Oral history project focuses on children of Holodomor survivors

TORONTO – The Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Center (UCRDC) announced the launch of its Children of Holodomor Survivors Oral History Project, funded by the Temerty Family Foundation. Interviews with children of the survivors of the Ukrainian Holodomor, the genocidal famine of 1932-1933, commence this month.

The project’s coordinator, UCRDC Archivist Orida Wynnyckyj, stated: “The Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Center has the experience and infrastructure needed to undertake an oral history interview project of this kind, and indeed, it will be the first such project about the second generation of survivors to be embarked on.”

The history of the Ukrainian Holodomor has been studied and amply written about. What is missing is a study of the second generation of Holodomor survivors, the survivors’ children, the UCRDC notes. Studies exist of the intergenerational transmission of trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in children of Holocaust survivors and in studies of the Armenian and African genocides, with some of these studies reaching into the third generation. There is even an “International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma,” edited by Yael Danieli.

History according to successive generations, or the generational aspect of a legacy of survivorship, is highly valuable information to gather for further research. For example, a sense of longing, mourning, burden or distrust, degrees of communicativeness and coping, and the strength and resilience of survivorship all have an impact on the successive generation’s identity and feelings of Other-ness with their communities.

“The purpose of this oral history project is not to record the history of the Holodomor’s genocidal trauma, but rather what became of the children of the survivors of the Holodomor and what do they see as the Holodomor’s legacy for Ukrainians,” stated the project’s interviewer, Sophia Kajee. “The fact that the project is being done in North America is equally valuable because it will enable a discussion of how the Holodomor has become a diaspora marker of Ukrainian identity. Oral history interviews with the children of survivors, some of whom are themselves now in their 60s to 80s, will provide a springboard for this discussion and further research,” she elaborated.

The project has two objectives. The main one is to ascertain the knowledge of the parents’ having gone through and survived the Holodomor had any influence on the descendant. This can be physical, emotional or spiritual. How the participants have dealt with this is also an important question. The second objective is to learn about the respondent’s own life story in a description of his or her family, schools attended, work history, migration and the like.

Respondents are chosen using the "snowballing method," which is to interview as many of the children of Holodomor survivors as possible. The interview method of oral history allows for respondents to freely express themselves and draw on their memory as much as possible.

(Continued on page 13)

Reforms are too few, too slow, experts say

by Zenon Zawada

KYIV – It’s been four months since Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk’s second Cabinet of Ministers took over and there’s no denying they’ve continued down a path of unprece dented reforms.

Never has Ukraine been independent of Russia for natural gas, shifting to cheaper European sources (for the same Russian gas, no less). Revenue from sin taxes have been shifted to starving local governments. State bodies in Kyiv have disbursed hundreds of career bureaucrats and hired dozens of business executives.

All that’s nice but not good enough, said half a dozen political and economic experts contacted by this correspondent. They described the government efforts as fragmented, not reflecting consistent structural reforms with a long-term strategy and certainly not enough to inspire confidence in Ukraine’s future.

“In order to launch a rocket into outer space, it needs to gain the first level of cosmic speed. If it flies slower, it can’t overcome the pull of gravity. The same applies to Ukraine – if we reform too slowly, we can’t surpass the empire’s pull with which it holds us back. We need to make a leap,” said Ihor Kolchubko, the board chairman of the Center for Political-Legal Reforms in Kyiv.

Even the Presidential Administration has admitted the snail’s pace of reforms.

Of the 290 requirements in the parliamentary coalition agreement signed in late November, 15 have been fulfilled, or 5.2 percent, said Dmytro Shymkiv, a deputy head at the Presidential Administration and its reforms spokesman, who previously served as general director of Microsoft Ukraine. Of the 290 requirements, 34 percent don’t have a deadline, he also noted in late March.

A similar estimate was offered by the Committee of Voters of Ukraine. For the first quarter, 14.5 percent of coalition requirements were fulfilled, or eight of 55. Seven were partially fulfilled, and 19 weren’t.

It’s as though Mr. Yatsenyuk and his Cabinet are doing the bare minimum to satisfy the public, both domestically and abroad, numerous leading publications and independent experts reported.

The Cabinet’s prime motivation during its first 100 days was to shield the main corruption schemes, take control of financial streams and fill the treasury exclusively using tax and fiscal measures, the Ekonomichna Pravda news site reported, based on its analysis. That was demonstrated with hiked taxes for private and state enterprises that didn’t take into account the consequences for the respective economic sectors, the news site said.

(Continued on page 4)

Ukraine turns to poppies in rebuke of Soviet World War II narrative

RFE/RL

KYIV – Ukraine is making the crimson poppy flower a symbol of the victory over Nazi Germany part of a shift away from Soviet imagery Kyiv says the Kremlin is using to influence neighbors and promote self-serving myths about World War II amid a conflict in eastern Ukraine.

First Lady Maryna Poroshenko attended a “Remembrance Poppy” ceremony on April 7 as part of events marking the 70th anniversary of the Nazi surrender in May 1945.

“The time has come when we have to look for the ideas that unite our country and nation,” she said, according to a statement on the presidential website. “The second world war was fought against each and every Ukrainian family. The poppy is a symbol of remembrance that pangs tribute to all heroes who sacrificed their lives for a better future.”

Russian celebrations of the World War II victory as the product of unity among Soviet peoples are ringing wrong to many in Ukraine because of Moscow’s annexation of Crimea and its support for separatists fighting Ukrainian government forces in a conflict that has killed more than 6,000 people.

Volodymyr Vyaturovych speaks during a ceremony at the Mystetskyi Arsenal in Kyiv, where the “Remembrance Poppy,” Ukraine’s new symbol of victory over Nazi Germany in World War II, was unveiled.

“Last year, we saw that the myth about the Patriotic War, the Soviet war, had become not only an instrument of propaganda but also an instrument of war against Ukraine,” he said, according to the website.

“The red poppy is a traditional Ukrainian symbol of the shed blood of heroes who sacrificed their lives for a better future.”

(Continued on page 5)
Russia reinforces Ukraine as military conceals underlying conventional weakness

by Roger McDermott

Europa Daily Monitor

Russia's recent "snap inspection" military exercises in the Western and Southern Military Districts (see Europa Daily Monitor, March 22) are a part of President Putin's plan to reinforce conventional deployments in Crimea (see EDM, March 27) generate an impression of revived Russian military power. However, Russia's relatively careful and low-scale use of military power in Ukraine since February 2014, problems identify, during the course map inspection exercises, as well as limitations in the capacity of the Defense Ministry to solve water supply issues in Crimea appear to offer limited indications of deep and systemic Russian military weakness (Voennoy Pressphenny Kuryer, April 1).

Although the weaknesses in Russian conventional military capabilities stem from manpower issues such as the undermanaging of units or the presence of large numbers of conscripts and an absence of a professional armed infantry, air corps, as well as continued weapons and hardware modernization, these have a particular marked impact on information strategy mobility. Russia's "snap inspection" exercises in all strategic directions since 2013 have prioritized testing and modifying strategic mobility capability. That is, the capability to move troops and equipment rapidly from one part of the country to another designated area to reinforce troop groupings, which is also used to rethink Ukraine and for strategic messaging purposes to the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), involve different types of combat elements, combined with combat support and combat service support. Of course, these exercises have revealed continued deficiencies in strategic mobility. The most recent snap inspection, which began with a focus on the Arctic region and then developed across other parts of the country, is consistent with efforts to reinforce Crimea and strengthen force groupings in the Arctic and in western Russia (Interfax, March 18;RIA Novosti, March 17;Neokhron, March 19).

The large-scale snap inspection exercise, staged over six days, also rehearsed troop deployment to Kaliningrad. According to Russian state media analyst Ilya Kramnik, Moscow's renewed interest in using strategic operational exercises to test strategic mobility stems from Zapad 2009. The snap inspection involves military units from almost all strategic directions in order to support forces deployed during a crisis on a particular axis.

However, despite this explanation concerning the need for enhanced strategic maneuver, Mr. Kramnik cites Col. (retired) Viktor Murakhovskyk on self-sufficient force grouping: "Today we do not have a single self-sufficient grouping on any of our strategic directions. The main reason for the great attention the armed forces leadership allocates to the potential for redeploying forces." Indeed, Mr. Kramnik notes that Russia's military mobility is also hampered by inadequate progress in the modernization of the fleet of transport aircraft (Lentara.ru, March 22).

The lack of any evidence of the presence of the Transmanchian transformed logistical support system, Material-Technical Support (Materialno- Tekhnicheskii Oboronghochnye - MTO), has emerged, linked to supplying water to Crimea. The MTO will commence laying trunk pipelines in Crimea from April 1, to provide fresh drinking water in Kerch, Feodosia and Sadak and help agricultur- al enterprises. This will involve 500 conscripts and contract MTO personnel laying a total of 378 kilometers of trunk pipelines in Crimea (Krasnaya Zvezda, March 22).

Yet, expert estimates concerning water requirements on the peninsula linked to tourism and industry suggests that a need for an additional 244 million cubic meters could be needed annually - which cannot be resolved by this latest effort to use the MTO (Neokhron, with reporting by Voennoy Obozrenyi, March 30). Depending on the specific demands produced by supporting forces in conflict situations, the MTO can easily be expanded to overstretch.

These weaknesses are important in the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and have implications for NATO. The Russian armed forces lack the capacity to deploy and sustain military forces beyond the country's borders over lengthy periods. During the Ukraine crisis, Moscow has used small-scale inser- tions of forces, fed local rebellions and generally fanned the flames of a conflict on its borders. However, it is unclear how much Moscow would want to commit to a much larger insertion of forces, due to issues surrounding force sustainment and potential depletion of its control over large-scale excava- tion (Rossiya, 1 March 15). Indeed, in this context, it is highly unlikely that Russia can withstand the severe demands placed on its combat service support to help sustain operations during a wider regional conflict. Moreover, it simply lacks the conventional

Poroшенko on regional power vote

KYIV - Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said on April 6 that he does not object to a referendum on giving more powers to regions in eastern Ukraine. When the conflict between Russian-backed separatist rebels and government troops began last year, protesters in the east demanded a vote on giving their regions more autonomy. Such calls were rejected by the Ukrainian government at the time. However, after meeting a parliamentary commission that is drafting amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine, Mr. Poroshenko said that, if the commission decides such a vote is necessary he would not stand in the way of a referendum. The president said he still opposes the idea of federalization, which he sees as a way to break up the country.

