

May 10, 2022

Dear Sponsors, Donors and Friends of **The TOUCH Project**,

As usual, this update will be packed with information. We hope you'll take time to read through the email. Alice and Mark Rampton will be traveling to Ukraine for about 4-5 days soon. They will take 10 suitcases containing medical supplies (including a donated EKG machine), quilts, calendars, hygiene kits, socks, art supplies, games, posters, and puzzles for the many refugees in Uzhhorod. Keep your fingers crossed that Delta Airlines will waive the fees. Special thanks to former **TOUCH** intern, Sydney MacNaughton, for taking two suitcases to Uzhhorod last month. Delta Airlines waved her fees.

DONATE TO THE UZHGOROD REFUGE FUND

The Uzhgorod Refugee Fund at Citizens Bank and through the GoFundMe account continues to grow thanks to our many donors! The Corvallis Sister Cities Association-Uzhgorod Council has set the fundraising goal at \$500,000 and we have passed the ½ way mark. But we are coming to realize that our efforts with the refugees in Uzhgorod will not be disappearing in the near future. Their needs are great and their resources are limited. We need to help fill that gap. So please continue to support the Uzhgorod Refugee Fund. Here's how to donate:



- The **GoFundMe account** -This is the link to share with all: <https://gofund.me/a28dca8d>
- Checks and cash can also be dropped off or mailed to:

**Citizens Bank- Circle Branch (or any of their 15 bank branches in Oregon)
978 NW Circle Blvd., Corvallis, Oregon 97330**

Please make checks payable to: **Uzhgorod Refugee Fund**

Note that due to the emergency nature of this fund, these donations are **not tax deductible**.

Please share this information with your friends and associates.

UZHGOROD WELCOMES TWO FIRST LADIES OF THE WORLD!



The citizens of Uzhgorod were very excited to learn that Uzhgorod, Ukraine was the site of a meeting between First Lady of the US- Jill Biden and First Lady of Ukraine- Olena Zelenska. It was held under a thick veil of security at a school in Uzhgorod where refugees were being sheltered. Dr. Biden remained in Uzhgorod for about 2-3 hours. Here is a link to the news story on her

visit: <https://www.npr.org/2022/05/08/1097460153/ukraine-jill-biden-visit-mothers-day>

REPORT ON UZZHOROD REFUGEE FUND TEAM IN UZZHOROD AND THEIR EFFORTS

Here's the latest update from our team in Uzhhorod and compiled by Vasya Chubar:

Please find a general overview of what has been done by the URF (Uzhhorod Refuge Fund) Team in Ukraine during the month of April. Sometimes we outline a project that covers several if not all shelters, the other times it can be an individual approach with a shelter that has unique or specific requests and needs.

Current background:

The situation in Ukraine changes very quickly. We are doing fine though our region is not safer than other parts of Ukraine. Air-raid sirens have become the norm, going off day and night. A few days ago, Volovets, a town in our region of Zakarpattia, was bombed. There is no safe spot in Ukraine any more.

The number of refugees arriving at our town has dropped because the majority have gone abroad, others settled in Uzhhorod, and there are almost no vacant places for the newcomers to settle. There are no crowds of refugees at the railway stations nor at check points on the border. We may observe a wave of return migration when some of the refugees go back home to Ukrainian territories which are being liberated from invaders. Refugees may arrive from areas that are currently under russian assault or those who failed to settle abroad and lack financial support due to policies in different EU countries may return to Ukraine. It is estimated that at least 100,000 displaced persons are settled in the Uzhhorod area now.

