

# **The Washington Group**

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**June 5, 2005**

**This will be my last annual President's report as I do not plan to seek another term of office. I have had the distinct honor and pleasure to be President of The Washington Group (TWG) for over 5 years, having first been elected President in June 2000, and it is now time to turn over the helm to a member of the younger generation. I am very glad to report that The Washington Group, as usual, had a very active, interesting, and productive year sponsoring numerous diverse political, social, educational and cultural activities. All of the events were very well attended. I do not plan to enumerate each and every TWG event in my report as there are too many events to mention. Furthermore, most of these events will be discussed in reports of other officers. I do plan to mention a few events that, in my opinion, are of special note.**

**There is no question that this year's event of the year, maybe of all time, was TWG's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Leadership Conference and Banquet in June 2004 at the Key Bridge Marriott. It was an affair to remember. The theme of the conference was "TWG at 20: Reflection, Renewal and Celebration". The conference reflected on the events that occurred during TWG's 20 year history. One of the highlights of the conference was the Ambassador's Forum which focused and reflected on the history of U.S. – Ukraine relations as seen through the eyes of Ambassadors Oleh Bilorus, William G. Miller, and Steven Pifer. During the banquet, a slide show organized by Natalie Sluzar allowed conference participants to reflect on TWG's**

history and on the role many of them played in TWG events. At the conference, I had the pleasure of presenting TWG Honorary Memberships to both the current Ambassador to the U.S. Mykhailo Reznik and to the former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Steven Pifer. The featured speakers at the conference were General Kostyantyn Morozov, Ukraine's first defense minister, and Ambassador Mykhailo Reznik. The conference was preceded by an elegant reception sponsored by TWG and hosted by the Embassy of Ukraine.

Among some of the other more notable events that TWG sponsored this year included presentations by Hon. Borys Tarasiuk, the present Foreign Minister of Ukraine, on the political situation in Ukraine, Ambassador Mykhailo Reznik on U.S. – Ukraine relations, and author and Professor Lubomyr Luciuk on the role of the Ukrainian Diaspora post the “Orange Revolution”. Finally, TWG was extremely fortunate in that we (TWG in conjunction with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars) were able to sponsor a presentation by the Hon. Richard Green Lugar, United States Senator from Indiana, on the topic of “A Changing Ukraine”. Senator Lugar traveled to Ukraine to observe the Ukrainian Presidential elections as well as the “Orange Revolution” and then reported his findings and observations to the President of the United States. It should be noted that Senator Lugar is one of the most knowledgeable U.S. politicians on the subject of U.S. – Ukraine relations.

As President of TWG, I represented TWG on the National Shevchenko Commemoration Committee and actively participated in the planning and the organizing of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Unveiling of the Monument to Taras Shevchenko in Washington, DC. But more importantly, I had the privilege of

having served as one of the five (5) co-chairs of the Welcoming Committee for President Yushchenko when he came to the U.S. on an official visit in April 2005. As co-chair, I was actively involved in the planning and organizing of the welcoming ceremonies for President Yushchenko and his wife at the Shevchenko monument as well as in the planning and organizing of the Banquet in honor of the Ukrainian President at the Omni Shoreham Hotel which took place on April 6, 2005. Additionally, I represented TWG at various State Department and White House briefings on Ukraine as well as at conferences sponsored by other Ukrainian organizations and numerous Embassy affairs and events.

As you all know, TWG also has two very active organizational components: the TWG Cultural Fund (TWGCF) and the TWG Fellowship Fund (TWGFF). First of all, I would like to note that TWGCF had another extremely successful year. TWGCF, headed by its long-time Director Ms. Laryssa Courtney for the first part of the year and now by its current Director Ms. Svitlana Shiells, under the patronage of the Embassy of Ukraine, sponsored and presented a number of world class musicians, musical groups, singers, and traditional folk ensembles in its 2004-2005 Music Series. TWGCF, in cooperation with the Embassy of Ukraine, also hosted and sponsored a number of art shows and literary evenings featuring noted Ukrainian artists, sculptors and writers at the Embassy. More detailed information about all of the TWGCF events can be found in its Annual Report.

The TWGFF, headed by Mr. Michael Drabyk, has also been very active. Under Mr. Drabyk's capable management, the TWGFF was able to raise the funds, in a very short period of time I might add, necessary to fund the "2004 TWG

**Fellowship Fund Embassy Internship” at the Embassy of Ukraine. The increasing popularity of the program is reflected in and evidenced by the fact that this year the TWG Embassy Internship Program has attracted a record number of highly qualified applicants. The activities of the fund are detailed in its Annual Report.**

**TWG socials continue to be popular and offer our members and prospective members an opportunity to meet on a regular basis where they can socialize and network. The socials continue to be held on the first Friday of each month.**

**The Washington Group, as an organization, has something to offer every member of the Ukrainian community and, therefore, continues to attract many dedicated and talented Ukrainian American professionals to its ranks. We all need to support its activities throughout the year so that our organization can remain vibrant and relevant.**

**I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors and its officers for their cooperation and hard work during this year as well as in the past years. I would also like to thank all the TWG members for the confidence, trust, and the generous support you have given me and the Board. Special thanks go to Ambassador Mykhail Reznik, Ms. Natalia Hulub, (Cultural Attache) who earlier this year received an award from TWG, and to all the diplomats and staff for their support of TWG. As you all know, many of our TWG events were jointly sponsored and held on the premises of the Embassy of Ukraine.**

**I hope that you will continue to support TWG and its various activities in future years. Thank you.**

**Ihor O.E. Kotlarchuk, Esq.  
President**