ANALYSIS

Mr. Kramnik stressed the importance of Russian military power beyond the country's borders, which is linked to the development of units and the presence of large numbers of conscripts or the establishment of infrastructure, which sup- port and combat service support to help sustain operations during a wider regional conflict. Moreover, it simply lacks the conventional

Soldiers killed in eastern Ukraine

KYIV - Six Ukrainian soldiers were killed in an April 5 incident in the east where two separate incidents as the conflict in eastern Ukraine entered its second year. The Internal Affairs Ministry said a military vehicle hit a mine and crossed a bridge in Schastia, a government-held town about 170 kilome- ters northeast of the city of separatist-held Donetsk. The ministry accused Russian-backed separatists of firing the shell, but that report could not be independently confirmed. It said initial reports showed "mili- tants had fired a laser-guided antitank mis- sile." Ukraine's anti-terrorism center has identified all four of the servicemen, adding that they came from the Kharkiv region.

The information center for the so-called Luhansk People's Republic denied reports its forces were involved. The pro-Russian separatists claimed the Ukrainian military vehicle hit a landmine placed on the bridge by Ukrainian forces. In a separate incident less than an hour later, a Ukrainian military vehicle hit a landmine near the town of Stoykove, east of the city of Mariupol, killing two service- men and wounding one other. The previous day, the government reported the deaths of another three soldiers when a mine exploded near the town of Avdiivka, a govern- ment-held town north of Donetsk. (RF/E, with reporting by Reuters, Agence France-Prese and Interfax)

Inflation spikes in Ukraine

KYIV - New figures show that inflation in Ukraine during the first quarter of this year increased 20.3 percent compared to the previous quarter.
IN THE PRESS: Kramer on lessons from Russian invasion of Ukraine

RFE/RL

In an interview with RFE/RL in Brussels, former Swedish Foreign Affairs Minister Carl Bildt on lessons from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. While, by the European Union with regard to Russia, what he thinks the Russian president’s next moves are likely to be, and why the bloc needs to engage more deeply with Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia. Mr. Bildt spoke on March 22 with RFE/RL Rihard Jozwiak on the sidelines of a Brussels Forum held by the German Marshall Fund.

Looking back at the run-up to the Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius in November 2013, and what way up to today, could the EU have done differently in its policy toward the East?

I think we should have reacted more strongly towards Russia when they started to misbehave in the summer of 2013. Clearly, when they started the sanctions against Ukraine, we didn’t see clearly the implications of that. I remember that [former Polish Foreign Affairs Minister] Radek [Sikorski] and myself were trying to alert Brussels and Brussels was more or less hidebound by the Russian wish that there will be a difference. I don’t know. But that is clearly a mistake.

You and Sikorski are not foreign ministers anymore. You were considered to be some of the leaders of movement to stand up to Putin’s Russia and at the same time strong supporters of the EU’s Eastern Partnership. When you look at the EU today, coming towards an agreement that the EU will do essentially the same commitment towards the Eastern Partnership and the same hawkishness towards Putin’s Russia?

I think that the commitment is clearly there. One of the good things that we did – going back to 2008, because in 2008 two things happened – there was the Union for the Mediterranean and there was the Eastern Partnership. While the French were keen to have the Union Mediterranean with a separate arrangement or whatever, we were keen to make the Eastern Partnership completely integrated with the [EU’s] instrument for European neighborhood policy because such a policy is not very good. But it is a special part of the EU institutions [in terms of] the calendar and what not. So the commitment is clearly there. I have no doubt about that.

On [your other question], Radek and myself, we were sort of ahead of the game in a sense that we – too late perhaps, but earlier than others – saw what was going to happen. I think that Russia was being more or less everyone has caught up with us by now. There were those who said that Putin was not going to do this, and then Putin has done virtually everything. So, unfortunately, I would say we have been proven right.

What do you think will be Putin’s next move?

I think at the moment he is keen to build up the enclaves – these ‘people’s republics’ virtually without peoples, by the way. But at the heart of his program – strengthen the army. I think he would like them to be able to undertake military operations more on the cheap because he knows that the price associated with him sending in the regular Russian army time after time is too high. He is waiting to exploit weaknesses either in Ukraine or in the West. He believes that he has time on his side and that the West will get bored with the entire thing.

My best guess – and I am saying this with the reservation that everyone has been wrong, including myself – is that at the moment, for a couple of months, [there will be] a calmer down, consolidating, then again, Ukraine and of violating the Minsk agreement, trying to get out of sanctions, hoping there will be division inside Ukraine, hoping there will be divisions inside the West, and then being ready to exploit those weaknesses.

So what should the EU do right now?

I think the most important thing is what was done by the European Council [on March 19-20] – that is, essentially to say the sanctions against Russia are going to be in place all this year. It has not been legally said like that, but politically that was the decision that was taken. I think that is a very good signal. Then I think we should shift focus to strengthen Ukraine in different ways. I think that the IMF program was very important. It is important that other countries are coming [to say] that – Sweden, the U.S. is doing [it], but other European countries should be doing that as well. And then make certain that we really help them with all the reforms necessary because Ukraine is going to go through a tough time and they need our solidarity, support and to go forward. These things, I think, are the priorities.

The EU Eastern Partnership summit in Riga is coming up in May. Looking at the draft declaration, it looks like it is going to be a very ambitious summit, as such. Should the EU be more ambitious at least in the countries – Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – that are slowly approaching the EU?

I think the most important signal coming out of Riga is going to be that we stay the course. There is a need for agreement with the three in the form of helping them in implementing these [association] agreements. These agreements are very ambitious and they will require a lot of efforts by them. I think that they probably need more help than we have been envisaged so far in actually doing that.

Then the critical issue is also how we engage with others: What do we do with Armenia? How do we treat Azerbaijan and Belarus in terms of their somewhat lukewarm commitment to human rights, to put it very mildly? That needs to be addressed.

So, no light at the end of the tunnel? In other words, no EU perspective for them?

The light at the end of the tunnel, in my opinion, is that there is a potential for the EU treaty stating that any European country can become a member of the EU applies. If we talk about a membership perspective, Armenia and Azerbaijan – they just don’t even play in the same league. They are there as, you know [aspiring] countries ready to take that particular step. That is quite a number of years in the future.

Reforms...
(Continued from page 1)

About 82 percent of 57 bills drafted by the new Parliament that were examined by the Center for Political-Legal Reform pose "systemic risks of corruption." All nine of the approved bills that the center examined contain such risks, the center reported.

"The president and the prime minister, with their parties, are not the vanguard of society's development," Mr. Koliushko said. "Maybe I don't know the complications and conditions they face, but more now have passed, and these complications haven't revealed themselves. There's a lack of knowledge and desire of doing what needs to be done. And that generates distrust in all those around them, which undermines their effectiveness."

Global organizations recognize the lack of effort, as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) responded with the very minimum in mid-March in the form of a $5 billion tranche of its $17.5 billion loan, reported Dr. Andrus Adland, a senior fellow at the Petersen Institute for International Economics in Washington. Finance Minister Natalia Jaresko had asked for a $10 billion first tranche.

"Ukraine has a chance to reform instead of self-defence, limited funding and the speculation, the very poor state of the economy, too," she said in mid-March, reported by epravda.com.ua. "In the reduced structure, not more than half the departments are led by old staffers. Together with the appointment of urgent changes to the Constitution of Ukraine has largely dissipated.

Thus, a 302-vote parliamentary coalition had emerged in late November 2014 – enough to make urgent amendments to the Constitution – and yet the president has been identified as the constitutional commission, which he did on March 31, with a motley collection of 72 members.

"Among the faces are Ukraine's first three presidents, widely blamed for the nation's current travails; former Prime Minister Yulia Timoshenko, the controversial former prime minister widely suspected of corruption; and Serhi Holovaty, a career politician who represents the interests of President Kolomoisky. Dozens of judges are also on the commission, some of whom have no experience in constitutional law, Mr. Koliushko said."

"A lot could have been voted on three months ago by decentralization and changes to the judiciary – when there was enthusiasm and the coalition agreement was drafted and management was planning to do a lot," Mr. Koliushko said. "Today, when everyone sees the attitude of the president and government towards the coalition agreement has changed, enthusiasm of deputies has also elapsed."

A 15-member temporary parliamentary commission had also formed to prepare bills to amend the Constitution, but it has yet to submit any bills for review, with the deadline extended by a month to May 15.

Mr. Koliushko is the fact that the 15 committee members voted for the January 2014 bills severely limiting the rights of Ukrainians, commonly referred to as the dictatorship laws, reported the Center for Legal-Political Reforms.

Decentralization

Decentralization is what can improve the social climate within a few years' time very significantly and should be the government's top priority, Mr. Koliushko said. Yet no initiators of decentralization have been included in the president's constitutional commission, he noted, adding his belief that Mr. Poroshenko might have other plans, despite advocating the need for giving local governments more authority.

In particular, the president's biggest challenger, Mr. Kolomoisky and his state administrator deputy, Gennady Kukhan, have been vocal about the need for fiscal decentralization.

Yet their recent conflict with the president, in which they allegedly dispatched armed men to Kyiv to maintain control of Ukrnafta, might have prompted the president to think twice about his decentralization agenda, said Kyiv political consultant Mykhailo Basarab.

