their first English-language album that also includes the songs *Lighthouse* and *Voices are Rising*, and features collaborations with John Rzeznik of the Goo Goo Dolls, Travis Barker of Blink 182 and famed producer John Feldmann.

Mr. Vakarchuk said *Lighthouse* is a metaphor for hope and is particularly meaningful for Ukrainians.

Asked why the band made their first English language album, Mr. Vakarchuk told *The Ukrainian Weekly* backstage before their show in Boston that "we understood we needed to speak about Ukraine more loudly using a language everyone knows and understands, and we decided to connect ourselves to these [English-language] voices. This was a desire to do something important for Ukraine and about Ukraine so that the entire world can hear it."

Mr. Vakarchuk told the audience in



Andrew Nynka

Okean Elzy, with lead singer Sviatoslav Vakarchuk (right), performs in Boston on October 26 as part of the band's *Lighthouse* tour.

Boston that there was a reason they kicked off the show with some of their more popular, albeit older Ukrainian-language songs.

"We started this concert with these four songs, and we pretended that we feel as it was, but unfortunately it is not, and we hope once, soon, we will feel as it was again: happy, entertaining and relaxing," Mr. Vakarchuk said in English.

"But now we're living in a different time, in a different world, especially in our country where Ukrainian fighters are struggling and doing their best and sacrificing their lives to preserve the future of our country and our kids, so we need to remember every second and every moment of our lives that we are here to help them," he said.

Together with SoftServe's Open Eyes charity fund, Okean Elzy continues their joint fundraising for 30 ambulances for medics on the frontline. The initiative was launched together with the band's tour in Europe, Canada and the United States. The first ambulance within the scope of the project has already been handed over to Ukrainian medics on the front lines.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Russian army intensified attacks on medical facilities in Ukraine in 2024 in a flagrant violation of international law. Since the beginning of the war, more than 1,682 attacks on medical facilities have been recorded, according to the WHO.

"Ambulances are expendable. The Russians are simply hunting for them. The losses of these vehicles are huge, and the need for them is constant," said paramedic Yulia Payevska (call sign "Tayra") during the transfer of vehicles from the band and the foundation to the medics.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the Open Eyes charitable foundation has been actively helping Ukrainian medics. As of October, the foundation has delivered more than 250 ambulances to the frontline and continues to work to secure more. Together with Okean Elzy, they plan to purchase another 30 vehicles.

"It's constant work for all of us. We need to do our best and understand that it's our responsibility – and when I say our, it's not an abstract 'our.' It's my personal responsibility, and I hope that all of you Ukrainians understand that it's your personal responsibility to make Ukraine win this war," Mr. Vakarchuk said during the show in Boston.

During the European portion of the tour, the band managed to raise 5 million hryvnia (about \$121,000). With these funds, one ambulance has already been purchased and handed over to medics, and four more are being purchased.

"On average, one ambulance can save 15 wounded people a day. Moreover, it needs to be equipped. And finding this equipment takes time, money and effort. We often use the vehicles we received from the Open Eyes foundation as an example because they have everything we need. The foundation searches for vehicles to suit our needs, and we just take the vehicle and go to work right away," said Yaroslav, a soldier with the 79th Air Assault Brigade who gave only his name and call sign, "Brother."

Medics at the front rely on ambulances as much as they do on their fellow soldiers, he said.

"This is a kindred fortress on wheels, and its importance is hard to overestimate," said Yaroslav, adding that the situation at the front has become more complicated due to constant drone attacks on the crews, especially near the front line.

Fundraising for the ambulances will continue until the end of the year as Okean Elzy continues its tour. The audience can make donations to the cause before, during or after the shows, and individuals can contribute to the cause by purchasing items during a charity auction help before and after the band's shows.

During the band's shows, visitors bid on Ukrainian flags signed by Gen. Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, a guitar signed by members of the band and other valuable items.

In addition to funds raised during the concerts and donations made through the band's website (<https://okeanelzy.com/en/>), the band will donate part of the proceeds from ticket sales and their fundraising initiatives.

"In this war, Russia continues to kill our people every day, and we must realize that ending this war is the responsibility of all of us. I know that I personally must and will make every effort to do so, and I hope you think the same about yourselves," Mr. Vakarchuk said in Boston.

Individuals can help Ukrainian medics at the front by joining the fundraiser for ambulances from anywhere in the world via the Open Eyes website (<https://open-eyes.net/our-work/relief-for-ukraine/>).

Open Eyes was founded by SoftServe in 2014 and it operates in Ukraine, Europe and the United States.

After Russia launched its full-scale war on Ukraine in 2022, the organization focused on providing critical support to the country. As of the end of 2023, the foundation has provided more than 3,000 uniforms for soldiers and delivered more than 1,000 tons of humanitarian aid to more than 100,000 people. In addition, the foundation has donated over 350 pieces of vital medical equipment to several critical hospitals in Ukraine. Since 2022, the foundation has donated more than 250 ambulances to the frontline as part of its flagship Drive for Life initiative.

SoftServe is the largest global information technology company with Ukrainian roots, providing software development and consulting services. More than 10,000 employees work in over 50 offices from San Francisco to Singapore. The company's headquarters are located in Lviv and Austin, Texas.



Tour workers auction an Okean Elzy album signed by all of the band's members before the show in Boston on October 26.



Milos Jelic of Okean Elzy plays a guitar signed by all of the band's members and auctioned during the group's show in Boston on October 26.

Rotary International's CEO lauds Ukrainian civil society

by Adrian Karmazyn

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Washington Group (TWG), an association of Ukrainian-American professionals, on November 1 hosted John Hewko, CEO of Rotary International, at its latest distinguished speaker series luncheon held at the historic DACOR Bacon House in the nation's capital. Laryssa Courtney, president of TWG, opened the event, welcoming participants and noting that the organization that she leads is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Also addressing the audience was Denys Sienik, deputy chief of mission of the Embassy of Ukraine in the U.S.A., who commended TWG for the work it has done over the decades in terms of supporting Ukraine and the strengthening of U.S.-Ukraine relations, including through advocacy work aimed at bolstering U.S. assistance for Ukraine in its current battle against Russia's genocidal full-scale invasion.

The Washington Group's efforts are still very much needed, "do not stop" he said.

Mr. Sienik also expressed appreciation for the organization's promotion of Ukrainian arts through TWG's Cultural Fund's concert series. He also thanked TWG for sponsoring interns at the

Embassy of Ukraine under the auspices of its Fellowship Fund.

Alexa Chopivsky, TWG events director, introduced the keynote speaker of the event – John Hewko, the CEO of Rotary International, a global service organization with headquarters in Evanston, Ill., which works on such challenges as fighting disease, supporting education, protecting the environment and fostering economic development at the community level.

Mr. Hewko described various aspects of the activities of Rotary, which has 45,000 local clubs with 1.2 million members, the majority of them outside of the United States, including in Ukraine. Rotary clubs around the world have mobilized to provide the equivalent of \$80 million worth of aid to Ukraine, ranging from taking in refugees to providing medical and humanitarian assistance, he said.

Mr. Hewko, a Ukrainian-American who worked in Kyiv as the executive secretary of the International Advisory Council to the Ukrainian Parliament in 1991-1992, devoted much of his talk to the critical role of civil society in Ukraine's democratic and social development throughout the past three decades of Ukrainian independence and particularly in the current war effort.



The Washington Group

Keynote speaker John Hewko (fourth from the left), CEO of Rotary International, with board members of The Washington Group and Kateryna Smaglyi (fourth from the right), counselor of political affairs and public diplomacy at the Embassy of Ukraine in the U.S., at the historic DACOR Bacon House in Washington, D.C., on November 1.

Civil society has been a crucial source of Ukraine's resilience in the war, he said, and will be a key force in driving and implementing Ukraine's postwar reconstruction. The leader of Rotary International believes

that the promise of accession to the European Union in the near future will help motivate Ukrainians to take on difficult reforms, including those that facilitate the fight against corruption.

St. Vladimir...

