

# HERALD ВІСНИК

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## AUUC Malanka Celebration in Regina



— Photo: Mark Greschner

On January 17, 271 patrons enjoyed an evening of good food, beverages, fine performances and plenty of dancing, as the Poltava Ensemble of Song, Music and Dance, along with the Regina Branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadian, hosted a celebration of Malanka 2015 at the Regina Performing Arts Centre. A report on the event, with more photos by Mark Greschner, appears on page 6.

### The Next Issue

The next issue of the “UCH” will be dated May/June, 2015. Announcements of events in May, June or early July, 2015, as well as articles for the May/June, 2015, issue should be in our office by April 10. Thank you for your consideration.

### NEC AUUC in Teleconference

The National Executive Committee of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians met in teleconference on February 21. The three-hour session dealt with some very weighty matters.

Sale of the property near Sylvan Lake, Alberta, was discussed at some length. It was agreed to return to this matter at the next meeting, when some factors may be clearer.

Another property, the land in Oakville, Ontario, also generated much discussion, with a positive report on progress from the Lands Development Committee.

Mixed feelings were generated by the report that, for health reasons, Bill Harasym was planning to stand down from the Board of Directors of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation at the Annual General Meeting of that institution. Mr. Harasym, who celebrated his 90th birthday in October, 2014, has made valued contributions to both the AUUC and the Shevchenko Museum over some seven decades.

The NEC also considered some issues related to the AGM of the Shevchenko Museum and the future of that institution.

Among the more pleasant items on many NEC agendas is the consideration of membership applications. On this occasion, new members were accepted into the Richmond, Vancouver and Calgary AUUC branches.

The meeting ended with the consideration of meeting arrangements for the National Committee and the National Executive Committee.

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### Hijab

In Quebec, judge Eliana Marengo ordered a Rania El-Alloul out of court for being improperly dressed — she was wearing a hijab, which is essentially a head scarf covering the wearer's hair.

In Alberta, Amna Qureshi wears a hijab in court every day — as do dozens of other Muslim women practising law in Canada.

Are the courts in Quebec more secular than those in the rest of the country, or does the xenophobia which seems so widespread in that province also infect the courts?

Mr. Gregorovich spoke about the Museum website “which I established in 1999”, the trilingual *Kobzar*, and the Taras Shevchenko stamps.

“The Government of Canada in the 1980s appointed me to the Postage Stamp Design Committee so I was familiar with the procedures for postage stamps,” Mr. Gregorovich informed the meeting.

Mr. Gregorovich pointed to two possible programs for the coming year. One was a possible speech by Texas academic Prof. Lindfors, perhaps with the participation of a co-sponsor. The other was a possible exhibition of sculpture by Igor Grechanyk, which had “many complications to be resolved”.

In her rich and informative report, Museum Director Lyudmyla Pogoryelova provided additional information on some of the items in the President's report: the trilingual *Kobzar*, the stamp project, the website and others.

Ms. Pogoryelova also reported on other matters. These included several exhibitions, including the one which was displayed in Winnipeg, Calgary, Regina, Edmonton, and Los Angeles.

The report spoke about advertising which, in addition to the website, included a long and growing list of media outlets.

The Museum Director's report addressed a project to digitize the Museum's *rushnyk* collection, matters related

(Continued on Page 9.)

## Shevchenko Museum Foundation AGM

The Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation held its 19th Annual General Meeting on March 7.

Through the magic of modern communications technology, members of the Board of Directors were able to participate from the comfort of their own homes, while most of the Toronto resident participants gathered at the Shevchenko Museum.

Modern technology was not without its problems, and the

meeting was delayed while some technical issues were resolved.

Andrew Gregorovich, President of the Foundation, opened the meeting and immediately called for a moment of silence for the departed and for the problems in Ukraine.

Following the adoption of the agenda of the AGM, voice was granted to several attending AUUC members and guests.

Elected as officers of the AGM were Andrew Gregorovich (Chair), George Borusiewicz (Vice-Chair), Bernardine Dobrowolsky (Recording Secretary) and Lyudmyla Pogoryelova (Vice-Recording Secretary).

Bernardine Dobrowolsky read the draft minutes of the 18th AGM, held on March 8, 2014, and these were adopted.

The bulk of the meeting was devoted to the reports of the Resident Executive Committee members, starting with the report of the President.

In his report, among other matters, President Andrew Gregorovich thanked each Resident Executive Member individually, as well as the Board members across Canada and the Lands Development Committee. He also introduced Pavlo Lopata, whom he had asked (and who had agreed) to serve on the Board.

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# Current Eclectic — Long and Short

## Time for Pharmacare

Prescription drugs can be very expensive. The result is that many people (at least 10%) do not fill the prescriptions given by their doctors. In many (perhaps most) cases, these people suffer more than

they need to for longer than required, but eventually they get better.

In many (perhaps most) other cases, these people get worse. They end up going to hospitals; sometimes they end

up with chronic conditions requiring continuing treatment; sometimes they die.

The widespread belief in Canada is that preventing such negative outcomes is more expensive than this country can afford. The reality, of which not many people are aware, is that preventing

such negative outcomes would be cheaper than allowing them. This is a reality which has been confirmed by many studies.

The most recent of these studies is one published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, co-authored by Steven Morgan, professor of health policy at the University of British Columbia, and Dr. Danielle Martin of the University of Toronto. This study showed that spending on drugs in Canada could drop from about \$22 billion annually to about \$15 billion, for a saving of about \$7 billion.

Among other studies which had similar findings are the federal government's National Forum on Health in 1997, a study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in 2010, a CD Howe Institute report in 2013, a study by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions in 2014, and others.

So why is Canada the only country with a universal health care system which does not include prescription drugs?

Thomas Walkom, in a March 18 column in the *Toronto Star*, cites one reason: pharmacare would pay the bill out of taxes, while the current system pays much of the bill out of prescription prices and insurance premiums.

At present provincial drug plans subsidizing seniors, people on social assistance and such pay over \$7 billion of the drug costs, and private insurance plans do the same. Pa-

tients pay almost \$5 billion out of pocket, workers compensation and other such compulsory plans pay just under a billion dollars, and federal coverage for First Nations and "other targeted populations" pays about half a billion.

The new study says that, in the worst case, pharmacare would cost governments an additional \$5.4 billion, and in the best case it could save them \$2.9 billion. (Mind you, that says nothing about savings from reduced trips to the hospital and other savings from people actually getting their meds.)

As Thomas Walkom points out, "Yet politicians feel, with some reason, that they are judged not by the overall good they do the country but by their handling of taxes and budgetary deficits." The potential \$7 billion saved by residents in total spending loses to the possible extra taxes.

There are other significant factors, in addition to resistance to higher taxes. One is the self-serving attitude encouraged by the drug manufacturers (as well as by others) that anything private is automatically better than anything public. Another is the Ayn Rand school of thought: if sick people can not afford their medication, tough — why should I pay for it? Still another is the attitude that most illnesses are the result of life choices made by the sick, so punish them, not me.

Pharmacare makes good sense as social policy, but it is unlikely to be adopted by governments who are cutting back on existing public health care.

## The Government of Bad Laws

The government run by Stephen Harper has had more of its positions overruled by the courts than any other in Canadian history. Here is a partial list.

In 2011, Stephen Harper tried to shut down Vancouver's Insite safe-injection facility for drug users. He tried to do it by not renewing the sites exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act. The Supreme Court of Canada found that the government's action contravened the principle of fundamental justice, and ordered that the exemption be restored immediately.

In 2013, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that a certain law pertaining to prostitution was unconstitutional, overruling the government's strongly held position. Given a year to bring in a new law, the government produced legislation which, in the opinion of many experts, will fail to meet a constitutional challenge.

Stephen Harper made retroactive changes to the laws on parole eligibility, lengthening the time nonviolent first-time offenders had to serve.

In 2014, the Supreme Court ruled that the change was a form of double jeopardy.

Also in 2014, the Supreme Court rejected Stephen Harper's appointment of a judge to the Supreme Court, ruling that the appointee did not meet the criteria for an appointee from Quebec.

In 2014, once again, the Supreme Court overruled the Truth in Sentencing Act. The government wanted to prevent judges giving extra credit for time spent in jail before sentencing. The court ruled that judges can give up to 1.5 days credit for every presentencing day spent in jail.

Stephen Harper wanted to change the Senate, or abolish it, unilaterally. The Supreme Court ruled in 2014 that the provinces would have to be involved in any changes, and the provinces would have to give unanimous support to abolition of the Senate.

In 2015, the Federal Court of Appeal has found that the federal government was discriminating against immigration sponsors of parents and grandparents, by taking far more time to assess them than

to assess sponsors of spouses and children.