Mr. Poroshenko has repeated since last year that decentralization does not mean federalism, which he firmly defended by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Most Ukrainian leaders believe the president needs to be reached without tipping into federalization, or what Mr. Koliushko referred to as "regionalization." Mr. Basarab believes that a moratorium must be placed on any decentralization of state authority until the war is over.

All decentralization legislation must be passed by Parliament in two readings by July before the Constitutional Court reviews them and a final vote can be held in the autumn. Mr. Koliushko said.

As for accomplishments so far, the Cabinet of Ministers has simplified the procedures for local governments to access loans.

The Kyiv government has also transferred the collection and spending of numerous revenue streams, including payments for administrative services, customs fees, real estate taxes that now include commercial rent for large-engine automobiles, a 10 percent profit tax, an ecology tax hiked to 80 percent from 35 percent and a 25 percent tax on mines.

Local governments will also collect a five percent retail sales tax on alcohol, tobacco, construction materials. The measures will transfer $45 billion hryv ($1.8 billion) for local government use, the Finance Ministry estimated in mid-February.

Further reforms in this direction consist of transferring the administration of local roads, and the corresponding funds, to oblast state administrations. Construction and repair of local roads would be transferred from a single state company to several state firms, which would later be privatized. According to officials, changes to in plan for reform of the system of state administration of roads, as published on April 3.

The judiciary

No reforms in Ukraine's notoriously corrupt judiciary are expected for years, no matter how intensely it works, Mr. Koliushko said. Yet the overall theme of "some reforms that what's necessary" applies especially to the judiciary, he said.

To the government's credit, the Berkut day on April 2 marked the 15th day since the bill submitted by the president, "On ensuring the right to a just court," which established a content-based selection of judges and their recertification. New disciplinary charges were introduced with deadlines for criminal prosecution.

For the first time, the selection of judges at appellate levels and higher will take place based on open competitions, rather than on appointments by independent assessments, rather than presidential appointments, will determine judges' promotions. Yet the catch in all this is that Mr. Poroshenko retained the right to dissolve or liquidate courts.

"He kept all the levers of political influence on the judicial system with the President Administration and kept the unconstitutional authority of transferring judges from court to court, which was the very instrument used effectively by Yanukovych to maintain control on the judiciary," Mr. Koliushko said."

"If Poroshenko doesn't want to refrain from this invested authority that's not in the Constitution, that means that he or someone in his entourage doesn't rule out the need to return to a similar tactic, and that's very bad," he said.

To the government's credit, the selection of the Higher Justice Council has become more transparent, on a competitive basis. Yet it hasn't been active in more than a year. All judicial rulings will be included in a register, elimination of political influence will be facilitated. And for the first time, anyone will be able to video record court proceedings without needing permission from the presiding judge.

Yet once again, reform is lacking in addressing the large-scale issues, such as last year's 202 judge positions which Mr. Koliushko referred to as "regionalization." Mr. Basarab believes that a moratorium must be placed on any decentralization of state authority until the war is over.
Deputy Secretary Blinken’s remarks at NATO Transformation Seminar

Following are excerpts of remarks by Deputy Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken at the Atlantic Council’s NATO Transformation Seminar 2015 held in Washington on March 26. The text was provided by the U.S. Department of State.

"I was in Berlin and a student asked me, ‘Why are you so focused on Ukraine? Why does it actually matter? Russia’s actions don’t pose a threat to you; they don’t really pose a threat to Germany. What’s so important about what’s happening in Ukraine?’ And so I tried to explain that our concern in the first instance was helping a European state attain its democratic aspirations, that Ukraine is not whole if its people are not free. If the country is not at peace, then in some important sense neither is Europe.

But I also explained that, as each of you know the crisis that we’re facing now goes beyond Ukraine and even Europe. As Russia and the separatists that it backs descend on eastern Ukraine, they’re doing more even than violating the borders of one country. They are threatening the principles on which the trans-Atlantic partnership was founded and upon which the trans-Atlantic partnership was established.

These principles are that the borders and territorial integrity of a democratic state cannot be changed by force; that it is the inherent right of citizens in a democracy to make their country’s decisions and determine its future; that linguistic nationalism, something we thought was confined to the dustbin of history, must not be allowed to be resurrected; and that all members of the international community are bound by common rules and should face costs if they don’t live up to the solemn commitments they make.

As all of you know very well, when the Soviet Union dissolved, it left successor states, three of which had nuclear weapons – Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine – throughout the world and successive generations. One of the great achievements of the Clinton administration and of our European partners at the time was to convince those successor states to give up their nuclear weapons. They inherited a responsibility, of course, in the case of Ukraine, that required a solemn vow and commitment from three countries to support Ukraine’s territorial integrity and sovereignty – the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia.

That, we would allow that commitment to be trampled upon only if it does not only a grave injustice to Ukraine, but think about what it says at this very moment when, as we speak, our secretary of state, the secretaries of state from our major partners are working to convince Iran to forego nuclear weapons.

It would be understandable that Iran would want certain assurances in order to do so. So it is imperative in our judgment that we continue to stand together to affirm these principles, to end the conflict peacefully, to restore Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. And the best way to do that is through full and comprehensive adherence to the September Minsk agreements and to the February Minsk implementation plan that President [Francois] Hollande and Chancellor [Angela] Merkel did such a good job in negotiating.

I want to emphasize one point here. The most critical step in that plan is the last step – the restoration of Ukraine’s international border. Until that is done, this crisis will not be resolved because Russia will have the ability until that is done, at will, to turn up the volume, to pour troops and arms back across the border and into Ukraine. And so until that last step is completed, it’s imperative that we sustain the pressure on Russia that we continue to support Ukraine, and if Russia continues to violate its obligations, then we should increase the costs.

Ukraine turns...

(Continued from page 1)

the Kazaks. On the other hand, it is a European symbol that commemorates victims of the first and the second world wars," Mr. Vatroychv said.

He noted that the initiative of commemoration fallen Ukrainians with the Remembrance Poppy had been established the previous year. This year, the initiative gained legislative basis in the form of a presidential decree that made May 8 the Remembrance Day.

Amnesty International: New evidence of summary killings of captured Ukrainian soldiers must spark investigations

LONDON – Shocking new evidence of “execution-style killings” by pro-Russian armed groups in Donbas, eastern Ukraine, illustrates the urgent need for action to tackle the escalating human rights and humanitarian crisis in the area, Amnesty International said in an April 9 news release.

“The new evidence of these summary killings confirms what we have suspected for a long time. The question now is: what are the separatist leaders going to do about it?” said Denis Krivosheev, Europe and Central Asia deputy director at Amnesty International.

“The torture, ill-treatment and killings of captured, surrendered or wounded soldiers are war crimes. These crimes must be promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated, and the perpetrators prosecuted in fair trials by recognized authorities.”

Footage reviewed by Amnesty International shows Ukrainian soldier Bor Branyoty, one of the defenders of Donetsk airport, taken captive and interrogated. The video, posted on YouTube, shows signs that he was hit in the face. He remained in captivity until he was killed.

A number of individuals claim to have seen Mr. Branyoty being shot and killed point-blank by a separatist commander. His body was returned to his family earlier this month and he was buried in Kyiv on April 3. The Ukrainian security services have opened an investigation into his killing.

Amnesty International has also seen video documenting the captivity, and pictures of the dead bodies, of at least three other members of the Ukrainian armed forces, reportedly being held in a morgue in Donetsk. There are signs of bullet wounds to their heads and upper parts of their bodies, apparently the result of execution-style killings. The soldiers had been captured by pro-Russian forces in Debaltseve between February 12 and 18 when the defending Ukrainian forces were encircled.

The revelation follows a report by the Ukrainian newspaper, Kyivpost, on April 6 featuring a phone interview, allegedly made by Arseny Pavlov, better known by his nom-de-guerre “Motorola.” Mr. Pavlov reportedly a Russian national and the leader of the pro-Russian armed group known as the Sparta Battalion operating in eastern Ukraine, claimed he had ‘shot dead’ 15 soldiers captured from the Ukrainian armed forces. He is alleged to have killed Mr. Branyoty.

“This chilling ‘confession’ from a separatist fighter alongside video evidence and testimonies from witnesses, and the mounting evidence of abuses of captives by both sides, highlights the urgent need for an independent investigation into this and all other allegations of abuses in this conflict which began a year ago,” said Mr. Krivosheev.

“Summary killings are a war crime, plain and simple,” he underscored. “The leaders of the self-styled ‘Donetsk People’s Republic’ in eastern Ukraine must send their members a clear message: those who fight with them or on their behalf must respect the laws of war. They must urgently remove from their ranks anyone suspected of responsibility for ordering or committing serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses, and fully cooperate with any independent investigation.”

As parties to the armed conflict, armed groups such as the Sparta Battalion are legally bound by the rules of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses, and fully cooperate with any independent investigation.”

With information from the official website of Ukraine’s president, http://www.president.gov.ua.

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For complete details and applications, please call the UNA headquarters or visit the Our Benefits page on the UNA website at:

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EASTER PASTORAL

May peace, love and unity always be among us

Following is the Paschal Epistle of the Permanent Conference of Ukrainian Orthodox Bishops beyond the Borders of Ukraine.

To the God-beloved prebishops, honorable metropolitans, and all faithful children of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the diaspora and in Ukraine:

"Angels in heaven, O Christ Savior, praise your Resurrection with hymns, make us worthy here on earth to glorify You with a pure heart." (Paschal Stichy)

Right Reverend, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

On this joyful and holy day of the Most Glorious and Divine Resurrection of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, we extend our most heartfelt greetings to all you Orthodox Christians with the feast of the Lord’s Pascha! The magnificent feast of the Resurrection of Christ calls all of us to consider again the eternal treasures of Christian teaching and offers a golden opportunity to fill our hearts with goodness and love for God and neighbor. The Resurrection of Christ unites us all through faith in the victory of light over darkness, goodness over evil and life over death. The Holy Apostle James reminds us that “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (Jam 2:26). And so, on these joyful days of Pascha, we should endeavor with especial diligence to properly fulfill the suffering of those oppressed by sorrow. Encourage the downcast, perform acts of mercy, love and compassion, and help those in need, who are waiting for us to offer our aid.

