

Ukrainian Open World Leadership Delegates Hosted by PTPI- Greater Phoenix AZ Chapter



The Ukrainian delegates along with the Ukrainian-American

An important event occurred here in the Valley of the Sun. Five Ukrainian delegates and their facilitator came to Arizona to learn more about how our American government is designed to work. Of the Ukrainian delegates visiting Phoenix, two were Mayors, two council members, and one secretary of their respective towns. The towns were in areas near Kiev and Lviv. Their towns' populations range in size from 970 to 20,000. Their visit was planned and coordinated by Ruth Allen and Margaret Dubois of the People to People International-Greater Phoenix AZ Chapter (PTPI-GPAC) with a grant from the Open World Leadership Program, <http://www.openworld.gov> which is administered by the Library of Congress and funded by the U.S. Congress. In Washington D.C., eight other such groups, all from Ukraine, had a day's debriefing before they headed off to different states.

The group flew from Kiev to Washington D.C, where they spent a day with others from Ukraine in an orientation and visited the

Capitol where they were met with the Chief of Staff for Congressman Pastor. They then traveled on Friday to Arizona where they were welcomed with a lovely reception at PTPI-Greater Phoenix AZ Chapter's (PTPI-GPAC) board member Joan Ward. The next day they were whisked off to see the Grand Canyon!

On Sunday, a welcoming event was held in their honor at the Ukrainian Cultural Center of Phoenix. It was an emotional time for many to view the traditional bread and salt greeting, and local Ukrainian-American folk dancing. Each Ukrainian delegate then presented information about his or her town and role in it, followed by a potluck luncheon supplied by members of the Ukrainian-American community. It was a crowd of about 100 people, comprised of members of PTPI-GPAC, host families and local Ukrainian-Americans.

The main purpose of the Ukrainian delegates' visit was to inform them in the ways our three branches of government work to assure transparency, openness, and accountability. With that aim in mind, many different lectures and informational sessions were given by various people, organizations like the



Mayor Jim Lane of Scottsdale and Oleksii, delegate from Ukraine

Greater Phoenix Economic Council, a day long training session with the Center for Progressive Leadership, legislators, city council members, the city manager of Guadalupe, the economic development specialist from Gila Bend, the city planner of Scottsdale, and city mayors and/or councilmen from Scottsdale, Tempe, and Guadalupe. A high point was meeting the

Mayor of Scottsdale Jim Lane, as he gave them an hour of his time and willingly posed for photos many times.

Another session was presented by Attorney James Huntwork, who explained his involvement in law and election reform in Ukraine after Ukrainian independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. He compiled and had translated laws for possible use by the new government, which could encourage business and allow private ownership. He also set up a system of public observation of elections in Russia (under Gorbachev), Ukraine, and Armenia.

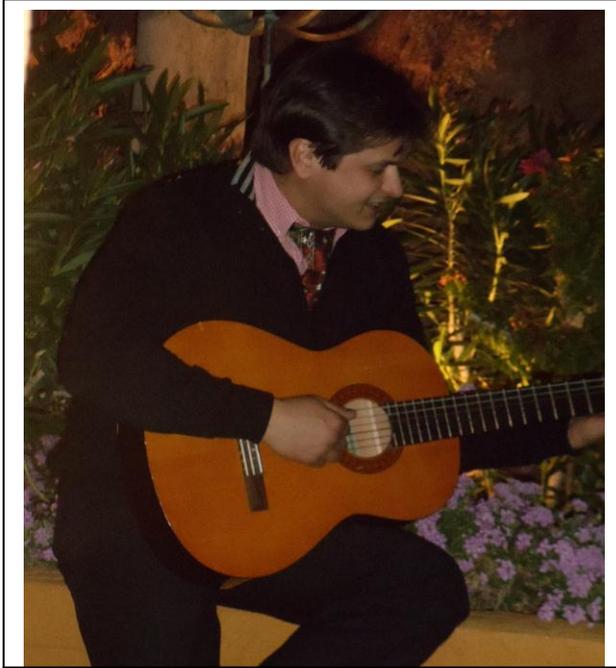
Joseph A. Kanefield, President of Arizona State Bar, explained to the delegates the importance of an Independent Bar (Law Association). Another day, Judge Orest Jejna and Attorney Patience Huntwork spoke on the importance of an Independent Judiciary.



Former U.S. Congressman Harry Mitchell with the delegates

The delegates toured the Arizona State Capitol, viewed Native-American dancing, enjoyed shopping trips, a Suns Game, home Bar-B-Qs, area restaurants, and host family meals and hospitality. In addition, every day, former U.S. Representative Harry Mitchell was there to explain any questions the delegates had. Our farewell party was held in the home of a PTPI member, where guests could overlook the city lights of the Valley, while eating Mexican food, listening to Ukrainian folk songs, and making presentations of gifts and promises of visiting Ukraine.

Many thanks to all involved who helped make their visit the special week that it was.



Above: Singing favorite Ukrainian folksongs

Right: Dancing to a lively Ukrainian song



If you are interested in becoming involved with PTPI-Greater Phoenix Arizona Chapter or to learn more about what we are doing, check our webpage www.ptpiaz.org or become a fan on Facebook.