In this year, the Supreme Court ruled that RCMP officers have a constitutional right to unionize, overturning a law which opposed RCMP unionization.

Most recently this year, the government has lost a case concerning niqabs. (See "Niqab Rule Unlawful" on this page.)

As indicated above, this is a partial list of court rulings that have gone against Stephen Harper. There are others. There are still more decisions in various stages of litigation, and there are there laws which are expected to be tested and overturned some time in the future.

Stephen Harper may be sorry about losing some of the decisions, but if he really cared he would find ways to enact laws which could stand up in court. What he really wants, and gets, with each questionable law is another opportunity to impress his supporters with his law-and-order, tough-on-crime facade while dividing the population once again into "us" and "them" with a wedge issue.

## Niqab Rule Unlawful

Once again Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his government are on the wrong side of the law, and once again they are using the court ruling as political capital.

The issue this time is whether a woman taking a citizenship oath has to remove her niqab.

The government insists that a woman must remove her niqab. The niqab, it says, was barred by a rule introduced in an operational manual, in December, 2011.

Justice Keith M. Boswell of the Federal Court of Canada has ruled that the rule is against the law because it violates a "citizenship judge's duty to allow candidates for citizenship the greatest possible freedom in the religious solemnization or the solemn affirmation of the oath", as required under the law.

Instead of accepting the

judge's ruling the government has indicated that it would appeal the decision. If the Conservatives win the coming election, the issue may reach all the way to the Supreme Court — or maybe not, depending on how Stephen Harper, Supreme Defender of Our Civilization, decides to play it.

In the meantime, the elections approach, and the issue remains current. Stephen Harper has what he wants: a reason, however spurious, to attack Muslims and Muslim beliefs; another opportunity to attack Canadian courts; and more chances to call his political opponents nasty names. Each of these three behaviours, Mr. Harper believes, will win him votes

This is not the first time that Stephen Harper and his Muslim haters have made the niqab an issue. In 2007, they

tried to ban wearing the niqab while voting. The Chief Electoral Officer rejected the claim that voters had to show their faces, and noted that some 70,000 voters mailed in their ballots without showing their faces.

On both the citizenship oath and the voting issues, Stephen Harper was cynically creating a problem where none existed, for purely electoral purposes. The Prime Minister and some of his caucus may not actually be biased against foreigners, especially darker-skinned foreigners, especially Muslim darker-skinned foreigners, but they sure act like it. Furthermore, to the extent that it is an act, it is an act intended to attract the support of people who actually are bigoted and racist.

Nor is everyone, if anyone, in that caucus acting. Some of them, at least, would very much like the people who are different to "stay the hell where you come from".

## Harper's Income-Splitting Caper

Prime Minister Harper is nothing if not clever. An example is the income-splitting tax legislation, by which he pays off his buddies while frustrating the opposition.

Under income splitting, spouses can account their income for tax purposes so as to reduce their tax liability.

For example, if someone has a taxable income of \$180,000 and a spouse with no taxable income, that person could pay over \$41,000 in federal income tax, or transfer half the income to their spouse to pay combined amounts slightly over \$33,500 in federal income tax. This would represent a saving of more than \$7000 in federal tax. (The numbers in this example not exact, and are intended only to illustrate the point, without significant distortion.)

Stephen Harper met the objections of the opposition on this point by limiting the benefit to \$2000 for any household.

However, there was another objection: only the highest earning 15% of families (about 1 in 7) would benefit at all. Rather than agree with the former Minister of Finance, the late Jim Flaherty, that the idea was bad, Harper changed the law — by rolling in other changes he was going to make: an increase to the Universal Child Care Benefit, enhancing the Child Care Expense Deduction, and doubling the Children's Fitness Tax Credit.

Now, every household with children would benefit, about 4.5 million households. That done, Stephen Harper challenged the opposition to oppose the bill.

The tax change is still a vote-buying gift of up to \$2000 to every high-income household, with or without children, but now income splitting is pretty much off the election table. And, the bigger (taxable) cheques start to reach voters in time for the election.

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Ukrainian Canadian Herald editorial offices are located at 1604 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M6P 1A7  
Phone: 416-588-1639; Fax: 416-588-9180  
E-mail: kobzar1@on.aibn.com

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**Harper: the Threat Within**

AN EDITORIAL BY WILFRED SZCZESNY

Increasingly, it appears that Prime Minister Harper and his government have no other purpose than to retain power. They seem to have no vision of the future and no sense of a direction in which they wish to take Canada beyond winning the next election.

They were willing to do anything to gain the power they have, and now they are willing to do anything to keep that power. That makes them a greater threat to each and every resident of this country than any of the bogeymen with which they try to frighten Canadians.

We have seen that this prime minister and his party are comfortable breaking traditions, regulations and laws to stay in power, and we see them ready to victimize both their opponents and innocent bystanders to stay in power.

When opposition parties in Parliament threatened to outvote them, in the face of Canadian Parliamentary tradition (and with no legal basis) they declared such an outcome to be illegal, and dissolved Parliament. The Prime Minister's trip to the Governor-General to ask for the prorogation was preceded by some pretty "energetic" demonstrations threatening the Liberal and New Democratic parties and their supporters. We may never know for sure, but I am convinced that the threat of widespread violence was part (perhaps the decisive part) of the Prime Minister's argumentation to the Governor-General in their unusually long meeting.

We do know certainly that almost every constitutional expert agreed that the probable defeat of the government was no legitimate reason to prorogue Parliament.

In subsequent elections, the Conservative Party has violated regulations and laws governing election expenses, voter suppression (with robocalls, for example) and more.

In between elections this government (which means this Prime Minister) has systematically removed from appointed office individuals (like auditors) who dared to challenge Harper's policy positions, and reduced to impotence (and even closed down) agencies which raised "inconvenient" issues. Among the major agencies which have suffered such treatment is Statistics Canada, no longer able to produce reliable demographic data which clash with the ideological preconceptions of the Harperites.

Does Mr. Harper truly believe that keeping someone in prison 70 years instead of 60 will make society safer? He's not that stupid. But he does believe that legislation to do so, as well as other senseless laws to look tough on crime will gain votes — and that's good enough for him.

(Continued on Page 9.)

**COMMENTARY****Open Letter on Health Care**

Throughout Canada, health care is under pressure from those claiming that the current system can no longer be sustained. Aging populations, more expensive technologies, excessive wages and salaries, and other factors, they claim, make it necessary to cut back the services covered under the Canada Health Act, and to give private enterprise a greater role in all aspects of health care.

This debate, of course, is also part of the public discourse in Ontario, where serious hardship is often the result of "rationalization" and privatization of health services. Recently, a public meeting (one of many in the province) was held in Brampton, Ontario. The open letter adopted at that meeting is printed below because it is relevant, in its general thrust, to all parts of Canada.

**An open letter to Health Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins of Ontario and Minister of Health Rona Ambrose of Canada**

There are several ideas which dominate public discourse in Canada today, and form the basis of governmental action. These ideas, proclaimed by right-wing think tanks and promoted by mass media, seem so natural, self-evident, reasonable, and logical that they are accepted as true by many people. Nevertheless, these ideas are false and do not stand the test of close scrutiny. These ideas are fabrications which are promoted for self-serving reasons by the corporate elite.

A very simple, but very powerful, example of such an idea is: there is only one taxpayer. Millions of Canadians, struggling in difficult times, accepted this slogan which was an argument for tax reduction. They accepted this idea, even though they knew that in Canada there are millions of taxpayers, and they knew that David Thomson and Galen Weston are very different taxpayers from the neighbour trying to raise a family on a minimum wage job or the cousin who has lost his job and may lose his home.

There are more ideas like that. There is the idea that the private sector can do everything better than the public

sector. There is the idea that corporations are models of efficiency and sound judgment, while governments are money-wasting bumbler. There is the idea that a corporate model is the appropriate model for operation of governments, in spite of the difference between the purposes and the conditions of the two institutions. There is the idea that efficiency and balanced budgets are the two highest values of government. There is the idea that the most important role of government is to attract investment by encouraging the building of corporate shareholder value.

Because our governments act on these beliefs, the richer the corporations and shareholders get, the poorer the rest of society gets. This is often expressed as the growing gap between the richest and the rest, a gap whose dangers are starting to worry even some bankers.

The situation in the provision of health care shows with amazing clarity that promoting the health of corporate shareholder value is incompatible with promoting the health of people.

It is a grim picture.

