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“Our Taras Is Gone!”

—Photo: David Stewart



The statue of Taras H. Shevchenko, part of the monument to the Bard of Ukraine at Taras H. Shevchenko Memorial Park in Oakville, Ontario, is no more. It was stolen for sale as scrap metal. At press time, only the head has been recovered, and one man has been charged with one count of possession of stolen property over \$5000.00. At last report, the investigation of the crime is continuing.

When Toronto AUUC Branch Executive Vice-President Mike Stefiuk called me at the office in late afternoon on December 30, I was sceptical. It did not seem at all probable that the huge statue of Taras Shevchenko had been stolen in Oakville.

When Mike told me that he had heard the information from AUUC Toronto Branch Recording Secretary Bill Hrynchak, who had heard it from Larry Soldat, who had seen the loss with Terry Danylevich while on a visit to Taras Shevchenko Memorial Park, my doubts were not dispelled.

The story was coming to me at several steps removed, and could have been distorted at each step. Or the young men could have been playing a practical joke.

Mike informed me, when I asked, that he had not been to the park, and was not planning to go that day.

I put the whole thing out of my mind, and got back to work.

In late evening, Bill Harysym, President of the Board of Directors of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation,

called me at home, confirming that the statue had been stolen. He had spoken directly with Terry Danylevich. The Halton Regional Police had been called, and Bill invited me to travel to the park for a 9:00 a.m. meeting with the police the next day, Sunday, December 31.

Bill missed a turn coming to pick me up the next morning, so we (Bill and I, as well as Shevchenko Museum Resident Executive member Lyudmyla Pogoryelov and her husband Yevgen) were a few (perhaps five) minutes late reaching the park.

We found Lillian Carrigan, who lived during the summer in one of the few remaining cottages at the park and looked after grounds, sitting in her car on the private road near the entrance to the park. Through rolled down windows, Lillian told us that she had been there for about a half hour, but had seen no police.

Concerned about destroying evidence, we parked on the shoulder of the road, and walked into the park, along the concrete path leading to the monument. The base of the statue, which had been obscured by trees, came into

view, and I could no longer doubt: the statue was indeed missing.

As we walked toward the monument, a local resident walking two large dogs, approached Lillian. Their warm greeting showed that they were well acquainted. David Stewart, who often visited the park with his animals, reported that he had been there in late afternoon on Wednesday, December 27, and believed that the statue had been there at that time.

Along the path, we could see what appeared to be vehicular tire tracks, and as we neared the massive stone base, we detected lengths of thick rope scattered on the ground. The tracks veered to the right, toward what had been the front of the statue. There were pronounced tire tracks in the grass at the front of the monument, in the alley leading south toward Highway 5 (Dundas Street), formed by trees, as well as a length of rope some distance from the monument. It was not possible to tell easily whether the vehicle which had made the tracks had veered off somewhere between the monument

(Continued on Page 3.)

WBA Officially Closed

In Letters Patent of Dissolution under the Insurance Companies Act, dated De-

ember 15, 2006, and signed by Minister of Finance James M. Flaherty, the Workers Benevolent Association of Canada “is dissolved as of December 31, 2006”, pursuant to section 570.08 of the Act.

As reported in the January, 2007, issue of the “UCH”, the Board of Directors of the WBA held its last meeting on November 11. The report directed its attention to the evening events, the banquet at which Board members and invited guests said their farewells to the WBA. Earlier on that same day, however, the Board had met to make the detailed preparations required for an orderly winding up of

the organization.

The WBA had to provide for the continuing management of Ivan Franko Manor. Though legally a separate entity, the IFM was linked to the WBA through the Board of Directors. The dissolution of the WBA Board of Directors would also have left IFM without a Board, so a resolution was passed to ensure the continuation of the institution.

In consultation with the National Executive Committee of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, the resolution passed by the WBA Board transferred the duty of naming the Board of IFM to the executive of the AUUC Winnipeg Branch, subject to ratification by the National Committee of the AUUC.

In the period between the dissolution of the WBA and Annual General Meeting of AUUC Winnipeg Branch, the resolution specified that the currently (that is, on November 11, 2006) existing NEC of the WBA remain as the acting Board of Directors of the

Second Man Charged

The *Toronto Star* reported on January 18 that a second Oakville man had been charged with offenses – possession of stolen property and breach of probation – following the theft of the Shevchenko statue in December.

Ivan Frank Manor.

A particularly difficult discussion concerned the fate of the WBA Scholarship Fund. On November 11, no resolution was found to the problem of finding a custodian for the fund. While not large, the fund has provided scholarships to WBA members and their children, with funds specifically donated for that purpose. The meeting agreed on a list of possible alternatives for the future of the fund.

The Ivan Franko Museum, which also came under the jurisdiction of the WBA, was reorganized in the same way as the Manor. The meeting passed a motion authorizing expenditure of \$60,000.00 by the Museum for upgrading, (Continued on Page 12.)

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**Submitted
as a
separate
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“Our Taras Is Gone”

— Photo: Wilfred Szczesny



Instead of a magnificent statue atop the massive granite base, this bleak view greeted visitors to Taras Shevchenko Memorial Park on December 31.

(Continued from Page 1.) and the highway. Nor did it seem that it had retraced its path.

Less pronounced tire tracks were detected at the back of the monument, where there was also a hole gouged in the sod near the granite base. More pieces of rope were there, and strewn all around.

On the ground beside the monument base, on the east side, farther from the private road, lay an artifact which seemed to be a short wooden ladder, leaning against what appeared to be a rubber or plastic barrel.

