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New Acts of Vandalism



Vandalism continues to be a problem at Taras H. Shevchenko Memorial Park in Oakville, Ontario. The most recent instance was forced entry into the cabin shown above through a hole smashed into a wall, and into another cottage. Inside the cabins, the vandals pursued an orgy of destruction, smashing the contents, including appliances like refrigerators.

Following discovery of this latest attack on the property, the Resident Executive of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation announced the cancellation of the Canada Day picnic, because of concerns about the safety of anyone who might be attacked while working on preparing the grounds.

Discussion on Early Childhood Education

“Canada ranks last among developed nations in spending on early childhood development.” The Council on Early Childhood Development says that 1% of the GDP, about \$10 billion, would more than cover the cost of development centres designed to give every child the opportunity to develop fully, and provide parents with the tools and skills they need.

According to Dr. Fraser Mustard, brain development in the early years affects everything, from behavioural to

mental and physical health. To attain a highly competent population with limited behaviour problems and no violence, investment in early childhood development is mandatory.

Dr. Mustard’s development centres would combine play-based preschool programs, parenting help, social service referrals and daycare. Among other things, these centres would help eliminate the low literacy levels of 42% of Ontario’s population, which are a definite handicap in a high-tech, knowledge-based economy.

Critics question the usefulness of such centres, and are particularly unhappy with the suggestion that most parents need help in parenting.

While they have a point when they say that such centres are not a panacea, much of their criticism arises from the “family values” approach against social solutions to social problems.

Early childhood development programs will not eliminate poverty, but they would be a start toward better care for our children.

Confession as Proof of Guilt

A recent story in *The New York Times* (Pressed by Police, Even Innocent Confess in Japan, May 11, 2007) makes some interesting points about coerced confessions as a reliable source of truth.

The article cites numerous examples of innocent people confessing to various crimes, implicating other innocent people, becoming ill or attempting suicide as a result of questioning methods used by police.

One astonishing thing is that the Japanese interrogations are, mostly, positively benign

compared to the methods approved by American officials in questioning terrorism suspects. No waterboarding, no electrical shocks, no freezing, no deafening noise, no physical abuse, as such, at all. At least, not in the cases reported in the article.

The main technique seems to be prolonged interrogation sessions, up to 17 hours a day, with heavy psychological and moral pressure. The welfare of the “suspect’s” family is invoked. Claims are made that co-accused have all confessed. Very limited, if any,

contact with the outside world is allowed. Constant shouted threats in an atmosphere suggesting that the suspect’s situation is hopeless.

All of this can legally go on for up to 23 days, but an instance is given of one suspect who did not confess and was held for 395 days, another in the same case held for 273 days, and a third for 186 days.

Because confessions have been considered best evidence, there is usually no effort to establish guilt or innocence by other evidence. Because guilt is assumed once there is a confession, the conviction rate in criminal cases in Japan is 99.8%.

Recently some of those convictions have been reconsidered and reversed, either because the real culprit in a crime has been found, or because the degree of coercion used to get a confession without substantiating evidence has been just too blatant.

All of this reality notwithstanding, there are still many people who believe that torture is a good way to establish the guilt of a suspect and to get the names of accomplices.

Too many of those people are in the American administration of President Bush. Too many of them, too, are in police, military and security forces around the world, including Canada.

Foreign Ownership a Growing Concern

Foreign ownership is becoming an increasing hot topic of discussion in the public arena. This is a discussion which waxes and wanes, but never ceases. It is a discussion between those, on the one hand, who believe that the economy should be there to serve society and those, on the other, who believe that society should be there to serve the economy.

At the moment, an increasing number of senior corporate executives are expressing concern about the consequences of selling strategic Canadian industries to foreign buyers. These are “men who believe in liberalized trade, know about mergers and acquisitions and understand global finance” and “know more about making money, creating jobs and preserving shareholder value than most members of (Stephen Harper’s) government” as Carol Goar wrote in *The Toronto Star* on May 16.

They are also men who recognize that regulation of the markets is desirable to avoid the excesses whether economic (boom and bust cycles) or social (like the growing income gap and school fund raising for supplies, for example) of unfettered capitalism.

These men and their opinions are opposed by another group who say that free markets will produce the greatest good for the greatest number, with the greatest efficiency. Ignoring hundreds of years of experience, they insist that the magical “invisible hand” of the

market will lead to the best in the best of all possible worlds.

Why does it matter who owns what? Because, as a rule, the owner decides what happens to an asset, and the “freer” the market the more this is true.

The owner of a mine can decide to close it or keep it running, too make it a clean and relatively safe operation or turn it into a death trap, and so on — unless regulations restrict those rights of ownership. In recent decades, the trend has been to remove regulations, and the result has been so bad that there is emerging a trend to restore and enforce the regulations.

In a country, the dominant group of owners will decide not only the disposition of their own assets, but also the social agenda. In recent decades, dominance has rested with a group most interested in the greatest freedom in managing of their holdings (free trade markets), the lowest levels of contributing to general welfare (lower corporate and profit taxes, reduced social programs), and least concern for good corporate citizenship (opposition to environmental programs).