Every person, and perhaps even whole nations, experienced their lives various hardships, suffering, and at such times often talk about the victory of evil over good. How many times in our own lives have we ourselves fallen into despair? And so, in order to avoid disillusionment and discouragement, we must remember that evil and untruth are overcome and conquered through the Resurrection of Christ. With faith in the Risen Christ many generations of Christians have finished their earthly journey, accomplished their ascetic struggle of fasting and prayer, patiently endured suffering and sorrow and accepted death, firmly believing in the coming resurrection and eternal life with Christ. St. John Chrysostom said, “Today people have joined together with the angels, and clothed in flesh, together with the hallowed powers now offer hymns, worthy here on earth to glorify You with a pure heart.”

Today the domination of the devil is destroyed, today the bonds of death are broken, the victory of evil and hell is over. Come! Let the Resurrection! Christ has opened to us the path to salvation.

The Pascha of Christ has especially great meaning for every Ukrainian this year. We all believe and pray that the Resurrected Christ will assist our Ukrainian people and our homeland of Ukraine to be victorious over her enemy and overcome all difficulties and obstacles which our people are facing. We know that Christ the Savior also experienced a Golgotha, after which came the Resurrection. These words give hope to our Ukrainian nation that we will be vouchsafed exceptional joy, peace and unity following the cruel war and enmity. Our faith would not exist without the Resurrection of Christ. There would be no eternal life without faith. Consequently our purpose and the essence of our spirituality is our belief in the Risen Christ. The Resurrection of Christ has become the heart and foundation of Christianity. The Holy Church prayerfully calls upon heaven and earth in celebration of this divine joy. “Let the heavens, warranty rejoice, and let the earth be glad. Let the world, both visible and invisible, keep the feast; for Christ, our Eternal Lord, is Risen (Tsadi of the Paschal Canon). May this bright Paschal joy encourage us once again to offer our thanks to the Lord for His great and limitless love for us.

How should Christians respond to this Divine Love and sacrifice for us sinners? We should respond with whole heart and gratitude to God, to the fulfilling of His Commandments and to learning how to love one another as God has loved us. The path to realizing this goal has been revealed to us by the power of the Resurrection of Christ.

Following the Resurrection, the Lord appeared to the Apostles and greeted them with the words “Peace be unto you.” After hearing Christ’s words, the Apostles felt this peace in their hearts and they felt joy and the Peace of God instead of fear. Today the words “Peace be unto you” are very important and relevant for the Ukrainian people. The peace which is brought by Christ is also the peace between nations and people.

In celebrating the Pascha of Christ, we should remember that the world today has many conflicts and injustices that give rise to resistance and opposition. We are not lacking in this respect. And so, may the greeting of Christ the Savior - “Peace be unto you” - resound throughout the world.

(Continued on page 16)
Putin conducting 'hybrid genocide' against Crimean Tatars, says journalist

by Andrew Sorokowski

Moscow officials are asserting and some in the West are accepting the notion that local officials in Crimea are to blame for any problems with the registration of Crimean Tatars. But what is happening in Crimea is the "blunt force" of a war being fought against that population, driven by Russian officials and the Kremlin, and that is a lie in the case of the former and a self-deception on the part of the latter, Ayder Muzhdabayev says.

The Crimean Tatar, himself a Crimean Tatar, says the occupation authorities simply were waiting for the Kremlin's decision. Had that been other than to close Crimean Tatar outlets, they would have extended ATR licenses "instantly" because this is "a routine bureaucratic" step (nv.ua/index.php?id=1428361378).

Consequently, he argues, the Kremlin and Vladimir Putin perceive the Crimean Tatars "as a self-deception on the part of the latter, but that is a lie in the case of the former and that there is a problem with the registration of Crimean Tatars in Crimea that will not be resolved in the near term, Mr. Muzhdabayev says he is confident that soon the leaders and employees of the Moscow-annexed Crimea have begun "ethnic cleansing" in the Ukrainian peninsula as a first step to what he calls "a hybrid genocide" of the Crimean Tatar nation.

The entire "intentional" Moscow lies about the "Crimean Tatars" is a "false latest link in a chain of lies about the real situation of the Crimean Tatar people under the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and has the following goal: having hidden this reality from the world community to continue the persecution of the Crimean Tatars in an even more harsh way.

This situation threatens to take the form of "a repetition of the worst examples of the policies of Stalin and Hitler". And in the next round, they may get away with it, "certain that soon the leaders and employees of ATR will be subjected not only to threats but to administrative and criminal penalties which will be increased with each reprisal".

Foreign diplomats need to recognize that Moscow is lying to them and is moving quickly to "liquidate" the only Crimean Tatar television and radio channels. That is bad quickly to "liquidate" the only Crimean Tatar television and radio channels. That is bad.

The situation is truly dire. As Halya Cozhobayova points out, "As well as living under the forced silencing of Crimean Tatar TV ATR and plans to replace it with a mall network that Moscow, a top figure in the so-called Mejlis in Crimea has proposed that the "coup of March 18 - the anniversary of the deportation of the Crimean Tatar People in 1944 should be stopped and Crimea should instead celebrate a "day of joy" (khpg.org/index.php?id=1428361378).

The Ukrainian communities in Crimea have been "coping with the stunt that history has traditionally focused on dramatic events like war or revolution. Thus, the popular image of Ukrainian history emphasized the massacres of Jews during the Khmelnytsky uprising, as well as 19th and 20th century pogroms. Socio-economic and religious factors bred mutual distrust. Yet for nearly a thousand years, Christians and Jews in Ukraine lived in peaceful coexistence, even symbiosis. Symbolic of this was Ayder Sheptytsky's custom of addressing Jewish communities in Hebrew during his episcopal visitations. During the Holocaust, Metropolitan Sheptytsky went further than other Christian leaders, speaking out against violence and sheltering Jews from the Nazis. This is this aspect of his legacy that is the subject of "Archbishop Andrei Sheptytsky and the Ukrainian Jewish Bond." Meticuloiusly edited by the Rev. Dr. Peter Galadza and jointly published last year by the Leadership Conference of Eastern Christian Studies (MASECES) and the Ukrainian Jewish Encounter (UJE), this volume appeared in time for the 100th anniversary of Sheptytsky's birth (as a note on the inside back cover explains, there are several ways to spell his name).

Of Shakespeare, the reference to a Ukrainian Jewish "bond" may recall the Jewish moneylender Shylock's heartrending insistence on the pound of flesh promised to him by his friend Bassanio's debt of 3,000 ducats: "I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond/I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond; speak not against my bond." That, incidentally, was the great mistake of the Stalinist authorities in Crimea who constantly tried to create a cult out of various tragedies, whether the Holodomor or the deportation. It's impossible to build a strong national sentiments.

Mr. Polonsky said that the Crimean Tatar activists in the pocket of the regime had proposed an alternative Crimean Tatar holocaust commemorator to the President of Russia Vladimir Putin signed a decree about the rehabilitation of victims of the war, that was a day of mourning we must nonetheless move to a day of joy... You need to remember the dead quietly, and rejoice loudly!" Paul Goble is a long-time specialist on ethnic and religious questions in Eurasia who has served in various capacities in the U.S. Government, currently with the Department of Homeland Security’s Intelligence and the International Broadcasting Bureau, as well as at the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. He has published the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Mr. Goble writes a blog called "Window on Eurasia" (http://windo- voneurasia2is2.blogspot.com/). The article above is reprinted with permission.

The Ukrainian Weekly welcomes letters to the editor and commentaries on a variety of topics of concern to the Ukrainian-American and Ukrainian-Canadian communities, as well as the Ukrainian diaspora. Opinions expressed by columnists, commentators and letter-writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of either The Weekly editorial staff or its publisher, the Ukrainian National Association.
Students from Friends Seminary visit UIA Maidan exhibit

by Kitty Samuels
and Martin Rather

NEW YORK – In many ways, it was only fitting that the day our class visited the Ukrainian Institute of America was cold and dreary. On our 15-minute walk from the subway to the Institute, the grey skies opened up, soaking all twenty of us as we travelled uptown from Friends Seminary in Manhattan’s East Village.

Walking through the front doors and up the eloquent staircase in the Institute, we noticed a wooden shield with a message scrawled in Ukrainian, that when translated for us, read “DO NOT KILL.” We were then told by our guide and the exhibit curator Foma Fomenko, through a translator, that “it took two and a half months worth of peaceful protests in Kyiv, in five-degree weather protected by nothing but these shields, before people started to react.”

Having just walked five blocks in near-freezing rain, the idea of being outside in much colder weather while passionately protesting all day, for months on end, was an idea that we could not fathom. Foma was incredibly articulate in his ability to explain how the protests shaped the Maidan. We were particularly interested to hear that the Maidan has now returned to the way it was pre-revolution, with the exception of the memorials to the fallen. Our academic instruction was brought to life by hearing and seeing the real-life stories and art at the Institute. Our interest in learning more about the Ukrainian revolution was truly heightened.

After we learned the basics of foreign relations and the inner workings of a state, Stefan Stawnychy, our teacher, decided to test as well as enhance our understanding of politics by giving us the grand challenge of simulating the current crisis in Ukraine. We were all assigned roles, some Russian, some Ukrainian, some members of the E.U., and some American. We began by extensively researching the Ukrainian Revolution of Dignity, looking into the corruption of [fugitive former president Viktor] Yanukovych’s administration, and examining the Ukrainian people’s desire for tangible democratic change. Next, we had weekly simulations to talk about different levels and times of the crisis, first of course the revolution and the beatings of the protesters, then the sham Crimean referendum and subsequent U.N. Security Council meeting, the eastern separatist movements, the crash of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH 17, summing up with the current situation and likely future courses of action. Each simulation became more contentious and aggravating, as the groups were unable to get anything productive done due to Russia’s continued rhetoric.

