

Chornobyl Chronicle

CHILDREN OF CHORNOBYL RELIEF FUND NATIONAL NEWSLETTER Summer 1999 VOL. XVI

NEW DATA SHOWS ALARMING DECLINE IN UKRAINE'S POPULATION

The New York Times, Kyiv Post and the Ukrainian Weekly have confirmed that Ukraine is experiencing a serious decline in its birth rate and a disturbing increase in mortality. According to the latest statistics available, Ukraine has experienced a net loss of more than 2 million citizens - from 52 to 50 million - in just the past five years as overall mortality has dramatically outpaced live births. In a front-page article published on February 26, the New York Times reports that Ukraine's infant mortality rate stands at 21 deaths per one thousand live births - nearly three times the European average. The factors contributing to these trends are varied and complex, but many health experts are convinced that Chornobyl is clearly having a major impact. Preliminary findings from the European Longitudinal Study on Pregnancy and Childhood (ELSPAC) have established that women exposed to Chornobyl fallout are more likely to experience severe prenatal or birth complications than Ukrainian women who were not exposed to Chornobyl. It is noteworthy that Belarus and Ukraine - the two nations hardest-hit by Chornobyl fallout are the only two European nations experiencing such a demographic freefall.



Newborns recover at Poltava Regional Maternity Center.

Responding to the new findings, Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky, President of CCRF stated, "This underscores the importance of our efforts to combat infant mortality and to strengthen neonatal units and prenatal education. We know that in Dnipropetrovsk, our partner hospital reduced infant mortality by nearly 50% within the first year of receiving new technology and training from CCRF. We have seen other encouraging successes in Lutsk, Lviv and Vinnytsia, but this is not enough. We need to expand these efforts to more provinces as quickly as possible. In the United States, these problems have been countered effectively with an



First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton praised CCRF as "a remarkable organization that has set new standards for international development and humanitarian aid." Seated behind the First Lady are actor Alec Baldwin and US Senator Frank Lautenberg.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton Accepts Lifetime Achievement Award from CCRF

(New York City) On Monday, April 19th the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund held a special awards reception honoring the First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton for her lifetime achievement in promoting women's and children's health. Despite a harrowing schedule, the First Lady came to the Ukrainian Institute of America to accept the award in person and to express her enthusiastic support for the work of CCRF.

Speaking to a capacity crowd, the First Lady praised CCRF as a "remarkable organization that has set new standards for international development and humanitarian aid." "Many members of Congress and humanitarian experts at the State Department are amazed by how much CCRF has accomplished with such a lean staff and such a modest budget," said Mrs. Clinton. "I have seen with my own eyes and heard with my own ears the impact of your efforts."

The First Lady was presented with a 14-inch bronze sculpture of the "Berehynia" (the protectress), a traditional icon-like image of a mother holding a child with outstretched arms. In introducing the First Lady, CCRF Executive Director Nadia Matkiwsky cited several verses from a poem by Maya Angelou entitled "Phenomenal Woman". She called Mrs. Clinton "a woman who stands on her own achievements, a woman of vision and compassion and intellectual strength...". Mrs. Matkiwsky thanked Mrs. Clinton for "reaching out to help the stricken children of Ukraine", noting that a nation without healthy children is a nation without a future.

Prior to the First Lady's arrival, film producer Fred Caruso, who served as the Master of

Mr. Baldwin, who is well known for his role in such popular films as "The Hunt for Red October" and "The Juror", called on the audience to recognize the global threat posed by the Chornobyl accident and to intensify their commitment to aid its victims. "Some of the health consequences of Chornobyl are well known and beyond dispute. Others are just becoming apparent...."

At the conclusion of the program, the Brooklyn-based "Prolisok" Ukrainian girls' choir under the direction of Andriy Stasiw rendered several songs by Viktor Petrynenko and other modern composers in honor of the Chornobyl children. Mrs. Clinton commented on "the beautiful faces" of these young ladies and thanked them for their wonderful singing.

