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Welcome to New Canadians

—Photo: Emily Halldorson



Some new citizens posed with members of the Yunist Dance Ensemble on Saturday, September 30, after a citizenship ceremony was held at the Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg. AUUC Winnipeg was very proud to host the ceremony, during which 50 people received their citizenship papers. A report on the event, with pictures, appears on Page 7.

Trump to Decertify Iran Nuclear Deal

President Donald Trump has been a vocal critic of the nuclear agreement between Iran and six other countries (including the USA). The agreement is considered periodically by the American Congress, on the basis of the President's certification that Iran has met its obligations. In early October, President Trump announced that he would not certify the agreement by the October 15 deadline, claiming that it was not in America's interest.

This would put the onus on Congress to decide whether to

continue the agreement or withdraw. The president has said that he would put forward an alternative plan for dealing with Iran, whom he blames for terrorism and instability throughout the Middle East.

While various dates for speeches and other activity were floated by anonymous White House sources, they also cautioned that everything was open to change.

What did appear certain is that President Trump would not press for an immediate resumption of sanctions on Iran. Such a move would abrogate the agreement, and could lead to Iran's resumption of a nuclear program.

The other five countries which are part of the deal

have said that the USA could not unilaterally kill the agreement. However there is nothing (except self-interest) to prevent America's withdrawal.

The effect of such a move would probably depend on Iran's view of its self-interest. Resumption of a nuclear program would not be automatic.

Shield Law Passes

On October 4, the House of Commons in Ottawa unanimously (277-0) passed the Journalistic Source Protection Act, also known as a shield law.

This law protects whistleblowers and other confidential sources of journalists' information by restricting police access to journalists' records.

Nobel Peace Prize

The Norwegian Nobel Committee announced in early October that the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize this year.

The ten-years-old organization was given the award "in part" because of its support for the International Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which the UN approved in July and has been available for signing by countries since August..

The group draws attention to the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, and works for treaty-based abolition of this threat. It has branches in more than 100 countries.

The organization, whose Executive Director, Beatrice Fihn, has been has been a vocal critical of President Trump, hopes that the nuclear powers, who have not signed on to the treaty, will change their position. "Good luck with that," we say.

The Next Issue

The next issue of the "UCH" will be dated December, 2017. Announcements of events in December or early January, 2018, as well as articles for the December, 2017, issue should be in our office by November 10. Thank you for your consideration.

We regret any confusion created by the wrong information in this space last month.

US to Quit UNESCO

For the second time in the history of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, the United States is quitting the organization.

The first time was in 1984, when the US, under President Ronald Reagan, withdrew because, he claimed, UNESCO advanced Soviet interests. The US rejoined in 2003.

This time, under President Donald Trump, the US is withdrawing because UNESCO has, he says, an anti-Israeli bias.

While UNESCO's departing Director General, Irina Bokova, expressed regret at the American decision, it is not clear how much real (as opposed to symbolic) difference it will make. For one thing, the USA has not paid dues in

years, and owes \$US550 million in back payments. For another thing, the ranking US representative to UNESCO has said that the USA would continue to participate as a non-member observer state in such projects as the protection of World Heritage sites.

American officials claimed that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson made the decision alone. The decision is to take effect on December 31, 2018.

Israel has also announced that it would withdraw from membership.

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Strife in Caledonia

Some 10 years ago, Six Nations in Caledonia, Ontario, erected a barricade to defend their land rights. This year, the issue once again urgent, they re-established that barricade. On September 1, Hilary Beaumont had an interesting discussion of the situation in *Vice News*.

The article (abbreviated) reports that:

“Six Nations members have rebuilt a decade-old blockade. Behind it is division over who is the legitimate government of Six Nations people.

“At the campsite outside of Caledonia, Ontario, a small number of personal tents are set up, as well as larger communal tents for shade. Red and yellow warrior flags hang at the camp entrances, and a 10-foot-high chunk of a toppled hydro-electric tower that cut across the road in 2006 has been pushed back into the middle of the highway.

“A group of Six Nations people, who call themselves land defenders, have re-erected a blockade on the road to Caledonia, Ontario. But, unlike a decade ago, only a small number of people have arrived to support the new barricade. Fewer than 10 people were on site when *VICE News* visited the camp....

“The small number speaks to division in the community over which government really represents the people of Six Nations. At the heart of the local dispute are two duelling governments — the Six Nations band council, established by the century-old Indian Act, elected in a vote with a paltry three percent participation

rate; and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council, an unelected, hereditary organization that predates colonization.

“Supporters of both governments had stood together ... in 2006, on the same road, when clashes erupted between residents of Caledonia, members of Six Nations, and police over the disputed land. Six Nations members had occupied the land in response to a developer’s construction of a number of houses, dubbed the Douglas Creek Estates, on a property next to the highway — part of an area of land promised to the people of Six Nations in 1784.

“To end the conflict, Ontario promised to return both the Douglas Creek Estates and another parcel of land called the Burtch Lands to the people of Six Nations.

“... last year,... Ontario returned the Burtch Lands to the elected band council rather than the hereditary Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council — effectively choosing one government over another.

“The confederacy council had leased the land to a farmer, but when the band council took charge of the land, they evicted her with a court order. It was that move that led confederacy council supporters to erect the barricade again.

“Ontario’s land transfer has reignited a bitter division between the two First Nations governments.

“Critics of the band council point out that only about three percent of Six Nations members vote in its elections, and

the band council was created in 1924 by the Indian Act. They say the confederacy council is more legitimate because it predates colonization and is made up of representatives of First Nations families. However band council members criticize the confederacy council for being unelected, saying it is not perfect either.

...

“The piece of land sits within a much larger swath of land that the people of Six Nations contend was granted to them by the British Governor of Quebec, Frederick Haldimand, in 1784, in recognition of the support that several of their member states gave to the British during the American Revolutionary War. Known as the Haldimand Proclamation, the piece of land promised to them stretches from the top of the Grand River to where it meets Lake Erie, and six miles on either side of the river — a huge slice of land.

“But today, media spokesperson for the land defenders Rhonda Martin explains, the Six Nations reserve is much smaller than that. The Crown sold off much of the land that was promised to the Six Nations by Haldimand, although Six Nations people maintain they have never ceded those lands.

“Douglas Creek Estates sat just over the train tracks, where the reserve lands end, and inside the area promised in the Haldimand Proclamation. In October 2005, the chief of Six Nations band council David General wrote a letter to the developer saying the company’s development was on disputed land. But the company pushed forward with its development

anyway, saying it bought the land legitimately. In late February 2006, a small group from Six Nations occupied Douglas Creek Estates — and in March, a court injunction sought by the developer ordered them off the land. The situation escalated and on April 20, 2006, Ontario Provincial Police officers raided the construction site, pulling people out of their tents and arresting 16 people.

“That’s when the call went out to the people of Six Nations to come to the site because their people were being arrested on land promised to them in the Haldimand Proclamation.

...

“Within three hours, ... about 5,000 people from the Six Nations reserve had arrived on site.

“This campsite here, this barricade that’s put in place now, is about Canada not keeping their promises, again.”

...

“The day after the police raid, the provincial and federal governments started negotiations with both the band council and the confederacy council. In an important letter dated May 10, 2006 and addressed to the confederacy council, former Ontario premier and appointed negotiator David Peterson wrote that “Ontario is prepared to return title to the Burtch Lands to the Six Nations people,” he wrote.

“The letter does not clearly state which government Ontario would transfer the land to. However, last year, Ontario quietly transferred the land to the band council.

...

“The corporation will hold the land on behalf of the Six Nations people, and the band council has invited the confederacy council to select a chief to sit on the corporation’s board, the spokesperson said. The province declined to answer further questions, saying the matter is before the courts.

...

“The land defenders have made presentations to both the band council and the confederacy council to explain their

position and to ask for support.

“As for Ontario and Canada, she says they aren’t listening to the people of Six Nations.

“I strongly feel there is a role for both governments.”

“So is this an answer?” she says, gesturing toward the new blockade and camp. “Well, you know what, this is all we got right now.”

“The story of Six Nations and its two dueling governments is a microcosm for many Indigenous communities across Canada who are stuck between colonial structures and their own way of doing things. At the heart of it all is the Indian Act, a piece of legislation designed to tell Indigenous peoples how to run their government, how to marry, where they can live.

“The Canadian government has signaled that the end of the Indian Act is coming, but hasn’t said when. It’s not clear what will replace it, and how it will address complex realities on the ground — realities like those in Six Nations.

“In Six Nations, the land at the centre of the dispute is being held in trust in a corporation until it can be formally added to the reserve, band councillor Mark Hill, who also owns a business that has been blocked by the barricade, told *VICE News* ...

“Hill believes neither the band council nor the confederacy council are perfect, and that both have to fix things within their own systems. He accused the confederacy council of being “corrupt” — saying there were roughly four or five chiefs running the entire council, when there are a total of 50 or so hereditary chiefs. But he conceded that the band council has suffered from abysmally low voter turnout rates.

“I strongly feel there is a role for both governments,” Hill said.

“We’re at a state of emergency where our people are fighting each other,” he continued. “We have a crisis at hand, and we have to figure out how we’re going to work together for the benefit of the whole group collectively.”

NIMMIWG

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls held five days of hearings in Winnipeg, during which they heard the stories of at least 50 missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls.

More than 80 survivors and families testified. Among those appearing was the family of Jennifer Catcheway, who’s been missing for nine years.

Bernice Catcheway, mother of Jennifer, said she was offered a private session because her daughter’s case is an active RCMP investigation, but she refused.

“I was upset with that and I made it known,” she said, following her 2½-hour public testimony with commissioner Michele Audette.

“This is our inquiry, not theirs. They’re getting paid \$53 million. They can sit there and listen to the families and not rush them.”

Following her testimony, Bernice Catcheway, said, “I feel a load of weight off of my shoulders.”

Sue Caribou, the aunt of Tanya Nepinak also complained about the lack of time.

