

Interview for the magazine “ІМІДЖ.UA” (“Image.ua”, No 2, 2008).

Ukrainian children sing Christmas carols in America.

Such an event was held by the *Power of Spirit Society Corporation* not for the first time. Its' renowned festive performance have traveled around not the USA only, but also around Ukraine. And this year the organizers of the event decided to expand their audience more and to step, so to say, into the crowd. The first stop of the tour was the Christmas Tree near the White House in Washington, D.C. They were able to share with the Americans not only about the Ukrainian Christmas and Saint Nicholas Day, but also to congratulate President George Bush. His helicopter was landing before the White House at the moment.

The next stop of the Power of Spirit Society Corporation was the Embassy of Ukraine in the USA. After the festive speeches and carols, the carol singers gave presents to children. The Ukrainian Diplomatic Representation didn't stand aside either. The Ambassador Oleg Shamshur prepared a surprise for the small carol singers.

After the good time in the Ukrainian Embassy, the corporation headed for the Washington Mormon center. The corporation has been organizing festive events for all people in the center for a few years. This time, the people present in the center learn about St. Nicholas and why he deserves the status of one of the most popular saints of Christian churches.

The founders of Power of Spirit Society Corporation, Roman and Dana Lun, are very optimistic: “We would like to spread St. Nicholas Day's foot around the entire world. We want our representations to show how profound our roots are and how profound our culture is.”

For 2008, the Power of Spirit Society Corporation has planned a new project entitled “Donbas sings Christmas carols”.

“We wish to take children from Dondas region, teach them to sing Christmas carols, dress them in these beautiful garments, and awaken the Ukrainian spirit in them about which, perhaps, they do now even know anything. We are going to attempt to do that,” says Roman Lun.

The next venue for the event organized by Power of Spirit Society Corporation will be Ukraine. Alongside a performance on Kyiv, they will be presenting a film entitled “Peace be onto this house”.

Also Roman Lun, a restless organizer and a fervent promoter of the Ukrainian culture (as he is the representative of the Ukrainian Culture Fund in the USA and Canada) has literary a burning desire to create an institution in which one could receive information on Ukrainians in any country of the world.

I have talked to Viktor Yushchenko on this topic a couple of times, and we first had a talk right before the International Ukrainians Forum, which took place in Kyiv last August, – Roman Lun shared with us. – The delegates from all over the world present

in the forum approved of the proposition. This idea was further actively discussed by the representatives of the Ukrainian Diaspora in different countries with the hope that the process of the creation of the center would begin. I do hope that the ice will be broken. As I am not even asking for any financial support of Ukraine. I know how to get the money. I just want to witness that the state is actually interested in the establishment of such center. But even if not a single official needs it, we'll be doing it, as Ukraine needs it.

The basis of the activities of the World Ukrainian Culture Center should be the information stored electronically about the Ukrainians worldwide: starting from when Ukrainian settlements appeared in a certain country, what newspapers they printed and in what ensembles they partook, and everything to the modern life of the Ukrainian diaspora. Besides, in the Center, exhibition and theatrical hall must be constantly in operation, where culture days Ukrainians from different countries will take place.

The diaspora itself undertook the business as well. At the moment, it is not easy to say how much money is needed for the center to be established, but Mr. Roman Lun is confident that there will be no problems with money. He believes that many Ukrainians will contribute funds into this project since they want the residents of Ukraine to know about their life and achievements.

20 million Ukrainians were destined to spread around the world. – he pointed out. – These are predominantly strong people that kept their love for motherland, and together they are a great power. This world community of Ukrainians can be very helpful in the development of our country today. They also want Ukraine to take interest in them. As now the state pays no attention to the Ukrainians outside Ukraine. The fact that no one is looking for ways to help them, on the one hand, and on the other hand, to involve them into the realization of Ukraine's interests in a misdeed. The Ukrainian authorities had better learn a lesson from the Russian one, which really supports its fellow countrymen residing abroad. For example, last year over 10 million dollars were allocated for the promotion and support of the Russian language in the USA. And with us things are opposite: Ukrainian programs abroad are shut down for lack of financing. So, the main thing for us right now is to commence work on the creation of the World Ukrainian Culture Center.

The initiators are willing to do it with the support of the established All-Ukrainian Charity Fund “Power of Spirit”, one of the main tasks of which is to establish and reassert ties between the Ukrainians worldwide and to study their history. •