

PRESS RELEASE

Highlights of the 60th Biennial Convention of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League of Canada (USRL/CYC) Winnipeg, Manitoba August 10 to 13, 2017

■ Numerous significant events marked the Biennial Convention of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (CYC/USRL) of Canada held at the Delta Hotel in downtown Winnipeg on August 10 to 13. The most extensive and potentially the most critical were the interactive workshop and discussion on restructuring the USRL in order to make it more relevant to current and the future members. Another very momentous event was the launch of the CYC/USRL history book compiled and edited by Dr. Natalia Aponiuk. Both the discussion on restructuring and the book launch took place concurrently with the business meetings of the Component and Affiliated organizations of CYC/USRL. The organizing committee chaired by Mr. Maurice Bugera are to be commended for ensuring a very successful convention with great facilities and memories.

Attending the Convention were 162 delegates and guests that included 42 from the Ukrainian Orthodox Youth (UOY/CYMK), 60 delegates from Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada, 30 delegates from TYC/Ukrainian Self-Reliance Association and the remaining 20 delegates were from St. John's, St. Petro Mohyla and St. Vladimir's Institutes, the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, the SUS Foundation of Canada, St. John's Fraternal Society and National and Provincial CYC/USRL Executives. There were 10 guests including His Eminence Metropolitan Yuriy, His Grace Bishop Ilarion and the Chancellor of the UOCC V. Rev Fr. Taras Udod. His Grace Bishop Andriy was unable to attend.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Youth program started on Wednesday, August 9th with a Keynote presentation by Fr. Peter Haugen. The rest of the delegates and guests started their sessions on Thursday with a Power Point Presentation on restructuring/revitalization of the USRL led by Dennis Kuchta, Mark Olynyk, Emil Yereniuk and Lesia Perritt with some observation by facilitator Wayne Hellquist. This was followed by a Moleben and the Official Opening ceremonies. His Eminence brought greetings from the UOCC and wished the USRL organization the best in its deliberations and outcomes. Other greetings were from the Honourable Terry Duguid on behalf of the Prime Minister of Canada the Honourable Justin Trudeau, His Worship, Brian Bowman, the Mayor of Winnipeg and Dr. Roman Yereniuk read greetings from Counsellor Ross Eadie. Dr. Tony Harras brought greetings on behalf of the USRL family of organizations. He noted that during the past number of years the National Executive had worked extremely hard to develop a plan for the future; for this he expressed his most sincere appreciation. He also noted that when a group of people are working intensely it is sometimes easy to make errors or possibly to offend, for this he personally apologized. Finally, after serving six years as the National President of the CYC/USRL National Executive Committee he indicated that this Convention will be his '*Do pobachynnya*'. The day wrapped up with a wine and cheese reception.

Friday was dedicated primarily to 1) business sessions of the member organizations, 2) a presentation by the National Youth Organizer, Christina Kowalenko and her assistant Yuri Hladio, 3) presentations from the three Institutes (St. Petro Mohyla, St. John's and St. Vladimir's), 4) the beginning of the CYC/USRL's Annual General Meeting and 5) workshop, facilitated by Wayne Hellquist, on the restructuring proposal.

Late Friday morning, Christina Kowalenko reviewed the substantial work that she and Yuri had done since the establishment of the National Youth Organizer position. But as always there were hopes to have done more but for time and other constraints, it proved difficult. It was however noted that for the position to be more successful in the future, there needs to be greater involvement by and support from the entire church community.

The Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (UWAC) held its Biennial General meeting during most of Friday morning and continued on Saturday morning. Greetings were offered by His Eminence Metropolitan Yuriy, Rev. Fr. Protospyter Nicholas Rauliuk, National UWAC Chaplain, Tony Harras, USRL President; Orysia Sushko, President of the World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations (WFUWO) and Lesia Perritt, UWAC National President. In her President's report, Lesia indicated that 1200 UWAC members in 46 branches across Canada, engaged in numerous activities, raised and donated approximately \$1,060,000 to various causes in a two-year period. National Executive initiatives included continuing to gather information for publication of the UWAC History Book, Volume II; a concerted effort to consolidate and catalogue UWAC National archives in one location; and to disperse numerous copies of past UWAC publications still held in their possession. The UWAC National Executive for 2017-2019 is as follows:

President – Sylvia Gray
 Past President – Lesia Perritt
 1st Vice-President – Donna Reed
 2nd Vice-President – Elaine Harasymiw
 Secretary – Donna Kowalishin
 Treasurer – Karen Herzog
 Promin Administrator – Betty Corlett
 Financial Review Committee
 – Nadia Opyr, Diana Mauch, Shirley Wozimirsky
 Members at Large – Geraldine Nakonechny, Dorothy Stachniak
 Alberta Provincial President – Vivian Skakun
 BC Provincial President – Gladys Andreas

Manitoba President – Dobrodiyka Orysia Ehrmantraut
 Ontario/Quebec President – Darcia Moskaluk-Rutkay
 Saskatchewan President – Leona Procyshyn
 UMC President – Alicia Klopoushak

On Friday afternoon, USRL Roundtable Discussions were conducted. Delegates rotated to four different locations with new participants and engaged in lively discussions on four topics, briefly summarized as: 1. Critical issues facing CYC/USRL today and in the future 2. Desired future vision for CYC/USRL 3. What will keep you involved with CYC/USRL? 4. Strategic actions to develop stronger partnership between CYC/USRL and UOCC.

