

Chornobyl Chronicle

CHILDREN OF CHORNOBYL RELIEF FUND NATIONAL NEWSLETTER Fall 1999 VOL. XVII

Merry Christmas & Season's Greetings



Dr. Morris Cohen (left) of Beth Israel Medical Center provides hands-on instruction for doctors from Dnipropetrovsk, Drohobych, Kyiv and other cities during grand rounds at the Volynian Regional Pediatric Medical Center- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

Volynian Partner Hospital Achieves Marked Decrease in Infant Mortality

Improvements in Intensive Care Attributed to CCRF Aid

(Lutsk, Volynian Region)

The Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund has received a highly encouraging report from its partner hospital in Volyn indicating a notable decrease in infant mortality over the past two years. In a report issued in September of 1999, the Volynian Regional (Oblasny) Children's Medical Center (VODTMO) compared the mortality rate for children undergoing treatment for birth defects, premature births and other complications between 1995 and 1999.

According to Dr. Mykola Hnatiw, one of the leading neonatal specialists at the Volynian Center, the number of children undergoing treatment at the Center has increased slightly from 1995 to 1998. However, mortality has fallen off sharply from 51 deaths in 1995 to only 11 in the first six months of this year.

"This represents a more than 50% decrease in the number of infant deaths in our facility, from 27% four years ago to under 12% this year," said Dr. Hnatiw. "These are very encouraging indicators." Hnatiw and his colleagues have attributed much of this improvement to new technology and training provided by the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund which has delivered more than \$500,000 dollars' worth of intensive care equipment to the facility, beginning in November of 1997.

Among the most prized items delivered by CCRF was a fully-equipped ambulance that has enabled doctors in Lutsk to reach newborns in some of the most remote villages in this rural province and to transport them safely to Volyn's central critical care facility. (See photos, page 5) "In one year, we have doubled the number of children we are bringing from remote maternity clinics," Hnatiw explained. Thanks to the initiative of Professor Volodymyr and Oksana Bakum of Highland, New York and a very generous gift from the Matushevsky/Bakum Families, CCRF was able to leverage and install five complete neonatal stations at the Volynian pediatric center. The new work stations are equipped with infant warmers, respirators and pulse oximeters that help staff in monitoring and stabilizing the infants' condition.

CCRF's experience in Lutsk follows similar successes it has achieved at its partner hospitals in Dnipropetrovsk and Lviv with the help of grants from Monsanto and the John Deere Company. The success of the Volynian neonatal team convinced CCRF medical advisers to stage a national training conference in Lutsk between October 18 and 20th this year.

To support CCRF's Infant Survival Initiative, send your tax-deductible contributions to CCRF, 272 Old Short Hills Rd. Short Hills, NJ 07078.

Neonatal Conference Draws Experts from across Ukraine

All 25 Oblasts & Crimea Represented

On October 18-20, the Volynian Regional Children's Medical Center (VODTMO) was the site of a historic medical conference when over 100 neonatal specialists from all 25 provinces of Ukraine and the Crimean Autonomous Republic came together in Lutsk to strengthen their technical skills and to develop new strategies for combating infant mortality. The conference was financed by the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund and co-sponsored by the VODTMO, its partner hospital in Lutsk. The conference received the official endorsement of the Ukrainian Ministry of Health and featured technical presentations by several American medical experts. Among these were Morris Cohen, M.D. and Patricia Benedetto, RNC, BSN, MPA of the Children's Hospital - Newark Beth Israel Medical Center. (cont'd on pp 4 & 5)



Conference participants listen intently to technical demonstration of an infant ventilation system by Volodymyr Mitin of Fisher & Paykel.

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Chicago, IL, Lehigh Valley, PA;
Rochester, NY, Hartford, CT

- * Fishkill, NY Rotary Ambulance
- * Berkeley Chamber Chorus in Lviv

Letters to CCRF

RESPONSE TO APRIL 19, 1999 AWARD CEREMONY FOR FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

"Honorable Mrs. Clinton:

Millions of people around the world, including Ukraine have come to know you not only as the First Lady of the United States, but as a person who continually and unselfishly devotes herself to broad-based humanitarian activity. This evokes in us feelings of great respect and gratitude. For many unfortunate people, you have become a sister, a daughter, a mother, insofar as you always share their pain and suffering, devoting maximum effort to make their lives better and easier.