Propped up against the base on that same side was an aluminium ladder, which Lillian Carrigan identified as having been taken from her summer cabin on the park grounds. A length of steel chain with a hook, which was lying on the grass, had been stolen from the same place.

I took some pictures of the site. At the top of the stone base could be seen the boots of the statue of Taras Shevchenko, detached at about the

— Photos: Wilfred Szczesny



Above and below, some of the many lengths of rope strewn around the scene of the crime.



ankles. Not wanting to disturb any evidence, I did not climb the ladder to inspect what was left on the base.

At 9:30 a.m., the police had still not appeared. A call to the Halton police elicited the information that an officer was thought to be at the scene. Bill Harasym drove down to the highway to see if he could spot the patrol car, but returned a short time later to report that no police car had been spotted.

We set off for the police station, Bill, Yevgen and I riding in the Harasym car, while Lyudmyla joined Lillian in the lead car.

We arrived at the police station to find the building closed (it was Sunday, and New Year's Eve day, after all). Over an intercom, we were referred to another station, so off we drove again.

This second building was open. It was quickly established that the woman at reception was the person with whom Bill had spoken earlier. She insisted that a police officer had been at the park as arranged; we insisted that he had not.

Finally, Constable Al Bonner was contacted. It was established that he had not, in fact, been at the park, but had spoken by telephone again with Terry Danylevich. Constable Bonner was returning to the station soon, so we decided to wait for him.

Easy communications were established quickly, as Lillian was acquainted with Constable Bonner from the days when he was involved with cadets on the park grounds. Nevertheless, with five of us posing questions and making suggestions, it took a bit of time to get a clear picture of the situation.

Statement of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians

“Our Taras is gone.” Unbelievable as it seems, thieves severed the monument in Oakville (Palermo) at its ankles, and took the figure of Taras Shevchenko to be melted down for the value of the bronze. Fortunately, the owner of the smelter which was asked to melt the head notified police and the head was saved. A decision will be made in the near future as to displaying the head as part of a continuing tribute to our great Ukrainian Bard.

The unveiling of the monument of Taras Shevchenko on July 1, 1951, was the highlight of a National Festival of Ukrainian Song, Music and Dance celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada. The festival was presented by the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians in cooperation with the Workers Benevolent Association. The monument itself was a gift from the people of Soviet Ukraine. Its unveiling on a portion of the AUUC camp in Palermo, Ontario, was witnessed by over 45,000 people. In the 55 plus years since that time, many persons from all over the world have visited the park that was developed around the monument to pay tribute to Taras Shevchenko, poet, artist and humanist, who is recognized as such internationally and has been accorded special recognition by UNESCO.

Harsh words and uncivil thoughts spring to mind when thinking about the theft and its perpetrators. However, not words, nor thoughts, nor any action can change what has happened. Our solace is that we still have the works of Taras Shevchenko and we still have our museum in Toronto.

We will continue to honour our Bard, and the monument will continue to exist in our memories and in our hearts.

It was disappointing in this conversation to learn that Constable Bonner had not been to the scene of the crime, and he was not planning to go. It was his opinion that the scene would provide no useful physical evidence, television crime shows notwithstanding. For example, even if the tire tracks at the scene were good, and even if they could be matched with the tires of some vehicle uniquely, it would be almost impossible to establish who was driving during the commission of the crime. For another example, even if the criminals had not worn gloves, it was highly improbable that useful fingerprints could be found at the scene.

The possibility of finding useful physical evidence was further reduced by the effects of weather during the time which had elapsed.

For reasons which were not clear to me, Constable Bonner seemed to believe that the statue was probably stolen a week or more earlier than the date suggested by David Stewart.

Constable Bonner seemed to be of the strong opinion that the statue was stolen to be melted down for the bronze.

On the positive side, the police officer seemed to believe that the statue might still be recovered. The holiday season, the size of the artifact, and experience with other such thefts were among the factors supporting this view.

Constable Bonner indicated that his efforts would be directed mainly at recovering the statue, and suggested that we concentrate on generating press coverage, so that anyone with any information would be alerted that a crime had been committed and was being investigated.

It was agreed that I prepare a press release, and that Bill Harasym be the main spokes-

person.

Bill drove with Lyudmyla and Yevgen to the Shevchenko Museum in Toronto to send me their media list, among other reasons. (My office receives press releases, but is not well set up to issue them. It had been years since I last sent one.)

Lillian drove me back to the park. I wanted to take some additional pictures, unhampered by concern about destroying evidence.

After turning off the highway, we met a group of people (Terry Danylevich, Harold Kinsley, and David's wife Lisa Stewart) who were leaving. They had a fragment of the statue which had been left behind by the thieves. This fragment surprised me by its weight. The bronze was of varying thickness, from about one centimetre to, perhaps, as much as 3 or 4.

The group went on its way, while Lillian and I continued into the park.

At the monument, I climbed the aluminium ladder to take pictures of what was left of the boots at the top of the base. It was then I learned that the monument had in fact been cut off at the ankle, and it looked as though the last little bit, at the back of the right foot, was the only part the was separated by a break.

It was time for Lillian to drive me home, as she had volunteered to do, but first we drove by the cabins and sheds. They had all been broken into, and Lillian reported that copper parts had been stolen from the air conditioning units, as had copper electrical wiring used for lighting and sound during events at the park. Plywood panels on doors and windows had been smashed; jagged glass was everywhere.

