

CHORNOBYL CHRONICLE

CHILDREN OF CHORNOBYL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT FUND NEWSLETTER Fall 2005 VOL. XXXIII

Introducing CCRDF



Dear Supporters of the
Children of Chernobyl:

After careful consideration by our Board of Directors and our delegates at last year's National Convention, the administration of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund has decided to change its name officially to "The Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund" (CCRDF). It is our belief that this name more accurately reflects the long-term mission of our organization, which for many years has pursued a policy of sustainable development and long-term improvements in health care beyond the realm of emergency relief. In the months to come, we will be changing all of our official documents, stationery, and promotional literature to reflect this change.

We thank you for your understanding during this period of transition. As of May 31, 2005, tax-deductible donations should be addressed to the "Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development



Ruslana enjoys the company of her friend, Marta Nykolayeva, from Dzhherelo Rehabilitation Center during the VIP reception.

Eurovision Winner Ruslana Performs Benefit Concert for Children of Chernobyl

On May 17, Arena City in downtown Kyiv provided a sensational backdrop for a benefit concert in support of the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund. Ukraine's popular recording artist Ruslana took to the stage with her dynamic dance ensemble and presented a memorable multi-media program that featured many of the favorite selections from her "Wild Dances" CD. Ruslana's win of the 2004 "Eurovision" Song Competition enabled Ukraine to become the host country for this year's festival. (Several years ago, Eurovision inspired the popular "American Idol" contest in the United States.) The CCRDF benefit concert was designated as an official highlight of the weeklong music festival that drew thousands of music lovers from across Europe.

Among the distinguished guests attending the concert were Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko and First Lady Kateryna Yushchenko with their family. (continued on page 2)

6 Calls for Kids

UMC Awards Grant to Three Hospitals

This summer, the popular Ukrainian wireless giant UMC (Ukrainian Mobile Communications) held a series of public events to celebrate a landmark achievement of surpassing its goal to have 10 million subscribers by the year 2005. As a token of appreciation for its many loyal customers, UMC held a televised charity marathon to support the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund during which the company offered one million free calling minutes to ten lucky winners. Contestants were invited to send SMS text messages in response to a series of quiz questions for the cost of one hryvnia each (about 20 cents at the current exchange rate of 5.05 hryvnia to the dollar). Altogether, UMC customers raised over 671,948 hryvnen (\$133,059 U.S.) during the marathon and the company matched this public response; the combined contribution was 1,343,896 hryvnen (\$266,118 U.S.).

The grant to the Children of Chernobyl and Development Fund was announced during a press conference on August 18th at the UNIAN press center that was covered on national television throughout Ukraine. UMC's CEO Eric Franke expressed his company's trust and confidence in the Children of Chernobyl and the Fund's ability to implement effective programs in its partner hospitals with the grant. "We are very pleased to be able to make this donation on behalf of all of our 10 million customers and contestants (continued on page 2)



UMC CEO Eric Franke with Assistant to General Manager Andriy Sazorov (back left) and External Affairs Manager Yaryna Klyuchkovska greet Olena Nyzhnykevych with the newly established strategic partnership between UMC and CCRDF.



Success Story: At the Odessa Regional Children's Hospital, chief neonatal specialist Dr. Natalia Sywolap rejoices over the progress of a newborn infant who is one of hundreds who have benefited from state-of-the-art equipment that CCRDF has delivered with the help of funds raised by Olympic and World Skating champion Viktor Petrenko and his friends in the international skating community. Your contributions to the Victory for Kids campaign have helped save the lives of many babies since 2001.

FUND PREPARES TO COMMEMORATE 20th ANNIVERSARY

Next April, the world community will mark the twentieth anniversary of the world's worst nuclear accident. Nearly twenty years have elapsed since Reactor No. 4 at the Chornobyl Atomic Energy Station was destroyed by a massive explosion and fire, unleashing more than 185 million curies of deadly radiation into the atmosphere, the headwaters of the Dnipro River, and some of the most fertile land in Eastern Europe. Although the last of the Chornobyl reactors was shut down in December 2000, the threat to the environment and public health remains very severe. Hundreds of square miles downwind from the reactor site are still heavily contaminated with cesium 137 and other radioactive elements, and thousands of scientists and engineers from Slavutych and around the globe continue to monitor the disaster site for fear of additional releases from forest fires or the collapse of the makeshift sarcophagus built around the molten core. Even without a secondary release from Chornobyl, its long-term effects on public health will be felt for generations.