CCRF is thankful to all the patrons, guests and volunteers who helped to make this one of our most successful fundraisers ever. The evening program enabled us to raise over \$90,000 for our medical mission. The program was cited in a number of news publications, including USA Today, the New York Daily News, Associated Press and the Kiev Post. For an interactive report on the program, including recorded audio excerpts from the speeches by the First Lady, Senator Lautenberg and Alec Baldwin, please consult the internet webpage: webmaster@brama.com. See page 4 and 5 for more coverage.

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

- * Alec Baldwin's Remarks about CCRF
- * New Partnership with Poltava
- * Progress in Kyiv, Lutsk & Vinnytsia

Dear Nadia:

I am writing to confirm and reestablish our ongoing cooperative efforts in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of the Newly Independent States (NIS), this time in Ukraine where you have done such outstanding work in the past. As always, it is a pleasure to do business with you and to continue a mutual partnership with a highly professional private volunteer organization like the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund....The service you perform is one of the most efficient uses of US government [Freedom Support Act] funds that I can envision and is just what our Congress had in mind when it made transportation and grant dollars available for the delivery of donated commodities to the NIS.....I wish you the greatest success and encourage your efforts to assist the people of Ukraine by providing..... medical and relief commodities to those in greatest need.

*Charles R. Hardesty,
Director, Humanitarian Assistance to the
NIS US State Department*



Doctors from Lutsk and CCRF staff gather near the ambulance donated by Fishkill, NY Rotary Club for emergency aid to children in Volyn Province.

For more than half a year I was forced to walk the halls of many hospitals with my little daughter in the hopes of finding out what may be wrong with her. Our local and regional health officials could not locate the problem. But the hand of Providence led me to the Kyiv Emergency Hospital where they were able to establish an exact diagnosis. Thanks to the high qualifications of the staff at your MRI Unit and the sophisticated technology, I was able to prevent a terrible disaster that could have happened with my child. I'm writing to express my sincerest gratitude to the staff, organizers and to the providers of that [MRI] who are bringing us hope for the future in this difficult time.

*L.O. Hordiy
Village of Dzyhivka, Vinnytsia Oblast*



Prof. Hlib Hayuk of Baltimore, Md. blows out the candles at his 60th birthday party. In lieu of presents, Prof. Hayuk's friends and family donated \$900 to

Dear Children of Chernobyl Staff:

How do you celebrate a 60th birthday when you are in excellent health, living a comfortable life in a free country, full of wealth and abundance? We decided that in lieu of cards, gifts, flowers and the usual trinkets, we would try something different this year. Since both of us are employed in the environmental fields, we are very conscious of the great tragedy that befell unsuspecting millions after the Chernobyl disaster. Especially tragic is the plight of the many children born before and after the accident. We are aware that many of these children will not live to adulthood.

For this reason, we had a large birthday gathering and asked our friends, family, and work associates to make a donation to the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund if they wished to honor Hlib on his 60th birthday. The response was astounding! Many people expressed what a wonderful idea it was to contribute to a charity for this event. Hopefully others will follow suit in the future.

We are happy to send Children of Chernobyl a grand total of \$900 contributed by many caring individuals. It is our hope that this money can be put towards helping those children who developed cancers as a result of the catastrophe. We have also included a picture of the "birthday boy" blowing out the candles!.....Thank you for all the work that you do.

*Prof. Hlib Hayuk Teresa Kaltenbacher
Geography Prof. Environmental
Baltimore, MD Planner
Baltimore, MD*

Dear Dr. Matkiwsky:

Thank you for the "Chornobyl Chronicle"...The work that CCRF is doing is outstanding and deserves recognition....Since we are natives of Bukovyna, we would urge your society to make an effort to assist children of this area as well. We realize that our contribution is not large enough to support such activity in Bukovyna, but we will do the best we can for as long as we can. Attached is a check for \$100. Thank you for your kind attention."