Lillian told me that a storage trailer left behind by army cadets had been forcefully entered, and items from the

cabins used to establish a den in the trailer. In addition to theft of copper and bronze, the park was apparently the target of general vandalism.

At home, I had a bite to eat and gathered a few items which would be helpful in working on the press release.

Public transit in Mississauga is not famous for rapid travel, and on a Sunday it takes time to get around. It was mid-afternoon before I reached my office in Toronto.

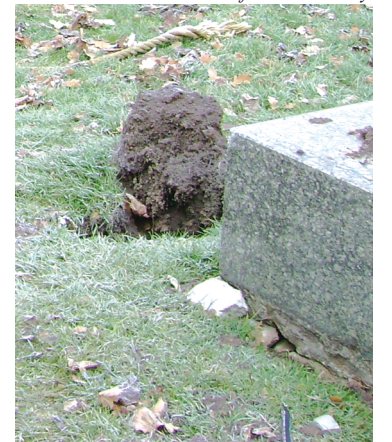
As I worked on the press release, searching for information about the statue, seeking and editing pictures for the information package, and writing the story, the phone started ringing. Members, friends and supporters of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians were calling to confirm the story they had heard: that the statue had been stolen.

Interruptions notwithstanding, by the end of the afternoon I had a package starting to go out by e-mail. As a follow-up I called *The Hamilton Spectator*, and spoke with Dana Brown, listed as the reported who was on call.

Ms Brown told me, though not in so many words, that I was not spreading news.

(Continued on Page 8.)

— Photo: Wilfred Szczesny



This hole gouged into the ground to the rear of the monument was the worst damage done to the sod around the base.

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN

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necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board.**About Price and Value****An Editorial by Wilfred Szczesny**

What was the value of the Shevchenko statue, stolen in Oakville and sold, at least in part, to a scrap metal dealer in Burlington?

To the thieves, it was just so much scrap metal, to be cut up and sold for a few dollars a pound, along with copper wire and pipe, or brass door handles, bronze plaques or what have you.

To the law, it is stolen property over \$5000.00. The same as a car, or a few diamond rings, a home entertainment centre, or any other of many possible stolen items.

To sculptors and others in related fields, it is a possible creative project priced upward from \$350,000.00.

To realtors and others involved in real estate, it is possibly a deal involving millions of dollars.

To the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation, to the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, to the tens of thousands whose lives have been touched by the Shevchenko monument and memorial park, to hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian Canadians and millions of Ukrainians around the world, it was priceless, and its destruction is an irredeemable loss.

There have been many suggestions for ways to replace the irreplaceable. Formally, a statue is replaceable, including a statue of Taras Shevchenko — pick from the 600 already in existence, or commission a new one. There are many ways to pay for a statue.

This statue, however, is not replaceable.

Is there a sculptor able to create a new first Taras Shevchenko monument in the Americas? Not just Canada, or North America, but all of the Americas!

Can another statue of Shevchenko, who was to be found in the hearts and minds, and among the meagre possessions, of the earliest Ukrainian settlers, be unveiled by a son of one of the first two officially recorded Ukrainian immigrants to Canada?

Is there enough money in the world to attach to a new statue all the memories formed through the decades — of family and friends, of good times and joyful celebrations, of private moments and grand public events — which are associated with the original statue?

It is far too early now, while people are just coming to terms with the loss, to predict what the future will bring. What can already be asserted with profound sadness, however, is that the loss of cultural, historical and emotional values is permanent.

For a fistful of silver, an important symbol of human heritage was reduced callously to a pile of scrap metal.

COMMENTARY**In the Name of Freedom and Democracy**

“They hate our freedom,” says America’s President Bush, as he sets out to spread democracy around the world.

“They hate our freedom,” echoes Canada’s Prime Minister Harper as he demonstrates his solidarity with its beleaguered southern neighbour.

One would hope that men who send their troops half way around the world to wreak death and destruction in the cause of promoting freedom and democracy, had some commitment to these ideals, that they would apply them in their own dealings.

As eager as they are to prescribe freedom and democracy abroad, they take that same medicine at home only when forced to swallow it.

For example, Maher Arar remains on the US no-fly list, even though his Syrian torturers have judged him innocent, and a Canadian inquiry has cleared him. US Attorney-General Alberto Gonzales has promised to share with legislators — and maybe with the public — the reasons for the continued listing. Look for something heavily censored.

Alberto Gonzales is the same Attorney-General who redefined torture to exclude anything that did not kill the subject or, at least, cause permanent serious injuries. Any administration truly dedicated to freedom and democracy

would long ago have packed him away — probably to a prison to serve time for crimes against humanity. President Bush thinks he’s great.

But then, George Bush thinks that illegal wire taps are an excellent addition to the toolkit of freedom. Only under the direct threat posed by a hostile Congress has he agreed to end this criminal activity — or so he says. As the *Globe and Mail* wrote about the Bush administration in an editorial, “But they have yet to see the error of their ways.”

Another tool in the anti-terrorist kit is kangaroo courts that will allow hearsay evidence and statements made under torture in trials which could result in death penalties. These are conditions which the Bush administration considers to be “affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized people.”

Some 400 detainees continue years-long detention at Guantanamo prison camp. Of these, 60-80 could eventually be charged.

Oh, and it’s okay for a Pentagon official to call for corporate clients to boycott law firms who represent these and other suspects. Though the Defence Department disavowed the statements, there is no other evidence that the US administration believes

that defence counsel continue to have a legitimate role in trials. Not to mention their attitude on *habeas corpus*.