"The time to prepare is now," says co-founder, Dr. Matkiwsky.

"Over the past summer, a number of groups and (continued on page 5)

(RUSLANA, continued from page 1)



Minister of Culture Oksana Bilozir and Kyiv Mayor Oleksander Omelchenko

Olympic and World Skating Champion Viktor Petrenko, Minister of Culture Oksana Bilozir, and Kyiv Mayor Oleksander Omelchenko, among many others.

The concert raised over 192,000 hryven (approximately \$38,000 U.S.) for the Fund. The proceeds have been designated for the following: the purchase of neonatal supplies and other medical devices (valued at \$12,600) for Kyiv City Children's Hospital No. 2; a state-of-the-art neonatal respirator (valued at \$17,400) for Dnipropetrovsk Children's Hospital No. 3; and \$8,000 for the Dzherelo Rehabilitation Center in Lviv for children with cerebral palsy.

President and Mrs. Yushchenko met with CCRDF volunteers and supporters and congratulated the Fund on their success. The President



President Yushchenko takes offers the sign of victory with a few of his loyal musical supporters from the band Green Jolly.



CCRDF co-founder Nadia Matkiwsky introduces Dr. Oleh Korniychuk to President Yushchenko. Dr. Korniychuk saved the life of little Mariyka, seated on the President's lap. Her mother, Vera Tkachuk, proudly looks on as do Valerie Burachinsky, First Lady Kateryna Yushchenko and her daughter.

Mrs. Yushchenko to discuss the next steps in this creative partnership. Despite her busy recording schedule, Ruslana is planning to visit our partner hospitals to see first-hand the impact of her charitable endeavors.

The Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund is grateful to Ruslana and her organization for their generous contribution of time and energy to this special project. We especially thank our sponsors for their financial support: Amway, Bank Nadra, Ernst & Young, Ms. Natalie Jaresko & Mr. Ihor Figlus, McDonald's, Ogilvy, the Ukraine 3000 Foundation, and the Western NIS Development Fund; and all of our in-kind contributors: Blank Press, Dzherelo Rehabilitation Center, Eugenia Gapchinsky, Vera Kuleba, Kyiv Post, and RadioActive Film. The co-chairs of the event, Nadia Matkiwsky and Tanya Vena, thank our dedicated staff and volunteers who led this effort:



The official benefit concert ticket with major sponsors indicated.

Later in May, Ruslana again met with CCRDF co-founders Nadia and Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky and Executive Director Alexander Kuzma at the offices of the First Lady



At the conclusion of the concert, CCRDF co-founder Nadia Matkiwsky thanked Ruslana for her humanitarian endeavors on behalf of the children of Ukraine.



Left to right: Mrs. Olena Nyzhnykevych, Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky, Mrs. Nadia Matkiwsky, Ambassador John E. Herbst, Mr. Orest Fedash, Mrs. Tanya Vena, Mrs. Nadia Herbst, Mr. Viktor Petrenko, Mrs. Valerie Burachinsky, and Mr. Yuriy

(UMC, continued from page 1)

Ukraine's economic growth and, at the same time, to support vital humanitarian initiatives such as CCRDF."

Appearing on behalf of the Fund, Maryana Voronovich congratulated UMC on its great commercial success and thanked the company for its outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of Ukraine's children. "We will do everything in our power to make sure that this grant has a significant impact on the health of children who are suffering from a wide range of life-threatening illnesses." Ms. Voronovich announced that the UMC donation would be designated for pioneering programs in three hospitals in Lviv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Chernivtsi.

The Lviv Regional Clinical Children's Hospital (Oxmadyt) will receive technology, training, and instrumentation for its cardiac and thoracic surgery program. Under the leadership of Dr. Roman Kovalsky, this center is one of only a handful of hospitals in Ukraine that provide life-saving operations for children born with congenital cardiac and thoracic defects. It is playing a leading role in the campaign to expand the number of open heart surgeries available for the more than 8,000 infants born each

year in need of such operations. Last year, almost 600 infants received open heart operations, nearly double the number from the year before.