The problem with the approach by this group is even more serious when ownership is not for production, but for investment, buying and selling ownership, rather than products, is the typical economic activity. It is a circumstance when the freedom of money to move is the only freedom thought important.

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Mary Semkuley Celebrates 95!



Mary Semkuley, who was born on May 6, 1912, celebrated her 95th birthday in Calgary on April 29, with family and friends, including daughter-in-law Elaine.

*You must be rich with memories
That 95 years have brought,
And wise with all the lessons
That 95 years have taught.
As you celebrate your birthday
On this very special day,
You're warmly wished more happiness
Than words could ever say.*

* * *

April 29, 2007 was a wonderful day for AUUC Calgary Branch. One of its members, Mary Semkuley, my mother-in-law, celebrated her 95th birthday.

95 years – what an age! About 70 years out of this 95 were devoted to the Ukrainian Cultural Centre in Calgary. That is why it was not only the family celebration, but also a big event for all the Ukrainians in our Cultural Centre.

People from Calgary and Edmonton arrived at about 1:30 p.m. and took their seats at the holiday-set tables. Shortly, MC Taras Semkuley opened the celebration by greeting the guests and inviting his *Baba* to join the party. Mary Semkuley, escorted by her two sons, Dr. Myron and Walter Semkuley, entered the hall under a storm of warm applause. In keeping with the old Ukrainian tradition, she was presented with bread and salt on an embroidered towel.

The party began with a short history of my mother-in-law's life. Andrea Semkuley prepared an interesting biography of her *Baba*:

"Mary Semkuley was born on May 6, 1912 in the Ukrainian village of Tsapivtsi, which was part of Austro-Hungary at that time. She was the youngest of 5 children born to

Dochka (Mekhaliuk) and Ivan Kuryluk. Like all Ukrainian families at that time, they were very poor, living in a small house made of logs, sealed and covered with mud, white-washed inside and outside. It was covered with a thatched roof of rye-straw.

"When *Baba* was three years old, her father was taken away to fight for the Kaiser. His last words addressed to his wife were: 'Dochka, please be gentle with Maria, as she is our last child; we will not have any more.'

"He was never seen again. "As *Baba* approached her school age, she desperately wanted to go to school.

"She attended school for three years. In winter she would wear her sister's or mother's boots and clothes to school. She never had proper school supplies, so, after the third grade, the teacher said that there was no point in going any further, if Mary could not get school supplies. Thus ended her school career.

"From now her job was to take the sheep out to pasture. She remembers being bare footed, cold footed, and when the sheep urinated, the bare footed girl would stand on that

wet, warm ground to temporarily warm her feet.

"In 1922 sister Hanka left home to go to Canada. After seven years, in 1929, 17-year-old Mary left her beloved Ukraine and joined her sister in Canada. The next few years were spent doing all kinds of work on the farm, in hotels, in private houses.

"*Baba* did not know at that time that Vasyl Semkuley, a young man from her village, also came to Canada in 1929. She met him later, in 1933, and with hope to improve her life and build her future, she married him on January 29, 1934. Soon their first son, Myroslav was born.

"Life was very difficult on the farm in that first year; they nearly froze the first winter, and so they decided to move to Edmonton to look for work and a better life.

"At the age of three, Myroslav died of diphtheria and Mary never fully recovered from that devastating loss.

"The Semkuley family continued to struggle through the depression years. *Baba* worked at odd jobs, trying small businesses which always failed.

"In February, 1939, their second son, whom they also named Myron, was born.

"Then in June, 1941, their younger son Walter was born.

"The family moved to Calgary in September, 1941, to get better paying jobs. They have lived in Calgary ever since.

"Both Myron and Walter obtained a university education. This was an opportunity *Baba* never had, and she is proud of her sons for achieving their university degrees.

"Over the past years Mary has been an active member, and still continues to participate, in the AUUC.

"She volunteered for the 1988 Olympics, the Calgary Stampede, Curby Centre, and many others.

"On behalf of all the grandchildren and great grandchildren, we would like to thank *Baba* for the afghans to comfort us in the winter, the hangers to keep our clothes off the floor, and the slippers to keep out feet warm.

"Thank you, dear *Baba*. We all love you, and Happy Birthday".

Jim Skulsky, AUUC Branch President, read greet-



Jim Skulsky read several of the greetings, including his own as President of AUUC Calgary Branch to an audience which gathered from Calgary and Edmonton.



Hazel Skulsky, Nettie Stowko and June Huska (left to right) sang a short concert program.

ings from the Prime Minister of Canada Stephen Harper:

"Mary Semkuley, it is a great pleasure to send you best wishes and warmest congratulations on the occasion of your ninety-fifth birthday."

Touching greetings were received from the Mayor of Calgary, Dave Bronconnier:

"Dear Mrs. Semkuley,

"I am pleased to have this opportunity to extend my greetings on the occasion of your 95th birthday, May 6th, 2007.