*Irene F. and Bohdan M. Slabyj, Ph.D.
Brewer, Maine*



At a rehabilitation center near Narodichi, youngsters afflicted by Chernobyl illnesses enjoy a respite between therapy sessions.

Dear Nadia:

I just wanted to tell you that the special evening honoring our First Lady was very impressive, well done and a tribute to you and your staff. Congratulations. Also, many thanks for extending an invitation to CMMB....Please be assured of our continued assistance to the wonderful work you are doing for the people of Chernobyl.

*Terry Kirch, Executive Director
Catholic Medical Mission Board, Inc.
New York City*

Dear Alex:

I want to thank both you and CCRF for the opportunity to participate in the ceremony honoring Hillary Clinton. I felt so honored to be a volunteer in this organization after I heard how our "little" jobs and efforts pay off in big results in Ukraine. We are all behind you in your efforts.

Wanda Baxer, New Britain, Connecticut



AIRLIFTS #22 & #23 DELIVER \$1.6 MILLION IN AID

In its latest effort to reduce infant mortality in regions affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, CCRF launched its 22nd and 23rd airlifts on April 28th and May 5th, successfully delivering 31 tons of medicines, medical equipment and supplies to Ukraine, valued over \$1.6 million dollars. These airlifts were coordinated with the United States Department of State and coincided with the thirteenth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

The medical aid was delivered to maternity and pediatric centers in Kyiv, Poltava, Dnipropetrovsk, Znamyanka, Lviv, Lutsk, Zakarpattia and Mukachevo. The key in-kind donors included Siemens Medical Systems, Catholic Medical Mission Board, International Aid, Rotary Club of Fishkill, NY, Meritage International, Allegiance Healthcare Corp., Becton Dickinson Healthcare Systems, Bristol Myers Squibb, STAT Medical Equipment Corp. and the American Board of Radiology. Among the most valuable commodities delivered were a Ford ambulance donated by the Rotary Club of Fishkill, NY, neonatal intensive care equipment including incubators, ventilators, infant warmers and monitors with all accessories, ultrasounds and a variety of medications and antibiotics. The ambulance will be used primarily to transport infants with life-threatening respiratory conditions from remote villages in Eastern Volyn to the provincial capital of Lutsk. The eastern areas of Volyn were especially hard-hit by radiation from Chernobyl. This help has given Ukrainian doctors the critical tools they need to combat infant mortality.

CCRF's 22nd and 23rd airlifts and neonatal conference were organized as a continuation of CCRF's long-term commitment to its medical programs in Ukraine. It is our mission to save as many lives as possible, while at the same time creating a self-sustaining environment for our partner hospitals. Since 1989, CCRF has delivered more than 1,100 tons of medical aid to Ukraine valued at \$40 million dollars.

CCRF's donors and partners have helped set these high standards, providing desperately needed medical aid to mothers and children in Ukraine - saving their lives. We thank you for understanding the value of CCRF's assistance as a PVO working in Ukraine for the past ten years, and for helping us provide the desperately needed medical aid to the mothers and children of Ukraine. Thank you for being a part of our medical programs, sharing in our vision, and supporting our mission.



At Boryspil Airport outside of Kyiv, CCRF held a press conference to announce the arrival of more than 35 tons of cargo as part of the Fund's 22d Airlift. From left to right: Panalpina Director Dmitriy Tkachenko, Siemens Director Ihor Khranovsky, Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky, Volodymyr Yavorivsky, Nadia Matkiwsky, and Ksenia Salewycz.



(Above) Siemens Medical Systems of Iselin, "New Jersey donates Diagnostic X-Ray Unit earmarked for the use in CCRF's Infant Survival/Womean's Healthcare Initiative program in Ukraine. The equipment was delivered aboard CCRF's 23rd airlift to Lviv. From left to right: Valerie Burachinsky (CCRF Vice President), Lothar Jaeger (Siemens Business Administrator), Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky (CCRF President), Tim Ketchmark (Siemens AX Division Manager) and Ksenia Salewycz (CCRF Director of Procurement).