"It is difficult to overstate (overvalue) the practical assistance which our nation has received from the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund whose activities have gained your significant attention. The results of the activities of this charitable organization have once again attested to the fact that the United States of America is a great and humane nation which is not complacent towards the plight of children in Ukraine who have been afflicted by the aftermath of the Chernobyl catastrophe. We highly value your personal contribution as well as the moral and financial support of your countrymen in this noble cause.....May God protect you and give you strength and stamina."

With deep respect,

*B.P.Klimchuk, Governor of Volyn Oblast
June 8, 1999*

Honored Friends!

The delegation from Luhansk which attended your conference in Lutsk expresses its gratitude for giving us the opportunity to gain valuable information to improve our treatment of newborns, as well as literature that will enable us to work on a higher level. If possible, please send us more copies of your handbook *Fundamentals of Neonatology* so that we might distribute them among the neonatologists of our oblast. We would be very thankful for this.

*Dr. Hanna Skorina
Luhansk Delegation*



Esteemed members of CCRF!

In this unsettled and troubled time, I am sure that more often than not, you receive letters from people expressing various pretenses and disappointments, and more seldom sincere letters of gratitude for your good deeds of compassion. I would like for my letter and poems addressed to Mrs. Nadia Matkiwsky to be forwarded to her...May the thread that binds nations together not be broken, and may it bring us mutual understanding.

With respect and gratitude,

*Svitlana Reshetova, Donetsk Oblast, city of Artemivsk
(Below: A short excerpt from letter to Mrs. Matkiwsky)*

Dear Ms. Nadia:

I am writing you from Ukraine. Threefold I apologize for disturbing you, but you have inspired me. It is difficult to express in words what great feelings of admiration your visits to Ukraine have stirred in my soul. I have composed a short story about you and assigned it to my students who were deeply moved by the narrative of your work on behalf of the Chernobyl children....As a token of my gratitude for your good deeds, I am sending you a few of my poems dedicated to your service in the hopes that they will reach you far beyond the ocean.....May God bless you with a long and healthy life.

Svitlana Reshetova

Feedback on the June 26 Kupalo Fundraiser in Conn.

Dear Judi and Lou (Friedman):

Ed and I wanted to thank you for the beautiful "Kupalo Festival of Renewal" that we enjoyed at your home on Saturday night. The Yevshan Ukrainian Vocal Ensemble, the bandura quartet and dancers were wonderful. It is a memory we will cherish. After meeting all the great people and understanding the important work that is being done for the Children of Chernobyl, we have enclosed a small donation.

Mary S. Carpenter, Avon, Connecticut

Dear Judi and Lou:

Once again, you knocked our socks off. What can I say about that night? How the light came through the trees, the voices in the woods, the golden light, the rising moon, the costumes of the dancers, voices moving over the pond...older Ukrainian women who remember, flowers in their hair, walking just before us, holding on to each other's arms, singing with the singers, knowing all the tunes, what that evening meant to them, to their grandchildren cavorting in and out of the line. All of this - and another plane full of compassion heading out to Ukraine....Thank you for exactly who and what you are. Love,

Anne Batterson, Canton, Connecticut



SOME ENCHANTED EVENING: Celebrating the Ukrainian festival of Midsummer Night's Eve (Kupalo) CCRF volunteer Melanie Bonacorsa (center) plays the ceremonial role of the Mavka - the hostess Wood Nymph of the ancient summer solstice. Joining Melanie and other revelers are CCRF activists Inya Chehade and Ksenia Kzyk Salewycz. See letters (right) and page 7 for more highlights.