How does Canada fit in?

Well, having thrown Maher Arar to the US wolves, the Canadian spy guys then collaborated with his torturers after he was rendered to Syria. The government pretended it did not know that he was being tortured (just as did the Americans). They set out on a vilification campaign, and when Arar was found not guilty, allowed the main man responsible to resign rather than taking other action. Most important, there is no evidence that the basic attitudes and procedures have changed in dealing with American officials.

Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, in the US to talk with Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff, was so pleased to hear that the Arar file would be less secret.

On the other hand, neither Stockwell Day nor Stephen Harper is reported to have objected much to extraterritorial application of American law by Canadian banks who refused certain clients American dollar accounts, or to restrictions (tighter than restrictions in the US) on Canadians with dual citizenship working on certain US contracts. Day said that he would discuss the matter with Chertoff, but he avoided saying even that he would energetically oppose these applications of American law.

Further, Canada remains one of the few major Western countries not to have called for shutting down the Guantanamo facility.

Still more, neither Day nor Harper, both great supporters of freedom and democracy, seems to have a problem with an undercover police agent deliberately leading a group of young talkers into action, providing them with training and other encouragement (called “whipping them up”?) until the police had grounds to arrest them for conspiracy. Entrapment — another fine democratic tool from the anti-terrorist kit in defence of freedom. — Sz

From Our Readers

I’m grateful to Myron Shatulsky for his outstanding articles, conveying his knowledgeable views on past and present politics and history, particularly on Ukraine and on muddled up Bush’s policies.

Also, I wish to thank Wilf Szczesny for his editorials pertaining to Canada, for bringing into clear perspective our living problems under Harper’s leadership and his Conservative buddies with their false and twisted facts.

I just love our little paper — leaves me clear headed and satisfied.

I wish you both, your fami-

lies and your staff, happy holidays and very good health with the coming of the new year

Mary Danilevitch
Thunder Bay ON

* * *

This is a belated thank-you for a job well-done — I mean the obituary about George in the April, 2006, issue of the “Herald”.

You summarized so well that, in short, it tells the whole story of our married life.

Thanks again, and best wishes with your work.

Magda Burechailo
Wakaw SK

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Edmonton AUUC, Trembita Ensemble
www.ukrainiancentre-edm.ca

Regina AUUC, Poltava Ensemble
<http://www.poltava.ca/>

Taras Shevchenko Museum:
www.infoukes.com/shevchenkomuseum

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Ukrainian News Briefs Selected by George Borusiewich

Capitalism at Work

Ukraine, one of Europe's poorest countries, is experiencing an unlikely property boom that has delighted developers but left ordinary Ukrainians out in the cold.

Some properties have rocketed in value by 600% in the past three years, and prices in Kyiv rose by up to 25% in the last two months of 2006 alone. Young Ukrainians and renters now find themselves shut out of the market.

Small flats in Kyiv city centre are going for US\$400,000.

Yet average salaries range from only US\$150 to US\$350 per month.

"I'm young and I rent an apartment and make pretty good money, but I can't even afford to get a mortgage," said Anna. She added, "Mortgage rates are high, as high as 12%. Even foreigners are surprised by how expensive it has become here."

To add insult to injury, many of the buyers are foreigners out to make a fast buck by buying and reselling quickly.

The trigger for Ukraine's property boom appears to have been the country's pro-western "Orange Revolution" in 2004. The new president, Viktor Yushchenko, abolished visa requirements for European Union and American citizens, and let it be known that his country was open for business.

Government buildings in Kyiv are frequently picketed by people angry about poor living conditions. "The politicians promise that something will change, but nothing ever does," said Anna.

Referendum on NATO

During the past four years (and maybe longer), every single poll published in Ukraine has stated that the people of Ukraine overwhelmingly, by 3-to-1 to 4-to-1 ratios, reject membership in the American NATO military alliance.

This has not deterred American-supported President Viktor Yushchenko from setting NATO membership as one of the key goals of his presidency.

In an effort to allow the will of the people to prevail, a coalition of Ukrainian political parties (including Communists and Socialists) spearheaded a campaign during the past two years to collect a minimum of 3 million signatures requesting an official referendum on NATO membership. This campaign concluded with over 4.5 million signatures having been collected.

On December 29, 2006,

Ukraine's Central Election Commission (CEC) completed their examination, and reported that 4.43 million signatures had been validated (well above the 3 million required by the constitution to initiate a referendum).

Political experts predict that Yushchenko will ignore his constitutional obligations, and allow the referendum decree to gather dust on his desk.

Weapons Sales

The Buddhist island nation of Sri Lanka is located about 31 kilometres south of India. It is a country of about 20 million people.

Since 1983, Sri Lanka has been involved in a bloody civil war between the Sinhalese-dominated government and the Tamils, who demand an independent state in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

On December 27, 2006, Sri Lanka purchased another four second-hand MIG-27 fighter-bombers from Ukraine. The purchase price was about US\$2.5 million each. This was the second MIG-27 purchase from Ukraine, the first having taken place in 2000 when six MIG-27s, along with a MIG-23, were purchased.

The 20-ton MIG-27 is a ground attack weapon, carrying a 30 mm cannon (with 300 shells) and four tons of bombs.

Sri Lanka has been using the MIG-27's to attack the independence-seeking Tamils.

Chess Battle

India's chess prodigy Parimarjan Negi took on Kateryna Lahno of Ukraine in a "Battle of the Grandmasters" in Delhi (India) recently.

