



NEWSLETTER

November 2020

UKRAINIAN WINTER CELEBRATIONS - STEEPED IN CULTURE AND TRADITION

Christmas Eve Supper • Sviata Vechera • Свята Вечера



In this issue:

- Christmas Eve Supper
- Kutya Recipe
- Malanka Traditions
- Thank You To Our Volunteers
- Golf Tournament
- Ivan Franko Library
- Membership renewals for 2021
- Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Language School

Upcoming Events

Friday Night Suppers—Take Out Only!:

- December 18
- January 15
- February 19
- March 19

All suppers take place from 4:00-6:30pm. Please note—**only Take Out is available** during Covid 19 Health and Safety Protocols.

Saturday Sales:

We continue to have Saturday sales from 10:00 – 2:00 pm. You can get perogies, cabbage rolls, borscht, and Ukrainian sausage. We will also have beets and horseradish relish available in December. Stock up for the holiday season and for your Christmas Eve dinner.

Saturday, December 19th is the last day of sales before we close for the Holidays. We will reopen again in the New Year on Saturday, January 9th.

For Ukrainians, the most beloved and joyful festivity is Christmas. Some Ukrainian Christmas customs have historical roots going as far back as the Neolithic era. These customs are connected to the agricultural way of life of our ancestors. Many of these folk customs and rites have been adapted to the spirit of the Christian religion.

The most important and colourful part of the Christmas traditions and festivities is Christmas Eve (Sviata Vechera). Twelve different and special dishes are traditional for this meal which begins only after the first star of the evening appears. The twelve dishes are to remind us of the twelve Apostles. After a day of fasting, in remembrance of the hardships that Mary endured as she and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem, preparations of a spiritual and physical nature set the mood for the Holy Night.

Food for the Holy Supper is prepared with no meat or dairy products. Hay is put under the table and under the tablecloth as a reminder of the humble place of Christ's birth. On top of a white or embroidered tablecloth is placed a Kolach. The word "kolach" derives from "kolo" meaning round or circular and it is a symbol of the sun. In the middle of the Kolach, a candle is placed which is left burning all night. A lit candle is also placed in the window, to welcome any homeless people. There is always an extra table setting for the souls of the deceased. As dusk approaches, the head of the house brings in a Didukh, a sheaf of grain, and places it near the Icons. As the star appears, the father carries a bowl of Kutia around the home three times, reciting prayers. When all the family is at the table, prayers are recited and the Nativity Tropar is sung, "Boh Predvichny".

The first dish of the twelve is always Kutia. The eldest of the family throws a spoonful of the kutia to the ceiling. The more kernels that stick to the ceiling, the greater the good

luck in the following year.

After the completion of the twelve dishes, nuts and candies are scattered in the hay under the table for the children to find. Throughout the rest of the evening, Christmas carols are sung by the family.

When it is almost midnight, all the members of the family go to the Nativity Mass, a celebration of Christ's birth. The traditional greeting is "Khristos Razdayetsia" (Christ is Born) to which one replies, "Slavite Yoho" (Let us glorify him).

The following day and up to Yordan (Jordan), carolers visit families and friends, starting with the home of the priest, proclaiming the birth of Christ, our Saviour.

In modern times, Ukrainian tradition has been enriched by the acceptance of the Western-European Christmas tree called in Ukraine "yalynka". Richly decorated with hand-made colourful artifacts, "yalynka" is a symbol of peace and friendship.

The Holy days of the Christmas season end on January 20th, "The Feast of St. John the Baptist".



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Kutya—Ritual Wheat Dish

Ingredients

1 lb. wheat kernels
12 cups water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
1 cup poppy seed
1 cup sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped walnuts

Directions

- Rinse wheat in a sieve and place in pot. Add 12 cups water and soak overnight.
- Add salt and bring wheat and water (not drained from soaking) to boil. Skim the scum off the top. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally. Cook for 4 to 5 hours or until kernels burst and white appears. Drain and rinse wheat kernels. Let cool in serving bowl.
- Bring poppy seed and water to boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Drain well.
- Add poppy seed to wheat.
- Boil 2 cups of water. Add sugar and honey to boiled water and stir to dissolve. Cool.
- Add water mixture to wheat and poppy mixture. Add more water if necessary to cover wheat mixture completely. Mixture should be soup-like (medium thin).



