

Chornoby Chronicl

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Season's



Peaceful New



Viktor Petrenko and Chief Neonatologist Dr. Ihor Symonenko examine a newborn baby recovering in one of the neonatal stations funded by the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund and its "Viktory for Kids" campaign. A portion of the equipment in this center was funded by CCRF's corporate sponsors, including Cingular Wireless, Western Union and Eurotech, Ltd.

Viktor Petrenko Welcomed as Hometown Hero at Opening of Odessa Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

Odessa, Ukraine -- On October 22nd, the Odessa Regional Children's Hospital in southern Ukraine welcomed Olympic and World Champion Viktor Petrenko at the grand opening of the new infant care unit renamed in his honor. The Viktor Petrenko Neonatal Intensive Care Unit was equipped with state-of-the-art medical technology delivered by the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund and purchased with the help of over \$100,000 in funds raised at the "Viktory for Kids" charity ice skating show. In March of this year, Viktor Petrenko mobilized an impressive array of international skating stars including Brian Boitano, Philippe Candeloro and Sasha Cohen to raise funds for CCRF at the



At the Odessa skating rink where he began to train for the Olympics, Viktor Petrenko meets with a group of young proteges who hope to follow in his footsteps.

Over the past seven months, CCRF worked with the Odessa RCH to completely remodel and refurbish the neonatal intensive care unit. As part of its 28th airlift last May, the Fund delivered and installed some of the most advanced technology available to treat newborn children suffering from respiratory complications, low birth weight and various birth defects. The equipment includes Bear Cub respirators, Novamatrix pulse oximeters, an infant warmer, and other critical care components.

Following a noontime press conference, Mr. Petrenko toured the facility where he was greeted with bouquets of roses and warm embraces from the hospital staff. Accompanied by Dr. Ihor Symonenko, the director of the neonatal ward, CCRF Executive Director Alexander Kuzma, and in-country director Olena Maslyukivska, Petrenko had the opportunity to observe newborn infants undergoing treatment with the help of the equipment funded by his Viktory for Kids initiative.

"Winning a world championship was an important part of my life," said Mr. Petrenko. "But this is becoming a new and equally important part of my life's work. Odessa is where I grew up, where I learned to skate, where many of my friends and family live. I'm just glad that I could give back something meaningful to

Improving conditions at Orphanage in Zaluchya

Zaluchya, Sniatyn Region -- In the remote southern corner of Ivano-Frankivsk Province, a long-neglected orphanage for 127 severely disabled children is undergoing a major overhaul with the aid of the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund made possible by a \$40,000 grant from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. Until last year, the Zaluchya orphans had been living in deplorable conditions that were documented by CCRF investigators and photographer Joseph Sywenkyj. The exposure of the orphans' plight eventually led to the dismissal of the former director and inspired an intensive campaign to provide the orphanage with emergency humanitarian aid.

"The conditions in which these children once lived were intolerable," said CCRF Executive Director Alexander Kuzma. "Until this year, Zaluchya was reminiscent of the Willowbrook scandal where as recently as the 1970s, American orphans on Long Island were neglected, abused and forced to live in unsanitary quarters. This outrage had to stop." Kuzma expressed gratitude to His Grace Archbishop Antony and Rev. Deacon Ihor Mahlay of Parma, Ohio for their leadership in confronting the tragedy at Zaluchya. "We are grateful to the many caring people from across the country, who have responded so generously. Their gifts are really making a difference in these chil-



CCR medical supervisor Svitlana Kuzmin visits with a young patient at the Zaluchya Orphanage. Clean sheets were provided by the Ukrainian Veterans' Association of New Jersey and the Children of Chornobyl Relief Fund has delivered new mattresses and hygienic plastic covers, clothes and antibiotics to help combat outbreaks

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On October 13th, on the grounds of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral in South Bound Brook, NJ, the Ukrainian Orthodox League planted a tree in memory of all the victims and survivors of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. (Above) John Meschisen and Natalie Kapeluk presented a check for \$2,182 to the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund on behalf of the Orthodox Youth Ministries. From left to right: CCRF's Ohio Coordinator, Rev. Deacon Ihor Mahlay of St. Vladimir's Church in Parma, Ohio; CCRF Executive Director Alexander Kuzma; CCRF President and Chairman of the Board Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky; His Grace Archbishop Antony of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA; John Meschisen; Bishop