CCRF Delivers New Technology in time for Poltava Jubilee

On September 23, the historic city of Poltava hosted thousands of guests from across Ukraine and from around the world as it celebrated the 11th Century since its first settlement. To mark this venerable jubilee, CCRF delivered more than \$46,000 worth of intensive care equipment to the Poltava Maternity Center, to help safeguard the next generation of baby Poltavchany who may suffer from various birth complications. Among the delegates were Dr. Silvia Bilobron, a member of CCRF's Board of Directors, Kyiv staffers Pavlo Smirnov and Lesia Yavorivska and Mrs. Tamara Denysenko, the President of the Irondequoit-Poltava Sister Cities Project who helped to forge a medical partnership with the Rochester Chapter of CCRF earlier this year. In a special letter to the Poltava press, Dr. Natalia Udovyt'ska, the Chief Doctor at the Poltava Maternity Center expressed her thanks for the "significant contribution of high quality neonatal technology provided by CCRF" that was timed to coincide with the 1100th Anniversary.

(Above) In celebration of the 1100th Anniversary of the founding of the City of Poltava, CCRF delivered a complete neonatal intensive care station to the Poltava Maternity Center. From left to right: technical adviser Volodymyr Mitin (representing Fisher & Paykel-NZ Techno); CCRF Board member, Dr. Silvia Bilobron; President of the Irondequoit-Poltava Sister Cities Project, Mrs. Tamara Denysenko; CCRF staffer Lesia Yavorivska, a Poltava doctor and CCRF Kyiv Office Director Pavlo Smirnov.



Poltava: Dr. Silvia Bilobron (left) and Lesia Yavorivska distribute presents to children at the Poltava Regional Children's Hospital. Though lollipops and toys have less therapeutic value than the medical equipment CCRF delivered in September, these patients expressed a clear preference for their sweets.



Volodymyr Mitin (left) a technical expert from the European firm Fisher & Paykel installs the first infant warmer at the Poltava Maternity Center with the help of CCRF staff director Pavlo Smirnov.

For more information on our overseas mission, see our new Web Site at:
www.ccrf-iccf.org
 or
childrenofchomobyl.org

Sanatorium in Volyn Aids Disabled Children With Aid from CCRF & Pennsylvania Parish

With the support of local businesses and volunteers, doctors from the Volynian Regional Children's Medical Center have created a progressive treatment center for children suffering from cerebral palsy and other neurological disabilities. Nestled in a picturesque forest in the village of "Dachnyj", the sanatorium provides physical therapy, family counseling, educational programs and a Montessori School for a variety of children with special needs. In May, the Dachnyj Sanatorium received a large shipment of toys and climbing structures donated by the parish of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Orthodox Church in Northampton, Pennsylvania. Therapists and doctors at Dachnyj expressed deep gratitude to CCRF



and the people of Lehigh Valley who responded to their plea for play equipment and therapeutic toys that might help these unfortunate children develop their motor skills and stimulate their intellectual development. "Our children just love these gifts", said assistant director Dr. Domka Borysenko. "They are colorful and appealing, and they really help us to motivate the children to improve their skills." In addition to aiding the Dachnyj facility, the Pennsylvania drive also generated gifts for orphanages in Svitlovodsk and Rivne.



One of several durable play structures assembled in the Dachne Children's Sanatorium. The "elephant slide" donated by the parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Northampton, Pennsylvania has become very popular with disabled children in the Volynian treatment center.



A well-prepared host committee from the Volynian Regional Children's Medical Center greets delegates and trainees at the October 18-20 conference in Lutsk. Luba Emelyanova - Head of Nursing for VRCCM (left) supervises the interns.



Seated at the press conference prior to the opening session of CCRF's Neonatal Conference are (from left to right) Hanna Mikulska - Volyn Ministry of Health, Dr. Hryhoriy Vashchynin - Head of the Volynian Regional Pediatric Medical Center, Nadia Matkiwsky - CCRF Executive Director, Oleksiy Zhurakivsky - Lieutenant Governor of Volyn, Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky - CCRF President, Dr. Valeriy Samokhin, Head Volyn Ministry of Health, Dr. Olena Sulima - Head Neonatologist, Ukrainian Ministry of Health, Ihor Khranovsky - Director, Siemens Corporation in Kyiv, Dr. Maria Hohosha - Head Pediatrician, Ukrainian Ministry of Health.



A packed auditorium at the Lutsk Conference Center listens intently to the Opening Plenary Session of the Neonatal Conference. (First row from right to left: Tanya Fesenko Vena - CCRF Financial Officer, Nadia Matkiwsky - CCRF Executive Director, Dr. Liudmilla Hahalovska - Assistant Director of VODTMO and Dr. Maria Hohosha - Ukrainian Ministry of Health.