Tanya Nepinak went missing in 2011. Her body has not been found. Charges against convicted serial killer Shawn Lamb in connection with Ms. Nepinak’s death were stayed in 2013.

Sue Caribou, who has sat on the family advisory council since the inquiry began, said that more time was needed for families who speak.

She said, “I think they need more time....“I’m not saying to have a reset or anything like that. I think it should be here, maybe two weeks, not one week.”

Ms. Caribou said that she wasn’t given enough time at the inquiry to fully explain the effect Nepinak’s death has had on her entire family.

Ms. Caribou said that the family advisory council will

meet following this hearing, and that she would offer some advice.

Sue Caribou was one of the last to testify. She complained that the schedule changed frequently throughout the week.

One survivor burst into tears during her testimony, saying she felt like walking out because she felt rushed.

Inquiry staff said that, over the five days in Winnipeg, 24 families showed up at the last minute asking to testify. All were accommodated, and set up with statement-gatherers, not a commissioner.

The inquiry went to Membertou, Nova Scotia, at the end of October. The interim report was due November 1, after “UCH” press time.

Hearings in Yellowknife, originally scheduled for the week of November 13, will now be in January 2018, according to a news release. The release did not specify a reason for the delay. No firm date has been announced for the rescheduled hearings.

The '60s Scoop

When it comes to “taking the Indian out of the child”, most of the attention, until recently, was turned to residential schools. However the effort to eliminate Indigenous consciousness, and Indigenous people as well, also took other forms.

One of those other forms is now known as the ‘60s scoop. It was the practice of taking Indigenous children from their mothers to be adopted by non-Indigenous people.

The children often had their

identities completely suppressed. In many instances, their parents were told that the child had died, and all evidence of their true origin were erased.

This was one of a string of practices that were part of genocidal policies toward Indigenous people, practices which ranged from providing blankets infected with deadly diseases to payment of bounties for Indigenous scalps, to sterilizing Indigenous women, to name just three.

Current Eclectic

Palestinian Deal

As the result of an agreement signed on October 12 between the Palestinian Authority (led by Fatah) and Hamas, Gaza and the West Bank were brought under one government for the first time in a decade.

The PA, which controls the

West Bank, was supposed to take administrative control of Gaza over a number of weeks, merge the two security forces and ministries, and patrol Gaza borders.

The success of the deal, brokered by Egypt and signed in Cairo, depends on how its

implementation develops. Important questions require resolution, including what is to be the fate of the main Hamas militia, and what is to be done with the tunnels under Gaza which have been used for smuggling.

In November, talks are to begin toward the formation of a unity government.

Previous attempts at unity have failed, but some optimism springs from the support for his deal by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and others.

NAFTA Negotiations

Canadian officials, if one is to believe their pronouncements, are starting to feel that President Donald Trump's repeated statements that he wants out of the North America Free Trade Agreement, may be honest.

This was a result of the latest round of negotiations, during which the Americans put out positions which could be anticipated to be clearly unacceptable to Canada and/or Mexico. These included, among other demands, items like elimination of the conflict resolution mechanism, a very high requirement of USA content in cars.

Furthermore, the demands were placed on a take-it-or-leave-it basis.

Unfortunately, President Trump being as erratic as he is, everyone is still left guessing whether the American posture was as inflexible as it seems or merely a bargaining

tactic.

The result was that Mexico declared that it did not really need a deal, while Canada said, in essence, that it would never walk away from the table.

Nevertheless, Canada was abuzz with discussion of how this country would fare without NAFTA.

The conclusions reached by various pundits were all over the map. Speaking on CBC radio on the morning of October 22, Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs, put forward the most positive evaluation she could muster.

She denied that the talks were at an impasse, noting that some paragraphs had been agreed, but most important, the three parties had agreed to abandon the end-of-the-year deadline and carry on into the next year.

Ms. Freeland also played down the importance of the

NAFTA. Because of the red tape NAFTA entails, she said, most trade between Canada and the USA is carried on under the provisions of the World Trade Organization.

Ms. Freeland noted that Canada and the USA are each other's most important trading partners by far, and expressed a belief that this would continue to be true.

Because of the small part of Canadian trade involving countries other than the USA, she thought that trying to build that sector as a replacement for trade with the USA could represent was not realistic in the short run.

Asked about the Trans-Pacific Partnership without the USA (which has withdrawn), Ms. Freeland opined that the TPP could serve Canada better without the USA, opening up important markets to this country, but could not be a substitute for Canada-USA trade. The same applied to the Canada-Europe Trade Agreement.

On Barack Obama

During his presidency, we referred to George Bush (the younger) as "George the Torturer Bush". Some time into his presidency, we called Barack Obama "Barack the murderer Obama. This reflected a significant difference in the way the two presidents pursued their "security" objectives.

Some details about President Obama's approach were given by legal analyst Azeezah Kanji, writing in the *Toronto Star* on November 5, 2017. Her article contrasted the Canadian government's adulation of Barack Obama with its rejection of whistleblower Chelsea Manning, who exposed US war crimes in Iraq. The article also raised concerns about the potential for harm by President Trump as a result of actions by President Obama.

The article points out that, "Trump's presidency is dangerous because of Obama's policies, which expanded presidential powers to use violence without constraint or scrutiny — including through

his administration's treatment of whistleblowers like Chelsea Manning."

An example Ms. Kanji gives is that, "As president, Obama claimed the authority to engage in covert wars without congressional authorization, bypassing legal provisions... requiring Congressional approval." She cites a clear example of this action.

She also points out that, "In 2016 alone, the Obama administration dropped more than 26,000 bombs on seven different countries.

President Obama's manipulation of the Authorization for the Use of Military Force, passed by Congress in 2001 to permit war against Al Qaeda, Ms. Kanji writes, has made the AUMF "a licence for open-ended aggression".

The article notes that President Obama, using drones, killed thousands of people outside official theatres of war, included an unknown number of civilians. Obama's administration succeeded in preventing judicial review of these killings, hiding "the use

of lethal force behind a wall of secrecy and unaccountability".

Although required by international law to do so, President Obama did not prosecute George Bush's torturers. The only official the Obama administration punished as a result of the torture program was John Kiriakou, who "blew the whistle on it".

Ms. Kanji reminds us that President Obama "prosecuted twice as many whistleblowers as all previous administrations combined".

Chelsea Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison for her whistleblowing, even though her leaks did not involve top-secret documents. Though President Obama pardoned Ms. Manning before he left office, Ms. Kanji writes, he has left intact a very dangerous precedent for President Trump.

Now that Canada has passed the Magnitsky act, which, we are assured, is not directed only against Russia, perhaps ex-President Obama (whom Ms. Kanji calls "an apparently liberal, progressive leader") will no longer be welcome in Canada.

Yeah, right.

Debt Conundrum

One of the contradictions in modern capitalism (which might be called credit card capitalism) is the need for a growing domestic market to generate higher profits, on the one hand, and the pyramid of consumer debt on the other. The result is an unstable economy which threatens to collapse with every growth in interest rates or drop in employment.

Thus, at the beginning of September it was reported by Statistics Canada that, "The economy surged past expectations with across-the-board growth in the second quarter, giving the country its best start to a calendar year since 2002."

Real gross domestic product grew at an annualized rate of 4.5%. This was the highest growth rate since 2011. A key aspect was the growth of household spending.

It was expected that the Bank of Canada would increase its interest rate again,

as it had in July, to control the rate of inflation.

Financial institutions of various types were very pleased with the strong growth, and expected that it would continue, as they attributed it to "robust economic fundamentals, such as job and wage growth".

That report followed by only a few days a report expressing concern over the continuing rise in consumer debt. The latter report warned that "the steady climb of the household debt-to-GDP level had put Canada's long-term economic growth prospects at risk.

The expansion of household spending, a major source of economic growth, created record levels of debt. At some point, the consumers' ability to pay their bills while continuing to buy reaches its limit, putting a break on economic growth. Then consumers find themselves over-extended, and the house of cards comes tumbling down.

Cuba-US Diplomacy

The September, 2017, issue of the "UCH" had an item reporting a mysterious series of illnesses among American diplomats, with a lot of speculation about what was happening and who was responsible. This was based on an August 11 story in the *Toronto Star*.

We concluded that, "It is interesting that this suddenly comes up after the election of an American president who would like to restore Cuba to axis-of-evil status. Stinks like two-weeks-old, unrefrigerated fish. Ugh!"

A report in the *Toronto Star* of September 23 basically reported the same information about this issue, but included information about insults exchanged between Cuba and the USA,

In that report, an unspecified number of Canadians who had been affected by whatever it is "are in 'fine health' now".

On September 30, another report appeared in the "Star", indicating that the US had recalled more than half of the American staff from its embassy in Havana. After all that time, apparently, neither the FBI nor the Cuban authorities were able to determine the exact cause of the problem, let alone who was responsible.

By then the American administration was talking about "attacks", rather than "incidents".

Processing visas for Cubans wanting to travel to the USA was put on indefinite hold, and Americans were warned to stay out of Cuba.

Though he was able to say

that "they did some very bad things" in Cuba, he did not say who or what.

Canada reported that some of its diplomats had also experienced unexplained illnesses, but this country was not changing its diplomatic position in Cuba.

The next report we found in the *Toronto Star* was on October 1, when it was restated that the American diplomats had suffered a wide range of symptoms, and not only hearing loss. Furthermore some reported hearing or feeling or sensing something, while others experienced nothing like that.

The report talked of several theories (ultrasound, electromagnetic weapons, poisons), each as improbable as the others.

A report on October 4 said that the US had ordered Cuba to withdraw 15 of its diplomats from Washington, specifying which ones had to go. The report said that at least 22 American diplomats had been affected, including one that week.

After almost a year, no progress had been made in unearthing the cause of the problem.

The report also said that Canada had reported that an undisclosed number of consular officials and their families in Havana had been affected (consular, as opposed to other diplomats is an interesting detail, as is the addition of "their families"). Canada was planning neither to expel Cuban diplomats nor withdraw its own.