Supplies provided with Uzhhorod Refugee Funds:

Cleaning sets/Drying racks-The most common request from refugees was fulfilled- drying racks and cleaning sets consisting of buckets, brooms and mops. 70 drying racks and 62 cleaning sets were distributed among the 10 largest shelters. The project was completed by two new volunteers on our team- Mark and Sasha, a young couple who relocated with their young daughter Emmy from Irpin, near, sadly, Bucha. Mark and Sasha also edited videos of the distribution of supplies that have been shared on local media. **Total cost of this project was approximately \$1280 USD.**

Cookware (pots, pans, kettles) and deep plates and mugs:

Cookware and dishes were also frequently requested items. We didn't want to go with single-use items, therefore we opted for a more sustainable solution. Up to seven large shelters received pots and pans for cooking as well as plates and cups to serve meals. The project was completed by volunteers Maria Kron and Volodymyr with assistance from Vasya. **Total cost of the project - \$2120 USD.**



Electric appliances for several other shelters:

We had several requests for electric appliances from a couple of shelters. A microwave, two electric kettles and two refrigerators were purchased earlier by Randy and Sabra Killen and were delivered to the shelters. Two new boilers, four refrigerators and two high volume washing machines were also purchased. The project was completed by Maria Kron, Volodymyr, Vasya and occasional assistance with deliveries by other volunteers. **Total cost of the project - \$2250 USD.**

Here's a link to watch about the distribution of some of these

items: https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipNi8z9uZMFmfUVtW9LgXdVK0iwwuYbZI8jUZA2jT21sTydM4NFkGziKbN7AgNPd5A/photo/AF1QipPLaJZnYGD0MgKgJh_oOmZIWdUaiHfQ_AQ_ylbE?key=Wk9aMwtSSXkyQ1ZFYV93ZDdvNFdLX2FhYXU2Z1BR (you may need to copy and paste this link)

200 Hygiene Kits for Refugees:

We are hoping that a grant application from The **TOUCH** Project to the Mission Endowment Committee of the Valley Community Presbyterian Church is approved for items to make 200 hygiene kits. Sydney MacNaughton brought drawings in a suitcase from Corvallis school children that will be placed in each kit. If approved, the kits will be distributed among the new refugees at one of the regular evacuation trains that arrive in Uzhhorod. Vasya oversaw the project and the kits packed by Maria and Arpad Kron's children and their friends. **Total cost - \$1500.**

Medical center for refugees:

Dr. Pavlo Kolesnyk is working hard to organize a well-coordinated medical center for refugees. A facility near Uzhhorod at the volunteer and humanitarian aid center called "Owl's Nest" was opened. A general practitioner, a nurse and an intern have shifts at the medical center examining and consulting refugees. Total expenses for purchases of medication, equipment needed, and small stipends for the staff came to approximately **\$3203.**

In addition, medical help for the refugees is being offered by Dr. Kolesnyk's team at the medical site in the Children's Hospital. The main problem with this site is that it is a small room. But during the last 4 weeks, 300 refugees came to this site for the following reasons: medical problems, needs in medications, referrals, etc. The doctors (some of them temporarily relocated from Eastern Ukraine) and Uzhhorod National University's Family Practice resident physicians are organized in pairs which helps provide hands-on training for residents. There is also a pharmacist who sorts the medication for free distribution. The receptionist is a refugee student from Irpin who accepts calls and schedules appointments by phone. "Word-of-Mouth" proved to be the best way of getting information to the refugees about this medical check point. Other services being offered by this medical site are:

1. Well-organized E-system of registration
2. Ability to chat with the staff on the Telegram channel
3. Opportunity for patients to make 30-minute appointments between 9:00 am-4:00 pm.
4. Volunteer specialists who consult online or give personal consultations of some patients if needed.

Dr. Kolesnyk is now working to provide high quality family medical services to the refugees with clinical diagnosis, prevention, screening, chronic disease care etc. He has received support from international colleagues from all over the world to create an INTERNATIONAL FAMILY MEDICINE CLINIC that would serve refugees. This clinic could provide refugee doctors with employment and health care services for the refugees. The proposed clinic would be located close to five major refugee shelters in Uzhhorod. Corvallis Sister Cities Association is looking into how the Uzhhorod Refugee Fund can be used to support this clinic.