(Continued from page 5)

Over 250 children gathered in prayer during the Moleben, led by Archbishop Daniel, who offered words of spiritual guidance and encouragement. Addressing the teachers, parents and children, he emphasized the importance of maintaining both their Ukrainian heritage and Orthodox faith, particularly in times of global uncertainty and challenges to cultural identity. The visit underscored the cathedral's commitment to fostering the spiritual growth of the younger generation, ensuring that they carry forward the legacy of faith.

The celebration of 100 years is a testament to the hard work and dedication of countless teachers, clergy and families who have made the school a cornerstone of the community.

Later that evening, the clergy of the cathedral gathered for the solemn Vespers service. Metropolitan Antony, primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A., joined Archbishop Daniel in prayer as the faithful filled the church. Vespers, an evening prayer service, was an opportunity for the community to prepare their hearts and souls for the Sunday celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

Following Vespers, a special blessing ceremony took place where Archbishop

Daniel, in the presence of Metropolitan Antony, consecrated several important new items for the cathedral community. Among these were a new depiction of Golgotha, which would serve as a visual reminder of Christ's sacrificial love for humanity, a new Eucharistic chalice set symbolizing the ongoing life of the church through the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, and a new outdoor electronic sign, providing the parish with a modern means of sharing vital information with the surrounding community. These new additions to the life of the parish were made possible through the generosity of parishioners, reflecting the communal spirit that has always been at the heart of St. Vladimir Cathedral.

The spiritual significance of these moments was profound, as they represented both continuity and renewal – bridging the historical depth of the parish with the evolving needs of the modern world. The consecration of these gifts highlighted the dedication of the faithful to ensure that the cathedral remains not only a place of worship but also a thriving center for community life, education and outreach.

On Sunday morning, the cathedral community led by Frs. Hontaruk and Nackonachny, as well as Protodeacon Mahlay who was assisting, welcomed Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel for the solemn celebration. Their presence embodied the unbroken connection between the cler-

gy and the faithful, offering prayers for the community as it embarks on a new century of ministry.

The celebration began with a warm greeting from the children of the parish, who presented flowers to the bishops, which symbolize the purity and hope of the future. Young adults also welcomed the hierarchs and requested archpastoral prayers for their spiritual growth and the well-being of the cathedral. Representatives from various parish organizations, including the parish board, brotherhood, sisterhood and youth ministry, joined Fr. Hontaruk in asking for the bishops' intercessory prayers, signifying the communal desire to be guided by Christ's love as they continue their journey of faith.

Joining the concelebrating hierarchs and clergy were Fr. Volodymyr Steliac of St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in Silver Spring, Md., Fr. Petro Levko of St. George Ukrainian Orthodox parish in Yardville, N.J., Fr. Roman Yatskiv, Fr. Milorad Orlic (Serbian Orthodox Church), Fr. Vasyl Pasakas of St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Memorial Church in South Bound Brook, N.J., Fr. Dimitri Belenki, and Deacon Maksym Zhuravchuk of Three Holy Hierarchs Chapel of St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary in Somerset, N.J.

The seminarians from St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Seminary, together with over 25 altar servers, ensured that the

service flowed smoothly, adding a youthful energy to the sacred celebration. Metropolitan Antony delivered a profound homily reflection on the Gospel parable of the sower, drawing a parallel to the seeds of faith planted a century ago in the cathedral community. He emphasized that these seeds have borne much fruit – through the sacrifices, prayers, and love of both clergy and faithful.

As the cathedral enters its second century, the Gospel's call to nurture the soil of individual hearts through repentance, good works and faithfulness to the teachings of Christ remains paramount. During the service, the participation of over 350 faithful in Holy Communion was a powerful testament to the vibrant spiritual life of the parish. The choir, under the direction of Markian Komichak, beautifully led the bilingual congregation in traditional Kyivan and Galician chants, a deeply spiritual form of liturgical singing that connects the faithful to their roots while offering glory to God. The involvement of the youth in the choir is particularly noteworthy, as it ensures the continuity of the sacred tradition and emphasizes the vital role young people play in the life of the Church.

The centennial banquet, attended by over 360 people, was held in the parish hall, where exhibits showcased the rich history, art and youth ministry of the cathedral. The displays paid tribute to the cultural and spiritual contributions of the parish over the past century. During the banquet, the hierarchs presented awards to various parish organizations in recognition of their dedication and ministry, highlighting the collaborative efforts that have sustained the parish.

As the community reflects on the past 100 years, members of the church said they do so with profound gratitude for the sacrifices and love of those who came before. The hierarchs noted that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral is poised to continue its mission of spreading the Gospel, nurturing the faith of the youth and serving the wider community for the glory of God in the new century to come. May the prayers of the saints and the intercession of the Theotokos be with the cathedral community as they embark on this new chapter of their spiritual journey, they said.



Mykola Stefanyk/uocofusa.org

More than 250 students of the Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies in Parma, Ohio, are seen with Archbishop Daniel (center), clergy and teachers at St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral following a Moleben service for the youth.

Ukrainian American Veterans announce 2024 scholarship award winners

by Nicholas Skirka

YONKERS, N.Y. – The Ukrainian American Veterans (UAV) announced their 2024 scholarship award winners during the organization’s 77th National Convention held on September 26-29 in Warren, Mich.

The UAV recognized 11 recipients for this year’s Scholarship Awards. The UAV National Scholarship Committee selected nine undergraduate and two graduate students for the awards. The committee awarded these students scholarships to help pay for tuition, books or school supplies.

Students were required to write an essay of 400-500 words about a current military or related topic. The topics for this year included the war in Ukraine, human rights war violations in Ukraine, negative war effects on returning American veterans, Russian aggression in Ukraine, and Ukrainian American veterans’ contributions to America’s wars. Other criteria considered for a scholarship are academic achievement and extracurricular activities. For the 2024 year, the following 11 students received a UAV Scholarship Award of \$500:

Arianna E. Rudko (Connecticut) is a student at Rocky Mountain College majoring in art and design. This scholarship was awarded to Ms. Rudko from many donors in memory of Michael Demchak, a past UAV national scholarship officer.

Jared M. Hrycak (New Jersey) is a graduate student at the University of California at Riverside, Calif., majoring in computer engineering. The scholarship was awarded to Mr. Hrycak by UAV Post 40 of Florida.

Madeline E. Zetick (Pennsylvania) is a student at Temple University majoring in nursing. The scholarship was awarded to Ms. Zetick by Gregory Buchai.

Benjamin I. Skorik (Massachusetts) is a student at Clarkson University majoring in business intelligence and data analytics. This scholarship was awarded to Mr. Skorik by the UAV Ladies Auxiliary and additional donors.

Jared J. Roderick (Massachusetts) a graduate student at the University of Connecticut majoring in statistics. This scholarship was awarded to Mr. Roderick by Stephen Glomb (\$200) and other donors.

Rylie S. Roderick (Massachusetts) is a student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Ala., majoring in biomedical engineering. This scholarship was awarded to Ms. Roderick by many donors.

Sofia W. Tsvihun (Connecticut/Indiana) is a student at Duke University majoring in electrical and computer engineering. This scholarship was awarded to Ms. Tsvihun by George Kovch (\$300) and the Selfreliance Federal Credit Union (\$200).

Stephen E. Sheptak (Pennsylvania) is a student at Butler Community College majoring in nursing. This scholarship was awarded to Mr. Sheptak by Roman Synychak (\$300) and Myroslaw J. Kyj (\$200).

Luke E. Coffey (Illinois) is a student at Indiana University-Bloomington majoring in finance. This scholarship was awarded to Mr. Coffey by Inia I. Tunstall and Andrew Petrina (\$200 each) and Joe Nasevich (\$100).

Alayna J. Storey (Michigan) is a student at Northern Michigan University majoring

in fine arts/art and design. This scholarship was awarded to Ms. Storey by the SUMA Federal Credit Union of Yonkers, N.Y., (\$250) and Yuriy Petrenko (\$250).

Alexandra L. Kostecki (New Hampshire) is a student at Concordia University, Canada, majoring in early childhood elementary education. This scholarship was awarded to Ms. Kostecki by Roman Bilynsky (\$200), Daria H. Rusyn (\$150) and other donors.

