



## **President's Message**

Dear Readers,

Welcome to "Student" newsmagazine, the flagship publication of the Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union (SUSK). This is our first issue of the 2012-2013 academic school year, and we hope to publish subsequent issues as frequently as possible. A little bit of background. This newsmagazine has been the voice of young Ukrainian Canadians for several decades past, and I certainly hope it will continue to be so in the years to come. We thank our sponsors for making this and successive issues a reality. It is an unfortunate truth that SUSK as well as "Student" fell inactive during the preceding decade. However, recent SUSK administrations have made it a priority to churn out new materials and digitize old issues. You'll notice that most, if not all, articles in this issue are written by members of the SUSK National Executive. We care enough to generate content - but this trend should be reversed. I challenge you, the readership, to contribute Ukrainian Canadian literature on any

subject you see fit to this publication. All it takes is a pitch and a quick e-mail to our Media Director ([media@susk.ca](mailto:media@susk.ca)).

If you have a moment and need some inspiration, I urge you to take a look at the digitized versions we are slowly beginning to post on our website ([www.susk.ca/media/publications](http://www.susk.ca/media/publications)). We recently obtained "Student" issues going back to the 1960's. Those musty pages speak to our communities trials, tribulations, victories, and glories. Simply put, "Student" tells our collective stories. As a community. As a "народ." And though today Ukraine is an independent country, you would be surprised to see the similar nature of challenges faced by both SUSK and the broader Ukrainian Canadian community in those days past.

On a separate note, welcome to another year of education - whether it be your first, middle, or last. The 54th National Ukrainian Canadian Students' Union (SUSK) Congress which was hosted by the McMaster Ukrainian Students' Association, convened in Hamilton, Ontario on May 10, 2012.





There it elected the National Board for this coming academic year. Twelve Canadian post-secondary institutions attended the National Congress, along with community observers. We have new Ukrainian Students Clubs (USO's) being formed in Manitoba, and British Columbia. It is truly an exciting time for us. That being said, there are a lot of challenges, both domestically and with respect to Ukraine. Some of the "stories" in this issues will speak to this. Best of luck with your studies, and I hope you enjoy this October 2012 issue of "Student"!

З повагою - Regards,

Danylo Korbabicz  
-University of Ottawa

### **A Summer Experience**

As summer comes to a close, life changes from travelling, working and relaxing back to assignments, exams, and of course, sleep deprivation. Even with the events of summer now being distant memories, I can't wait to dive into school. I was fortunate this summer to be able to attend the 52<sup>nd</sup> SUSK congress in Hamilton, Ontario where I met and learned from many Ukrainians from communities across Canada. Presentations at the congress included

speakers such as Irene Orysia Sushko with a presentation on "The Reality of Human Trafficking", several members of the CUCC spoke of how the CUCC can benefit today's youth, along with a keynote from Paul Grod on how Canadian Ukrainians can work together in Canada to help ensure a better future for Ukraine. Seeing what Ukrainian Canadians are doing in the community today is remarkable. It seems that every corner of society has a Ukrainian somewhere, and every one of them is willing to help you. The congress really showed how involved Ukrainian Canadians are and how much they can accomplish.

During the congress, I met many individuals from various USO's (Ukrainian Student Organization) from across Canada. I was amazed by how students from all these different schools and different areas of studies worked with their USO's to have a Ukrainian presence known on campus. Whether it is through a perogy BBQ, a Holodomor commemoration event, or even baking paska and babka for Easter, every group held events throughout the year showing off their Ukrainian spirit and their support for their USO.

As an executive member of the Ukrainian Students Society at the





University of Alberta, I am looking forward to what we can accomplish this year with our USO, and what we are able to bring back to discuss at next years SUSK congress. I can't wait to see everyone I've met again, and to keep meeting more fellow Ukrainian Canadians.