Future Ideas from URF Team:

- We hope to update the current list of existing shelters in Uzhhorod, they pop-up like mushrooms after the rain. Thus, new requests and needs might arise. Maybe developing a webpage or other media resource with all the available and up-to-date information for refugees.
- At the same time, many refugees are being redirected to shelters in Uzhhorod suburbs and neighboring territorial communities. Maybe it makes sense to look at those territories as well.
- Meanwhile, we are looking for the best possible options to buy 200+ sets of bed linen.
- We constantly get requests to help furnish the rooms and kitchens in dormitories (often simple wardrobe closets, chairs, tables or kitchen furniture). It can be a complex long-term project; therefore, we'll be looking for a carpenter who can consult us and then actually implement the project. We might start with a pilot project of furnishing ten rooms in a dormitory with wardrobe closets.

- The Palace of Youth, also a shelter for 175 persons, is arranging daily workshops and training for children and teenagers. They ask for all sorts of supplies. We plan to support this idea through a partnership on a regular basis on the condition that children from other shelters will be able to attend the events.
- We are also looking at potential other activities for refugee children including art classes, workshops, athletics, dancing, sporting events

REPORT FROM RANDY AND SABRA KILLEN

“On February 24 we heard on the news that Ukraine had been attacked. After the shock of learning about the invasion, our thoughts turned to what can we do to help. Corvallis Sister Cities Association had begun setting up ways to financially donate to our sister city Uzhhorod. Friends, family, churches, and people we didn’t even know, began to contact us on how to help. With news changing by the hour, we decided to go to Ukraine. We started collecting much needed medical supplies, hygiene items for refugees, thermals for soldiers, artwork for Ukrainian children that have been displaced, and letters/cards for our TOUCH children that have a sponsor. Items began to appear at our door and mailbox.

We collected supplies to fill 10 bulging suitcases, plus our 2 carry-ons, a large backpack, my purse (that exceeded its weight limit a little- ok, by a lot) and blankets that we hand carried over. A BIG shout out to Delta airlines for waiving ALL fees for extra baggage. We flew from Portland to Amsterdam to Budapest. We rented a van and drove to Slovakia to the Ukrainian border that night. There we met Ruslana who picked up our 10 suitcases and drove them across the border to Uzhhorod. We stayed in Slovakia the next few days buying supplies like refrigerators, washing machines, irons, electric water kettles, food, microwaves, bedding, and mattresses. Each time Ruslana would cross the border and pick up the supplies to take to Uzhhorod. After a few days we decided it was safe enough to go to Ukraine. We visited Valentina at the New Family center that is taking on orphaned refugees. Oksana, principal at Public School #14 that has become a refugee center for families. Ira at the Rehabilitation Center showed us now the Center is now hosting families with a member with disabilities. Then we visited the Pavlovo Farm Home with mama Maria and the girls. Their home is also being shared with refugee families. All have big hearts and care deeply for each other. The city of Uzhhorod is extremely overcrowded, but has welcomed all those that have come to them. We saw sadness, anger, frustration, broken hearts, and hope. Thanks to all those that helped contribute. We were asked many times if Americans know about the invasion to Ukraine. We were able to answer yes, we know, and we care for you. Because of generous donations from a \$5,000 gift, to a child’s beautiful artwork- we were all able to connect with each other during this difficult time to bring a spark of hope to those that needed it.” Sabra and Randy

THANK YOU, KILLENS, FOR YOUR INGENUITY, DETERMINATION AND TIME/RESOURCES TO HELP THE CHILDREN OF UZHGOROD IN SO MANY WAYS!



Ukrainian youth receive drawings from Corvallis students.