(Below) On April 27, CCRF convened a training conference focusing on neonatal intensive care for specialists from eight cities where CCRF has established long-term hospital partnerships: Chernihiv, Vynnytsia, Lviv, Lutsk, Kyiv, Poltava, Luhansk and Dnipropetrovsk. There are only 21 neonatologists for every 10,000 infants born in Ukraine. CCRF's conference was the first of its kind to address the dire shortage of trained neonatal experts, providing an open forum for the physicians to share their concerns about problems they are encountering with the rising rate of infant mortality. The conference featured advanced workshops by technical experts and manufacturers of intensive care technology to ensure that the aid received from CCRF is used to its maximum potential. This conference was just the first in a series of conferences that CCRF is planning as part of its Women's & Children's Healthcare Initiative. CCRF will be organizing its next neonatal conference in Lutsk which will further address the serious problems facing the critical care of premature and full term infants in Ukraine, and will provide practical clinical sessions for the physicians.





REMARKS BY ALEC BALDWIN AT THE UKRAINIAN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA, APRIL 19, 1999

Chornobyl proved that the risks of nuclear energy are not just the stuff of fiction. They are not a matter of fanciful speculation or remote theoretical improbabilities. Chornobyl was not a figment of our imagination. Chornobyl happened. It unleashed one hundred and fifty times more radiation than the Hiroshima bomb.

SOME of the facts about Chornobyl are well-known and well established. But many more are obscure and shrouded in secrecy. We know that thyroid cancer in children exposed to Chornobyl has risen to levels eighty TIMES higher than normal. Today, there are thousands of children who wear the Chornobyl necklace - a scar on their throats where their thyroid gland was removed. There are more than ten thousand nuclear cleanup workers who have died since battling the hellfire of Chornobyl. There are over one hundred and fifty thousand people in Ukraine alone who will never be able to go back to their homes and farms, who will never be able to cultivate some of the richest agricultural land in the world because it is too contaminated.

Chornobyl was not an accident. It was an abomination. A crime against humanity. But this represents only a small slice of the truth about Chornobyl. Nuclear scientists know that many of the worst effects of radiation exposure do not occur until fifteen to twenty years AFTER initial exposure. And some of the radioactive particles spewed out by Chornobyl will remain dangerously radioactive for many hundreds of years after you and I and our children have gone on to the hereafter. The people at CCRF (the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund) and the doctors they are working with have seen that ALREADY Chornobyl has taken a much more terrible toll on the children than anyone had even suspected. Thanks to the humanitarian aid and the sophisticated diagnostic instruments, like the MRI system CCRF delivered, doctors have found and extricated malignant brain tumors from very small children and Chornobyl survivors. The doctors you have trained have helped to repair life-threatening or unsightly birth defects. Your neonatal

Agency and its allies in the radiation research establishment, the truth is beginning to emerge. Recent studies have shown that women exposed to radiation from Chornobyl are far more likely to suffer birth complications and immune disorders than control groups. And no one has yet explained why Ukraine and Belarus - the two countries that bore the brunt of Chornobyl's radiation are the only two European countries experiencing a steep decline in their population. Ask yourselves: why has Ukraine - a country which is not at war, a country which has some of the richest natural resources in the world - suffered a net loss of two million citizens - just within the past five years? ...Why are so many children in Ukraine being born with cleft palates and missing digits and deformed limbs and cardiac defects and missing critical organs, and spina bifida and immune disorders? Coincidence? I don't think so, and those of you who are working so hard to help these poor children KNOW that there is much more to Chornobyl than the scientific establishment would like us to believe.

Why is our Department of Energy and Sixty Minutes and the National Cancer Institute ignoring these problems and trying so desperately to convince us of the preposterous notion that only 40 people died from Chornobyl? Why are all the research moneys devoted to Chornobyl being channeled into thyroid cancer, when thyroid cancer is only ONE of the problems we need to examine? ...

