

We are gathered here this afternoon to celebrate the life of Ihor Kotlarchuk, and there is much to celebrate, as it was a life well lived. Ihor was not only a reserve officer in the Army with the rank of Lt. Colonel and an accomplished lawyer at the Justice Dept, but he also served as President of The Washington Group, an Association of Ukrainian American Professionals from 2000 - 2005. His was a life of service.

As President of TWG, he was keen to satisfy the needs and everchanging expectations of the organization's constituents (members). He also thought that it was important to cooperate and interact with other Ukr. American organizations, and to be open to all political leanings and religious persuasions. And Ihor, as president of TWG, was successful in meeting all these goals.

Ihor was very proud of the fact that The Washington Group was highly regarded by others and that in a Hromada (Meest) article in 2004, the writer, in discussing how the Ukr. community could better organize and unite itself, suggested that Ukr. American organizations look to The Washington Group as a model.

Ihor was proud of TWG's Cultural Fund, which in cooperation with The Embassy of Ukraine, sponsored and presented world class artists, musicians, singers, and organized other events, including a fundraising fashion show for a breast cancer awareness project in Ukraine, featuring designers from Lviv and Kyiv.

Under his leadership, the Fellowship Fund flourished, sponsoring a student internship program at the Embassy of Ukraine as well as at other Ukr. American organizations.

Of all TWG's activities under his guidance, Ihor's pride and joy were the annual TWG Leadership Conferences, which began with a formal reception at The Embassy of Ukraine, and then were held at notable Washington hotels or conference centers.

The conferences, which lasted 3 days and attracted participants from all over the US, were intellectually stimulating and socially enjoyable. Some of the participants in the conferences included former US Ambassadors, as well as foreign ambassadors to the U.S., other gov't officials, noted scholars, prominent experts in a variety of fields, and officials from NGOs and international organizations.

And lastly, something that you may not know about Ihor. He was also classically trained in opera singing. He was truly a Renaissance man. On behalf of The Washington Group, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to Ihor's beloved wife, Natalia Holub, who took such good care of Ihor during his illness with Parkinsons. Natalia was a Cultural Attache at the Embassy of Ukraine and a very active participant in the TWG Cultural Fund committee. I like to think that Natalia and Ihor first met through their involvement in The Washington Group. May Ihor rest in peace. Vichnaya pamyat!