Curiouser and curiouser.

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On the Magnitsky Act

AN EDITORIAL by WILFRED SZCZESNY

The official name of the law is "Victims of Corrupt Foreign Officials Act", but it is much better known as the Magnitsky law. It is this latter name which tells the truth about the law, which shares at least one characteristic with Quebec's law on face coverings: Both are directed at one target, but both are being portrayed (to make them more palatable) as having a broader focus.

In the case of the Magnitsky law, the target is Russia. The Canadian Press can write, as its Mike Blanchfield did, that, "The law targets the actions of gross human rights violators in all countries, not just Russia." However, the promoters and supporters of the law can not resist crowing about their success in driving yet one more wedge into Canadian-Russian relations.

For example, Bob Nault, MP, the Chair of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, is quoted as saying, "...there's no reason for Russia to take personal offence..." and then adding, quite pointedly, "Unless you have a reason to take things personally."

American-born financier Bill Browder makes no bones about his motivation in campaigning for the bill. It's not "anti-Russian sentiment", but the "total impunity" in Russia protecting people who "persecute opposition figures and whistleblowers". Mr. Browder is quoted as saying, "The bad guys in Russia get away with it." Clearly, he was not thinking of ex-President Obama, noted for persecution of whistleblowers; nor was he thinking of all the countries allied with America where opposition figures are persecuted.

Conservative MP James Bezan said that the bill "potentially targets all countries." He then named three, including current favourite targets Iran and Venezuela, but had nothing to say about countries like Burma.

James Bezan tabled the Magnitsky law in the House of Commons, Raynell Andreychuk introduced it in the Senate, and it had energetic support from Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs. By their actions, these three Ukrainians gained added favour not only with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, but also with the government of Ukraine, both of which have a decidedly anti-Russian bias.

President Putin of Russia may be exaggerating when he says that passage of the Magnitsky act "will cause irreparable harm to Canada-Russia relations". These things too shall pass. But the UCC-inspired acts of hostility to Russia are a deliberate effort to keep the two countries at loggerheads to benefit the right-wing government of Ukraine, not serve Canada's best interests.

COMMENTARY

Shameful Law

Why have the legislators in Quebec passed a law designed to solve a problem which does not exist, by targeting a group which is almost nonexistent? For no other reason than to gain the votes of bigots.

The small group which motivated the law is about 90 (according to reports) women in Quebec (most of them reportedly in Montreal) who wear the burka or the niqab. The problem which does not exist is the major security threat that they have suddenly become, not to mention the danger they suddenly pose to Quebec secularism.

The problem which does exist is that political leaders in Quebec are quite prepared to join the so-called populist demagogues in demonizing and victimizing minorities, and in particular Muslims, to win elections.

The argument is that their clothing is a symbol of oppression of women, forced on them by their husbands or other men in their families. Assuming that the argument is correct, is the best course for dealing with the women's oppression to severely punish them for being oppressed, to banish them to their oppressive homes.

Yes, banish them, because they are now labelled law-breakers, hostile to Quebec's values, who can be attacked by any bigot empowered and encouraged by the law who sees them in public.

Quite the way to solve a problem of oppression!

Two defences of the law are raised against charges that it is directed against Muslims. One is that face-covering is not part of Islamic belief, as it is not mandated by the Koran, therefore the law is not anti-Muslim.

As one Muslim woman pointed out, there are two opinions about that among Muslims. Some Muslims sincerely believe that face covering is required. The reality is that, in addition to Muslim

women who are coerced into covering their faces, there are others who choose to do so. These include young women whose families oppose the practice.

People in a secular society should readily recognize that such differences can exist. Christianity is rife with conflict over doctrinal differences, as is almost every (maybe every) major or minor religion.

The other major defence of the indefensible law is that it is not directed against Muslims because it applies to all face coverings, including sunglasses, scarves, and every other face covering.

If the law does apply to all face coverings, then this law which solves a nonexistent problem will create real problems.

Are bus drivers, police officers and other drivers who wear glasses against the glare of the sun going to be falling asleep at the wheel from glare-induced fatigue, as well as falling victim to illnesses, including cancer, from overexposure to the sun's rays?

Are the masks worn by medical personnel during operations or while treating people with contagious respiratory infections or patients with reduced resistance also banned? Will staff and patients both be exhaling and inhaling health threatening air pollution?

Of course not. Nobody will complain about a police officer's glasses or a doctor's face mask. Nobody in Rimouski or Rouyn or Malartic will complain about a scarf or a ski mask or other face covering against winter's -40°C — unless that face covering is a niqab or a burka.

The idea that Quebecers feel threatened by people with covered faces is just laughable, given all the circumstance in which they have accepted face coverings.

Equally ludicrous are all the claims by some people that they feel isolated from a per-

son whose face is covered. Are we really expected to believe that Quebecers go through their days striking up conversations with random strangers, except when they feel excluded by a face covering?

Well, we can be expected to believe anything, but we do not have to do it. We can believe, instead, that the more honest position is that expressed by the woman who asked, "If I went to their country wearing a big cross, would I feel welcome?"

More honest, too, probably, is the statement, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," suggesting that the Quebec Romans wear neither niqabs nor burkas.

Those legislators in Quebec who voted in favour of the disgraceful law should be ashamed of themselves for their lack of any principle other than winning at all costs. Those among them (if there are any) who actually believe that the law is a good and proper thing should be locked up for treatment as a threat to democratic secular values.

Those among the populace who feel threatened by 90 women in the province who cover their faces should be given a spinal transplant.

Those who think that this law defends secular values should be given a course in the meaning of secular society.

People have all sorts of prejudices. They should be allowed to have them. It is unlikely that prejudice will ever be completely eliminated, and it may not even be desirable to eliminate all prejudices. (Perhaps that depends on the definition of "prejudice".)

What people should not have a right to do is attack people on the basis of not liking them or disliking something about them.

A politician who calls enactment of a law like this travesty in Quebec "an exercise in democracy" should be judged a potential criminal. One who supports the passing of such a law, victimizing particular people, belongs on the dock at the International Criminal Court.

(Continued on Page 6.)

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AUUC (National)
auuc.ca

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

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

Taras Shevchenko Museum:
www.infoukes.com/shevchenkomuseum

Vancouver AUUC
http://www.auucvancouver.ca/

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The Revolutions Conference

— Photo: Glenn Michalchuk



A historic conference — the Revolutions Conference — was held in Winnipeg at St. John's College, University of Manitoba, on September 29 to October 1.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, or the Great October Socialist Revolution, as it is also known. The overthrow of capitalism and feudalism in Russia ushered in the present historical period in which we are living, an era of

social, economic and political transformation from capitalism to socialism.

This period has witnessed the overthrow of colonialism in Asia, Africa and Latin America; the break with capitalist relations of production; the evolution of new demo-

cratic processes; and the rising of indigenous peoples to protect their lands, resources and way of life.

But, as with every period of transition from old to new, the midwife that is revolution has also witnessed its failures and retrogression. Thus, the need to constantly assess the state of the revolutionary movement, the progress made, and the lessons to be learned from failures and shortcomings.

To that end, the Geopolitical Economy Research Group (GERG), headed by Radhika Desai, Professor of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba, organized the Revolutions Conference as a contribution to the political experience of revolution on this the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia.

As a political activist with an interest to learn more about the possibilities and problems of revolution, I attended the Revolutions Conference as an individual and as a member of the Editorial Board of the *Ukrainian Canadian Herald*. The Winnipeg Council of the AUUC Winnipeg Branch endorsed and supported the conference, and the "Herald" did a preview in its March, 2017, issue. The endorsement and support of the AUUC was noted in the Conference program.

I would say that the presence of a Ukrainian organization at the Conference did spark interest, given that many only know of the Ukrainian nationalist politics in our community.

The issues of the Conference were a natural fit for the AUUC. The founders of the AUUC came out of the revolutionary movement for social, economic and political change that defined the early years of the twentieth century, and would go on to shape it in its entirety.

As we approach our 100th anniversary we should keep in mind this fact and, more importantly, recognize that there is a role to play in the present

period. We should also take note that there is an interest to know what the progressive section of the Ukrainian Canadian community has to say about the situation in Ukraine and the world.

The Revolutions Conference takes a stand on Venezuela.

The aim of the Conference was to deal to with the many facets of the revolutionary experience, past and present, in the northern and southern countries (east and west, too) and amongst the indigenous peoples of these countries.

Appropriately, the opening session of the first day was to deal with the current situation in Venezuela, which is on the front line of revolutionary struggle in the present period.

Venezuela is at a tipping point. The government of Nicholas Maduro is carrying on the work of Hugo Chavez to transform Venezuelan social, economic, political and cultural life into one that serves and empowers the vast majority of Venezuelans.

However, it faces a significant and well-supported (by foreign powers) opposition, determined to reverse the gains made by Chavez and Maduro and return the rule of Venezuela to the elite.

To its shame, Canada has been one of the most active of the foreign powers working to undermine the government of Maduro.

A Special Plenary of the Conference, on Friday morning, was to feature Dr. Miguel Angel Perez Pirela, a noted political philosopher, writer, international analyst, essayist and columnist, from Venezuela.

His talk was to be on the theme "Venezuela: revolution under destabilization, blockades and media war". However, he was unable to secure a visa from Canadian authorities in time to attend, and a Skype connection was not possible.

In response, the Conference decided that it was appropriate that it should take a public stand on the crisis in Venezuela. During the next three days of the Conference, a draft of a petition was circulated to Conference attendees, and on the final day of the Conference, the petition "Canada, Hands Off Venezuela" was issued.

While the Conference did not hear from Dr. Miguel Angel Perez Pirela, it did have the opportunity to hear the excellent presentation of Julia Buxton, one of the keynote speakers, on the final day of the Conference.

Keynote Addresses of the Conference.