"I want to CHALLENGE the international medical community to come to Kiev. To come to Vinnytsia, to Chernihiv. To take a look at the babies lying in the neonatal intensive care units established by CCRF. Look into the glare of the infant warmers and under the phototherapeutic lamps and see what kind of babies are being born in the aftermath of Chornobyl. Take a look in the orphanages and the pediatric cancer centers where children are being treated for tumors and conditions that are virtually unheard of in the West."

- Alec Baldwin

I want to commend First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton for having the COURAGE to visit these hospitals in Ukraine, for having the compassion and integrity to touch these children's lives. You and Vice President Gore have had the courage to speak out on the need for more aid for the Chornobyl victims and you understand that the aid provided by groups such as the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund may someday lead to new medical discoveries that can even save the lives of America's children.



Like the First Lady, the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund is an organization that is not afraid of the truth. Whether at Congressional hearings or at conferences at Yale and Columbia University and at the United Nations, you have testified clearly and forthrightly about the horrors you have seen. And you have not been content to TALK about these problems. You have done everything that is humanly possible to make a difference in these children's lives.

This is an organization that does not just go through the motions. You have organized twenty airlifts. Seven major sea shipments. You have provided training and technology and medicine and surgical supplies. For every dollar it has received in donations, CCRF has delivered more than twelve dollars' worth of aid to the children. Forty million dollars' worth of aid on total cash contributions of under four million dollars. In many cases, the impact of this aid has been profound. For example, I was very excited to read that thanks to training and technology provided by CCRF and Columbia Presbyterian and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, one of your partner hospitals in Lviv has completed some groundbreaking research on children's leukemia that has generated a lot of excitement at the European Hematological Association. CCRF has created model hospital programs that have improved the quality of care for thousands of destitute, desperate children in a part of the world that we scarcely knew just ten years ago. You have improved infant survival and cancer remission rates in several medical centers and brought new hope to a nation that is working so hard to overcome hundreds of years of oppression and underdevelopment. If these are not sustainable results, I don't know what else can qualify.

The world has not been the same since the Chornobyl nuclear disaster...[However] with your support, and with the support of more enlightened leaders such as the First Lady, I am convinced that the world can learn from this tragedy and our children can grow up in a safer, more humane environment. I wish you every success in the world.



Quotations from the First Lady's Address at the Ukrainian Institute of America on April 19, 1999



Melanne Verveer, the First Lady's Chief of Staff and CCRF volunteers Vova Malofienko and Olenka Olesnycky listen to Mrs. Clinton's acceptance speech during the April 19th Awards Ceremony. Vova is a Chernobyl survivor and an honors student at Millburn High School who came to the United States under CCRF's auspices in 1990 to undergo cancer treatment. In 1996 Vova was invited to speak at the White House at a special ceremony hosted by the Vice President and the First Lady, marking the 10th Anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The First Lady praised the efforts of US Senator Frank Lautenberg's (D. New Jersey) to secure permanent residency status for the Malofienko family, and called on the audience to support this family in their pursuit of U.S. citizenship.

"Only because of the persistence of many of you in this room, led by Nadia and Zenon, were we able to really break through the obfuscation and understand what needed to be done....No relief effort can succeed without local support and leadership. CCRF has worked to build a strong and sustainable community health network in provinces across Ukraine....You have set an incredible example for people in Ukraine. We can look to the model you have established and learn better how to be successful....We cannot rest when millions of children are still exposed to environmental hazards, polluted water, contaminated food, when millions more do not receive even the most basic medical care. Let's resolve, then, to continue to support those who are on the front lines, like CCRF and all of you who are its allies, its friends, its supporters, its voices. Let's be sure we do everything we can as CCRF has shown us, to build a caring society, to send a message to the victims of Chernobyl that the world will not forget and will stand with them as they continue to fight the struggle against the horror of Chernobyl. Thank you for what you are doing, not only for the children of Chernobyl but by the power of your example, for all the children of the world."