The Chernivtsi City Maternity Center will receive support for its neonatal intensive care unit to help save the lives of premature and low birth weight babies and provide treatment for infants with congenital defects. The UMC program in Chernivtsi will expand on the generous contributions of the Andriuk family of Norwalk, Connecticut. Last year, Dr. Alex Andriuk and his brothers Mark and Andrew made a multi-year commitment to this hospital in honor of their parents, Col. Basil Andriuk and Martha Andriuk who served as a Vice-President of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund from 1990 until her untimely death in 2003. "We hope to upgrade this facility and let it serve as a vital training center for doctors and interns from the prestigious Chernivtsi Medical University," said CCRDF President Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky.

The third beneficiary of the UMC grant will be the Dnipropetrovsk City Children's Hospital No. 3 that has been a leader in saving children's lives in this heavily industrialized and environmentally damaged region of Ukraine. Under the leadership of its chief physician Dr. Ihor Makedonsky, who trained at the Boston Children's Hospital, the Dnipropetrovsk CCH3 has won acclaim for its innovative procedures to save small children suffering from various congenital defects. The UMC funds will be used to purchase a special diagnostic system that can help facilitate operations of complex anomalies of the urinary tract and reproductive organs in small children. "Even without advanced technology, Dr. Makedonsky's surgical team has already proven its ability to perform uniquely successful operations in this sphere," said Dr. Matkiwsky. "Our hope is to expand their capacity in the very near future. With UMC's generous support, we can now implement a program we thought might take much longer to finance." Earlier this spring, UMC made a donation of \$10,000 to our Fund as its first investment in our program in Dnipropetrovsk.

The telemarathon and the "We are 10 Million" campaign gave CCRDF widespread exposure through frequent advertisements that



The official advertisement of UMC's "We are 10 Million" campaign.

Sea Shipment #16

Director of Procurement Alexa Milanytch is pleased to announce that over one million dollars worth of medical supplies will be sent to Ukraine on Sea Shipment #16 later this year. The partner hospitals that will be benefiting from this shipment include: Rivne Regional Children's Hospital, Kyiv City Children's Clinical Hospital No. 2, Uzhorod Central City Clinical Hospital, Dnipropetrovsk City Children's Hospital No. 3, and Ivano Frankivsk Regional Perinatology Center.

Ms. Milanytch is most grateful to CCRDF's partner organizations, AmeriCares and Aesculap, and our friends in Fort Wayne, Indiana—Renell Leichty from Parkview Hospital and the Michael brothers, Matthew and Andrew, from Hickory Center Elementary School—for their in-kind contributions towards Sea Shipment #16. Thank you to Valerie Burachinsky and Lisa Milanytch who helped in documenting the pallets

A view of the warehouse with Sea Shipment #16 awaiting departure for Ukraine.



Portable X-ray

August, 2005

To the President of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund
Dr. Zenon Matkijewsky

Dear Mr. President,

We are glad to inform you that [the] portable X-ray unit and [sterilizer] autoclave were purchased at cost, with funds donated to our institution by the Bakum family. The equipment is already installed and working well. We are sending you photos taken in our newly equipped hospital. On behalf of our little patients of Volyn oblast, we are tendering great thanks to the Bakum family and to all the members of your Fund [who continue to support our hospital]. We are looking forward to further collaboration.

Truly yours,
Valery Rutsky
Chief Medical Officer of Volyn Oblast Children's Clinical Hospital



Autoclave

CCRDF and SALUS Foundation to Host AIDS Conference

On October 27-28, 2005, CCRDF and the SALUS Foundation will host an AIDS conference at the Hetman Hotel in Lviv. Over 300 physicians from eight western oblasts (regions) of Ukraine including Chernivtsi, Ivano Frankivsk, Khmelnytsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Volyn, and Zakarpattia are expected to participate. The two day conference, titled "Applying Global Strategic Approaches to Combat the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Western Ukraine," is sanctioned by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine and will include speakers from the United States and Ukraine. From the U.S. contingent, Prof. Thomas Denny will address the issue of the "Global Epidemic of AIDS" and Research Teaching Specialist Dan Lewis will speak on the topic of the PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) laboratory and diagnosis of HIV. Both speakers hail from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ). Senior Consulting Engineer Mykola Yaremko of Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics, Inc., a Johnson & Johnson company, will discuss the principles of clinical laboratory operations. Joining them in Ukraine will be Dr. Larysa Janiv, Head Doctor of the Lviv Regional Perinatal Center, and Dr. Olena Hodnevskya, Assistant Director of Maternal and Children's Health Programs for the Odessa Regional Health Administration.