Injustices left and right, yet Russia, sticking to their roles, kept denying others’ requests for discussion and the U.N. and the U.S. could provide little to no real assistance. Ukraine, currently in a transitional state attempting to stabilize after the huge revolution and creating a new people’s democracy, had the least power in the simulation. All that the representatives from Ukraine could do was explain how Russia was bombarding them, when really it felt like the only way to fix the situation was for Russia to stop trying to create spheres of influence and thus further its dictatorial empire.

Our conclusion: politics, especially international affairs, is exhausting and disheartening. However, we came away with the knowledge that we must start advocating for those in need and change our current system of international relations. Our class will forever be advocates for Ukraine and with no doubt will be a part of a large community calling for reform in the harsh global political system, both now and in the future.

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Renowned Ukrainian writer Andrey Kurkov says Ukraine does not need a third Maidan.

EDMONTON, Alberta – The Euro-Maidan of 2014, also known as the Revolution of Dignity, was centered on Kyiv’s main square, as was the 2014 Orange Revolution. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Euro-Maidan revolution, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) organized a three-day symposium and invited the Ukrainian writer Andrey Kurkov to deliver the 49th annual Shevchenko Lecture, which served as the keynote event of the symposium.

Mr. Kurkov’s talk, delivered on March 9 before an audience of almost 200 at the University of Alberta, was titled “How Many Maidans Does Ukraine Need to Become Different?”

In the first part of his lecture, Mr. Kurkov gave a personal account of his development as a writer in the context of the changes taking place during the late Soviet period, when the Soviet state and economic system began to unravel. It was in this period that Kurkov began to leave the Soviet past behind and identify himself with Ukraine, which became independent in 1991.

According to Mr. Kurkov, one of Ukraine’s consistent problems since independence has been the lack of state-builders among its political elite. In the years following independence, Ukrainian politicians never considered the Ukrainian populace as the cornerstone, which boosted Mr. Kurkov pointed out that no agreement with Russia was ever concluded to delimit Ukraine’s territory. The failure to protect national property on which the house is to be built, where the owner begins by fencing the property, is written in Ukrainian and partly in Polish.

It can be purchased in the U.S. for $30, or phone us at 508-284-7036.

In his novels, Mr. Kurkov satirizes life in the country, as the country faces a difficult road ahead, Mr. Kurkov noted.

It is clear that many Ukrainians want to live under the rule of law but corruption is difficult to root out, especially when the country is at war. Russia’s leaders hope that by the end of 2014, the Ukrainian government. Mr. Kurkov concluded that if there are no reforms, there may be a third Maidan in Ukraine’s informational and cultural space. In the Donbas and the Crimea, media and information outlets were controlled by local elites, who used them to maintain a Soviet-type mentality among the local population.

Last year’s Euro-Maidan revolution was provoked by the actions of Viktor Yanukovych, who, ironically wanted to avoid such a scenario, having lost power following the 2004 Orange Revolution. The goal of the demonstrators in 2014 had been to secure honest elections, which was achieved, but disillusionment followed when politicians failed to initiate fundamental reforms. This allowed Mr. Yanukovych to come to power in 2010. He sowed the seeds of the Euro-Maidan revolution when he began portraying officials from the Donbas to positions of authority throughout the country, alienating local officials and businessmen.

During the first stages of the Euro-Maidan, demonstrators had no clear goals and the Maidan became a forum for discussion, resembling a type of open university. and the Maidan became a forum for discussion, resembling a type of open university.

Those discussions, the readiness of a faction, resembling a type of open university.

Mr. Kurkov also participated as a commentator at the opening session of the symposium on the Euro-Maidan revolution and subsequently met with students at MLCS. Before coming to Edmonton, Mr. Kurkov also met with John Ralston Saul, president of PEN International, and other Canadian writers.

In conjunction with his speaking tour in Canada, Andrey Kurkov gave two interviews that were published in Canadian newspapers: one appeared in the Edmonton Journal and the other in the Toronto Star. Following his departure from Canada, Mr. Kurkov wrote about the symposium and his impressions related to his trip to Canada (http://culturemedia/pro-ukrainskii-patrofo-kanad).

Mr. Kurkov is a world-renowned Ukrainian novelist, movie scriptwriter, and essayist. A Member of PEN International, he has published 18 novels, seven books for children and more than 30 filmcripts. His works have been translated into 36 languages, including English, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, German, Swedish, Turkish, Japanese, Chinese and Hebrew. Among Russsophone writers in the post-Soviet space, Mr. Kurkov commands the largest international audience and is also Ukraine’s best-selling author abroad.

In his novels, Mr. Kurkov satirizes life in post-Soviet Ukraine, often using strategies of the animal fable to deal with political and social issues. An example of this approach is his novel “Death and the Penguin” (1996; English, 2001). In 2004 Mr. Kurkov openly supported Ukraine’s Orange Revolution, after which presses in Russia refused to publish his works. An independent thinker and fine essayist, Mr. Kurkov has frequently participated in the civic life of Ukraine, using his excellent command of English, German, French, Polish, Russian and Ukrainian to represent the interests of Ukraine’s artists, reformers, and human-rights activists internationally.

Mr. Kurkov’s most recent work, “Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev,” documents the Euro-Maidan revolution from its inception in late November 2013 through April 2014. The diaries dispel many colonial myths and portray Ukraine as a political nation. The book has appeared in German, French, Italian, Estonian and English, and recently in Ukrainian. Polish, Russian and Japanese editions will appear shortly.

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Crimean pottery: the plate in the upper left features the “tamga” symbol used by Eurasian nomads.

**“Crimea Unveiled”: Documentary film spotlights Crimean Tatars and Ukraine**

by Adrian Bryttan

NEW YORK – The red potter’s wheel whirls anti-clockwise, turning round and round while artisan hands expertly coax a new vase from a lump of clay – it’s a recurring image in director Olga Morkova’s documentary film “Crimea Unveiled” that was screened at the Ukrainian Institute of America in New York on March 25.

This potter’s wheel was a symbol for the central figure of the film, artist Rustem Skibin, a Crimean Tatar forced to relocate to Kyiv upon the Russian invasion of the Ukrainian peninsula. The plight of one skilled craftsman, a vanishing art form, the tragic decline of a culture and a whole nation – these were the larger themes of the documentary.

Mr. Skibin now continues to produce his traditional ethnic pottery in Kyiv. But the consequences of the Russian invasion and annexation continue to be disastrous for indigenous Tatars in Crimea.


The film ends with Ms. Morkova’s words: “We don’t know what will happen, but we must be patient. We will wait and submit ourselves to the whirl of the universe.”

For Crimean Tatars, the potter’s wheel keeps turning.

Following the film, Ayla Bakkalli, U.S.A. representative of the Indigenous Crimean Tatar Mejlis (their highest executive-representative body), expanded on the history and present situation of Crimean Tatars. (Ms. Bakkalli traces her ancestry back to two strands of Tatars in Crimea – one to the 12th century and the other to nomads several millennia ago.)

Ms. Morkova’s beautifully crafted short film related how almost all Crimean Tatar artists and artisans died off in Uzbekistan, where the entire Crimean population was forcibly exiled in cattle cars by the Soviets in 1944. More than 100,000 deportees perished from starvation and disease. Following the re-establishment in 1991 of Ukraine’s independence, about 250,000 returned. Then, in 2014, came the “little green men.”

The film’s director, Ms. Morkova, a Ukrainian of Russian origin from Sevastopol, explained how “Crimea Unveiled” afforded her the opportunity to show “the other Crimea, not just like other destitute and wretched displaced peoples in the world, but artists [who are] committed to carry on their culture.”

The sponsors listed for her documentary include the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv, the Fulbright Association and the Rinat Akhmetov Foundation. Ms. Morkova has now initiated her next project: a documentary about Mustafa Dzhemilev, leader of the Crimean Tatar National Movement and a member of the Ukrainian Parliament since 1988. This will be produced by Crimea SOS Initiative in Kyiv.

In her talk, Ms. Bakkalli said there is no question where Tatars’ sympathies and allegiance lie: “We Crimean Tatars told our Russian neighbors, we are more Ukrainian than you. The Russians were always imperialists, never the Ukrainians. Our genocide began with Catherine II and her confiscation of our lands. We assess historical facts to fight Russian propaganda. All Crimean Tatars want to be with Ukraine because a strong Ukraine means peace. Currently we see a return to horrific Soviet times; now the world has been destroyed...”

Ms. Bakkalli added that what is rarely mentioned is the current penalties for not embracing Russian citizenship (which amounts to de facto recognition of Crimea as part of Russia): no right to work in the public sector, no driver’s license and no opportunity to study in state schools. Most civil servants are now Russians. Coupled with harsh censorship, police state monitoring and an absence of democracy, it is no wonder that Tatars fear Crimea becoming another Ossetia or Abkhazia scenario.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), over 20,000 uprooted Crimeans fled across the newly established borders to find a safe haven in Ukraine. And the systemic human rights abuses by Russian occupiers keep escalating, with the banning of public events and restrictions on elemental freedoms of association. Hardly reported were the recent severe beatings of two Tatars on a Crimean bus just for speaking their native language. Others fared much worse. Ms. Bakkalli described one 39-year-old who wanted to enlist in the Ukrainian army; he was killed and his mutilated body thrown out in a bazaar. Been non-activists are found hung or killed.

One of Ms. Bakkalli’s slides showed a young Tatar woman under a Crimean flag during the Maidan. On a light blue background, this official flag features a golden symbol, the “tamga,” which suggests an inverted “tryzub” or trident, but is actually an abstract tribal seal historically used by Eurasian nomads. The caption revealed this Tatar girl spoke in Ukrainian: “Maidan is a Tatar word... we are proud to be Ukrainian.”