The battle of the sexes was first heard way back in 1973 when Ms Billie Jean King and Mr. Bobby Riggs faced each other in a tennis match. More than 30 years later, it was recreated in Delhi when the youngest male Grandmaster in the world, Parimarjan Negi, took on the youngest female Grandmaster, Kateryna Lahno, in a week-long battle.

Before the start of the competition, the money was on Negi, but his shy female opponent stole the show by battling the odds and proving to be the better player. The quiet 16-year-old beat her opponent 11-7.

"Yes I am very tired but I am very happy. It was very tough for me to win this match. Parimarjan played very well. My luck was better," said Kateryna after the match.

"Yes playing a man is difficult. I need to have good concentration," she added.

Order Of Lenin

Last month, both Ukraine and Russia marked the birth centenary of the legendary Ukrainian-born Soviet spacecraft designer Sergey Korolyov.

Born in Zhytomyr (Ukraine) on December 30, 1906, Korolyov spent parts of his youth in Odessa, and then in Kyiv. In 1930, he became interested in liquid rocket engines, and in 1931 helped establish one of the earliest centres for rocket development in the USSR.

By the end of the Second World War he had been promoted to the position of chief designer of long-range missiles. Several years later, he was appointed head Soviet rocket engineer and designer.

It was while Korolyov held this title that he led the Soviet Union in its win over the United States in the space race, first by launching the world's first satellite (Sputnik) in 1957, and then by launching the world's first man in space (Yuri Gagarin) in 1961.

In recognition of the centenary, Russia last month issued a commemorative medal and, on January 18, launched a cargo spacecraft named after Korolyov.

Take Me To Cuba

The flow of tourists from Ukraine to Cuba doubled in 2006 compared to 2005.

In a meeting with 125 Ukrainian tour operators in Havana, the Cuban ambassador to Ukraine presented "Certificates of Recognition" to the four most successful companies in sending travellers to Cuba. The representatives of the Ukrainian tourist companies said there has been a boom in interest in Cuba as a result of the Tourism Spring Fair in Kyiv held last March.

Some companies are studying the possibility of establishing a direct flight to Cuba, which would further boost the number of Ukrainian visitors to the island.

From The Heart

President Viktor Yushchenko's wife, Kateryna, managed to raise UAH 250 million for the construction of a children's hospital in a recent TV marathon.

Fifteen TV channels participated in the marathon, and broadcast the appeal for funds 3,745 times without charge. Over 8 million viewers watched the event.

After the campaign, the First Lady thanked Ukraine's mass media for their assist-

ance. The TV marathon, she said, broke many records: it was watched by a record number of viewers, televised by a record number of channels, and helped raise a record sum.

Added Kateryna, "This project showed that we can unite for the sake of children's health."

The hospital, to be built in Kyiv, will be named Children's Hospital of the Future. The facility will have 250 beds, a diagnostic department, a radiology complex, and a park with playgrounds.

Construction of the structure is to begin in 2007.

"Politician of the Year"

According to a poll conducted a few weeks ago, Viktor Yanukovich, Prime Minister of Ukraine, is Ukraine's "Politician of the Year 2006."

The Razumkov Centre, a Kyiv-based, American-funded polling organization, reported that 26% of respondents named Yanukovich as their choice for the title. Second place was given to Yulia Tymoshenko with 19.2%, while third place went to President Viktor Yushchenko with 8.6%.

Interestingly, every tenth Ukrainian thinks that the country has no political leader at all.

Constitutional Warfare

In a major blow to Viktor Yushchenko (Ukraine's pro-American president and Orange Revolution co-leader), the country's parliament voted on January 12 to transfer much of the president's remaining authority to the government headed by his anti-Orange rival, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.

The power of the president had already been considerably diminished by changes to the Ukrainian constitution effective January 1, 2006. The bill enabling the further erosion of his authority was passed by parliament on December 21, 2006, but was subsequently vetoed by the president.

To over-ride a presidential veto requires a two-thirds majority vote, and this was accomplished on January 12 when former Orange Revolution co-leader Yulia Tymoshenko joined forces with the Communists, Socialists, and Yanukovich's Party of Regions to score a total vote of 366 in the 450-seat parliament.

Members of the president's Our Ukraine party stormed out of parliament after the vote.

Parliament, rather than the president, is now Ukraine's supreme body.

"Love In A Box"

More than 48,000 children who are living in poverty have been helped by this year's Love in a Box campaign, run by Mustard Seed, a charity organization in the small town of Eastbourne in England.

Schoolchildren from the town have donated shoe boxes full of goods which have brought joy to some of the most deprived children in Europe.

The shoe boxes were stuffed with essentials such as clothes, shoes, blankets, and toothbrushes. They also contained little treats such as candy or a cuddly toy.

About 13,000 of the boxes were sent to Ukraine, just in time for Christmas. The rest of the boxes were sent to children in Romania, Bosnia, and Croatia.

Important Events 2006

According to a poll conducted by the Kyiv-based Razumkov Research Centre, citizens of Ukraine consider the March 2006 parliamentary elections the main political event of the year.

Almost 25% of respondents regard the election battle as the main event of 2006. The second most important event (11%) was the appointment of Viktor Yanukovich to the post of Prime Minister of Ukraine.

Third place (8%) was given to the formation of the anti-crisis coalition in parliament (Communists, Socialists, and Yanukovich's party).

Recognition of *holodomor* was deemed important by 2.2% of people in Ukraine (tied at 2.2% of Ukrainians who thought that price increases were important).

