

Dear friends,

I'm back from camp, and for a change, reasonable healthy. It was a great time, as always. I wish to thank you, as do all the children at camp, for your kind and generous support this year. I had a wonderful time, as did the children. Their most common complaint was that camp was ending so soon. Several told me that these were the best two weeks of their lives. One of the girls, a returnee from last year, told us that, whenever she got blue or depressed, she would find her camp diary from last year, read the entries, and immediately be cheered up. You are doing a wonderful thing in supporting these children.

This year we had some 350 children, a few more than last year. As before, the children were split into three groups. The younger ones, ages 12 to 17, were split among two campuses, Basa Ukraina and Basa Avanthard. The older kids, those of college age, were once more up on Mahora, a survival camp up on a mountain.

This year, as always, the most of the children arrived, by train, in the middle of the night. They had travelled long distances, and many of them had been en route for two or more days. They were tired but excited. There were many happy reunions, as kids from previous years returned and recognized us. We rounded them up, sorted them out, walked them to their assigned camps, and put them to bed for the night. The following morning, they received their supplies (shoes, clothing, toiletries, etc.), showered, and had their medical exams¹.

Basa Ukraina is right in the heart of Vorohta, a town of sanatoriums in the Carpathian mountains. It is the larger of the two bases, and there were over two hundred children from 19 internaty (orphanage-schools) there.

Basa Avanthard, my camp, is some two kilometers out of town, but only a ten minute walk from the natural spring that supplied all of our drinking water. It is also the summer home of the Ukrainian National Ski Jump team, although they were on holiday this summer while we were there. In previous years we had the opportunity to watch them practice jumping every morning. We had some 140 children from 14 internaty at our camp.

Basa Mahora was a rough, tough survival sort of camp up in the mountains, run by mountain men Bo and Orchyck. The kids there were those who had been to camp in previous years and been recognized as having potential, but were too old to return to regular camp. All were attending some higher institution of learning, many thanks to scholarships provided by HUHTC. They spent their time on long, multi-day treks through the mountains.

Our younger kids had a more formal program. Every minute of every day (almost) was scheduled and accounted for. At 0715 the whistles would blow and we would all rise (well, most of us....); at 0730 we would gather outside for **zbirka**—first we had morning calisthenics, then the order of the day would be read, and then we would repeat the Lord's Prayer and sing the Ukrainian National Anthem ("Ukraine has not Died Yet²").

After that would be a filling, if not necessarily tasty, hot breakfast. Then the work of the day would begin. The children would go off to their "**maysternyi**"--group sessions which could be didactic, interactive, or a combination of both. This year our sessions included

1. History (early 20th century Ukrainian)
2. Floral Arts³
3. Mass Media⁴

¹ This year we had several doctors from Lviv helping out, so we split into two groups, and examined boys and girls separately. It went much faster, and we examined all 350+ by dinner time. Among the findings were several cases of scabies (we had a dermatologist with us) and the usual skin infections.

This year we also had two dentists, who checked all of the kids' teeth, and selected out the worst ones. These kids were shuttled on a daily basis to Ivano-Frankivsk, where our dentists had access to a dental chair and could do some serious repair work.

² I kid you not. Having spent so much of its recent (post 14th century) history under foreign hegemony, Ukraine has somewhat of a national inferiority complex. We've spent much of recent history trying to convince the world that we really exist. I should add that there is a TV program, and a fairly popular one, called "Things could be worse."

³ The children learned how to weave baskets and make all kinds of floral arrangements and wreaths. This was particularly useful as we had two holidays, Malanka (New Year's Day) and Spass (harvest festival), which required such skills. The children and their Floristica teachers made wreaths, huge straw stars, and all sorts of arrangements for the tables for Malanka, as well as individual baskets for blessing for Spass.