Ms. Bakkalli cautioned that any videos showing “Crimean Tatar” support for Russia are just Moscow propaganda taking advantage of a different group, the Khazar Tatars, instead of the Crimean Tatars, who are all pro-Ukraine.

Responding to a question about why there is so little official action from Turkey and other Muslim states, Ms. Bakkalli stated there are currently 5 million Crimean Tatars living in Turkey. While there is widespread grass-roots support, Turkish-Russian energy agreements complicate the political situation. She continued: “Even much of the Muslim world is hearing of Crimean Tatars for the first time. The Middle East is volatile with its own issues, which does not leave much room for Crimean Tatars.”

In a private conversation with this author, Ms. Bakkalli added: “The Crimean Tatars are much more modern; our women do not wear veils. We also need to remember that Crimean Tatars were content to live in a democratic Ukraine for almost a quarter of a century.”

Perhaps the most important point made by Ms. Bakkalli was the significance of the April 2014 official declaration by Ukraine that the Crimean Tatars are the indigenous people of Crimea and the recognition of their self-governance by the Mejlis. (Ms. Bakkalli is also advisor on indigenous matters to the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations.)

With this decisive action, Crimea now falls under international norms and becomes part of a much larger global forum of 370 million indigenous peoples worldwide.

For Ukraine, this is critical because it provides additional compelling legal arguments against Russian claims and annexation of the Crimean peninsula.
NEWSBRIEFS (Continued from page 2)

the January-March period in 2014, and that last month alone it rose by 45.8 percent. The State Statistics Service released information on April 6 that showed the dramatic downturn for the economy last month. The service reported that the price of basic foods and nonalcoholic beverages went up 15.6 percent in March, and prices for drinking and smoking increased by 13.5 percent. However, the cost of housing rose only 1.1 percent. The National Bank of Ukraine has forecast inflation running at between 2.6 to 3.4 percent for 2015. The State Statistics Service noted that the figures do not include “occupied Crimea and Sevastopol, and also areas where anti-terrorism operations are being conducted” referring to the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in eastern Ukraine, which are largely under the control of pro-Russian separatists. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by UNIAN, Agence France-Presse and TASS)

Self-proclaimed LNR to issue passports
LUHANSK - The self-proclaimed Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR) says it will begin issuing passports to residents of eastern Ukraine. The Luhansk rebels’ Service noted that the figures do not include “occupied Crimea and Sevastopol, and also areas where anti-terrorism operations are being conducted” referring to the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in eastern Ukraine, which are largely under the control of pro-Russian separatists. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by UNIAN, Agence France-Presse and TASS)

Savchenko eating ‘to survive until trial’
MOSCOW - Ukrainian military pilot Nadia Savchenko, who has been on hunger strike to protest being held in a Russian jail, has reportedly resumed eating small amounts of food. Mikhail Fedotov and Yelizaveta Glinskaya, members of Russia’s presidential human rights council, say Ms. Savchenko has begun eating dairy products with the aim of staying alive until her trial, which has yet to be scheduled. The announcement came after Mr. Fedotov and Ms. Glinskaya visited the pilot at Moscow’s Main Directorate of the Federal Security Service. Savchenko, 33, has interrupted her hunger strike. Citing health concerns, she briefly resumed eating in early March after more than 40 days without solid food. She returned to her fast on March 16. Ms. Savchenko, a member of Ukraine’s volunteer Aidar Battalion, is charged in connection with a June 2014 mortar attack that killed two Russian journalists covering the conflict between government forces and Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine. She says she was kidnapped by separatists in June and illegally transferred to Russia. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by TASS and Interfax)

Savchenko lawyer claims probe
MOSCOW - A lawyer for Nadia Savchenko, an Ukrainian air force officer who is on hunger strike in a Russian prison, says Savchenko’s lawyer claims probe

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**NEWSBRIEFS**

(Continued from page 12)

Ukraine among most dangerous countries

WASHINGTON – A new study has listed Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Ukraine among the world’s 10 most dangerous countries. Based on terrorist and rebel activity, the study by the Washington-based International Crisis List Bands Iraq and Syria as the world’s most dangerous countries. Afghanistan was ranked fifth and Pakistan was listed as the world’s eighth most dangerous country. Ukraine was listed as the world’s ninth most dangerous country.

Others in the top 10 were Nigeria, third; Somalia, fourth; Libya, sixth; Yemen, seventh; and Egypt, 10th. (RFE/RL, based on reporting by The Economic Times and The Times of India)

Duma acts against dissenting deputy

MOSCOW – The lower house of Russia’s Parliament voted almost unanimously to strip the immunity of lawmaker Ilya Pomorovoy, who is the main member of the State Duma who voted against the annexation of Crimea last year. Meeting on April 7, Duma deputies voted 438 to one to remove Mr. Pomorovoy’s immunity, which paves the way for criminal charges to be brought against him. Authorities say Mr. Pomorovoy, one of the very few opposition lawmakers in the State Duma, has been suspected of embezzling some 22 million rubles (about $400,000) for the payment of employees. The newspaper said they spent three days using scissors to cut an article about a Siberian newspaper say they spent three days using scissors to cut an article about an article about Mr. Batonmukuyev out of the newspaper’s entire April 3 print run by a lawsuit to a court in Amsterdam demanding that the Allard Pierson Museum return the Crimean part of the collection. (RFE/RL, with reporting by TASS and Ekho Moskvy)

**Russian paper removes article about soldier wounded in Ukraine**

Journalsists used scissors to cut story from 50,000 copies of newspaper

RFE/RL’s Russian Service

ULAN-UDE, Russia – Journalists at a Siberian newspaper say they spent three days using scissors to cut an article about a Russian soldier who was wounded fighting alongside pro-Russian rebels in Ukraine out of 50,000 copies of the publication.

The editor of Novaya Buryatia (New Buryatia), Timur Dugarzhapov, told RFE/RL on April 7 that staffers in recent days cut an article about Mr. Batomukuyev out of the newspaper’s entire April 3 print run after “too many complaints” and “before it could be removed from the Internet.”

Moscow-based independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta published an interview last month in which Mr. Batomukuyev, who suffered severe burns and remained hospitalized, described in detail how Russian armed forces had taken part in the battles in Ukraine.

**Oral history...**

(Continued from page 1)

"If you or someone you know are children of Holodomor survivors and would like to be interviewed for this project, you are very welcome to contact the URCRD office as soon as possible and let us know," Mr. Iazov said. Each interview is recorded on tape in English and transcribed, and will be accessible for further study in the URCRD archives.

"By recording these participants, humanistic and cultural heritage can be preserved for future generations," Mr. Iazov said. "In this way, the memory and understanding of the Holodomor from many new points of view," stated the project’s technical consultant, Andy Holowaty.

The Temerty Family Foundation’s operations consist primarily of research projects and programs of various registered charities and donor funds to those registered charities carrying out research or projects of interest to the foundation’s board members in order to aid those particular registered charities in carrying out these research activities.

The Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Center is a community institution that collects, catalogues and preserves material documenting the history, culture and contributions of Ukrainians throughout the world. The URCRD is a non-profit organization that produces documentary films, prepares educational materials, and sponsors lectures, conferences and exhibits on various topics related to Ukrainian issues. For more information about URCRD, readers may visit its website at http://urcd.org.

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**With deep sorrow we inform family and friends that on March 31, 2015, passed away our beloved mother, grandmother, aunt**

Maria Chervoniak Woroch

widow of Wolodymyr, born April 29, 1920 in the town of Kryvenke, Ternopil obl.

Parastos was held on Friday, April 3, 2015 at the Peter Jarema Funeral Home in new York City

Funeral services were held Saturday, April 4th, at 10:30 a.m. at the St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church, New York, followed by interment at St. Andrew Cemetery in South Bound Brook, N.J.

She will be deeply missed by her:

- daughter
- son
- grandchildren
- sister
- nieces and nephews
- daughter
- son
- grandchildren
- sister
- nieces and nephews

- Zwenyslawa Lubomyr with his wife Barbara
- Lubomyr with his wife Linda
- Andrea DeWitt with husband Brian
- Oksana Woroch with son Boris and daughter

- Vera Tomashivsky
- Oksana Woroch
- Bohdan Tomashivsky
- Woroch - Rosanna, Bohdar, Roman, Ivaiol, Sofia
- Leonid Huta, Nadia Bodnar, Marusia Oliynick, Inya Yasykov with families
- extended family in Ukraine, USA and Canada

ВІЧНА ПАМ’ЯТІ – Еternal Memory!

In lieu of flowers, donations would be appreciated to the following:

- St. George Ukrainian Catholic Church
- 30 East 7th Street, New York, New York 10003
  - (212) 674-1615

- Ukrainian Catholic University –Liviv; c/o UCEF
- 2247 W. Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60622
  - (773) 235-8547

- Ukrainian Institute of America
- 2 East 79th Street, New York, New York 10028
  - (212) 288-8660

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Zuk Piano Duo performs at Queens University

by Thomas Davidson

KINGSTON, Ontario – The 2014-2015 Faculty Artist Series at Queen’s University came to a successful close with an artistic performance by the esteemed Zuk Piano Duo on Sunday, March 22. The Zucks provided an afternoon performance full of intimacy and personal charm. Their notable control of sound and nuance was projected with clarity in the wonderful new surroundings.

This was the inaugural season of the newly constructed, state-of-the-art Isabel Bader Center for the Performing Arts, affectionately known as “The Isabel.” The exceptional acoustic and aesthetic environment quickly established the Isabel Concert Hall as a leading performance venue for Canadian and international artists. Since the Zuck Duo has earned such a fine reputation on the national and international performing scene, it was most appropriate to have them conclude the series in this exceptional space.