"It is an honor to recognize this milestone and I want to offer my heartfelt wishes for a wonderful celebration. I hope that this day allows you to celebrate and recognize past achievements and accomplishments with your friends and loved ones.

"Calgary is a dynamic, vibrant community. Our success is rooted in citizens like you who have chosen to make Calgary their home and whose contributions have made this community the best in which to live.

"City Council and the citizens of Calgary join me in wishing you the very best on this special occasion.

"God bless and many happy returns."

Jim Skulsky also read greetings from Bill Bilecki, National President of the AUUC, and his own greetings as President of the Calgary Branch.

A wonderful job was done by Mylaine Tsaprailis, who did an enjoyable Powerpoint picture presentation on her *Baba's* life. She put together many pictures about Mary's life and activities, and accompanied them with beautiful Ukrainian songs. The guests had a chance to see the entire life of their friend Mary, from the time she came to Canada up to the present day.

The delicious dinner of tasty Ukrainian and Canadian food was served by Dean Andrichuk and his team. Thank you guys! The food was excellent!

Numerous greetings and warm wishes continued during the celebration:

"Ninety-five candles mark the years that you, Mary, have been a source of light and in-

spiration."

"Your 95th birthday is the perfect time to celebrate how special you are and to wish you a year filled with happiness in every way."

"God bless you, Mary, with peace, comfort, a happy heart, and all the beautiful things that are part of a wonderful birthday."

A short concert was performed by June Huska, Hazel Skulsky and Nettie Stowko. These old friends of Mary Semkuley sang beautiful Ukrainian songs for her.

I had the honor to present my mother-in-law with the birthday cards and presents received from Ukrainian relatives.

The Semkuley and Polevey families sent their *streyna* a very nice birthday card and golden pendant of St. Mary and Jesus Christ. They wished her many healthy years and hoped that St. Mary would protect their *streyna* from illnesses.

Her other family, the Preymaks, sent their *teta* a beautiful Ukrainian red coral necklace – a real piece of Ukraine that would warm their *teta's* heart. They also wrote wonderful words of greeting.

One of Mary's friends from Ukraine, Vira Derevoriz, wrote and devoted a poem to her, for this celebration.

"Happy Birthday, dear Mary" was heard from different parts of the hall; everyone found the best words of respect, appreciation and love for Mary Semkuley. After blowing out the candles on a huge birthday cake, the guests sang the traditional Ukrainian greeting song "*На многії літа*", wishing my mother-in-law healthy life for many years.

For Mary Semkuley, this day was very special – she was 95, she went through many difficulties in her life, but today she was very happy. Today she was surrounded by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, many relatives and friends, who love her, who respect her, who adore her.

Happy birthday, our dear mother and *Baba!*

(Continued on Page 8.)

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN

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Creating the Poor

An Editorial by Wilfred Szczesny

At a recent forum on poverty, a representative of one of those think tanks whose mission it is to justify the existence of the rich and explain why they should be even richer, reportedly told his audience that the rich do not create poverty. I beg to differ.

First a clarification. By "the rich" I do not mean the heir to an estate of a few hundred thousand dollars, the lottery winner of several million dollars. By "the rich" I mean those whose wealth translates into power, those who can decide to close a factory, those who can wring tax and other concessions out of governments, those who can affect public policy by granting or withholding support for governmental initiatives.

These rich directly create the poverty of poor people in day-to-day practice by paying minimum wages or (using a variety of stratagems) even less, by creating hazardous work places where acutely or chronically injured workers receive inadequate compensation, by outsourcing and other practices designed to replace well compensated jobs with minimum-wage, no-benefits employment.

These rich create poverty less directly, as well, by their influence on government.

The shift of massive amounts of the tax burden from corporate to private incomes is one shining example. Add the move from publicly funded governmental services to fee-for-service, user-pay arrangements with new and increased user fees. Add reductions of funded services which force those needing them to go to private providers, and delisting of items like certain medical procedures. Add the employment insurance rip-off.

There is more. For example, privatizing and/or deregulating industries, in the name of creating competition, but in fact creating oligopolies which practice predatory and misleading marketing practices, and what-the-traffic-will-bear pricing policies.

Not enough? How about building a huge gambling industry, the main purpose of which is to reduce inflationary pressures, like the war bonds of old but without the need to pay interest and redeem the paper, regardless of the devastating effect on many a family's budget?

How about cutting affordable housing programs? How about making it necessary for schools to raise funds privately for their programs? How about refusing to provide affordable and secure child care for parents who need two incomes? How about... how about... how about...?

The rich don't create poverty? Give me a break.

COMMENTARY

What Is The Source of Growing Disparity?

The Globe and Mail writer Margaret Wentz, in the May 15 issue of the paper in the article "Who's to blame for the poverty gap?" explores the growing income gap. In essence, she concludes that the rich are getting comparatively even richer because they are superior. Ms Wentz is unable to fathom the source of that superiority and, therefore, she is unable to see any way to change the situation.

