



President's Message

If TWG is to grow and prosper, it has to meet its members' expectations and attempt to satisfy, as best it can, their needs and requirements.

Therefore, it is very important for an organization, with a membership as large and diverse as ours, to provide a wide variety of events and functions so that each member will feel that TWG offers him or her something of particular interest. At the same time, in planning and organizing our activities, we also need to be mindful of and adhere to TWG's stated mission which is to "raise the awareness of Ukrainian political and social issues in the United States and abroad, promote Ukraine's cultural heritage, and support the Ukrainian community with emphasis on the Washington, D.C. area." I feel that we have done an excellent job on both fronts.

In August of last year, we celebrated Ukraine's Independence with an Independence Day Picnic at the Sandy Point State Park. This gave TWG members and their families not only an opportunity to commemorate Ukraine's Independence but also to spend a fun day at the beach.

Shortly thereafter, in October of last year, we had a very successful Leadership Conference, featuring the first public appearance of the recently appointed U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Ambassador Carlos Pascual.

The TWG Cultural Fund, in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine, is sponsoring a series of five concerts at the Rosslyn Spectrum Theatre during the 2000-2001 season

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2000...A Year Of Success

TWG Leadership Looking Forward To New Opportunities

By any measure, 2000 was a good year for TWG and its members.

From the various TWG-sponsored cultural events to TWG's festive Christmas party, last year was filled with many wonderful and successful events.

The TWG Cultural Fund had much to do with TWG's success last year. "We sponsored eight events during the year 2000, from baroque to contemporary music; from an ensemble of members of the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra to the Experimental Bandura Trio. For the first time, we hosted a book party and co-sponsored

a lecture at the Library of Congress," said Laryssa Courtney, TWG Cultural Fund Director.

"We also launched a concert series, under the stewardship of Cultural Fund committee member Chrystia Sonevytsky and in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine, to benefit the Music Conservatory in Lviv. This Benefit Concert Series, featuring artists from Lviv, combines the Cultural Fund's mission to promote Ukrainian culture in the Washington area with help for those who create this culture at its source," she continued.

See Cover Story, page 18



Taking in the crisp winter evening air, TWG members and friends gathered earlier this year at the National Mall's Sculpture Garden Ice Rink in Washington, D.C., for fun and skating. Homemade medivka made rounds to help keep everyone warm.

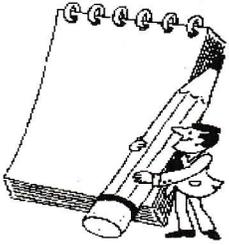
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Need to renew your membership or know a friend or family member who might like to become a TWG member? Check out the handy form on the back cover.

From the Editor...



In this year's first issue of *TWG News* you'll find articles that are a true reflection of TWG members & friends dedicating their valuable time and energy to making The Washington Group an organization of Ukrainian professionals the best it can be, and much more.

Whether it's the fascinating spotlight piece on Ambassador Bill Courtney by TWG's former president Orest Deychakiwsky, or board member Marta Zeilyk's insightful article about Maria Rudensky Silver, the *TWG News* publication continues an excellent tradition of serving its membership, friends and family.

The "News on Members" by Juliana Kinal Ballard updates you on the latest news about your fellow TWG members. Also, you get an informal opportunity to meet the 2000-2001 TWG Board up close and personal in "Getting To Know Your TWG Board" on page 13.

As it's often said, the future is what we make of it. TWG offers new members the unique opportunity to join a growing community of Ukrainians from around the world. From TWG's Web site, to its wonderful yearly events and networking opportunities, TWG continues to shine and bring Ukrainians together from across the world.

For the past six years, Yaro Bihun has served as editor of this publication. Yaro put in 6 tireless years as *TWG News* Editor and we all wish him the very best and appreciate all his hard work (see p. 5). *TWG News* has kept its members informed of various activities and continues to offer membership a fantastic way to advertise Ukrainian-owned businesses and sponsored events.

TWG News wants to hear from you. Let us know what you would like to see in this year's coming issues. After all, it's *your* publication. If you have a story to contribute, would like to advertise, have any events to promote or just want to comment, e-mail us at TWGNews_Editor@hotmail.com. ■

TWG News

Published for members by The Washington Group
P.O. Box 11248, Washington D.C. 20008

Editor: Andy C. Szul, TWGNews_Editor@hotmail.com
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Publisher: Nicholas Babiak

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Advertising: Business card size: \$10/issue, or \$25/three issues for TWG members; \$15/\$40 for non-members. 1/4 page: \$45 for members, \$55 for non-members. 1/2 page: \$60 for members, \$75 for non-members. Full page: \$100 for members, \$140 non-members. To advertise, contact TWG Treasurer Roman Stelmach at (973) 290-9616.

Notes on Members

Please join us in welcoming TWG's newest members (as of 9/1/00):

1. Dan Andrusiak, Program Analyst for U.S. Coast Guard, from Burke, VA
2. Tony Bilecky, Program Manager for Ronco Consulting Group, from Falls Church, VA
3. Elena Heimur, Associate Instructor, Manhattan School of Music, from Staten Island, NY
4. Kye Parsons, Student at Salisbury State University, from Delmar, MD
5. Olha Holozydya, Attorney/Consultant, from Alexandria, VA
6. Volodymyr Chornodolsky, Assistant to the Executive, Ukraine-U.S. Business Council, Washington, DC
7. Oleksa Breslawec, Engineer/Principal, Sebesta, Blomberg & Associates, Inc, Potomac, MD
8. Orest Hanas, Consultant, Lehigh, PA
9. Volodymyr Tkachuk, Student, Alexandria, VA
10. Nataliya Biletska, Student, Washington, DC
11. Helena Melnitchenko, Teacher (Retired), Owings, MD
12. Eugene Melnitchenko, Financial Analyst (Retired), Owings, MD
13. Ulana Moroz, Attorney/ Country Coordination Program for Amnesty International, Washington, DC
14. Tina Marinitchenko, Student, Santa Clara, CA
15. Charita Petrina, Captain, US Air Force, Washington, DC
16. Masha Archer, Jewelry Artist, Masha Archer Jewelry Design, San Francisco, CA
17. Anthony Trojanowski, Senior Analyst, TRW, Herndon, VA
18. Lydia Komarnicky-Kocher, physician, Cherry Hill, NJ
19. Natalie X. Korytnyk, Ph.D., Clinical Psychology, Chevy Chase, MD

Announcement from Membership Director, Juliana Kinal Ballard:

Dear TWG members:

Do you have news or an announcement about yourself or another TWG member which may be of interest to the rest of the membership body? We are dedicating space in every issue of *TWG News* to introduce new members and publish news about our members.

See **Members**, page 4



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Spotlight on Honorary TWG Member Bill

by Orest Deychakiwsky

During the last fifteen years, Bill Courtney, our former Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Georgia and senior director at the National Security Council on Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia, has been no stranger to The Washington Group and the Ukrainian-American community.