At the Lutsk Conference Center, keynote speakers Patricia Benedetto, RNC, BSN, MPA and Morris Cohen, M.D. of Children's Hospital at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center in New Jersey meet with CCRF President Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky (right) and conference coordinator Ksenia Kyzyk Salewycz (left) between sessions.

Neonatal Conference Draws Experts from across Ukraine All 25 Oblasts & Crimea Represented

(continued from page 1)

Dr. Cohen has served as Director of Neonatal Medicine at Children's Hospital of New Jersey and Co-Director of the Regional Perinatal Center at Newark Beth Israel Center since 1986 and is currently the President of the Gateway Maternal Child Health Consortium. As a registered nurse, Ms. Benedetto is the Neonatal Outreach Education Coordinator for the Regional Perinatal Center at Children's Hospital of New Jersey and the Regional Trainer for the American Academy of Pediatrics Neonatal Resuscitation Program, coordinating this program for the Children's Hospital and for its referral institutions. The first two days of the conference covered the following topics in neonatology: regionalization of neonatal/perinatal health care, neonatal outreach education, new modalities of neonatal care, problems of the preterm newborn - respiratory distress syndrome, nutritional/fluid management, meconium aspiration syndrome & PPHN, jaundice, and perinatal infections. The third day offered a more clinical approach addressing the mechanics of neonatal resuscitation and difficult case studies during rounds at the neonatology ward at the Volynian Regional Children's Clinical Hospital.

In addition to formal presentations and lectures, participants were able to take part in small group training sessions with technical experts representing medical manufacturers such as Siemens, AVL and Fisher & Paykel. Dr. Cohen also conducted grand rounds providing in-depth consultation for several teams of doctors from various provinces in the local hospital's neonatal intensive care unit. Since 1997 the Volynian hospital has succeeded in increasing its patient caseload while reducing its infant mortality rate by more than 50%. Local doctors credit much of their success to CCRF which provided extensive training and new technology. "This conference was an eye-opening experience", said one doctor from Eastern Ukraine. "Until recently, we had believed that our Soviet medical system had provided us with the finest medical technology and therapeutic techniques. Only now do we fully realize how far our hospitals have fallen below Western standards."

Many doctors from other regions of Ukraine echoed these sentiments. Others expressed the hope that in the near future, their medical centers would also be able to implement new procedures that would help them sharply improve infant survival rates in their regions. "We are simultaneously inspired and sobered by what we have seen here," said a doctor from Poltava. "We had always thought of Volyn as a remote and backward province. Now we understand that the doctors here have made huge advances far beyond our wildest imagination." All participants received a complimentary copy of a newly released medical handbook entitled "The Fundamentals of Neonatology" (Osnovni Polozhennia Neonatolohiyi), the first textbook of its kind published in Ukrainian. The manual was translated and published by CCRF and the national women's organization, "Zhinocha Hromada" with technical assistance from doctors and medical students in Kyiv.



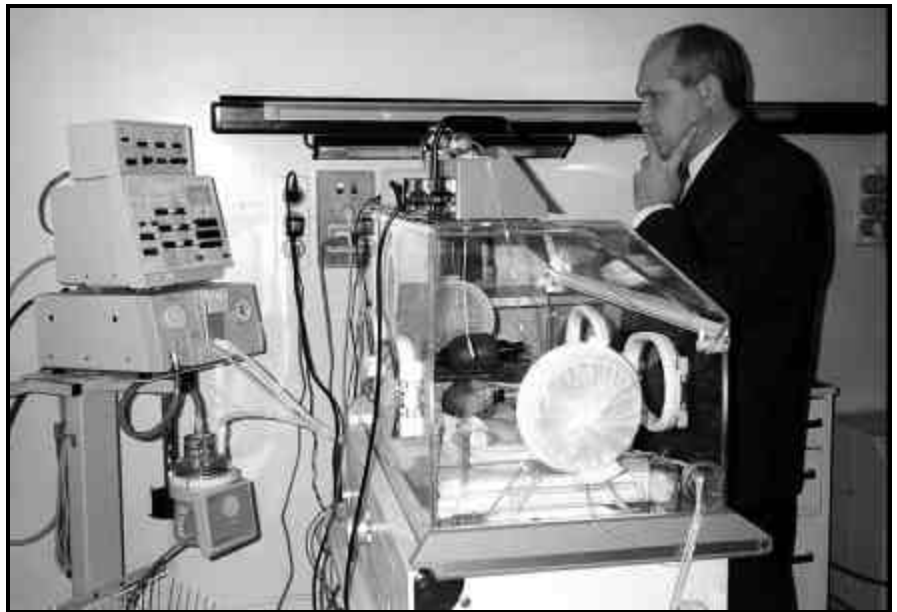
Dr. Morris Cohen prepares a 2 week old child for examination in the NICU of the Volyn Regional Children's Clinical Hospital during the clinical rounds.