"The knowledge economy is creating an entirely new phenomenon — an entrenched meritocracy, whose world is more and more remote from the lives of the bottom fifth," writes Ms Wentz.

That sentence talks about a "meritocracy", suggesting that the people at the top are there by merit — they deserve to be there, and the rest of us do not.

Ms Wentz throws up her hands and concludes, "The trouble is, none of the old policy prescriptions will close the gap — not more wealth redistribution, public housing, or even free tuition. What would? I wish I knew."

However, if the "entrenched meritocracy" has been created by the knowledge economy, does it not seem reasonable that the way to close the gap would be to provide the requisite knowledge to everyone?

Ms Wentz starts by discussing incomes. "The gap between the rich and poor is growing," she informs us, "not just in Canada but in the U.S. and Britain, too. The rich are getting richer, while the middle class is shrinking and the poor are standing still. In Canada, families in the top fifth now make an average of \$105,000 a year more (after tax) than families in the bottom fifth. That differential has increased by \$20,000 in the past nine years."

So far, this is almost received wisdom. The main question is whether the poor are standing still or getting poorer. Most observers (but not *The Globe and Mail*) suggest that the poor are, in fact, getting poorer.

What drives this growth in disparity (disparity itself is not new; its rate of growth is)?

"Many people blame evil forces for this trend — globalization, corporate greed, the stingy minimum wage, part-time jobs, welfare cutbacks, lack of public housing, and so on," Ms Wentz informs us, scornfully citing a couple of examples of people falling into such wrong thinking.

Let us not imagine that economic and social conditions have anything to do with the fate of populations.

Ms Wentz has another explanation. After she asks, "What's really driving the prosperity gap?" she suggests as an explanation "one factor you don't hear much about: High-achieving women."

So, it appears that the poor are poor because their women are inferior. Are we to understand, then, that the middle class is shrinking because middle class women are becoming inferior?

Obviously proud of her powers of analysis, Ms Wentz writes, "It's obvious when you think about it. Higher-earning women tend to marry higher-earning men, and together they tend to make a pile of money." Or, to put it another way, richer people marry richer people, and together they are richer.

Ms Wentz writes that, "Even a pair of teachers can easily bring in \$131,000 a year — more than enough to put them in the top 10 per cent of Canadian families by income."

How "easily", actually, can a pair of teachers earn that much? Advanced degrees and years of experience may not actually represent "easily". Starting salaries with basic degrees are far below \$131,000.00 a pair.

Then there is the belittling "even" describing a pair of teachers. This hint of snobbery, or class distinction, recurs.

Where do the women in the "power couples" who "make a pile of money" come from? They were made possible by the (birth control) pill, Ms Wentz informs us, which not only allowed women to pursue careers, but also "made career women far more desirable as mates". As a result, "More professional men began to marry their colleagues, instead of their secretaries or high-school sweethearts."

Do we have this right? Professional men, like doctors, lawyers and journalists are marrying their colleagues, because the women have become more desirable because of the pill. Or is it because now more women colleagues are available? How many secretaries actually ever married the boss? How many high-school sweethearts were from a distant social stratum?

Oh, wait, there is another factor. "Inequality is also widening as the economy increasingly rewards certain abilities — especially the ability to

communicate, organize, persuade and lead sophisticated teams." Where do those "certain abilities" come from? They must be innate, since education ("free tuition") and other "old policy prescriptions" will not help close the gap.

So, "certain abilities" are innate only in high-achieving women. In addition, "The difference between the haves and the have-nots isn't only about income. It's also about education, skills, attitudes, behaviour and expectations."

Thus, in addition to "certain abilities" which are innate, skills (which are somehow different from abilities) attitudes, behaviour and expectations, none of which can be acquired, distinguish the high-achievers from the others. Education, too, though free tuition would not help.

One more thing. "(The difference is) also about parental investment. Power couples become power parents who are able to invest a fortune in their children — not just in money but in time, attention and life lessons." In other words, richer people have the advantages which money can buy, and they pass them on to their children.

"Any parent who reads *The Globe and Mail* is probably a power parent," Ms Wentz flatters her readers in *The Globe and Mail*. "You help the kids with their homework, drive them to soccer practice, enroll them in French immersion, take them to Europe on vacation, and show them how to navigate their way through a sophisticated and increasingly complex world."

Ms Wentz tells us that, "A lot of parents who live in Lawrence Heights (her choice as the sample neighbourhood contrasting with the Beemerich, glitzy midtown Toronto) don't do those things. A surprising number of their children have never been downtown, never mind to Europe."

Again, the difference in parental behaviour is probably innate, as none of the "old policy prescriptions will close the gap". Circumstances are irrelevant, you bad poor person and neglectful parent.

— Wilfred Szczesny

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Ukrainian News Briefs Selected by George Borusiewicz

Bribery

Almost 40% of Ukrainians paid a bribe in the year 2006. According to a survey of 60 countries by Transparency International, Ukraine has one of the worst records in the world for bribery. Only Albania and Morocco reported higher rates.