Traditional Dishes for the Ukrainian Christmas Eve

- Kutia** (ritual first dish)
- Kolach** (braided ring-shaped bread)
- Borsch** (meatless beet soup)
- Stuffed Salmon or Fried Fillets**
- Pickled Herring**
- Holubtsi** (meatless cabbage rolls)
- Varenyky** (potato, sauerkraut or prune pyrohy)
- Kapusta** (sauerkraut and peas)
- Kolasheny Fasoli** (mashed beans)
- Pidpenky** (mushrooms with gravy)
- Yzbap** (compote)
- Pampushky, Makiwnyk** (doughnuts, poppy seed roll)

Malanka Traditions

A week after Christmas Eve comes “Malanka” or New Year’s Eve. Malanka is how Ukrainians celebrate Old New Year- January 13 – 14 according to the Julian calendar. It is another feast rich in traditions. Malanka is a cheerful festival that includes delicious food, entertainment, merrymaking, caroling and fortune telling.

Malanka is the name of a Ukrainian deity or mythological figure dating

back to Ukraine’s pre-Christian pagan days. Pagan carols and incantations still exist today when Malanka is celebrated during the winter solstice cycle on a night called “Shchedry Vechir” (Generous Eve). Traditionally, Malanka was represented as a maiden wreathed in blossoms and fruit and accompanied by her consort, Vasily. The rites of Vasily



(Vasily’s Day) followed those of Malanka (Generous Eve).

The pagan ancestors of Ukraine were nature-worshippers with the sun god, Dazhbog, at the head of the pantheon. It was on the day of the winter solstice that the sun, having reached its lowest point south of the equator, turned back to begin its northward ascent. It may be surmised then, the Generous Eve (Malanka) was the eve before the day of the winter solstice and the rites of Vasily’s

Day, the day of the winter solstice.

Unable to eradicate the deeply-rooted rites of paganism, Christianity was forced to absorb them, disguised under Christianized names and Christian festivals. Thus, Malanka became St. Melania, and her festivities were moved to New

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**Malanka 2021
Cancelled**

Due to Covid-19 and Public Health restrictions, Malanka 2021 is cancelled. We are very hopeful for next year and look forward to celebrating Ukrainian New Years in January 2022.



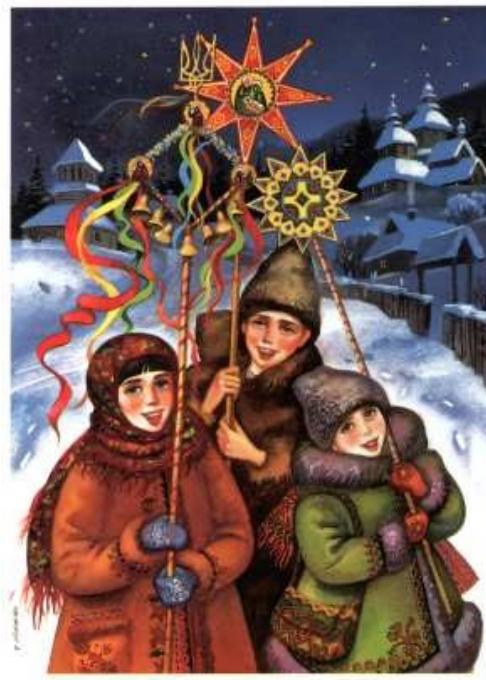
Malanka Traditions ...continued from page 2

Year's Eve, or the Eve of Epiphany in some regions. Vasily's Day was integrated with New Year's Day (January 14th by the Julian Calendar of 46 B.C., or January 1st by the Gregorian Calendar of 1582 A.D.) Once great religious celebrations, they became secular festivities, with the church recognizing neither in its religious calendar. The liturgy of St. Basil, rather than that of St. John, celebrated on New Year's Day is in deference to St. Basil the Great, and not the pagan Vasily.

A prominent rite of Malanka festivities was called Shchedruvannia (house-to-house caroling) performed separately by troupes of maidens or young men masquerading as maidens, with the chief characters in either troupe being Malanka and Vasily. On Generous Eve, it was believed that both good and evil spirits descended upon earth. Only with the first crowing of the cock would the evil powers depart after men would spend the night warding off the evil forces and invoking the forces to bring happiness and agricultural prosperity in the coming year.