Cassian Soltykevych

-University of Alberta

### **WUSA Summer Activity!!**

The University of Waterloo is the largest university world wide to house a co-operative education program. This program encourages various educational collaborations outside of traditional classrooms. Enrollment in co-op occurs in each school semester, and student life on campus running full tilt over 12 months of the year is not out of the ordinary on the Waterloo campus! This is no different with the Waterloo Ukrainian Students' Association (WUSA)! WUSA is unique in many aspects, including the fact that it is functional throughout the entire year and does not become dormant over the summer term. WUSA continued to host events throughout the past few months, including paying tribute to two important events that occurred in Ukraine over the summer of 2012.

The first – Ukraine being co-host with Poland for the EURO 2012 soccer tournament: in June as Ukraine co-hosted this prestigious soccer tournament, WUSA members gathered at a home base to watch team Ukraine games at a local pub. Students of WUSA, sporting their blue and yellow colours, cheered on Shevchenko and his team mates from start to finish! It was exciting to get together and encourage team Ukraine and celebrate the country being put on the map for the world to see what a beautiful country it is, rich with history and tradition!

Another important event to come up during summer 2012 in Ukraine was the divide of the country and associated commotion with the Language Bill. To support and promote anti-Russification, and encourage democratic practices in Ukraine, WUSA members got together to create posters for the Ukrainian Language Protest. The protest was put on by the Canadian Conference in Support of Ukraine (CCSU) – whose member organizations include: The League of Ukrainian Canadians (LUC), League of Ukrainian Canadian Women (LUCW), the Ukrainian Youth Association (CYM), and the Society of Veterans of Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in Canada. It took place in





Toronto on July 18<sup>th</sup> in front of the Ukrainian Consulate General where WUSA members attended and joined hundreds of others in protest of the proposed language bill. Christine Czoli, member of WUSA, and also SUSK Vice President, expressed the discontent of Ukrainian Canadian students across Canada with the proposed language bill and the way through which it was passed – which violated democratic procedures and the Ukrainian constitution. Attending this event solidified the fact that WUSA Students care about the democratic state of Ukraine, its traditions, culture and language.



WUSA members and other youth from Toronto at the Language Protest in Toronto - July 18, 2012, Ukrainian Consulate General

WUSA's summer activities helped foster student connections – both amongst students and between students and Ukraine. These events, both

recreational and political, define some important happenings in the year Ukraine celebrated its 21<sup>st</sup> year of independence!

Ulanna Wityk

-University of Waterloo

### Community Involvement

GET INVOLVED. If you're a new university student, you have probably heard these words energetically uttered to you time and time again over the past few weeks. If you haven't gotten the message yet, I hope these next few lines can convince you to join at least one organization...a Ukrainian Student Organization (USO) at your new university. What's the point? With over a million Ukrainian-Canadians in Canada, volunteering a bit of your time for your USO can land you a job, provide great scholarship opportunities, and connections that you will foster for a lifetime. The strong Ukrainian community in Canada is looking to us, students to be able to continue the great work the community has founded, and create leaders to motivate new work that needs to be done.

Pick up a shift selling tickets for the next Ukrainian Pyrohy dinner, volunteer with a fundraising initiative for a charity in Ukraine, or pursue a position on an



executive and begin giving back to a community that has given lots to you. Specifically, I hope you consider running for a position on your local executive. It not only looks great on a resume, but it just feels right. Being the past-president of the Ukrainian Students Society in Edmonton, and now External Relations Director at SUSK, that first step into my USO has provided me incredible opportunities, life and leadership skills, and friends for life.

It's a network—Jump in. Canadians of Ukrainian decent have become successful premiers, doctors, lawyers, government officials, engineers, professors, and pilots, along many more. The opportunity for creating connections is perhaps something that the Ukrainian community takes for granted. This incredible network of individuals will go a long way for you...talk with them, engage them, and ask questions...you'll be glad you did.

So join a USO executive, start off with just a volunteer shift, or simply come to an event...it's a community with so much more!