By comparison, Russian citizens reported a bribery rate of less than 15%, while the majority of European Union states reported rates of less than 5%.

Political parties, parliament, and police were recognized as the most corrupt.

Rich Live, Poor Die

The Committee of the *Verkhovna Rada* (Supreme Council — Ukraine's parliament) on National Security and Defence is currently preparing a draft law titled "On Compensation Instead of Performing Active Military Service". If this draft is passed into law, Ukrainians will be able to avoid military service by paying 31,000 hryvnias (about Can\$7500).

According to the Information Department of the *Verkhovna Rada*, the passage of the law is intended to solve the problem of draft-evasion.

A typical wage, if you have a job, is about 300 hryvnias per month. Therefore, if you work for 100 months without spending anything for food, lodging, or clothing, you can legally avoid the military draft.

Or you can have a rich father (or mother) to buy your way out of the army.

Wine Fraud

To people worldwide who have appreciated the high quality of Ukrainian wines, the news that the Ukrainian government has approved the use of dry "wine powders" as a substitute for grapes comes as a shock.

According to one of the leading wine manufacturers in Ukraine, "Such a legislation undoubtedly plays into the hands of the recently launched mall wineries, which having no technologies and traditions of their own, and by means of mere mixing of ethanol (grain alcohol), sugar, dye-stuffs (colouring), and wine-powders will supply the Ukrainian market with a low-quality product under the name of "wine". Being so cheap, this "wine" will be able to simply force out all the naturally produced Ukrainian wines from the market".

Iryna Sovershenna, an expert of *Vino Ukrayiny*, stated, "The very fact of considering such drinks as wines is basi-

cally a consumer fraud, which is forbidden in the world's leading developed countries. So, if it comes to exporting these 'wines' to foreign countries, the reputation of domestically produced Ukrainian wines will be destroyed for good. Besides, wines made from wine powders in no way meet the requirements of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which Ukraine is so anxious to join."

Bush's Democracy

According to remarks he made on May 14 (reported in *The Washington Post*), US President George Bush has found some progress in democracy in Ukraine.

"The advance of freedom is the great story of our time, and new chapters are being written every day," Bush said, mentioning Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

In response, the on-line newspaper *Kommersant* makes the following comment: "This democracy rhetoric of the US president appears a bit strange, particularly when it comes to improvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, where dozens of people are killed daily by the (US) military and the 'democratically-elected' (my quotation marks — GB) governments are protected by troops of the United States..."

On-Line Ukrainians

According to a report by sputnikmedia.net, the Ukrainian internet audience increased by 7.1% in March and 0.6% in April of this year. The total now stands at 4.82 million people.

A viewer is defined as a person who views more than one page per month. On average, Ukrainian users spend 3.47 minutes on a website.

The leading city by the number of internet users is Kyiv — 60% of the total number of users in Ukraine are found in Kyiv.

In order of decreasing numbers are: Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya, Lviv, Odessa, Kharkiv, and Odessa. (It is interesting to note that almost all of the above cities are located in the eastern or southern regions of Ukraine).

SS Halychyna

In 1941, as the Second World War unfolded, Hitler's ideologists called for Ukrainian volunteers to join their armed groups "Nachtigal" and "Roland". These volunteers, soulmates of the Nazis in their hatred of Russians, Poles and

Jews, were used by the German fascists to brutally control civilians in German-occupied Ukraine.

At about the end of 1942, the Nazis formed the 14th Galician Waffen SS Division, using members of the "Nachtigal" and "Roland" groups. About 84,000 Ukrainians voiced their readiness to fight for Great Germany, and volunteered to join SS Halychyna.

In 1945-46 the International War Crimes Tribunal in Nuremberg (Germany) declared "Nachtigal", "Roland" and SS Halychyna to have been criminal formations.

On April 28, 2007, police in Kyiv arrested 77 people, including 37 whose "appearance was similar to skinheads", after they tried to hold a march to honour the SS Halychyna Ukrainian division.

What Ukrainian Girls Want

The following are suggestions from a dating service in Kharkiv to North American men looking for a Ukrainian bride.

"Bring flowers. Giving flowers to ladies on a date may not be a custom in North America, but it is in Ukraine. It doesn't have to be a huge bouquet, but a sign of attention from a man is always pleasant for a lady. When you are going to the first meeting the beginning of the date can be awkward for both of you, so presenting the flowers can be a great start of the conversation.

"One thing that you have to remember is that the girl you are going to meet most likely spent at least two hours to get prepared for the meeting, doing her make-up and choosing the clothes to wear. She does want to look really great. In Ukraine all the single girls wear very sexy and elegant clothes even on week days, so she will definitely try to look really great for a date! Don't forget to mention to her that she looks fantastic! Girls anywhere in the world love compliments, so why not compliment the lady who might become your wife?