The Manual of Neonatal Care was also distributed for use in every neonatology center in attendance. "We were extremely pleased with the caliber of physicians who participated in this conference," said Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky, the Chief of Surgery at Union Hospital in New Jersey and President of CCRF. "Their high level of motivation and diligence bodes well for the next generation of Ukraine's medical leaders. They are hungry for new ideas, and they are not afraid to change old habits that may have limited their effectiveness in the past." Dr. Matkiwsky expressed special appreciation to medical directors Dr. Valeriy Rutsky and Dr. Hryhory Vashchylin and their staff at the Volynian Regional Children's Medical Center for their collaboration in designing the conference and for their outstanding hospitality and professionalism in handling the advance work and on-site logistics.

Besides Dr. Matkiwsky, a number of CCRF volunteers and staff played a key role in the design and coordination of the conference, including Executive Director Nadia Matkiwsky, Tanya Fesenko Vena, staff members Ksenia Kyzyk Salewycz, Olya Datsenko, Lesia Yavorivska and Pavlo Smirnov. The October 18th conference was the latest in a series of successful training programs sponsored by CCRF since 1990. To support such programs or to help finance the publication of medical manuals and health literature, please send your tax-deductible contributions to CCRF, 272 Old Short Hills Rd., Short Hills, NJ 07078. Call (973) 376-5140.



Dr. Mykola Hnatiw and head nurse of NICU - Natalia Emelyanova devote their attention to a struggling neonate in the neonatal intensive care ward of the Volynian Regional Pediatric Medical Center. Thanks to new technology such as this advanced pulse oximeter and infant warmer provided by CCRF, the Medical Center has significantly decreased its infant mortality rate.



During rounds at the intensive care ward Dr. Dmytro Yarmoliuk, Chief Neonatologist of the Zhytomyr Region studies the intensive care equipment donated by CCRF, as it stabilizes a two week old infant suffering from various complications due to premature birth.



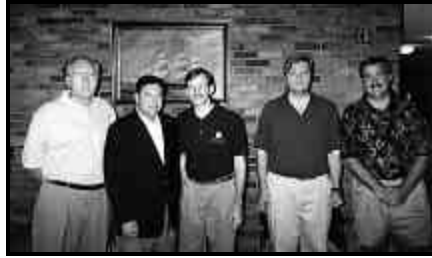
During the conference, the chief doctors from several oblasts including, Poltava, Zhytomyr, Luhansk, Crimea, Lviv and Mykolayiv marveled at the capabilities of the ambulance donated by the Rotary Club of Fishkill, New York/Rotary International and delivered to Lutsk by CCRF in April of this year aboard CCRF's 24th medical relief airlift (above right). To date this ambulance has successfully transported infants from across all 16 provinces of the Volynian oblast using the transport incubator and ventilator donated by CCRF. Over 22 transports have occurred over a 3 month period, saving 14 premature babies and 8 term babies after admittance to the Volyn NICU. The babies were treated for respiratory distress, congenital heart failure and other anomalies. CCRF extends its sincere gratitude to the Rotary Club, Fishkill, NY, Mr. George Supan - Treasurer, Mr. Timothy Every - President, Mr. Charles VanVoorhis - Board Member and Mrs. Halyna Danylenko - President - Lutsk Rotary Club in Ukraine for making this miracle happen. Above left CCRF staffers Lesia Yavorivska and Olya Datsenko with Dr. Liudmilla Hahalovska - Assistant Director of VOTMO during a follow up visit to Lutsk.