All levels of government throughout Canada, single-mindedly seeking to balance their budgets while reducing taxes paid by corporations and dividend recipients, are downloading costs to lower levels

of government and, ultimately, to citizens. Among the costs ultimately downloaded to citizens are the costs of health care. Increasingly, services that were once available in hospitals can only be obtained for a fee in a private clinic. Ever more often, services that were available at full-service local hospitals are only provided in a few facilities, requiring expensive hours of travel and, occasionally, the cost of overnight accommodation. Hospital space remains empty, operating facilities sit idle, and doctors are underemployed while patients face long waits to see a specialist and more long waits for tests and treatments.

The reasons are not hard to find.

The Government of Canada and Ontario's provincial government have slashed tax rates on corporations and high-income earners, particularly those whose incomes are in the form of dividends. Now Ontario's corporate taxes are among the lowest anywhere in the developed countries. The result is income crises at all levels of government. Rather than restoring income levels, governments choose to reduce program spending. Ontario is now also among the lowest provinces in Canada in spending on health care. This reduction of expenditures is done in several ways, all of them shifting the cost of services to the people who can least afford to pay.

We reject the proposition that Canada, one of the richest countries in the world, cannot provide to its citizens the health care which was the promise of the system known as Medicare.

We reject the concept that health care which was affordable in earlier decades, when the Canada Health Act came into being, is now beyond our society's capacity.

We reject the proposition that, in health care, private is better.

We reject these propositions for the same reason that we reject the proposition that there is only one taxpayer — because our experience tells us that these propositions are

(Continued on Page 9.)

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auuc.ca

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www.ukrainiancentre-edm.ca

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

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www.infoukes.com/shevchenkomuseum

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—Photo: James Cochrane

## Edmonton AUUC Seniors Celebrate



January birthday celebrants (left to right) were Victor Horon, Rose Kereliuk and Bill Uhryn.

### In January...

Birthday celebrants at the head table on January 20 were Victor Horon, Rose Keryliuk and Bill Uhryn.

In keeping with pagan Ukrainian Christmas rituals, the evil spirits were called by Shirley Uhryn to join the assembly or forever leave those attending in peace and goodness in the New Year! None came!

Anne Husar and her caring daughter Cherry Kapowski brought in the sheaf of wheat bound by a *rushnyk*, (embroidered Ukrainian runner), which they carefully placed on the table of honour.

On the tips of each of the heads of wheat were the spirits of our ancestors.

A moment of silence ensued when each bowed his/her head in remembrance and praise of his/her ancestors.

As the elder, Bill Uhryn, keeping tradition with a hand full of wheat from the farm days in Volyn, Alberta, in both English and Ukrainian, asked for goodness and bounty in the coming year.

President Paul Greene then introduced the guests of honour at the head table.

Victor Horon and his family come from the early Ukrainian Alberta community of New Kiev. The AUUC hall in that community was later sold for one dollar to the Ukrainian Village in Vegreville, Alberta. Victor and the Horon family have been active in the AUUC for decades.

Rose Kereliuk comes from the community of Hairy Hill, where she was mayor at one time. Rose comes from a Romanian background. She married into the Kereliuk family

which belonged to choir, danced in the hall and partook of activities at the hall through the years.

Bill Uhryn was born in Volyn in the Rycroft area of Alberta, where their family (along with others) built the AUUC community hall in 1948, approximately. Bill's brother John, with his wife Marie (née Boychuck), donated one acre of land for this hall. The AUUC bought four acres for a ball diamond.

There, Bill Uhryn taught Ukrainian dancing, choir, and theatre. His brother Mike participated in all the above, especially dancing, as well as belonging to the Volyn Kodiak ball team. Bill also taught the Ukrainian arts in Highland Park and Innisfree.

Jeanette Scratch remembers as a child being in the Volyn hall. It was late into the night, the dance was going but it was time for the little children to go to sleep on straw mattresses under wool quilts in the corner of the hall. If they were good, they got a donut!

Bill Uhryn, in his address to those in attendance at this gathering, said, "Originally my parents' house served as a meeting place for the community meetings and dances, since in the early pioneer days the community had no hall."

Bill, as an AUUC member for 60 years, went on to say that this organization is a peaceful, cultural organization. We support the idea that we all need to preserve good land for food production, clean water and clean air for ourselves, our children and future generations. We also support good health care and a clean environment!"

—Photo: Bill Uhryn



Bringing in good luck and prosperity for 2015, Ann Husar and Sherry Capowski bring in sheaves of wheat.



Edmonton AUUC Seniors shared a traditional Ukrainian Christmas meal on January 20.

The group then stood to sing "Mnohaya leeta" and "Happy Birthday" to the celebrants!

As Past President of the Edmonton Branch, Mike Uhryn brought greetings and best wishes from the executive and Branch to the guests of honour.

The first dish which was featured was the kutya which is boiled wheat with honey, poppy seed and walnuts.

The head table then led all to the buffet, which featured many of the dishes of a traditional Ukrainian Christmas meal as well as other Ukrainian foods: nalyсныky (crepes), herring, beet salad, cabbage rolls, studenetz (jellied meat), nachinka (stuffing), meat balls and gravy, perohy (sauerkraut as well as cottage cheese), kulach (braided bread) and with other dishes.

All were appreciative of the hours of work that the women did at home to prepare each of the dishes.

As we were eating, Paul Greene welcomed those from out of town: Jeanette and Erie Scratch from Barrhead, Alberta; Tamara and James Cochrane from Victoria, B.C., and Andrew Kacak from Chicago, Illinois, USA.

Mike Uhryn shared his concern for mankind. Mike reminded us of the basic values of humanity: peace not war, substantive democracy not limited democracy, social and economic equality, environmental sustainability, and cultural opportunity for all.

Bill Uhryn received birthday greetings from out of town. Excerpts follow.

Lucy Hojnacki from Chicago wrote for Bill to "Take care and enjoy every moment because that is time and every minute is a memory to be cherished!"

Wilfred Szczesny of Toronto, a long time friend and Vice-President of the AUUC, "May your day be filled with the comforting presence of family and friends. May this day be filled with things you hope for, and all the people you hope with!"

Bill Harasym, from Toronto, wrote, "Good health and success in all your endeavours in your future life and your

family, friends and compatriots. *Na zdorovia!*"

Lyudmyla Pogoryelova, Director of the Taras Shevchenko Museum, on the behalf of the board, wrote: "We appreciate your work and participation into the work of the Shevchenko Museum in Toronto for many years. A book of Uhryn's Family history, CD's of your music band and your other donations will always be a part of our library and collections... We wish you good health happiness, joy and many successes in everything you do."

### ...And in February

Fanny Hruschak was the birthday celebrant honoured at the February 17 gathering of the Edmonton AUUC seniors!

The group collectively recognized her sense of humour, love of a variety of music, caring personality, interest in western Canada's Ukrainian history, and an assortment of Canadian pins were handed to her as well as others by Virginia Witwicki and Paul Greene marking 50 years since Canada's maple leaf has flown on the Canadian flag.

The program for this month featured the noble work of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

The Edmonton's chapter of Grandmothers was represented by Lucy Antoniw. The Edmonton seniors gave a significant financial donation through Lucy Antoniw to the Stephen Lewis Foundation to help support their necessary work.

We seniors learned about Grandmother's work by watching a DVD garnered in November, 2014, through the *Grassroots* newsletter. The film was produced by the Stephen Lewis Foundation, and is based on the African Grandmothers Tribunal held in Vancouver, B.C., in September, 2013.

The excerpts which follow were taken from "The Grandmothers Call to Action"

"The purpose of this Peo-

ple's Tribunal was to shine a public light (to the international community) on the denial of African grandmothers' human rights, and to issue a call to action. Six grandmothers from Swaziland, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa presented their personal testimonies. They shared their expertise about some of the most pressing human rights challenges grandmothers are facing. All together, they sent out a clarion call for change to a panel of four Tribunal judges."

"African grandmothers are working to secure better futures for their communities. They have stepped in to care for orphaned (because of HIV/AIDS) grandchildren, putting them through school, supporting them through the loss of their parents to AIDS, and teaching them about HIV prevention and treatment. They tend to the sick, set up support groups, harvest the crops and create income-generating programmes. They are advocates for their families, and are emerging as experts and leaders, increasingly acknowledged by governments and international NGO's but gender inequality imposes an unconscionable price."

In Stephen Lewis' opening address he said, "At the root of all of this lies gender inequality... and the grandmothers of Africa are the centerpiece of this reality."

After the DVD responses from the Edmonton seniors followed:

One said that it was so good that the grandmothers were sacrificing and helping the children.

Another said this DVD made us aware of how other parts of our world live.