Amb. Courtney, who married TWG Cultural Fund Director Larysa Chopivsky last November, has had a long, distinguished and varied career as a diplomat, most of it dealing with the former Soviet Union and political military affairs. Born in West Virginia, Bill graduated from West Virginia University with a B.A. and Brown University with a Ph.D. in economics. After joining the Foreign Service, he served at the American embassies in Moscow and Brasilia, and in assignments at the Department of State and the National Security Council. During the early and mid-1980's he was deputy U.S. negotiator in the Defense and Space Talks, part of the U.S.-Soviet Nuclear and Space Talks in Geneva.

Bill first came to know The Washington Group when the Department of State assigned him to open the first American consulate general in Kyiv. At the Geneva Summit in November 1985, President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev agreed that the USSR would open a consulate in New York, and the U.S. a consulate in Kyiv. The idea was to open the U.S. consulate within weeks, but a problem arose. The Soviets refused to allow the United States Government to perform internal or external reconstruction work on the building that would house the consulate. They had carefully prepared it for the Americans' arrival. A stand-off ensued for a year. Finally, Moscow agreed to allow internal reconstruction.

This positive move was then quickly negated by two other developments. The U.S. announced that two Marine Guards may have been spying in our embassy in Moscow. And a U.S. government report was made public indicating that electronic penetration of the new embassy building in Moscow was worse than expected. The bugs rendered it unusable as a facility where sensitive, classified activities could take place. These twin scandals caused the government to halt preparations to open

a classified consulate in Kyiv.

Meantime, Bill prepared to go and study Ukrainian language. In early 1986 he addressed the Washington Ukrainian-American community at a well-attended TWG-sponsored evening at Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church to discuss plans for the Kyiv consulate. While receiving a warm welcome, Bill recalls also facing tough questioning on the US government's handling of the Medvid and Demjaniuk cases. He came to know the Ukrainian-American community even better, subsequently traveling to over a half-dozen cities on speaking engagements.

In October 1986, Bill took a team of three U.S. physicians and scientists to Kyiv to measure radiation. The U.S. government had told the Soviets it could not open the consulate until it was sure Kyiv was safe in the wake of the Chornobyl disaster. The team took radiation measurements, and bought honey, vegetables, fish, and animal parts at markets. They guarded the samples 24-hours a day to prevent tampering, and carted everything in sealed plastic boxes back to the U.S. for testing. Once they had to shake their tail to collect certain samples to be sure they were genuine; this upset their hosts. Partly because they took samples a half-year after the accident and Kyiv was upwind of Chornobyl initially, U.S. Government testing showed only moderately higher levels of radiation.

While in Kyiv for this visit, the team heard by BBC short wave radio that dissident Irina Ratushinskaya had just been released from prison. Bill knew her address and visited Irina and her husband that evening. They were shocked to be called on so quickly by an American diplomat. Irina asked that Bill relay to President Reagan, then at his second summit, gratitude for his efforts to obtain her release. Bill called the American embassy in Moscow and the



Amb. William Courtney

Cultural

by Marta Zielyk

Let the good times roll! To dispel some of the gray monotony of the mercifully short month of February, TWG invited the acclaimed group "Louisiana Swamp Romp" to perform a program of toe-tapping Zydeco and New Orleans jazz at the Lyceum Theater in Old Town Alexandria on Sunday February 4th at 2:30pm. The program featured traditional Ukrainian melodies with a jazzy twist.

This jazz concert, as well as the next few events the Cultural Fund is planning, are intended as benefits for worthy causes.

As we all know, the difficult economic situation in Ukraine has led to a severe shortage of funds for cultural organizations. Among the hardest hit are music conservatories, such as those in Lviv, Kyiv and Odessa. With this in mind, the TWG Cultural Fund has decided to organize a series of classical music concerts to gather financial assistance for these conservatories to purchase or repair their musical instruments.

The next concert in the series that benefitted the Lviv Conservatory took place on March 5 and featured two graduates of this conservatory: soprano Nusia Bachynska and tenor Ihor Tymbala. They were accompanied by Volodymyr Vynnytsky on the piano. The program reflected the fact that the concert was intended as a tribute to Taras Shevchenko. In 2001

See Cultural, next page

See Spotlight, page 5

2001 TWG/Ukrainian Embassy Summer Internship

Now accepting applications.

by Adrian Karmazyn

The Washington Group, in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine, is seeking candidates to participate in its sixth annual summer internship program at the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the project, which is being conducted under the auspices of the TWG Fellowship Committee, is to provide the Ukrainian Embassy with an intern who could serve as a research assistant to the embassy staff. In turn, the intern would gain valuable experience in learning how a foreign embassy in Washington works and how the embassy interacts with various Washington individuals and institutions.

Candidates for the two-month internship should have completed at least two years of undergraduate studies and be proficient in English and Ukrainian. (An excellent command of English -- native fluency -- is required). Applicants should possess excellent oral and written communication skills and be able to demonstrate excellent computer skills, including proficiency with the Internet. Candidates should anticipate assisting the embassy with whatever issues and needs that may arise, including general office work.

Applicants should submit the following:

- 1.) a one-page essay explaining their interest in the internship, preferred starting date (in May or June), and how their work, educational and personal experience would help meet the goals of the project
- 2.) copies of academic transcripts
- 3.) one letter of recommendation, and
- 4.) two references

To be considered for this internship, candidates must

submit this information to TWG no later than April 4, 2001.

The Washington Group Fellowship Committee will provide the successful candidate with a stipend of \$1,500.

Application materials should be addressed to: The Washington Group Fellowship Committee, Ukrainian Embassy Internship Project, P.O. Box 11248, Washington, D.C. 20008.

For more information call Adrian Karmazyn at (301)260-9630 or Orest Deychakiwsky at (301)937-0492 (evenings). E-mail inquiries may be sent to aksbk@aol.com.

The Fellowship Fund relies on contributions from individual donors. Tax-free contributions to the Fund may be sent to the above address. Checks should be made out to The Washington Group. ■

Karmazyn is TWG Fellowship Fund Director.

Notes on Members

Members, from page 2

Let us know if there is a new development in your life which would be of interest to others! For example: new job, promotion, transfer, etc.

Also, a reminder: Please check the date on your mailing label - it will let you know the expiration date of your membership. Help us save printing and postage costs by renewing your membership on time, or even early!!

Sincerely,
Juliana Kinal Ballard

Ballard is TWG Membership Director.

* * *

Awards

Marta Zielyk, Senior Diplomatic Interpreter at the Department of State and TWG Board member at large, was awarded the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public service for her work as a high-level Ukrainian language interpreter for Secretary William Cohen from 1996 to 2000.

* * *

Recent Weddings

- Cultural Fund director Laryssa Lapychak Chopivsky and Honorary Member William Courtney.
- Former TWG editor Maria Rudensky and Stanley Silver.

E-mail your Announcements: TWGNews_editor@hotmail.com

Cultural Corner

Cultural, from previous page

we celebrate the 140th anniversary of The Bard's death.

The April 23rd concert to benefit the Lviv Conservatory will feature the famed New York City Opera star, soprano Oksana Krovtytska.

The April concert will take place in the Rosslyn Spectrum Theater in Arlington, VA, at 7pm.