"When I think of all that you have done over the years to bring attention to the aftermath of Chernobyl, and to provide very tangible relief and medical assistance to the children, it really is an example of the best in America. I hope you know that what you are doing is not only important to CCRF and not only to the people of Ukraine and others who have been affected by Chernobyl, but it really is a value statement for who we are as Americans, what we believe our obligations to be, and our willingness to use our blessings on behalf of those who are far away."



CCRF is "a truly remarkable organization that has set new standards for international development and relief efforts."

"You have captured the imagination and the conscience of caring Americans across all kinds of ethnic and racial and generational lines, and you have been able to do that because you've never flagged in your efforts. The kind of commitment that Ukrainian-Americans, joined with other Americans have brought to this relief effort means more than I can say."



"I want to thank the Prolisok choir who I thought were wonderful and beautiful...When we heard the girls sing and when we look at their faces, we're reminded very vividly of why we are so committed to the children of Chernobyl." The Prolisok Girls' Choir, based in New York City and affiliated with the Ukrainian-American Youth Organization (SUMA) is under the direction of Andrij Stasiw.



At the wine and cheese reception following the meeting



Revellers from across Connecticut enjoy the festivities at the May 1st Spring Dance fundraiser in New Haven. The traditional "zabava" raised nearly \$3,000 for CCRF's New Haven Chapter and received news coverage on the Saturday evening news on WTNH -Channel 8, an ABC affiliate. Some families brought four generations of dancers to the fundraiser to benefit the Children of Chernobyl. Special thanks to Gloria and Donald Horbaty and the entire organizing committee for making this zabava such a success.



Ten-year-old Roman Zayets (above) of New Haven was one of many dancers who tested their skills during the "kolomeyka" interlude. (Photos by Chrystina Sheldon)



The Chicago Public Library hosted a special exhibit on the April anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, featuring many photos and materials highlighting the work of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, including copies of the Chernobyl Chronicle. From left to right: Uirii Lazarov, Ukrainian Consul, Kalyna Drohomyrecka, Library Associate, Rose Wagner, Director of Foreign Language Division, Victor Kyryk, Consul General of Ukraine, and Robert Bibbee, Head of Literature and Language Division. CCRF is very grateful to Mrs. Drohomyrecka for initiating this project.

YEVSHAN CHOIR PERFORMS BENEFIT CONCERT

Valentine's Day and Earth Day Concerts Highlight CCRF Mission

(Newington, CT) The Hartford-based Yevshan Ukrainian Choral Ensemble held a very successful benefit concert for CCRF on February 14th at the Church of Christ Congregational in Newington. The Valentine's Day program, entitled "Songs of Love and Devotion" featured works by Bortniansky, Koshetz, Leontovych and other Ukrainian composers as well as new arrangements by Julian Kytasty and Oleh Mahlay. The mixed choir of 22 men and women drew an enthusiastic response from a diverse audience that filled the sanctuary of the church. Some music lovers traveled from as far away as Rhode Island and Upstate New York to hear the concert which raised over \$1,300 for the Fund.

Yevshan also performed in concert at Harkness Chapel on the campus of Connecticut College in New London on Sunday, April 18th. The concert was part of a daylong commemoration of Earth Day organized by the students and environmental organizations at this prestigious liberal arts college in southeastern Connecticut.

The concert followed a short presentation on the Chernobyl nuclear disaster by Alex Kuzma, Director of Development for CCRF. The choir performed several selections from the

Fields". The concert also featured the banduratrio of Christine Jamahian, Daria Richardson and Irene Kytasty-Kuzma.

On June 26th, Yevshan will be performing another benefit for CCRF - a special observance of the traditional Ukrainian summer solstice festival of Ivano-Kupalo followed by an outdoor reception at the home of Louis and Judi Friedman in Canton, Connecticut. Yevshan will be joined by dancers from the Zolotyj Promin and the Zorya Ensembles of Hartford and New Britain. For further information please call (203)407-0261 or (860)956-3834.