A letter from Lily Stearns was read in which she said that the Shevchenko memorabilia sent from the Edmonton seniors is being archived in the AUUC archives. Ms. Stearns thanked the "appropriate people for this donation. It will be recorded that this came from the Women's Branch of Edmonton."

— Shirley Uhryn



## Malanka 2015 in Regina

On January 17, 271 patrons enjoyed an evening of good food, beverages, fine performances and plenty of dancing. The Poltava Ensemble of Song, Music and Dance along with the Regina Branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadian's Malanka 2015 proved to be another wonderful success that gave everyone attending a most enjoyable evening.

Greetings on behalf of the Regina AUUC and the Poltava Ensemble were given by Sasha Lapchuk, Chairperson of the AUUC.

Among the dignitaries attending the event was Ralph

Goodale, Liberal Member of Parliament.

The beginning of the evening included cocktails and appetizers (pickled herring, Kiev garlic cheese), and was followed by an incredible meal catered by Joe's European Deli and Catering, with help from the AUUC's varenyky crew, headed by Gerry Shmyr and Emily Laslo.

All the tables were adorned with helium-filled balloons.

The evening's activities were conducted by Masters of Ceremonies Ken Lozinsky and Dave Wilson.

The Poltava Ensemble of Song, Music and Dance pre-

sented a 45-minute program. The Ensemble is under the direction of Dance Director, Oleksandr Byelyayev and Orchestral Director, Natalia Osypenko. Also appearing, from the Poltava School of Ukrainian Performing Arts, were the Pre-Poltava and Lileya dancers, under the direction of Lisa Wanner and Daniel Hebert. In all, there were some 80 performers.

The evening continued with door prizes — and something new this year for the Malanka raffle. After purchasing the raffle tickets, one would place them in the boxes in front of seven theme baskets, choosing those that one would like to win. Basket themes included "For the Kids", "For Her", "For the Techie", "For the Entertainer", "For the Party", "For the Sports Fan", and "For the Ukrainian (At Heart)".

This set-up was so popular that the income generated from the raffle was three times that of those held in the past.

Of course, no evening in Regina would be complete without a dance, and at this Malanka it was to the music of the 6-member Slow Motion Walter Band. The music had both young and old on the dance floor, and also had



The Pre-Poltava Dancers presented "Kubanushka", featuring Ukrainian, Georgian and Russian dance elements of the Kuban Region.

plenty of participation during the traditional "Kolomeyka".

The Regina AUUC is grateful to all the volunteers and sponsors who facilitated an enjoyable evening, and in particular the Malanka Committee: Cindy Greschner, Sasha

and Wanda Lapchuk, Todd and Renata Tkatchuk, Shawn and Jennifer Swicheniuk, Zoya Shmyr, Erin Stepenhoff, Dion Tchorzewski, Kris Wanner, Dave Wilson, Lynne and Alex Lapchuk and Noah Evanchuk.

— Alex Lapchuk



Of course, Malanka is not complete without a kolomeyka.



Slow Motion Walter kept patrons dancing.

## Cultural Traditions Revived in Edmonton AUUC

This year, AUUC Edmonton Branch took a major step towards reviving some of its annual cultural traditions by organizing events both before and after the Christmas break.

A Christmas showcase on December 20, 2014, treated parents, members and friends to a display of many of the activities taking place in the Centre. It included songs by the Trembita Mixed Choir as well as engaging instrumentals by an ensemble of Chilean and other Latin American players who presented some of the tunes practiced by members of the community that uses the Edmonton Centre once a week for their functions.

Perhaps most enjoyable, however, was the demonstration of some steps, as well as actual dances, being taught as part of the Centre's children's dance program by instructors Kristina Kyaushas, Nataliya Kovalenko and Angeline Letourneau. The program



AUUC Edmonton Branch President Peter Horon spoke of the history and mission of the organization.

closed with a visit by Santa Claus, after which everyone adjourned to the Centre basement for a lunch of borscht and sandwiches prepared by Elsie Horon and Marsha Bilyk.

The showcase was followed in the new year by an even more ambitious event — Malanka — which has always been one of the most popular and well-attended celebrations held in Edmonton's Ukrainian

Centre.

The 2015 celebration of the Ukrainian New Year took place on Saturday, January 17, and was a smashing success, attracting some 250 members and supporters.

Cocktails and a huge buffet dinner were followed by a floor show that included numbers from the Trembita Mixed Choir, dances by the Nadiya Dancers and a traditional Malanka pageant.

The night closed with a dance to the Hammertones, a band which includes several of the Bill Uhrn family, long-time members of Branch #2.

Branch President Peter Horon greeted the packed Hall with a welcome that referred to the history and mission of the AUUC.

"Ninety-seven years ago," he said, "Our forefathers organized a progressive Ukrainian organization, one that was dedicated to maintaining the positive values of our culture through song, music and dance.

"So successful were they in pursuing this vision that today we still come together to teach our children to sing, dance, celebrate, and hold on to some of their values. Today, we strive to maintain the unity of all progressive people, no matter what their nationality or ethnic origin."

The Malanka celebration, which has its roots deep in



Paul Greene played the part of the *chort* (evil spirit) captivating Malanka (Nataliya Kovalenko) in the night's frivolous skit.

— Story photos: Bruce McDonald



Nadiya Dancers prepare to present the "Tambourine Dance".



The Trembita Mixed Choir appeared at both the Christmas celebration in December and the Ukrainian New Year's celebration in January.

Ukrainian folklore, was carried to Canada by some of the earliest Ukrainian settlers, many of whom opened up the prosperous farming region in central and northern Alberta. In Ukraine, carollers or other small groups traditionally went from house to house playing pranks, acting small plays, or just visiting neighbours, friends and family. Ukrainian organi-

zations in Canada, however, tend to celebrate in halls, with a full dinner, raffles and prizes, and a lively dance.

In keeping with tradition, the band played a kolomeyka late into the evening, for which almost everyone joined into a triple circle, after which they resumed dancing the night away.

— Winston Gereluk



# Concert at Shevchenko Museum

On February 12, Kosa Kolektiv, a group which meets in a studio in Toronto for various activities, staged a concert/social at the Shevchenko Museum. A capacity audience attended in spite of the bitter cold of the day. The singing warmed their minds, and a generous supply of open-face sandwiches and other refreshments warmed their bodies.

Kosa Kolektiv opened the concert with a selection of shchedrivky, kolyadky, and other winter songs.

To meet popular demand, Kosa Kolektiv formed KalynDar, a smaller singing

group, which also performed, continuing the winter festival theme.

The evening included a performance by a trio who presented Georgian songs. In-

cluded was a young fellow who seemed totally at ease.

Guest performers were the group Yavorovy Lyudzy, whose heritage is Byelorussian.

— Story and photos: Wilfred Szczesny



KalynDar is one of the activities of Kosa Kolektiv.



This trio singing Georgian songs added variety. Did the young man steal the show? Of course he did!



Guest performers on February 12 were Yavorovy Lyudzy, a group of Byelorussian heritage.



A varied audience braved the weather to attend the concert/social at the Shevchenko Museum.



Kosa Kolektiv, which meets in a studio in Toronto for various activities, hosted the concert/social at the Shevchenko Museum. They opened the concert with a selection of Ukrainian songs of the winter season.

# Love and Laughter at AUUC Toronto Branch



Many people braved the bitter cold of that afternoon to attend the popular annual Love and Laughter event.

— Story photos: Jerry Dobrowolsky

February 15th saw an enthusiastic group of celebrants enjoying a post-Valentine's Day filled with music, laughter, sweets, and Natalka Mochoruk's hand-crafted raffle prizes.

The multi-talented Peter Krochak shared his musical gifts with the incredible soprano Kira Braun and clarinetist Carlos Melendes. Their beautiful music thrilled the crowd and set the tone for the "interesting" variety of jokes that followed.

Winners of the "comedy contest", Adele Paraschuk, Peter Krochak, and Nancy Zepp, are to be congratulated.

The jovial atmosphere certainly served to brighten an otherwise dull, winter afternoon, and left the crowd anticipating the next event.

— Connie Prince



Soprano Kira Braun, accompanied on the keyboard by Peter Krochak, opened the concert with an aria from Mozart's Don Giovanni.



Peter Krochak accompanied himself on the keyboard in the Ukrainian song "A Small River Flows" (Teche reechka nevylychka),



George Borusiewich, member of the AUUC Toronto Branch Executive, was Master of Ceremonies.



The concert ended with Franz Schubert's "The Shepherd on the Rock", performed by Peter Krochak on the keyboard, soprano Kira Braun, and Carlos Melendes on the clarinet.