The Conference was organ-

ized around five keynote lectures that dealt with significant features impacting the revolutionary nature of the era. Each presentation was recorded and will be available for viewing in the near future, so this report on the Conference will confine itself to the description of each of the main talks as described in the Conference program:

"Venezuela: Was Another World Possible": Julia Buxton, Professor, Central European University.

"The Russian Revolution and the Chinese Revolutions: Reflections on the Scientific Socialism in the 21st Century": Xiaoqin Ding, Professor, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics.

"Colours of a Revolution: Post-Communist Society, Global Capitalism and the Ukraine Crisis": Ruslan Dzarsov, Professor, Plekhanov University of Economics.

"Bush/Revolution: Theses on Indigenous Challenges to Dominant Structures": Peter Kulchyski, Professor, University of Manitoba

"From Permanent Revolution to Permanent Counter-revolution": Kees van der Pijl, Professor Emeritus, University of Sussex.

When the keynote addresses are available for viewing on-line (and some of the panel discussions as well), the "Herald" will provide that information to our readers.

The sessions devoted to the keynote addresses were important for giving the Conference its main thrust. Additional to the keynote sessions were the numerous panels on issues, addressing a variety of topics, discussing the problems and achievements of the revolutionary period in which we live.

Some panels featured people who had first-hand experience of the revolutions in countries such as Guatemala and Nicaragua.

During the Conference I had the opportunity to spend some time with three of the keynote speakers — Julia Buxton, Kees van der Pijl and Ruslan Dzarsov — as we travelled to and from the Conference each day.

Aside from interesting exchanges about the Conference, we also discussed the significance of Winnipeg politically to revolutionary politics in Canada, the role of the AUUC, and the divide in the Canadian Ukrainian community.

Time constraints did not permit a tour of the Ukrainian Labour Temple so, as a parting gift, on behalf of the Branch, I presented them copies of Aaron Floresco's excellent video: *The Ukrainian Labour Temple: A Cultural and Political Movement from Winnipeg's North End*.

— Glenn Michalchuk

CANADA, HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!

Petition from the Conference organized by the Geopolitical Economy Research Group, held at St John's College, University of Manitoba, September 29 to October 1, 2017, to the Government of Canada, Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, and Foreign Affairs Minister, Chrystia Freeland.

Whereas on September 22, 2017, the Government of Canada imposed new sanctions against Venezuela, Venezuelan officials, and other individuals under the Special Economic Measures Act in violation of the sovereignty of Venezuela;

Whereas such sanctions impede dialogue and peace-building in Venezuela and in the region more generally; **Whereas** these sanctions impede the normal operation of Venezuela's duly constituted political processes including elections;

Whereas the Government of Canada has supported the U.S. government's sanctions against Venezuela;

Whereas the Government of Canada has met with, supported, and continues to echo the demands of Venezuela's violent anti-government opposition;

Whereas the Government of Canada refuses to recognize the legitimacy of Venezuela's democratically elected government and falsely refers to it as dictatorial;

Whereas the government of Canada seeks to promote foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Venezuela;

We demand that:

1. The government of Canada immediately lift all sanctions against Venezuela, Venezuelan officials, and other individuals;
2. The government of Canada retract all statements in support of US sanctions against Venezuela;
3. The government of Canada immediately cease its support for the efforts of the US and other right wing governments in the Organization of American States (OAS) that violate the sovereignty and self-determination of another member-state; and
4. The government of Canada immediately cease all intervention against Venezuela.

Canada Hands Off Venezuela!

Contact Person: Radhika Desai, 204-806-2743

— Photo: Emily Halldorson

Winnipeg AUUC Welcomes New Canadians!



A large audience of family, friends and AUUC members gathered at the Winnipeg Ukrainian Labour Temple to witness the citizenship ceremony on September 30. The Yunist Dance Ensemble performed two dances during the event.

On Saturday, September 30, the Winnipeg Ukrainian Labour Temple hosted a Citizenship Ceremony during which 50 people were welcomed for the first time as citizens of Canada. This was a very unique, yet very fitting, way to kick off the 100th year anniversary of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadi-

ans, and all that it stands for.

When my family first immigrated to Canada in the early 20th century, my great-grandpa sang in the choir at the Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg. There he joined a community of other recent immigrants, and found acceptance.

Three generations later, my

— Photo: Emily Halldorson



Members of AUUC Winnipeg Branch assembled a cultural display for viewing before and after the ceremony.

family is still avidly involved in the cultural dimension of the AUUC, through dance.

It seems that the AUUC has come full circle at the Ukrainian Labour Temple — it was built by and for Ukrainian immigrants, and now 100 years later, we have the chance to welcome new Canadian citizens, at the same spot where many immigrants once saw as a starting point in their Canadian lives.

The new citizens were impressed by the hospitality shown as they were greeted with a traditional bread and salt dance, performed by the Yunist Dance Ensemble.

As the Oath of Citizenship was spoken, and the new citizens came up one by one to receive their certificate of citizenship, it was hard not to share in the excitement and pride that overwhelmed the new citizens.

We were honoured to have



AUUC National President Bob Seychuk (third from right) was in the official party as the new Canadians, one by one, received their citizenship papers. Mr. Seychuk spoke briefly.

— Photo: Emily Halldorson



With Tusia Kozub at the piano, the Ukrainian Labour Temple Ensemble, including the Festival Choir and others, led the singing of "O Canada".

City Councillor Ross Eadie, former Canadian Airforce member Jeffrey Stevens, and National President of the AUUC Bob Seychuk speak at the event.

After all of the speeches, we were honoured to have the Ukrainian Labour Temple Ensemble lead everyone in the singing of the National Anthem. All Canadians, both new and old sang, together proudly, truly a moment to remember.

Lastly, the Yunist Dance Ensemble came back on stage for a final performance at the conclusion of the ceremony, followed by refreshments.

It was an honour for me to take part in this ceremony,

given my family's background, who were, at one time, immigrants themselves — and I am sure I am not the only one who left feeling this way.

Thank you to everyone who made this celebration possible, including Bob Seychuk, who took the time to fly in from Ottawa just for the occasion.

As the celebrations of our 100th year anniversary continue into 2018, I invite everyone to join the festivities — I promise that it will rekindle your pride as a Ukrainian Canadian, and the long history we share here.

And finally, to all the new citizens, welcome to Canada!

— Robyn Brown

ULT Gets New Floor

The Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg is a national historic site, the largest and most significant of the Labour Temples built by the AUUC. It is also a magnificent space. However, the floor in the main hall has long been in need of refinishing. The dark brown, mottled finish detracted significantly from an otherwise impressive room.

That is now a thing of the past. Thanks to the on-going work of the AUUC Winnipeg Council and support from the Ukrainian Labour Temple Foundation, the floor in the main hall will soon have a bright, new, and durable finish.

Also part of this work is installing a new floor on the stage, as the old one was beyond repair.

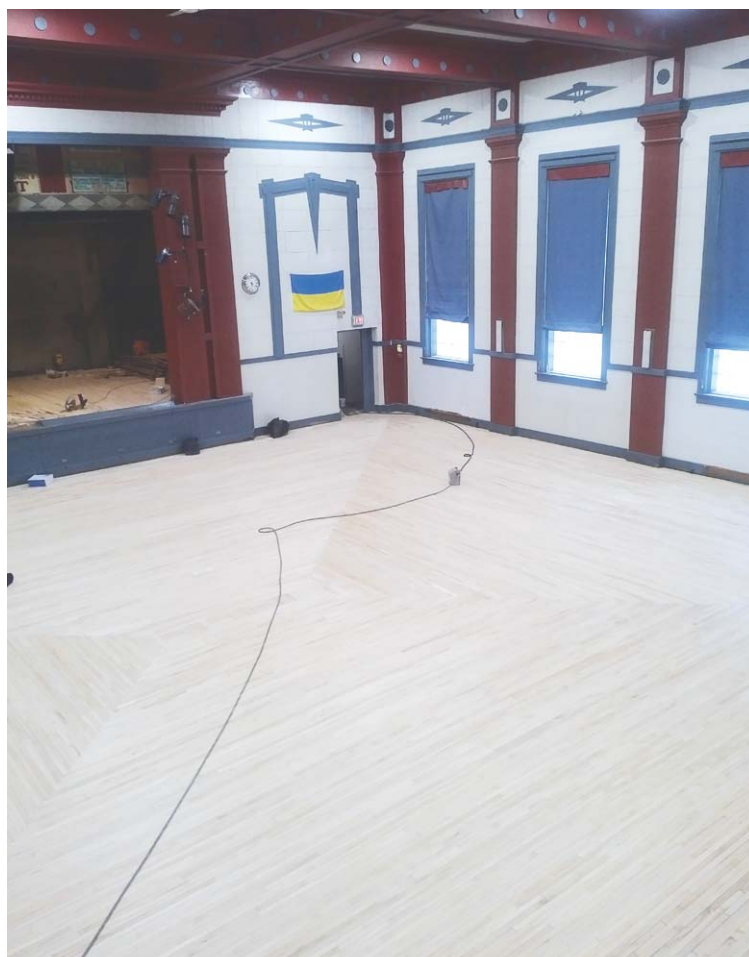
The work on the floor and the stage comes at consider-

able expense. Approximately two thirds of the cost to do this work has been covered by grants received from the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg. A generous donation from Elise Williston towards the work has meant that a significant portion of the costs associated with the project are covered. The amount that is not covered will be paid by the Ukrainian Labour Temple Foundation.

A special note of thanks is due to the members of the Building Committee which have worked hard to make this project a reality.

— Glenn Michalchuk

At right is a picture taken by Glenn Michalchuk in the main hall of the Winnipeg Ukrainian Labour Temple, with much of the floor newly refinshed.



Shameful

(Continued from Page 4.)

A sincere concern for the oppression of Muslim women would not lead to punishing them, but to helping them, in the same ways as we try to help other oppressed women — women battered by partners, women and girls abused by relatives, and so on.