In May, TWG invites everyone to hear Stefania Dovhan, an exciting young singer from Ukraine who was named the gold medalist artist of the year 2000 in the prestigious Rosa Ponselle "Young Classical Singers" competition. Ms. Dovhan will exhibit her considerable talent at a concert on May 12, at the Dumbarton United Methodist Church in Georgetown.

For more information on these events or on the TWG Cultural Fund, please call the Fund Director Laryssa Courtney at 202-263-3964 or contact her by e-mail at Laryssac@aol.com. ■

Zielyk is TWG Member at Large.

Adieu and Diakuiu to Long Time *TWG News* Editor Yaro

by Natalie Sluzar

After a six-year stint as editor of *TWG News*, Yaro Bihun announced his retirement this past December. Mr. Bihun, in effect was not our newsletter's editor, but also reporter, writer, production manager, graphics designer, artistic director, photographer, and whatever else needed to be done.

Mr. Bihun is no stranger to journalism. He has worked in that profession since his years at John Carroll University, near Cleveland, where he was editor of the campus newspaper. After a brief stint as reporter and

photographer for a small daily in north-eastern Ohio, he was lured to Washington to work in radio, for the Ukrainian service of the Voice of America. Ten years later he switched back to print journalism, with the press division of the U.S. Information Agency, specializing in African, Near Eastern and South Asian affairs. In his 15 years there, his assignments took him all



Yaro Bihun

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Spotlight, from page 3

message was passed to the President.

With the Kyiv Consulate on seemingly permanent hold thanks to Soviet intransigence, Bill became U.S. Commissioner, with rank of Ambassador, to the implementing commissions of the Threshold Test Ban and Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaties. He co-chaired the U.S. side in initial talks with the USSR and Russia on the safety, security, and dismantlement of nuclear weapons, which helped pave the way for implementation of the Nunn-Lugar cooperative program that has reduced threats from weapons of mass destruction of the former USSR.

Bill's arms control expertise became especially useful as the first U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan. In 1993-94, he negotiated with President Nazarbayev for the removal of 600 kg of highly enriched uranium (HEU) – enough for a number of nuclear weapons – in Kazakhstan. During this time Moscow was notified. A Russian minister reacted by saying it was impossible that the HEU existed in Kazakhstan. Moscow was told to look again. Evidently not everyone knew what had been left behind when the USSR dissolved. Russia did not want the HEU back. America then launched an ultra-secret project in which dozens of U.S. nuclear technicians lived for a month in cold, wind-swept Ust-Kamenogorsk near the Chinese border to pack the HEU and prepare it for shipment. Four U.S. Air Force C-5s then flew it half-way around the world non-stop (with multiple air-to-air refuelings). The HEU arrived at the U.S. Department of Energy's Y-12 plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Within hours, the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Energy held an unprecedented joint press conference to announce the mission as a success for U.S. nuclear non-proliferation policy.

One of the most poignant memories of Bill this author has is during Bill's tenure as Ambassador to Kazakhstan. In April 1992, as part of a Congressional delegation led by Senator Dennis DeConcini – the first Congressional visit to independent Kazakhstan – Bill was meeting our plane at the airport in Almaty. As I walked down the stairs of the plane, we shook hands and Bill said: "Remember six

years ago when you, me and Andy Fedynsky first met at a restaurant in Rosslyn. Could you have ever imagined at that time that we would be meeting six years later under these circumstances?" Indeed, back in early 1986, few people would have predicted that the historic change that was to take place only a few years later with the dissolution of the Soviet empire would occur so soon.

Following his tenure as Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Bill continued to be an important policy actor in the post-Soviet area. He served as Ambassador to Georgia. Following this assignment, Amb. Courtney became special assistant to the President and senior director of the National Security Council (NSC) staff for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia. At the *TWG* Leadership Conference in October 1997, he was the featured luncheon speaker articulating U.S. policy towards Ukraine. In his last post before retiring from the Foreign Service in December 1999, Bill was senior advisor at the Congressionally-chaired Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission) and was instrumental in ensuring that U.S. initiatives on torture, trafficking and corruption were included in the December 1999 Istanbul Summit of the 54 heads of the state of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Since retiring, Ambassador William Courtney has been president of DynMeridian, a DynCorp Company. With annual revenue of \$1.8 billion and over 250 employees, DynCorp performs technology and outsourcing services mainly for government. DynMeridian provides professional and technology support for national security programs. The company focuses on arms control and non-proliferation policies and programs, defense and arms control technology program management, classification of nuclear weapons information, security management and special programs, specialized information technologies, and safe schools planning. Key clients are the U.S. Departments of Defense, Energy, and State, and the chemical. Bill is also a founding member

Courtney is president of DynMeridian, which provides professional and technology support for national security programs.

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TWG Members and Friends Enjoy Social Hour in Washington,



Pictured at left, TWG members and friends enjoyed an evening at a recent TWG Social Hour held at The Lombardy Hotel, in Washington, D.C. The TWG Social Hour, which takes place on the first Friday of every month, has become quite popular.

Those who attended called the evening "fantastic," "relaxing," and "a great opportunity" to network and meet new people.

Join TWG Members & Friends for Social Hour, first Friday of every month, at The Lombardy Hotel, 2019 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., in Washington D.C.

Off-site Software Development: A Boon to IT Firms

by Luba Cehelska

The Northern Virginia Technology Council [NVTC], a membership organization of over 1600 firms, serving as the voice of technology in Northern Virginia, will hold a symposium entitled "Off-Site Software Development: Near-shore and Off-shore" on April 25.

Two NVTC committees, Workforce Development and International, have joined forces to create a symposium familiarizing IT firms with key components of the off-site software development process. The event will present examples of successes and challenges of off-site software development, provide an opportunity to ask questions of experts in relevant fields, and offer information about sources of help for companies who decide to do this.

Luba Cehelska, International Consultant, initiated the idea of the symposium with NVTC, whose members and Management have generously contributed time, ideas, information and meeting venues. Cehelska conducted three focus groups in December to gather topics and recommendations for the symposium format. Taras Kytsmej, President of the Ukrainian software development

firm SoftServe, flew in from Lviv and attended one of the focus groups where he discussed with participants Softserve's offerings and capabilities. Softserve is moving into the Greater Washington Information Technology [IT] market to

"Ukraine is rich in intellectual capital and offers large numbers of highly trained scientists..."

expand its US presence. Not only will SoftServe attend the Symposium in April, but it has agreed to serve as a Gold Sponsor.

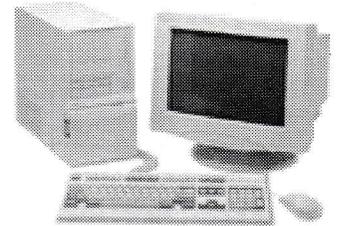
Off-site development refers to development that takes place at sites which are not co-located (i.e. not in the same facility) but are distributed, perhaps in other buildings, or in another town, in another state, or overseas.

Software teams may collaborate across many locations, borders and time zones to program the software needed in the IT environment.

Today's technology makes it possible for software teams to be dispersed throughout the world and still succeed in developing a high quality product.