Catching Up To Socialism

After 15 years of capitalism/independence, Ukrainian industrial output has finally struggled back up to the level attained by Soviet Ukraine.

"We finally reached the level of 1990 industrial production in 2006," announced Ukrainian Finance Minister Mykola Azarov last month.

Agricultural output was still only 63% of 1990 levels, he added.

He could have also added that the standard-of-living of the average Ukrainian is still below that which he enjoyed in Soviet Ukraine.

**Ukrainian
Page
Submitted
Separately**

**Ukrainian
Page
Submitted
Separately**

—Photo: Wilfred Szczesny

“Our Taras Is Gone”

(Continued from Page 3.)

What she did say was that she was already working on the story, based on information provided by the police. What she wanted was a quotation to use to reflect the reaction of the Ukrainian community.

I referred her to Bill Harasym. A short time later, she called to verify the phone number that I had given her, as she was unable to get through. I told her to keep trying, as the Bill was probably fielding calls from community members.

Satisfied that there was nothing else to be done by me, I went home for what was left of New Year's Eve

Later, speaking to Bill, I learned that Ms Brown eventually got through. She had difficulty because Bill had been giving a long interview to the *Toronto Star*.

On New Year's Day, the *Toronto Star*, a morning paper, had coverage of the theft, with a picture teaser on the front page, and a story with two pictures on pages 1 and 3. One of those pictures was of Lillian Carrigan up that famous aluminium ladder, taken in daylight by “Star” staff report Jim Wilkes — long before I had reached my office to write a release!

As I learned later, when Bill Harasym learned from



At the top of the base, this was all that remained of the monument, after 55 1/2 years.

Terry Danylewich, back on Saturday, December 30, that the statue had been stolen, he informed a number of other people, among them Vice-President of the Museum Board Andrew Gregorovich, who had immediately notified print media, radio and television stations, and even a couple of press agencies. By Sunday afternoon, many of the of the media were at the park taking their own pictures, and talking to people who were at hand.

As was evident from some of the pictures taken that afternoon, the police also decided to visit the site.

On Tuesday, January 2, Sharon McCulla called to say that she had seen reports on January 1 on all television stations in the area except CTV, including interviews with Bill

Harasym, Lillian Carrigan, Mary Wasylenky, and others. In addition, local resident Harold Kinsley, Terry Danylewich, and others were cited in print. The news had spread as far as British Columbia, and coverage in the southern Ontario media was truly impressive. At my office I got a call from Mary Skambara, informing me that she had received an inquiry from Ukraine (I referred her to Lyudmyla Pogoryelov at the Shevchenko Museum.)

In the afternoon of January 2, I was invited to attend the meeting of the Resident Executive of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park foundation. Among others sitting in on the meeting was *National Post* reporter Laura Hendrick, who had over 21 inches in that

morning's issue of the “Post”. (The story was topped by a photo by Tyler Anderson, covering five columns.) Andrew Gregorovich was late for the meeting because of his second radio interview of the day, Lyudmyla had been fielding calls from Ukraine, and Bill Harasym was using the meeting as a break from all his media interviews.

The bombshell dropped by George Borusiewich, Recording Secretary of the Resident Executive, was that the head of the statue had been located in a Burlington metal recycling business. Two men were being questioned.

On January 3, the papers were giving the details.

Apparently metal recycler Gary Thomson of Burlington had bought the head of the statue, and a few other pieces, on December 12, from men who claimed to be acting on behalf of Oakville in disposing of the statue. Because the head was a unique piece, it was not immediately melted down, but put in a corner as a conversation piece.

When he read of the theft on January 2, Mr. Thomson called the police. While detectives were questioning employees, a car drove up. Inside it were men whom the employees identified as the sellers.

After an unsuccessful effort to escape, the two men were caught. After questioning, one of the two was released. The other man, a 36-

year-old Oakville resident, was charged with one count of possession of stolen property over \$5000.00.

On Sunday, January 14, the Toronto Branch of the AUUC transformed its Branch meeting into an open forum to discuss the theft.

The focus of attention at the meeting hall in the AUUC Cultural Centre was the recovered head of the statue, brought over from its current location at the Museum. The precarious recent history of this item was clear from the slit, almost imperceptible from most angles, which attested to an aborted effort to cut the head into pieces.

Reporting on the meeting was a crew from CHTV of Hamilton, which aired coverage in news programs later that same day.

Not present at the meeting was representation from police investigators. In a fax read by Bill Harasym, the explanation given was that the case was still under investigation. The police, it was indicated, would be pleased to appear when the investigation was finished.

After a panel consisting of Bill Harasym, Andrew Gregorovich, and Lillian Carrigan had made their presentations, George Borusiewich, Branch President and Museum Board Recording Secretary, invited some fifty people in attendance to ask questions or make comments.

Many of those present took advantage of the opportunity to speak. In many ways, the afternoon was cloaked in the aura of those memorial meeting at which grieving survivors celebrate the life of a deceased friend or family member.

Often the speakers were overcome with emotion, and had difficulty completing their remarks. Many spoke about a sense of tragic loss, and their words reverberated with grief; they recalled personal incidents and public events; they presented their mental images of family and friends tied to the monument; they evoked the historical and cultural values of this unique artifact. They presented a wide range of suggestions about how to proceed.

The meeting ended, and those who had assembled went our various ways. In the coming days and weeks — even months — we will continue to mourn. There will be a continuing search for answers to the unanswered questions about the crime and its causes, and various manifestations of denial. There will be anger directed at the perpetrators and, justly or not, at others. There will be more sorrow and, perhaps, more tears. In time, there will be acceptance and calm, and then it will be appropriate to chart the way forward.