In 2024, the following individuals and organizations donated \$100 to support the UAV scholarship program: Leo J. Samokieszyn, Raymond Diaz, Michael Mosyjowski, Ihor Hron, Jaroslaw Sywyj, Walter N. Czebiniak, Kenneth Johnson, Paul Nadzikewycz, Richard Skorik, Catherine A. Popaduik, Peter Lusenko and Col. Orest R. Gogosha (retired). The UAV National Scholarship Committee thanked all of the individuals and organizations that donated to make the UAV scholarship awards a huge success.

Students interested in applying for the UAV Scholarship Award should fill out an application, send their high school and/or college transcript with class schedule, write an essay from one of the five military topics described above, and email a high-

resolution digital headshot of themselves. Applications are available on the UAV website: www.uavets.org.

To be eligible for a UAV scholarship, applicants must be descendants of or related to a Ukrainian American veteran who is or was a member of the UAV organization. Applicants should be full-time undergraduate or part/full-time graduate students in a degree program. Students attending accredited trade schools or institutions that have a degree program are eligible as well. Students can apply after they graduate from high school; college attendance will be verified before awards are given in the fall semester. Applications are accepted year-round, and the deadline is August 31. Students can reapply for a scholarship award in subsequent years.

Completed scholarship applications can be mailed or emailed to UAV National Scholarship Officer Nicholas Skirka at the following address: 109 Windsor Terrace, Yonkers, N.Y., 10701. For additional information, readers may email Mr. Skirka at nskirka@optonline.net or call (914) 965-3707.

The UAV National Scholarship Committee includes John Galik, Peter Olijarczyk, George Pasiuk and Maksym Makarczuk.



Luke E. Coffey



Jared M. Hrycak



Alexandra L. Kostecki



Jared J. Roderick



Rylie S. Roderick



Arianna E. Rudko



Benjamin I. Skorik



Stephen E. Sheptak



Alayna J. Storey



Sofia W. Tsvihun



Madeline E. Zetick

NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

Pyongyang's military objectives," the joint E.U.-South Korean statement said. "We are also deeply concerned about the possibility for any transfer of nuclear or ballistic-missile-related technology to the DPRK, which would jeopardize the international nonproliferation efforts and threaten peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and across the globe," it added. (RFE/RL)

Germany's Baerbock in Kyiv

German Foreign Affairs Minister Annalena Baerbock met with Ukrainian officials on November 4 in Kyiv where she arrived in a show of support for Ukraine as Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine nears the 1,000-day mark amid daily strikes on the war-racked country's infrastructure and heavy fighting in the east. "Germany, together with many partners around the world, stands firmly by Ukraine's side," Ms. Baerbock said upon arrival on her eighth visit since the start of the war. "We will support the Ukrainians for as long as they need us so that they can follow their path to a just peace," she said after arriving in Kyiv by train. Ms. Baerbock's visit comes as Ukrainians face the prospect of a third winter of war amid energy shortages and the reported arrival of North Korean troops to fight on Russia's side. "Almost

1,000 days of rocket attacks, wailing sirens and the noise of tanks. Almost 1,000 days of power cuts, collapse of heating systems and countless missed lessons," Ms. Baerbock said in a separate statement. "For almost 1,000 days now, Putin's war has been shaking the everyday life of Ukrainians to the core – yet not their courage and their hope of a life in safety in a free Ukraine," she said. "We are countering this brutality with our humanity and support – not only so that the Ukrainian people can survive the winter but also so that their country can continue to exist." Russia on November 4 launched 80 drones and several missiles and guided aerial bombs in another massive attack on 11 Ukrainian regions, Ukraine's air force reported, adding that its air-defense systems shot down 50 over the Kyiv, Sumy, Odesa, Kherson, Mykolayiv, Zhytomyr, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv and Kirovohrad regions. It said that another 27 drones were lost in various parts of Ukraine. Separately, Andriy Yermak, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's chief of staff, warned North Korea in a message on Telegram. "North Korean military will die in Kursk region, because they, like the Russian army, pose a threat to Ukraine. They are present there and, of course, they will die," Mr. Yermak said on November 4. Mr. Zelenskyy has criticized Ukraine's Western allies for their muted response to the reported deployment of thousands of North Korean soldiers to the eastern Russian

region of Kursk, where Ukrainian troops in August launched a surprise offensive. However, on November 4, Mr. Zelenskyy sounded some optimism about weapons and ammunition deliveries from Ukraine's allies after a meeting with Gen. Oleksandr Syrskiy, the commander in chief of Ukraine's forces, and Defense Minister Rustem Umerov. "There have been significant improvements in partner supplies to the front line, with an increase in deliveries under support packages. Artillery supplies have also seen marked improvements," Mr. Zelenskyy wrote on X. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

Fico supports Chinese-Brazilian peace plan

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico said

Bratislava is ready to join a proposal promoted by Brazil and China to resolve the war in Ukraine. Mr. Fico met with Chinese President Xi Jinping on November 1 in Beijing and said afterward that China's position on the war in Ukraine "is fair, objective and constructive." China and Brazil in August jointly published a "six-point consensus" meant to bring about a lasting political solution to the war that Russia launched in February 2022. The plan calls for cooling down the fighting and a recognition that dialogue and negotiations are the only way to end the war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has called the proposal "destructive" and

(Continued on page 15)

To combat...

(Continued from page 2)

which is more susceptible to policy changes than its birth rate, though such reforms would require a ruler in the country willing to make them (Holod, October 16). These steps would include expensive and fundamental alterations to both domestic and foreign policy – ones Putin shows no sign of willingness to undertake. Demographers suggest all his talk about boosting the birth rate is, first and foremost, a smokescreen to conceal his almost complete unwillingness to address mortality issues.

Russia's fertility rate – the number of children per woman in her lifetime – has fallen well below replacement levels, much as in other European countries. Russia's mortality rate – the number of deaths relative to the population as a whole – however, is far higher than in all other developed and urbanized countries. This is due in part to the fact that most of these states have adopted social policies designed to reduce death rates and boost life expectancy. Given that pattern, demographers say Russia should focus on reducing the latter if it is to prevent the country's total population from continuing to shrink, possibly to as few as 100 million by the end of this century. According to Russian demographers Aby Shukyurov and Dmitry Zakotyansky, the Russian government has focused almost exclusively on boosting birth rates, something it thinks it can do despite all the evidence to the contrary from its own experience and that of other countries. Moscow does this while ignoring far more effective policies that would reduce mortality rates.

Mr. Shukyurov pointedly notes that, while Russia's birth rate is lower now than at any time in the past, it "might be fine" given that the country is becoming increasingly urbanized. Its mortality rate, on the other hand, "is anything but." While Russia's birth rate is comparable to Europe's, its mortality rate is far higher, and the causes of death are different as well. In Russia, cardiovascular diseases are the primary cause of death, while in Europe – which has used various healthcare strategies to reduce those – cancer is now the leading cause. Mr. Zakotyansky, for his part, points out that economic inequality is a significant contributing factor to Russia's low life expectancy, with as many as 40 percent of all Russians living in poverty, continuing to smoke and drink heavily, and more likely to be involved in or affected by crime. The Kremlin could do more to combat all of these economic inequalities, but it is not.

Moreover, both demographers say that Russia's demographic situation has been seriously affected by the war in Ukraine, a conflict which, according to some estimates, has killed 120,000 Russian soldiers and injured more than 400,000 more. Once again, the regime could improve the country's demography by bringing the long war to an end. Even when Putin does talk about the mortality rate, he obscures the true fig-

ures by playing games with statistics, as the real numbers are too horrific. Apart from fertility questions, the mortality rate is almost always discussed so as not to lead to any challenge to Putin's policies (Tochno, March 14; Window on Eurasia, March 18).

Presently, the Kremlin wants to block questions regarding Putin's healthcare "optimization" program, his decade-long effort to cut back healthcare facilities so as to allocate more money for other projects, including his war in Ukraine. Hospitals and medical centers have been shuttered across the country, making Russians increasingly angry (Novaya Gazeta, September 16). Reversing his course now would be prohibitively expensive. To just return to what Russia's mortality rates were in 1991, academician Robert Nigmatullin says Russia would have to double the share of its gross domestic product (GDP) spent on healthcare. Otherwise, it will continue to suffer 200,000 or more excess deaths every year (Nakanune.ru, June 27, 2023).