UPDATES FROM DR. YURIY KOPYNETS

Yuriy Kopynets is a former History Professor at Uzhhorod National University. Each day he compiles information about the war in the country and then writes about activities from every Oblast (state/region) in Ukraine. He sends this out to anyone who sends him an email (kopynets.yuriy@gmail.com) and asks to be included on his mailing list. He provides the information first in English and then repeats the same info in Ukrainian. Here are a few examples of what was sent out on a particular date regarding the Zakarpattia Oblast (or Transcarpathian Region). This is the Oblast where Uzhhorod is located:

May 1, 2022-Zakarpattia Oblast

- Surveillance and analytics have been put in place to help law enforcement officers identify suspects and sabotage and reconnaissance groups in Zakarpattia Oblast. <http://www.mukachevo.net/ua/news/view/3523266>
- The Hungarian government has allocated another 200 million forints for the Hungary Helps program in Zakarpattia <https://goloskarpat.info/boundless/626e5fa5834e6/>
- 11th grader from Zakarpattia Dmytro Nemchyk won the world's largest international competition of school projects on ecology, "Olympics of Genius," founded by Terra Science and Education in partnership with the Rochester Institute of Technology. <https://goloskarpat.info/society/626e3dc4b4d76/>

May 3, 2022-Zakarpattia Oblast (Transcarpathia)

- A social laundry-cafe "Bulka" for internally displaced persons has started operating in Uzhhorod. It was opened with the help of the Caritas Charitable Foundation. In it, IDPs will be able to wash what they need using the centralized approach, and while they wait, they can drink coffee. <https://zakarpattya.net.ua/News/220067-V-Uzhhorodi-diie-sotsialna-pralnia-dlia-vymushenykh-pereselentsiv-VIDEO>
- 500 rose seedlings were donated to by the Pokrovsk City Council in Donetsk Oblast. A large package of seedlings was delivered to Uzhhorod by rail. And the conductors of one of the evacuation trains undertook to convey the beauty from another, now very "hot" spot of Ukraine. <https://zakarpattya.net.ua/News/220044-500-sadzantsiv-troiand-peredala-na-Zakarpattia-miska-rada-mista-Pokrovska-na-Donchchyni-FOTO>
- More than 62,000 internally displaced persons in Transcarpathia have received payments from the UN. <https://zakarpattya.net.ua/News/220047-Ponad-62-tysiachi-pereselentsiv-na-Zakarpatti-otrymaly-vyplaty-vid-OON>
- Today, for the first time during the war, Transcarpathia came under fire - at about 9.30 pm a Russian missile hit one of the infrastructural objects of Volovets village, Mukachevo Rayon(power plant). The fire is being extinguished. No casualties have been reported so far.

May 9, 2022-Zakarpattia Oblast (Transcarpathia)

- Two volunteers, Nazar Dychuk and Dmytro Byts, from Zakarpattia Oblast, have died in the village of Bilohorivka, Luhansk Oblast. Throughout the war, they were regularly assisted with the evacuation of Oblast residents. They would rescue people every day, take them to safety and deliver humanitarian aid. They died from a russian airstrike on a school in Bilohorivka where they stayed together with locals.
- 14 businesses in Oblast have already received reimbursement of labor costs related to the employment of IDPs. A total of 35 IDPs have been employed, Zakarpattia Employment Center informs.
- For the time of the full-scale military invasion by russia, more than 3500 people, among them more than 1500 residents of other oblasts in Ukraine where active hostilities have been taking place, have applied to the Oblast Employment Service looking for jobs. Oblast employment centers have already been instrumental in finding employment for 1089 individuals, among them 94 who came to Zakarpattia Oblast from other Oblasts of Ukraine affected by active combat actions.
- In Uzhhorod, artist Yuliya Yehorova-Rohova held a master class of clay pottery-making for Roma children who had come from war-affected areas.

