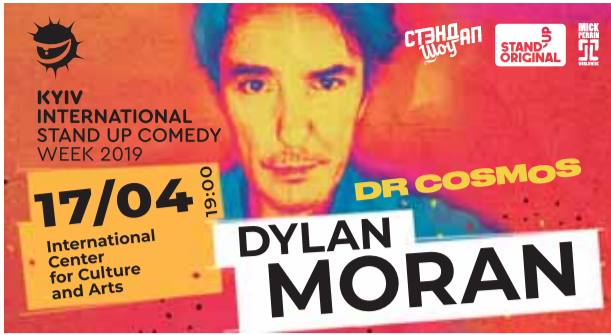




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BUSINESS WITH A HUMAN FACE AND GOD'S BLESSING!

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Ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko waves to supporters when speaking during her party congress in Kyiv on Jan. 22, 2019. (Volodymyr Petrov)

9 days until election

Election Watch
KyivPost
March 31
Race for President

Will 3rd time be the charm for Yulia Tymoshenko?

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO
GRYTSENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

The mostly middle-aged women in the crowd on March 18 in Sloviansk, a war-torn Donetsk Oblast city of 111,000 people located 670 kilometers south-east of Kyiv, are clamoring for former prime minister and current presidential candidate Yulia Tymoshenko to come up to them. "Yulia Vladimirovna! Yulia! Yulichka, come here!" they call to her in turn.

Tymoshenko approaches them, holds their hands, hugs them, patiently listens to everyone and promises them almost anything — to reduce the cost of natural gas, to increase pensions, to remove the head of a gas company, and even to restore water supplies to one particular house.

Less than two weeks before the presidential election on March 31, Tymoshenko is deploying all the charm and populism that she can muster to attract more supporters in the crucial vote.

Tymoshenko led the presidential polls until January, when her rating dropped several percentage points and she was pushed

more **Tymoshenko** on page 6

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CURRENCY WATCH
Hr 27.4 to \$1
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Kyiv Post,
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Kyiv, Ukraine, 01004

Advertising

tel. +380 44 591-7788

fax +380 44 591-3345

advertising@kyivpost.com

Editorial staff

tel. +380 44 591-3344

fax +380 44 591-3345

news@kyivpost.com

Subscriptions&Distribution

tel. +380 44 591-3344

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Stars of Pryamii TV channel focus on international news

BY BRIAN BONNER
BONNER@KYIVPOST.COM

They seem to be everywhere — a conference of Russian dissidents in Lithuania, Ukraine House Davos in Switzerland, the Munich Security Conference in Germany, Ukrainian Week in London and almost every key event in Ukraine.

With their healthy travel budget and connections, they've interviewed such luminaries as: ex-U.S. secretaries of state John Kerry and Condoleezza Rice, the presidents of Columbia and Poland, U.S. national security adviser John Bolton, ex-U.S. Defense Secretary Bob Gates, retired U.S. General Wesley Clark, ex-Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Anne Applebaum, British historian Niall Ferguson, ex-French Prime Minister Manuel Valls, Icelandic author Sjon, Israeli author Meir Shalov, ex-NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and others.

Their weekly international affairs talk show "The Week" is broadcast on Pryamii TV channel Saturdays at 10 p.m. They have done about 70 episodes with an estimated 1.5 million viewers each show. TV news is still king of the hill in Ukraine, with 60 percent of the population getting their information this way.

Such is the world of Peter Zalmayev, who grew up in Donetsk and then emigrated to America, and Taras Berezovets, who is from Crimea. Berezovets is the more constant presence on the airwaves. He can also be found on Pryamii TV channel five times a week, hosting "The Situation" political talk show.

They share a lot of bonds, including support for Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko. Pryamii is owned by ex-lawmaker Vladimir Makeyenko.

Pro-Poroshenko channel

In addition to their support for Poroshenko, they both hail from areas of Ukraine now under Russian occupation. This shared circumstance, they told the Kyiv Post, helped bolster their support for the president seeking re-election on March 31. They admire his strong anti-Russian stance.

"We can say it's largely friendly to the president," Zalmayev said of Pryamii's policy.

Said Berezovets: "In many senses, the channel covers news in Ukraine from the pro-governmental positions. I support Poroshenko because of his personal stance against Russia and what he has done as the president."



Taras Berezovets (L) and Peter Zalmayev, who co-host "The Week" international affairs talk show on Pryamii TV channel, speak with the Kyiv Post in the newspaper's office on Nov 6, 2018. (Pavlo Podufalov)

But they try to steer clear of domestic politics on "The Week," taking enjoyment by educating Ukrainian viewers on international issues through interviews and reports on issues in other countries.

Pro-Western views

Both of them favor Ukraine's integration into the European Union and NATO membership. If they differ, it's slightly on the ideological spectrum, with Berezovets more conservative than the liberal Zalmayev.

They met in the summer of 2015 at the Arsenal Book Fair, where Berezovets was presenting his book on Crimea, and hit it off quickly. Their on-air chemistry is obvious.

They believe their international affairs show is "exactly what the Ukrainian TV market" needs, Zalmayev said. "It's a mission of enlightenment."

Despite their pro-presidential stance, they say they have "a healthy degree of autonomy" on "The Week," partly because "we stay away from internal politics," Zalmayev said. But, they also note, Berezovets routinely hosts government critics on his "The Situation" program.

"We have editorial independence. We have not had any interference in what to say and what not to say," Berezovets insisted.

Zalmayev said he "wouldn't stay there for a minute" if he were told what to broadcast. "I would be out the door."

The challenge, they said, is making international news interesting and relevant for Ukrainians focused on domestic issues.

In one episode, they covered the Brazilian presidential election by emphasizing the large Ukrainian diaspora in Brazil, estimated at 500,000 Ukrainians. They also go heavy on U.S. President Donald J. Trump's Russian ties and look for other ways to make what is happening in the world more relevant and interesting for the Ukrainian audience.

They have taken up many causes. Both were outraged by the Oct. 2,

2018, murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the outspoken critic of Saudi prince Mohammad bin Salman, who is believed to have ordered the assassination in the Saudi Arabian Consulate in Istanbul, Turkey. They devoted several weeks to Khashoggi's murder and won't let it go. "As long as I'm there at the helm with Taras, I'm going to be talking about this," Zalmayev vowed.

Berezovets' heavy work schedule has forced the political consultant to spend less time on his Berta Communications business. He has healthy popularity on social media, including more than 66,000 Twitter followers.

Crimea, Donbas

They are happy to be among the stable of Pryamii's stars, including hosts Matvey Ganopolskaya, Karolina Ashion, Sergei Loiko and Yevgeniy Kiselyov.

While the money of a Ukrainian TV host is not big, compared to American standards, Zalmayev said that he gets "tremendous job satisfaction working with this guy (Berezovets). We work seamlessly together. We've never had a conflict, knock on wood." Together, they have command of a tremendous number of languages, including English, Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, French and Polish.

Berezovets, who hails from the Crimean city of Kerch — with 146,000 people nearly 1,000 kilometers southeast of Kyiv — believes that Ukraine will eventually regain control of its lost territory from Russia,

but not anytime soon. "People there are Russified and brainwashed now," he said, so much so that he is no longer on speaking terms with some of his estimated 50 relatives still living there.

Zalmayev underwent a similar experience, spending his first 19 years growing up in Donetsk, the city of 1 million people located 700 kilometers southeast of Kyiv and now occupied by Russia. He had to relocate his relatives, including his Jewish mother, from Donetsk in May 2014, shortly after Russia launched its war. He moved them to Israel. But he spent most of his adult life in America. He's a licensed Baptist preacher who has lived in Tennessee and New York.

'Ukrainian patriots'

"We're Ukrainian patriots from Russian-speaking and very unfortunate parts of our country, under occupation both," Zalmayev said. "That's a binding factor in our partnership."

Berezovets said that "in Crimea, they watch our program. Our mission is to show they are not forgotten. Russia is not forever. Things will change. Russia is a pariah state now."

Zalmayev said he wants to "counter the defeatist attitudes" of those in the nation who want to give up Ukraine's claim to the Donbas and Crimea. "We are of the strong opinion that Ukraine cannot say goodbye to Crimea and Donbas. The patriotic position is to continue to insist on their return, on Ukrainian terms." ■

"The Week" international political talk show is broadcast at 10 p.m. Saturdays on Pryamii TV channel. More information here: <https://prm.ua/> Watch some English-language interviews done by Peter Zalmayev and Taras Berezovets here:

- Peter Zalmayev interviews Colombian President Ivan Duque. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GgsupBODxo&fbclid=IwAR3kreiNW1TdoHvqhdLN-N9m62f1Cemq4XZ0jxhm5TB4bept07M7QxSyMBQ>
- Peter Zalmayev interviews former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkFmCu6OjzA&fbclid=IwAR0PBFaAEOS0Wd7x2_bETnSfWYRuaESPzmqJpPLtYuoF_ILzn9sbFXPE
- Peter Zalmayev and Taras Berezovets interview ex-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPeA0N_2iwi&fbclid=IwAR32cvZJkQr0aXsc-CReAaU8IJUXyTpJbATbJIM6O2pEkcZb0PiLi_N9s

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Polls don't look good for Poroshenko; extra ballots cause concern; debates will be duds?

Editor's Note: Election Watch is a regular update on the state of the presidential race in Ukraine. The country will elect its next president on March 31, 2019, with a possible runoff on April 21. The Election Watch project is supported by the National Endowment for Democracy. The donor doesn't influence the content. Go to kyivpost.com for more election coverage.

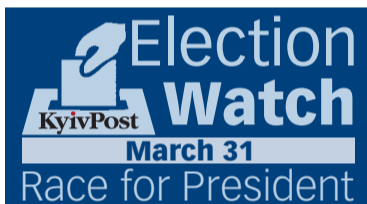
BY OLGA RUDENKO
RUDENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

A week before the election, the order of the top trio appears to be solidifying.

Actor and political satirist Volodymyr Zelenskiy has led the race since late January.

In mid-March, Zelenskiy was supported by 24.9 percent of decided voters, according to the latest poll by the Rating Group, a Kyiv-based pollster, released on March 19.

He is followed by ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko with 18.8 percent support. For the leader of the Batkivshchyna party, it is her third attempt to win the presidency.



Days until election: 9

Incumbent President Petro Poroshenko ranked third in the poll: 17.4 percent supported his re-election.