The first step might be to give them a viable alternative to staying with the abuser. The second steps might be to inform them of their viable options. The third step might be to give them the strength and courage to exercise an option.

But the Quebec law is not about helping; it is about bullying. It is not about concern; it is about spite. It is not about creating a spirit of inclusion; it is about creating division and about hate-filled exclusion.

On Sunday, October 15, the AUUC Welland Branch held a concert and banquet commemorating the 100th anniversary of Welland's Ukrainian Labour Temple.

After being windswept by the warm but blustery conditions outside, the guests were introduced to an extremely welcoming atmosphere. Each and every visitor was received with the traditional bread and salt greeting by Bill Lukan and carefully directed to assigned seating.

The hall was arranged with round tables covered by white linen tablecloths, and accented by an arrangement of dried flowers as a centrepiece. The six bulletin board panels were artistically decorated with significant photographs from the Labour Temple's past century, and adorned with flowing

rushnyky.

Wanda Lukan, AUUC Welland Branch President, began the program by bidding the audience welcome and inviting them, accompanied by the Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra, to sing "O Canada". Ms. Lukan acknowledged the presence of AUUC National President Bob Seychuk. She also introduced, and invited to speak, Clara Babiy, Vice-President of the Branch and Coordinator of the centennial celebration.

As Ms. Babiy was unable to read the speech, Wilfred Szczesny stood in to deliver the remarks, which focused on the history and growth of the Labour Temple, the challenges that were faced in moving it to its current location, and its rebuilding following the devastating fire of 1935. The words described the extensive programs that existed over the years, making the centre the focal point for political, social and cultural life for Welland's progressive Ukrainian community. With such a rich history and such importance to the community, the building was designated a Heritage Property in 2005.

The concert by the Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra commenced with conductor Rudy Wasylenky's introduction of the duet of "This Land Is Your Land" by Wilfred Szczesny and Margaret Card. This was followed by an instrumental arrangement of "Oy hylia, hylia" and Wilfred's solo rendition of "Blowin' in the Wind".

Interjected at this point was an address by Bob Seychuk, in which he offered greetings and congratulations on behalf of the AUUC National Committee. Bob continued by presenting an overview of the establishment and the significance of AUUC halls throughout Canada following the first waves of immigration from Ukraine. He announced that the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians was in



AUUC National President Bob Seychuk brought greetings from the National Committee of the AUUC.



Member of Parliament Vance Badawey spoke before driving to Ottawa for a mandatory Liberal caucus meeting.



Cindy Forster, MPP, (NDP) came directly from the airport to bring a message from Premier Kathleen Wynn and deliver a message from Mayor Campion.



Welland AUUC Branch Vice-President Clara Babiy, for many years Branch President, was recognized for her many years of service, as well as her yeoman efforts to make the centennial celebration a success.

Marking Welland ULT Centennial

— Story photos: Jerry Dobrowsky



A full house gathered to celebrate the 100th anniversary at the Welland Ukrainian Labour Temple on the afternoon of Sunday, October 15, featuring a concert and a banquet.



The Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra (AUUC), with vocal soloist Margaret Card, presented the concert program. Playing with the orchestra were Hazel Skulsky, who was Welland's cultural director in the early 1950s, and musicians Ginger Kautto, Florenz Seychuk and Olga Kirlik from the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra.

the process of planning a 3-year celebration marking its own 100th anniversary in 2018.

The concert resumed with the traditional folk song "Unharness the Horses Lads" (*Rozpryahayty khlop-tsi koni*), followed by Wilfred's solo of "Autumn Gold" (*Ossine zoloto*) and a duet by Wilfred and Rudy of "Red Rue" (*Chervona ruta*).

The concert then took another pause, with the continuation of Clara Babiy's account (delivered by Wilfred) of the history of the Labour Temple. The emphasis at this point was

on the AUUC contribution to Ukrainian Canadian culture through the performing arts: drama circles, dance groups, the orchestra, and others arts, and participation in festivals throughout Canada.

The final portion of the concert included a duet (Wilfred and Rudy) of "Mother Let Me" (*Pozvol meni maty*), the medleys "Prairie Wedding" and "Ukrainian Melodies", and the solo "Try to Remember" by Margaret Card. The last scheduled number was the male duet "When Cossaks Dance" (*Yak tansyuyut kozaky*).

Needless to say, the audience rose to its feet with applause and an exuberant request for an encore. The orchestra (with male duet) graciously obliged by playing "Ukrainian Folk Medley".

After a flower presentation to both Clara and Rudy, Clara responded with a very emotional "thank you", including a tribute and expression of gratitude to family members who had contributed to the activity at the Labour Temple over the years. Clara announced a personal donation of \$500.00 to the organization that had organized the celebration, in memory of her own parents, her husband Alex's parents, her sister and brother, her grandma and her uncles.

Wilfred took the floor on behalf of AUUC Welland Branch to thank the orchestra ("which works year-round to present such fine entertainment"), and Rudy Wasylenky, who has been conducting the orchestra for some 20 years.

He also thanked vocalist Margaret Card.

"Welcome back, Hazel, and thank you," Wilfred said to Hazel Skulsky of Winnipeg, who had served as cultural director in Welland for some three years. Other musicians



Conductor Rudy Wasylenky (left) and musician Wilfred Szczesny shared announcing duties, as well as joining voices in four duets.

(Continued on Page 8.)

Greetings to AUUC Welland Branch

The National Executive Committee of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, and AUUC Branches across the country, represented in the National Centennial Celebration Committee were very encouraging and supportive of plans by AUUC Welland Branch to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the Ukrainian Labour Temple in that city. The Welland celebration was the first to receive a grant from the fund established to celebrate AUUC hundredth anniversary events in 2017-19.

The request from AUUC Welland Branch that the AUUC National President attend the concert/banquet on October 15 received enthusiastic approval. Printed below is the text of the greetings delivered by AUUC National President Bob Seychuk during the concert at the Welland Ukrainian Labour Temple on October 15.

Members of the Welland AUUC Branch – past and present, orchestra members – past and present, invited guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen.

Good Afternoon.

It is a great pleasure and honour to attend this wonderful event. Thank you to the AUUC Welland Branch Executive for the invitation.

On behalf of the National Committee of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, I bring greetings and congratulations on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of this Ukrainian Labour Temple, in this, the 150th year of Canadian Confederation. I will not talk specifically about this hall, but I would like to give you some information about the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, the AUUC, its formation, and some of our significant future events.

We are here in this building, which has been declared a Historic Site by the city of Welland. This hall is not as old as Canada, but we are here, in 2017, to celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Quite an achievement, I think!

If the walls could talk, we

would be amazed by the interesting history here.

The building is the result of the efforts of new Ukrainian immigrants from Eastern Europe. Arriving in the early nineteenth hundreds, they, working together in harmony, built this Labour Temple by contributing volunteer labour, time and effort, and over a few years, others did the same in dozens of other cities and towns in Ontario and across Canada.

In those early years, the Canadian government was recruiting people to emigrate to Canada to populate the great sparsely populated spaces.

Starting in 1891, which is the accepted date of the first official arrival of Ukrainians to Canada, thousands arrived from Eastern Europe. Most could not speak English, all were landed immigrants in a strange land.

Most came with very little, except a huge desire to succeed. They needed gathering places, and with the help of other immigrants who had been members of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party in Europe, they organised themselves. This hall started life as a meeting and gather-

ing place for members and supporters of the transplanted Ukrainian Social Democratic Party.

Just a moment ago I mentioned future events. Well, the anniversary celebrations for the AUUC will stretch over three years, starting now, in 2017, with this concert/banquet in the Welland AUUC Ukrainian Labour Temple.

In 1918, in Winnipeg, a similar chain of events occurred. Local members of the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party organized a Ukrainian Labour Temple Association, collected money, and started construction of a large hall. It was completed in 1919.

The Ukrainian Labour Temple Association was the original name of the AUUC, and it was organized in 1918. That was the origin of the AUUC.

In 1925, the name changed to the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, then, after a few years, to the Association of Ukrainian Canadians and, in 1948, to the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

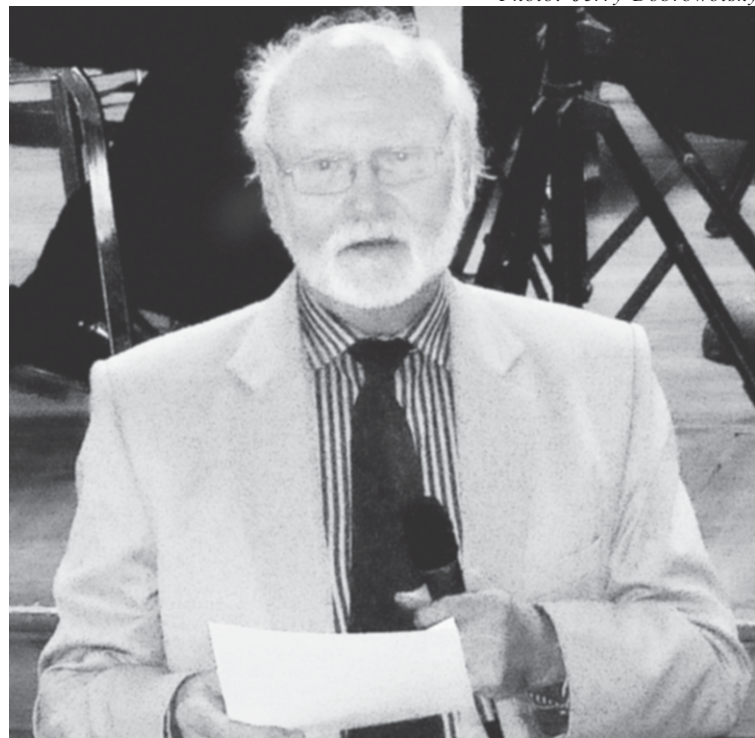
In 2018, the AUUC will be celebrating 100 years of existence along with the Winnipeg Ukrainian Labour Temple,

As the sun started to set and the blustery wind outside started to subside, it was eventually time to bring this momentous occasion to an end. But after months of planning and preparation, the event would not be complete without acknowledging those dedicated members who made it such a success. Wilfred Szczesny drew attention to and expressed thanks to Clara Babiy (“nobody has worked harder for this event”) and her daughters Vera and Claudia, Wanda and Bill Lukan, Leda Braun, Brenda Zynomirski, Joan and George Sitak, Millie Kish, John Manning, Joe Panetta, Arlene’s Catering and the kitchen helpers, the Shevchenko Seniors, the clean-up crews before and after the event, and the audience (“without whom there is no celebration”).