Upon completion of this two day conference, the physicians will receive a certification for continuing medical education from the Ministry of Health as well as a copy of the new Ukrainian language edition of the *Manual of Neonatology* by Dr. John Cloherty and Dr. Ann Stark of Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. The publication of this 700 page manual was made possible through the generous donations of the Kyiv Lion's Club and Nestle's, and by the assistance of Dr. Lyudmyla Porokhnyak, Medical Director for *Zhinocha Hromada*, Ukraine's largest women's organization.

The PCR laboratory will be installed prior to the conference with the help of UMDNJ's Dan Lewis, M.S. The laboratory will be located at the Lviv Regional Perinatal Hospital in the ASTAR Laboratory and will serve to screen blood for HIV/AIDS patients, particularly in pregnant women to prevent the transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child. This PCR laboratory will be the first of its kind in western Ukraine.

CCRDF is most grateful to Metropolitan-Archbishop Stefan Soroka of the Ukrainian Catholic Metropolitan Archeparchy of Philadelphia, the Maria Hulai Lion



UMDNJ's Dan Lewis advises which pipette would best suit the PCR lab in Lviv, Ukraine. CCRDF is grateful to Mr. Lewis and his colleagues from UMDNJ for helping with the procurement of the laboratory equipment and for helping to train the director of the Lviv PCR Laboratory, Dr. Olena Baran.



CCRDF's new Kyiv administrator, Eugenia (Zhenya) Medvedenko (right) meets with Director of Corporate Communications & Marketing for Siemens-Ukraine Tatjana Tchubenko, at the Boyarka Children's Regional Hospital. During the first few months of her tenure with CCRDF, Zhenya has helped to implement our grant from Philip Morris by procuring and delivering valuable equipment to the Kharkiv Children's Hospital No. 16. Zhenya also helped persuade Siemens to donate a new ultrasound to a children's hospital in her hometown, Boyarka.

(SURGEONS, continued from page 5) 2,000 cardiological screenings. A major component will include the training of neonatal, obstetric, and intensive care specialists, including nurses who are on the front lines of diagnosing infants with cardiac defects. "In the past we had been like generals without an army," said Dr. Gennady Knyshev of the Amosov Institute. "One error by an inadequately trained or unqualified intensive care nurse on the third day after an operation can negate the efforts of the finest surgeons."

In facing the daily challenges of his daunting profession, Dr. Yemets is inspired by a photograph of a former patient that sits on his desk. Nicknamed "Mishko the Hurricane" because of his boundless energy, he was the first child to undergo an operation for the most complex of cardiac

defects: transposition of magisterial vessels. Today, he is 12 years old, attends school, and loves to play soccer. Dr. Yemets is looking forward to the day when these success stories are no longer the exception but the rule, when all Ukrainian children born with congenital heart defects can go on to live a long and healthy life. Source: "Dzerkalo Tyzhnia" (Mirror of the Week) No. 17 (492).

To help support the expansion of cardiac surgery programs and

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL PROVIDES DAIRY COWS FOR ORPHANAGES SPONSORED BY CCRDF

On June 2nd in the Sniatyn District of the Ivano Frankivsk Oblast, representatives of Heifer International and the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund delivered seven dairy cows to the Zaluchya Orphanage. The donation of livestock was the latest step in a long-term campaign to improve living conditions at the Zaluchya Orphanage which CCRDF has undertaken with the aid of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (USA) and other institutions.

The Zaluchya orphanage houses over 120 disabled children suffering from a wide range of birth defects and developmental disabilities. When CCRDF first visited the orphanage in 2000, we were appalled by the deplorable state of the children's health, compounded by malnutrition, the lack of basic hygiene, and unsanitary standards. Since then, the Fund has made significant improvements in the facility, building a new roof and floors, providing industrial strength laundry machines, new mattresses and bedding, installing new bathrooms and plumbing, and most recently, developing a physical rehabilitation center.

