

January - February 2005 News from American Ukrainian Medical Project (AUMP)

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Equipment Shipment On Its Way!

What could be better than our last newsletter's announcement of approval from Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers? That our warehouse is empty and our collection of donations is on its way! The day after Orthodox Christmas over 30 AUMP and Kent - Kherson Sister City Committee volunteers came together to load almost 300 cartons and crates. Included among the shipment is enough laboratory equipment to fully equip three labs in the American style. Other equipment will be used to supplement items sent earlier as well as to enhance the capabilities of new participating hospitals. We have received letters of inquiry from Rivne, Donetsk and Kharkiv.

One item which is making the journey to Chernihiv is a large chest freezer. Among other duties, it will be used to store antibodies and their preparations for distribution and use at a later date. We will soon have a central site to which antibody donations can be delivered, prepared, stored and distributed from. For as long as our donors and couriers are interested and able this central site will help ensure a more steady and reliable supply of antibodies for our participating hospitals and training programs.

In 1999 it was our great pleasure to assist in rounding up donated equipment and supplies for the USAID project from which AUMP later emerged. That shipment made a great difference in how the pathology laboratories of three hospitals were able to work. We are grateful and proud to say that this latest shipment contains many times that number of machines and supplies. Certain key pieces also represent the latest technology and will produce results not seen before in Ukraine. With all our hearts, we thank our many generous donors. Their in-kind contributions are on their way to a very important second life. To the many volunteers who gave part of their Saturday to help us realize this long-awaited event, thank you very much. Duzhe d'yakuyemo! We could not have done it without you. Your pictures will be highlighted on our updated website.

News of Ukraine - Our Close Call

For those of you who could not attend our "loading party" a month ago, you will be happy to learn just how lucky AUMP was with its application to the Cabinet of Ministers. As you will recall, demonstrators barricaded several government buildings in Kyiv during the height of the protests over the presidential election runoff. Our application for approval of our shipment was granted on the Thursday preceding the protests. Had we been on the next meeting's agenda it is likely our shipment would still be in its warehouse. Only three days separated us from business as usual to an event that captivated the world for weeks.

All of us at AUMP are relieved that the citizens of Ukraine once again showed their impressive ability to resolve a complex and emotionally charged problem in a peaceful and most civilized manner. It shows another facet of why we so enjoy our work with and for the people of Ukraine.

Donations to AUMP

With the successful departure of our container it is my duty to report that our grant from the Rotary Foundation of Kent is nearly depleted. Its mission is almost accomplished so it was well spent. The process of preparing and packing our donations for their journey to Ukraine was a bit more expensive than estimated. The "free" shipping program offered by the US State Department through Counterpart International is indeed free and door to door - our warehouse to Chernihiv. The time and numerous expenses involved in getting the donations collected, cleaned, checked and packed runs to hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars, though.

As a result we ask that any of you who have the means or interest to help, please consider a donation to AUMP. In America, as we prepare our tax returns many of us take advantage of itemizing and can receive a tax benefit for charitable contributions. Guidelines for "efficient" charities call for half or more of each dollar donated to be spent on actual charitable programs. For AUMP, during our first three years, our ratio was more than 99%. We are contacting foundations and other organizations which may be able to help fund our Project but this is a slow and uncertain effort. The number of foundations which support overseas medical work is startlingly low. So we ask for and need your support, too.

Through the mechanics of accounting for nonprofits, cash and noncash (in-kind) donations are valued and recorded as assets. We closed our third fiscal year with about \$241,663 in total assets, of which \$6,000 was cash including undisbursed grant funds. When we sealed the container on January 8th \$232,276 was onboard. Another \$600 waits to fly with us to Ukraine in the form of micropipets and other supplies. That leaves about \$2,780 of which half is in the bank. The rest is an aging computer, desk and office supplies. There will also be a small adjustment to our inventory valuation due to the sad fact one machine did not make it into the container.

With the distribution of our 2005 container and its contents AUMP will have received and distributed some \$946,000 in medical supplies, equipment and program services. Also in that time just \$800 went to administrative costs, mostly fees to governments for incorporation and our tax exempt status. So you can see we are very thrifty with our cash donations - sometimes it seems we spend each dollar three or four times!

Ukrainian Language Translators Needed

Another way you may be able to help is by assisting our translation efforts. Every piece of equipment on its way to Ukraine had to have a translated technical manual with it. Happily we managed to get this very large task done. Thanks to uncounted hours of effort by dozens of translators from literally around the world each machine has a technical manual in Ukrainian or Russian with its English original. On a couple we were lucky enough to get translations in all three languages so the risk of misunderstanding should be remote. They're beautiful - even the parts lists and diagrams are translated.

There is always more to do, though. We have translated a number of medical references and many more remain to be done. Our ongoing effort to upgrade our website is creating a need for fresh translations and, ideally, editing. We are committed to the idea of creating and furnishing an ongoing medical and charitable resource which will be available to anyone in Ukraine who can access the Internet. We regularly communicate with our participating hospitals and their staffs by means of email and file sharing. Our goal is to move most of this onto our website but it will not be a success unless it can be accessed in their native tongue.

This is why we have such a need for Ukrainian language translators. The work is not difficult and we can assist with certain medical or technical vocabulary and any other questions. We are happy to acknowledge the contributions of our volunteers and can furnish letters of reference for students and others. A page on our new website will list our volunteers, their hometowns and contributions. A similar page also appeared on our first website. In 2004 it had a tally of over 20,000 volunteer hours!

Subscriptions and Contact Information

Our newsletter is delivered to you in English free of charge. Ukrainian and Russian versions are available from our volunteer translators at "Downloads" on our website. To continue your subscription you need do nothing to stay on our mailing list. If you wish to cancel your subscription, though, press "Reply" and enter "Unsubscribe" and your name in the message box. Anytime you wish to resubscribe contact us through www.aump.org If you know anyone else who may be interested in helping to advance international healthcare technology, please contact us. Here is our mailing address:

American Ukrainian Medical Project
302 - 156th Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98007

Tel: 1-425-643-1798