After such a wonderful day, everyone should have left feeling like a dignitary, having participated in such a memorable and historic event.

Congratulations to AUUC Welland Branch! Well done!

— **Bernardine Dobrowolsky**



AUUC National President Bob Seychuk presented greetings to AUUC Welland Branch on October 15.

which by the way, also has recognition as a significant historic site.

A couple of years ago, that building was designated a National Historic Site by the federal government. It already had recognition as a Provincial Site, as well as a Civic Historic Site.

The construction of meeting places for these immigrants was not restricted to large centres. In Ontario alone there were upwards of 30 Labour Temple locations — Welland, St. Catharines, Thorold, Leamington, Kitchener, Windsor, Windsor East, Brantford, London, Hamilton, Oshawa Toronto, West Toronto, Ft. William, Port Arthur, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, Kirkland Lake and more. These Labour Temples, and the philosophy surrounding them, became the “home away from home” for hundreds and hundreds of first and second wave immigrants from Eastern Europe, and became the focus of Ukrainian culture and worker/farmer social and political activism.

Most locations had at least a mixed choir or a drama group, some had an orchestra, and others a folk-dance group or some combination of all four.

Here in Welland, the orchestra which we will hear has been performing for years and years. It has a well-respected reputation in the community, as well as within the AUUC, as a core cultural group and has been involved in many National AUUC Festivals as well as numerous civic events.

The AUUC celebrations will continue into 2019, as 100 years ago in Winnipeg in 1919, the newly organized Ukrainian Labour Temple Association and the just-completed Labour Temple became involved with what is known as the historic Winnipeg General Strike – the only general strike ever in Canada. It lasted only a couple of weeks,

but the city was totally shut down. It really was a general strike, as almost all wage workers were in support, including the city police, fire fighters, streetcar drivers and mechanics — all industry as well as clerical workers.

At that time there were none of the social benefits or the social safety net which we now enjoy. It was organized by the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council in an attempt to win an improvement in general working conditions.

The Winnipeg Ukrainian Labour Temple, even though it was not the Strike Committee’s headquarters, was one of the central meeting places for the strikers.

Theirs was a fight for social justice, and an attempt to change working conditions for all. This was, and remains, one of the original founding principles of the AUUC and its earlier manifestations.

The Winnipeg AUUC Ukrainian Labour Temple is the only surviving hall that had a direct part in these historic events, and is still in use today.

Quite a history and something to celebrate!

The AUUC is a national fraternal association with members and Branches in six Canadian provinces. All will hold events such as concerts, banquets, street parties, and such to celebrate 100 years of existence. Welland starts us off with this event.

Once again, congratulations to the members in Welland for their efforts to maintain this building, along with the folk orchestra, as well as maintaining an active Branch. It has not been easy, what with an aging membership base and a 100-year-old building, but there will be financial assistance coming from the national AUUC treasury.

Thank you to all who volunteered their countless hours and great effort to keep things going in Welland. It is recognised and appreciated.

Thank you.

Welland ULT Centennial

(Continued from Page 7.) were thanked by name — three members from the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra who performed with the group: Ginger Kautto, Florenz Seychuk and Olga Kirlik.

A special “thank you” was given to Bob Seychuk for travelling from Ottawa “to inform us about the exciting plans for 2018”.

An interlude between the concert and the meal, with some fundraising activity, had been scheduled. However, it was also at this time that two invited dignitaries, with limited time available, were able to arrive. So the audience happily welcomed Mr. Vance Badawey, Member of Parliament for Niagara Centre. Mr. Badawey congratulated the group on its centennial and presented one certificate of recognition from himself and a second from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. With a mandatory Liberal caucus meeting scheduled for Monday morning, Mr. Badawey soon excused himself to drive

back to Ottawa.

Also warmly received was Ms. Cindy Forster, MPP for Welland. Ms. Forster presented a plaque to the Branch on behalf of Welland Mayor Frank Campion, who was unable to attend.

She then paid tribute to the late Peter Kormos who, as the legendary former MPP for Welland, attended the Labour Temple on numerous occasions and felt a great affection for it. Ms. Forster read a heartwarming passage by Mr. Kormos from his reflections in the legislature on the Temple’s dedication as a Heritage Property in 2005.

She then presented a plaque from the Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne.

With all formality completed, the audience raised their glasses in a toast to the legacy of the Labour Temple, enjoyed the frivolity that accompanies the winning of prizes from a 50/50 draw and a raffle, and relaxed over a most delicious traditional Ukrainian dinner.

Ukrainian Miscellany

Preparing for More Active War?

Fist fights and a smoke bomb are all part of the discussion when Ukraine's parliament debates contentious issues. Events on October 6, involving members of the opposition and members of Poroshenko's party, were just more of the same, almost routine.

According to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), after order was restored the parliamentary deputies passed, on first reading, two laws proposed by President Poroshenko. "One of the bills," according to the report, "sets out steps to restore Ukrainian sovereignty over separatist-held parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, which border Russia, and the other is a bid to create 'the conditions necessary for peaceful regulation' of the conflict.

"The first bill would define territory controlled by the separatists as temporarily occupied, define Moscow's actions in those areas as Russian aggression against Ukraine, and give the president the right to use the armed forces to restore control.

"It would also give UN Security Council resolutions precedence over the February 2015 deal on a cease-fire and steps toward peace known as the Minsk agreement."

That sounds very much like a decision by Ukraine's President Poroshenko to launch a military attack into areas held by the separatists (note the terminology — the law does not call them Russia's proxies). There also appears to be an expectation that Russia's veto in the UN Security Council can be overcome.

It is interesting to consider the significance of this law at a time when UN peacekeepers are being considered as a possible force of occupation in rebel-held Ukraine.

The second bill extends the legal force of the law on peculiarities of local self-government in certain regions of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, passed following the Minsk agreements. This is a law which is renewed annually but fails to meet the demands of the Russia-speaking population in the eastern Ukrainian regions.

Confidence in Ukraine's commitment to minority rights is not increased by recent legislation reducing minority rights to education in their mother tongues.

President Poroshenko sees that, "Former partners in the democratic coalition, people who call themselves patriots and even Ukrainian nationalists disrupt voting...." Instead of considering changes to the

laws he chooses to tolerate fighting on the parliamentary floor, and accuses the opposition of pursuing "narrow-party interests".

What is his aim?

"... we secure the right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter.

"This further strengthens the legal framework for the use of the Armed Forces, expands their capabilities in the region. This strengthens the arguments in favour of providing Ukraine with defensive weapons." The intent seems to be, very much, to heat up the war.

"While regulating in detail the military aspect of our struggle," President Poroshenko says, "the law proclaims a peaceful, political and diplomatic way the key one." This echoes the view put forward by Gen. Rasmussen that war is the diplomatic way.

As for the "law on the peculiarities of local self-government in certain areas", it does not build any confidence in the ethnic Russians. It is mere window dressing by which Ukraine justifies its failure to meet its obligations under the Minsk agreements. Instead of a constitutional amendment, Ukraine's government, which quakes in the face of Russian-hating fascist militias, provides a time-limited law without guarantees. At the same time, it applies new restrictions on minority rights.

Would you entrust your future to such scoundrels?

Peacekeepers for Ukraine?

The idea of putting an United Nations peacekeeping force into Ukraine has been getting increasing attention in recent times. However, the discussion has some rather strange aspects.

UN peacekeepers have always been deployed along the line of contact between forces in conflict. That, apparently, was part of the proposal made by Russia.

However, the government of Ukraine and its allies (or should we say puppet masters?) have a different opinion.

Former NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen, for example, who currently works as a security adviser to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, calls Russia's proposal "a Trojan horse". His proposal is to "push for a robust mandate that seeks to protect civilians, protect infrastructure, and cover the entire territory of Donbas...."

In other words, the UN peacekeepers, according to him, should be an occupation

force quashing any opposition from Ukrainians hostile to the government in Kyiv.

"If we followed President Putin's proposal," he said, "we would just have what I'd call a UN-mandated frozen conflict in eastern Ukraine, and that would of course be unacceptable."

President Poroshenko does not recognize the rebels in Donbas as a Russian-speaking minority fighting for its rights, but refers to hostile elements in the area as "Russian occupation troops and their proxies".

In an article in the *Globe and Mail*, General Anders Fogh Rasmussen wrote, "My conclusion is that Europe, Canada and the United States now have the opportunity to foster a political solution to this war: first, by providing defensive equipment to the Ukrainian soldiers; and second, by deploying a robust United Nations peacekeeping mission to the Donbas region."

It is rare indeed to have

increasing armaments and imposition of an occupation force (albeit, presumably, an international one — just what Canada has been wanting) a "political solution". But then, he *was* the leader of NATO, a military alliance.

General Rasmussen recognises the inconsistency, and merely asserts that, "Providing defensive systems in no way diverges from efforts for a peacekeeping mission."

However, the important thing, in his mind, is that "Further measures will continue to raise the costs (to President Putin) and prompt further reconsideration," as he interprets President suggestion.

Gen. Rasmussen, in effect, calls on the "transatlantic allies" to gang up on Russia now (in his words, "have the tenacity to solve this conflict bleeding in the Western world's heart, or whether their timidity will let the opportunity sail us by...").