CLIFTON, NJ The Holy Ascension Chapter of the Ukrainian Orthodox League (UOL) held a charity fundraiser, "A Celebration of the American Spirit" at the Mountainside Inn in Clifton, NJ on November 9th. The funds collected at the 1940s USO Dinner/Dance benefited the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund and the International Orthodox Christian Charities. Proceeds from the UOL's fundraising initiative will be designated for the two orphanages in Zaluchya and Znamyanka which have been adopted by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. This unique benefit event was organized by the UOL Chapter as a tribute to America's veterans and the victims of 9/11. (Above: Members of the organizing committee meet at the Mountainside Inn. From left to right: Event Chair Nadine Drost, Marion Jendras, Eugenia Arson, Debbie Burgan, Richard Jendras, Brian Drost, Jr., Rev. Arkadiusz Mironko, Mrs.



North America's largest ambulance company, American Medical Response has donated three Ford ambulances to the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, to aid the Odessa Regional Children's Hospital and the Viktor Petrenko Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. At the company's national headquarters in New Haven, Connecticut, Chairman and CEO Robert LaTorracca (left) presents one of the three units to his long-time friend Orest Dubno, a current member and former Chairman of

Orphanage Improves (Cont'd.)

to verify that all donated supplies were in place, and to ensure that construction and repair work was continuing on schedule. CCRF also hired an on-site medical supervisor, Svitlana Kuzmin to distribute medication and to make sure that children were not being neglected or abused. "The city administration has been put on notice that mistreatment of these orphans will not be tolerated," said Alex Kuzma. "We are beginning to see a change in attitude and greater attention to the children's needs, but there is a great deal more work that needs to be done."

"Overall, we're pleased with the new director of the orphanage, Hryhory Orobets, who has devoted a lot of his effort to improve nutrition for these children," said Ms. Maslyukivska. "Unfortunately, he is constrained by a very tight budget and local health officials have cut back on his staff." Mr. Orobets has been appealing to local businesses to provide financial support for his orphanage, and a local restaurant and factory have provided supplemental food for the orphans. CCRF has also received a pledge of support from the Swedish P & G Foundation after a front-page feature on the orphanage appeared in the Oslo-based "Expressen", a prestigious investigative journal. A team of Swedish nutritional experts and physical therapists toured the site earlier this summer. Based on their assessment, the P&G Foundation has offered to train local staff and nutritionists in ways to improve their care for children with special needs. In the mean-



Caretaker Halyna Piovska and Dr. Mykola Mateychuk and his daughter Tetiana examine new mattresses delivered by CCRF. A new industrial-strength dryer funded by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA will help the orphanage staff provide clean clothes during the winter months.



Contractors install a new roof of galvanized steel at the Zaluchya orphanage. The roof replacement was made possible by a grant from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA.

meet the children's need for milk and protein.

Beyond capital repairs, CCRF's primary goal is to improve hygiene and medical care at the facility. The staff at the orphanage has expressed great relief after the arrival of new mattresses, and an industrial-sized washer and dryer. "This will help us to handle all the soiled laundry produced by these children," said laundress Lesia Odynska.

CCRF is also making arrangements for the Zaluchya staff to visit model orphanages in Dnipropetrovsk and Lutsk that have developed more effective treatment programs for children with special needs.

The next steps in the rehabilitation campaign will include refurbishing the facility's bathrooms and showers. Other enhancements are being planned. A group of young children from the "Troyeshky Art Studio" in Kyiv have volunteered to travel to Zaluchya next summer to paint murals on the interior walls of the dormitory to give the orphans visual stimulation and to create a more pleasant, child-friendly environment.

"There is no reason why this orphanage that was once called a 'Chernobyl death camp' can't become a livable home," said Ms. Maslyukivska. "It will certainly take a lot of hard work, but we're prepared to do whatever it requires,

Second Annual Strategy Caucus for CCRF Chapters



A contingent of delegates from Chicago, Boston, Hartford, New Haven and northern New Jersey gather at the Second Annual Strategy Caucus sponsored by the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund at the Ramada Hotel in East Hanover, New Jersey. Seated from left to right: Natalie Pollock, Irene Oleksiak, and Tanya Vena. Standing from left to right: Gloria and Donald Horbaty, Valerie Burachinsky, Richard Zak, Natalie Plaskonos, Andrii, Adrian & Chrystyna Petrykiw, Orest Fedash, Joseph Sywenkyj, Yulia



Mykhailik Hladysh and his mother Maria visit the hematology ward at the Lviv Regional Specialized Pediatric Clinic.