— W. S.

—Wilfred Szczesny

Toronto Meeting Considers The Theft

—Photo: Wilfred Szczesny



The uniqueness of the piece, and the tremendous media publicity after the theft was discovered, led to the recovery of the head of the statue from a Burlington scrap metal dealer who phoned the police. After examining the artifact, police released it to the Museum, and it was displayed at the meeting on January 14.

On Sunday, January 14, 2007, the Toronto Branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians gathered close to 60 people, among them a representative of the Consulate General of Ukraine in Toronto, to discuss the theft in December, 2006, of the statue of Taras Shevchenko from Taras H. Shevchenko Memorial Park in Oakville, Ontario.

In the centre of the room was the head from the monument, the only part of the statue which had been saved at the time of the meeting. At the time of this writing, not many people retain any hope that more will be salvaged.

The head bore evidence that a start had been made on cutting the head into pieces, but for some unknown reason the cut was not completed. Thus it sat on the coffee table as one 75-80 kilogram piece.

George Borusiewich presided over the meeting, which was originally planned as a regular meeting of the Toronto AUUC Branch.

The first speaker was Bill Harasym, President of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation, who presented a

chronology related to the theft from the time that it was reported to him by phone by Terry Danylewich. Bill concluded by noting that the fate of the park was not certain at this time; the monument can be replaced, but its history can not.

Lillian Carrigan, park superintendent, spoke next. She, too, gave a time line, and spoke about her feelings concerning the loss of the statue. She spoke highly of the energetic efforts of the police.

In his remarks, Andrew Gregorovich indicated that he had started contacting the media as soon as he had learned the news from Bill Harasym, around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 30. In the days following, the count of his media appearances grew to about 125 of the 1000 or more reported on the internet. Andrew spoke, also, of the cultural and historical significance of both Taras Shevchenko and the statue.

Many emotional speeches by audience members followed the presentations by the panel. There were many and varied suggestions about the way forward. Several speakers noted the importance of the widespread media coverage in recovering the head.

Stella Oijorden



Stella Oijorden was born on October 8, 1921, and died on December 15, 2006.

At the memorial meeting held on December 21, Bill Stanchuk delivered the eulogy.

He noted that Stella's parents Alex and Nettie Agnot ensured her involvement with the mandolin, and later the violin, from her childhood. Thus, Stella got most of her musical training in the late 1920s and early '30s at the Fort William Ukrainian Labour Temple of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association. (Fort William and Port Arthur were later combined to form Thunder Bay.)

From about 1934 and into the '40s, Stella and many other orchestra members travelled on weekends and holidays in an old home-made bus to put on concerts at remote rural halls. That meant playing in the orchestra, then changing costumes (while someone recited a poem or entertained the audience with a song) to perform dances, and rounding out the program with some acrobatics.

In the years 1950 to 1970, Stella was in the Lakehead Mandolin Orchestra that won many first-class honours at the Northwestern Music Festivals.

The Orchestra was invited to perform at Expo 67 in Montreal, the only performers from Thunder Bay to participate.

Stella taught mandolin to children and adults to augment the LMO.

It was about this time that Stella took up the violin, eventually becoming involved for a number of years with the Lakehead Symphony Orches-

tra, conducted by Charles Bateman and Boris Brott. She was in the orchestra that played at the opening of the Summer Games in Thunder Bay in 1981.

Stella will always be remembered for her passion for playing, entertaining and making the joy of music available to many, many people.

Stella was predeceased by her parents, her sisters Sophia Ward of Thunder Bay and Anne Lapchuk of Regina, and her brother Walter Agnot of Thunder Bay.

She is lovingly remembered by her sister Jean Barnes of Thunder Bay, her daughters Wendy and Nancy, their families, and friends everywhere.

John Bokla



John Bokla was born in Saskatchewan on April 24, 1922. He died peacefully on Tuesday, January 9, 2007, in Mississauga's Trillium Hospital.

John lived a full and eventful life.

He was a proud World War Two veteran, serving in the navy from 1943 to 1946.

He was a dedicated member of Alcoholics Anonymous, and praised its policies often.

He was an enthusiast of the Toronto Thoroughbred Racing Club.

He was a talented tenor whose career path included success as a night-club entertainer.

He was a member of the Don Cossack Choir in 1950 to 1952, with Serge Jaroff.

His Ukrainian heritage was important to him, and for many years he was a soloist

with the Shevchenko Male Chorus of Toronto. His credits include leading roles in operettas, and solo appearances at national festivals of song, music and dance staged by the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

A throat operation left him thinking that he would never sing again — and for about fifteen years he didn't.

A few years ago, John decided to come back. He worked very hard at regaining control of his voice, and made remarkable progress.

He made his public comeback debut with the Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra in a concert just a few years ago. He began to sing at events like birthday parties and memorial meetings, and particularly loved to perform "Blue Bird of Happiness".

His loyalty, however, remained with the Welland orchestra, until the illness which claimed his life overcame him. He had only had time to appear in a few concerts, but his contribution was highly appreciated. Conductor Rudy Wasylenky, informed the orchestra of the loss with an emotion-charged, "We're going to miss him."

Also missing him are his wife Menka; his children John (Barbara), Michael (Louise) and Beverley (Will); eight grandchildren; brother Steve (Betty) and sister Marie Bowyer (Bruce); sister-in-law Marylou Stavroff; many nieces and nephews; and a great many friends.