General Rasmussen thinks that such a move "could uncover a path to end Europe's deadliest conflict." Unfortunately, it could also lead to WWII, or even a nuclear war.

Foreign Masters Press

Ukraine has a deal with the International Monetary Fund for a total of \$17.5 billion in "assistance". Ukraine is learning that the IMF never gives money, and it never lends money without conditions.

As just a part of the IMF conditions for the aid to Ukraine, the IMF and other western backers were demanding a decisive crackdown on corruption through formation of an independent anti-corruption court, pension reform, reform (now adopted) of the healthcare system, and much-delayed appointment of a new central bank chief.

In early October, Ukraine's parliament finally adopted legislation to reform the country's pension system.

Supported by the country's western backers, the law should improve contribution compliance by workers, and gradually increase meagre pensions, among other provisions.

Key aims are to reduce a \$5 billion pension fund deficit and cut expenditures that amount to 11% of gross domestic product.

Although pensions are to increase almost immediately, the over-all effect will be a net cost to workers, as is typical of IMF conditions.

Nevertheless it was not clear whether the pension reform alone would be enough to release a long-delayed \$1.9 billion tranche from the IMF.

Ukraine's Finance Minister Oleksandr Danylyuk travelled to Washington in mid-October for talks with the IMF on outstanding issues for the next loan tranche, including gas prices and pension reform.

Naftogaz, Ukraine's state-run natural gas company, reported a 21% increase in net profit in the first half of the year to 23.3 billion hryvnias (\$870 million). The main factor was the government's policy of linking the regulated gas price for households to import parity prices. A reform to bring Naftogaz's prices in line with the market helped it make a profit in 2016 for the first time in five years.

That's not good enough for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Monetary Fund.

Ukraine is trying to change the formula with the IMF. Prime Minister Groysman said that he sees no reason to increase gas prices further. "We're currently discussing this (with the IMF) in terms of adopting this fair formula," he said.

The Prime Minister also said that Ukraine was willing to discuss any issues the IMF

might have on the pension reforms that were passed in parliament, which he said could be easily addressed.

Good luck with that.

The international money lenders have also been pressing for other legislation, including laws to remove immunity from criminal prosecution of sitting members of parliament and judges and the establishment of an anti-corruption court.

President Poroshenko has been pressing parliament to adopt these laws, in the forms that he has proposed. He submitted a proposed constitutional amendments two years ago to eliminate parliamentary and judicial immunity. He submitted a new package in mid October this year.

The President noted that these reforms "are taking place in close cooperation with the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission." The Venice Commission has ruled the two draft laws on establishing and anti-corruption court to be unacceptable.

President Poroshenko demanded that the Supreme Council (*Verkhovna rada*) prepare an acceptable bill based on a few principles — it must comply with the Constitution and the requirements of Ukraine's sovereignty, and it must provide for a completely transparent selection procedure and absolutely effective candidate selection trusted by the public.

While visiting Kyiv in September, deputy IMF chief David Lipton was critical of apparent decreased interest in Ukraine in speeding up "reforms that are necessary to secure foreign direct investment and sustain long-term gross domestic product growth higher than current 2% annual levels".

The concern expressed there was not about health care or pensions, though the IMF always presses for belt tightening, but about encouraging direct foreign investment. That means measures to privatize public assets, and to remove barriers to foreign ownership. An example is the pressure on Ukraine to allow foreign ownership of land, with large foreign firms champing at the bit to be allowed to speculate, to develop, to mine, to harvest forests, and even to farm in the rapacious way they typically do.

Perhaps every form of corruption known to humanity may be practiced in Ukraine, but the corruption tag has been applied to efforts to keep the foreign wolves at bay. Furthermore a common political practice is to accuse one's opponents of corruption.

The Shores of Our Souls

The Shores of Our Souls by Kathryn Brown Ramsperger. TouchPoint Press, Jonesboro, Arkansas, 2017. 306 pages. ISBN-10: 1537848488, ISBN-13: 9781537848488.

The Shores of Our Souls, by Kathryn Brown Ramsperger, is not a typical romance novel. Instead, it is a delicate, thought-provoking exploration of the differences and similarities between lovers from different cultural backgrounds, and the challenges they must face to-

gether and individually, if their love is to survive.

Ramsperger's story starts with a glimpse into the daily life of Qasim, a 40-year-old Lebanese man, who possesses a strong love of his home country and its geography of cold mountains and warm beaches. Qasim is hard-

working and mostly obedient to his family, if not a loving husband. By the mid-1970s, he hopes to improve Lebanon's fractured society by working as a diplomat with the United Nations in New York City.

There he meets Dianna, an insecure young woman, who juggles the financial responsibility of caring for her sick mother and siblings by typing index cards at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Their physical chemistry is instant and undeniable. In addition, Dianna also satisfies Qasim's desire for a mistress more stimulating than his wife, while she embraces a more global philosophy as she tries to understand her lover.

The Shores of Our Souls is intensely readable. Ms. Ramsperger's consistent use of symbolism creates a steady rhythm throughout the book, and she's very good at creating an atmosphere through words. For example, she writes:

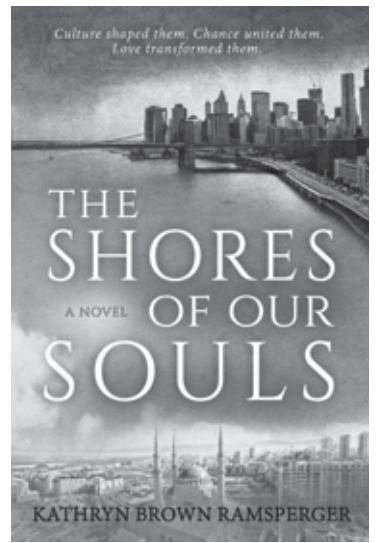
"On Dianna and Qasim's first date, they rendezvous at an upscale pizzeria. They stand in a serpentine line, their breath flowing smoke through unseasonably cold air. The pavement shines with a rainbow of slick moisture from a storm that blew through minutes before." (p.31)

Though Ms. Ramsperger

creates a lively, culturally diverse New York City, the couple is subject to others' disapproval throughout. Indeed, intolerance is a strong theme, and Ms. Ramsperger doesn't ignore the prejudices of the protagonists — especially Qasim's. For example, we get the impression that Qasim's attitude towards women is a casualty of the expectations defined by his Muslim religion and Middle Eastern culture. The insight into the Arab world is mainly written from Qasim's perspective, with very little input from minor characters. Ms. Ramsperger treats Qasim's Muslim values with dignity and sensitivity, allowing readers to form their own opinions of his motives, and the factors that shaped them.

Qasim is the more strongly written character, giving the impression that *The Shores of our Souls* is his story. We only see a brief, albeit pivotal, moment of Dianna's story, and I wanted to know more about what forces shaped her, aside from the societal pressures that all women face.

This may be because Ms. Ramsperger uses a question-and-answer style to reveal her characters. Even though the story is told from both perspectives, Dianna's curiosity affords us a deeper



look into Qasim's life than into hers.

If each revelation of Qasim's life was more interesting and impactful than the previous one, the book would have been as exciting at the end as it was at the beginning. Unfortunately, that is not the case, and I found the ending somewhat pedestrian.

The Shores of our Souls is not a traditional take on the star-crossed love story. The more time Qasim and Dianna spend together, the more the reader is invited to discover the commonalities between two very different kinds of people.

Whatever its failings, I recommend the book, because it reminds us that we are all more similar that we are different, and that loving with patience and understanding is one small way we can help achieve equality.

— Zorya Murphy

About the Author

Kathryn Brown Ramsperger is an award-winning author, editor, and creativity coach. She began her career writing for *The Roanoke Times* and *The Gazette* newspapers, and later managed publications for the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva, Switzerland. She has contributed articles to *National Geographic* and *Kiplinger* magazines.

A graduate of Hollins University, Ms. Ramsperger studied under several esteemed writers, including Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Eudora Welty, her mentor Richard Henry Wilde Dillard, and Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Henry Taylor.

She is also the recipient of the Hollins University Fiction Award, and holds a graduate degree from George Washington University.

Her debut novel, *The Shores of our Souls*, was a semifinalist in the 2017 Faulkner-Wisdom Literary Competition.

She currently lives in Maryland with her husband and two children.

(Compiled by Zorya Murphy.)

Ukrainian Canadian Herald

Season's Greetings

Remember your family and friends with a message! We invite you to express seasonal greetings through an ad in the *Ukrainian Canadian Herald*, either in the December, 2017, or the January, 2018, issue. One line (name and city) on two columns is only \$10.00. A five-line ad as shown is only \$35.00. **See the diagram on this page for sizes.** Larger ads are \$5.00/col./cm.

Deadlines: November 10, 2017, for December, 2017.
December 10, 2017, for January, 2018.

Send your request to:

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JoKe TiMe

Merv was in a terrible accident at work. He fell through a floor tile and ripped off both of his ears. Since he was permanently disfigured, he settled with the company for a rather large sum of money and went on his way.

One day, Merv decided to invest his money in a small, but growing telecom business called Plexus Communications. After weeks of negotiations, he bought the company outright. But, after signing on the dotted line he realized that he knew nothing about running such a business, and quickly set out to hire someone who could do that for him.

The next day he had set up three interviews. The first guy was great. He knew everything he needed to and was very interesting. At the end of the interview, Merv asked him, "Do you notice anything different about me?"

The gentleman answered, "Why yes, I couldn't help but notice you have no ears."

Merv got very angry and threw him out.

The second interview was with a woman, and she was even better than the first guy. He asked her the same question, "Do you notice anything different about me?"

She replied: "Well, you have no ears."

Merv again was upset and

tossed her out.

The third and last interview was the best of all three. It was with a very young man who was fresh out of college. He was smart. He was handsome and he seemed to be a better businessman than the

first two put together. Merv was anxious, but went ahead and asked the young man the same question:

"Do you notice anything different about me?"

To his surprise, the young man answered: "Yes. You

wear contact lenses."