"It is not usually an issue but make sure that the clothes you are wearing are smart-looking. People here accept other people by looking at the clothes, so don't spoil the first impression!

"Many men are surprised by how little Ukrainian women eat. The truth is that a girl can feel not very comfortable ordering a big meal at the meeting.

"Having a conversation is not always very easy when you meet the first time; to many people it seems even

harder to have it using an interpreter. But one thing about having an interpreter is that you get lots of time for thinking.

"Women love funny men, so make jokes."

Now you know. The rest is up to you.

Economic News

A recent report by Viktor Yanukovich (Ukraine's Prime Minister) brought some good economic news to the long-suffering people of Ukraine. According to a presentation he made to his Cabinet last month, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rose by 8% in the previous 4 months. At the same time, inflation rose by only 1.3%.

This is the best performance by the Ukrainian economy since before the current President came to power.

In his report, Prime Minister Yanukovich also touched on salaries and pensions. He stated that, by the end of this year, salaries will be increased by 40% and pensions by 30%.

New Elections

After 12 months of political squabbling, the agreement on May 4 between Ukraine's president (Viktor Yushchenko) and Ukraine's prime minister (Viktor Yanukovich) to hold early parliamentary elections will resolve, once and for all, the corrosive rivalry between the two.

Or will it?

According to recent polls, the new parliament will look almost identical to the old. Viktor Yanukovich's coalition (Communists, Socialists, and Yanukovich's party) will control about 250 seats out of a total of 450 seats. Yushchenko and his "Orange Revolution" partner, billionaire gas queen Yulia Tymoshenko, will win about 200 seats.

So why bother with an election? Why did President Viktor Yushchenko issue a decree in April dissolving parliament and calling a very early election?

My guess is that Yushchenko is betting everything on a parliamentary election where anything could happen. Lightning could strike! What has he got to lose? His personal popularity in the polls is down to single digits. His Orange Revolution has been thoroughly discredited. George Bush, once one of Yushchenko's biggest cheerleaders, just gave Yulia Tymoshenko the red-carpet treatment in Washington (Yushchenko and Tymoshenko dislike each other).

If a presidential election were to be held right now, the

polls say that Yushchenko would have no chance! So, like a drowning man floundering in the water, Yushchenko is rolling the dice and hoping for a miracle to eliminate Viktor Yanukovich, his enemy.

Ukraine Education

The following is an excerpt from the listing "Ukraine Education" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. "In 1917 more than 70% of Ukraine's population was illiterate. Within the next half century, the *Soviets'* (my emphasis) policy of compulsory education helped wipe out illiteracy in the younger generation, and virtually the entire adult population can now read and write."

Mass Hypnotism

"Hypnosis — the induction of trance states"

On May 17, 2007, Ukraine's legislature banned mass hypnotism, limiting the mind control procedure to a small group of medical professionals.

Parliament voted overwhelmingly in favour (244 out of 255 present) of outlawing any attempt to hypnotize a group of persons on Ukrainian territory. The law, if broken, could result in a fine of up to the equivalent of US\$11,000.

The law allows "qualified medical professionals" to perform hypnosis in a hospital or other legally-approved therapeutic setting, on one individual at a time.

Ukraine's Ministry of Health sponsored the bill in an attempt to end profitable businesses run by faith-healers who have drawn packed auditoriums across Ukraine. Evangelical Christians, using group suggestion techniques, have also attracted substantial audiences. This law, if strictly enforced, would end popular shows imported from the United States that offer healing via the television screen.

Non-traditional means of improving one's health are often taken quite seriously in Ukraine, a country where the state-financed public health care system is generally considered corrupt, and most medical doctors are paid less than 200 dollars a month.

Eurovision

According to *Wikipedia* (the on-line encyclopedia), the Eurovision Song Contest is an annual competition held among active member countries of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), in which par-

(Continued on Page 12.)

**Ukrainian
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Winnipeg Spring Concert



The Yunist Dancers, the senior dance group in Winnipeg AUUC, are shown in their "Hopak".

AUUC Winnipeg's Spring Concert on May 6 featured all six dance school classes, from the smallest children to the teenagers, as well as four dances by Yunist, the senior group, plus the Festival Choir.

The Festival Choir, under the direction of Myron Shatulsky, included in their four numbers some fresh arrangements of old standards. Walter Stefaniuk did the solo work in *Pyrohy*, with Nancy Grodzik on the accordion. Myron Shatulsky introduced this, his own arrangement, by telling the story of the song so that everyone could appreciate its humour. The final selection was a medley of two Mykola Lysenko arrangements, *Oy*

pid horoyu pid perevozom and *Na vhorodi kalyon'ka*, the latter especially bringing back old memories.

The choir, which has wanted to sing without amplification, has had to contend with a stage on which sound was lost rather than projected. This time they tried an experiment, dropping an old and recently restored painted backdrop of a Ukrainian village scene two-thirds of the way towards front stage. The choir reported that they could hear each other better, and some in the audience reported an improvement. One thing the backdrop did was to force the choir to the front edge of the stage, which in itself had a



Clad for the "Hutsul Twister" are the Intermediate Dancers. Kneeling are Derek Barr (left) and Clayton Sul. Standing, left to right, are Laura Warren, Ellana Gard, Shaela Enns, Dariya Petryshyn and Rosie Carr.