Their program, inspired by folk elements, contained works by five Ukrainian composers. Two of these were composed specifically for the Zucks: “Five Ornaments” by Halyna Ovcharenko and “Three Ornaments” by Fedir Akimenko (“Pièces Ukrainiennes”). Both offered a broad spectrum of style and tone including a very modernist approach and were inspired by the rhythms of Ukrainian folk cossack dance. Ovcharenko’s “Pièces Ukrainiennes” was written in 1950s. Akimenko’s “Pièces Ukrainiennes” was written in 1960s.

The other three Ukrainian composers were Ihor Bilohrud, Fedir Akimenko and Fiala. The Bilohrud was probably the most “romantic” work on the program and the performance captured its song-like quality admirably well. The Akimenko pieces, which opened the concert, set an intimate and contemplative mood. “Dances from Greek Isles” by Yannis Konstantinidis, and “Ronde Villageoise” by Clermont Pépin finished the first and second halves of the program respectively. Due to its lively nature, “Ronde Villageoise” is a great work to end a program. Pépin, a Montrealer who passed away in 2006, was a valued colleague and personal friend of the Zucks. He was also welcomed as a Distinguished Michener Visitor by Queen’s University during the 2003-2004 academic session.

The Zuk Piano Duo: Ireneus and Luba Zuk.

There was also a performance of George Fiala’s, “Ukrainian Dance” (1979). The contrasting nature of the composer’s style was especially evident in the acoustic clarity of this new concert hall. Fiala, who has written works specifically for the Zuk Duo, has had a long and personal musical association with them since his arrival in Montreal in the 1950s.

The other two Ukrainian composers were Ihor Bilohrud (Sonatina Op. 20) and Fedir Akimenko (“Pièces Ukrainiennes”). The Bilohrud was probably the most “romantic” work on the program and the performance captured its song-like quality admirably well. The Akimenko pieces, which opened the concert, set an intimate and contemplative mood. “Dances from Greek Isles” by Yannis Konstantinidis, and “Ronde Villageoise” by Clermont Pépin finished the first and second halves of the program respectively. Due to its lively nature, “Ronde Villageoise” is a great work to end a program. Pépin, a Montrealer who passed away in 2006, was a valued colleague and personal friend of the Zucks. He was also welcomed as a Distinguished Michener Visitor by Queen’s University during the 2003-2004 academic session.

Thomas Davidson is assistant professor of piano and musicanship at Queen’s University in Kingston and McGill University in Montreal.

Russia reinforces... (Continued from page 2)

The UCCA continued: “These statements demand a swift and firm response from Ukraine’s allies. Referring to the Crimea’s sizeable population of Ukrainian citizens of Russian descent, President Yeltsin asserted that Russia ‘has considerable interests in the Crimea.’ He went on to unacceptably impugn Ukrainian sovereignty by referring to ‘a power grab by Ukraine’ and to ‘the will of Crimeans.’” He went on to unacceptably impugn Ukrainian sovereignty by referring to “a power grab by Ukraine” and to “the will of Crimeans.” The latter is consistent with Mr. Putin’s remarks during the recently broadcast documentary on seizing Crimea, in which he said he was willing to place nuclear forces on alert if there were signs of a collapse of the Crimea. Otherwise, the UCCA’s担心 that this reliance on playing the nuclear card also offers strong enough evidence of the limits of Russian conventional military forces (Rossiya 1, March 15).

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Turning... (Continued from page 6)

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Ukraine’s Acting Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk noted that while he was working to resolve issues related to the Black Sea Fleet, “De jure, it is a fleet owned by two countries – Ukraine and Russia; de facto, it is controlled by Russia.”" Moskovskaya Novost, in which he said he was willing to place nuclear forces on alert if there were signs of a collapse of the Crimea. Otherwise, the UCCA’s担心 that this reliance on playing the nuclear card also offers strong enough evidence of the limits of Russian conventional military forces (Rossiya 1, March 15).

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Chicago concert raises funds to help war’s victims in Ukraine

by Solomiya Chuyko

CHICAGO – The Second Presbyterian Church, in the heart of Chicago’s South Loop, hosted a fund-raising concert for Ukraine on March 28 to support humanitarian aid for families and children in Ukraine affected by the war. The concert was the idea of Kyiv native and violinist Maria Styrn. The well-attended event was co-hosted by the Kyiv Committee of Chicago Sister Cities International, the US-Ukraine Business Council and the Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago.

Opening comments were delivered by Kyiv Committee Chicago Sister Cities International Chair Vera Eliashvily and Business Subcommittee Chair Lev Holubec. Present in the audience were a number of notable attendees, including the consul general of Lithuania in Chicago, Marijus Gudynas, and the consul general of Ukraine in Chicago, Andriy Pavezdyk, whose closing remarks reaffirmed the importance of helping Ukraine overcome this socio-political crisis.

This event attracted an audience of multicultural music lovers interested in benefiting a humanitarian cause. Following the events of the Euro-Maidan – the Revolution of Dignity encompassing a period of protests that demanded closer European integration for Ukraine – the situation took a turn for the worse as Russian aggression sparked fighting in eastern Ukraine. This benefit concert was a remarkable opportunity to raise money for a nation in dire need of medical supplies, military equipment and international awareness.

The Second Presbyterian Church, a National Historical Landmark with an Arts and Crafts style sanctuary and 175 representations of angels throughout the majestically structured church, was a truly inspiring location for this night of musical indulgence. The St. Nicholas Cathedral School Children’s Choir under the direction of Irene Dychig opened the program with the American and Ukrainian national anthems. Mr. Storm began the concert with an excerpt from Johann S. Bach’s “Chaconne.” Her performance sent the audience into a state of transcendence, and her heartfelt commentary about the war and Ukraine elicited an overwhelmingly positive response. Accompanied by her New York-based friend and pianist Emilko Sato, Ms. Storm followed with the first movement of Robert Schumann’s Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Minor, Op. 105, and Ernest Bloch’s “Nigun.” The Storm/Sato duo ended the first classical half of the concert with Bella Bartok’s “Romanian Folk Dances,” a beautiful church. In a soft-spoken voice Mr. Santos, a colleague of Ms. Storm, said “Music has the power to unite – no matter when or where, it is truly a universal language.”

The concert’s final section comprised an inspiring Ukrainian program introduced by the St. Nicholas Cathedral School eighth grader Alex Tymouch reciting his poem “I Hope We Stop the Fire” – a tribute to the Revolution of Dignity and a young person’s expression of desire for peace in his native Ukraine.

A special guest, singer-songwriter Serhiy Fomenko of Kyiv, took to the stage, bringing audience members to tears with renditions of Ukrainian songs, including two selections to the words of Taras Shevchenko. Mr. Fomenko, known as Foma, was a key figure of the Maidan whose countless stage performances kept protesters hopeful.

Currently, he is the curator of the traveling exhibit titled “Maidan. Ukraine. Road to Freedom.” He sang the famous song “Ne Spy, Moya Ridna Zemlia” (Do Not Sleep, My Native Land), marking the first time he has performed this piece with children. It was “one of the most special days of my life in the recent past,” he said as he turned to thank the children while the audience applauded vociferously.

The epitome of the evening was the performance of “Plyve Kacha po Tyzny” by Trioda, a trio of male singers from Ternopil, Ukraine. This song, delivered as a funeral hymn for each of the Heavenly Hundred at the Maidan funeral in February 2014, has since become an international symbol of Ukraine’s current struggle for freedom.

In short, the evening was an incredible pro bono effort by musicians in support of a humanitarian cause. The concert proceeds will assist the Ukrainian Federation of America in continuing to provide relief in the form of food, water, clothing and medical supplies to families and children in Ukraine affected by the war.
PORTSMOUTH, R.I. – The Portsmouth Free Public Library is featuring an exhibit of 61 pysanky that includes 34 pysanky written by pysanka Boryslav Slabicky and 27 from his collection. They are being shown on a background of embroidered rynky. The exhibit opened on March 30 and will remain on display through the end of April.

Mr. Slabicky approaches pysanka writing with the goal of creating or writing a new design each year. He creates pysanky that are a continuation and a furthering of the strong and graphic geometric designs that have been written in the past. He says, “They are what a writer of those designs back then could be writing now. If the early ethnographers and collectors had visited that little village that they had decided not to, they would have seen eggs written with these designs.” What all his pysanky have in common is strong, geometric design elements and traditional colors.

Mr. Slabicky has previously exhibited his pysanky at the “2008 Pysanka Symposium” in Washington and at The Ukrainian Museum’s annual pysanka exhibition “Pysanka: Safeguarding an Ancient Tradition” in 2000. His pysanky are also included in the collection of the Pysanka Museum in Kolomiya, Ukraine, at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, and in many private collections.

The library is located at 2658 E. Main Road in Portsmouth, R.I.
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.
Houston teen earns Eagle Scout rank

HOUSTON – Joseph G. Kuchta recently earned the rank of Eagle Scout – the highest rank in Boy Scouts.

Joseph’s journey in scouting began in the 1st grade as a Tiger Cub Scout in Pack 798 and continued through 5th grade when he earned the Arrow of Light and crossed over from Cub Scouts into Boy Scouts. As a Cub Scout, Joseph earned the two religion emblems available to Catholic scouts.

As a scout in Troop 251 and Crew 251, Joseph earned 28 merit badges, which included the 12 merit badges required for the rank of Eagle, earned the Light is Life religious emblem for Eastern Catholics, hiked 50 miles, camped 57 nights, performed 68 hours of scouting service and completed his Eagle project – the planting of 12 trees along a nature walking trail.

Upon completing the requirements for the rank of Eagle, Joseph was required to have a scoutmaster conference and present himself for an Eagle Scout Board of Review. The Eagle Scout Board of Review is conducted by a representative of Boy Scouts of America (BSA), Sam Houston Area Council, and adult members of Crew 251. Results of the Eagle Board of Review were sent to the BSA national office for final review and approval. Once final approval was given by BSA, Crew 251 announced that an Eagle Scout Court of Honor was to be held for Joseph.