Merv was shocked, and asked, "What an incredibly observant young man. How in the world did you know that?"

The young man fell off his chair laughing hysterically and replied, "Well, it's pretty darn hard to wear glasses with no ears!"

Who, What, When, Where

Vancouver — AUUC Vancouver Branch will host **Heart of the City Festival Concert and Dinner on Sunday, November 5 from 3:00 p.m. at the Ukrainian Cultural Centre, 805 East Pender Street.** This is the wind-up event for the Festival. Concert program featuring AUUC performing arts groups and Strathcona Community performers. Dinner will follow the concert. General Admission: **\$25.00.** For guaranteed tickets call **(604) 254-3436.** If not sold out, tickets will be available at the door.

* * *

Vancouver — AUUC Vancouver Branch will host the **Annual Mini-Bazaar: Perogy Lunch, Crafts, Baking, Art Exhibit** at the **Ukrainian Cultural Centre, 805 East Pender Street** on Saturday, **November 18,** and Sunday, **November 19, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

* * *

Toronto — The **Taras Shevchenko Museum, 1614 Bloor Street West** in Toronto, launches its 65th season with **REFLECTIONS**, an exhibition of pastels by **Roksolyana Pidhainy-Benoit.** REFLECTIONS will run through November to December 15. Gallery hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday to Wednesday and Friday, noon to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, and by appointment on weekends and holidays. Admission is free; donations appreciated.

* * *

Toronto — AUUC Toronto Branch will be hosting the luncheon **"After the Harvest"**, starting at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, **November 19,** at the **AUUC Cultural Centre, 1604 Bloor Street West,** with a **Remembrance Day** tribute. Come for a delicious hot meal. Come, too, to view photo albums of past events, a raffle of Natalka's beautiful embroidery, a 50/50 draw, and good fellowship. For more information or to reserve tickets, call **Nancy at 416-766-8895.**

* * *

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

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

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 Phone: (204) 582-9269 Fax: 589-3404
 E-mail: auucwinnipeg@gmail.com

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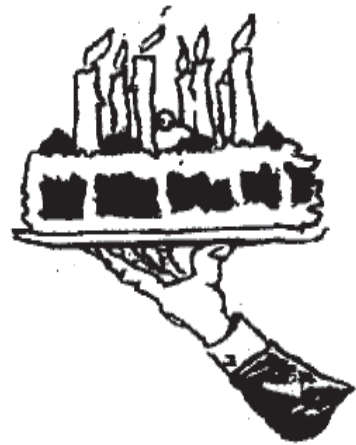
TORONTO BRANCH

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 1604 Bloor Street West
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 Phone: 416-588-1639 Fax: 416-588-9180
 E-mail: auuctorontobranch@gmail.com

WELLAND BRANCH

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

Happy Birthday, Friends!



The **Toronto AUUC Senior Citizens Club** extends best birthday wishes to November celebrant:

Anne Magus

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

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

- Alex Babiy
- Anna Boyd
- Mike Kereluk
- Katie Mackenzie

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

Roksolyana Pidhainy-Benoit

It's a warm and sunny autumn afternoon in October, and Roksolyana Pidhainy-Benoit, the beautiful, blonde-haired and hazel-eyed artist with the sun-kissed glow radiates a sense of passion and enthusiasm as she discusses her art work.

Born in Newmarket, Ontario, to parents of Ukrainian origin, the precocious child was raised in both Toronto, Ontario, and Auburn, Alabama. Her father, Dr. Oleh Pidhainy, taught Ukrainian history at various universities, while her dynamic mother, Mrs. Mary Pidhainy, worked both inside and outside the home and was the anchor in a household of five children.

With a love for the arts that began to flourish in her formative years, it was only natural that Roksolyana chose to pursue studies at the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD), where she specialized in drawing and painting; graduating in 1997.

She counts renowned masters such as Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas and Rembrandt

van Rijn as having a profound effect on her work as an artist. However, she's also been influenced by the legendary Ukrainian poet and artist Taras Shevchenko, in addition to William Kurelek, the Alberta-born artist who achieved much acclaim and was also of Ukrainian origin.

Growing up, she wholeheartedly embraced the richness and uniqueness of the cultures and societies she was exposed to. However, culturally, she identifies herself as Ukrainian, noting that she honours the country's customs and traditions when celebrating holidays, such as Easter and Christmas with her husband Stephen, her nine-year-old daughter Sophia and their extended family.

Her cultural connectedness to Ukraine also manifests itself in the kitchen, in addition to having a substantial impact on her work as an artist. For example, she enjoys gathering vegetables from her mother's garden in order to make a variety of soups, such as potato, leek, chicken, and turkey.

A connection to the Earth is an integral aspect of Ukrainian culture, and she embodies it. It's only natural, then, that she would choose to depict borsch, which is essentially a beet-based soup, in her art work. For example, in her drawing *Homage to Borsht*, a medley of vegetables can be seen. The warm tones and interplay of bold and subtle lines emanate richness and authenticity.

This might leave spectators wondering if she can cook it as delicious as she drew it.

"I still leave making borsht and *varenyky* (dumplings) to my mother," she smiles.

Fittingly, her drawing *Mother's Kitchen* continues on the soulful theme of hearth. A cooking scene is illustrated, complete with a pot full of vegetables, a cutting board and a ladle. Lively and vivid, the colours burst to the fore.

However, her ultimate passion lies in portraiture. "A portrait is a window into the state and the soul; a dance between the artist and the subject," she says.

For example, her father appears in *Old Cossack*. With a pensive look on his face, his eyes are cast downwards. He has salt-and-pepper hair and the fine lines on his forehead indicate a life well-lived.

Ultimately, she values the infinite possibilities of art as a creative form of self-expression. "What's most appealing and inspiring about it is that you can take aspects from your own culture and that of others and meld them into something uniquely your own."

That's precisely what she's done, and with the mesmerizing kaleidoscope of colours that's notable in all of her works, their sheer magnitude and brilliance are sure to be cherished.

— Ayah Victoria McKhail

Reflections, an exhibition and sale of pastels by Roksolyana Pidhainy-Benoit, continues through November to December 15, 2017, at the Taras Shevchenko Museum.

Featured is a stunning collection of 18 pastels drawn between 1997 and 2017.

This is the first solo show in Canada for the artist, who has participated in various group shows.

Her works are located in private collections across Canada and the USA.

The museum is located at 1614 Bloor Street West in Toronto (between the Dundas West and Keele subway stations).

The Museum's "admission is free policy" remains in effect, and covers *Reflections*.

For Shevchenko Museum hours of operations, see the ad at left on this page.



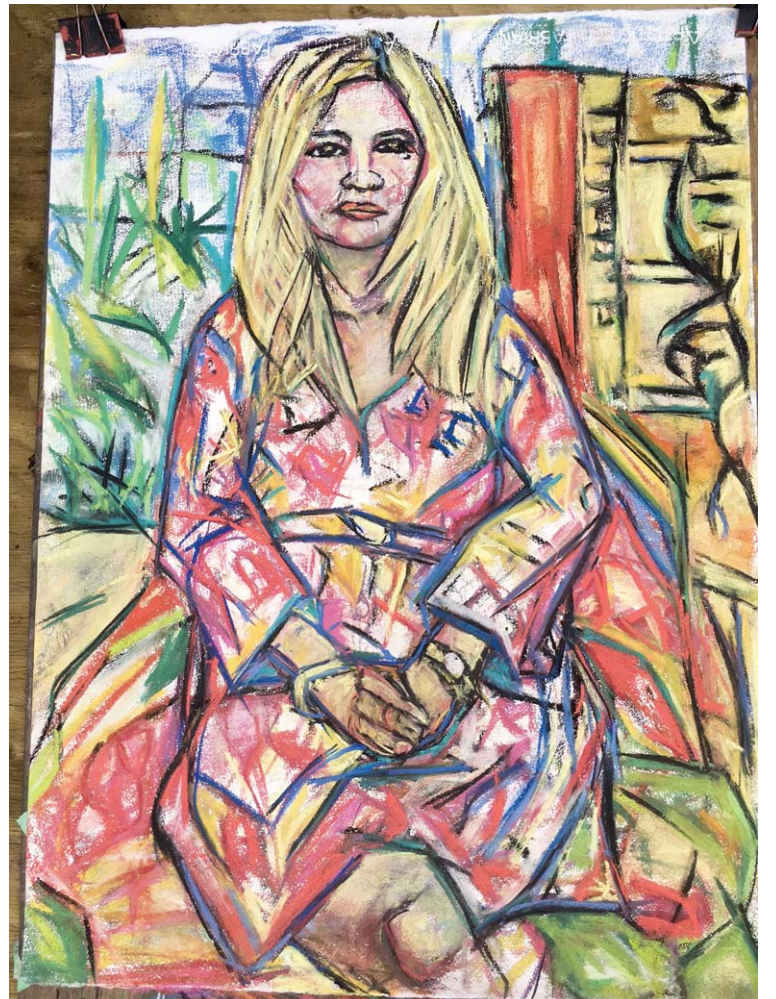
In *Homage to Borsht*, a medley of vegetables, the warm tones and interplay of bold and subtle lines emanate richness and authenticity.



Apples, Pears is another of the still-life compositions in which the artist displays her strong use of colour.



Mother's Kitchen is a cooking scene, complete with a pot full of vegetables, a cutting board and a ladle. Lively and vivid, the colours burst to the fore.



An Evening Out, like the other paintings shown on this page, is done in pastels.

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JoKe TiMe

The diner put in his order: "I want two boiled eggs, one of them so undercooked that it's runny, and the other so overcooked, that it's hard to eat. Also, grilled bacon that has been left on the plate to get cold; burnt toast that crumbles away as soon as you touch it, butter straight from the freezer, and a pot of very weak coffee, lukewarm."

"That's a complicated order, sir," said the bewildered waiter. "It might be quite difficult."

The guest replied, "Oh, but that's what you gave me yesterday!"