4. Psychology⁵
5. Spirituality
6. Health⁶
7. Social Interaction⁷
8. Kozak Martial Arts⁸
9. Singing/Traditions/Folklore⁹
10. Petrikivsky Painting¹⁰
11. Handcrafts¹¹
12. Sports
13. Mountain Climbing

The first eleven sessions were once weekly during the two weeks. Sports was twice a week, plus the equipment was available during the kids' free time and during their small-group sessions in the afternoon. The kids learned to play baseball, and had a great time riding the bikes around and around and around and around the compound. (I am convinced that there are a few of them who spent their entire two weeks doing nothing but riding the bikes.) Mountain climbing was a once a week, all day long affair. In the first week, the kids climber Hoverla, the highest mountain in Ukraine. In the second week, they hiked through the mountains to the Nesamovite Ozero (Haunted/Frenzied Lake), fourteen kilometers each way through breath-taking scenery. One group got to do both trips in the rain and cold.

My maysternya was health this year (not Easter egg making, like last year), as I was the camp physician and medical director. I had done the same thing two years ago, so I merely had to recreate all my notes (I had leant them out and they had not been returned) and make posters. Anna, who taught the same thing at the other Basa, gave me a set of her notes (in Ukrainian!) and some Canadian health posters. In the end, it turned out surprisingly well.

The first week, we did a "getting to know each other" activity, and then discussed alcohol and tobacco, and a bit about drugs, subjects about which the kids had a lot of knowledge—many of them came from alcoholic homes, and all of them had been exposed to smoking. Most of them had a well-founded fear of alcohol, having seen the worst of what it could do¹². They knew a lot about tobacco, too—partly because of the government's new anti-smoking campaign, and partly because so much of the population smokes¹³. One of our activities was listing brand names of cigarettes; one of the groups (of young girls) knew thirty seven!!!!

⁴ This seemed to consist mostly of kids taking turns looking through a camera. I have quite a few photos of the kids looking through the camera. They very much enjoy looking through cameras, and spent a lot of time looking through mine. Some sorts of videos were shot (I know I was interviewed) for the use of the Canadian organization.

⁵ This was held down the hall from me, and included a lot of sitting quietly (i.e. meditating) to some horrible new age music.

⁶ My session. More about this later.

⁷ I'm not sure what this was really about; in Ukrainian it was called "Culture". My friend Andy ran the session at Basa Ukraina, and had a segment where there was group problem-solving. Somehow it included getting over an obstacle. The kids did well except for one, who flew over it a bit too well when his attention was distracted; she became the first casualty. Luckily, after falling, the girl came to pretty quickly, and seemed to have no residual problems.

⁸ This was quite amazing. We had a bunch of kozaks (Ukrainian warriors), shaved heads and all, teaching the kids martial arts and self defense. The girls were involved, too—it's amazing what you can do with a scarf!!!!

⁹ The group Vertep, from the city of Ternopil, was here again this year. They collect and preserve Ukrainian folk songs. They taught the kids traditional shchedrivky (new year's songs, most of which are quite pagan in origin) and the songs and traditions of Spass.

¹⁰ This is a traditional style of Ukrainian painting, from the town of the same name. The subject is usually floral, and it is done with a particular sort of brush stroke. The painting is usually done on wooden plates, but our kids had to settle for paper ones.

¹¹ Kids really love handcrafts, especially anything involving those plastic laces, which they call "gimp". They made little purses from leather, and lots of bracelets from the gimp, and loved every minute of it. At the other Basa, they also seem to have gotten into match stick and popsicle stick architecture.

¹² One way the Soviet government kept the people in line as by making vodka very cheap and readily available. A drunk populace is much less likely to complain or rise up than a sober one.

¹³ A by-product of Independence and the ability of Western companies to now conduct business here. As people in the USA and other western countries have quit smoking in large numbers, and as smoking has become socially and legally unacceptable, Western cigarette companies have targeted the third world to make up for their

I then had the kids make, individually or in groups, various health-related posters. They were allowed to pick the subject of their choice, and had access to markers, crayons and colored pencils. They loved this, and really got into the planning and execution of the art work. As an added bonus, I decided to have a competition, with judging and prizes to be awarded the following week. The posters they created were amazing, with styles ranging from abstract expressionism to highly realistic to allegorical. Subjects included smoking, alcohol, drugs, AIDS, and various combinations of the above. Some were so heart-felt, that I knew they sprang from personal tragedy. One, my personal favorite, looked like Edvard Munch's The Scream on acid; I hung it in my room for quite a long time.