PENNSYLVANIA PARISH COLLECTS TOYS & PLAYROOM EQUIPMENT FOR CHORNOBYL HOSPITALS

At the Orthodox Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Northampton, Pennsylvania, parishioners and friends throughout the Lehigh Valley area have pitched in to help the Children of Chernobyl. In an intensive campaign that began last Christmas, Rev. Bazyl Zawierucha initiated a drive to collect children's toys, clothing, swing sets and playground equipment that could help lift the spirits of children affected by Chernobyl aftermath. Rev. Zawierucha and his family feel a special kinship to the survivors of Chernobyl. The British-born pastor was on holiday in Istanbul when the nuclear disaster first struck Ukraine and Belarus in 1986, and a portion of the radioactive plume reached as far south as Turkey and Greece. The toy collection was well publicized in the area of Allentown and Bethlehem and parishioners and local residents were very generous in their response.

CCRF's President Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky, Executive Director Mrs. Nadia Matkiwsky and Alex Kuzma traveled to the parish in February to personally thank all the donors for their support. In April, the toys collected in Pennsylvania became part of CCRF's 23rd airlift. They were distributed to children in orphanages and sanatoriums in the provinces of Volyn, Poltava and Kirovohrad.



CCRF Executive Director Nadia Matkiwsky and Rev. Bazyl Zawierucha survey the toys collected by parishioners at the Assumption Church in Northampton.

Rochester Chapter Bolsters Sister Cities Initiative

Donates \$15,000 To Aid Maternity Hospital in Poltava

In January, the Rochester Chapter of CCRF voted unanimously to launch a campaign providing medical technology and training to combat infant mortality in the city of Poltava, in Eastern Ukraine. The new campaign is designed to bolster the Irondequoit-Poltava Sister Cities Initiative which has been working to promote economic development and citizen contacts between the two cities since 1991. The Rochester Chapter donated a check for \$15,000 toward the effort, and the National Office of CCRF used these funds to secure more than \$96,000 worth of intensive care respirators, a radiant warmer, two incubators and pulse oximeter for the Poltava City Clinical Maternity Center.

Although Poltava was not directly affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, it harbors thousands of evacuees from Chernobyl and suffers from a very high infant mortality rate. The City Maternity Hospital was in desperate need of new technology to protect the health of mothers and their newborns and one of its neonatal specialists, Dr. Stepan Vernyhora had received extensive training in Vienna in the use of such equipment. CCRF hopes to expand its training program and to procure additional supplies for the Maternity Unit once more funding becomes available.

The Rochester Chapter is planning several fundraisers to promote the Poltava Initiative, including a major golf tournament at the Deerfield Country Club on September 18th. The golf tourney is being organized by a committee of young businesspersons led by Roman Lesiv, Bohdan Skrobach and Lesia Telega. CCRF is working actively with the Irondequoit Rotary District, Kiwanis Club, the Rochester Ukrainian Federal Credit Union and the Basilian Fathers to leverage more private and corporate funding for the Poltava campaign. Irondequoit Town Supervisor Dave Schantz and former Supervisor Sue Masters have pledged their support. For further information on the golf tournament, please call Tamara Denysenko at (716)544-9727.



A Life-saving Gift: Myron Babiuk, (left) President of the Rochester CCRF chapter presents a check for \$15,000 to Tamara Denysenko, coordinator of the Irondequoit-Poltava Sister Cities Project. Standing to Mrs. Denysenko's left are Sue Masters and Gabe Geiger of the Irondequoit Rotary District #7120. To the right of the Children of Chernobyl emblem are Mr. Dave Schantz, Town Supervisor for the borough of Irondequoit, Father Richard Kinsky of the Basilian Fathers, and Alex Kuzma representing the National Office of CCRF. The presentation took place at the Rochester Ukrainian Federal Credit Union on April 23d.