Adrian Warchola

-University of Alberta



USS Members enjoy a BBQ on the University of Alberta QUAD

### **Heritage Days 2012**

As August rolls around, many cultures are busy preparing for the annual Heritage Days Festival at the Hawrelak Park in Edmonton, Alberta. Hungarians are busy rolling their dough for their famous elephant ears, Bosnians preparing their *ćevapi*, Ecuadorians peeling mangos and placing them on sticks and Ukrainians busy making *pyrohy*, *borsch* and *kovbasa*. Each pavilion included an arts and crafts section, a kitchen and entertainment. Of course Ukraine had dancers, singers and musicians of all ages. On several occasions, individuals would come up and ask when are the Ukrainian dancers coming on? All three days, the Ukrainian Pavilion had non-stop visitors and won several awards. In +30 heat, people lined up for hours to spend their food tickets on our famous *pyrohy* and



kovbasa. All the food was graciously made by the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada (Edmonton). Along with a kitchen, we had an arts and crafts pavilion which included a display of different Ukrainian outfits and headpieces from wedding to everyday wear. Many passer-byers stopped and praised the tent for their lovely display, which evidently deserved to win 3<sup>rd</sup> prize in best arts and crafts. Even with drastic weather conditions like a lightning storm and rain, Heritage Days 2012 were a great success.

Sasha Vorotylenko

-University of Alberta

### **BERLIN: The Walls Left Standing**

My unwavering commitment to “be in touch with as much of the world as possible” brought me to the foreign land of the formerly divided Berlin, earlier this summer, for the final course of my undergraduate studies. The course objective was to examine the severed city during the time of the erected Wall and the ever-lasting legacy it left behind.

By far, the most prominent marks of the living-legacy of divided Berlin remained in the walls of its underground. While observing several metro stations built under different

regimes, my findings proved my hypothesis to be true. Amongst other notable legacies that persist, are those buried in people’s mentalities that will take generations to phase out. Precisely, the imaginary walls that people have put up themselves ever since the reunification of divided Germany.

To this date, the constituents of the German capital, sometimes indirectly refer to one another as “Ossis” or “Wessis,” depending on whether they come from what used to be the former German Democratic Republic or the Federal Republic of Germany. To this day, they have a different perception of history and politics that shape their lives and identities.

Although largely invisible to an unarmed eye, the split remains prominent and the stereotypes, as crude as they are entrenched. The Wessis are dismissed as greedy and immoral, while the Ossis are perceived as lazy bigots.

Not until a daytrip to the German Bundestag, an occasion for a question-answer period with one of the creators and a prominent member of Germany’s Green party, did I truly understand the magnitude of this divide.



Hans Christian Ströbele is an elected politician to the constituency that has its lines drawn around both sides of where the Wall once stood. Consequentially, his constituency consists of both, the so-called Wassis and Ossis. When answering the question regarding the success of German reunification, Hans Christian Ströbele chuckled a little and told us that his constituents are very particular when it comes to deciding whether to send their children to a school standing on the former East, or West. Over twenty years following the reunification, one would think that a uniform system of education has been achieved, but apparently people do not see it so. The common perception is that a Western school raises lazier pupils, and it is not serious and difficult enough. In the meantime, Eastern schools are too strict and unnecessarily rigorous.

I can't help but wonder how local hospitals and medical centers are perceived nowadays in light of the above stereotypes. Moreover, how do these stereotypes shape people's thinking, their day-to-day decision-making and how to they continue to stagnate Germany's ongoing effort to a sound reunification?



*My God, Help Me to Survive This Deadly Love*

An ever-lasting legacy of the divided city clearly remains and another great example of this is Berlin's zoo. Correction: are Berlin's zoos! That's right, presently there are two very big and popular zoo's in Berlin, one Eastern and the other one, more Western style, naturally located on each side of the former Wall. I guess upon the reunification, animal consent has not been reached, or perhaps it was established that the animals would never be able to overlook their differences. Luckily for them, there is a wall separating their differences, luckily for us, the Wall has been abolished to have those differences addressed. Regrettably, the metaphysical walls continue to exist in Berlin and outside of the capital, the walls that have been manifested by the people on the pretention of outdated cultural stereotypes and discernments.



Makes you wonder whether people and animals are so different after all...