"We are very grateful for the dairy cows provided by the grant from Heifer International," said Olena Nyzhnykevych, former In-Country Director for CCRDF in Ukraine who helped secure the grant. "These animals will provide milk and cheese and other basic foodstuffs these children need. They will also help to make the orphanage more economically self-sustaining."

- Olena Nyzhnykevych, Chairwoman of CCRDF's Kyiv Advisory Board

embroidered blouses, the children's caretakers greeted the President of Heifer Intl. Viktor Teres with the traditional greeting of bread and salt. A group of children in wheelchairs sang songs and recited poems they learned from their new teacher Zoreslava Hoyan. Since CCRDF began its campaign to develop the intellectual and physical rehabilitation of the orphans, a number of the children have begun to read and write and many have shown considerable intellectual, musical, and artistic ability.



Children of Chernobyl volunteers Adriana Burachinsky (left) and Natalia Chraplyvy participate in the ceremony welcoming a donation of dairy cows from Heifer International at the Zaluchya Orphanage.



Dressed in their Sunday best, the children of Zaluchya orphanage anxiously await to welcome the arrival of the donated livestock.

Fund hired its own independent monitors, a physical therapist, and a special education teacher to ensure that the children are never again malnourished or abused.

"This is an exciting new partnership with Heifer International," said Maryana Voronovich, the orphanage coordinator for CCRDF based in Kyiv. Heifer International is renowned throughout the world for its pioneering work in providing sustainable development for impoverished communities through simple, cost-effective methods of animal husbandry. Depending on the ecology and culture of developing countries, Heifer finances the purchase of cows, goats, pigs, water buffalo, bee hives, and other life-sustaining food producers. Heifer has established offices in Kyiv and Lviv to strengthen farming programs in Ukraine. The donation of cows to Zaluchya was made possible with the assistance of the Ukrainian Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and with the support of the Ivano Frankivsk Regional and Sniatyn District governments.

The staff and children of Zaluchya welcomed the dairy cows with great excitement. Dressed in embroidered blouses, the children's caretakers greeted the President of Heifer Intl. Viktor Teres with the traditional greeting of bread and salt. A group of children in wheelchairs sang songs and recited poems they learned from their new teacher Zoreslava Hoyan. Since CCRDF began its campaign to develop the intellectual and physical rehabilitation of the orphans, a number of the children have begun to read and write and many have shown considerable intellectual, musical, and artistic ability.

The donated cows were decorated with garlands of flowers and colored sashes and priests from the local Orthodox and Catholic churches gave their blessings and prayed for the health and well-being of the children as well as the animals that will provide them with nourishment. A delegation of local dignitaries attended the ceremony, including the director of Social Welfare for Ivano Frankivsk Oblast Ivan Kaziuka and the assistant director of the district government Anatoly Dorchuk. In addition to Maryana Voronovich, volunteers from the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund Valerie Burachinsky, Adriana Burachinsky, and Natalia Chraplyvy took part in the ceremony.

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ABD Capital Donates to CCRDF's Infant Cardiac Program



Dr. Ihor Lazoryzhnets, a cardiac surgeon at the Amosov Institute, holds a certificate from ABD Capital and CCRDF marking the donation of the new technology for his cardiac surgery wing. To his left are Dr. Zenon Matkiwsky and Dr. Natalia Zahorodnova who helped to facilitate the donation.

On May 31st, the firm of ABD Capital-Ukraine and its Swiss parent company ABD Capital-SA presented an advanced cardiac ultrasound system and anesthesia station to the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund and its partner hospital, the AMOSOV Cardiac Surgery Institute. The gift which will provide life-saving operations for young children with congenital heart defects was made possible through the efforts of Mr. Hans Jorg Rudolph of Barclays Capital, the Novartis Pharmaceutical Corporation, and Director of ABD Capital-Ukraine Natalia Zahorodnova following a gala fundraiser in London featuring members of the Kyiv Ballet ("Suzirya Aniko") and the designer house of Anna Rossa. Of the \$200,000 raised, half was designated for the Beslan Children's Relief Fund, and the other half