Benefits of off-site development can be significant, including substantially reduced costs, increase in staff more affordable, higher quality product, availability of highly experienced and well-trained staff and expediting product to market with software development, which is done both in the U.S. and overseas.

Ukraine is rich in intellectual capital and offers large numbers of highly trained scientists, software engineers, software developers, and network administrators. These professionals range in age from recent grads to seasoned veterans, are largely unemployed or underemployed, and are available immediately, for salaries that are a small fraction of American salaries. We know that they compare favorably with developers anywhere in the world, whether India, the Philippines, China, Scotland or the US. It is imperative that these Ukrainians become an integral part of the global IT intellectual community and demonstrate that they too are vital to the global economy. It is critical that they be included in the global community so that they too can participate in the wealth generated by the Information Technology industry. ■



Cehelska is an international consultant specializing in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine. She can be reached at 703-750-3927 or e-mail luba@webpdq.com.

Editor Bihun Moves On

Bihun, from page 5

over the U.S., a dozen African countries, as well as to Ukraine, where he was detailed as temporary press attaché when the U.S. Embassy was being established in 1992.

After taking advantage of an early retirement opportunity at USIA in 1994, he took over the helm of *TWG News*, and freelanced as the Washington stringer for BBC, *The Ukrainian Weekly* and other news organizations.

Asked about his future plans after his second retirement, Mr. Bihun says that he will pursue long-delayed projects of personal interest that have been kept on the back burner while he was doing other things. And he plans to spend more time by the Bay.

Mr. Bihun is one of the founding members of TWG. He served as its first treasurer and fourth president (1998-1990).

The Board of Directors of The Washington Group extends its sincere thanks to Mr. Bihun for his many years of service to TWG. We couldn't have done it without you. Mnohaia Lita! ■

Sluzar is a TWG member.

Interested In Learning Conversational Ukrainian?

Forget the tapes!

Join other TWG members in a Ukrainian roundtable and learn the basics of communicating in Ukrainian. Beginners & those looking to brush up on their Ukrainian skills are welcome.

As people join, we'll be holding weekly roundtable discussions led by several Ukrainian speaking TWG members with experience in teaching the Ukrainian language.

Anyone interested in teaching or learning Ukrainian should contact Anya Piazza at 703-204-4701, or e-mail at piazzaa@alpa.org.

TWG Member's Work Spans Globe Bringing People Together

by Marta Zielyk

Maria Rudensky Silver started her third overseas assignment with the State Department in July 2000 as the deputy consul general at the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. She characterizes her job as the biggest management challenge she has undertaken in her nearly 12 years with the Foreign Service.

Besides standing in for the Consul General in running a section of 14 Americans and 35 Polish employees, Maria directly manages the immigrant visa unit, which has three American consular officers, and 17 Polish employees. Keeping track of what is in effect a big visa factory can be daunting at times. In just her first half-year in Warsaw, Maria has had to tackle a variety of new laws affecting visas, training for nearly all her employees and the always dreaded computer upgrades, which inevitably result in problems and glitches.

Her clientele includes all (legal) immigrants from Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine as well as Poland. She sees the many fiancées coming from Ukraine to marry U.S. citizens, as well as the numerous babies being adopted from Ukraine by American parents.

"...the most frequently seen problem with applicants for immigrant visas is lack of adequate financial support from the sponsor..."

"Some mornings our waiting room is filled with half a dozen crying infants, their exhausted parents and about an equal number of anxious fiance(e)s, clutching letters, photos and e-mail printouts from their intendeds," Maria says. "The vast majority of the fiance(e) cases are Internet romances," she adds. "All this is in addition to our other applicants seeking to join their U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident relatives in the U.S."

Maria's consular work in Ukraine was quite different. The Embassy in Kyiv processes only non-immigrant visas — that is, for applicants seeking a temporary stay in the U.S., either to visit a relative or friend, to see a tourist attraction such as Disneyland, to do business, to study, for temporary employment on a labor petition, cultural/scholarly exchange and several other categories. Warsaw, on the other hand, is the regional immigrant visa processing center.

Even today, travel by Poles to the West is much more routine than it is for Ukrainians. But especially during Maria's years in Kyiv — 1992-1995 — travel by Ukrainians to the West was still in its infancy.

Today's well-educated, solidly established and relatively affluent citizen of Ukraine has likely already

See Rudensky Silver, next page

Keeping Up With The Change Of Times...

UESA Members Seek to Revitalize Or-

y Andrij Wowk

As we enter the "high-tech" era of 21st Century, members of the Ukrainian Engineers' Society of America (UESA, or *Tovarystvo Ukraiians'kykh Inzheneriv Ameryky*) are trying to make sure their organization keeps pace with the times.

At more than 50 years old, the UESA is one of the oldest Ukrainian-American organizations in the U.S., and one of the most unique, since its members come from all fields of engineering and other technical professions. The group currently includes about 700 members, organized in 10 branches across the U.S., with headquarters in New

York City. The UESA publishes a technical newsletter ("*Visti Inzheneriv*"); has its own Web site, for use by members and non-members alike; and organizes technical and social events throughout the year.

Despite its long history of successes, however, the UESA must continue to keep up with the many ongoing changes in the world today. These changes are both social (the emergence of a new generation of Ukrainian-American professionals, and the "Fourth Wave" of immigrants from

See **Organization**, next page

TWG Member's Work Spans Globe

Rudensky Silver, from previous page

been to Western Europe and/or North America at least once. And Poles have passports full of entry and exit stamps. The difference in the economic standing of the average Pole and the average Ukrainian is remarkable, Maria says. That fact made, and continues to make, processing of non-immigrant visas in Kyiv very problematic.

The pressure to leave the country for a better life has only increased during the 1990s. By contrast the most frequently seen problem with applicants for immigrant visas is lack of adequate financial support from the sponsor, who is sometimes unable to meet the U.S. government's minimum poverty guidelines for bringing in a relative or fiancé(e). In most such cases, however, once the sponsor starts bringing in more wages, or obtains the assistance of a bona fide joint sponsor, the immigrant visa can be issued.

But working in Kyiv did have many advantages. Maria remembers fondly the close cooperation among the first seven or eight officers at the Embassy in Kiev during the winter of 1992. "Once," she recalls, "we all were driven by Charge Jon Gundersen to an event across town. You can only imagine the lines about 'how many Embassy Kyiv officers can you fit in one Volga!'"

There was the time that Ambassador William Miller, pressed for time to make a meeting with a high-ranking official, was stranded on the Embassy's second floor by repair work that had blocked the stairs. An ingenious Ukrainian employee quickly leaned a ladder against an open window, and the Ambassador was able to make a dramatic exit to his waiting car.

Work at the Embassy in Kyiv in the early 90's was characterized by high energy and a feeling that each day presented a host of opportunities to make a difference in

the lives of people who had suffered tyranny for so long. There was a palpable feeling of euphoria in the first few years after independence, before the problems of grounding a genuine free-market, democratic society became apparent. By the time she left Ukraine in August 1995, the lack of rule of law, absence of true freedom of the press and growing realization that the average citizen is being taken advantage of by powerful economic players had begun to sink in.