The Teen Dancers in their "Polissa" costumes are: (front row, left to right) Ataya Enns, Deana Mailman, Michelle Warren, and Tamara Abas; (back row, left to right) Cassandra Mailman, Brenna Sorokowski, Danny Barr, Hanna Sul, and Tara Samborsky.

beneficial effect.

The Yunist Dance Ensemble, under the direction of Corey Tkach, continued to perfect their repertoire. This time their "Gypsy Dance" showed new polish and flair.

There were some exceptional moments during the dance school recital. *Zirka*, the class of teenagers, showed good progress since they last appeared in March. This group, taught by Kirsten Schubert and assisted by Justin McGillivray, had a strong, lively, and precise step in their "*Beryznyanka*", and combined this with a certain recently developed maturity.

Earlier in the concert, an intermediate group under Justin McGillivray, assisted by Randi Kellow, got the genders reversed in a character dance based on cross-dressing. Everyone was delighted by this piece of foolishness.

And then there were the youngest children, a lively class of toddlers who do not really have to do anything to be loved. Just pretending to be little spring flowers, or prancing around the stage following their instructors, Melissa Boss and assistant Deana Mailman, is enough. But *Zaichyky*, as this group is called, had some little boy dancers who surprised the audience by imitating the steps of their role models, the boys and men in the older groups. Precociousness can be funny, particularly when it is unexpected.

Towards the end of the program, attendance certificates were awarded to members of the dance school classes.

Kathy Schubert was Master of Ceremonies. Bouquets were presented to Kim Boss, Director of the AUUC School of Folk Dance, and to Olga Pawlychyn for her services in opening and preparing the building for classes.

About 175 ticket holders and participants looked on.

(The instrumental groups were to finish their season six days later at the orchestra's *Mostly Mandolins* concert.)

— Brent Stearns

Mary Semkuley

(Continued from Page 3.)

I would like to thank all Mary's grandchildren who put together such a wonderful party for their beloved *Baba*: Karina Semkuley, Andrea Semkuley, Aaron Semkuley, and Mylaine Tsaprailis.

Also, a big "thank you" goes to the Calgary Cultural Centre authority for helping us with this celebration.

And guests, dear guests from Calgary and Edmonton, thank you all for coming and sharing the 95th birthday celebration with my mother-in-law, Mary Semkuley.

God bless you all!

— Nadiya Semkuley

— Story photos: Glen Michalchuk and Joe Friesen



Junior Dancers of the School of Dance are shown performing a dance from central Ukraine.



The Tiny Tots, who "do not really have to do anything to be loved", are prepared for a central Ukrainian character dance. Behind Adam Hrinkiw are (left to right) Alyssah Gard, Kelly Barr, and Shanaya McMillan, with Jenelle Dominique and Julie Sidorchuk in the back row.



Preteens in the "Welcome" are (left to right) Nicole Warren, Jennifer Warren, Robyn Smith, Megan Mailman, and Jennifer Fernandes.



The Yunist Dance Group: (front row, left to right) Christopher Miller, Marissas Boss, Cheryl Terleski, and Arron Pierre; (back row, left to right) Emily Chorney, Matthew Whitford, Jordon Jerrod, Jenny-Lynn Tkach, Mykola Hedrich, Justin McGillivray, and Kirsten Schubert.

Edmonton Seniors Party Again

Looking for a reason to party? Well, here's a reason for you — Anne Husar and Mervin Rogers are one year older! It was a privilege to honour these two members for their April birthdays.

The joy of this event was contrasted with sadness involving some of our members' families. A tribute by way of a minute of silence was given for Sophie Sywolos's daughter-in-law, as well as for the late Al Shawley's granddaughter, who passed away recently.

On a lighter note, this month our resident orchestra played for us. There was Maurice Warick on his button accor-

dion and Paul Greene with his banjo. Next came Mike Uhryn with his good-buddy, the accordion. One must have strings, so Bill Uhryn was there with his violin. The members and guests enjoyed their renditions. Sometimes Edna Chmiliar joins the merry makers too. Their musical skills are always appreciated.

The theme for this month's gathering was Spring, featuring pussy willows, Easter eggs and daffodils. The artistic Virginia Witwicki was in charge of the decorations. She gathered the daffodils and pussy willows from the tables and gave them to the birthday people for a departing gift.



Bill Uhryn prepares to distribute the Easter eggs, some with a Ukrainian motif.



Virginia Witwicki was in charge of the spring decorations, featuring pussy willows, daffodils, and Easter eggs.

Virginia also made a modern Easter egg for each participant to enjoy and take home. Some even had a Ukrainian motif.