**Why not renew your sub now?**



# JOIN US!

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

## AUUC NATIONAL OFFICE

National Executive Committee AUUC  
595 Pritchard Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R2W 2K4  
Phone: 800-856-8242 Fax: (204) 589-3404  
E-mail: mail@auucobzar.net Web site: auuc.ca

## VANCOUVER BRANCH

Ukrainian Cultural Centre  
805 East Pender Street  
Vancouver BC V6A 1V9  
Phone: (604) 254-3436 Fax: (604) 254-3436  
E-mail: auucvancouver@telus.net  
Website: www.auucvancouver.ca

## CALGARY BRANCH

Ukrainian Cultural Centre  
3316-28 Avenue SW  
Calgary AB T3E 0R8  
Phone: (403) 246-1231  
E-mail: calauuc@telus.net

## EDMONTON BRANCH

Ukrainian Centre  
11018-97 Street  
Edmonton AB T5H 2M9  
Phone: (780) 424-2037 Fax: (780) 424-2013  
E-mail: auucedm@telus.net

## VEGREVILLE BRANCH

c/o Lil Humeniuk  
Box 481  
Vegreville AB T9C 1R6  
Phone: (780) 632-3021

## REGINA BRANCH

Ukrainian Cultural Centre  
1809 Toronto Street  
Regina SK S4P 1M7  
Phone: (306) 522-1188 Web site: www.poltava.ca

## WINNIPEG BRANCH

Ukrainian Labour Temple  
591 Pritchard Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R2W 2K4 ult-wpg.ca  
Phone: (204) 582-9269 Fax: 589-3404

## OTTAWA BRANCH

c/o Robert Seychuk  
24 Attwood Crescent  
Ottawa ON K2E 5A9  
Phone: (613) 228-0990

## TORONTO BRANCH

AUUC Cultural Centre  
1604 Bloor Street West  
Toronto ON M6P 1A7  
Phone: (416) 588-1639 Fax: 588-9180  
auuctorontobranch@gmail.com

## WELLAND BRANCH

Ukrainian Labour Temple  
342 Ontario Road  
Welland ON L3B 5C5  
Phone: (905) 732-5656

# Yunist Hosts Malanka

— Photo: Katherine Pierre



**Creatures of the Night, a KISS tribute band, appeared at the celebration of Malanka hosted by the Yunist Dancers on January 19 at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, and graciously posed for photos. The night's "amazing" DJ is in the background.**

The Yunist Dance Ensemble of the AUUC Winnipeg Branch hosted a Malanka social on January 10. The turnout included over 160 people!

The participants enjoyed delicious food — perogies,

kielbasa, rye bread and pickles.

The guests danced the night away with an amazing DJ, and topped the night off with a rousing kolomeyka.

An interesting surprise for the guests was the appearance of a KISS tribute band — Creatures of the Night — who showed up to do photo-ops with everyone.

The night ended with some great prizes! Winners took

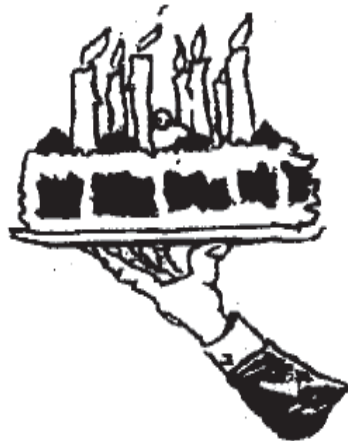
home items ranging from a Steeped Tea prize package to a Jets jersey to a kids package.

Yunist looks forward to another great Malanka in 2016; make sure you can make it!

— Elise Pierre

The AUUC will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2018.

## Happy Birthday, Friends!



The **Edmonton AUUC Senior Citizens' Club** wishes a happy birthday to the celebrant of April:

Anne Husar

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

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

Joan Kowalewich  
Audrey Skalbania

Enjoy your day with family and friends!

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

Rose Kwiecinski  
George Sitak

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

## Who, What, When, Where

**Vancouver** — AUUC Vancouver Branch will present a **Ukrainian Arts and Culture Fest** at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, 805 East Pender Street, on Saturday, April 18, and Sunday, April 19. Workshops in folksongs, playing musical instruments, bead making and egg decorating (pysanky) will be offered. In conjunction with the workshops, **Perogy Lunch and Mini Bazaar** will be offered at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, 805 East Pender Street, on Sunday, April 19, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. **Pre-registration is recommended** for the workshops. For more information, call (604) 254-3436 or visit our website at

**Calgary** — The **Calgary Hopak Ensemble**, accompanied by guest artists, **Edmonton's Trembita Folk Choir**, invites you to the annual **Spring Concert** on Friday, May 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the **Leacock Theatre, Mount Royal University**. Tickets — \$20.00; children (ages 3 – 12) — \$10.00. For tickets call the **Ukrainian Cultural Centre** at 403-246-1231 or **Darlene** at 403-271-2379.

**Winnipeg** — A **Spring Concert** will be staged by the performing groups of the **Association of United Ukrainian Canadians** on Saturday, April 18, at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, 591 Pritchard Avenue, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$20.00. Call **Brent Stearns** 204-488-1008.

**Winnipeg** — **Festival of Mandolins** will take place on Saturday, May 9, at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, 591 Pritchard Avenue at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20.00 at the door. For information call **Brent Stearns** at 204-488-1008.

**Toronto** — AUUC Toronto Branch will hold its **Annual General Meeting** from 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 19, at the AUUC Cultural Centre, 1604 Bloor Street West. All members are urged to attend.

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.



## Shevchenko Museum AGM

(Continued from Page 1.)  
to Museum governance, received donations, and about a dozen other items, before closing with thanks to REC members, Museum volunteer Lana Danylenko (who looks after the Facebook page) and “everyone who generously donated to helping make the Museum successful!”

Bill Harasym presented a report from the Lands Development Committee. In addition to reviewing a bit of the history of the LDC and presenting information about its structure, the report presented information about recent developments. The spirit of the report was quite positive.

The LDC report was supplemented by comments from legal advisor Norm Tomas.

(Most participants at the AGM were unaware that Bill Harasym had suffered a fall the day before the meeting, but chose to attend the AGM rather than being taken to a hospital. Mr. Harasym did go to the hospital shortly after returning home after the AGM. His stay at the hospital for observation was brief, and he has resumed regular activity.)

The AGM also received a financial report from Treasurer Nancy Stewart, and a

report from the Audit Committee, presented by Jerry Dobrowolsky.

The AGM adopted two resolutions, one specifying the duties of Board members, and the other directing that the Board of Directors meet face to face every third year until the financial situation improves.

A motion was also passed

setting March 12, 2016, as the date of the next AGM.

Elected to the Board of Directors of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum and Memorial Park Foundation were: Vancouver — Larry Kleparchuk; Edmonton — Shirley Uhryn; Calgary — Debra Skrabek; Regina — Bob Ivanochko; Winnipeg — Lily Stearns; Sudbury —

Oryst Sawchuk; Welland — Clara Babiy; Ottawa — Bob Seychuk.

Elected to the Resident Executive Committee were: President — Andrew Gregorovich; Vice-President — George Borusiewich; Museum Director — Lyudmyla Pogoryelova; Treasurer — Nancy Stewart; Recording Secretary — Bernardine Dobrowolsky; Members — Pavlo Lopata, Len Sedun; Vice-Recording Secretary —

George Borusiewich.

Elected to the Audit Committee were: Jerry Dobrowolsky, Vera Borusiewich, and Bill Malnychuk.

As Bill Harasym did not stand for election to any position, there were many expressions of gratitude for his decades of service.

There were also expressions of welcome to Pavlo Lopata on his election for the first time to the REC.

— Wilfred Szczesny

## From the Museum Director's Report

**What follows is most of a section of the Museum Director's Report, re-edited, which provides some insight into the quality of the activity of the Shevchenko Museum in Toronto.**

### Other activities

We helped the Kobzar Park Rejuvenation Committee of Timmins, Ontario, in their fundraising campaign to raise money for the restoration of a Shevchenko statue that was vandalized beyond repair in the early 2000s. It was located in a Kobzar parquette next to the former Timmins AUUC hall. The statue was created in 1981 in Ukraine by the Ukrainian sculptor Anatoly Ihnashchenko, after which it was brought to Canada. It

was incorporated into the concrete maple leaf and erected in the park. Later, vandals beheaded the statue and the Timmins parks and recreation staff took it off. Now the Kobzar Park Rejuvenation Committee of Timmins are raising funds to restore the Shevchenko Monument. The sculptor was selected, the budget was set and the work started. We advertised the campaign on our website and forwarded a small donation to the project.

viding any protection to any person they have chosen to attack. What's that called?

For the time being, Canada is far from Nazi Germany. However, that does not mean that this country can never be that kind of dictatorship.