Executive Director Alexander Kuzma & Family Move to Ukraine



Left to right: Alexander, Alina, Teryn, Irene, and Maya Kuzma

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we announce the relocation of our Executive Director and his family to Kyiv, Ukraine. As of August 20, 2005, Alexander Kuzma with his wife, Irene, and their three daughters, Alina, Teryn, and Maya have transitioned to Ukraine. Mr. Kuzma will serve simultaneously as the Executive Director and the In-Country Director during his stay in Ukraine. He will help to complete on-going projects and to facilitate new ones. Mrs. Kuzma will be teaching at the Pechersk International School in Kyiv which Alina and Teryn will attend. We wish the Kuzma family much success, joy, good health, and many wonderful experiences in the new Ukraine.

Please note: CCRDF's Connecticut office has closed; to reach Mr. Kuzma, please contact him at our Kyiv office at 011-380-44-494-1535 or at our Kyiv office's new e-mail address: info-ua@childrenof-chernobyl.org.

UKRAINIAN CARDIAC SURGEONS WIN ACCLAIM IN EUROPEAN COMPETITION

The achievements of Ukrainian medical experts were recognized at a recent Congress of the European Association of Cardiac Surgeons in Vienna. More than 1,000 scientific lectures were submitted to this prestigious forum. Of these, only one-third passed the preliminary elimination round. The pioneering work of Kyivan cardio-surgeons Dr. Ilya Yemets and Dr. Oleksander Romaniuk was honored among the final five selections and was ranked second in the final round of evaluations of the most significant breakthroughs.

For many years, Dr. Yemets served as the chief cardiac surgeon in the pediatric wing of the renowned Amosov Institute of Cardiac Surgery in Kyiv. This Institute received a significant amount of medical aid from the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund, beginning in the year 2000. Dr. Yemets has been the key consultant to CCRDF in our efforts to train more cardiac surgeons and expand the number of open heart surgery centers across Ukraine. Trained in Paris, Montreal, and Sydney, Dr. Yemets has developed many innovative techniques for correcting congenital heart defects in infants and small children. More recently, he has been working at Kyiv's primary Hospital for Mothers and Children (Oxmydyt). He was one of the keynote speakers at last November's National Convention when CCRDF celebrated the 15th Anniversary of its first medical shipment to Ukraine.

At the Vienna Conference, Dr. Yemets presented a new methodology that he developed for the reconstruction of aortic valves using the tissue of the patient instead of an artificial piece. If a defective aortic valve is replaced with an artificial instrument, then over time, as the child grows, it becomes necessary to replace the valve with a larger unit. By nature, every person is born with two identical valves – one aortal and one attached to the pulmonary artery. Theoretically, one could be replaced with the other, and

in the past, the pulmonary valve had been replaced by an implant from a donor using a procedure known as "Ross's Operation." Unfortunately, it is well-known that foreign tissue is always more susceptible to rejection than one's own. Dr. Yemets and Dr. Romaniuk developed a technique that carves out a valve from the cardiac lining of the patient. The transplanted "detail" easily adapts and grows together with the patient. By now the surgeons in Kyiv have performed scores of these operations.

A conference sponsored by CCRDF entitled "Global and National Experience in Aiding Young Children with Congenital Defects" took place last year at the Pushcha Vodytsia Sanatorium on the outskirts of Kyiv. The Fund worked closely with Dr. Yemets to plan this conference, which featured lectures by renowned American cardiac surgeon Dr. Robert Shaddy of the University of Utah Medical School. Over 400 doctors took part in this historic forum, including cardiologists and pediatricians from every oblast of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian government and health ministries have become more responsive to the critical needs of children with cardiac defects. Over 40,000 such children are now under medical supervision in Ukraine, and virtually all of these children will die at a young age without timely surgical intervention. Last year, the Ukrainian Parliament approved a historic resolution (No. 1752) that allocated sufficient funding for (continued on page 3)



Dr. Ilya Yemets explains his award-winning method for aortic valve reconstruction.

(20TH ANNIVERSARY, continued from page 1)



Dr. Evhenia Stepanova, a leading researcher at the National Institute of Radiation Medicine was one of the co-authors of a major study published in the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine in London. A native of the closed nuclear city of Tomsk in Russia, Dr. Stepanova worked with independent researchers in Ukraine and Israel who found a seven-fold increase in chromosome damage among children born to Chernobyl liquidators as compared to siblings born prior to the disaster.