Such is not the situation in Poland, by contrast. The country has a feeling of vibrancy from its large middle class. Societal problems such as economic inequities, lack of healthcare, and even growing unemployment are all tackled in a transparent fashion by a government that at least appears to be responsive and responsible to its citizens.

For example, post offices function efficiently and punctually, public transportation is clean, affordable and well-equipped, electronic financial transactions and use of ATMs are routine, and many (but not all) government office telephones are answered either by live operators or taped, interactive message systems. The Polish countryside certainly marches to the beat of a slower drummer, but even in the most remote village, some optimism for the future can be sensed.

With her very hectic job, Maria still finds time for her passions, which include skiing and dancing. Indeed, she met husband, Stan, at a contra dance at Glen Echo Park's Spanish Ballroom. They were married a few months ago at Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Silver Spring, Md.

On the TWG front, Maria Rudensky Silver is a long-time member. She was the first editor of *TWG News* back in the late 80's when the publication was in its infancy. She fondly remembers the many hours spent putting together the monthly issues on fellow TWG member's George Masiuk's Macintosh computer, and the many phone calls made tracking down obscure bits of information on TWG members, upcoming events and historical facts.

UESA Members Seek to Revitalize Organization

Organization, from previous page

Ukraine), and technical (the emergence of the Internet and the digital information age). To respond to these challenges, the group has done the following in recent years:

- Created the UESA Web site (www.uesa.org) in order to keep members updated on news events, technical information, and branch activities.
- Created an e-mail discussion list (uesa@yahoo.com) to make communication between members easier.
- Sponsored panels on leading-edge technical subjects, such as on the Ukrainian aerospace industry (as part of the Synergy Conference in 1999) and on communication in the digital age (in November 2000).

Proposed activities for 2001 include additional technical and social events; establishing UESA student groups among Ukrainian-American students at various colleges; and holding "career days" for both students and newly-arrived technical professionals from Ukraine. The UESA leadership and branch leaderships are actively looking for additional ideas to make our organization more valuable to both its members and the Ukrainian diaspora in general.

For more information about the UESA (or to obtain a membership application), visit our Web site (www.uesa.org), or join the [uesa](mailto:uesa@yahoo.com) e-mail discussion list (uesa@yahoo.com). For information about the Washington, D.C. branch of the UESA, please contact Mr. Theodore Kostiuk (6703 96th Place, Seabrook, MD 20706). ■

Wowk and his wife Larissa are TWG members who live in Bridgewater, New Jersey. Wowk is president of the UESA New Jersey branch, and treasurer of the UESA national organization. He is currently employed as a business analyst by UPS in Morristown, New Jersey, and can be reached at wowk@email.com.

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**** Check out the "Getting to Know Your 2001 TWG Board & Members at Large" in this issue -- see page 13 ****

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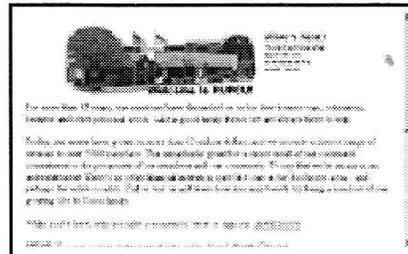
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* TWG Member

TWG Member's Recital at National Gallery of Art Called

by Natalie Sluzar

Washingtonians had an opportunity to enjoy a delightful concert by pianist Juliana Osinchuk at the National Gallery of Art on February 4th.

Ms. Osinchuk, a TWG member, performed in the Washington area several times before, receiving very positive reviews each time. The *New York Times* has called her a pianist of "superior technique, discipline, and talent." The *Washington Post's* music critic Joseph McLellan, called her recital at the National Gallery "spectacular," saying that in this recital, Ms. Osinchuk "avoided music's beaten paths and presented one revelation after another."

Ms. Osinchuk began her piano studies at age four with her mother. She had her debut at age 11, after which she became a pupil of Nadia Boulanger in Paris. She continued her studies at the Conservatoire de Musique in Paris, Tanglewood, and at the Juilliard School of Music where

she received a bachelor and master of music degrees and the doctorate in musical arts. She made her formal professional debut at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall. She was subsequently profiled in the magazine *Musical America* as a "young artist to watch."



Osinchuk

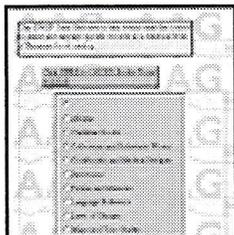
It was her training in the French romantic school, lead by Nadia Boulanger, however, that was especially noted by McLellan in his review of the Gallery concert. Osinchuk began the second half of her program with the Washington premiere of a piece composed for her by Philip Munger, "The Fragile Vessel." It was here that Ms. Osinchuk passed a pianist's test of "speed, power and accuracy" with "flying colors," writes Mr. McLellan. This piece especially reflected her training under Boulanger. The two pieces by French composer and Boulanger's teacher, Gabriel Faure, Nocturne No. 9 in B Minor and the Impromptu No. 3 in a-flat, demonstrated Ms. Osinchuk's "sense of form and powers of expressive subtlety."

The highlight of the program, according to Mr. McLellan, was the performance of two short pieces of jazz-flavored works by American composer Morton Gould: "Rag-Blues-rag" and "Boogie Woogie Etude." Equally dazzling was Ms. Osinchuk's performance of the Sonata No. 3 in B Minor by Viktor Kosenko, a Washington premiere performance. Mr. McLellan writes that it was a pity that Washington had to wait 80 years to hear this piece.

Juliana Osinchuk has performed nationally and internationally in the major concert halls of New York, Washington, London, Amsterdam, Salzburg and Kyiv. She served on the faculty of Hunter College of New York City, and at the State University of New York at Purchase. Juliana Osinchuk currently resides in Anchorage, Alaska, where she gives concerts and teaches privately. ■

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Greetings,
Oleg Jerschkowsky

Spotlight: Amb. Courtney

Spotlight, *From page 5*

of the United States Committee for the National Laboratories. The Committee is a non-partisan organization that supports the national security mission of the U.S. Department of Energy national laboratories and their talented and dedicated people.

Both Bill's professional and personal lives have been linked with Ukrainian-Americans and he continues to be a valued member of the TWG family. ■

Deychakiwsky is Immediate Past President of TWG.

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Getting to Know Your 2001 TWG Board & Members at Large



President - Ihor Kotlarchuk recently retired, after 31 years of federal service, as a Senior Trial Attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice. Earlier, he served on active duty as a Captain in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG) which included a tour of duty in Vietnam. He retired from the U.S. Army Reserve in the rank of Colonel. While in the service, he received numerous decorations, including the Bronze Star and the Presidential Legion of Merit.

Ihor has been travelling extensively to Ukraine, working on legal, military and judicial assistance projects sponsored by the State Department, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice. He received his B.S. degree and his J.D. degree in law from Fordham University. He also received an LL.M. in tax law and a M.A. degree in law from Fordham University. He also received an LL.M. in tax law and a M.A. degree in Political Science from Georgetown University. Currently, he is completing his requirements for a Masters in Education degree (M.Ed.) and is in the process of setting up his law practice in Old Town Alexandria.