On Friday morning, August 11th 26 registered TYC/USRA delegates began their Biennial meeting. His Eminence Metropolitan Yuriy and Dr. Tony Harras joined later that morning and brought greetings. During the meeting, the following key points were presented to all the delegates:

- The Metropolitan Ilarion (Ohienko Museum) resolution from 2015 was very successfully completed. In total, through the effort of TYC branches and individuals across Canada, 209 kilograms of material was sent to the Ohienko museum in Brusyliv, Ukraine. This included books (books written by Metropolitan Ilarion or books about him) magazines and newspaper articles, original photos, programs and paintings.

- The 2013-2015 TYC/USRA National archives were delivered to the University of Manitoba Archives.

- The TYC/USRA website was upgraded and the TYC (1938 to 2013) history book is now on this site.

In his official report in the TYC/USRA biennial book Emil Yereniuk concluded by stating the following: "As the National President, I am very proud that the Ukrainian Self-Reliance Association (TYC/USRA) is continuing with its positive and proactive approach in its dealings with the Branches, Provincial/Regional Executives, the USRL/CYC National Executive, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and all the members of the USRL /CYC family organizations.

Emil Yereniuk stated that he believes that there is a need to re-evaluate and re-structure. The following questions need to be answered: Who are we (mission, vision, values)? What is our purpose in the community? What do we want to accomplish? How do we get to that goal?

The following 2017-2019 National TYC Executive was elected:

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| President | Larry Balion (Saskatoon) |
| Vice President | vacant |
| Secretary | Dennis Kuchta (Edmonton) |
| Treasurer | Ron Trischuk (Saskatoon) |
| Members-at-Large | Gerald Luciuk (Regina) Wayne Hydeman (Regina) Mark Olynyk (Toronto) |
| Past President | Emil Yereniuk |

Emil Yereniuk thanked the delegates for sharing their ideas, for their positive approach in dealing with issues and their desire to make TYC/USRA a relevant organization in our Ukrainian Orthodox community. He pledged to support and assist the newly elected President, Larry Balion and the National TYC executive.

Friday evening's dinner was followed by a presentation by Ruth Plett and Krystan Pawlikowski from the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). A large part of their presentation was focussed on the work that the MCC is undertaking in Ukraine. Ruth and Krystan's presentation was most interesting in that they outlined the many humanitarian projects and programs the MCC has currently underway in Ukraine along with their very sizable budget.

The final event on Friday was the presentation of Awards of Excellence plaques to eight most worthy recipients from across Canada for their many years of service to our Ukrainian Orthodox community as well as to Canada: Kay Hobden, Natalie Olynyk Kowalenko, Carla Kozak, Evangeline Gloria Manulak, Darcia Moskaluk-Rutkay, Dr. Geraldine Nakonechny, Anne Nazarevich and Wasyl Scherbatyuk.

Saturday was, in large part, a day of Annual General Meetings (AGMs) starting with one for the SUS Foundation of Canada and UOY/CYMK. This was followed by a Ukrainian Museums informational meeting. The afternoon saw the completion of the CYC/USRL Annual General Meeting. The one major exception to this was at noon when Dr. Natalia Aponiuk spoke at the CYC/USRL history book launch. She gave an extensive overview of the book, its structure and the historical basis which was used in deciding on its contents. It was then announced that one copy per family would be given to all delegates free of charge.

The SUS Foundation of Canada AGM reported that its current capitalization stands at \$2.1 million and that in the last 2 years there were \$143,000 dollars of grants awarded. Some of the more notable ones were \$58,000 for youth programming beyond the national youth organizer program and \$43,000 for Ukrainian Museums of Canada and \$9,000 for Ukrainian Art Song Project. It was also announced that the SUS Foundation would match dollar for dollar donations in support of the National Youth Organizer program. TYC Alberta immediately stepped forward with a \$5000 donation. At the closing it was announced that SUS Foundation donors TYC/UOMA Steppe and UWAC St. John's Cathedral were recognized for reaching Patron level 2. Dr. Lesia Boychuk and Jars Balan as