Looming behind these immediate healthcare and financial concerns is another that is likely to grow and play an increasing role in Putin's failure to address mortality issues. Even though abortion rates have fallen 90 percent from Soviet times, research suggests that this occurred for many reasons, and that a pro-natalist hyperfocus on them has proved less effective than advertised (Tochno, July 28, 2023; Cherta, September 5). Additionally, to the horror of many Russian nationalists, mortality rates are far higher in predominantly ethnically Russian regions of the country than they are in non-ethnically Russian regions, while fertility rates remain higher in the former than the latter (Window on Eurasia, July 30). Failure to address the high mortality rate means that the Russian Federation will become ever less ethnically Russian, despite Putin's increasing support for a Russian nationalist agenda (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, October 29). Even worse, from his perspective, Moscow's pro-natalist policies, besides being overwhelmingly ineffective in ethnically Russian areas, appear to be maintaining or even boosting the high birthrates in non-ethnically Russian regions, exactly the opposite of what the Kremlin leader wants (Kavkaz. Realii, October 23).

Focusing only on what Putin says he is doing to address the demographic situation distracts from what is really going on: a continuing population decline exacerbated by his focus on pushing for a higher fertility rate rather than also helping to reduce the super-high mortality rate. Unfortunately, both for Putin and Russia, those being deceived by his words almost certainly include the Kremlin leader himself, making any change of course highly unlikely before dramatic demographic collapse or his departure from power.

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NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 14)

“mostly pro-Russian” as it calls for a compromise from Ukraine and was created without input from Kyiv. He rejected it in an interview in September with Brazilian media, saying it has nothing to do with justice or with values and fails to take into account Ukraine’s position and the issue of territorial integrity. Despite Mr. Zelenskyy’s rejection of the plan, Mr. Fico said Slovakia is willing to join other countries that China says have positively received it “and work with China to contribute to promoting a political solution to the crisis,” according to a Chinese government statement. Mr. Fico, who has criticized EU policies on Ukraine and has opposed sanctions on Russia, said Slovakia is “very keen on China’s diplomatic efforts dedicated to regulating the conflict in Ukraine and have exchanged our attitudes on this fundamental issue.” China could play a “decisive role” regarding the war on Ukraine, he added on Facebook. China has been criticized by Western countries for maintaining friendly ties with Russia and for providing dual-use equipment, such as electronics needed for weapons production. Beijing has said that the plan it developed with Brazil, which it calls Friends Of Peace, has received a “positive response” from more than 110 countries. Mr. Fico landed in Beijing on October 31 for a state visit that ended on November 5. Slovakia and China announced on November 1 that the two countries had signed a strategic partnership agreement and granted Slovak citizens 15-day visa-free entry to China. Mr. Xi said China would strengthen bilateral cooperation with Slovakia in areas such as new energy, transport and logistics, and infrastructure construction, according to the official Xinhua news agency. (RFE/RL)

Additional security assistance for Ukraine

The U.S. Defense Department on November 1 announced additional security assistance for Ukraine worth an estimated \$425 million. The Pentagon said in a statement that the aid is meant to meet Ukraine’s most urgent security and defense needs. This includes air-defense interceptors, munitions for rocket systems and artillery, armored vehicles and anti-tank weapons, the statement said. It is the 69th tranche of equipment to be provided from the Defense Department since August 2021 under a program known as the Presidential Drawdown Authority (PDA) that allows stockpiled U.S. military equipment to be transferred to Ukraine. (RFE/RL)

Ukrainian drone strikes Russia’s Daghestan

A Ukrainian drone made an incursion into Russia’s North Caucasus region of Daghestan in an attempt to strike the city of Kaspysk near the Caspian Sea. Russian air defense intercepted the drone, the first time such an attack has been reported, but not before falling debris injured a 16-year-old girl. The attack prompted the temporary suspension of operations at Makhachkala Airport, Daghestan’s main air hub. Kaspysk, home to Russia’s Caspian Flotilla, is strategically important due to its proximity to Russian military assets. Ukrainian sources claim the strike damaged two Russian missile ships that have been active in missile strikes against Ukraine. The attack highlights Ukraine’s growing ability to target critical Russian military infrastructure far beyond the front lines. (RFE/RL’s Russian Service)

Russia shows purported U.S. national snatched

Russian media said on November 2 that Russia removed a U.S. citizen “from territory controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces” who it alleged had been aiding

Russian forces by transmitting coordinates of Ukrainian military facilities for two years, although it provided no evidence of such activities. A man who appeared on RIA Novosti the same day identifying himself as Daniel Martindale and displaying a U.S. passport said he was in Moscow of his own will and wanted to obtain Russian citizenship. He was quoted

as saying he had “done everything I could to save the lives of Russian soldiers” and wanted to continue. The U.S. Embassy in Moscow has not commented on the case, according to Reuters. A VKontakte page purporting to belong to a Daniel Martindale, which was last updated in February 2022, listed residency in Poland. (RFE/RL’s Russian Service)

Early peace...

(Continued from page 3)

way for Kyiv to defend itself or seek Western security support.

Documents from later stages of the talks, including treaty drafts from March 17 and April 15 that were published by The New York Times earlier this year, show that the sides drew closer on some issues as the talks progressed – and as Ukraine beat back Moscow’s forces in the north.

Crimea’s status would have been left for future negotiations, for example, and Russian demands for changes in legislation involving languages and thorny historical disputes faded into the background. Crucially, the sides were discussing security guarantees for Ukraine that would include Western nations, though how they would work was a major bone of contention.

However, Mr. Ciaramella suggested that in fundamental ways, little had changed.

“The versions discussed a few weeks later in Istanbul and at virtual sessions were still based on the deeply erroneous Russian logic that permeated the initial text,” he told Systema. “Had the treaty been signed, its final form in April would have been merely a softer version of Ukrainian capitulation.”

The subsequent drafts still included some of Russia’s key demands, such as a

permanent bar on North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership for Ukraine, something that neither Kyiv nor the Western alliance is prepared to accept. NATO has repeatedly said that Ukraine will eventually join, and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been seeking a swift invitation as part of a “victory plan” he has presented to Ukrainians and the country’s backers abroad in recent weeks.

In at least one way, meanwhile, Russia’s stated conditions for peace have grown more aggressive than they were on March 7, 2022.

In September of that year, Putin claimed that five Ukrainian regions – Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia and Kherson – were now inalienable parts of Russia. The baseless claim included the portions of those regions that remained, and still remain, in Kyiv’s hands, and Putin has said that Russian control over those territories is a requirement for any peace negotiations.

(Adapted from the original Russian by Steve Gutterman)

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Ukraine reacts...

(Continued from page 1)

eration between Kyiv and Washington.

"Strong and unwavering U.S. leadership is vital for the world and for a just peace," Mr. Zelenskyy said.

Mr. Trump has said he would work with both Ukraine and Russia to end the war. He has said that Kyiv might have to cede territory to reach a peace agreement, something Ukraine has rejected.

In a post on X on November 6, Mr. Zelenskyy said it was always crucial for the people of Ukraine and all populations across Europe to hear the words "peace through strength" during Mr. Trump's first term when he was the 45th president of the United States.

"When this principle becomes the policy of the 47th president, both America and the entire world will undoubtedly benefit," Mr. Zelenskyy said, referring to Mr. Trump's return to the White House after defeating Vice President Kamala Harris in the November 5 election.

He noted that President Ronald Reagan used the words frequently in his dealings with the then-Soviet Union.

"People want confidence, they want freedom, they want a normal life," Mr. Zelenskyy said. "For us, that means a life free from Russian aggression, with a strong America, a strong Ukraine and strong allies."

Mr. Trump said during the campaign that he would work quickly with both Ukraine and Russia to end the war but didn't provide many specifics on how.

Mr. Zelenskyy in recent weeks has outlined a set of measures that he says would turn the tide of the war in Kyiv's favor and possibly end the conflict.