Children cheating cancer: Survivors return to CCRF's Partner Hospital in L'viv

Last fall, the Lviv Regional Specialized Pediatric Clinic celebrated its 10th Anniversary. Today, this hospital has become one of Ukraine's leading centers for the treatment of childhood cancers, leukemia and blood disorders. Despite its share of financial difficulties and despite chronic shortages of medication, the LRSPC has built a very impressive track record in combating these life-threatening illnesses.

According to its director, Dr. Oleksander Myndiuk, the hospital owes much of its success to a highly motivated and talented young staff, which has received significant support from Western aid providers. Advanced technology, cancer medication, surgical supplies and training provided by the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund has enabled the hospital to provide state-of-the-art diagnostic tests, effective chemotherapy and life-saving surgical procedures for hundreds of patients. Today, the Lviv RSPC boasts remission rates for acute lymphoblastic leukemia (78%) and non-Hodgkins lymphoma (65%) that rival some of the West's most elite children's cancer centers.

Many of the patients who have recovered from their illnesses at LRSPC have maintained close contact with their former doctors, and during last fall's celebration, over 75 "alumni" gathered at the hospital's front steps for a group picture with the director of the Hematology Ward, Dr. Romana Polishchuk. (See Christmas edition, Chernobyl Chronicle, 2000)

This year, representatives of CCRF



At eleven years old, Mykhailik Hladysh is still small for his age. Otherwise, he shows no sign of the leukemia that once ravaged his body. In 1992, he was on vacation with his family when he began to feel severe pain in the heel of his foot. For three months, he underwent diagnostic tests at a local polyclinic where his condition was mistaken for polio-arthritis. His health deteriorated rapidly until he had almost no use of his hands or legs. Only then did his doctors think to bring him to the LRSPC where blood test showed he was suffering from a very aggressive form of acute myelogenous leukemia. He spent a year at the specialized clinic where his treating physician was Dr. Olha Orestivna Troyanovska. He has now been in remission for nearly eight years and his prognosis is very good. Except for occasional follow-up visits for blood tests, the illness that nearly



Natalia Vynnyk offers encouragement to Romchik Gembara (seated in wheelchair) who is waging his own difficult struggle with a life-threatening blood disorder.

Natalia Vynnyk is a 20-year-old student at the Ternopil Academy for Public Management. (*Akademiya Narodnoho Hospodarstva*). A native of Kaminka Buzka, she was diagnosed with Hodgkins Disease in 1997 and underwent 10 months of treatment under the supervision of Dr. Olha Dorosh.

Natalia is a deeply religious young woman who says she always believed in the power of prayer and never doubted that she would recover from her illness. She is active in the parish youth committee (Bratstvo) at the Orthodox Church of the Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary where she visits the elderly and shut-ins and helps the priest with various tasks around the church grounds. Recently, she helped her parish to raise thousands of dollars for a young girl from her hometown who was badly burned in a house fire and required skin grafts. Natalia enjoys her studies, especially mathematics and English-language courses. Although she loves Ukrainian pop and traditional folk music, Natalia's favorite singer is Whitney Houston. "I admire her modesty and poise," she says. Every so often, Natalia returns to the LRSPC to give encouragement to the children who are still undergoing chemotherapy. "It's important that their parents see that I've recovered and



CCRF Executive Director Alex Kuzma and Laboratory Director Dr. Rostyslav Koziy examine a Becton Dickinson bacteriological analyzer BACTEC 7000 at the Volynian Regional Children's Medical Center

Petro Mykhailovych is now 22 years old. He has been working as a waiter at a L'viv café on Naukova Street for the past year and a half. In 1992, when he was still 13, he was diagnosed with pneumonia and was transferred from one clinic to another until the Lviv RSPC properly diagnosed his leukemia. For eight months, he endured a difficult course of treatment under the supervision of Dr. Rostyslav Koziy, Dr. Larysa Skoropad and Dr. Olha Troyanovska. Remembering his ordeal at the LRSPC, Petro does not mince words: "I couldn't wait to get it over with." At the same time, he befriended two of the boys who occupied the same room during their treatment. Volodya Frankiv and Misha Chukhlebov also survived and the three have remained close

Petrenko Hometown Hero (Cont'd. from page 1)

The Chief Doctor of the Odessa Hospital, Dr. Alexander Liman thanked Petrenko and CCRF for the outstanding quality of the equipment provided. "Since I've been the director here, we have had many influential people come through this hospital - many politicians and businessmen, especially during election campaigns. They promised us a great many things, but never delivered anything. Viktor Petrenko came here and promised us nothing, but look at the wonderful gift he has brought our poor children."