ROCHESTER GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES FUNDS FOR CCRF AND POLTAVA SISTER CITIES PROJECT



During the September 18th charity tournament, golfers and organizers enjoyed spectacular Indian Summer weather at the Deerfield Country Club. From left to right: Orest and Dorothea Torous, Jerry, Michael and Roman Lesiv.

(Greece, NY) On a balmy Saturday afternoon in September, more than eighty golfers from the Greater Rochester area came together for their favorite pastime and raised over \$4,300 for the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund and the Poltava-Irondequoit Sister Cities Project. The September 18th golf tournament was the first in what organizers hope will become an annual charity event. All proceeds were designated for a new neonatal intensive care unit at the Poltava Maternity Hospital. The golf tournament at the picturesque Deerfield Country Club drew a diverse crowd of golf enthusiasts, representing various Rochester-area businesses, Rotary International, and Ukrainian-American civic



State Senator James Alesi greets representatives of CCRF and organizers of the September Golf Tournament. From left to right: Myron Babiuk, Senator Alesi, Alex Kuzma, Roman Lesiv and Bohdan Skrobach.

groups. After a full day of golf, the players gathered for an awards banquet that included a raffle, door prizes and surprise presentations. Among the guests of honor at the banquet were State Senator James Alesi who announced that he had secured \$10,000 for the Sister Cities Initiative in Poltava, and Irondequoit Town Clerk Lydia Dzus who presented CCRF with a check for \$700. Also present were Alex Shoumatoff, a frequent contributor to Vanity Fair Magazine and Golf Digest who drove all the way from Montreal, Quebec to join the festivities. Tournament organizer Roman Lesiv thanked all the sponsors and participants who helped make the event so successful, including



A cavalcade of golf carts assemble at the start of the September 18th tournament.

co-organizers John Adamczuk and Bohdan Skrobach, and local businesswoman Lesia Telega whose firm Monroe Graphics designed and donated the promotional poster for the event. The winning team of Jerry Randisi, Clark Cogan, Barry Deane and Jim McKeegan finished the challenging course with a score of 65. To learn more about the Poltava-Irondequoit Sister Cities Project in the Rochester area, please contact Mrs. Tamara Denysenko at (716)544-9727 or Mr. Myron Babiuk at (716)872-4263. To make a contribution to the neonatal unit at the Poltava Maternity Hospital, please make your checks payable to: CCRF, 272 Old Short Hills Rd., Short Hills, NJ 07078.



Berkeley Chamber Chorus

On May 29th, in a special concert arranged by CCRF, the Berkeley Chamber Chorus from the University of California-Berkeley staged an eclectic performance for children at the Lviv Regional Clinical Children's Hospital (Okhmadet). Besides its official repertoire of serious classical and Ukrainian works, the choir also sang a variety of children's tunes and light hearted favorites.

Prior to its departure, with children still peering out of upper story windows, the chorus offered an improvised version of "In the Jungle, the Lion sleeps tonight" on the front steps of the hospital (photo above). Following several encores, the musical director of the Berkeley Chamber Chorus, Dr. Marika Kuzma mingled with patients at the Lviv RCCC, leaving behind toys and special gifts like this University of California "Cal-Bear" for enthusiastic youngsters (see photo above right). CCRF is very grateful to the Berkeley Chorus for taking time out of a very busy touring schedule that included performances at conservatories and prestigious concert halls in Vienna, Prague, Kyiv and Lviv.



(Above) Dr. Lydia Chapelsky of Mission Viejo, California (left) meets with "Vladyk", a young patient who has just undergone surgery in the ophthalmology ward of the Vynnytsia Regional Children's Hospital.