JOIN US!

Join us for a new season of AUUC activities! Each Branch has a unique schedule of events and activities. To discover what we have to offer, contact the AUUC in your area:

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National Executive Committee AUUC
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805 East Pender Street
Vancouver BC V6A 1V9
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Who, What, When, Where

Toronto — On Sunday, February 4, at 12:30 p.m., at the AUUC Cultural Centre, 1604 Bloor Street West, the Toronto Branch of the AUUC will host a banquet celebrating Anne Krane's 90 birthday. Seating is very limited, and few tickets, at \$50.00, remain. Contact Mike Stefiuk at (905) 275-7299 for more information.

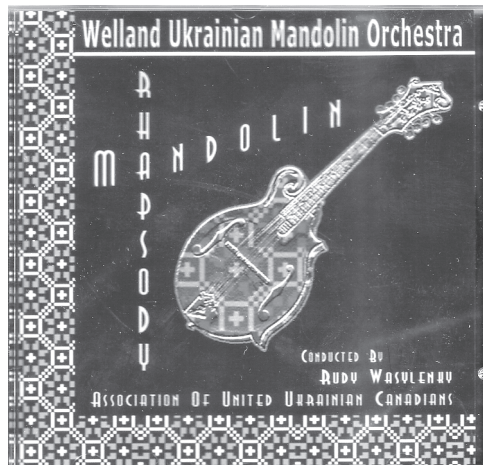
Toronto — Cafe Cuba and AUUC Toronto Branch will present the CBC TV documentary *Children of Chernobyl* at the AUUC Cultural Centre, 1604 Bloor Street West, starting at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, February 25. Admission: \$10.00. For more information, contact CCFA Toronto at 416-410-8254.

Readers of the *Ukrainian Canadian Herald* are invited to submit items of interest to the progressive Ukrainian Canadian community for free listing in this column. The deadline for material is the 10th of the month preceding the month of publication.

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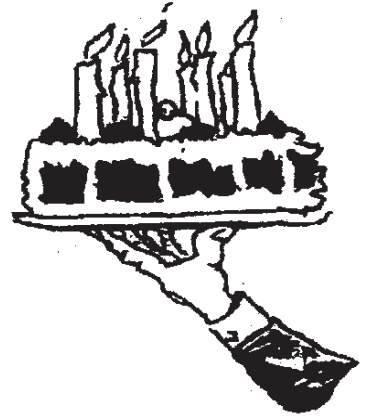
Call Clara at 905-732-4716
or write to: Ukrainian Labour Temple
342 Ontario Road
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Sustaining Fund Donations

WBA Branch #11, Thunder Bay ON.....	\$1000.00
AUUC Sudbury Branch, Sudbury ON	
<i>In memory of two loved members of Branch 40, Taras Sawchuk and Helen Niemi, who died in 2006</i>	
	200.00
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Marie & Bill Harasym, Toronto ON	100.00
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Mary Rydz, Burlington ON	70.00
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<i>We wish you all the very best in the coming year</i>	
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AUUC Edmonton Seniors Club, Edmonton AB	50.00
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<i>In memory of Stella Oijorden</i>	
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WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THESE CONTRIBUTIONS AND THANK THE DONORS FOR THEIR GENEROSITY. IF YOUR DONATION HAS NOT APPEARED ON THE PAGES OF THE "UCH", WATCH FOR IT IN FUTURE ISSUES.

Happy Birthday, Friends



The Edmonton AUUC Senior Citizens' Club wishes a happy birthday to the celebrants of February:

David Andony
Ann Cotek
Olga Rachel Dorish
Olga Dutchak
Kay Gill
Harry Strynadka

May you have good health, happiness and a daily sense of accomplishment as you go through life.

The Toronto Senior Citizens Club extends best birthday wishes to February celebrant:

Mary Saik

May good health and happiness be yours in the coming year!

The Vancouver Seniors Club wishes the best of health and happiness in the coming year to February celebrants:

Patricia Dzatko
Dianna Kleparchuk
Leona Levchuk
Dora Stewart

Enjoy your day with family and friends!

The Welland Shevchenko Seniors extend a happy birthday wish to February celebrants:

Joy Edwards
Olga Katrynyuk
Christine Lambert
Martha Maksymiuk
Steve Tirone
Olga Young
Bill Zadwirny

May the coming year bring you all the best in health and happiness!

JoKe TiMe

After waking from a nap, a young woman told her husband, "I just dreamed that you gave me a pearl necklace for Valentine's Day. What do you think it means?"

"You'll know tonight," he said. That evening, he came home with a small package for his wife. With a squeal of delight, she opened it — only to find a book called *The Meaning of Dreams*.



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Or AUUC Branches in Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Toronto, Vancouver Welland, Winnipeg.

WBA Closed

(Continued from Page 1.) maintenance and expansion, and for the creation of a WBA Historical Exhibit. Rudiger Hedrich was appointed supervisor of the display.

The concept of a historical exhibition was evolved as an alternative to the idea of preparing and publishing an updated history of the WBA.

Any monies remaining in the WBA after costs of dissolution and all other obligations had been defrayed were to be transferred to the Ivan Franko Museum to cover expenditures for the WBA historical display.

Ownership of the building housing the WBA, with all its contents, was transferred to the AUUC earlier.

The meeting of the Board included an 11:00 a.m. Remembrance Day observation.

In December, the National Executive Committee of the WBA met for final closure.