In keeping with Ukrainian tradition, Lucy Antoniow brought *babka*, and she and Bill Uhryn brought the boiled eggs. Bill distributed the eggs, one to each of the 41 people in attendance. Then the crowd had an egg fight with their neighbours. At the end of the game, Morindie Bagan had the strongest egg; it had not been broken after several attempts by friendly neighbours. She received the Easter basket as a prize.

In keeping with the practice of this year, this quarter we have a new set of cooks preparing the meals. The good food was prepared by Ann Kawchuk, Rose Kereliuk, and Virginia Witwicki. As always, many others pitched in to set and clean the tables, sweep the floors, do the dishes, and attend to the many other tasks necessary to make this monthly event the success it continues to be.

Eva Doskoch told the par-

ticipants about the project Pastors for Peace, based in the United States. Their mission is to collect objects such as tools or bicycles for the people of Cuba. This is the first time they have come to Edmonton. Eva is the contact here and will be accepting donations on their behalf for the next couple of months.

Eva has also made arrangements for members and friends to go on a field trip to the Devonian Gardens on August 20.

Pauline Warick reviewed coming events. On July 28, at 7:00 p.m., there will be a film at the Edmonton Ukrainian Centre about the children of Chernobyl who are being rehabilitated in Cuba since the tragedy. There was also the news of the field trips the seniors' group will be going on, like the trip to Sylvan Lake in July.

Next month there will be a guest speaker about South America.

— Shirley Uhryn



Sitting at the table of honour were birthday celebrants Anne Husar (left) and Mervin Rogers. Edna Chmiliar (right) was also at that table.



Everyone had an egg, so the logical next step was an egg war, to determine who had the strongest one.



Shown above and below are some of the 41 people attending the monthly gathering of the Senior Citizens' Club.



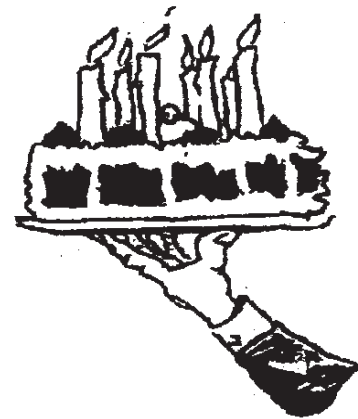
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Apologies to Mary Slobojan for omitting her donation from our last issue.

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 June:

- Nester Bagan
- Paul Greene
- Nick Kereliuk
- Ed Makowecki
- Sophie Sywolos
- Mike Uhryn
- Virginia Witwicki
- Mary Woyewidka

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

The Toronto AUUC Senior Citizens Club extends best birthday wishes to June celebrants:

- Frank Mihay
- Natalie Mochoruk
- Anne Omylanowski

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

The Vancouver Seniors Club extends June birthday greetings to:

- Joe Dzatko
- Mary Fedosenko
- Carol Snider

We wish you the best of health and happiness in the coming year!

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

- Alice Beazley
- Lida Braun
- Ron Hlywka
- Leonard Whatmough

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

AUUC Orchestra on Kontakt

The Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra of the AUUC was featured in a segment of about ten minutes on the OMNI 1 television program *Kontakt* on April 21.

Content included music, commentary by Conductor Rudy Wasylenky, various visual images, and remarks by segment host Michael Curry.

**Submitted
separately
as a .pdf**

**Submitted
separately
as a .pdf**

Who, What, When, Where

Edmonton — Senior Citizens Club is planning a bus trip on **June 19** to Stony Plain Leisure Centre and Hubbles Lake. Shirley and Bill Uhryn will be hosting a **wiener roast**. For more information, contact the Senior Citizens Club.

Edmonton — **George Hewison**, a well-known labour singer, will appear in concert at the **Ukrainian Centre**, 11018-97 Street, at **7:00 p.m.** on Friday, **June 22**. Tickets will be available at the door.

Regina — The Regina AUUC will participate in **Mosaic 2007** on **May 31–June 2**, hosting the Poltava Pavilion at the **Regina Performing Arts Centre**, 1077 Angus Street.

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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Eurovision

(Continued from Page 5.) Participating countries each submit a song to be performed on live television by a performer of their choice. Then each country proceeds to cast scores of between 1 and 12 points for the other countries' songs.

The contest has been broadcast every year since 1956, and is one of the most-watched non-sporting events in the world, drawing audiences of anywhere between 100 million and 600 million people. The competitions take one week to complete and are hosted by the country which won the previous year's competition.

Past winners have included such well-known performers such as ABBA and Celine Dion.

Ukraine won the contest in 1994, with Ruslana (wearing a daring torn-leather costume) performing a Hutsul-influenced song called "Wild Dances". The Greeks won in 2005, while the Finnish heavy metal group "Lordi" won last year.

This year, the competitions were held in Finland, and the finals took place on May 12.

It would give great pleasure to report that Ukraine's entry won again this year, but unfortunately (for Ukraine), Serbia snatched first place. Ukraine came a very-respectable second, and Russia took third place.



Contact us!

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