(Above) Mrs. Irene Kaminsky, a senior bank administrator at the Selfreliance Ukrainian Federal Credit Union in Chicago has been a strong advocate of CCRF's medical projects in Ukraine. Here Mrs. Kaminsky speaks with Dr. Andriy Petrykiw about the impact of the CCRF exhibit in the credit union lobby which has encouraged investors to raise thousands of dollars for the Fund's medical projects. A veteran of the Ukrainian anti-Nazi and anti-Soviet resistance movement during World War II, Mrs. Kaminsky is not bashful about promoting the importance of CCRF's overseas mission. "I find it especially gratifying to see the little children of our community who appreciate the plight of the Chernobyl children in Ukraine. It is customary for them to deposit their loose change and candy allowance in our collection jar, and over time, this has added up to a great deal of money." The ongoing drive recently raised another \$10,000 for CCRF's infant survival campaign, to help purchase some of the critical care technology needed to save the lives of newborn infants.



(Above) At Lehigh Community College in Pennsylvania, educator Lydia Leszczyszyn (left) was well received for her presentation on the Children of Chernobyl at a special seminar on Early Childhood Education.



The Zolotyj Promin' Dance Ensemble of Hartford, under the direction of New York choreographer Orlando Pagan was one of several colorful ensembles to perform at the June 26th Summer Solstice celebration - Kupalo - at the home of Lou and Judi Friedman .

**CONNECTICUT ENSEMBLES
PRESENT MEMORABLE
"KUPALO" IN BENEFIT FOR
CHILDREN OF CHORNOBYL**

(Canton, CT) On June 26, a consortium of musical groups presented a re-enactment of the ancient Ukrainian midsummer ritual "Kupalo" in a special benefit performance for the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. The performers included a number of Connecticut-based artists, including the Yevshan Chorus, the Zolotyj Promin' Dance Ensemble, a bandura quartet and recording artist Olya Chodoba-Fryz. The outdoor concert was hosted by Lou and Judi Friedman, well-known as environmental activists in New England, and long-time supporters of the Children of Chernobyl relief mission. The Friedmans' home, located near the Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton, Connecticut provided an ideal setting for the Kupalo ceremonies, with picturesque woodland trails, meadows, ponds and cattail marshes.

Before an audience of over 200 guests, the ritual unfolded on an upland meadow nestled between tall stands of white spruce and oak. Dancers from Zolotyj Promin' dressed in folk costumes from the Poltava Region greeted the audience with a traditional welcoming dance, and the Yevshan Choir entertained the crowd with a series of folk melodies from different regions of Ukraine.

Soloist Christina Jamahian gave a brief explanation of the "Kupalo" ceremony which incorporates ancient courtship rituals with the Feast of St. John the Baptist. Dating back to pre-Christian times, Kupalo has been celebrated for centuries as a commemoration of the summer solstice, and a celebration of the power and enchantment of Nature. The choir then led the guests on a long, meandering walk through the woods, with many stops along the way for more songs, poetry readings and a surprise appearance by "Mavka", a traditional wood nymph character played by Melanie Bonacorsa.

The program concluded with a grand finale on the deck of the pond featuring the principal dancers from Zolotyj Promin and a rousing rendition of love songs by Yevshan. The artistic program was followed by a potluck reception on the patio of the Friedman home. Among the guests was Attorney Igor Sikorsky, Jr. of Rocky Hill, the son of the aviation pioneer and helicopter inventor who emigrated from Kyiv in the 1920s and later established the Sikorsky Aircraft manufacturing plant in Connecticut.




At the conclusion of the outdoor fundraiser, CCRF activists embraced their hosts, Lou and Judi Friedman and special guest, Igor Sikorsky, Jr., a prominent Connecticut attorney and son of the world-renowned, Ukrainian-born aviation pioneer. From left to right, Alex Kuzma with daughter Alina, Nadia Matkiwsky, Lou and Judi Friedman, Mr. Sikorsky, Tanya Fesenko Vena, Ksenia Kyzuk Salewyc, and Inya Chehade. Mrs. Friedman is sporting a special wreath and embroidered shirt from the Ternopil Region - a token of appreciation from Mrs.

Mr. Sikorsky made a special presentation of historic photographs of his father's pioneering flight from St. Petersburg to Kyiv. He thanked the Friedmans for hosting this event and he expressed his support for the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund and its relief mission to Ukraine. The Kupalo fundraiser raised over \$6,000 for the CCRF, and generated enough memories for a lifetime.