Out of several polls released in March, all but one place Poroshenko third. One flattering poll that had Poroshenko in second place was released by Socis, a pollster co-owned by the son of Poroshenko's campaign strategist and lawmaker Ihor Hryniy. It was Hryniy who masterminded Poroshenko's 2014 campaign that got him a whopping 54 percent in the first round of the election — enough for him to win the presidency outright in one round.

But while Poroshenko's chances of making the runoff seem bleak, he may still benefit from low turnout among young voters, many of whom support Zelenskiy.

Also, the turnout will be affected by the fact that many Ukrainians don't live in the place where they are registered to vote. If they want to vote, they need to change their voting location with the local authorities before March 26 — a hurdle that not everyone will clear. As of mid-March, only some 90,000 people had gone through the procedure, including those relocated from the war-torn Donbas and Russia-occupied Crimea. The exact number of Ukrainians who don't reside where they are registered is unknown.

Most of the 1 million Ukrainians who are reckoned to live and work in Poland are likely to skip the election, too. Voting for them requires prior registration with the local consulate, and many live in places where there isn't one. In the 2014 presidential election, only about 5,000 Ukrainians voted in Poland.

Key developments:

Reallocation of ballots raises concerns. Lackluster start to debates. Bad runoff forecasts for Poroshenko.

This may be bad news for Poroshenko, as most of the Ukrainians working in Poland come from western Ukraine, where Poroshenko enjoys especially strong support thanks to his conservative program and strong anti-Russian stance.

Meanwhile, some 15 percent of the voters remain undecided, according to a poll by the Rating Group.

Runoff

There is little doubt there will be a runoff second round in this election, as none of the candidates are polling anywhere close to the 50 percent that is the threshold for the first-round victory.

And forecasts for the runoff have been consistent for the past three months. Out of the leading trio, Poroshenko has the worst chances of winning in a runoff: he is likely to lose both to Zelenskiy and Tymoshenko, according to the Rating Group's polling data. Tymoshenko would prevail over Poroshenko but lose to Zelenskiy. Zelenskiy would beat either of them.

Poroshenko's problem is his high anti-rating. About half of the voters declare they will not vote for him under any circumstance, according to the Rating Group. Some 30 percent said the same about Tymoshenko. Zelenskiy, who is a political novice, holds an anti-rating of just 13 percent.

But paradoxically, the same poll also showed that the largest share of voters, 20 percent, still believe Poroshenko will win. Zelenskiy and Tymoshenko follow with 19 and 18 percent, respectively.

Extra ballots

Alarming news came earlier in the week from the Central Election Commission. According to public records, the commission had ordered a change to the number of ballots it was allocating to each round of the election.

It originally ordered 30.2 million ballots to be printed for both the first round and the runoff, which is only slightly more than the number of registered voters. However, later the commission reallocated 263,000 ballots from the runoff to the first round.

The Central Election Commission representatives could not explain why it needed more ballots for the first round of the election than for the second.

It stirred fears that the ballots were required to rig the election in favor of Poroshenko. Judging from the polls, the incumbent president isn't guaranteed a spot in the runoff.

The Central Election Commission denied the accusations.

Debates

While in the United States and other Western democracies public debates are a must-have component of any election, in Ukraine they remain rare events.

And while the state-owned TV channel UA Pershiy hosts official election debates, they aren't popular with the top candidates.

The station's producer Tetiana Kyselchuk told Detector Media that UA Pershiy had invited 18 out of 39 presidential candidates to join the debates, picking the ones with the most support. However, only 13 of the 18 candidates agreed to show up.

The top candidates have yet to say if they will take part or not, according to Kyselchuk. And even those who agreed to come could drop out — as happened with Serhiy Kaplin, the leader of the Socialist Democratic Party. He failed to show up for the first debate of the election on March 18, where he was to speak alongside ex-lawmaker Inna Bogoslovskaya and Oleksandr Moroz, the former speaker of parliament and former leader of the now marginal Socialist Party.

Money

No matter who wins the election, someone is winning already: all advertising platforms, including TV and Facebook.

According to Chesno, a campaign monitoring politicians and elections, the candidates have together spent over Hr 1 billion (\$37 million) on TV advertising during the election campaign.

They have also spent on outdoor advertising and other media.

For example, according to Chesno, businessman and presidential candidate Serhiy Taruta, who on March 16 endorsed Tymoshenko without officially dropping out of the race in her favor, had by then spent Hr 150 million (\$5.5 million) on advertising across different platforms.

Facebook is profiting from the election as well. The platform now displays how much was paid for any specific ad shown on a Facebook page. Watchdogs dived into the data and found dozens of posts that advertised top candidates, each boosted for hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars.

UKROP party candidate Oleksandr Shevchenko was one of the biggest spenders: He paid Facebook between \$10,000 and \$50,000 to boost just one post — a photo of him and his wife on the occasion of the International Women's Day. ■



Women hold placards at the International Women's Day march for equal rights in Kyiv on March 8, 2018. (Oleg Petrasuiuk)

Women run for president without feminist agenda

BY BERMET TALANT
BERMET@KYIVPOST.COM

Last week, Hollywood filmmaker Mary Lambert, best known for directing thrillers, announced she was making a documentary about Ukrainian veteran politician and a presidential candidate Yulia Tymoshenko as an inspiring woman in political leadership.

The story didn't get much attention in the news media and received some skeptical responses on social media. First, Lambert lauds Tymoshenko as "a powerful advocate for pro-Western values" and "fighter for human rights and radical reforms," which seemed like part of the election campaign. Second, this depiction of Tymoshenko as an empowered feminist leader was off-key.

Tymoshenko is one of four women running for the presidency in this election against 35 men. Her chances for victory are high: the latest poll from March 19, she ranked second with 18.8 percent following the front-runner, actor Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

Relying on a predominantly elderly and female voter base, Tymoshenko's election agenda doesn't include issues that are commonly raised by Western female leaders: for instance, encouraging women's participation in politics or closing the gender pay gap (according to the government envoy for gender policy, Kateryna Levchenko, Ukrainian women earn 72-75 cents for every dollar a Ukrainian man is paid) or fighting violence against children and women.

"When she became the first woman prime minister in 2005, there were very few women in politics. And we were interested in engaging her as an advocate for women's rights," recalls Larysa Kobelyanska, gender and politics expert. "But she is the product of her time and its fears, stereotypes, and narrow-mindedness."

Tymoshenko tries to avoid speaking on equal rights or discrimination, in order to not anger her conservative voter base. And when she has to, she keeps her opinion as vague as possible.

Speaking at the All-Ukrainian Family Forum organized by the Council of Churches on March 1, she briefly talked about happy families and the importance of spirituality, threw in some statistics on childbirth rates in Ukraine and cited Pope John Paul II. "We have to build our lives and the Ukrainian government based on the laws of the Creator," she said.

"Tymoshenko is situational and careful to talk about ideas of gender equality," says Kobelyanska. "In Ukraine, feminism is marginalized. She doesn't want to associate with it and women's rights organizations. But when she goes to the west, her rhetoric changes, and she speaks about rights."

Another presidential candidate, Olha Bohomolets, is a fervent advocate for Christian values and pro-family policies to stop the Ukrainian nation from dying out.

Last November, the healthcare committee in the parliament led by Bohomolets, a medical doctor by trade, hosted a controversial round table titled "Scientific and medical approaches to the issue of gender equality" co-organized by Hanna Turchynova, a university professor and wife of the head of the State Defence and Security Council Oleksandr Turchynov. She is most known for anti-LGBT, anti-feminist, pro-Christian family statements.

The highlights of the "scientific" forum were speeches by church clerics, theologians, and other "experts" who talked about gender identity and gay propaganda. One speaker even claimed that safe sex promotion was propaganda of condoms.

Bohomolets also argues against quotas for women in the parliament. If women want equal rights and opportunities, they have to be ready for fair competition, she wrote in an 2018 op-ed.

Inna Bohoslovskaya, an ex-lawmaker running for president, appears to have more progressive views. In a 2017 interview to 112 TV channel, she shared the story of her daughter who suffered from an abusive husband.

"She left him and organized a group to fight violence against women," she said. "Today, women became strong. Women communities stopped being jealous and became healthy groups of beautiful, smart, self-reliant women who have kids, families, men, and most importantly, faith in themselves."

Currently, women in Ukrainian politics are still outnumbered by men. There are only 49 women lawmakers, against 374 men. In the government, women hold only six out of 25 of the top ministerial positions. ■

Editorials

Anti-Western buffoon

While ostensibly spouting pro-Western rhetoric and banging on about plans to join the European Union and NATO, Ukrainian authorities are now biting the hand that feeds them.

Top Ukrainian officials are now either blatantly ignoring or even openly lashing out at the United States — the country that has been the strongest supporter of anti-corruption reforms in Ukraine and one of its biggest donors in helping the nation prevail against Russia's war.

In a buffoonish manner characteristic of his whole career, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko claimed in a March 20 interview that Marie Yovanovitch, the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, had given him a list of untouchables who cannot be prosecuted. The U.S. Embassy called this a lie.

Making his tirade even more pathetic, Lutsenko complained that the U.S. had not given him the \$4.4 million earmarked for his office. The money was not transferred due to Lutsenko's utter failure to reform the prosecutorial service and to successfully prosecute anyone of note. Instead, he largely focuses on harassing political opponents.

The most recent episode of the Lutsenko clown show was likely a response to Yovanovitch's harsh criticism of Ukrainian authorities on March 5. Yovanovitch criticized the cancellation of the illicit enrichment law and called for firing discredited Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor Nazar Kholodnytsky. She also urged Ukraine to investigate corruption in the defense sector amid graft accusations against presidential allies and lambasted vote buying as President Petro Poroshenko and ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko are accused of bribing voters, although they deny the allegations.

She also said that the authorities should not appoint tainted judges to the Supreme Court.

Her pleas were ignored. The High Qualification Commission on March 6 nominated 16 out of the 31 discredited Supreme Court candidates vetoed by the judiciary's civic watchdog. On March 20, the High Council of Justice appointed 10 of the 16 tainted candidates to the Supreme Court and will likely appoint the rest later.

This whole circus shows that Ukrainian authorities' pro-Western credentials are fake. They are not interested in genuinely transforming Ukraine into a European liberal democracy with the rule of law.

Censorship threats

There is a popular image on the internet: a photo of an elderly woman at a women's rights rally, bearing a poster that reads: "I can't believe I still have to protest this sh*t."