We would do well to remember that Hitler did not overthrow the government. Like Mr. Harper, Hitler was elected. Like Mr. Harper, Hitler played on fear and resentment to garner support, and like Harper, Hitler identified certain groups as public enemies to be given special treatment. Other similarities include doing whatever it takes to keep power.

Again, Canada is not, at the moment, Nazi Germany. However, the direction in which Prime Minister Harper is taking the country is cause for concern.

Stephen Harper, the enemy within, is far more a threat to the people of this country than any other, including external movements like ISIL, Boko Haram or the Taliban.

Fortunately, we can still do something about it. Opposition to measures like Bill C-51 is still possible. The courts are still independent and regularly rule against the government's excesses, and the Conservatives can still be defeated in the federal election later this year.

Will this still be true in a few years, if Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party are re-elected?

On February 12 we had a concert of Ukrainian folk songs of the winter calendar performed by the Ukrainian singing group Kosa Kolektiv, the Byelorussian group Yavorovy Lyudzy and a Georgian trio. The concert was attended very well and was enjoyed very much!

On May 31, 2014, I was delegated to Quebec City to represent the Museum. I attended the ceremony where I witnessed the unveiling of a bronze bust of Shevchenko. The bust was created by the Toronto sculptor Oleh Lesiuk and unveiled before hundreds of visitors from many parts of the country.

On March 22, I participated in the Taras Shevchenko conference at the Shevchenko Scientific Society held in the Canadian Ukrainian Art Foundation (KUMF) Gallery....

The Museum supplied in-

formation and materials to universities, publishers, archives and researchers. A new exhibition on foreign commemoration of Taras Shevchenko, in the State Archive of Ukraine, includes materials that we supplied. We helped a Texas University professor... Bernth Lindfors, to illustrate a book about Ira Aldridge and Taras Shevchenko that will be published later in the year. American writer Irene Zabutko published a book about Mykola Gogol where she acknowledges the help of our Museum.... With the help of the Museum, the Ukrainian Cultural Club of Atlanta (USA) organized multilingual readings of Taras Shevchenko poetry. We helped the Ukrainian Museum in Woodstock, CT, create a video presentation of Taras Shevchenko monuments

(Continued on Page 11.)

## The Threat Within

(Continued from Page 4.)

That is the same logic which is leading him to demonize Muslims, environmentalists, First Nations, certain charities and activist not-for-profit organizations, defenders of civil liberties, and many other groups.

A more dangerous threat, because it is less public, is the decision to investigate the political history of people in the civil service. What possible purpose could this have other than to make easier a purge at some future date? (At least the government of Ukraine, which is doing the same thing, has admitted that its intent is to eliminate political opponents, though they have not called it a purge.)

Is a Prime Minister like Stephen Harper, and a political party like the Conservatives, to be trusted with powers like those enacted under Bill C-51?

Under this legislation, they can throw you into jail for what you're thinking — without having to prove that you were thinking it, or even that they have any good reason to believe that you were thinking it.

Under the law, you are guilty until proven innocent — the security agencies and the police are not required to reveal any evidence against you or identify your accusers (if any).

The law provides no parliamentary oversight, leaving a weak and compliant (to the government) oversight structure to protect those who are charged. Canada is the only democratic country without parliamentary oversight of such legislation.

The law allows the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) to break laws and violate the constitution, subject only to a “disruption warrant” issued by any cooperative judge. In Canada judges are not allowed, currently, to allow violations of the constitution. Lawbreaking by the RCMP was the justification for the creation of CSIS in the first place.

The Conservative majority on the parliamentary committee studying Bill C-51 blocked the appearance before the committee of a representative of eight senior lawyers approved by the federal Justice Department and appointed by Canadian courts to examine top-secret evidence related to deportation of terror suspects — because their three-page brief calls for an amendment to specify the appointment of a special advocate “to represent the interests of the persons whose charter and legal rights might be affected” (*Toronto Star*, March 13, 2015).

In other words, the government is utterly opposed to pro-

## Open Letter

(Continued from Page 4.)  
false. Part of our experience is the evidence to the contrary contained in many studies (studies of which governments are aware) and reports, including submissions to government by the Ontario Health Coalition and others.

We believe that there is a better way to health care in Ontario and Canada; that way is an end to privatization, coupled with adequate needs-based funding.

We call on your governments to rededicate themselves to support of the Canada Health Act, and to enact specific measures to that end.

We call on your governments, as appropriate in your jurisdictions, to restore full healthcare funding, using needs-based criteria rather than corporate efficiency models.

We call for an end to the P3 model (under whatever name) of funding in health care, designed to provide safe and easy profits for the private sector, and we call for a reversal of de-listing of publicly funded services (such as podiatry) which forces patients to use for-profit clinics and independent health facilities charging user fees (often

for inappropriate tests and services).

We call for a restoration of a full-service-local-hospital model.

We call for waiting lists for visits to specialists and services in hospitals to be eradicated by opening up idle hospital beds, full utilization of operating rooms and other facilities, and the provision of adequate staffing and funding to make these areas operational.

We call for waiting lists for long-term care and home care to be eliminated by providing adequate funding and adequately paying the required staff.

We call for the extension of Medicare to include dental care, vision care, long-term care and pharmacare. Enforce the Canada Health Act.

We call for effective regulation and inspection of all institutions (including drug manufacturers, long-term care providers and others) which provide services or goods to the health care system.

**Respectfully submitted by those present at a meeting on health care in Brampton on February 15, 2015.**



## Ukrainian News Briefs Selected by George Borusiewicz

### Coal Dust

(From a January 31 report in the *New York Times*.)

“Outside Vladimir Moroz’s snug little brick home, winter and hardship grip war-stricken eastern Ukraine.

“Money is scarce, the store shelves are bare and an icy wind whips over the snowy steppe. Inside, a retired miner smiles broadly. He peels off his gloves and flexes his cold-stiffened hands over a stove and his prized, glowing, once-illicit source of warmth: backyard coal dug from dangerous, unregulated mines.

“In a region plagued by upheaval and misfortune, coal miners who take pride in their grit and self-reliance have found at least one silver lining in changes sweeping over their land. The rebel government has decided to allow private mining, a long-stigmatized, legally proscribed but nevertheless widespread practice in Ukraine’s east.

“I have my own potatoes, my own carrots, my own cabbage and my own mine,” Mr. Moroz said, referring to the dark pit under a shed out back. “This is how we live.”

“Deep in the back country of Donbass, as the rebellious region of eastern Ukraine is known, rich seams of coal undulate just under the hills. In places, kicking back the topsoil with a boot reveals glistening layers of coal, as mysterious and alluring to these miners as onyx.

“Mr. Moroz struggles to recall when he was last paid a pension; maybe it was August. Relatives have fled, food is scarce and danger is never far away. But coal, at least, is plentiful. So long as Ukraine’s legions of small-time miners pay taxes to the rebel government, The Donetsk People’s Republic, they are free to dig wherever and however they see fit.”

### Hungary Against Arming Ukraine

(From a February 2 report in the *Irish Times*.)

“The leaders of Germany and Hungary have agreed not to sell weapons to Ukraine to use in its war against Russian-backed separatists....

“Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban hosted Chancellor Angela Merkel yesterday for talks that were closely watched by Moscow and western capitals, given his efforts to maintain good relations with Russia and his criticism of European Union sanctions against it.

“Russian president Vladimir Putin is due to visit Budapest

in a fortnight’s time, and analysts said Dr. Merkel was keen to gauge Mr. Orban’s stance on Ukraine, where heavy fighting continued and separatist leaders announced plans to draft an additional 100,000 men in the coming weeks.

“For my part, I can say that Germany won’t support Ukraine with weapons,” Dr. Merkel said in Budapest. “I’m firmly convinced that this conflict cannot be solved by military means.”

“Mr. Orban said Hungary shared those positions....”

### Cluster Bombs

(American Senator John McCain was recently interviewed by the Russian news agency *Sputnik*. The interview was published February 6, 2015.)

“I think that if we had provided them with the weapons they need, they wouldn’t have felt they had to use cluster bombs. So, it’s partly our fault,” McCain, who is also the US Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, told *Sputnik*

“Human Rights Watch has confirmed November reports that Kiev’s military used cluster bombs in residential areas in southeastern Ukraine, including Donetsk and Lugansk. The HRW also said that cluster ammunition was deployed in Donetsk on October 2, which led to the death of an employee from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

“The usage of cluster munitions has been declared illegal and a violation of international humanitarian law by the UN. Up to 114 countries have signed a UN treaty banning such weapons, which are made up of hundreds of submunitions that can travel in any direction during blasts, putting everyone in their vicinity at high risk.