The second week we broached the subjects of relationships, sexuality and HIV/AIDS (called SNID in Ukrainian). These are inseparable, and are particularly important to these kids. Ukraine had the highest growth rate of AIDS of any European nation, and no medical infrastructure to deal with it¹⁴. The children knew quite a bit about AIDS and its transmission; their health education has been good. They also believed quite a few myths (e.g. transmission of AIDS by mosquitoes) that I did my best to debunk. We discussed how to avoid AIDS, but also talked about friendship, love, abstinence and sexuality.

Their favorite part, however, was the condom¹⁵ demonstration. It consisted of me using a cucumber (pickling, not salad) to demonstrate the proper application of a condom, with the assistance of a member of the audience. But it was more than just application technique. We discussed the importance of inspecting and of using condoms, and common guy excuses¹⁶ for not using condoms. It was all done with a sense of humor and was quite the hit.

The kids were kept quite busy even when they weren't in any of the three maysterni per day. From three to six each day they had **group activities**. They would review what they had learned that day, prepare for the evening program, and get ready for upcoming events (such as the yarmarok/bazaar at the end of camp). In the evenings we had various **evening activities** planned (I think that our camp director agrees with the Puritans that "idle hands are the Devil's workshop"). There were several discos¹⁷, a masquerade ball, "vohnyky", a candidates' debate night, an election night, and two big vatry.

losses. There is a huge amount of advertising, and it is everywhere. The kids all know the names of lots of brands, even the Western one. The Marlboro man still rides in Ukraine.

The life expectancy in the former Soviet bloc has been dropping recently, and is quite low compared to Western Europe (app. 61 years for men). This is due in part to the horrible industrial pollution and the aftereffects of Chernobyl, but also due to the high rate of alcohol and tobacco abuse.

On the bright side, there is a bit of anti-smoking activity on the part of the government. Recently, smoking has been banned in some public places, and there are anti-smoking ads. Alcohol is more expensive now than in the past, due to increased taxes, but home brewing has increased.

¹⁴ Although medical care is, by law, free and available to all, in reality it isn't. The government has created an unfunded mandate—it directs the doctors and hospitals to provide care to one and all, but does not provide any funding outside of paying their heating and electrical bills. What testing can be done is unreliable at best; equipment is old, the electrical supply is often intermittent, refrigeration is iffy, and calibrating solutions are often unavailable or too expensive.

Medications are rarely found in the hospitals and clinics; they are available on the open market, but at western prices. In a country where \$100 a month is a good wage, who can possibly afford anti-AIDS medications costing thousands of dollars a month?

¹⁵ This was not as simple as it sounds. The pharmacy committee sent us a box of twelve condoms, to be split between the three camps. I soon discovered that, even for demonstration purposes, condoms can't really be reused—they just don't roll back up properly. I asked my room mate, Maryna, to pick some up for me from the pharmacy in town. She came back giggling—she and Svita had thoroughly confused the pharmacist by asking for a dozen condoms. He had sold them the four (mind you, this is the entire supply for the town of Vorohta), and told them he could get more by Saturday, but they told him it would be too late, they needed them that day!

I then asked Vitaly to pick some up on his next trip to Ivano-Frankivsk, the state capitol. He forgot, so had to borrow two from the "Ternopil boys" until he could get them the next day. The Ternopil condoms came in handy, not the least bit because one was in a package so old, that a ring of ink had worn off of the foil over the condom itself. I used that one as an example of what not to avoid!

¹⁶ My favorite being, of course, "I'm too big, it won't fit". To debunk this, I would blow one up like a balloon until it was about the size of a watermelon, and then comment that I'd never seen any Ukrainian guys, macho as they might be, who was quite this big!