We could say the same when it comes to Ukraine's authorities trying to censor journalists or limit their rights: we can't believe we still need to defend freedom of speech. At least once a year, someone in power comes out with a "hot new idea" to either censor the internet, or criminalize libel, or do something else along those lines.

Right now, three dangerous media-related bills are sitting in parliament (see story on page 5), waiting to be considered. All were drafted by representatives of the ruling coalition.

The newest seeks to criminalize the spread of fake news, intentional or not.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian journalists are being reminded all the time how dangerous their profession is in this country — be it by the anniversaries of journalists' murders or by physical attacks and regular harassment.

On March 20, three journalists from Nashi Groshi investigative project were attacked as they were filming in a forest north of Kyiv. They were illegally detained by private guards of pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk, who has a mansion near the forest. The police didn't intervene when the guards physically assaulted the journalists, according to them. The assault is one of the dozens if not hundreds of similar cases in recent years. The attacks have become almost routine, a fixture on the news feed.

Too many people in Ukrainian power circles are poisoned with the authoritarian legacy of the Soviet Union. They can't grasp the idea that the press can be independent, writing freely about the most powerful people. They need to accept it, sooner rather than later: freedom of speech isn't an exotic Western concept. It's a universal human right.



Oleksandr Markov, a partner at Redcliffe Partners, moderates the Straight Talk discussion at Fedoriv Hub on March 20, 2019. (Oleg Petراسиuk)

'Straight Talk' tackles role of human rights for responsible firms

BY GABRIEL HARDY-FRANÇON
HARDYFRANCON@GMAIL.COM

What distinguishes responsible businesses from irresponsible businesses when it comes to human rights?

Four specialists in business and one in human rights gathered on March 20 to answer this fundamental question at the Fedoriv Hub in Kyiv during the Kyiv Post's fourth Straight Talk public discussion.

Maybe was it a little odd to see three people respectively representing the pharmaceutical, alcohol and sugar industries joining a panel to address human rights. However, their experience of high-level management brought the practical touch needed for such a topic.

The discussion was moderated by Oleksandr Markov, a partner at Redcliffe Partners law firm.

Responsibility in rights

A responsible business is — according to all panelists — one that respects the rules and considers profit to be secondary.

Dmytro Shymkiv, the executive chairman of the Ukrainian big pharmaceutical company Darnitsa, considers that this must be established from the very start.

"Irresponsibility of the company usually starts with the shareholders. The owners define the principles and the vision of the company," said Shymkiv.

Evgeny Shevchenko, managing director of Carlsberg Ukraine, on the other hand, believes that shareholders are not necessarily involved in making a company responsible, and that it is the operational aspect of the company that ensures that.

Over the long haul

Shevchenko was clear that human rights always comes first.

He told the story of a supplier in Uzbekistan who would send clean bottles back to the brewery. As it turned out, his brother being the director of a local prison, the bottles were cleaned by prisoners who did not receive any salary for it, which was in violation of human rights.

So, Carlsberg decided to put human rights before environmental concerns, which illustrated his earlier point about operational management making the difference.

Nataliya Chernyshova, general manager at Mars Ukraine, praised the family values of the company she

more **Straight Talk** on page 10

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Parliament considers 3 media censorship bills

BY OLEG SUKHOV
SUKHOV@KYIVPOST.COM

Three bills that could dramatically restrict free speech have been submitted to the Verkhovna Rada.

They have not been considered in the first reading yet. However, if passed, they could introduce censorship similar to the restrictions faced in Russia under the dictatorship of Vladimir Putin.

Human rights watchdogs criticized the initiatives as sponsors of the draconian measures deny accusations of censorship.

Fake news bill

One of the bills was submitted to the Verkhovna Rada on March 12 by Igor Lapin, a lawmaker from the 80-member People's Front party.

The bill has been compared to similar initiatives in Russia, which on March 18 enacted a law to block "fake news" and introduce criminal penalties for insulting state officials on the internet.

Lapin's bill seeks to criminalize libel, which would be punishable with a fine of up to Hr 8,500 or community service of up to one year. Currently, libel can only be punished as part of civil lawsuits.

The legislation would introduce criminal penalties for "unreliable information" containing allegations of severe crimes or accusations made against candidates in legislative and presidential elections during election campaigns. This would be punished with a fine of up to Hr 17,000 or community service of up to one year.

Under Lapin's bill, such cases will be considered under a fast-track "simplified procedure" in courts. Currently, civil libel cases may take years.

Moreover, during election campaigns courts will be able to suspend



A portrait of journalist Pavel Sheremet is pictured in Kyiv, on the corner of Bohdan Khmelnytskyoho and Ivana Franka streets, where a bomb blew up the car he was driving on July 20, 2016. The authorities' failure to solve the murder contributes to an intimidating atmosphere for free speech in Ukraine. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

television channels' licenses, ban the publication of print media or block sites, according to the bill.

However, ex-Information Policy Minister Tetiana Popova told the Kyiv Post that the bills were unlikely to be considered in the first reading before the March 31 presidential election.

"Such legislative initiatives may become a dangerous tool of censorship and pressure on independent media," Freedom House, the Free Internet Coalition, the Crimea Human Rights Group and other human rights groups said in a joint statement on March 15.

There are concerns that the bill

could target high-profile investigations like the Nashi Hroshi investigative show's one into an alleged corruption scheme spearheaded by Oleg Gladkovsky, an ex-deputy secretary of the National Security and Defense Council and a top ally of President Petro Poroshenko.

Lapin has denied intentions to censor media and argued that the legislation aimed to better protect public officials whose reputation has been unfairly damaged.

A similar bill was submitted to the Verkhovna Rada in November by Poroshenko Bloc lawmakers Mykola Palamarchuk, Artur Palatny and Oleg

Velykyn. It would also criminalize libel and make it punishable with up to three years in prison.

Internet censorship

A third dangerous bill was submitted to parliament in 2017 and included in the Rada's agenda in 2018. On March 12, Popova published an alleged updated version of the bill and said it could be considered jointly with a bill on the Ukrainian language in March.

The original version of the bill was sponsored by Ivan Vinnyk, a lawmaker from President Petro Poroshenko's dominant 135-member bloc, and

People's Front lawmakers Tetiana Chornovol and Dmytro Tymchuk. This version would grant prosecutors and the National Security and Defense Council powers to block websites they deem threatening to national security without a court ruling. A court will have to confirm the blocking of a website within 48 hours, however.

Under the bill, websites can be blocked if they "have an impact on decision-making, or the action or inaction of national or local government bodies, officials of these bodies, associations of citizens, or legal entities." Sites can also be blocked if they "threaten national security, aim to intimidate the population, provoke a military or an international conflict, or attract the public's attention to a convict's (terrorist's) certain political, religious or other views."

If an internet provider fails to comply, it must pay 1 percent of its annual revenues as a fine. For repeat offenses, the fine is 5 percent.

The leaked updated version of the bill published by Popova appears to be even more dangerous. The blocking of sites will be possible without any court approval at all.

Under the law, internet service providers will have to block sites if ordered by either the National Security and Defense Council without court authorization or by courts.

Vinnyk, one of the sponsors of the original version, told the Kyiv Post he was not aware of the updated version of the bill. He said that the consideration of the bill had been postponed due to society's concerns over free speech.

Vinnyk has denied the accusations that the bill would introduce censorship and argued it was necessary to counteract Russian propaganda and misinformation. ■



Ballots ready

Head of the Ukrainian Central Election Commission Tetyana Slipachuk (L) and director of Ukraine printing plant Yuri Onishchenko hold a ballot paper during its presentation in Kyiv on March 21, 2019, ahead of the presidential election. The March 31 election pits 39 candidates against each other. If no one wins a majority, a runoff election takes place on April 21 among the top-two vote-getters. (Volodymyr Petrov)

ON THE MOVE

Advertisement

Sayenko Kharenko further boosts its IP practice with new counsel hire



Denis Krokhmalev

Sayenko Kharenko has executed the next step in the growth of its IP practice with the hire of the Ukrainian IP law star Denis Krokhmalev as its new counsel. Denis has 14 years of unique professional experience in implementing and managing anti-counterfeiting strategy.

In particular, Denis has impressive experience in leading proactive investigations targeting the production, transportation, and distribution of illicit goods, delivering multi-million seizures of counterfeit goods as a result of the shutdown of dozens of large manufacturing facilities, market raids, and customs operations. His practical

background brings priceless knowledge and gives an advantage to the firm's expertise in the field of anti-counterfeiting and brand protection.

In addition, Denis has extensive experience in establishing efficient cooperation with governmental agencies and local/international organizations within the framework of anti-counterfeit actions, as well as running regular anti-counterfeiting training programs for customs/law enforcement bodies/local distributors (approximately 900 people a year).

Prior to joining Sayenko Kharenko, he has been the Regional Brand Protection Manager and in-house lawyer for Central/Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus at P&G and General Counsel at P&G Ukraine.

Nazar Chernyavsky comments: "I am very proud and excited that Denis has chosen our firm to continue his professional career and saw the opportunity in combining his unique professional experience with the solid background of our reinforced IP team. His arrival will let us implement anti-counterfeit and brand protection programs at a much broader scale and offer newlaw products in this area to our clients in the whole CEE/CAC region, as well as in Ukraine."

Tymoshenko scrambles to survive first round of voting on March 31

Tymoshenko from page 1

out of the top spot by actor and political satirist Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

Now President Petro Poroshenko threatens to push her out of the second round. He and she are polling with similar numbers behind Zelenskiy. Assuming none of the candidates wins a majority of the vote, the top-two vote getters in the March 31 first-round election will advance to the April 21 runoff.

Tymoshenko's trip to eastern Ukraine, where she has the least support, became essential.

"Even a half percent is important for her now," said Volodymyr Fesenko, head of Penta political think tank.

When Zelenskiy took away part of Tymoshenko's voters, Poroshenko's team started hitting her with smear campaigns, Fesenko added.

But Tymoshenko still has her devoted supporters and also some oligarchs on her side. And people who know her well say the attacks only make her stronger.

"She's a fighter," said political consultant Oleksiy Kovzhun, who worked with Tymoshenko in the 2000s.

Lawmaker Serhiy Vlasenko, deputy head of Tymoshenko's party, said she has nothing to worry about.

"Better to let Petro Oleksiyovych (Poroshenko) think how he's going to get into the second round," he said.

Third try

Tymoshenko, 58, a former gas trader, has experienced steep ups and downs in her political career, which started back in 1997. She twice served as prime minister and twice was put in jail, under the regimes of presidents Leonid Kuchma and Viktor Yanukovich.