He is admitted to the practice of law in Virginia, New York State, and the District of Columbia, before the U.S. Court of Military Appeals, the U.S. Tax Court, and the U.S. Supreme Court.



Vice President - Anya Silecky is a Senior Public Relations Representative with the Air Line Pilots Association, International, which is based in Herndon, Virginia. ALPA is the oldest and largest pilots union in the world, representing 59,000 airline pilots at 49 different carriers in the United States and Canada. Anya works on national aviation issues involving media relations, congressional hearings, FAA matters, aircraft accidents, mergers and airline-specific member outreach.

She is a graduate of the Ohio State University and a native of Lorain, Ohio. Anya served on the TWG board as a member-at-large for three years prior to becoming vice president, and has been supportive of many of its activities in that time. She revamped TWG's old brochure, created the snazzy nametags for our last conference and is now spearheading the new membership directory. Anya is married to Francesco Piazza, who, while Italian, strongly supports Ukrainian causes and TWG events.



Secretary - Mike Drabek is in his third year as TWG Secretary. Previously, he was Membership Director for three years, and before that a Board Member-at-Large for one year. Mike moved to the Washington DC area from Long Island NY more than eight years ago in 1992, and joined TWG soon afterwards. He works as a computer consultant specializing in Oracle database software.

Mike is married to TWG Member Roberta Vant Veld Drabek. Their hobbies include playing tourist, visiting places of interest in and around the Washington, D.C., and Baltimore areas, as well as the surrounding Virginia and Maryland countryside and shore areas.



Treasurer - Roman Stelmach currently works as an accountant at the Rutgers Federal Credit Union in New Jersey. He also supports the N.J. branch of the Self Reliance Federal Credit Union in their marketing efforts.



Membership Director - Juliana Kinal Ballard is a Washington, DC native, and holds an undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and an MBA from the Yale School of Management. Juliana was a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in Ukraine and worked for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States (BISNIS) as the Ukraine Trade Specialist for two years before becoming a Foreign Service Officer of the U.S. Department of State.

Continued on next page

Getting to Know Your 2001 TWG Board & Members at Large



Communications Director - Andy C. Szul is director of Information Systems at the Media Research Center (www.mrc.org), located in Alexandria, VA. He is an adjunct instructor at George Washington University, where he teaches in the public relations program. As a member of the National Capital Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (www.prsa-ncc.org), Andy serves as chair of the Web Site Management Committee.

His professional affiliations also include serving on the board of The Washington Group as communications director and editor of the organization's newsletter, *TWG News*. Earlier this year he was elected secretary of the Alexandria Young Republicans (AYR) and is the managing editor of *AYR News*. Throughout the Republican presidential primary he was a freelance reporter for *The American Reporter*, an online newspaper, and, more recently, co-founded the Conservative Internet Network. Andy has a Master of Journalism from Temple University and has served in the U.S. Army Reserves since 1994, currently working at Walter Reed Army Medical Center as wardmaster of the psychiatric ward. He enjoys traveling, biking, and reading. He can be reached at mack1998@hotmail.com.



Cultural Fund Director - Laryssa Lapychak Courtney was a founder of The Washington Group Cultural Fund and is in her seventh year as its Director. Under her leadership, the Cultural Fund has presented many artists and performing arts groups, including the Kyiv Chamber Choir, the Kyiv Chamber Orchestra, the University of California Chamber Chorus at Berkeley, soprano Oksana Krovtytska, cellist Natalia Choma, the winners of the Horowitz International Piano Competition, and many more.

In 1996 she raised over \$35,000 for the Odessa Philharmonic Orchestra's Chernobyl Tenth Anniversary Commemorative Concert Tour. Laryssa was TWG Special Projects Director in 1989, when she chaired the TWG Leadership Conference and organized TWG's inaugural trip to Ukraine.

An active member of the Ukrainian community, she was in the leadership of the youth organization Plast in Chicago and later in Washington. In addition, she was a member of the Chernobyl Committee of Washington, and a founding member and first treasurer of the Ukrainian Washington Federal Credit Union. Laryssa was a longtime member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Performing Arts Society and continues to serve on its Artistic Direction Committee. She is also a performing member of the Friday Morning Music Club. Laryssa was formerly a principal and Vice President of Commonwealth Broadcasting Company and a member of the Board of Development of the Hospital for Sick Children.

Laryssa has a B.A. from the University of Illinois and an M.B.A. from George Washington University. She is married to TWG Honorary Member Bill Courtney and has two children, George and Alexa, and two stepchildren, Will and Alison.



Fellowship Fund Director - Adrian Karmazyn currently holds the position of Program Manager in the Ukrainian Branch of the Voice of America.

VOA broadcasts two hours of programming to Ukraine every day, focusing on U.S. and international affairs, US-Ukrainian relations, significant trends in America and Ukraine and information about the life of the Ukrainian diaspora.

Adrian joined the Ukrainian Service of VOA in 1988 and has served several assignments as Kyiv correspondent.

Continued on next page

Message, from page 1

to raise funds for the procurement of musical instruments for the Lviv Conservatory in Ukraine. In December, we had a well attended and a very enjoyable Christmas Party at the Montebello Cafe. For the first time, we have instituted monthly social gatherings (TWG Social Fridays) where our members can meet, socialize, and network on a regular basis.

Some other recent very successful TWG events included an Opera Night at the Ukrainian Embassy, a TWG Tour of the Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures from Ancient Ukraine at the Walters Art Gallery, a Jazz Evening, and a TWG Social Evening on Ice at the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden Ice-Skating Rink. In February, the Harry Watters Louisiana Swamp Romp, featuring music from New Orleans' Mardis Gras, performed at a "full house" Benefit Concert in Old Town Alexandria, with all proceeds designated for the procurement of musical instruments for the Music Conservatories in Lviv, Kyiv and Odessa.

By organizing and offering these diverse activities and functions to our membership, we are not only living up to TWG's stated mission but ensuring TWG's future growth, success and effectiveness as the largest organization of Ukrainian-American Professionals in the United States.

Ihor Kotlarchuk
President

Getting to Know Your 2001 TWG Board & Members at Large



Events Director - Tanya Stasiuk is a Foreign Affairs Officer at the State Department responsible for various countries in Eastern Europe and the New Independent States. Prior to that, as a Contract Negotiator with the Department of Defense, she managed multi-million dollar projects and conducted international negotiations, primarily in Ukraine and Russia.

She also previously worked as a Research Assistant with a telecommunications market consulting firm and authored articles for the *East European & former Soviet Telecom Report*. Tanya is a graduate of The College of William and Mary and received a M.B.A. degree from the Florida Institute of Technology and a M.A. degree in Russian Area Studies from Georgetown University.



Special Projects Director - Oles Berezhny currently teaches Ukrainian Language and Culture at the Foreign Service Institute. He is also an interpreter, translator, editor and writer. He graduated Kyiv Linguistic U. (M.Ed., 1989) and Georgetown (M.A., 1999). Oles was born in Kyiv.