¹⁷ The discos were fun, but dancing was only a small part of it. Mostly there was a lot of mingling and just plain hanging out. The younger girls would do group dancing, while the younger guys would sit on the benches and look cool. There was some couples dancing, but not much. Since our female to male ratio was almost 2:1, this was

The first evening, it was “Getting to Know You” night. The kids gathered in the Sports Hall, and were presented by internat/orphanage. They introduced themselves, and performed for us. Some danced, some sang, others performed humorous skits. A few gave us gifts—local water or melons they had brought with them, or handicrafts that the children had made. It was all quite nice.

We had several discos (these were held on nights when there was nothing else planned), a masquerade (for which everyone made masks, and some had more elaborate costumes), and even a business seminar night. Diana from Kiev got a bunch of Ukrainian business people (the real kind, not the mafiosi) to come and talk the kids, in small sessions, all about real world business. Everyone expected it to be boring, but it wasn’t—they provided practical information, and tales of their adventures in the business world (in Ukraine, still a bit like the wild, wild west).

We had two vohnyky—“little fires.” These were done on a group basis; a group, or sometimes two, would prepare a site, and build a fire for the evening. Everyone would gather, there would be singing and games. It was a bonding experience. Michael, our camp commander, brought his guitar and sang with us. One night there were marshmallows¹⁸; the next we had shashlyky¹⁹. The days we scheduled the vohnyky attracted rain; we changed the first one and had a nice dry event, but the second was wet.

One afternoon, shortly after the arrival of the tardy American boxes, I broke out my box of sidewalk chalk. The kids really loved it. They spent hours drawing up the sidewalks. Some wrote their names, many drew flowers, at least two drew a HUHTC logo, and several of the boys drew a really huge Chicago Bulls tribute—logo, basketball net, etc. One group even drew me! After the drawing was done, all that remained were a handful of tiny chalk stubs not quite big enough to even write with.

Our first Saturday, we had our big yatra (bonfire), at which all three camps participated. It was a huge event—the Prime Minister of Ukraine and his wife²⁰ attended, as well as the local governor, county chairman, and several mayors²¹. The show was good—dancing²², singing, acrobatics²³, kozak hopak²⁴, humorous skits. One of my fellow campers, Maka, has

not surprising. The music was pop, some of it horrible Europop, a small bit of it Russian pop, and a lot more American music than in past years. Hip hop is quite popular here, and I saw quite a few backwards baseball caps, a few backwards sunglasses, and even baggy, droopy trousers.

¹⁸ These have become a traditional part of camp, and the kids really look forward to them. They are still not found naturally in Ukraine, and are quite the delicacy. Some of the counsellors, having had no previous experience with them, were heard to caution the kids not to eat them raw, but to make sure they were well cooked!

¹⁹ Ukrainian shish kebabs. They are marinated and then cooked over the camp fire, and are quite yummy. I missed out on the shashlyky at our camp; it rained that night, and I assumed the fires would be canceled. I did get to have some at Basa Ukraina, and it was quite chewy.

²⁰ Katia Yushchenko is American by birth, from Chicago. She is on the board of directors of Help Us Help the Children, Inc, and actually was there for much of the camp.

²¹ We had many visitors to our camp throughout the two weeks we were there. Besides the Prime Minister and his wife, we had Steve. Steve was an American not of Ukrainian descent who had heard about our organization and decided to do something to help it. Along with his friend Alexandra, he had decided to bicycle across Europe to raise money, starting in Paris and ending up in our camp in Vorohtha.

As Steve tells it, France was quite friendly, and almost everyone he met spoke English and helped them along. Germany was not quite as nice, and Poland he found quite primitive by his American standards. They made it to the Ukrainian border, only to be told that their papers were not in order. Faxes which were to have been sent apparently did not arrive, and they were not allowed in.

Disheartened, they returned to Cracow, and then took the train to Warsaw, where they then spent several days getting visas for Ukraine. By this time, they had no hope of making it by bike before the end of camp. Instead, they took a bus, riding with the chickens.

Steve was quite the hit at camp. Despite not knowing a single word of Ukrainian, and not learning any that we could discern, the kids took quite a liking to him. He played games with them and hiked up the mountains with them. They in turn tried gamely to teach him a few words of Ukrainian, shared their candies and photos with him, and tried to get photographed with him. When he left, they missed him.