Kate Ivanchenko

-University of Ottawa

### **Popularity vs. Politics: The 2012 Parliamentary Elections in Ukraine**

The last few months have been dynamic, almost turbulent, for Ukraine. The country and its people have witnessed the influx of their Western neighbours for Euro 2012,



*"I found out my grandson voted for the Party of Regions, so I rewrote [my will] to give my house to*

the splitting of the nation along linguistic lines, and the early flexing of political muscle in campaigns for the upcoming parliamentary elections. Election campaigns have dressed Ukraine in political posters and slogans: as Natalia Korolevska continues to build her collection of celebrities-turned-politicians, the Communist Party of Ukraine promises to return the nation to its people, while Oleh Liashko conveys his message with a simple pitchfork. Amidst all this, a certain babusia and her cat seem to have won the popularity contest; however, their chances in the contest for a seat in Ukraine's parliament appear slim. That contest is far more important, as it marks what many analysts have described as a critical test for democracy. According to Freedom House, an independent watchdog that monitors the status of freedom and human rights around the globe, Ukraine is classified as a "partly free" country. Unfortunately, the watchdog's second assessment of Ukraine indicates that the country is moving in the direction of autocracy. Much of this is a result of President Viktor Yanukovich's policies,



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## КИТ? НЄ, НЕ БАЧИВ

*Yanukovich: "Cat? No. No, I haven't seen it."*

particularly the selective prosecution of opposition figures, disrespect for the rule of law, restriction of the media and increasing corruption. The electoral environment this fall will involve robust election monitoring involving both domestic and international observers. Canada's contribution will include short- and long-term observers sent through CANADEM and through the mission organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and the Canada Ukraine Foundation. The presence of observers should improve the transparency and credibility of the election process. Given the Ukrainian population's widespread distrust of President Yanukovich's administration, this type of oversight and support are sorely

needed. According to Freedom House, the way in which the government administers the upcoming elections will have a major impact on whether they mark a step towards rehabilitation of the government's reputation or a further deterioration of today's dismal situation.

Although Ukraine's leadership claims to seek integration into Europe, its policies result only in contradiction, as they effectively deteriorate Ukraine's young and fragile state of democracy. Ultimately, integration can only come with genuine respect for freedom and human rights. The upcoming elections mark an opportunity for Ukraine's leadership to demonstrate its commitment to these values. This opportunity is certainly one that should not be missed: let's hope the famous cat keeps meowing.

*For more spin-offs of the "kotofot" scandal, see the photogallery published by Radio Liberty:*

<http://www.rferl.org/media/photogallery/24682895.html>

*For more information on Freedom House's reports on Ukraine, visit:*

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/country/ukraine>



Christine Czoli

-University of Waterloo

### **Ukraine's Migrant Workers**

Traveling in Ukraine two summers ago (2011) I was struck by a shocking observation. First, I was shocked by the fact that the prices of most consumer goods are close, if not equal, to those that you would expect in Canada. Second, that salaries of the average Ukrainian are extremely low in comparison to the cost of goods. And third, that many of these average people are somehow able to afford these goods.

To give you an example, I met a young couple, the husband a police officer and the wife a schoolteacher. The average salary of a civil servant in Ukraine is 300USD per month, making their combined income approximately 600USD per month. Observing their apartment, they appeared fairly well off, having various modern appliances. I also discovered that they also have a car and frequently vacation in Krim. I kept thinking, how could such a standard of living possibly be achieved on such incomes? I have always known that the informal economy in Ukraine is significant, and that it's not uncommon civil servants to accept bribes. But even

if this is taken into account the incomes simply do not match the expenses. Further into the conversation I discovered that the wife's father lives and works in Italy. This detail set off a light bulb. Of course, such a standard of living could only be achieved with an additional income coming from abroad.

I decided to do some informal research and discovered that Ukrainian migrant workers in the EU infuse approximately 5 billion USD of informal cash into the Ukrainian economy (5% of Ukraine's GDP). I assume that this would be considerably higher if the total world income of Ukrainian migrant workers were combined.