Immediate Past President - Orest Deychakiwsky is staff advisor at the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission). His responsibilities at the Helsinki commission include Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria; security officer; and liaison with non-governmental organizations at OSCE meetings. He has served on numerous U.S. delegations to meetings of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held in various countries in Europe.

He has been an international observer at elections in Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Bosnia. Other employment includes project manager at the Republican National Committee and a consultant for the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation. He holds an MA in Government and International Relations from Georgetown and a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame. Orest is a native of Cleveland.

Orest's activity in the Ukrainian-American community includes Founding Member of TWG, where he has served in various Board of Director positions, most recently as TWG President (May 1998-May 2000). He has been a periodic contributor to various Ukrainian-American publications. In the 1970's and 1980's, he was active in Ukrainian-American human rights organizations, including Smoloskyp. He is the father of 14-year-old Nataka, and stepfather to 22-year-old Hanna and 20-year-old Jess. Orest enjoys swimming, the beach, tennis, reading and, when necessary, walking dogs Bilash and Godzilla.



Member at Large - Marta Zielyk is Senior Diplomatic Interpreter at the Department of State. She assumed this position in 1995 becoming the first ever staff Ukrainian interpreter for the U.S. government. As such, she interprets for the President, Vice President, Cabinet Secretaries and other high ranking government officials when they deal with their Ukrainian counterparts. She served as President Clinton's interpreter during his two state visits to Ukraine and has accompanied First Ladies, Vice-Presidents, secretaries of State and Defense to Ukraine numerous times.

Prior to taking up her position in the government Marta worked for 12 years in the arena of international broadcasting. She was with the Ukrainian services of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (Munich, New York and Washington, D.C., offices) as an on-air broadcaster, commentator and as MC of a very popular variety music show aimed at young listeners in Ukraine.

Marta is proud of being a native New Yorker. She completed her undergraduate studies in Barnard College in New York City and is a graduate of Columbia University's School of International and Public.

She was recently honored with the Award for Excellence from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and received the Superior Honor Award from the Department of State for outstanding performance in assisting Secretary Madeleine Albright communicate with the world.

She has held various positions in TWG, among them Vice-President and Public Relations Director and for the last few years has been pleased to host monthly TWG Board and other meetings at her home.

Continued on next page

Getting to Know Your 2001 TWG Board & Members at Large



Member at Large - Maria Kulczycky senior manager of product marketing at Fannie Mae, the mortgage company, is an expert in financial communications strategies. She has served on the TWG board for eight years, including managing the logistics for the last TWG conference. She is also involved with the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art in Chicago, has worked on marketing communications with the U.S.-Ukraine-Foundation in D.C., and managed the public relations for the state visit of Leonid Kravchuk to the U.S. Maria has masters and undergraduate degrees from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. She and her husband, Lamar Brantley, have four children and four grandchildren and reside in Chicago.



Member at Large - Olenka Gaponenko has been working for TRANSIT-Europe Project at World Learning for a year. She is responsible for identifying, developing and monitoring training opportunities for USAID-funded senior-level professionals from East-Central Europe in the US. Much of Olenka's last five years have been spent in the field of international education and training. Prior to working for World Learning, she worked at the International Student Services, University of St. Thomas, Saint Paul, MN, for two years, coordinating cultural and educational programs.

From 1997 to 1999 Olenka pursued her Master's degree in English while working at the University of St. Thomas Writing Center as a Graduate Writing Consultant and teaching Ukrainian to a group of parishioners' children at St. Katherine Ukrainian Orthodox church in Arden Hills, MN.



Member at Large - Nick Babiak is a native of NYC, who grew up in Yonkers, New York. He's been a resident of Washington, D.C., since 1980. Nick served as TWG President and TWG Leadership Conference Chairman from 1993-95. Previously, he served as TWG Treasurer, and as at-large Board member. Currently, he's a real estate agent in metro DC area. He and his wife, Chrystyna, have two sons, Mark, 14, and Adrian, 11.



Member at Large - Tatyana Kramaska joined TWG in Spring 2000. Her first TWG Board assignment involved assisting with the registration process for Leadership Conference 2000. In her full time capacity at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), she manages a USAID-sponsored program aimed at facilitating an information exchange program among the new energy regulatory bodies in Central/Eastern Europe and NIS. She is involved in the planning and implementing of meetings of the regulators and creation of a voluntary regional energy association.

In addition, Tetyana designs and develops the NARUC international program's Web site and writes for the energy regulatory newsletter. Tetyana joined NARUC from the U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce. It was in the Congress that she met with the TWG ex-president Orest Deychakiwsky and decided to join TWG. From 1996 until 1998 Tetyana served as the Project Assistant for the United Nations Office in Ukraine where she organized programs and conferences on economic restructuring and poverty issues. In 1999 she received a M.S. degree from the London School of Economics (UK) and in 1996 a B.S. degree in International Relations and Economics from Kyiv National University (Ukraine). Tetyana's biggest hobby is exploration of the Washington D.C. area and guiding weekend tours for the Ukrainian and Russian speaking visitors.

Continued on next page

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Getting to Know Your 2001 TWG Board & Members at Large



Member at Large - George Masiuk is a former TWG president and chairman of 4 TWG leadership conferences. He presently works for ITT as a telecommunications engineer consulting on FAA projects.

Member at Large - Adrian Pidlusky grew up in Maine and moved to Ellenville, N.Y. in 1986. In 1987 he attended the Ukrainian Pontifical Minor Seminary in Rome, graduating in 1990. In 1994 he graduated from the State University of New York, College at New Paltz where Adrian majored in International Relations. During this time, he worked at Soyuzivka.

After graduation, he went to work at an English-language news agency in Kyiv, Ukraine as a translator/correspondent. In August 1995 he went to work at the U.S. Embassy as a Consular Assistant until July 1997.

Subsequently, he came to Washington, D.C. to attend the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). During his studies, he worked in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, and the Energy Intelligence Group in research. In 1999 he graduated SAIS with a concentration in American Foreign Policy.

After graduating, he entered the Nonproliferation Graduate Program which sends recent graduates to Ukraine to represent the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in nonproliferation programs. In November, 2000, he returned from Kyiv to the DOE in Washington to coordinate assistance to the Newly Independent States in nuclear export control. Adrian can be reached at apidlusky@jhu.edu.

Member at Large - Oleg Jerschowsky was born in Kyiv in 1932. He left Ukraine in the autumn of 1943 for Germany where he lived until 1950 when the family came to the United States. He graduated Syracuse University and Johns Hopkins University in International Relations. He was employed by the U.S. Department of Commerce as economist, Director of Trade Promotion Division for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In that capacity, he visited the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries numerous times as director of U.S. trade missions and commercial exhibitions in those countries. After retiring from the Department of Commerce he started his own company representing U.S. firms in Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R.

After Ukraine gained its statehood, he changed the activity of his company to the business of importating Ukrainian books and handicraft for sale in the United States and the representation of Ukrainian firms in the United States.