Tymoshenko led the campaigns against both presidents and was deemed "Ukraine's Jean D'Arc" during the Orange Revolution, a popular people's uprising against rigged elections in 2004.

This will be her third try to become president after finishing in second place twice, losing to Yanukovich in 2010 and to Poroshenko in 2014.

When in February 2014 protesters of the EuroMaidan Revolution ousted Yanukovich and brought Tymoshenko from prison to the stage at Kyiv's Maidan Nezalezhnosti, or Independence Square, she didn't look herself — hunched in a wheelchair, wearing baggy black clothes instead of her usual expressly feminine outfits.

But she came back soon enough to run in the presidential election that May, where she came second with 12.8 percent of the vote, and to take 20 members of her party, including herself, into the Verkhovna Rada in the parliamentary election later that year.

At first, she played a small role. But when the government started increasing the gas utility tariffs in 2015, Poroshenko's rating steeply went down, and Tymoshenko, who started speaking about "tariff genocide," began rising in the polls.

She gets strong support from economically poor residents of small towns and villages, who were the



Yulia Tymoshenko waves to her supporters while arriving at an election rally in Kyiv on Feb. 9, 2019. (Oleg Petrasjuk)

most severely hit by the gas price hikes.

"She knows gas issues well and she used the social discontent related to it," Fesenko said.

Limited electorate

In May, Tymoshenko tried to widen her electorate and attract younger voters and residents of big cities, organizing several forums, where she proposed to rewrite the country's constitution, limiting the powers of the president and granting them to the chancellor, in a similar system to Germany's.

She changed her trademark traditional braid for a more modern up-do and large glasses, and started talking about big data, blockchain and a "new social contract."

But her rebranding hasn't won her much more support. Her long-time voters didn't understand her, and the young electorate didn't believe her.

In January, when her party officially nominated Tymoshenko as a presidential candidate, several thousand people were in attendance — but most of them were middle-aged women. Catering to that audience, she made the promise to cut the gas utility tariffs in half one of the main slogans of her campaign.

Over the next two months, her rating remained the same, while the ratings of her main competitors Poroshenko and Zelenskiy rose.

"Tymoshenko is not creating any strong messages apart from cutting the gas prices," said sociologist Inna Volosevych, the deputy director at the Info Sapiens research agency.

Her typical voters are middle-aged women living in rural areas of central and western Ukraine. But their support might not be enough

to get her into the second round, according to political technologist Serhiy Gaidai, who consulted for Tymoshenko in 2018.

Her other former consultant Kovzhun agrees.

"She has nowhere to grow and each new supporter is gained with much more effort than the previous one," Kovzhun said.

Fesenko said Tymoshenko had started her campaign too early and now it's hard for her "to keep its tempo, drive, and energy."

Frauds

Another of Tymoshenko's problems is Poroshenko. In 2005, they were fighting for influence over then-President Viktor Yushchenko. Now they are clashing for a place in the second round, with both reportedly using dirty tricks.

On Feb. 22, Tymoshenko accused Poroshenko of ungentlemanly behavior, claiming that presidential candidate Yuriy Tymoshenko, whose last name and initials are identical to hers, is a Poroshenko scam aimed at distracting her voters, who may vote for him by mistake.

"If you are a man and also president of the country and commander in chief, why don't you have the bravery to fight honestly?!" she said at a press conference.

When Poroshenko largely relies on government resources and support of the Prosecutor General's Office, led by his friend Yuriy Lutsenko, and the SBU state security service, Tymoshenko has a network consisting of her Batkivshchyna (Fatherland) Party and good relations with country's top cop, Interior Minister Arsen Avakov.

It was Tymoshenko who first accused Poroshenko of vote-buying

in late February and brought the evidence to Avakov's office, claiming Poroshenko was planning to buy six million people with paying them Hr 1,000 (about \$37) each. Avakov said the deputy head of Poroshenko's party faction, Serhiy Berezenko, is mentioned in a criminal investigation.

After that, the state security service accused Tymoshenko of doing the same, revealing an alleged scheme involving two lawmakers, later identified as Tymoshenko party members Valeriy Dubil and Ruslan Bohdan.

On March 20, Lutsenko posted on Facebook a photo of a sack full with cash and hinted that all that money, Hr 2.5 million (almost \$93,000), were supposed to be spent for vote-buying by Tymoshenko in Dubno, a western Ukrainian city of 35,000 residents. Lutsenko called Tymoshenko "candidate Y" when saying that it was "lawmaker D" — most likely Dubil — organizing the vote-buying scheme.

In mid-March, someone started calling, allegedly on behalf of the Opora election watchdog, and threatening Tymoshenko's voters with criminal responsibility, saying that the candidate was involved in vote-buying, Olga Aivazovska, head of Opora, told the Kyiv Post. Opora notified the police.

Fesenko said Tymoshenko can't match Poroshenko's money, so she would get outspent in any attempt to buy voters. Poroshenko's representatives have denied vote buying.

Scandals

In response to the attacks on her, Tymoshenko has tried to milk a corruption scandal involving the president's allies for all it is worth. The Nashi Groshi TV investigative pro-

gram alleged massive embezzlement in the defense sector by Poroshenko's ally, Oleg Hladkovskiy, and his son Ihor Hladkovskiy.

She initially spoke about the impeachment of Poroshenko, then switched to guaranteeing criminal investigations. In an interview with journalist Sonia Koshkina published on March 7, Tymoshenko promised to "turn the stomachs (of allegedly corrupt officials) inside out and see what they had consumed over the years."

But another investigation by Nashi Groshi revealed Tymoshenko's team also used murky tactics. Her party received transactions worth millions of dollars in 2018 from dummy donors, whose names were used sometimes even without their knowledge. Journalists also found that people involved in this scheme were linked to runaway lawmaker Oleksandr Onishchenko, a vehement critic of Poroshenko, who is now being investigated for gas embezzlement. Tymoshenko and Onyshchenko denied this connection.

Tymoshenko tried to explain the dummy donors, claiming that rich Ukrainian entrepreneurs had to donate money to her through their relatives for fears of persecution.

When Tymoshenko claimed that about half out of 39 presidential candidates are fake ones working in favor of Poroshenko, Aivazovska, from Opora, said Tymoshenko also has several dummy candidates on her side. For a candidate, having several "dummy candidates" among competitors gives the perk of controlling more people in the election commissions around Ukraine, since every candidate is allowed the same

more Tymoshenko on page 7

Tymoshenko hopes that Ukraine is in mood to vote out Poroshenko

Tymoshenko from page 6

quota of representatives.

Poroshenko Bloc lawmaker Maksym Savrasov published on March 20 a protocol of the meeting of the district election commission in Chernivtsi, where Tymoshenko's representative claimed she was the coordinator of a group of representatives of eight other candidates. One of them was businessman and lawmaker Serhiy Taruta, who on March 16 publicly endorsed Tymoshenko without technically withdrawing his candidacy.

Tymoshenko's ally Vlasenko claimed the protocol was fake.

Oligarchs

In 2005, Tymoshenko became a big enemy of Ukraine's oligarchs, when her government challenged privatization of Kryvorizhstal, country's largest steel mill, by Rinat Akhmetov and Victor Pinchuk, claiming it was bought on the cheap. Tymoshenko was personally present at a televised auction, where Mittal Steel bought the plant for \$4.8 billion, nearly six times more than Akhmetov and Pinchuk paid for it a year earlier.

But now, Tymoshenko's relations with Ukraine's oligarchs have turned significantly warmer.

The endorsement of Taruta won't help her in the polls, but might help her financially, Fesenko said.

Also, on March 17, Tymoshenko appeared on the Sunday prime time TV show on ICTV channel, which belongs to Pinchuk.

On March 7, someone uploaded to British video sharing website Liveleak an intercepted phone conversation in which a woman with a voice resembling Tymoshenko's gave birthday congratulations to a man who sounded like billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky. The alleged phone call pumped the long-running rumor that Kolomoisky was backing Tymoshenko financially, which her team denies.

"I want to thank you on your birthday for all, for the fact that you can be a real friend, a real partner in all of the most important issues," the woman is heard saying on the tape.

Vlasenko neither confirmed nor denied the authenticity of the conversation.

While Kolomoisky in 2015 called Tymoshenko a political "prostitute,"

in recent interviews the oligarch called her a "favorite" and said he would support any presidential candidate able to defeat Poroshenko.

Fesenko said Tymoshenko and Kolomoisky could make a temporary deal against Poroshenko, which doesn't mean she is dependent on the oligarch.

"Each one just has his own interest here," he said.

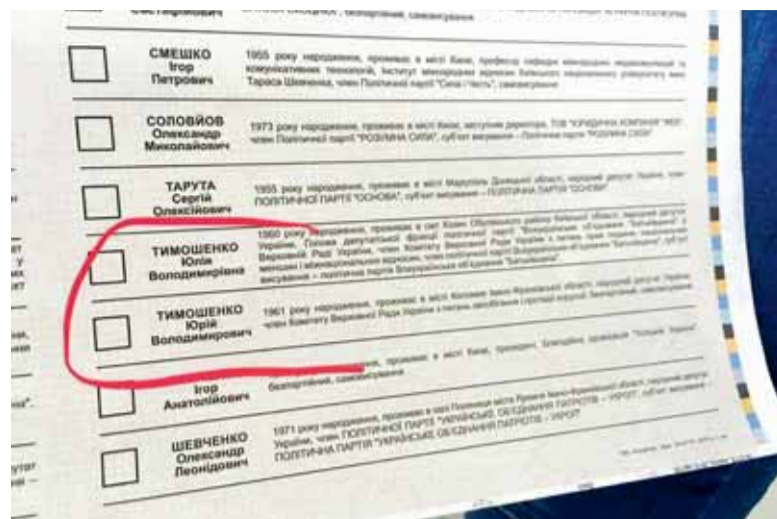
Foreign lobbyists

In early March, Tymoshenko campaigned in several western Ukrainian cities, being followed by Hollywood producer Mary Lambert and director Shawn Thompson. Lambert later announced she is working on a documentary about Tymoshenko and the role of Paul Manafort, an imprisoned former political consultant to Yanukovich, in Tymoshenko's imprisonment in 2011.

"Yulia has star quality," she told the Kyiv Post.

Thought Lambert denied being paid by Tymoshenko or anybody else to do this project, Tymoshenko's team is believed to be using foreign lobbyists.