His five-point "victory plan" rules out ceding Ukrainian territory and calls for an unconditional invitation for Kyiv to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the deployment of a strategic nonnu-

clear deterrent package in Ukraine.

Under outgoing President Joe Biden, the United States has committed more than \$56 billion to Ukraine in security assistance alone since Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February 2022. It has allocated tens of billions more in financial and humanitarian aid.

"The most significant factor that's going to be driving the outcome of the war, I think, and certainly what happens in the next few months, is the U.S. election," said Ruth Deyermund, senior lecturer in the Department of War Studies at King's College London.

The result of the vote "will determine, in effect, whether Ukraine continues to be supported by the United States, or the extent to which it's supported by the United States," Ms. Deyermund told RFE/RL.

Mr. Trump and Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris expressed vastly different positions on backing for Ukraine during the campaign.

Ms. Harris said she would continue Mr. Biden's policy of aiding Ukraine, clearly expressing the desire to see Russia defeated.

Mr. Trump questioned U.S. support for Ukraine, saying that Europe should be carrying the bulk of the burden in backing Kyiv against the Russian invasion. He has declined to comment on whether he wants Ukraine to win and has asserted repeatedly that, if he is elected, he will end the war very quickly – even before he takes office in January.

"While we could expect a Harris White House to continue to act in much the same way, perhaps, as the Biden White House, certainly not a dramatic turn away from Ukraine, Donald Trump has made it very clear that he wants to see an end to the war quickly," Ms. Deyermund said.

"And we know that one of his long-term foreign policy priorities, one of the few consistent foreign policy positions he's held since before he was elected in 2016,

was, as he puts it, getting along with Russia," she said. "So, he would want to see the war ended quickly, and on Russia's terms, I think."

Mr. Trump has said Putin's conditions for peace talks are "not acceptable," argues that he was tougher on Russia than previous presidents, and claims that Putin would not have invaded Ukraine if had he been in the White House. In 2017, he gave the green light for the United States to provide lethal aid to Ukraine, something his predecessor, Barack Obama, had refused to do because of concerns about provoking Moscow.

'No more'

In April, Mr. Trump said he would be open to something like the lend-lease program the United States launched to help allies during World War II as an alternative to aid grants.

Mr. Trump has said little about how he would seek to engineer an end to Russia's war against Ukraine.

In an interview with Fox News in July 2023, he indicated that he would try to push Russian President Vladimir Putin to negotiate by threatening to open the aid spigots for Ukraine. Conversely, he said he would pressure Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by threatening to withhold aid.

"I would tell Zelenskyy: 'No more. You got to make a deal.' I would tell Putin: 'If you don't make a deal, we're going to give [Mr. Zelenskyy] a lot. We're going to [give Ukraine] more than they ever got if we have to,'" Mr. Trump said. "I will have the deal done in one day. One day."

Ukrainians fear that any push for a quick peace agreement would play into Russia's hands, leaving about one-fifth of their country under Moscow's control while also letting Putin use a cessation of hostilities as a chance to build up its forces for a future attack.

Words and actions

In any case, exactly what Mr. Trump will do once in power is uncertain, and there are a number of variables that could affect the next president's actions.

Mr. Zelenskyy's government has been frustrated with the Biden administration, saying U.S. military aid is coming too slowly and with too many restrictions. Despite persistent entreaties, Mr. Biden has not permitted Ukraine to use U.S. long-range missiles to strike deep inside Russia.

Ukraine is still short of air defenses and ammunition, enabling Russia to pound its cities and critical infrastructure from the skies and advance deeper into the Donetsk region. This month, Russia has made its largest territorial gains since March 2022, the month after the full-scale invasion.

One factor in how a Trump presidency would affect Ukraine and the Russian invasion would be the makeup of his cabinet.

The Trump campaign is reportedly considering former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo for the position of defense secre-

tary and former national-security adviser Robert O'Brien for secretary of state. Both have criticized the Biden administration for restricting the use of U.S. weapons and called for more sanctions on Russia.

In an opinion article in The Wall Street Journal in July, Mr. Pompeo called for creating a \$500 billion lend-lease program to help the country defend itself. He also called for giving Ukraine NATO membership, something Mr. O'Brien said this week "is too provocative at this point."

'The year of diplomacy'

There is yet another variable: Congress. While presidents have greater sway over foreign policy, the legislature holds the nation's purse strings and could force the White House to adjust its stance on the issue of military and financial support for Ukraine.

Control of the U.S. House and Senate was also to be decided by the November 5 election, with Republicans taking a majority of seats in the Senate and likely taking control of the House (control of the lower chamber was not decided as The Ukrainian Weekly went to print).

That would be a more advantageous situation for Ukraine, as a Republican-controlled Senate would be likely to support aid to Ukraine, Kurt Volker, Mr. Trump's special envoy for Ukraine negotiations in 2017-2019, told RFE/RL last month. He said that a lend-lease program would be easier to get through Congress.

"I think making the case for spending real U.S. taxpayer money for Ukraine is harder and harder, but letting them borrow as much as they need in order to buy U.S. weapons and fight the war, that should not be controversial at all, and I think should get massive bipartisan support," he said.

But Charles Kupchan, an analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations, told RFE/RL that the United States would likely nudge Ukraine toward talks regardless of who wins the election, in part because the war is straining Western resources.

"I would expect 2025 to be the year of diplomacy," Mr. Kupchan said. "I don't believe that where we are today is sustainable."

At the same time, he said cutting off aid to Ukraine was not the way to get the two sides to the negotiating table.

"That's an invitation to Putin to keep coming," Mr. Kupchan said.

(With reporting by RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service. Steve Gutterman and Andrew Nynka contributed to this report.)

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Britain slaps...

(Continued from page 4)

the Skripals had been the targets of an attack by Russia's military intelligence in which Novichok had been applied to the door handle of their home.

The Skripals both survived, but a woman died after accidentally coming into contact with the poisonous agent.

That statement said that Mr. Sergeyev "provided support in the preparation and use of the chemical weapon Novichok in Salisbury ... and provided a coordinating role in London on the weekend of the attack."

The list also includes 28 entities based in China, Turkey and Central Asia accused of supplying machinery, microelectronics for drones and components for the Russian

military's war in Ukraine.

"Today's measures will continue to push back on the Kremlin's corrosive foreign policy, undermining Russia's attempts to foster instability across Africa and disrupting the supply of vital equipment for Putin's war machine," Foreign Affairs Secretary David Lammy said.

"Putin is nearly 1,000 days into a war he thought would only take a few. He will fail and I will continue to bear down on the Kremlin and support the Ukrainian people in their fight for freedom," Mr. Lammy concluded.

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Ukrainian pro sports update

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Sumo wrestler Serhii Sokolovskyi earns top promotion

Sumo wrestler Serhii Sokolovskyi, known in the sport as Shishi, became the first Ukrainian wrestler to grapple his way to the top division of professional sumo, the makuuchi, as of October 28 when the latest rankings were released. The 27-year-old was beginning preparations to attend the Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament that is scheduled to begin on November 10.

Despite his 6-foot-3, 380-pound imposing physique, Shishi's climb into the makuuchi division took four and a half years.

The Melitopol, Ukraine, native began wrestling at a young age and switched to sumo at age 15. His debut in Japan came in a spring 2020 tournament. In 2022, when Russia invaded Ukraine and gained control of Melitopol, Shishi could not return home and endured several challenging years in Japan, struggling to adapt to a new language and culture (he identifies himself as a native Russian speaker). He spent lots of free time alone in parks until he started to open up and spend time with his coach's family.

Since beginning his sumo career in Japan, Shishi has sent some of his earnings back home to his parents, even in his lower-ranked times when his earnings were modest. Now that he has been promoted to the sport's elite tier, he will be able to earn more and help support his family in war-torn Ukraine.

Ukraine tops medal table in U-23 European boxing

Ukrainian boxers finished atop the medal table at the 2024 Youth European Boxing Championships held in Sofia, Bulgaria, from October 8-21. Twenty-five Ukrainian athletes participated in the continental championship, among them were 13 men and 12 women. The Ukrainian team won a total of 14 medals including eight gold medals.