Matkiwsky. "We found in 1996 that even relatively small communities can organize highly effective observances. But to organize effectively, the time to start planning is now." During the 10th Anniversary in 1996, CCRDF played a major role in helping to organize press tours, Congressional hearings, scientific conferences at Yale, Harvard, and Columbia, benefit concerts, memorial services, fundraising dinners, and a White House observance in Washington. CCRDF hopes to mark the 20th Anniversary with similar educational, awareness events and to engage a number of prominent figures and celebrities in this 20th Anniversary campaign.

The Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund is working with several organizations and communities to mark the 20th Anniversary with educational conferences and solemn observances that will remind world leaders and health officials that the human legacy of Chernobyl should not be forgotten and that we can only ignore Chernobyl's lessons at our own peril.

Efforts are underway for a major conference in Kyiv next spring. CCRDF is working with the First Lady of Ukraine Kateryna Yushchenko and the directors of her foundation, Ukraine 3000, to organize a gathering of non-governmental organizations that will address the long-term impact of Chernobyl. The conference will also examine Chernobyl in the context of other global disasters that have served as a catalyst for social change, community renewal, and human empowerment. We are grateful to our coalition partners in *Zhinocha Hromada*, the largest women's organization in Ukraine, that helped to initiate and develop the concept for this historic event. The conference is expected to draw delegates from Europe, the United States, Central Asia, the Middle East, Japan, the Marshall Islands, and other regions affected by man-made disasters.

"Think Globally; Act Locally"

"In addition to this international conference, we are encouraging our chapters and community support networks across the U.S. to sponsor their own local commemorations to help raise awareness among government and church leaders, students, and environmental groups," said Executive Director Alexander Kuzma.

Local organizers are urged to contact their local press and to submit letters to the editor or op-ed columns to mark the anniversary. The fact that many communities and local doctors continue to help Chernobyl orphans and children's hospitals twenty years after the disaster is in itself newsworthy. Working with clergy and religious congregations, communities should plan memorial services at their places of worship. Local Congressional offices, governors, and mayors have also been very supportive of these efforts, but they need to be contacted well in advance to obtain letters of support and to schedule appearances.

Most importantly, we must raise funds to help the many children who continue to suffer from cancer, birth defects, and immune deficiencies. We have made tremendous strides in our partner hospitals, but there are many more children who need our help. A community dinner or benefit concert that raises thousands of dollars can have a powerful impact when combined with the efforts of other groups around the country.



Press prepares to mark anniversary: At the Institute for Radiation Medicine in Kyiv, Spanish journalists Marco Morte and Elena Bano meet with Dr. Natalia Preobrazhenska and Dr. Inna Kovalenko to plan their tour of the Chernobyl disaster zone and children's hospitals. In the coming months, CCRDF is planning to coordinate tours for news teams from Germany, Britain, and the U.S.



Procuring a treasure chest for the airlift

The U.S. State Department has pledged an aircraft to help CCRDF dispatch a major airlift to Ukraine next April. We are most pleased to report that AmeriCares and the Catholic Medical Mission Board have already responded positively to donating medical humanitarian aid. We encourage other companies and organizations to step forward and answer the call to provide vital equipment and medicines. We also urge our supporters and friends to set ambitious fundraising goals to allow CCRDF to purchase new medical equipment and life-saving medicine that would make a considerable difference in the lives of children and in Ukraine's medical infrastructure.

Cargo is being stockpiled in preparation for the CCRDF 20th anniversary airlift.

Let's Keep Mariyka Smiling! An update on Mariyka Tkachyk

After her birth, Mariyka Tkachyk suffered from a life-threatening infection that destroyed her nose and upper mouth and impaired her breathing. Her treating physician in Kyiv, Dr. Oleh Korniychuk, performed an emergency tracheotomy that allowed her to breathe through an artificial apparatus, but this temporary condition could not last. Fourteen months later, Mariyka arrived in the U.S. with her mother, Vera, to begin treatment under the watchful eyes of Dr. Oleh Slupchynskij and Dr. Jay Dolitsky from the Eye, Ear, Nose & Throat Infirmary in New York City. Little Mariyka and her mother were hosted by our CCRDF family, Dr. Andriy and Mrs. Valerie Burachinsky, and left for Ukraine after an extended visit free of the tracheal tube and breathing on her own.