In 2017, she was the first Ukrainian



Ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko lost her legal challenge to remove Yuriy Tymoshenko, a candidate who entered the race to confuse her voters. (Courtesy)

politician to meet the U.S. President Donald Trump, although her team refused to reveal details of the meeting.

In February 2018, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's investigative TV project Schemes revealed that Tymoshenko had a deal with Avenue Strategies, a U.S. lobbying firm, from at least February 2018 to August 2018, paying them \$65,000 per month. Tymoshenko denied paying the U.S. lobbyists and failing to put the spending on her yearly declaration.

Fresh ideas

On March 17, Tymoshenko's Instagram account posted a video of her buying a hotdog at a gas station on the way to Sloviansk.

"Don't tell anybody this is for me," she told a vendor, giggling, in an attempt to attract younger voters perhaps and show that she is a regular person.

Bringing fresh ideas to her campaign is essential for her to survive the first round, Fesenko said.

Her office, located in Kyiv's Podil area, has lots of house plants, and lots of photos — most from the 2004 Orange Revolution, which prevented Yanukovich from coming to power, and the 2013–2014 EuroMaidan Revolution, which forced Yanukovich out of power. There is also an entire wall in one room with attractive portraits of Tymoshenko in different periods of her life.

While Tymoshenko is polite with her colleagues and ready to hear criticism, Kovzhun and Gaidai said that she takes all decisions herself.

Politics is her main passion. Getting so close to her long-timer dream of being elected president has made her more intense, both physically and emotionally, Kovzhun said.

"This is like a last battle for her," he added. ■

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March 22-3

Docudays UA

The 16th Docudays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival is about to kick off in Kyiv. The event will screen over 70 films, both short and feature-length documentaries. Docudays UA will, as usual, focus on a topical issue – this time it's the digitalization of people's lives and their digital rights. The festival's program features Oscar-nominated picture "Minding the Gap," "Bellingcat: Truth in a Post-Truth World" telling the story of the citizen journalist group, "The Cleaners" putting the spotlight on internet content moderators, and much more. All the screenings will be with English subtitles. Apart from that, Docudays UA will hold workshops, discussions and exhibitions. Check out their schedule and purchase passes and tickets at www.docudays.ua.

Docudays UA. March 22-30. 10 a.m. - 11 p.m. Festival pass - Hr 900, one-day pass - Hr 300, one screening - Hr 50, 90. Check locations in our Entertainment Guide on pages 8-9.

Friday, March 22

Live music

Romax (rock covers). Docker-G Pub. 9 p.m. Hr 100-125

Lady Rock (female-fronted rock bands covers). Docker's ABC. 9 p.m. Hr 125-1,250

Sax in the City (smooth jazz by Andrey Chmut). Freedom Hall. 10 p.m. Free

Clubs

THP Session: Niff, TripPsy, Püoro (techno). Closer. 11:59 p.m. Price to be announced

Toy. Experimental (electronic, hard-core-punk music party). Otel'. 10:22 p.m. Hr 200

Dots Black Edition (electronic DJ set). River Port. 11 p.m. Hr 200-250

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employees

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Chloé Couture (retrospective exhibition of clothing by French brand Chloé). NAMU. 12-8 p.m. Hr 10-40

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Unseen America: The Southwest (photo exhibition by U.S. artist Mario Montoya). America House. 12-9 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Wooden Churches of the Carpathians (photographs by French artist Jean-Piere Durand). Art 14. 1-7 p.m. Free

Ash (paintings by Rustam Mirzoev exploring the feeling of loneliness). Tsekh. 2-8 p.m. Free

Chinese Lantern Festival (huge light installations symbolizing ancient Chinese fairy tales and legends). Spivoche Pole. 5-11 p.m. Mon-Fri. Adult - Hr 160, children from 5 to 16 - Hr 130. Sat-Sun. Adult - Hr 200, children - Hr 160. Free for children under 5

Movies

Wild (adventure, biography, drama). America House. 6:30 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Saturday, March 23

Classical music

Joseph Haydn (Kyiv Chamber Orchestra). St. Catherine Church. 6 p.m. Hr 150-350

Antonio Vivaldi Concert (Kyiv Virtuosi Orchestra). Cinema House. 8 p.m. Hr 175-425

Live music

Shevchenko 13 (Taras Shevchenko's poems accompanied by cello, piano music. Roman Smoliar - bass). Maria Zankovetska Museum. 3 p.m. Hr 100

Stanislaw Moniuszko, Yelyzaveta Lipitiuk (arias from operas). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300

Jazz for Children. Cinema House. 11 a.m. Hr 175-425

Eric Clapton Tribute (Perfect Strangers band). Docker's ABC. 10 p.m. Hr 100-1,100

Clubs

A Dult (house). Khylyovyi Bari. 10 p.m. Free. Visitors must be over 21

UA Electro (electronic DJ set). Otel'. 10 p.m. Hr 200-250

Criminal Practice, Andrey Voropayev and Others (electronic dance music). River Port. 11 p.m. Hr 200-250. Visitors must be over 18

Negru, Vadimoov and Others (electronic dance music). Dom. 11 p.m. Hr 150-200. Visitors must be over 21

Wordless with DJ Nobu (electronic DJ set). Closer. 11:55 p.m. Hr 300-400

Miscellaneous

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

Clothes for Spring (clothes, shoes, accessories, toys, furniture and decor for children by Ukrainian brands). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Chloé Couture (retrospective exhibition of clothing by French brand Chloé). NAMU. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Hr 10-40

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employees

I Touch (graphics, photos, videos by Daria Koltsova). Shcherbenko Art Center. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Spring Kurazh Bazar (charity market of various goods, food court, entertainment). VDNH. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 100. Free for pregnant women, children under 12, retirees and people with disabilities

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

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Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Osnovy Garage Sale x Bursa (book sale by publishing house Osnovy). Bursa Hotel. 11 a.m. Free

Movies

Docudays UA (documentary film festival). Zhovten, Kyiv Cinema, Kyivan Rus, Lira, Izone and other locations. 10 a.m. - 11 p.m. Festival pass - Hr 900, one-day pass - Hr 300, one screening - Hr 50, 90

Salvador Dali: In Search of Immortality (documentary). Multiplex (Lavina Mall). 3 p.m. Hr 190-240

The IF Project (documentary). America House. 3 p.m. Free. Bring ID

Shows

Andrey Chmut Band (smooth jazz, funk, fusion). Freedom Hall. 7 p.m. Hr 250-550

Tommy Cash (rap, hip hop). Atlas. 7 p.m. Hr 700-1,500

Penelope Isles (alternative, indie). Closer. 8 p.m. Hr 299

Naoosleep ft. Ilchy (electronic, indie, pop, jazz). It's not the Louvr Gallery Bar. 8 p.m. Free

Theater

Got to Be Free (rock musical about EuroMaidan Revolution). Theater on Podil. 6 p.m. Hr 200-900

Swan Lake (ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 150-2,900

Sunday, March 24

Live music

The Best of Hans Zimmer (music from "Pirates of the Caribbean," "King Arthur," "Rain Man," and other movies by National Academic Symphonic Band of Ukraine). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 350-700

"Affiliate" Dovlatov Jazz (music and readings of Sergei Dovlatov's novel in Russian). Cinema House. 8 p.m. Hr 100-350

Max Tovsty's Blues Band (blues rock covers). Docker's ABC. 9 p.m. Free

Miscellaneous

Chloé Couture (retrospective exhibition of clothing by French brand Chloé). NAMU. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 10-40

Clothes for Spring (clothes, shoes, accessories, toys, furniture and decor for children by Ukrainian brands). Vsi Svoi D12. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employees

Spring Kurazh Bazar (charity market of various goods, food court, entertainment). VDNH. 11 a.m. - 11 p.m. Hr 100. Free for pregnant women, children under 12, retirees and people with disabilities

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

The Ukrainian Canadians (documents, photographs, publications of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada). Museum of Ukrainian Diaspora. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Hr 25-50

Chinese Lantern Festival (huge light instal-

lations symbolizing ancient Chinese fairy tales and legends). Spivoche Pole. 5-11 p.m. Mon-Fri. Adult - Hr 160, children from 5 to 16 - Hr 130. Sat-Sun. Adult - Hr 200, children - Hr 160. Free for children under 5

Movies

Docudays UA (documentary film festival). Zhovten, Kyiv Cinema, Kyivan Rus, Lira, Izone and other locations. 10 a.m. - 11 p.m. Festival pass - Hr 900, one-day pass - Hr 300, one screening - Hr 50, 90

Shows

Sofi Tukker (house, electronic dance music). Atlas. 7 p.m. Hr 990-2,300

Little Big (rave, rap). Stereo Plaza. 8 p.m. Hr 920-2,499

Silver Town (alternative, rock). Docker-G Pub. 8 p.m. Hr 170

Theater

Swan Lake (ballet). National Opera. 7 p.m. Hr 150-2,900

Monday, March 25

Miscellaneous

Fearless (photographs and installations about the history of feminism and female activists in Ukraine). Creative Women Space. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Free

Alabaster Atlas (paintings by Ksenia Hnylytska dedicated to Soviet architectural modernism). The Naked Room. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Free

Chinese Lantern Festival (huge light installations symbolizing ancient Chinese fairy tales and legends). Spivoche Pole. 5-11 p.m. Mon-Fri. Adult - Hr 160, children from 5 to 16 - Hr 130. Sat-Sun. Adult - Hr 200, children - Hr 160. Free for children under 5

Movies

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Shows

Alex Clare (alternative rock, electronic, soul). Culture and Arts Center of Kyiv Polytechnic Institute. 7 p.m. Hr 350-1,800

Tuesday, March 26

Classical music

Nordic Impressions (Scandinavian and Baltic composers' music by Kyiv Soloists Ensemble). National Philharmonic. 7 p.m. Hr 70-300

Live music

Ruslan Egorov Band (jazz covers). Caribbean Club. 8 p.m. Hr 190-820

Miscellaneous

Amazing Stories of Crimea (artworks about the history of Crimea and its citizens). Mystetskyi Arsenal. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Hr 80. Hr 40 for retirees, school and university students. Free for children under 12, people with disabilities of the 1st, 2nd group, veterans and any museum employee

Future Generation Art Prize (various artworks by 21 nominees for the prize). Pinchuk Art Center. 12-9 p.m. Free

Alex Clare

The British singer, whose voice became internationally famous with the release of his "Too Close" single, is coming back to Kyiv. Alex Clare, who earlier performed at the local Atlas Weekend music festival in 2017, will now give a solo show in Ukraine's capital. The artist's music is

a mix of alternative rock, electronic and pop genres, all wrapped with his soulful voice. Alex Clare will perform songs from his three studio albums, as well as the acoustic versions of some of his tracks.