At the Poltava City Maternity Hospital, CCRF's Alex Kuzma meets with doctors in the neonatal intensive care ward. With the financial assistance of our Rochester Chapter, CCRF delivered more than \$96,000 worth of new technology to this hospital to strengthen its ability to restore the health of newborn infants. From left to right: neonatal specialist Dr. Stepan Vernyhora, Chief Doctor Natalia Udovytyska, Volodymyr Mitin (representative of the medical manufacturing firm Fisher & Paykel) and Alex Kuzma. (Photo by O. Yavorivska)

CCRF's contribution to the Poltava hospital partnership received extensive coverage in the Irondequoit Press and the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle. CCRF made good on its promise to deliver the first installment of medical equipment to Poltava by the end of April. The Fund also delivered recreational playroom equipment, gifts and toys to an elementary school in Poltava that serves families evacuated from the Chernobyl zone. The Fund's involvement in the Poltava project is helping to lift spirits in this historic city which will be celebrating its 1,100 year anniversary this September.



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 Chernobyl 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.



On-site Training:

Volodya Mitin, a technical expert with the Austrian-based Fisher-Paykel Corporation demonstrates the proper use of a Novometrix pulse oximeter for doctors at the Vinnytsia Regional Children's Hospital. CCRF is very grateful to this dedicated technician who has donated

Your Donations At Work: Touching Children's Lives in so many ways.

As we approach the Tenth Anniversary of CCRF's first airlift, our volunteers and donors are finding new inspiration for deepening and expanding our commitment. With each hospital visit, we are meeting more children whose lives have been saved or improved as a direct result of our aid.



Little Bohdana Dudovyk, born November 16, 1998 in the city of Kovel, Volyn weighed only 900 grams at birth. Thanks to an Infant Star mobile incubator delivered by CCRF, the child survived and is now increasing her body weight steadily. The doctors at the Volyn Children's Medical Center have expressed their gratitude to Prof. and Mrs. Bakum of Upstate New York who were instrumental in securing this equipment.



Sophisticated Ladies (and Gents): A group of former patients from the Lviv Regional Clinical Children's Hospital perform a little soft-shoe cabaret for visitors from CCRF to express their appreciation for the medical aid provided to their hospital. All eight children shown in this photo spent time in the hospital's intensive care unit, and all eight recovered from serious illnesses thanks to the medication, equipment and training provided by CCRF. Their treating physician, Dr. Roman Kovalsky underwent twelve months of training at Deborah Heart & Lung Center and the Boston Children's Hospital under the auspices of CCRF. (Photo by Ksenia Salewycz)



A neonate struggles to recover from severe birth complications in Kyiv. Recent reports from Ukrainian neonatal specialists show that the incidence of birth complications is on the rise.



Congratulations to Dr. Ihor Hrytsiuk (above), the chief endocrinologist at the Lviv Regional Specialized Children's Clinic who recently returned from a yearlong pioneering research in London, England where he conducted pioneering research on children's thyroid cancer. Dr. Hrytsiuk is one of several doctors from the LRSPC who have received awards or published articles in Western medical journals based on research conducted with the help of medical equipment donated by CCRF. "The accomplishments of our young doctors has been a source of great pride for our institution," said Dr. Oleksander Myndiuk, Chief Doctor at the LRSPC.



An incubator that refuses to quit:

Doctors and nurses at the Lviv Regional Clinical Children's Hospital have marveled at the durability of a neonatal incubator delivered by CCRF in 1994. Thanks to careful maintenance, this incubator, which was financed by St. John's Ukrainian Catholic parish in Whippany, New Jersey is still helping to save the lives of infants, long after most isolettes of its kind are taken out of service. CCRF hopes to replace this unit (cost: \$12,000) with a newer model soon. In May of this year, CCRF delivered \$283,000 dollars worth of medical aid to this hospital. From left to right: Nurse Lilya Tesluk, Dr. Anna Khovanska and Dr. Roman Kovalsky.

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