Steve fell in love with the kids, and said he would like to return next year. He is also seriously considering adopting one of the kids from camp, Olenka, a really sweet girl from Krivy Rih.

For some more background, you can check out his website www.rideacrosseurope.com

²² The dancing was quite good. One of the girls who performed was good enough to be a professional ballet dancer. One group did thematic dances—oriental, etc. The internat for deaf children did ballroom dancing, and they kept in good time with the music, although I don’t know how.

been involved with summer arts programs in Toronto for years. She tells me that, even with intense training from all sorts of professionals, the kids there didn't put on half as good a show as these poor kids from the orphanages. The entire town turned out for the show and to see the PM. It was great PR, if nothing else.

The next day, Sunday, we celebrated Malanka. First we had a traditional Sviat Vechir ("Holy Night" / Christmas Eve) meal in our sports hall, with all the traditional lenten foods. Vertep had the children sing the songs they had prepared. Then we all walked, en masse, to Basa Ukraina, some 2.5 kilometers into town. I walked with a few of the girls from Krivy Rih who had volunteered to bring the huge floral creations that Floristica had made. These included a large straw star, huge wreaths, and a big cornucopia of flowers.

At BU, the traditional Malanka/Shchedriy Vechir ("Generous Night") was acted out, in perhaps a somewhat allegorical fashion. I missed the talks about this holiday, and we don't really celebrate it in the States, so I'm not sure what is usually involved. Our holidays involved the "Malanka" (New Year, in this case a bearded guy in traditional Ukrainian drag) going from house to house, picking the girls who would be lucky enough to marry. One, played by Mark, our head cook, also in drag, was annually unlucky. At some point a nurse and a goat also entered the picture. I questioned my mother about this holiday, and she doesn't remember any goats being involved; she remembers only fortune-telling, trying to divine what the new year would bring. I hope to do a bit of research and figure all this out; I hope to have it sorted by my Christmas letter. (I should add that men in drag is not a traditional Ukrainian form of entertainment, although it does occasionally play a role in the Ukrainian wedding ceremony. It is more of a Canadian thing, part of their proud British heritage, in the tradition of Shakespeare, Monty Python, Benny Hill, and Kids in the Hall.) After, the Hutzul band played and everyone danced into the night.

As at last year's camp, we held elections, this time for camp president. The campaign was not quite as spirited and cutthroat as last year, partly because there were more female candidates, and partly because I didn't get actively involved. Debates were held, which included a history quiz and singing competition; posters and buttons were made. The vote was carried out in a quite organized fashion, with a proper voting booth and kozak guards. My candidate lost (she was just too shy for the job), and the women's vote was split four ways. In the end Tolik (Anatoly) from Poltava won. He was a nice, well-mannered boy, and did a very good job of commanding the camp on the following Friday. It appeared to me that it ran more smoothly that day than it had the previous two weeks!

I hung the health posters up once they had all been turned in (to protect the original ideas of the first few participants) and then, along with Maka, Diana, and Natalie, judged them. We picked the ones we liked best, narrowed them down to eleven, and created categories:

- Best Use of Color
- Most Artistic
- Best Anti-drug poster
- Best Anti-smoking poster
- Best Anti-Alcohol poster
- Best Anti-substance abuse poster*
- Best Use of Metaphor
- Most Original
- Best Illustration of the Camp Theme "Our Destiny is in Our Hands"*
- Best Concept*
- Best Content(?)²⁵

²³ One of the internaty seems to specialize in acrobatic and circus acts. Not only do they do tumbling and pyramids, but they lay on broken glass and, I can only assume, walk on fire.

²⁴ Ukrainian martial arts. The kozaks were Ukrainian freedom fighters who fought the Turks/Tartar, the Russians and the Poles during the 16-18th centuries. They had a series of fortified towns in the southern steppes and a democratic form of government. They shaved their heads, leaving only a small "pony tail" they called an oseledets. They also developed a form of martial arts they called the "hopak".