Alex Clare. Culture and Arts Center of Kyiv Polytechnic Institute (37 Peremohy St.) March 25. 7 p.m. Hr 350-1,800



(Alex Clare/facebook)

March 25

'Straight Talk' puts emphasis on human rights in business

Straight Talk from page 4

represents – “people come first, then mutuality” she said.

“When analyses were done, if the company wished to do more business, respecting human rights would help have a bigger impact,” she explained.

The United Nations has specific requirements that Global Compact helps to implement in order for businesses to be sustainable, and responsible.

And even though only a few are related to human rights, those that are related focus a lot on education explained Tetiana Sakharuk, the executive director of the United Nations Global Compact Ukraine.

Self-interest

Yaryna Klyuchkovska, a strategic communications consultant and adviser to the minister of finance in Ukraine, did not believe that companies could either be responsible or irresponsible, instead they act responsibly, or they do not.

This depends greatly on whether it is in their self-interest according to her.

“The only way to ensure that a business will act responsibly is to



Nataliya Chernyshova, the general manager of Mars Ukraine, speaks with panelists at the Straight Talk discussion on responsible and ethical business at the Fedoriv Hub on March 20, 2019. (Oleg Petراسиuk)

make it understand that it is in its self-interest,” she said, before adding that it takes strong commitment

from shareholders and management to remember where their true self-interest lies.

The business model of a company determines it all she believes. If the goal is to make as much

money as quickly as possible, then the company might not pay as much attention to acting responsibly, however, if the goal is to last in time, then it must.

An idea echoed by Shevchenko who clearly stated that “if a company acts irresponsibly, they will lose market share and will not be able to expand.”

Ukrainian reality

Klyuchkovska believes it to be difficult for companies to totally play by the rules in Ukraine.

“In Ukraine, if you respect human rights, pay all your taxes and employ all your employees legally, you become competitively disadvantaged,” Klyuchkovska said bluntly.

This is not to say that Ukraine is a hopeless case, because as Shymkiv correctly noted: “Human rights violation can happen anywhere in the world, so it depends on how society reacts to it.”

Nevertheless, Ukraine still has a lot of work to do in order to catch up with developed nations where abiding to human rights is more natural.

See more photos online from the Kyiv Post Straight Talk forum in partnership with Redcliffe Partners. ■

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Dive into the world of art and find the latest exhibitions in Kyiv in the miscellaneous section of our Entertainment Guide on pages 8-9.



Comic conventions clash in lawsuit over naming



A crowd of visitors surrounds a cosplayer wearing a Megatron costume at Comic Con Ukraine on Sept. 22, 2018 in Kyiv. Comic Con Ukraine is the country's largest popular culture event attracting 20,000 participants. (Volodymyr Petrov)

BY ARTUR KORNIENKO
KORNIENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Even superheroes like Captain America and Iron Man come to blows now and then, and now so have the capital's two comic conventions.

The city's first convention, Kyiv Comic Con (KCC), is suing the largest, Comic Con Ukraine (CCU), for the use of the term "comic con," which it claims is an infringement of its registered trademark. KCC wants CCU to change the name and pay up to \$1 million in damages.

CCU says "comic con" has become a generic term worldwide and cannot be protected by trademark laws. If anyone could have a monopoly on the term — it can only be San Diego Comic Con, which invented it in 1970, CCU's organizers say.

Ukrainian comic cons have only

been around for five years since the first Odesa Comic Con in 2014 and the first KCC in 2015. But there is a dedicated community of cosplayers and popular culture fans in Kyiv who have now found themselves dragged into the battle.

"I have friends who are 100 percent for CCU and friends who are 100 percent for KCC — and they almost end up in fights," says cosplayer and fan Marya Telizhenko.

Comic confusion

Kyiv's popular culture fans were confused on May 21, 2018 when CCU made its first appearance, announcing its festival. It was the day after the end of the fourth KCC held on May 19–20, 2018. "Are these the same organizers making another comic con?" people asked.

"Everyone was confused," says

Andriy Yakymenko, who has participated in all KCCs and CCU. "All of my friends asked me why there are two comic cons only three months apart."

This confusion was intentional, says Alexander Shaghoury, who founded KCC together with his wife. His trademark infringement lawsuit against CCU is based on a claim that CCU deliberately misled the public into thinking that the two festivals were associated.

Shaghoury says that CCU used the timing right after his festival to draw the attention of people who were searching the web for KCC most actively around the time of the event.

"Even the Facebook event that they created was called 'Comic Con Ukraine / Kyiv.' So that every person who searches for 'Kyiv Comic Con'

also ends up on their event's page," Shaghoury says.

To be more exact, CCU's Facebook event was called "Comic Con Ukraine / Kyiv, Platforma Art-zavod / 22–23.09.2018." The organizers could have put "Kyiv" in the title only to specify the exact location of the event.

The date of the announcement was also deliberate, but for a more noble reason, says the co-founder of CCU, Artem Priadka. CCU announced right after the end of KCC not to harm the competitor's ticket sales, but at the same time to give enough heads up to their own potential audience, he says.

"Usually such events are announced at least half a year in advance," Priadka says. "Because

more **Comic** on page 14

Book Review



WITH BERMET TALANT
BERMET@KYIVPOST.COM

Kremlin takeover of Crimea is documented by veteran journalist

"These years and these texts are a history now," wrote a prominent Crimean Ukrainian journalist Mykola Semena in the foreword to the English edition of his latest book, *The Crimean Report*, which came out in time for the fifth anniversary of the illegal occupation of Crimea by Russia.

The book, comprised of his 113 op-eds and articles written for *Crimea.Realities*, a service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, chronicles in great detail the first two years of the occupation until Semena was put on trial for his journalism.

The book offers a fascinating insider look into life on the peninsula by a local journalist who painstakingly documented the political, economic, and cultural decline after the military invasion and referendum: the expulsion of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, a crackdown on dissidents and free media, rising taxes, an exodus of investors, and growing poverty. No area of life was unaffected.

Semena's life spans all of modern Crimean history. Born in Chernihiv Oblast, he was almost four years old when the peninsula was transferred to Ukraine in February 1954 on the orders of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.

After graduating from the Communist Party journalism school, Semena moved to Crimea in 1982 to pursue a journalistic career in various newspapers. He was one of the few independent journalists who stayed in Crimea and didn't join the Russian Journalists Union after the Kremlin took control of the peninsula in March 2014.

"Those of us who remained in Crimea thought that in the 21st century we would still be able to work as ordinary journalists, not spies, and continue serving our readers. We understood how wrong we were when the searches and arrests began. In the blink of an eye, the invaders took Crimea out of 21st century and back to 1937," he wrote in the foreword to the English edition.

In spring 2016, Semena was arrested by Russian Security Services, the FSB, and accused of calling for separatism in one of his articles. In a sham trial, a judge handed him down a two-and-half years of suspended

more **Book** on page 13

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People take the escalator on May 21, 2019, at Ploshcha Lva Tolstoho metro station in Kyiv, as they pass an advertisement from a Ukrainian psychic. (Volodymyr Petrov)

I had session with psychic and surprise, surprise — I'm cursed

BY TOMA ISTOMINA
ISTOMINA@KYIVPOST.COM

Here's something few might have predicted: the market for the services of psychics is booming in Ukraine, with hundreds of advertisements online and on the streets featuring mysterious people wearing weird cloaks, kerchiefs, and jewelry, holding cards and amulets and promising supernatural aid for the ills in people's lives.

"A clairvoyant and healer, I came to this world to help people with their unenlightened, Earthly ways," the website of one psychic reads.

The range of services on offer runs from a simple prediction of one's future fate, to bewitching a person one desires, or lifting a curse.

Those who claim to have the seventh sense keep a busy schedule, and charge anything from Hr 200 (\$7.40) to Hr 6,000 (\$220) per session.

They call themselves healers, clairvoyants, mediums, tarologists, time lords, witches, and magicians. They claim to use the so-called white and black magic in order to read fortunes, attract money or career success to a person, remove bad spells, bring back a spouse that has left the family, cure infertility, set up defenses against the Evil Eye, diagnose auras, and much more.

Some of the psychics are extremely popular, having their session schedule booked up for at least a week ahead. These are mostly the participants of the television show "Psychic Challenge" that airs on STB TV channel, who are believed to have proven their skills on camera. However, many in Ukraine doubt the honesty of the show, which often seems scripted.

Last year "Psychic Challenge" had its 19th season, and it has produced

dozens of "graduates," or supposedly proven psychics, since the show was launched in 2007. There is also another show made by STB's team, called "Psychics Lead the Investigation," in which the stars of "Psychic Challenge" allegedly solve crimes and investigate mysterious events.

The shows popularize the psychic and extrasensory industry in Ukraine. Its participants and winners always add a notice that they have taken part in the show on their websites, social media profiles, and ads — this apparently adds to their credibility. They tour around the country or talk to people online and charge Hr 1,500–6,000 (\$55–220) for a 30–40-minute session.

I decided to try a psychic's service myself to see how they work, and test their skills.

I was skeptical about these supernatural services, so I decided to not spend much on this experiment, and lowered the bar to people who haven't appeared on the show charging significantly less.

There were so many people offering psychic services that selecting one was a problem — in the end I let fate decide and picked one of the cheaper ones at random.

Fortune decreed that I should choose an Odesa-based psychic, who, conveniently, holds online sessions with customers for Hr 300 (\$11). She had one open spot for the next day, so I booked it.

The psychic works through messenger apps. She tells me to send her my photographs, date of birth and full name through one of them before the session. After I message her right before our appointment, she sends me her bankcard information, asking that I send her the money first. I transfer the arranged payment, send her my photographs, a fake name, and a fake date of birth, half expecting her to disap-

pear as soon as she receives the money.

She tells me she needs around 30–40 minutes for laying out (Tarot cards, apparently) but calls back only after an-hour-and-a-half. I speculate that she might use this time to look up a person's profiles on social media, so looking for a woman with my face and made-up name online took her longer than she expected.

The psychic doesn't bother to ask for what reason I sought her help and what exactly I wanted to find out. And of course, she was unable to divine that the personal information I had provided was fake.

