

Ukrainian Sports Museum inducts second Hall of Fame class

Ukrainian Sports Museum

WHIPPANY, N.J. – The Ukrainian Sports Museum held its second annual Ukrainian Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey (UACCNJ) in Whippany on Saturday, September 16. Fifty individuals and three teams were inducted into the hall's class of 2017. Categories for induction were Olympic athletes, professionals, amateurs and "builders."

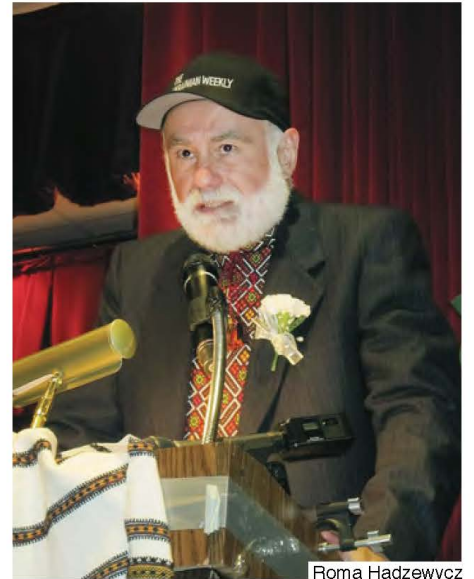
Some 180 guests attended, enjoying a cocktail hour, catered dinner, fund-raising raffle and a special celebratory cake honoring Canada's 150th birthday in addition to the evening's main event.

Returning master of ceremonies Ihor Stelmach, long-time sports correspondent for The Ukrainian Weekly, himself a 2017



Oksana Sorochan

Eugene Melnyk, owner of the Ottawa Senators team of the National Hockey League.



Roma Hadzewycz

Ihor Stelmach, sports writer for The Ukrainian Weekly since the 1970s, was among the 2017 inductees. He also served as the event's master of ceremonies.



Roman Petryk (right), chairman of Ukrainian Selfreliance Federal Credit Union, presents a donation for the Ukrainian Sports Hall of Fame to Myron Bytz.

Hall of Fame inductee, led the evening's program. His bilingual, lyrical opening remarks about sports flowed into trivial facts about select Hall of Famers and he again donned some 18 different sports caps, representing specific themes or an inducted athlete's team.

This year's Hall of Fame class included 40 persons still living, 13 deceased; 26 Americans, 19 Canadians and three from Ukraine; 47 males and six females. Fourteen represented the sport of soccer, eight – hockey, four each – volleyball and boxing. Thirteen different sports were represented.

Myron Bytz, president of the board of directors of the Ukrainian Sports Museum, officially greeted the assembled guests and spoke of the museum's achievements and

growth over the past year. He introduced his board members/partners: Christine Bytz (his wife), Roman Bulawski, Teodor Bodnar, Bohdan Porytko and Tania Soltys, acknowledging their grand efforts in the organization's success.

A major highlight of the evening was the presence of Eugene Melnyk, Ukrainian owner of the National Hockey League's Ottawa Senators, who flew in on his private jet from his home in Barbados. Mr. Melnyk, an inductee in the builders category, was one of the evening's two keynote speakers. His inspirational message could be characterized by one simple word: passion.

Mr. Melnyk explained how his love for horses was passed down to him from a

(Continued on page 16)

Ukrainian National Association Inc.

will host a presentation

"OPPORTUNITIES WITH UNA"



Saturday,
October 21, 2017
from 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

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The presentation
will be attended by
UNA Treasurer Roma Lisovich
and UNA National Secretary
Yuriy Symczyk.

UNA Detroit District Fall Organizing Meeting
will follow the presentation.