This got me thinking about the unsettling consequences that go along with the growing dependence on migrant workers. The first thing that comes to mind is that this will surely decline the international reputation of Ukrainians, as Ukrainian migrants take on low skilled labour for a fraction of price of an EU worker. As a European friend of mine put it to me: "Ukrainians are the new gypsies." This is a scary thought. Second, this must have massive implications for the families of migrant workers, who spend countless years apart, while relationships are reduced to skype calls and cash sent through the



mail. Further, the children of these workers develop delusions about the attainability of money in the West when they receive this seemingly effortless cash flow. Finally, this trend kills entrepreneurial spirit in Ukraine. Ukrainian young people strive to attain visas to make a buck abroad, rather than to start to their own businesses and truly stimulate the Ukrainian economy. This sort of strategy is unsustainable and hurts the Ukrainian economy in the long run. Unfortunately, as the economic and political conditions in Ukraine remain grim this trend is likely to grow.

Anastasia Ostapchuk

-University of Western Ontario

### **1812 Re-Enactment**

With all the hype around the War of 1812 and how Canadians defeated the United States, I decided to join an 1812 re-enactment group this summer. I looked on the web for some groups in my area and came upon a group from London who re-enacted the Royal Scots Grenadiers. This was a unit brought over from Britain to help stem the tide of the US advance into Canadian Territory. My first re-enactment was at Stoney Creek just outside Hamilton, Ontario. In this particular battle the British managed to defeat the American

troops. It was a very enjoyable experience as I got to live like a 19<sup>th</sup> century British regular for a weekend. I was outfitted with the uniform of the day and a real working musket which would fire on the battlefield using paper cartridges filled with black powder. So far I have been in 3 “engagements”: Stoney Creek, Fort George and Fort Erie. Fort George involved skirmishes inside and outside the fort while Fort Erie was a full on British assault which historically the British lost. The re-enactments not only include fighting battles but some re-enactors set up shops that sell period clothing and items that are sold to the public. At the end of the day both sides shake hands and remember those that gave their lives in a war that up until this year has been largely forgotten.

William Pidzamecky

-University of Ottawa

### **Друзи - Friends**

Ukrainians are everywhere. This was the lesson learned in my first year at the University of Western Ontario in London. As I walked through the University Community Center, lost in the maze of clubs booths for the Maple Leafs Fan Club, Chess Club and Western Snowboarding Federation, I



heard someone yell “Hey! Українець!” I don’t know how they could tell I was a Ukrainian. Maybe it was that tanci posture, maybe it was my “perogie eating champion” button, maybe it was the Shevchenko jersey I was wearing. We’ll never know. But, from that moment on, I found myself immersed in a community I didn’t know existed.

At the first social that year, I ran into some of my older druhs from CYM and people with whom I danced. That was the same day I was recruited to the London Barvinok dance group to teach. Though the group was extremely small at first, I was thrilled to see it grow from 4 young members (and teachers) to a multi-level group in four years.

Through many perogie (read: varenyky) nights, pub nights and being mistaken for Turkish dancers, I knew by the end of my first year I wanted more. Over the next three years I held the VP Finance, working alongside some of the most driven individuals I’ve met. It was an experience like none other. Running to the Council offices a week before our Holodomor event, since they moved us out of the main atrium, securing sponsorships from people who say I look like my father and doing a last-minute gorілка-run to ensure no one went

thirsty at our socials, I wouldn’t change any of it.

As I said earlier, Ukrainians are everywhere. That same conspiracy must tie in with the “Баба Бабі Сказала” (the BBC) network, as whenever I did anything, I would eventually hear something from my Баба or Дідо about it. I’m not going to lie. They knew everyone. Some of them even vacationed together! One of the hosts we went to Koliada for went to tabir with my father! It’s a small world and you never know whom you will meet.

Right now, I know there might be a little hesitation behind those reading eyes of yours, but I will tell you this, I almost hesitated. I was skeptical. I almost didn’t join. Four years later, I have some of the strongest connections with the people I met through the club and dancing. Sure, your town may not be the biggest Ukrainian community in Canada. Maybe that will make for a better experience.

Danylo Kostruba

-University of Western Ontario

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