It was fun watching these guys perform, along with their star students from our camp. Two of our kids got so involved that they even shaved their heads to the novice cut (like a bowl over the head). Apparently, the more expert one of the fighters is, the more he shaves off.

There was all sorts of fighting, exhibitions of strength (breaking of boards and concrete blocks with bare hands, laying on broken glass while having someone walk on their stomach). Even a few of the girls got into the act, disarming and immobilizing their attackers with a scarf and a few well-placed kicks.

²⁵ We made up the categories in English, and the Maryna translated it all into proper Ukrainian for us. The girls at the office made up in certificates on the computer, which I then filled in. The problem is, all I have now are my Ukrainian notes, and I can't for the life of me figure out what "змістовність" is in English. My dictionary says "sapidity", but this doesn't make much sense. Their poster showed the step in the life of an alcoholic, depicted as

We then chose the best three(*), and awarded the artists knapsacks (the most coveted item at camp, I should hasten to add). The other got lanyards or art supplies. We made the awards at zbirka, with quite a bit of fanfare, and with Tolik handing out the prizes.

Our last weekend was a busy one. On Saturday we had our last zbirka (Saturdays we got to sleep in an hour; Sundays were zbirka-free). There were more awards, and Mike and Natalie handed out the sporting equipment to the kids by internat. Then Vertep had an activity—each of the male counsellors had to select one of the female counsellors. Once each had done so, he was told to lift her in his arms and, holding her, do squats, all the time repeating “My love is as light as a feather”. This drew the group closer together, giving Diana and me our opportunity for our final act—as soon as the squats were done, we ran along opposite sides of the gathered ring of people, spraying them with bright orange and purple silly string, while Maka shot at the command with a water pistol. No one had ever seen silly string before, so it was good fun, and a good way to end our final zbirka.

Throughout the day Saturday, all sorts of preparations were made. Most of the foreign contingent went shopping in the morning to Kosiv, an old market town, which has a fantastic handcrafts market. Anna, Luba and I, the three Detroit girls, were on a mission—buying things for the annual auction²⁶. We found some really beautiful items²⁷, for the auction as well as for ourselves. Andy from Toronto had come with us, and we got to experience a thrill which very few women experience—watching a man shop and really enjoy it! We got to visit Kolomya²⁸, with its lovely town center and great museum of Hutzul arts, and just drive through the countryside. It was a good day.

That evening we had our final vatra; it was an audition for the closing concert on Sunday. There was much singing, dancing and laughter—it is amazing how talented these kids are. After two weeks, I’ve gotten to know them, and to know some of their hidden talents.

Sunday was incredibly busy. In the morning the priest came and we celebrated **Spass**, the blessing of the fruits. Most of the children had prepared baskets or arrangements of fruit and flowers; there was a service, a sprinkling of holy water, and then the fruits were rapidly devoured.

Next came the **Yarmarok** or bazaar. For two weeks the kids had been planning and making items to sell at the bazaar. Each was given some camp money, based on their behavior and participation in the previous two weeks. Booths were set up, and the items for sale were displayed. There were food items—donuts and baked apples²⁹—and all sorts of handcrafts. One particularly enterprising group setup a raffle with stuffed toys as prizes. Then the frenzy of buying began. Everything was bought up, even items that were only meant to be decorative³⁰. In the end, as in previous bazaars, kids ended up with piles of money and there was nothing left to buy. In my humble opinion, this does not do much to endear them to the capitalist system. Something had to be done to get all those camp hrivny out of circulation.

First Mark went and got the three boxes of toys he had sent to camp out of storage, and auctioned them off. The stuffed animals in particular went for high sums. Then I went to my storeroom, and got the remaining feminine hygiene products (which are expensive by Ukrainian standards and hard to get), and we sold those. There were huge lines, and much fighting over the goods, even at 5 hrivny (one dollar) for two pads. Even the boys were buying them! In the end, I

steps up a hill, with the final step being a huge fall. It was quite good, but I’m not sure what we decided to call the category.