The Ukrainian women emerged first in their competition on the strength of their

three gold medals won by Daria Olha Hutarina (52 kilograms), Natalia Merinova (66 kilograms) and Iryna Lutsak (81 kilograms), two silvers and one bronze medal.

The men's side captured eight total medals, including five gold medals, one silver and two bronze medals, headlined by Yuriy Zakhariyev's second gold medal at the Youth European Boxing Championships in the 71-kilogram class. Danyil Zamorylo (63.5 kilograms), Danylo Lozan (67 kilograms), Dzhamal Kuliiev (75 kilograms) and Vasyl Tkachuk (over-92 kilograms) were also gold medal winners.

The Ukrainian team announced that they would donate their prizes to assist Ukraine's Armed Forces.

Ukraine's women third in U-23 world wrestling

Ten Ukrainian women wrestlers won a total of six medals including a pair of gold medals to go with four bronze medals, earning the team 124 points and a third-place ranking in Tirana, Albania, at the U-23 World Wrestling Championships on October 21-27. Solomiia Vynnyk (59 kilograms) and Iryna Bondar (62 kilograms) led the way for the female wrestlers. For Vynnyk, it was her second consecutive gold medal victory at the U-23 Championships.

Ukraine's 20 male wrestlers won only one medal, a bronze, in Greco-Roman wrestling and did not medal in the freestyle competition. The Greco-Roman wrestlers finished with a ranking of 15th out of 24 countries with 24 points.

Gold medalist Abramenko retires from skiing

Thirty-six-year-old Oleksandr Abramenko retired from competitive skiing and transitioned into coaching. The aerials skier, who won both of Ukraine's medals in the last two Winter Olympics, including a gold medal in 2018, confirmed his retirement on October 22. He underwent knee surgery following his last international

competition in December 2022. He was sidelined for the entire 2023-2024 season.

In 2018, Abramenko won gold at the Pyeongchang Games, Ukraine's second-ever individual Winter Olympic gold medal since Oksana Baiul's victory in 1994. He added a silver medal at the 2022 Games. Abramenko was Ukraine's flag bearer at the 2022 Olympic Closing Ceremony.

Over the past year, Abramenko sold his Olympic gold and silver medals in auctions to help his country's defense in the ongoing war. The gold medal sold for \$50,137 and the silver sold for \$20,724.

U.K. parliament making progress on releasing funds

The British government is reportedly moving forward on releasing more than \$2.6 billion from the sale of the Chelsea Football Club to spend on humanitarian aid for Ukraine from the devastation caused by Vladimir Putin's invasion. Foreign Affairs Minister Jenny Chapman told parliament that the government was committed to making progress in releasing the funds without offering any specified timeline.

The minister was pressed on the issue by peers wanting to know why there has been no progress in releasing the funds from the sale transacted well over two years ago. The money has been sitting in a London bank account waiting to be used for reconstruction and humanitarian efforts in Ukraine and in other countries affected by Russia's war on Ukraine, specifically regarding food security.

In response, Chapman referenced the package of sanctions the U.K. and its international partners have implemented since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, claiming they have caused the Kremlin major difficulties. She did not directly address any imminent resolution of the issue as of late October.

Usyk appears as 'hitman' at press conference

Oleksandr Usyk decided to play dress-up



Serhii "Shishi" Sokolovskyi, 27, seen in 2023, was promoted on October 28 to the top tier of sumo wrestling – the makuuchi division – making him the first Ukrainian to compete at the top level of sumo. Sokolovskyi is scheduled to compete at the Kyushu Grand Sumo Tournament that begins on November 10.

at his press conference with Tyson Fury on October 23. Usyk appeared dressed in a black suit, white shirt, red tie and leather gloves, looking like the main character of the Hitman series of computer games. The protagonist, a professional killer, has a shaved head, which Usyk sported, and is known as Agent 47.

Usyk entered the press conference to the song "Ave Maria," the soundtrack to the video game.

(Continued on page 18)

Having lost a leg in a Russian attack, Ukrainian teen buoyed by Minnesota soccer fans

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Sixteen-year-old Artem's life drastically changed on March 2, 2022. A promising midfielder on FC Mariupol's youth team, he and a couple of friends were getting together to play soccer near their school. With Russian forces closing in on the outskirts of Mariupol, Ukraine, there was a break in the fighting that particular afternoon and the teenagers decided to kick a ball around. While Artem, who provided only his first name during interviews with the press, was changing his shoes, one friend stood in the net and another was in the middle of the pitch. They all heard a drone buzzing overhead, but paid it no attention until they realized it had stopped and was directly above them. One friend yelled out that they needed to run, and Artem took off in a sprint. Mere seconds later, he was on the ground.

It was later reported that Russian forces fired missiles and artillery at the soccer field, and the drone was used to target the boys.

After a bit of confusion, Artem saw his legs and midsection were covered in shell fragments and he was bleeding. One of his



Artem, 16, a Ukrainian boy who lost his leg as a result of Russia's war on Ukraine, has been fitted with a prosthetic thanks to fundraising efforts by the Protez Foundation.

friends was lying near him, his legs torn off, screaming in pain. Shortly afterward, assistance arrived and he recalled that a strang-

er used a jacket to create a makeshift tourniquet for his leg. Someone else drove them to a hospital in the back of a car.

The friend who lost both legs died at the hospital. Artem and his other friend survived. Artem had trouble processing that his friend died for nothing – a 15-year-old lost his life as he was playing soccer.

The Russian assault on the soccer field was part of a much larger, more intense bombardment of Mariupol's civilian areas that lasted some 15 hours with many Ukrainians killed, according to news reports from that time.

Artem's first surgery turned out well, but in time the hospital's supplies started to run out as Russian forces took control of the city. Artem's mother, Olha, remembered the hospital itself was hit and a floor above Artem collapsed. The teen was surrounded by fatally wounded Ukrainians.

All of the hospital's staff and patients who could flee did so. For 10 days, no one was allowed to enter or exit the hospital while intense fighting raged outside. Food almost ran out and many patients survived by eating candy they shared among themselves.

Without a normal supply of clean bandages and with limited medical staff,

(Continued on page 19)

Documentary film about Veselka restaurant released on video streaming services and Blu-ray

by Matthew Dubas

NEW YORK – Gravitas Ventures, an Anthem Sports and Entertainment company, announced on October 28 that the feature documentary “Veselka: The Rainbow on the Corner at the Center of the World” by filmmaker Michael Fiore will be released across the U.S. and Canada on video-on-demand (VOD), digital and Blu-ray beginning on November 12.

Gravitas will launch the film across multiple cable VOD platforms including Apple TV, Amazon Prime Video, Google Play, Fandango at Home, Vimeo, YouTube, Microsoft as well as numerous cable platforms, and the company will release the title on subscription-video-on-demand (SVOD) platforms in early 2025.

The film captures the remarkable moving story of New York City’s beloved Ukrainian restaurant and its father and son proprietors, Tom and Jason Birchard, and their humanitarian work to benefit Ukraine that has had a global impact.

Known for its borsch and varenyky, Veselka was opened in 1954 by a Ukrainian refugee, Wolodymyr Darmochwal, to give his displaced compatriots a place of refuge after World War II. Upon Mr. Darmochwal’s passing in 1974, his American son-in-law, Tom Birchard, took over as manager. In 2020, Mr. Birchard had plans for a major restaurant renovation, but the Covid-19 pandemic forced him into early retirement.

His son, Jason, took over. Not long after, his mission became helping people from war-ravaged Ukraine and he was thrust

into the role of surrogate father to support his Ukrainian staff and keep his business afloat. He faced a pandemic, a renovation and a war. What could go wrong?

Written and directed by Mr. Fiore and narrated by Golden Globe Award-winning actor David Duchovny, Mr. Fiore’s cameras follow the Birchards and their Veselka family across nearly 70 years to the present as they feel the direct impact of Russia’s war on Ukraine.

Grammy-nominee Ryan Shore’s East-meets-West music score gives added life and layers to the documentary, supported by the soulful sounds of Grammy Award-winning saxophonist David Sanborn (known for his work on “Lethal Weapon”). The Veselka film features appearances by New York Gov. Kathy Hochul and Mayor Eric Adams. The latter appears in a scene that can be previewed online: (<https://youtu.be/8QF0dq7rwoI>).