She starts off on safe ground talking about personal life and family matters — the things that most of people deal with. She uses general and vague phrases, like "personal life," rather than the more specific "marriage" or "relationship with a boyfriend/girlfriend."

She doesn't really reveal anything but asks questions and quickly adapts her line of questions to my answers. It seemed like she had set responses or follow-up questions that depended on my answers.

The first thing she says is that I have problems with my personal life. Well, just don't tell that to the guy I've been happily dating for three years, I'm thinking to myself.

She proceeds to confidently assert that "you're either in a relationship or single," and I have to restrain a giggle at this absurdly obvious "revelation." I lie that I am single.

"I see that there's some guy. He's kind of there but not really," the psychic continues. "It might be someone you think about."

The chances that a single woman thinks about some man, whether she has ever dated him before or not, ever met him in person or only knows him from online, are pretty high, so this looks like another safe bet from the psychic.

She continues by saying that I "sort of have two homes," explaining that there's another family I care for. She asks me what family that might be, and waits until I myself provide more information for her to work on.

I do, indeed, have two homes, the one where my parents live, and the one I live in. However, how likely is it that a 25-year-old (that was my age, according to my fake date of birth) hasn't moved out, or doesn't have parents, or have at least one sibling or family member that lives separately? Pretty low, I suppose.

She tells me that there soon will be some bad news from this other family, as well as claims there's a woman whose name has a letter "L," who wishes bad for me. At this point, I'm feeling like she's trying to scare me and wait to find out why she's doing it.

After another round of other vague suggestions about surgery and addiction to alcohol, the psychic sums up the session with an entirely predictable pronouncement.

"On your maternal line there is a very strong curse, but not the Evil Eye," she says.

In my head, I can see the scene from the "Friends" TV series when one of the characters, Chandler Bing, yells "I knew it!"

"Nothing will work out in your life until you get rid of this curse," the psychic adds. Of course, with every day it's getting worse, she says.

And surprise, surprise, the psychic can help take the curse off for only Hr 3,500 (\$130).

Pretending to be eager to get help as soon as possible, I ask her when she can start the procedure, and she says that for at least the next three days she will be busy lifting other curses.

She doesn't seem able to predict, however, that I won't be using her services again. ■

Starenki charity provides retirees with goods, urges people to take care of seniors

BY DARIA SHULZHENKO
SHULZHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Having got his first pension years ago, Kyiv resident Lev Kudriavtsev was surprised how little he could afford for such a modest amount of money. Kudriavtsev, now 89, says it is practically impossible to live on less than Hr 2,000 a month.

In Ukraine, where the cost of living is much higher than a minimum pension payment, which was Hr 1,497 as of December 2018, thousands of retirees all over the country are pushed into poverty and are left to cope with it themselves.

However, some retirees are lucky to get additional aid, only not from the government — pensioners in Kyiv and Dnipro, a city of 1 million people some 470 kilometers southeast from Kyiv, can receive free packages with food and hygiene products from Starenki, the Kyiv-based charitable foundation.

Since its establishment in 2015, Starenki (meaning seniors in English) has grown from a local initiative to a charitable foundation that has already handed around 4,500 packages with food and hygiene products to nearly 2,000 of Ukrainian retirees who receive the minimum pension and who have no relatives left to take care of them.

Kudriavtsev, who has already received three aid packages from Starenki, says that even though this help cannot fully cover all of his needs, he is still incredibly grateful for it.

"They (Starenki) prolong our lives," Kudriavtsev told the Kyiv Post.

Helping seniors

The co-founder of Starenki, Iryna Baranenko, 32, says she has always been donating money to seniors in need, but when she moved to Kyiv from Donetsk in 2015 because of Russia's war on Ukraine, she decided that her small donations were not enough.

As she was not able to find any charitable foundations to help retirees, Baranenko decided to set one up herself.

"I was thinking how many people I could help myself. It could be only one retiree per month that I meet at a grocery store or on the street," Baranenko says.

Eventually, Baranenko, together with four other women, all with different occupations and backgrounds, co-founded the Starenki initiative to support Ukrainian retirees in need.

The charitable foundation's aid packages include some basic products like oil, several types of cereals, canned meat and fish, hygiene products and sweets. Other than that, Starenki recently decided to put energy saving light bulbs to help seniors save some money on electricity payments.

Each of the food packages weighs nearly eight kilograms, and costs from Hr 300–450 (\$11–16).

"We see it as a supplement to pension payments, which provides seniors with some additional

Book Review

Occupation of Crimea documented by veteran journalist

Book from page 11

sentence and banned him from any public activity, journalism, and leaving the territory of Crimea.

The English edition doesn't include that very article: A 2015 op-ed titled "Blockade is a necessary first step to the liberation of Crimea" authored by Valentyn Honchar, one of over a dozen of pseudonyms that Semena used after the occupation.

In the op-ed, he argued that Ukraine should have cut off the electricity and food supplies to Crimea on the next day after the Kremlin-appointed authorities had signed an agreement "to join Russia" on March 18, 2014. This would have demonstrated how helpless the Kremlin was, and the residents of Crimea would have seen that Russia can't provide for it, he wrote.

The new illegitimate government promised Crimeans a bright future five years ago. But Semena accurately predicted that many ambitious projects, or as he calls them in the book, "figments of imagination," would never become a reality.

Crimea never got its gambling zone near Mykolaivka village and never developed its IT and science cluster, which the authorities claimed would turn the peninsula into a Silicon Valley. On the contrary, foreign investment dwindled amid the EU and US sanctions. The Chinese abandoned their multi-billion project of building a large port near Yevpatoria. The former chief archi-



Crimean Report, a collection of articles written by a veteran Crimean-Ukrainian journalist Mykola Semena for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, chronicles the first two years of Russian occupation after the February 2014 invasion. The English edition came out in February 2018. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

tect of Simferopol, Ernst Mavlyutov, was quietly fired and will always be remembered for his suggestion to demolish the Old City in order to rebuild it as a city "better than Monaco and Paris."

The new illegitimate government

explicitly lied to paint a picture of a booming economy. Semena reported on manipulations with statistics and census data, overblown agricultural production figures and tourism numbers. The lies were amplified by the Russian state propaganda media that

heralded the KrymNash (Crimea is Ours) campaign as the ultimate triumph of the Russian world. Meanwhile, Semena dispelled the myths about Crimea being "always Russian" and extensively wrote on the peninsula's troubled history.

At the same time, Semena repeatedly appealed to the Ukrainian government for action, believing that Ukraine was losing the information war against Russia, as the Kremlin-appointed authorities banned Ukrainian- and Crimean Tatar newspapers and television stations.

"The population of Crimea is completely isolated from the media space of Ukraine, brainwashed by Russian propaganda, disoriented and doesn't know about the situation in Ukraine," he wrote in June 2014. "If Ukraine wants to return Crimea, Kyiv must create Ukrainian media space in Crimea without a delay."

He opined that Ukraine could not resist the Russian aggression on its own, and the president of Ukraine had to initiate a so-called anti-Putin coalition, a joint international effort for the liberation of Crimea. The coalition had to employ all available measures — political, economic, and legal means, as well as threats of military force — to make Russia return stolen territories.

"The entire Ukrainian policy towards Crimea should be changed so it can serve the purpose of liberating Crimea," he wrote.

"A time will come when the occupation will end, and Crimea will remember it as a nightmare that should never happen again."

For inquiries where to get the book, email the Ministry of the Information Policy of Ukraine at books@mip.gov.ua ■

Anna Vereschak: These seniors 'deserve a proper retirement and a proper life'

Starenki from page 12

resources so they can buy something they really need but cannot afford, or buy medicine," Baranenko says.

Right after the establishment of Starenki its co-founders delivered the aid themselves, but nowadays the foundation has about 60 volunteers who regularly help with deliveries, as well as a community of nearly 450 volunteers in both cities.

Apart from that, the foundation is looking for new people to join their teams, in order to be able to provide more seniors with their aid.

"Physically, it's very difficult for us to support all of the retirees in Kyiv, and we are very dependent on our volunteers," Baranenko says.

Initially, Starenki's volunteers visited retirees only once every three months, but nowadays they deliver aid almost every day, as people have begun to donate more money, providing the foundation the opportunity to give help to more people daily.

Starenki regularly publishes reports of its spending to its official website and Facebook account, as according to Baranenko it is important that everything is transparent.

"This is a strict rule for all of the project's co-founders — to have no financial benefit from this project," Baranenko says.

Julia Fituni, a co-founder of charitable foundation Starenki, looks through old photographs with a retired woman who received aid packages with food and hygiene products from Starenki in Kyiv in 2017. (Violetta Yemelyanova)



Happy retirement

Another co-founder of Starenki, Anna Vereschak, 31, says they aimed to find pensioners who really need their help, but that at the beginning of the project it was unclear how they would find these people.

"Those who really need help they rarely go out, and they are mostly shy (about being in need). They don't

go begging, as many of them were teachers and engineers, but now they are ashamed," Vereschak told the Kyiv Post.

Therefore, the charitable foundation decided to cooperate with local social services centers in Kyiv and Dnipro, which help the foundation find pensioners to help.

To help retirees feel happier and

to entertain them, Starenki also arranges meetings every two weeks at which seniors can enjoy live music shows, eat some sweets and chat with each other.

"We give them an opportunity to communicate," Baranenko says.

Apart from food aid and meetings for retirees, the co-founders of Starenki urge people to

take care of pensioners who live in their neighborhoods as "these people are in actual need now," Baranenko says.

According to Vereschak, they see retirees in tears quite often as they deliver aid.

"It is tough to see seniors who cry when we bring them food, as they should get it easily, they deserve a proper retirement and a proper life," Vereschak says.

"They cry when we bring them some macaroni and buckwheat, and this is so sad," Vereschak says.

Starenki's co-founders also share the idea that a happy retirement depends not only on the size of a pension payment, as they promote the idea that people should get ready to become older, lead a healthy lifestyle and make some savings.

"Yes, pension payments are important. However, it is not the only thing that can make the quality of life at this age a little better," Baranenko says.

Baranenko also says that in Ukraine pensioners seem to be excluded from society, as they mostly spend time at their homes, feeling sick and lonely.

"We dream that one fine day everything becomes so good in our system, in our society, that there is no need for us. This is our goal," Baranenko says. ■

Will friendship or fighting prevail?

Comic from page 11

people have to make plans, cosplayers have to prepare costumes and so on."