“HRW blamed Kiev for not investigating its army’s use of prohibited cluster bombs against civilians in the country’s east.”

### Hell No, I Won’t Go

(Excerpts from the February 10 issue of the British newspaper *The Guardian*.)

“Ruslan Kotsaba posted a video addressed to the Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, last week in which he said he would rather go to prison for five years for draft-dodging than fight pro-Russian rebels in the country’s east. Now he faces 15 years in jail after being arrested for treason and obstructing the military.

“His case is symptomatic of Kiev’s difficulties in mobi-

lizing a war-weary society to continue the fight against the rebels, who appear to have an unlimited supply of weapons and training from Russia.

“As the country nears bankruptcy and the reform program demanded by the Maidan revolution last year is sidelined by the war effort, the drive to call up new recruits is floundering.”

“The government has denied there is a major problem with mobilisation.... But testimony from the regions, especially in western Ukraine (my emphasis - **gb**), tells a different story. ‘At least here mobilisation has been a total failure,’ said Iryna Vereschuk, mayor of the small town of Rava-Ruska, in the far west of Ukraine. ‘People don’t understand what they are fighting against.’”

“Vereschuk said attitudes have hardened in her town as locals who went to fight returned in coffins. Of about 100 call-up papers meant to be distributed as part of the latest wave of mobilisation, only six had been given out. In the other cases, the men had hidden or could not be found, she said.”

### Rebuilding Ukraine

(Excerpts from a February 26 posting on the *Reuters* website.)

“Western powers are preparing what they say may be their most potent weapon against Moscow’s interference in Ukraine— a multi-billion dollar aid package to rebuild a near-bankrupt state and realize the European dream cherished by many Ukrainians. There is just one problem: foreign governments and international financing institutions are not willing to pour money into a dysfunctional state.

“Only this week the businessman brought in by the new authorities to clean up the tax service was himself suspended pending a corruption inquiry.

“Donors say the former Soviet republic, crippled by war and corruption, is unable or unwilling even to identify how many roads, power plants and schools its 45 million people need, let alone meet new European standards for farms and factories.”

“Ukraine is one of the world’s most corrupt places, ranking as 142 out of 175 in Transparency International’s corruption perception index. By some estimates, the shadow economy accounts for up to 60 percent of economic output.

“In a telling remark as he suspended tax chief Ihor Bilous on Tuesday, Prime Minister

Arseny Yatseniuk complained that while the agency’s honesty improved after the Maidan protests ousted the old regime it had gone back to working ‘like it always did.’”

### Guns Worsen Crisis

(Excerpts from a *Sputnik News* website report on February 28, 2015.)

“Eighteen of the twenty-seven American political analysts denounced an initiative to arm the Ukrainian military forces as dangerous and futile, according to a survey.

“According to Keith Darden, Associate Professor in the School of International at American University in Washington, D.C., ‘the talk of arming Ukraine only feeds the delusion that Ukraine can win on the battlefield.’

“The analyst considered the Minsk II agreement ‘the best deal’ for Ukraine that can lead to ultimate solution to the longstanding crisis. However, instead of convincing the Ukrainian authorities to carry out necessary constitutional reforms aimed at decentralization of the power, obtaining a non-aligned status and aborting the schemes Kiev’s corrupted leaders who are used to stealing huge sums of money at Ukraine’s expense, Washington is indulging Kiev’s ‘unrealistic hope’ that Ukrainian troops can become a ‘well-funded and well-armed proxy army in a fight between Russia and the West,’ the analyst underscored.”

“John J. Mearsheimer, R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, emphasized that arming Ukraine will inevitably lead to further escalation of violence. He stressed that the US ‘trans-Atlantic relations’ will be put under threat, since the Europeans, especially the Germans, strongly oppose the plan of providing Ukraine with military aid.

“Another expert, Joshua R. Itzkowitz Shiffrin, a young Assistant Professor at the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, called into question the ‘defensive weaponry’ term, pointing to the fact that the armament can be used in both defensive and offensive operations.”

### Dangerous Propaganda

(*Der Spiegel* is a highly-respected German weekly magazine. According to *The Economist*, it is one of Europe’s most influential magazines. The following are ex-

cerpts from a March 6 report.)

“US president Obama supports Chancellor Merkel’s efforts at finding a diplomatic solution to the Ukraine crisis. But hawks in Washington seem determined to torpedo Berlin’s approach. And NATO’s top commander in Europe hasn’t been helping either.

“It was quiet in eastern Ukraine last Wednesday. Indeed, it was another quiet day in an extended stretch of relative calm. The battles between the Ukrainian army and the pro-Russian separatists had largely stopped and heavy weaponry was being withdrawn. The Minsk cease-fire wasn’t holding perfectly, but it was holding.

“On that same day, General Philip Breedlove, the top NATO commander in Europe, stepped before the press in Washington. Putin, he said, had once again ‘upped the ante’ in eastern Ukraine — with well over a thousand combat vehicles, Russian combat forces, some of their most sophisticated air defense, battalions of artillery having been sent to the Donbass.

“‘What is clear,’ Breedlove said, ‘is that right now, it is not getting better. It is getting worse everyday.’

“German leaders in Berlin were stunned. They didn’t understand what Breedlove was talking about. And it wasn’t the first time.

“Once again the German government, supported by intelligence gathered by the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND), Germany’s foreign intelligence agency, did not share the view of NATO’s Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

“The German government is alarmed. Are the Americans trying to thwart European efforts at mediation led by Chancellor Angela Merkel? Sources in the Chancellery have referred to Breedlove’s comments as ‘dangerous propaganda.’

“Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier even found it necessary recently to bring up Breedlove’s comments with NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg.”

### What Ukrainians Think

(From a March 8 report on the *www.usatoday.com* website.)

“Several residents in this city (Mariupol; controlled by the American-backed Kyiv government-**gb**) in far eastern Ukraine said they want a united country but they’re split on the use of force to solve Ukraine’s war with Russian- (Continued on Page 11.)



## AMIL TROPAK

Amil was born on July 17, 1929, in Ranfurly, Alberta, to Mike and Annie Tropak.

He heard stories of meetings that were held right after his birth both at his parents' and Uncle Anthony Yakimec's homes. These were the first meetings in the province to organize a branch of the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association. His family and neighbours continued to support the association for many years and that was something about which Amil was very passionate.

He joined the Association of the United Ukrainian Canadians (AUUC) in 1954 and continued to be a member until his passing.

Amil moved to Edmonton in 1959, first working in real estate.

He then enrolled in the very first class ever held at NAIT (Northern Alberta Institute of Technology) in 1962. In fact, classes started before the building officially opened in 1963.

The class consisted of 29 communication electrician apprentices, and he received his



ticket after two years of study.

He worked at the Celanese Plant for three years and for the provincial Government for 17 years, covering the northern half of Alberta in the field of instrumentation.

In 1961, Amil sang in the AUUC mixed choir and in 1972, he joined the newly formed Trembita Male Chorus.

In the late 1960s and early '70s, Amil spent every weekend from May to October helping develop the AUUC children's camp at Sylvan Lake.

Amil retired at the end of October in 1991, and married Mary, the love of his life, on November 9, 1991.

In 1995, Amil and Mary began to participate in the senior citizens' activities at the Ukrainian Centre.

Amil really enjoyed his retirement with Mary. Her birthday was the same day as his, and they celebrated every year together.

They travelled every year to Cuba and also went to Europe, Bali, Hong Kong and Hawaii.

He enjoyed visits from Mary's five children, the grandchildren, and later, the great grandchildren. He treated us as though we were his own.

At first we found his passion for certain subjects to be quite overwhelming. We had never really encountered anyone quite like him but, as our family is known to do, we lightened the mood by joking around with him. It took him some time to get used to this but he appreciated it in the end and it made him feel like he was part of the family.

One year, at Christmas, we remembered how he hated Michael Jackson with that

great passion of his, so he was given a huge poster of Michael Jackson with a glove taped to its crotch. He was miffed at first but took the joke as it was intended — in good humour!

Before they were married we used to have "Mom's Gone to Cuba" parties at her house. After they got married, we continued with "Mom and Amil Are Gone to Cuba" parties at his house. Amil wasn't too sure about these at first, but he accepted it anyway!

Mom and Amil would look after the grandchildren and Amil would repeat over and over again the funny things

they said and did. He really enjoyed telling those stories to everyone, even if they had heard them many times. Amil also looked forward to visits from the great grandchildren as well!

Amil Tropak passed peacefully in his sleep on January 9, 2015, at the Royal Alex Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta.