“After debuting at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival in February, ‘Veselka’ swiftly opened theatrically in over 40 cities across North America and Ukraine,” Mr. Fiore said in a statement. “Audiences discovered and fell in love with the ‘Veselka’ subjects and this universal story of family (both biological and extended), community, resilience, kindness and paying it forward – in good times and bad.”

“While ‘Veselka’ is not a political documentary, our upcoming November 12 release date is well-timed to keep Ukraine at the forefront of conversation, beyond the election cycle,” Mr. Fiore said. “It is a pleasure to partner with Gravitas Ventures to



The feature documentary “Veselka: The Rainbow on the Corner at the Center of the World” by filmmaker Michael Fiore will be released across the U.S. and Canada on video-on-demand (VOD), digital and Blu-ray beginning on November 12.

share the ‘Veselka’ story with the widest audience across North America. For nearly two decades, Gravitas has championed important and entertaining documentaries that stay with audiences long after a first viewing.”

Bill Guentzler, Gravitas senior vice president of acquisitions and operations, said,

“Gravitas is proud to be bringing the story of one of New York’s most iconic restaurant’s to North American audiences. Director Michael Fiore brings to the screen the legacy of Veselka through the sensitive narration by David Duchovny, archival footage, and the current day struggles of New York and Ukraine with a brilliant tribute to the community that transcends the brick and mortar.”

Mr. Fiore is a New York-based writer, producer and director. As with his previous documentary, “Floyd Norman: An Animated Life” (available on Netflix, TCM, Criterion Channel), Mr. Fiore turns his lens toward people who stand up for a cause, the marginalized and those who are dismissed by those in power. He said he first learned of Veselka in the late 1990s as a film student at the neighboring New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts, and he recognized Veselka as the vibrant and welcoming heart of New York City’s Ukrainian neighborhood community and beyond.

Mr. Fiore said he hopes the film brings international attention to Veselka and the Birchards’ far-reaching humanitarian work and impact, which he feels is “more vital than ever.”

The Veselka film received a 100 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes and boasts a 9.3/10 on IMDb (International Movie Database, www.imdb.com). The film is now available for pre-order on Apple TV, and additional info on the documentary’s release can be found at www.VeselkaMovie.com. The trailer for the film is available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/ftwKrVTdeeA>.

Ukraine dominates at blind powerlifting and bench press championships

by Ihor N. Stelmach

The International Blind Sports Federation’s (IBSA) 2024 Powerlifting and Bench Press World Championships took place in Astana, Kazakhstan, from October 7-14. Competitions were held in women’s and men’s open, sub-junior, junior and master categories across events that included squat, bench press and deadlift. Medals were awarded for individual results in each of the three competitions and for total points. In powerlifting, competitors perform the squat, bench press and deadlift in that order, with three attempts at each lift. The competitor’s total is the sum of their heaviest successful attempt for each lift.

Athletes with visual impairments from eight countries participated in the championships with Ukraine sending a team of 20 participants.

Ukraine dominated in Astana, finishing first in the competition by winning 102 total medals including an amazing 85 gold, nine silver and eight bronze medals. Ukrainian powerlifters set 22 new world senior records and an additional three junior world records. Both the Ukrainian men’s and women’s teams finished first in bench press and Ukraine’s team was first overall in powerlifting.

Among individual honors earned at the world championships were Ukraine’s Roman Kurov (best overall male lifter in powerlifting) and Halyna Halinska (best overall female lifter in powerlifting).

Blind powerlifter overcomes adversity

Before Oleksandr “Alex” Chernobai relocated his family to St. Albert, Alberta, in Canada, he was a powerlifter competing in events held by the IBSA.

Chernobai was the victim of a mugging



Oleksandr “Alex” Chernobai, a blind powerlifter from Ukraine, has made a new home for himself in St. Albert, Alberta, in Canada. He holds the world record for bench press (403.4 pounds), squatting (535.7 pounds) and total weight of all three lifts (1,510.1 pounds).

while living in Ukraine. Approached by two men looking for money, he was brutally attacked and left with a broken nose and a concussion. Complications arose during surgery that resulted in Chernobai losing 97 percent of his sight. All he can see now are faint silhouettes of people.

Chernobai elected to not allow his visual impairment to define his life, but instead chose to embrace it. He decided to enter powerlifting competitions hosted by the IBSA and made an impact by winning the under-90 kilogram class at the IBSA Bench Press and Powerlifting Championships in Giza, Egypt, in 2019 and Bakuriani, Georgia, in 2021.

Chernobai currently holds the world record for bench press (403.4 pounds), squatting (535.7 pounds) and total weight of all three lifts (1,510.1 pounds).

In February 2022, when Russia invaded Ukraine, Chernobai set off with a plan to resettle his family in a safer environment. It took a full year, but in February 2023 he moved his family to St. Albert in Canada. He chose the city for its openness, safety and sparse population.

Once he arrived, he immediately began helping people. Qualified to be a personal trainer in Ukraine, he decided he wanted to train people in his new hometown. He began training people at GoodLife Fitness, and later found more comfortable surroundings at a gym called The Vault. He offers three training options, including one-on-one training, two-person groups and a 3-4 person group option. Alex is also agreeable to train in other locations if

needed.

He says the key is to convince people to take the first step. He shares his personal story and is willing to assist people with disabilities. He sees that, when people take the first step, they become happier and healthier.

Chenobai enjoys meeting and talking with new people and diverse social groups and says that is what makes personal training so fulfilling. These days, he is more focused on helping others than he is competing in powerlifting.

To him, his new focus doesn’t even feel like a job. He is thankful for meeting lots of new people and wants to give back. Having overcome some serious adversity in his life, including losing his sight and his homeland, he is successfully pursuing his new mission in life.

(Based on reporting by St. Albert Gazette.)

Ukrainian pro...

(Continued from page 17)

Further mimicking Hitman’s Agent 47, Usyk came in carrying a suitcase out of which he took two posters and approached Fury to sign them. The posters were photos from his fight with Fury when he unified all four heavyweight boxing titles and became undisputed champion.

It was subsequently reported that one of the poster/photographs autographed by both boxers is set to be auctioned with the proceeds earmarked to help needy Ukrainians suffering from Russia’s war on Ukraine.

The rematch between Usyk and Fury is scheduled for December 21 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

SportShorts

- Ukrainian Anhelina Yefimova won the silver medal at the Aerial Art World Championships in Athens, Greece, on October 18-20.

- In the highly anticipated match between Ukrainian powerhouse football clubs Shakhtar Donetsk and Dynamo Kyiv in the 11th round of Premier League play, the two rivals battled to a 1-1 draw.

- Ukraine national team and Real Madrid goalkeeper Andriy Lunin was ranked third best goalie in the world by France Football magazine, the publication which presents the Ballon d’Or award.

(Based on reporting by 112.ua via Suspilne sport, Tribuna.com, NBC Sports, The Asahi Shimbun, The Standard and UNN.)

Ihor Stelmach may be reached at ihor@sbcbglobal.net.