**BE A VISIONARY!
Remember the Children In Your "Zapovit"**



One of the first poems that every Ukrainian schoolchild is required to memorize is Taras Shevchenko's "Zapovit" - the final "Will and Testament" in which this great human rights champion described the legacy he hoped to leave for future generations in his beloved homeland.

Unfortunately, many North Americans who care deeply about Ukraine and the children of Chornobyl forget to follow Shevchenko's example. They forget to write their own "Zapovit"! Your will and your estate can be a powerful instrument in promoting your vision for a new Ukraine, where children can live in a healthier, more democratic environment with decent medical care and dignity and hope.....By designating a portion of your estate to the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, you can reap important tax benefits and you can plan your future with the comfort of knowing that you are leaving a cherished legacy for some of the world's neediest and most deserving children.

CCRF is very grateful to the many individuals and families who have remembered to include the Children of Chernobyl in their estate planning. Their gifts have restored the strength and life of some of Ukraine's most promising and idealistic young citizens. They have helped to build the "strategic partnership" with a new Ukraine which is so vital to the long-term security of the United States and the entire world.

If you have not yet drawn up your will, please contact an attorney today. You may also contact our office at (973)376-5140 or write to CCRF, attn: "Zapovit Legacy Circle", 272 Old Short Hills Road, Short Hills, New Jersey 07078.

We promise: Your generosity will not be forgotten.

(Left) Using wooded ponds and groves of trees as outdoor amphitheaters, the Yevshan Ukrainian Choral Ensemble performed some of the best loved ancient songs celebrating the Summer Solstice. (Below) Dancers launch a spirited Carpathian Mountain folk finale taking full advantage of a lakeshore deck on the Friedmans' property.





CCRF is proud to be of assistance to Rotary International's Gift of Life Project that provides life-saving heart surgery for children in need. CCRF Volunteer Mrs. Lydia Welyczkowski (left) meets with 18 month old Yuri Khulas and his mother Philamalia. Yurchyk came from Ukraine to undergo surgery at the Montefiore Medical Center in New York. Hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Roland and Carol Verblau of West Caldwell, New Jersey, Yurchyk and his mother were assisted by Mrs. Welyczkowski who helped with translation and transportation services. CCRF also provided assistance for another Gift of Life patient, Ivan Petryk, who successfully underwent surgery in Syracuse, New York.

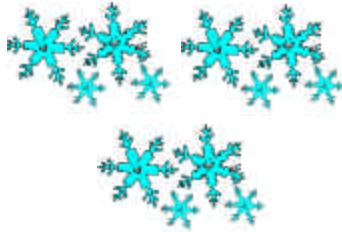


During her fact-finding trip in June, Inya Chehade visits with three children undergoing treatment for leukemia at the Lviv Regional Specialized Pediatric Clinic. As CCRF's first partner hospital, the LRSPC has received a large volume of cancer medication and advanced diagnostic equipment from CCRF. This partnership has resulted in higher remission rates, bringing new hope for these young patients.



OUR CHRISTMAS APPEAL

**Your Gifts Can Help
Brighten the Faces of Many
Other Children in the
New Millennium**



Jacques Hnizdovsky's touching image of a child in prayer reminds us of the essence of Christmas - the spirit of hope, and the innocence of children in need. As we prepare to celebrate the 2000th Anniversary of Christ's Birth, thousands of children across Ukraine are praying for a brighter future, praying for the strength to overcome life-threatening illnesses. Your generous donations are enabling CCRF to save lives of children like this young burn victim in Lutsk (above left), whose recovery was made possible by intensive care technology funded by CCRF. In the Year 2000, your gift can make the critical difference in a young child's life. We ask that you keep the plight of these children in mind and that this Christmas, you will make your gifts as generous as possible.



WISHING ALL OF OUR DONORS A VERY BLESSED AND JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON!



Children of Chomobyl Relief Fund, Inc. / International Children of Chomobyl Foundation

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252002, vul. Khreshchatyk 25/28 Kyiv, Ukraine / Tel-Fax: 011.380.44.228.1870 / 464.1207

www.ccrf-iccf.org or www.childrenofchomobyl.org

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