Indeed, KCC, for example, announced almost six months in advance that it will hold the festival on June 1–2 this year. CCU has yet to set the date for its event in 2019, but it will probably be in September.

The partners of KCC, like comic stores and publishers, have also received invitations from CCU, Shaghoury says, according to what they have told him. He sees this as unethical.

But there is one thing that seems to tick off KCC's Shaghoury most about CCU.

"In a post on their very first day they started by calling us a false comic con," Shaghoury says.

Well, not really. What CCU wrote was an appeal to the audience: "Let's make a real Comic Con (with a Ukrainian flag emoji) together!" The statement doesn't necessarily imply that other comic cons are false.

International cases

The main arguments CCU uses in its defense are that "comic con" can't be trademarked because it's a generic term even in Ukraine and that there are hundreds of comic cons across the globe that don't sue each other.

"Comic cons have taken place around the world for over 45 years. Among them, similar conventions coexist peacefully: for example,

German Comic Con and Comic Con Germany, Toronto Comicon and Toronto Comic Con," CCU's statement says.

But there have been, in fact, several lawsuits around the "comic con" trademark infringement.

In 2014, the original San Diego Comic-Con (SDCC) sued Salt Lake Comic Con (SLCC) and won. A U.S. court awarded SDCC \$20,000 in damages, although considered the infringement not to be willful.

The media reported that this way SDCC, a non-profit organization, punished SLCC for sending a customized car to SDCC to promote their own event. This incident was specifically cited in the lawsuit.

As a proactive move to avoid legal issues, Phoenix Comicon changed its name to Phoenix Comic Fest and then filed a motion to strike down SDCC's trademark in January 2018. In the same month, SLCC filed a motion for a new trial against SDCC. Both trials are ongoing.

Several comic conventions in the United States have changed their name after the high-profile lawsuits, but most – dozens of comic cons – have not changed their names.

"It would be very superficial to think that events with 'comic con' in their names are held freely. In fact, there are often some agreements in place: either the country's first comic con licenses a franchise or several comic cons belong to the same organization," Shaghoury says.



A cosplayer dressed as a demon poses for a photograph at Kyiv Comic Con on May 21, 2018. Kyiv Comic Con is the city's first comic convention gathering about 12,000 visitors. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

In a case closer to Ukraine, Comic Con Russia won a lawsuit over Comic Con Saint-Petersburg, forcing it to change its name. Now every event with the term "comic con" in its name in Russia belongs to one organization.

"They (Comic Con Russia) had the same implication as KCC has in a suit against us," Priadka says. "Ukrainian courts are far from perfect, but I don't want us to backslide to the level of the Russian Federation."

What fans think

Despite the organizers of KCC and CCU sharing a similar mission – the popularization of comic and entertainment culture – they have not

discussed any settlements outside of court. Shaghoury, who knows Priadka and other CCU's organizers, did not call them before taking them to court. Priadka also didn't make a step forward. Neither side sees any point.

Running a comic con is becoming a big business, with increasingly more profit as the popular culture industry expands, with more people reading comic books and watching superhero movies. As an entertainment and promotional platform, a comic con can bring money in ticket sales and revenues from partners.

CCU says that more than 20,000 people visited their event in 2018. It

estimates that KCC had about 12,000 visitors.

Yakymenko, who supports KCC in the lawsuit, still says that CCU was better organized for both, cosplayers and visitors. He also says that unlike him, most people in the fan community are on the side of CCU.

"Almost all cosplayers hate KCC, saying that 'comic con is not a property,'" Yakymenko says. "But I think KCC has the right to the name because it registered it first. First come, first serve."

Dmytro Danyliuk, who was a participant and a lecturer at KCC and the curator of the comics zone at CCU, says that KCC, which used to unite people around popular culture, is doing the opposite with its lawsuit.

"It was an idea around which everyone came together. And now this one festival wants to usurp this idea, this event format," Danyliuk says. "And it surely doesn't benefit the development of popular culture in our country."

Telizhenko, a cosplayer who met her future husband at KCC, says she tries to stay neutral in the dispute. And like all the fans, she thinks that the more comic cons there are the better, and that Kyiv could use another "one, or four, or five."

"And if they (KCC and CCU) could join forces – they would make something that could bring Ukrainian comic cons to a European level of organization. So I'm all for friendship," Telizhenko says. ■

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The LEGO Foundation

We are a Danish corporate foundation with a core team of dedicated employees with one shared passion: to make children's lives better – and communities stronger – by making sure the fundamental value of play is understood, embraced and acted upon. If you want to be the part of our team to make difference to the education system in Ukraine – join us!

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KfW, the German development bank, is recruiting a national Project Coordinator for its infrastructure programs in Ukraine. Within the framework of German-Ukrainian financial cooperation, KfW is consolidating and expanding its portfolio, amongst others, in the areas of municipal energy efficiency and electricity transmission. The Project Coordinator will report to the Director of the KfW office in Kyiv and work closely with the responsible Project Managers at KfW headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

The main responsibilities shall include:

- To liaise with and advise the national project partners and other stakeholders of financial cooperation activities;
- To discuss with, advise and support the responsible sector teams at KfW HQ in identification, preparation and implementation of financial cooperation projects;
- To monitor and report on relevant developments, policies and donor activities mainly in relation to the energy sector;
- To contribute to the fulfillment of supervisory and reporting requirements;
- To support donor coordination efforts in consultation with the German Embassy;
- To provide organisational support to, and participate in, KfW missions visiting Ukraine.

The required qualifications are:

- University degree in engineering, economics or another relevant area;
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- Experience in the initiation, preparation and implementation of public investment projects in Ukraine;
- Excellent oral and written Ukrainian/Russian and English;
- Project management, organization as well as oral and written presentation skills;
- Ability and readiness to travel in- and outside Ukraine.

The following features will be considered as additional advantages:

- Additional university degree(s) in relevant areas;
- Longer professional experience;
- Experience in working for international development finance institutions;
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Please address your applications in German or English, which must include an up-to-date CV, electronically to vacancies-kyiv@kfw.de no later than **15th of April 2019**. Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for interviews. Questions should be directed to the email address named above.

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SALE OF NON-RESIDENTIAL PREMISES
Kyiv, Ukraine
Moskovska Street is in the central area of the city of Kyiv.
The premises is located near Lesi Ukrainky Boulevard – one of the main arterial streets of the city. The building was constructed in 2006 as a special project. It has from 10 to 24 floors. The building type is cast-in-place concrete frame. The asking price – UAH 3,697,744 ONO.
General and technical information for the non-residential premises:
The property is based on the 2nd floor of a 24-floor building • the premises have fine both internal and external decorations • the total area is 123.6 sq m • the building area consists of 160.68 sq m • the ceiling height is 3.3 sq m • the material of the walls is brick • the dividing walls are plastered, consisting of brick and gypsum board • the premises have timber doors and metal-plastic windows • the floor is made with paving tiles • the interior decoration includes wallpapered walls, whitewashed ceilings, and oil and water mixture painted areas • utility systems include electric power and water supplies, and autonomous heating and sewerage systems.
Non-residential premises No 1 - 8, 30% of balcony (group of premises No 144 - in letter A) at 46/2, Moskovska Street
tel: +38 044 221 04 54

SALE OF FOUR-ROOM APARTMENT & PARKING SPOT
Kyiv, Ukraine
Lesi Ukrainky Boulevard belongs to Pecherskyi District in Kyiv (the right bank of the Dnipro River).
The building was constructed in 2010. It has 29 floors. The construction material of the walls is brick. With regard to infrastructure, the following is located nearby the building: Pecherska and Klovska metro stations • Oleksandrivska Clinical Hospital • Main Military Clinical Hospital.
The asking price of the apartment and parking spot – UAH 11,130,361 ONO.
General and technical information of apartment:
The property is based on the 15th-17th floors of 29-floor building • the apartment does not have decoration and is incomplete • the total area is 335.3 sq m • the living area consists of 149.8 sq m • the area of the kitchen is about 97.7 sq m • the area of the terrace is 3.3 sq m.
General and technical information of parking lot:
The total area of the parking slot is 15.5 sq m • located in basement No. 1 in the underground parking area • the technical condition is incomplete • the footings are piled and reinforced concrete, the walls are concrete panels, the floors are concrete, and the coverings are also reinforced concrete plates.
Four-room apartment No. 35 and parking slot No. 65 at 7-B, Lesi Ukrainky Boulevard
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SALE OF TWO-ROOM APARTMENT
Kyiv, Ukraine
Ivana Franka Street is in Shevchenkivskyi District of Kyiv (on the right bank of the Dnipro River).
The building was constructed in 1938. It has six floors. The construction material of the walls is brick. With regard to infrastructure, the following is located nearby the building: • Bohdana Khmelnytskogo Street • Yaroslav Val Street • Zolotovirskyi Park • Sofiivska Square and Mykhailivska Square.
The asking price – UAH 2,561,723 ONO.
General and technical information:
The property is based on the 1st floor of a six-floor building • the apartment is in a good technical condition • the total area is 69.1 sq m • the living area consists of 42.9 sq m • the area of the kitchen comprises of 12.4 sq m • the ceiling height is 3.3 sq m • no balcony • the materials of the floor are industrial carpet and tile • the apartment has timber doors and metal-plastic windows • the interior decoration consists of wallpapered walls, whitewashed ceilings, and ceramic tiles in the kitchen and bathroom • utility systems include electric power, gas and water supplies, heating and sewerage systems.
Two-room apartment No 12 at 9, Ivana Franka Street
tel: +38 044 221 04 54

SALE OF TWO-ROOM APARTMENT
Kyiv, Ukraine
Chervonoarmiyska Street is in Pecherskyi District in Kyiv (on the right bank of the Dnipro River).
The building was constructed in 1917. It has five floors. The construction material of the walls is brick. With regard to infrastructure, the following is located nearby the building: • Lva Tolstoho Square • Shevchenko Park • Taras Shevchenko Boulevard.
The asking price – UAH 2,343,632 ONO.
General and technical information:
The property is based on the 1st floor of a five-floor building • the apartment is in good condition • the total area is 66.4 sq m • the ceiling height is 4.7 sq m • the materials of the floor are laminated flooring and tiles • the apartment has timber doors and metal-plastic windows • the interior decoration consists of wallpapered walls, whitewashed ceilings, and ceramic tiles in the kitchen and bathroom • utility systems include electric power, gas and water supplies, heating and sewerage systems.
Two-room apartment, No. 34 at 25, Chervonoarmiyska Street
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