During a reception hosted by the pediatric wing of the hospital, Petrenko toasted the early success of the neonatal unit: "I am very pleased with what I saw today. I want to thank Dr. Liman and Dr. Symonenko and all the good people at the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund for their hard work in making this dream a reality." Petrenko also met with mothers in the hospital's maternity ward who were clearly delighted to receive a visit from such a local, yet global, celebrity.

After his hospital visit, Mr. Petrenko invited CCRF representatives to visit the humble ice skating rink where he first learned to skate and to train for the Olympics. This skating center was also the training ground for other champions such as Oksana Baiul, Viacheslav Zagorodniuk and Sasha Cohen. Upon his arrival, Petrenko was greeted by a group of very young skaters who are just beginning to learn their first figure skating maneuvers. Petrenko quipped, "Maybe



Students of the "Troyeshky Art Studio" in the Troyeshchyna District of Kyiv have volunteered to travel to the Zaluchya orphanage next summer to paint murals on the interior walls of the dormitory to give the orphans visual stimulation and to create a more pleasant, child-friendly environment.

REMINDER:

Please support the campaign for The 3rd National Neonatology Training Conference Organized by CCRF in Ukraine scheduled for April 2001

Children in Ukraine Respond to 9/11 Tragedy

Vladyk Dolgopolov, an eight-year-old pupil at the Troyeshky art studio in Kyiv painted the "Weeping Towers" of the World Trade Center as an expression of sympathy from the children of Chornobyl to the children of New York City and the United States. Many Ukrainian children who still live with the legacy of Chornobyl feel a special kinship with the survivors of

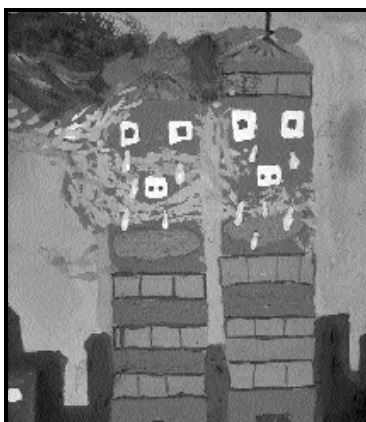


Photo courtesy of Andrew Nynka, The Ukrainian Weekly

Paying respect at Ground Zero

Mr. Leonard Mazur, a member of CCRF's Board of Directors & President of the Ukrainian-American Businesspersons Association of NY and NJ, Mr. Stefan Tatarenko, City Councilman of Clifton, NJ, and Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky, the Chairman of CCRF visited the site of the World Trade Center Disaster on October 29th to commemorate the tragedy of 9/11 during a wreath laying ceremony by the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Mr. Anatoli Kinakh.



Painting by Nelya Bilous, age 13 from

For this year's holiday fundraising initiative, our chapters and national office are selling blank Christmas and all-occasion greeting cards. If you are interested in purchasing these cards, please contact your local chapter or the CCRF National Office. Packs of 10 cards are being sold for \$15.

Your gifts can offer children a beacon of hope. Brighten the lives of many children by bringing essential medicine and medical equipment to Ukraine's youngest patients.



Photo courtesy of Joseph

This year we have reason to rejoice that Ukraine's infant survival rate has increased dramatically over the past year. It is crucial for this trend to continue, because thousands of newborn babies lives are still at risk. Your precious gift will enable us to provide the neonatal intensive care equipment, cancer medication, and physician training that has helped to save thousands of lives. Pictured above, this premature baby is alive today thanks to the neonatal intensive care unit established by CCRF at the Volyn Regional Children's Clinical Hospital.



WISHING ALL OF OUR DONORS A VERY BLESSED AND JOYOUS HOLIDAY



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