ADDITIONAL INTERESTING LINKS

Refugees in Uzhhorod volunteer to clean up garbage in the city (click on English version if desired):

<https://varosh.com.ua/vijna/yak-pereselenci-prybyrayut-uzhgorod-vid-smittya/>

News article about the Rehabilitation Center for Children in Uzhhorod becoming a refugee center.

https://suspilne.media/229882-v-uzgorodi-u-reabilitacijnomu-centri-vlastuvali-hab-dla-ditej-pereselenciv-z-invalidnistu/?utm_source=mail&utm_medium=ps

ACTS OF KINDNESS PREVAIL



50 baseball caps were created and donated from Vernon Hawk of La Grande, OR with the Ukrainian flag insignia. We appreciate this gift. Vernon is donating all proceeds to the Uzhhorod Refugee Fund. Here are long time sister city and **TOUCH** supporters Nancy and Mike Boom and Steve Bittner with their new caps at the regularly scheduled Stand For Ukraine rallies in downtown Corvallis (noon on Saturdays):



A group of women in Burns, Oregon made 20 quilts and afghans for the refugees. Judy Winn of Burns helped organize the community project. Nancy Mabee helped deliver them to Bend and then Paul Adams, a former Corvallis resident now residing in Bend with his wife, Ginny, transported them to Corvallis. That was a journey of over 285 miles! Thanks to the quilters and drivers who made this possible. The quilts will brighten and provide warmth to the lives of refugees in Uzhhorod (another 5,667 miles away). Those quilts will be included with several others made by the Benton County Mary's River Quilters and delivered this month.



Tom Kobald continues to donate donuts on the weekends throughout the month of May. GnomeNuts is parked at the Melon Shack on Hwy 20 and Garden Ave., in Corvallis, OR, Saturdays and Sundays, 9 am to 5 pm. **Proceeds will go entirely to the Uzhhorod Refugee Fund.** Thank you, Tom!

If anyone wants to volunteer for a shift taking orders at the Donut Truck, contact Tom at: (541) 602-0484 or gnomenutsdonuts@gmail.com



May is Sister Cities Month. The Corvallis Sister Cities Association is currently displaying the projects and mission of Corvallis' two sister cities in Gondar, Ethiopia and Uzhhorod, Ukraine at the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library. Art kits for children representing both cities are available from the librarians. Here are some photos of the displays:



GONDAR Sister City Displays



UZHGOROD Sister City Displays



The displays tell a beautiful story of the relationships that Corvallis has with both Gondar, Ethiopia and Uzhhorod, Ukraine. Thanks to Karen Sundseth and Patty Harris for setting up and arranging for these exhibits.



Earl Newman prints are still available at: https://sistercities.corvallis.or.us/earl_newman_print/
You can also purchase the Newman prints at the Corvallis Museum, 911 SW 2nd St, and at the Corvallis Arts Center, 700 SW Madison Ave., Corvallis, OR. Bakker Sister prints are available at the museum, also. Both Newman and Bakker prints can be obtained by emailing standwithuzhhorod@gmail.com



Members of Corvallis High School’s Key Club gathered, inventoried, and packed 330 hygiene items for the refugees in Uzhhorod shelters including lotions, toothbrushes, bars of soap, dental floss, toothpaste, etc. They also donated \$50 to aid in the humanitarian effort. Key Club advisor Jack Peters is shown here with club officers, Calista and Nicole, delivering the suitcase of supplies. Thanks members of Key Club!



Calendars galore! We have received over 300 calendars. Thank you. That should provide a calendar for all of the individuals/families living in the 3 dormitory shelter rooms in Uzhhorod. We had no idea there were SOOOO many calendars out there. They are beautiful and will make these rooms feel a bit homier. A Corvallis church youth group is putting labels on each month with the Ukrainian translation of the various months. We have enough calendars now so we will take down the blue receptacle box at Corvallis Family Medicine in Corvallis.



Thank you for all of your wonderful support as we reach out to the refugees and citizens of Uzhhorod, Ukraine. We continue to pray and hope and seek for peace.

Sincerely,

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The **TOUCH** Project = Take One Ukrainian Child’s Hand

<https://sistercities.corvallis.or.us/>,

<https://www.facebook.com/CorvallisUzhhorod>