Amil was predeceased by his parents, Mike and Annie, and his brothers Leo and Billy.

Amil's presence will be greatly missed, but I am sure he is with his bother Leo, having a few drinks and discussing politics!

— Delores Langston

## Director's Report

(Continued from Page 9.)

around the world.... The Shevchenko Museum Poetry Club has been functioning since 2010....

Although our Museum has experienced quite a bit of success, not everything that we planned went well.... Last fall the Museum planned ... an exhibition of sculpture by the renowned Ukrainian sculptor Igor Grechanyk.... We even received a grant from the Shevchenko Foundation in Winnipeg for this exhibit. It

was unfortunate that the sculptor ... was not able to arrange moving his exhibits from New York to Toronto. The Ukrainian Embassy didn't agree to cooperate and the Museum couldn't take responsibility of transporting the exhibits by its own means.

The museum took advantage of a Toronto Hydro initiative to upgrade lighting for small businesses free of charge.

... We had fun together too.... Along with the AUUC Toronto Branch we celebrated Bill Harasym's 90th birthday on October 5, 2014.

## Ukrainian News Briefs

(Continued from Page 10.)

backed separatists. "We're all here for a united Ukraine," said Eduard Fyodorovych, 69, a retired steelworker, standing with friends by the community pigeon roost. But Fyodorovych said he wants protections for the Russian language and schools, and he disagrees with the war.

"All we want is peace and pensions," he said. His views and those of others reflect some of the findings of an opinion poll... which says a clear majority of Ukrainians would accept neutrality between the European Union and Russia.

"The greatest potential consensus lies in Ukraine affirming a neutral position between the European Union and Russia," said the survey being presented at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington."

## Beauty Pageant

(As reported in the March 9 issue of the *Telegraph*, a British newspaper.)

"Female rebel fighters have held a beauty pageant in the city of Donetsk in celebration of International Women's Day. The unusual event saw the soldiers swap their military boots and camouflage fatigues for high heels and ball gowns.

"We have to continue to live," said one of the contestants, who gave her name only

as Anna. 'War is war but life goes on,' she added.

"According to the competitors' biographies, some of them left their children behind to fight on the side of pro-Russian rebels. One of the contestants was a woman from the Russian city of Bryansk, around 124 miles from the Ukrainian border."

## Economy Collapsing

(A summary of reports in the British *Guardian*, the Indian *NDTV*, the American *Washington Post*, the British *Telegraph*, the stateless *Zero Hedge*, the *BBC*, and the *American Free Press*.)

Soviet Ukraine dissolved in 1991, and the march towards a capitalist economy began. In spite of the fanfare and patriotic drumbeating, the changes brought hardship and a lowered standard-of-living to most Ukrainians.

According to the BBC, by early 2014, *the capitalist Ukrainian economy was still smaller than it was under socialism*.

This was confirmed by the *Washington Post*, which stated, "It seems almost impossible, but Ukraine's economy has actually shrunk since communism ended in 1991."

Since the expulsion (or escape?) of former President Viktor Yanukovich in February, 2014, Ukraine's economy has retreated further and has been on an accelerating down-

ward spiral. In one year, Ukraine's currency, the Hryvnia, has lost 70% of its value. In early February, 2015, *in just 2 days, it lost almost 50% of its then current value before rebounding*.

In a drastic move, Valeriya Gontareva, governor of the country's central bank, recently announced that it would raise its main interest rate to 30 percent to curb runaway inflation and stabilize its currency (on an annual basis, inflation rose to 28.5% in January, then spiked to 34.5% in February).

Gross Domestic Product (a measure of all goods and services produced by a country) contracted by 7% last year and is forecast to shrink another 5.5% in 2015.

However, To Ukraine's rescue a saviour appears — the International Monetary Fund. About mid-March, the I.M.F. signed off on a \$17.5 billion four-year aid program, the second attempt in less than a year to help Ukraine to avoid bankruptcy.

The I.M.F. loan is expected to unlock further credits from other donors. The combined package of assistance is estimated at \$40 billion.

As one of several conditions, Ukraine had to agree to increase substantially the price of natural gas to households. As of April 1, gas prices in Ukraine will increase four-fold, from 1,089 hryvnia per cubic metre of gas to 4,138 hryvnia for the same amount of gas (somebody has to pay the interest on a \$40 billion loan).

## MARY NEHODA

Mary Nehoda, for whom we held a 100th birthday party last July at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, passed away on January 12.

She was being treated for a foot infection at the Brock Fahrni Womens' Pavilion. She spent several months there as the infection did not want to heal and that is where she passed away.

A group memorial service was held at the hospital at which several friends and family were in attendance.

A picture of each person who had passed away was displayed on a table. As the pastor spoke about each person, someone from the family or a representative was called to light a candle and place a rose in a vase next to their picture.

A relative from Regina, Bernice Predenchuk, came to deal with estate matters and to arrange for the body to be transported to Canora, Sas-

katchewan, where she was born and where her father and mother are buried.

Mary worked as a maid and nanny for a family in Saskatchewan and when they moved to Vancouver, she came with them and lived here ever since.

She met and married her husband here, and was a member of the Ukrainian and Russian communities for many years.

One of the people who attended the memorial service was one of the "children" she helped to look after so many years ago.

The Ukrainian Cultural Centre has received a number of embroidered and crocheted items from her estate, most of which will go into our archive collection along with an album of pictures of her 100th birthday celebration, her funeral, and her life story.

— Audrey Moysiuk



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# Regina Concert-Recital



The Poltava Ensemble opened the program with "Pryvit" (welcome), featuring the Zakarpattia, Bukovyna, Volyn and Central regions of Ukraine.

The Annual Concert-Recital of the AUUC Poltava School of Ukrainian Performing Arts and the AUUC Poltava Ensemble of Song, Music and Dance featured 125 performers before an audience of 350 at the Regina Performing Arts Centre on February 7.

The six classes in the School are instructed by Dallas Montepetit, Kayla Swicheniuk, Nicholas Dmyterko, Julia Pringle, Daniel Hebert, Emery Millette, Eleanor Lekach and Lisa Wanner (who is also Director of the School).

The Poltava Ensemble Dancers are under the direc-



Vocal soloist Valeria Honchar rendered the Ukrainian songs "The Flowing River" and "Karpaty".

tion of Oleksandr Byelyayev, with Assistant Lisa Wanner and Ballet Mistress Tetiana Moisey.

The Ensemble Orchestra, which accompanied all the dances, is under the direction of Natalia Osypenko, and was also featured in the orchestral selection "Dnirovsky Waltz".

The 19 numbers in the program also featured vocal soloists of the Ensemble, Guenadiy Ostrikov and Valeria Honchar.

Making their first appearance with the AUUC were recent arrivals from Ukraine, "The Magic of Karpaty" violinists Bogdan Vatzyk and Nadia Babchouk, who played a medley of Hutzul dances.

The AUUC is indebted to all the instructors, technical and stage management, and the parents who assisted with the children's groups and those that manned the foyer.

A month later, on March 1, the Poltava Ensemble appeared "In Concert" before an audience of 650 in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, under contract to the Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils for their concert series "Stars For Saskatchewan".

— Alex Lapchuk



The Junior Kalyna Dancers delighted the audience with "Ptashky" (Birds).

— Story photos: Mark Greschner



As the long winter slowly ended, Poltava's "Winter Games" was full of lively games, frolicking and dancing.



The Lileya Dance Group presented the Western Ukrainian "Zakarpattia tanets".



Guest violinists Bogdan Vatzyk and Nadia Babchouk, recent arrivals from Ukraine, performed the medley "Hutzul Dance". They also appeared with Poltava in Weyburn on March 1.



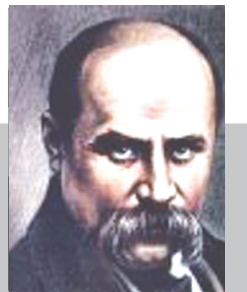
Polava Ensemble's colourful and energetic "Sviatkovy souvenir" is always popular.

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## Toronto's Movie Afternoon

The bitter cold and conflicting events kept the crowd low, but those who came to the AUUC Cultural Centre on the afternoon of March 1 had a wonderful experience.

For one thing, they watched a hilarious movie: *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Set in an imaginary country between the two world wars, the film's focus is the concierge of a world-famous hotel.

For another thing, they enjoyed a fine buffet featuring Hungarian delicacies: salami, sausage, pickles, peppers and



— Photo: Jerry Dobrowolsky

a selection of cheeses. For a third thing, they shared the company of a hardy and

sociable group of fellow filmgoers.

So that's what you missed.

## Sustaining Fund Donations

Elsie Williston, Winnipeg MB	
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