During Mrs. Burachinsky's recent visit to Kyiv, she had the opportunity to follow up on Mariyka's medical status and visit with the family that has become a part of her own. She reported that Mariyka has been attending speech therapy, and although her progress is slow, to her mother's delight she has uttered her first word, "Mama." Mrs. Burachinsky left Mariyka and her family with the assurance that the girl will be returning to the U.S. so that CCRDF can complete our promise to heal Mariyka to the best of our ability.

CCRDF extends a sincere thank you to all the individuals who helped bring Mariyka to this stage of her medical recovery: Dr. Andriy and Mrs. Valerie Burchansky and their family for opening their hearts and welcoming Mariyka and her mother to their home, Dr. Oleh Slupchynskij for donating his professional skills and time with his staff, Dr. Jay Dolitsky who worked with Dr. Slupchynskij, and the Vena family who offered their help in chauffeuring Mariyka to the hospital and often entertained them. CCRDF especially thanks Ann Zinich, Lesya Kruchowy, Andrea Procaccino, the Michael Scott Foundation, an anonymous donor, and all of you who gave so generously to help Mariyka.

The time has come for Mariyka to return to the U.S. for the second phase of her surgical procedures to close the tracheostomy hole and to evaluate her need for further surgeries. Once again, we are turning to you, our readers, to ask for the financial support that will help us fulfill our promise to this little girl. Thank you in advance for your donations and for keeping Mariyka smiling!



Valerie Burachinsky visits with the Tkachuk family, Mariyka, Serhij, and Vera.

The Kerhonkson Chapter Mourns the Passing of Captain Daniel Slobodian

On February 26, 2005, the Ukrainian community of Kerhonkson, N.Y., was saddened by the loss of Daniel Slobodian. The gentle Pan Danylo, as he was affectionately known, stood as a pillar of the community. From the 1950s, he served as a leader and member of many Ukrainian-American organizations, dedicating his life for the greater good and development of the diaspora. Capt. Slobodian also played a significant role in the American political scene, addressing Ukrainian causes before state and federal officials and aiding them in formulation proposals and resolutions. Capt. Slobodian served in the U.S. Army during WWII during which he earned the Purple Heart.

As grief overtook the community of Kerhonkson, funeral services drew many, including UNA President S. Kaczaraj and Congressmen M. Hinchey (D-N.Y.) who, among other heads of Ukrainian organizations, delivered an eloquent eulogy. Capt. Daniel and Mrs. Anna Slobodian were always supportive of CCRDF and this was well known. In tribute to this wonderful person, who will be painfully missed, members of the Kerhonkson Chapter contributed to



As the school year starts, children from the special Lycee in the historic Podol district of Kyiv meet with CCRDF co-founder Nadia Matkiwsky. This year, the Fund hopes to provide special nutritional supplements for schoolchildren suffering from various immune deficiencies to help reduce school absences and improve academic performance. According to the research of renowned biologist Dr. Serhij Komissarenko, radiation exposure weakened many Ukrainian children's immune system by destroying the important killer T-cells in their system.

SNEAK PREVIEW!!! IN OUR NEXT EDITION...

Thanks to a recent grant from Philip Morris, CCRDF has been able to provide new equipment for the clinical laboratory at Kharkiv City Children's Hospital No. 16 where cancer specialists are able to diagnose leukemia and blood disorders with the help of photometers, a new Stat Fax blood analyzer, and more powerful binocular microscopes.



This summer, a team of dedicated missionaries from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (USA) traveled to orphanages at Znamyanka and Zaluchya to help improve care for the disabled children there. In our next edition, more about this mission trip and the installation of a new playground in Znamyanka made possible by donors and volunteers from Virginia.



A grateful nurse welcomes the arrival of the new photometer.

Calling All Volunteers!!!

CCRDF's National Office in Short Hills, NJ needs volunteers to help with various administrative tasks. Whether it's folding brochures, writing thank you notes, or inputting information into the computer database, you can help! If interested, please contact Alexa Milanytch at the National Office at 973-376-5140.



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