Not Pictured

(listed in alphabetical order)

- > Arthur Belendiuk, *Member at Large*
 - > Andrew Bihun, *Business Development Forum Director*
 - > Steve Boyduy, *Member at Large*
 - > Andrew Charchalis, *Auditing Committee*
 - > Michael Kowalysko, *Auditing Committee*
 - > Ihor Procinsky, *Auditing Committee*
-

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TWG Leadership Looking Forward To New Opportuni-

Cover Story, from page 1

With the monthly Social Hour taking off and gaining in popularity, many believe it will continue to draw members and guests to The Lombardy Hotel every first Friday of the month (see p. 7 for more information).

"TWG Social Hour is a wonderful way of relaxing in the company of friends after a long week at work. It is also an excellent opportunity to meet new people and share one's thoughts and experiences with one another," said Olenka Gaponenko, TWG Member at Large.

According to Orest Deychakiwsky, Immediate Past President of TWG, "The first Friday of the month Social Hour has provided an enjoyable opportunity to touch base with old friends and meet new ones. Several newcomers to Washington have attended, and this has been valuable in providing them with an opportunity to meet Washington area Ukrainian-Americans."

Many TWG members also played an important part in coordinating the various events.

"Participating in planning the events was such a worthwhile endeavor! During the conference, Ambassador Pasqual's speech made an unforgettable impression on me. I became confident that the Ukrainian-American relationship is in good hands," said Gaponenko.

Based on her experience, Gaponenko also recommends future TWG conference participation for those interested in Ukraine.

"There is also much to be said in favor of the panel that dealt with building democracy and civil society in Ukraine, which presented us with three different views and was followed by a lively discussion. Frankly speaking, I

am already looking forward to the upcoming conference next year and highly recommend it to everyone who is interested in Ukraine," she said.

Looking back at last year, as he mentioned in his message on page 1, Kotlarchuk said that TWG events also offer folks lots of fun, in addition to any historical importance.

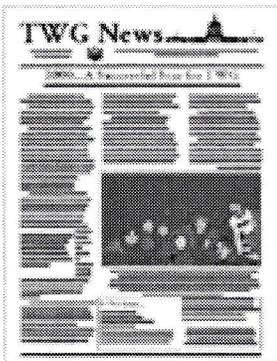
"In August of last year, we celebrated Ukraine's Independence with an Independence Day Picnic at the Sandy Point State Park. This gave TWG members and their families not only an opportunity to commemorate Ukraine's Independence but also to spend a fun day at the beach. Shortly thereafter, in October of last year, we had a very successful Leadership Conference, featuring the first public appearance of the recently appointed U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Ambassador Carlos Pascual," he recalled.

"2001 is off to a great start," said Andy C. Szul, TWG Communications Director. "We've got some very hardworking and dedicated TWG members. These are folks who have truly committed their time and efforts to making TWG the success it is today."

"It's exciting to be part of such a great team," Szul said. "Not only do you get to work with fellow Ukrainians in the D.C. area, but you get to work on TWG events that help shape how others view the organization." ■

Do you have a fun idea for a future TWG event? We want to hear from you! E-mail your ideas for future TWG events to TWGNews_Editor@hotmail.com.

TWG News Is Looking For You!



That's right. We are looking for folks to help us edit and proofread. We'd also like to hear from you if you're interested in helping us research, prepare & write articles. Story tips always appreciated!

Or, if you would like to submit an article, event, news about a TWG member, or have an idea for a feature article, let us know by e-mailing TWGNews_Editor@hotmail.com.

Letters From Across The Globe: Mongolia, Beijing, & The TWG member shares her exciting travel experiences in these exclusive e-

i everybody,

I am finally writing about Mongolia and my travels getting there. Let me start pre-Mongolia. As you know, on my way over I stopped in Hawaii and Beijing. Hawaii was fabulous! I've been to Florida and the Caribbean, and although nice, they don't compare to Hawaii. Somehow the long Polynesian history combined with rugged coastlines, multi-hued blue-green waters, and rippling mountains covered with lush dark-green vegetation just struck a cord with me. I was only there for a few days time, most of which was spent in meetings, but I managed to see a little of Oahu, and to walk a good bit of Waikiki. Waikiki is touristy, but I liked it anyway. There are flowers everywhere and interesting and exotic birds, and...

And then there was Beijing. Hard to know what to say about Beijing. I knew I wasn't in Kansas anymore! It was my first introduction to Asia, and it sure is different. Nothing like walking down the streets and not being able to read a single sign. (Except in the Russian section -- what a surprise -- I never knew there was a Russian community in Beijing. They have a whole area of stores and restaurants. Imagine my surprise when I turned a

...OK. Let's get to Mongolia itself. Somehow all the talk of the wonderful magical qualities of the country left me ill prepared for what I first encountered. The city looks like a second-rate Soviet town, with ugly concrete block buildings, peeling paint, cracked and broken sidewalks, and the whole town is covered in a pall of smoke from the coal fires that the people burn in their gers. (The outskirts of town are comprised of ger communities. The gers are the round felt tents which the herders live in in the countryside. Lots of folks can't afford to live in the hideous Soviet apartments, so they bring their tents to town and live in those. There are even a couple of gers set up in the empty lot near the embassy.) The electricity goes out regularly, and hot water is a very hit or miss affair.

The other side of the picture is that Mongolians are wonderful people. They are shy, but also warm and friendly. Though many of them live in very hard conditions, they are mostly cheerful and helpful. They also like Americans. It makes you feel good to be here, unlike some parts of the world, where you know that people just want you to go home.

The food situation a few years ago was pretty grim, but since then the culinary situation in Ulaanbaatar has improved immensely. There are quite a few restaurants, including a couple of Indian, a couple of German beer pubs with steaks and schnitzels, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Mexican (!), and even a little American cafe called Millie's.

The weather is very cold. It gets down to -40 C and below in the heart of winter. Right now it is around -15 to -25 C day and night. When the sky is bright and there is

corner to see "Restaurant Moskva" in cyrillic letters!) Beijing is a city of great contrasts. You see young people in the latest designer clothes carrying cell phones, and alongside old Chinese men riding by on delapidated bicycles with their wives riding behind, and a box of groceries or a grandchild tied on behind the wife. Beijing is big and noisy and polluted. Of the nine days I was there, I could see the mountains outside the city only on two days. And I was told that autumn has the least pollution during the year!

It was fun to wander the streets, absorbing the sights and sounds.

The food in good restaurants is fabulous. I gained a few pounds and have yet to lose them. It's most fun to go with a big group and then you can order lots of dishes and everyone gets to try lots of different things. I ate all kinds of things, many of which were very tasty. I heard about some very bizarre foods, but did not encounter them personally. (Live shrimp brought to the table which you cook in hot liquid right in front of you. Yes, I eat them, but I don't want to watch them die before my eyes.)

Love,
Renia

no wind, it doesn't seem so cold.

There are also lots of stray dogs in Ulaanbaatar. You see dogs roaming around all the time. The ones that break your heart are the puppies wandering around.

Tsiom!
Love,
Renia

Markiw is a longtime TWG member and a former TWG board member. She is presently stationed as an information officer at the U.S. embassy in Ulaan Bator, Mongolia. Both e-mails have been abbreviated for publication.

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**To apply for membership, please fill out the form below and mail, with a check, to:
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