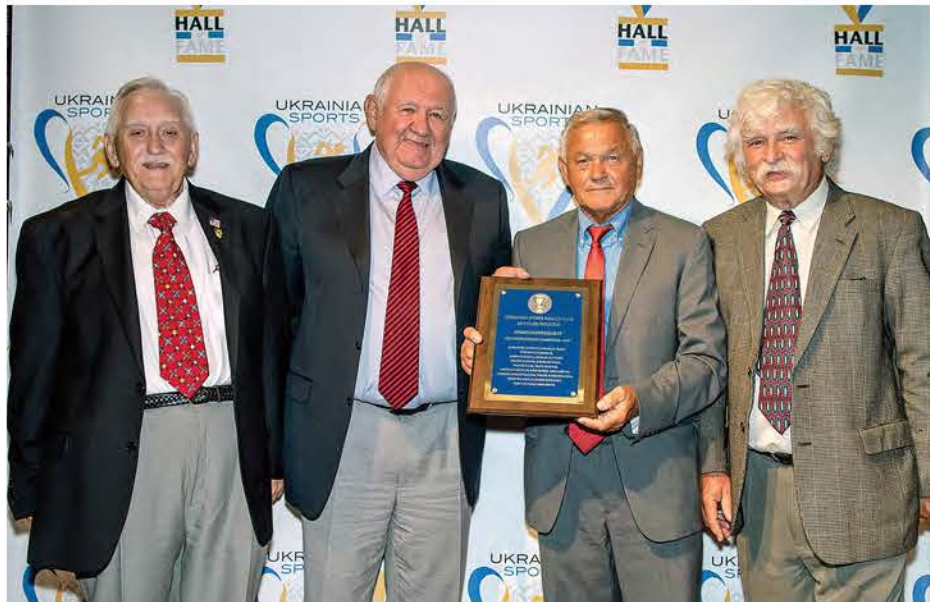
Ukrainian Sports...

(Continued from page 5)

dear uncle, eventually leading to owning several racehorses and his induction into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame. His passion for hockey, a sport he grew up playing, manifested itself later in life, when in 2002 he had the opportunity to purchase the Ottawa Senators hockey club. He did so with the firm understanding the club would remain in Ottawa and never relocate.

He then passionately expressed his patriotism by spearheading medical relief efforts to war-torn eastern Ukraine and proposed a boycott of sponsors of the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia to protest its involvement in the war in eastern Ukraine.

A second highlight was the presence of Vasily Karlenko from Kyiv, officially repre-



Inducted as a team: the New York Ukrainian Sports Club Juniors, who won the U.S. Junior Soccer Championship in 1959.



Oksana Sorochan

Professional boxer Chuck Wepner.



Orest Kindrachuk of the National Hockey League's Philadelphia Flyers, Pittsburgh Penguins and Washington Capitals.



Lesia Bilak Schinerer, whose tennis career took her from Ukraine to the U.S.



Yuri Kobziar, who was inducted for his skiing prowess, also accepted the honor bestowed on his late father, Ivan Volodymyr Kobziar, for soccer.

select honored guests. These included flags, medals, jackets, hats, autographed items and certificates of merit.

Among the 2017 inductees present at the event were ex-Philadelphia Flyers center and two-time Stanley Cup champion Orest Kindrachuk and heavyweight boxer Chuck Wepner (his mother was Dolores Hrynko). Both pro athletes reiterated great pride in their Ukrainian heritage and expressed sincere gratitude for being recognized by the Ukrainian Hall of Fame.

In an effort to continue the museum's growth, several organizations and an individual pledged generous donations which were disclosed by Mr. Bytz. A \$10,000 donation was made by the Ukrainian Selfreliance Credit Union in Philadelphia; \$5,000 was donated by the Ukrainian Heritage Bank Foundation in Chicago. Selfreliance Ukrainian American Federal Credit Union in Whippany gave \$1,000, as did Mr. Melnyk of the Ottawa Senators. Contributions of \$500 each were received from SUMA Federal Credit Union in Yonkers, N.Y., and the Ukrainian National Credit Union in New York.

Mr. Bytz announced that the Ukrainian Sports Museum and Hall of Fame would soon be relocating from the UACCNJ in Whippany to the Tryzub sports complex in Horsham, Pa., having outgrown its present premises. The move will allow the museum to be more cost effective, provide necessary space for the growing institution and place it in the middle of a strong Ukrainian sports environment.

EDITOR'S NOTE: To see the list of 2017 inductees into the Ukrainian Sports Hall of Fame, as well as the inaugural class from 2016, go to <http://www.ukrsportsmuseum-hof.org/>.

sending President Serhiy Bubka of the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine. Mr. Karlenko is the head of the Athletics Department and Cycling of the Ukrainian Institute of Physical Education and Sports and head coach of Ukraine's powerful biathlon team. He has been tasked with the responsibility of strengthening relations between the diaspora and Ukraine.

Mr. Karlenko gave a short address extolling the virtues and importance of the Ukrainian Sports Museum as an international institution, fully supported by Ukraine's National Olympic Committee. Mr. Karlenko arrived with many items of memorabilia and sports artifacts from Ukraine which were donated to the Ukrainian Sports Museum and awarded to members of the museum's board of directors and



Vasily Karlenko, head coach of Ukraine's National Biathlon Team.



Columbia University basketball player Ulana Lysniak (right) with her sister Lada.

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