²⁶ It will be held this year on Saturday, November 18th, at the Ford Fairlane mansion in Dearborn. It should be a good time. The theme this year is “Phantom of the Opera,” so I guess I’ll have to wear a mask. For ticket information, call me (248/360-4929) or my cousin Vera (248/756-5283).

²⁷ We will be auctioning off several wooden pieces, with encrustation, a traditional Ukrainian art (similar to the plates on the wall of my living room), some embroidery, a few pysanky (Ukrainian Easter eggs), a ceramic ram, and lots more stuff.

²⁸ We learned that Kolomya was to be the site of a huge Hutzul festival in September. In true Ukrainian form, the response to this was to tear apart the entire town center and remodel it. When we arrived, the roads were completely impassable, and every building within view was covered with scaffolding. I had trouble believing that it would be done in time, but the government had done the same thing in Kiev two years ago for the 7th Independence celebration and somehow finished on time.

²⁹ Unfortunately, due to the power outage, they could not bake the apples in the kitchen as planned. Instead, they built a fire, wrapped the apples in foil, and set them to bake. Being guys, they didn’t realize that to bake apples, you had to actually place them in the fire, not a foot away from the fire. It didn’t matter, though—they still sold every single one.

³⁰ One group had created, for fun, a complete wedding party from vegetables; I think a green pepper was the bride groom. Even these sold.

had thousands of hryvny, and the kids had goods. As I did two years ago, I threw all the money into the air, as it was now completely worthless.

During the bazaar, a transformer on the electrical pole had blown, with much sparking and noise. No one was injured, but we lost power completely. Attempts were made to get it repaired, or to find a generator, but to no avail. The **concert** began without microphones. We once again had to Mychaylo's car stereo to play music for the dances. The singing was all a cappella, and the fashion show commentary was not heard at all over its "background" music. Several skits were cut, and the kozak fighting display was shortened, as we had to finish up and feed the kids before dark, so they would have time to pack before nightfall.

They packed, and it got dark. We sat around with only flashlights or candles for light, saying goodbyes and crying a lot. It was sad saying goodbye. Although I would miss my fellow adults, I knew I would see them again next year, and that we would keep in touch in the mean time. With the kids it was another matter altogether. Many would not come back. Keeping in touch would be problematic; postage was quite expensive, and not always available (the Vorohta post office, for instance, was completely out of air mail postage and envelopes, so I couldn't even buy any for the kids). As the night wore on, the faces got longer and longer. Many of the kids had made new friends, and knew they might never get a chance to see them again.

In the dark I wandered around and passed out the last of my supplies—gumballs and stickers. I collected the notebooks I had handed out to the groups to write me about themselves, and made sure the last of last year's photos found their subjects. It was nice seeing everyone, but sad knowing they would all be leaving soon.

The groups were called; they brought out their stuff, and were taken to the train station and internat at a time. At the station, it was cold. The train was due around four am, and we stood around waiting for it. There was lots of hugging and crying. At last the train arrived, the kids were loaded on, we all cried some more and they left.

And so camp ended. I went and got a bit of sleep, then spent the next day packing, taking down the posters for storage, and inventorying the medical goods left for next year. But you don't really want to hear about that.

The aftermath of camp is always sad, and makes me a bit intolerant of how the rest of the world lives. I realize how spoiled we are here in the States and Canada; it's that impetus which makes those of us in the States and Canada work hard all year round to make camp happen, and to send supplies to the orphans, and the same impetus which makes those of us at camp give everything away. I even gave the kids things I had brought for my Ukrainian family who, although poor, are much better off than these kids. Many of us went home with only the clothes on our backs, our photos and our memories.

Thanks again for making all of this possible. The kids, in their letters to you have generally included addresses. If you want to write to them, please do so; they would love to hear from you. If you don't speak Ukrainian, you can try writing in English; all of the schools in Ukraine now teach English, and a teacher or fellow student should be able to help them translate it if you keep it simple. Or, if I'm in the country, I could translate it for you. They may or may not be able to write back; postage is expensive, and some kids really can't afford it, but it's worth a try.

Well, enough for today. If you have any questions, please write, phone or e-mail me.

Ciao!

Luba