At the solemn ceremony that took place on Sunday, January 18, Joseph was asked if he would accept the responsibility of being an Eagle Scout for the remainder of his life. After professing his acceptance, Joseph was presented with his Eagle badge, neckerchief and emblem. During the Court of Honor, Joseph’s journey in scouting from Tiger to Eagle was reviewed, and recognition and congratulations received from local, state and national leaders including President Barack Obama were acknowledged.

Joseph, 17, is a junior and varsity baseball player at Westside High School, an altar server and student of religious studies at Protection of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church, a member of Houston’s Ukrainian Dancers, and a member of the Ukrainian National Association. He is the son of Eugene and Irene Majnich-Kuchta and the grandson of the late Ihor and Josephine Kuchta of Hillside, N.J., and Maria and the late Petro Majnich, formerly of Willimantic, Conn.

Girl Scout troop honors Ukraine at World Thinking Day

WASHINGTON – On Sunday, February 22, Girl Scout Brownie Troop 4883 presented an exhibit on Ukraine at this year’s World Thinking Day celebration in Washington. The event took place at the Blessed Sacrament School auditorium in Northwest D.C. and had about 150 to 200 attendees and participants.

Every year, girl scouts come together to celebrate World Thinking Day – the day they think about and honor sister Girl Scouts and Girl Guides in other countries. Girl Scouts U.S.A. is part of a global community – one of nearly 150 countries with Girl Scouts and Girl Guides, including Ukraine. Thinking Day is traditionally celebrated on or near February 22, the birthday of both Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Boys Scouts and Girl Guides, and Lady Olave Baden-Powell, who was a leader in both the scout and guide movements.

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) selected as this year’s theme United Nations Millennium Development Goal 8: “Develop a global partnership for development.” Girls worldwide say, “We can create peace through partnerships.”

This year, the ethnically diverse Grade 2 Murch Elementary School Brownie Troop 4883 chose to honor Ukraine because of Ukraine’s developing democracy and determination to become a strong global partner for development, despite Russia’s ongoing invasion of Ukraine that has left more than 5,000 people dead and more than 1 million displaced. It was also an opportunity to honor the fallen heroes of Ukraine on the first anniversary of the Maidan – the peaceful movement of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians that eventually led to the overthrow of Ukraine’s corrupt government.

(Continued on page 19)
**Girl Scout...**

(Continued from page 18)

Two of the 14 girls in Troop 4883 are of Ukrainian heritage: 8-year-old Sophia Roof, whose mother, first-generation Ukrainian American Alexandra Chalupa, is the troop leader, and 7-year-old Amelie Rose Rosenthal, whose Ukrainian American mother Julia Rosenthal is of Jewish heritage. Ms. Chalupa’s grandparents were from Odesa and Donetsk, and her parents were born in displaced persons camps in Germany before immigrating to the U.S. when they were young children. Ms. Rosenthal was born in Cherkasy and immigrated to the United States in 1992. Alexandra and Julia were the lead organizers working with the girls in the troop on their Ukraine project.

The presentation included a booth display with photos and artifacts covering three topics: basic facts about Ukraine, Ukrainian culture, and Ukrainian children and scouting in Ukraine. To prepare for the presentation, the girls learned about Ukraine in their troop meetings. They watched videos of traditional Ukrainian dancing and music, made headdresses (vinky) that they wore at the event, studied and selected pictures to include in their display, learned about the Maidan, and discussed what they had heard in the news about the war in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Embassy provided some of the books and materials for the troop to use in the display and helped promote the event.

The Girl Scout troop also conducted an interview with children close to their age living in Ukraine’s capital, Kyiv: 8-year-old Stepan Teluk and 5-year-old Solomiya Teluk. The girls worked together as a group to come up with the interview questions, asking about favorite foods and toys, hobbies, school, as well as about the war and the Maidan and how the crisis in Ukraine has impacted the children. Several of the girls participated in a Skype interview with Stepan and Solomiya, with their father, Peter Teluk, as the translator.

The answers to the interview questions were then turned into a story told in the first-person by each of the girl scouts presenting a part of what life may be like for a child her age living in Kyiv. During the presentation, each girl wore her vinko and Girl Scout sash while holding a photo representing the part of the story she read. During the interview, Stepan had worn his Plast uniform, so one of the photos used was of Plast scouts to teach the audience about Ukraine’s most popular scouting organization.

In addition to photos of maps, Ukrainian foods and the Maidan, there was also a photo of My Little Pony. Throughout the Skype interview, even though the children from the U.S. and Ukraine didn’t speak the same language, they enjoyed directly communicating by showing each other their favorite toys, and it turned out that Solomiya shares the same passion for My Little Ponies as the girls in Washington.

A photo of Ukrainian children drawing pictures for Ukrainian soldiers was the image used to represent the war, as Stepan shared some of the many ways he and other children in Ukraine do their part to help their country, including donating clothes and helping their parents raise money and medical supplies.

The presentation started with the image of a Ukrainian flag in the introduction and ended with a peace symbol in Ukrainian colors. During the interview, Stepan told the girls “I think Ukraine will win. Ukraine will win. There will be peace again.”

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**I was Taras Shevchenko**

by Oriana Kateryna Makar

I am a student in fifth grade at Sacred Heart School in Hartsdale, N.Y., in Westchester. My teacher recently gave my class an assignment to choose any historic hero that changed the world. She wanted this to have a “wax museum” effect. Since I wanted to share my Ukrainian heritage, I decided to select the famous poet and artist Taras Shevchenko. For the assignment, I had to create a timeline about the important times of his life and a brief summary, and deliver a speech based on the summary and timeline displayed on a poster board.

February 11 was the day of the Grade 5 Wax Museum. We all had to be unrecognizable as ourselves, but to look like the historical figures we learned about. To make myself look like the older Taras Shevchenko I wore a man’s Ukrainian embroidered shirt (vyshyvanka), black pants, blazer and black wool hat. I had to look like a man, so I also tucked my hair back into a braid with my black wool hat. No one can be the older Shevchenko without a mustache. I went to a costume store and bought a long grey mustache. To complete my costume, I held a “Kobzar.”

Our classroom was dark. When one of the visitors or parents came to my desk and pressed a “wax museum” button, I put a flashlight under my face and recited the life of Taras Shevchenko (by memory). This was a very fun and creative way to have an opportunity to look like someone who made a big change in the world. Taras Shevchenko was a revolutionary man, a poet and an artist and a national hero of Ukraine. I was proud to teach my American friends about my Ukrainian culture.

Oriana Kateryna Makar, 10½, is from Hartsdale, N.Y. She is in Grade 5 at the New York Self-Reliance Ukrainian School and is a member of Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization in New York.
PREVIEW OF EVENTS

Saturday, April 18

NEW YORK: The Shevchenko Scientific Society invites all to an event dedicated to the celebration of the 80th anniversary of Ukrainian composer Leonid Hrabovsky. In 1954-1959 he studied composition under the supervision of Borys Liatoshynsky and Lev Revutsky at the Kyiv Conservatory. His master’s thesis “Four Ukrainian Songs for Chorus and Orchestra” (1959) won first prize in an all-union competition. In early 1960s Mr. Hrabovsky taught theory and composition at the Kyiv Conservatory. He belonged to the Kyiv avant-garde and was one of the first Soviet composers to adopt minimalism as a music genre. His works include dramatic, orchestral, chamber and vocal music pieces. In 1990 he moved to the U.S. at the invitation of the Ukrainian Music Society. The program includes Alla Zagaykevych’s essay about Mr. Hrabovsky, video and the composition “Sea” (1970). The event will be at the society’s building, 63 Fourth Ave. (between Ninth and 10th streets) at 5 p.m. For additional information call 212-254-5130.

Saturday, April 25

NEW YORK: Don’t miss the Chornobyl Songs Project Concert at 7 p.m. with ethnomusicologist/singer Maria Sonevytsky (Bard College) and the ensemble Hilka performing the polyphonic village singing styles of Ukraine’s Chornobyl region. The Yara Arts Group will join the performance, as will the Veveritse Brass Band, playing dance music inspired by the Romani bands of the Balkans. The event is co-sponsored by Yara, the Center for Traditional Music and Dance and The Ukrainian Museum. Admission (includes reception and gallery access) is $15; $10 for museum members and seniors; $5 for students. Tickets are available online or at the door. The Ukrainian Museum is located at 222 E. Sixth St., between Second and Third avenues; phone number, 212-228-0110; website, www.ukrainianmuseum.org.

Sunday, April 26

NEW YORK: Join us at 2 p.m. for a symposium titled “Experiment, Expression and the International Scene: The Ukrainian Avant-Garde Stage in the 1910s and 1920s.” Presenters include Prof. Mayhill Fowler (Stetson University), Prof. Lynn Garafola (Barnard College), Prof. Irena Makaryk (University of Ottawa) and Virlana Tkacz (Yara Arts Group). Myroslava Mudrak (professor emerita, The Ohio State University) will moderate the panel. Admission (includes reception and gallery access) is $15; $10 for museum members and seniors; $5 for students. Tickets are available online or at the door. The Ukrainian Museum is located at 222 E. Sixth St., between Second and Third avenues; phone number, 212-228-0110; website, www.ukrainianmuseum.org.

Sunday-Friday, June 14-19

KERHONKSON, N.Y.: The Ukrainian National Association hosts Seniors’ Week at the Soyuzivka Heritage Center. The program features fun and games, good food, a wine and cheese reception, a banquet (Thursday evening, June 18) and two prominent speakers daily. Cost for single occupancy begins at $590 per person. For reservations or information call Soyuzivka, 845-626-5641 (space is limited). For information call 973-292-9800, ext. 3071. Come one, come all. Guests are welcome.