OUT & ABOUT

- November 10
New York

Film screening, "Veselka: The Rainbow on the Corner at the Center of the World," with filmmaker Michael Fiore, New Plaza Cinema, www.newplazacinema.org
- November 13
Cambridge, MA

Petro Jacyk Seminar in Ukrainian Studies with Tatiana Tairova, "The Ukrainian Hetmanate vs. Europe," Harvard University, <https://huri.harvard.edu>
- November 14
New York

Book presentation, "The Language of War" by Oleksandr Mykhed, Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org
- November 15
New York

Film screening, "Veselka: The Rainbow on the Corner at the Center of the World," with filmmaker Michael Fiore, Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org
- November 16
Chicago

40th anniversary of the Alla Horska Branch of the Women's Association for the Defense of the Four Freedoms of Ukraine, Ukrainian Cultural Center, natalka1178@hotmail.com
- November 16
Chicago

Workshop, "Weaving Stories," Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, www.uima-chicago.org
- November 16
Cambridge, MA

Presentation, "Innovation in Isolation: The Story of Ukrainian IT from the 1940s to Now," MacPaw, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Museum, www.eventbrite.com
- November 17
New York

Concert, "Rediscovering Ukrainian Composer Thomas (Foma) de Hartmann," Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org
- November 17
Jenkintown, PA

Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner, Ukrainian American Senior Citizens Association, Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, 215-663-1166
- November 18
Ottawa

Book presentation, "Solomea: Star of Opera's Golden Age" by Andriy J. Semotiuk, Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (Ottawa branch), St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Shrine, ottawa.ucwlc@gmail.com
- November 20
Cambridge, MA

Presentation by Frank Sysyn, "The Return of Ihor Sevchenko: Interviews with a Cofounder of Ukrainian Studies at Harvard," Harvard University, <https://huri.harvard.edu>
- November 23
New York

Holodomor commemorative film screening, "Mr. Jones," Ukrainian Institute of America, www.ukrainianinstitute.org
- November 23
Ottawa

Ukrainian Christmas Market, Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada, Ukrainian Banquet Hall, 613-728-0856
- November 23
New York

Holodomor Commemoration, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, Saint Patrick's Cathedral, <https://ucca.org>
- November 23
Chicago

Gala concert, featuring Dagamba and Arina Domski, Revived Soldiers Ukraine, Eventus Hall, www.rsukraine.org/events
- November 23
Arlington Heights, IL

New member event, featuring a performance by Asia Ahat, Women's Association of America, Chez Hotel, Ukrainian www.uwaahelp.org
- November 26
Cambridge, MA

Presentation by Hanna Perekhoda, "Borders in Revolution: The 1917 Struggle Over the Russian-Ukrainian Divide," Harvard University, <https://huri.harvard.edu>
- November 26
Online

Webinar, "Ukrainian Women of Ravensbrück Concentration Camp," by Lydia Replansky and Kalyna Bezchlibnyk-Butler, Ukrainian Genealogy Group, <https://uggncr.org/next-webinar/>
- November 27
New York

Presentation by Ieva Gudaityte, "Listening to Alternative Histories Through Independent Music Radio in Ukraine," Columbia University, <https://harriman.columbia.edu>
- November 29
Chicago

Book presentation, "The Dark Night of the Soul" by Daniel Hryhorczuk, Ukrainian National Museum, www.ukrainiannationalmuseum.org
- November 30
Chicago

75th anniversary banquet, Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization (Chicago), Ukrainian Cultural Center, <https://ticketstripe.com/PlastovaStanycia-75th>

Entries in "Out and About" are listed free of charge. Priority is given to events advertised in *The Ukrainian Weekly*. However, we also welcome submissions from all our readers. Items will be published at the discretion of the editors and as space allows. Please send e-mail to mdubas@ukrweekly.com.

Having lost...

(Continued from page 17)

Artem's wound got infected and became gangrenous. On March 20, 2022, doctors at the hospital decided to amputate his leg to save his life.

After the amputation, Artem could not get used to having lost a leg. When he looked under the covers of his bed, it was difficult and impossible to accept what had happened. Artem was heartbroken because he believed he would never play soccer again. He would never realize his ultimate goal of being a professional soccer player. He had devoted most of his young life to the sport, dedicated hours upon hours of practice and training, and he believed his dream was shattered in an instant.

The Russian military eventually took control of Mariupol and with it the hospital. Artem was safely transferred to a hospital in Donetsk that was also under Russian occupation. He recalled television reporters interviewing doctors by his bed, claiming that he was actually injured by Ukrainian and not Russian forces. He kept quiet.

Artem's fate took a turn when a British volunteer, along with a German non-governmental organization, evacuated him to Germany to begin rehabilitation. While rehabbing, he found out about Minnesota's Twin Cities-based Protez Foundation, a non-profit co-founded by a Ukrainian prosthesis physician. Artem applied to the foundation and found himself in Minnesota.

Soccer fans in Minnesota have rallied to support Artem and his mother, both of whom relocated to an apartment in Fridley, Minn. In mid-July 2023, Anthony de Sam Lazaro, a board member of the Wonderwall (a Minnesota United FC supporter group), transported a load of necessities to Artem

and Olha. The supplies included food, clothing, shoes and kitchen essentials that were donated by fans at Allianz Field before a pair of Major League Soccer games in late July.

Mom Olha was overwhelmed when surrounded by six newly arrived boxes in the living room of her small apartment. She expressed her gratitude through a translator, explaining that without the support and encouragement of American supporters, she and Artem would not be able to cope emotionally.

Since he's been engaged with the Protez Foundation, Artem has spent quality time with many Ukrainian soldiers who have lost limbs. His mother says their friendship and support have eased his recovery and improved his mental health. In recent months, Artem has moved forward and made some serious headway in his recovery.

The first time he stood on his feet, he felt a unique sense of freedom. He felt courageous, bigger and got an emotional lift. He gained much confidence in himself and his future.

Artem still needs a new prosthetic, and Protez has organized a fundraiser to help cover the costs of a new prosthetic. The Ukrainian teenager is fully aware that he has several years of rehabilitation ahead of him, and he's prepared to take it one step at a time.

He knows he could have died on that soccer field, but he says God gave him a second chance at life. In time, although very difficult and quite challenging, he will return to a semblance of his old self and he is thankful for any support he might receive in getting there.

(Based on reporting by Fox 9 and KMSP)

Ihor Stelmach may be reached at iman@sfgsports.com.

Turning...

(Continued from page 6)

A U.S. State Department arms control report released in June stated that Russia had tested a missile system that violated the treaty. Moscow, in turn, accused the U.S. of deploying banned weapons systems.

The bill also included \$715 million for Iraqi forces who were battling Islamic state militants.

Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio), co-chair of the Senate Ukraine Caucus, commented on the need for U.S. to support Ukraine's defense. "As Russian aggression continues in

eastern Ukraine, NATO [the North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and the U.S. must provide sustained economic, political and military support to enable Ukraine to secure a democratic future. These provisions will help to ensure the U.S. is providing enough resources and equipment to allow Ukraine to defend itself. The president himself supports these provisions, and I am pleased that they will now become law."

The bill was signed into law by Mr. Obama on November 25.

Source: "Congress passes bill authorizing lethal military aid to Ukraine," (RFE/RL), *The Ukrainian Weekly*, November 15, 2015.

Ss. Peter and Paul...

(Continued from page 5)

support that sustained them through the years. The presence of both hierarchs – Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel – added to the sense of joy, as each person in attendance had the opportunity to receive their heartfelt blessings and prayers.

Metropolitan Antony and Archbishop Daniel, in their letter of greeting for the parish's centennial celebration, reminded everyone of "the dedication, devotion and love for God in the Holy Trinity ... whose teachings and traditions you have kept intact as passed on to you by the former priests, founders, benefactors and all members of the parish over the past 100 years! ... We call upon you to resolve within yourselves this day that each of you will pass your rich legacy onto your children, to your grandchildren and their descendants – not only intact – but also enriched by you as 'co-creators' with God of the conditions of parish life, which are necessary for making those descendants and all who visit to pray with you feel welcome and at home

amongst you."

Participants said they felt a profound sense of renewal and hope, and having celebrated its first century, the parish now stands at the dawn of a new era to face challenges ahead.

Fr. Mykola in his reflection, noted: "On this 100th anniversary we celebrate all that we have accomplished together. From our worship and sacramental life to our ministries and outreach efforts, we have truly been the hands and feet of Christ in our community. As we look to the future, let us continue to build on this foundation of faith, guided by the Holy Spirit and united in our mission to spread the Gospel message. May we always be a parish that welcomes all, loves all and serves all."

May God bless the parish community of Ss. Peter and Paul as it embarks on its next 100 years, and may the memory of those who have gone before be eternal, Fr. Mykola said.

Founded by 25 families in 1922, the parish grounds include a parish hall, rectory house and a cemetery. For additional information, readers may visit the website of Ss. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church at www.stspeterpauluoc.org.



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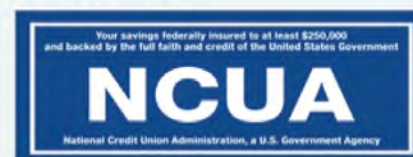
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