In the female troupe, Malanka and Vasily performed the ritual gestures (in pantomime), supported by the maiden chorus in recitation and song. The male troupe, which generally included such stock characters as a gypsy, a fortune

teller, musicians and animals (symbolic), and which introduced both humour and spontaneity into its performance, had a specific role for each character in the ritual drama.



With Shchedruvannia over, male and female groups gathered for a festive supper, fortune-telling, dancing and merriment. Young men viewed this as a favourable night for courting, and the maidens, for enchantment and casting of spells.

Until a generation or two ago, the rituals of Malanka survived Christianity with little change. Today, Malanka is celebrated as an ethnic holiday, which has adopted much of the traditions of the Canadian New Year's Eve celebrations. Ukrainian organizations have created events at banquet halls to help celebrate Malanka. This event typically occurs a week after Christmas Eve according to the Julian calendar on a Friday or Saturday closest to January 13 or 14.

People come to these events ready to celebrate with family and friends. The event begins with a delicious dinner featuring many Ukrainian dishes, entertainment by singers and dancers and ends with a zabava (dance) often showcasing a kolomyika. At midnight, everyone partakes in bringing in the New Year, singing, toasting with champagne and wishing each other good health and prosperity.

Golf Tournament 2020

It was a perfect day on the pretty Mylora Course on September 20th, where 47 golfers tried to shoot a hole-in-one. None succeeded, but there was some amazing golf as team scores varied from +4 to -7. Ruth and Stan Archer and Doug and Cheryl Stavely shot a -6 without having a birdie on the front 9. They were edged out for the top score as Mike Brandak, Jay Ho, Aaron Steitzer, and Scotty McKitrick shot a -7. The longest drives were won by Vera Adams (women) and Nicolai Werbowy (men). The top six golfers received prizes donated by Myron Kynach. The other



prizes donated by McEwan Electric, Bash Sheet Metal, VanCity, C & D Logistics, Camfil APC, and Envirotech were won by raffle.

At our banquet, 39 golfers were served our Society's super supper (holubtsi,

verenyky, sausage, and meatballs. Thank you to our kitchen staff for preparing another delicious meal for our enjoyment.

I wish to thank all the golfers who made the day a success and the volunteers who prepared the meals for the golfers. Also, the Mylora Golf Course was in excellent condition and the staff was very congenial. We look forward to seeing you in 2021 and we hope you will continue to support our tournament and our Society.

- Submitted by George Brandak

Thank You To Our Volunteers

We are always very grateful to all our Volunteers at Ivan Franko. We couldn't do it without all their help in our

kitchen, hall, library and outdoors. A big **thank you** to all our volunteers and for everything they do to help us!





Taras Schevchenko Ukrainian Language School

Ukrainian language classes for beginners, intermediate, and advanced speakers who would like to attend classes to learn and improve their language skills. Classes take place Mondays from 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

Because of COVID restrictions, the classes will be offered via Zoom, accessible online or by phone.

This term it's \$150 for the 10 classes, which includes \$5 annual society fee. Some Ukrainian learning materials are included

with your tuition. Students in more advanced classes will need to purchase the textbooks.

Check out the following website: www.ukrainianclasses.com.

Call Susan at 604 – 733-3756 or email at info@ukrainianclasses.com for more details or to register for classes taking place in the new year.

Check Out Our Website

A reminder to our members to check our website www.ivanfranko.ca for upcoming events at our Society and in the Ukrainian Community.

We update our website on a regular basis and information on our homepage is current.

You may also want to checkout the

www.ukrainianvancouver.com website for other events taking place in Metro Vancouver.

Membership Payments for 2021

Current, previous, and new members are reminded that their membership dues for 2021 should be paid no later than **January 31, 2022**. For those who have not paid their 2020 dues, payment is waived.

We encourage you to continue as an active member of our Society. We inform our members through email of upcoming events at Ivan Franko and in the Ukrainian community. Our members also receive Newsletters three times per year. Importantly, we really appreciate your support and staying active in our Society.

Library, Book Club, and Movie Club

Contact

For information about Library, Book or Movie clubs, contact Theresa at books@ivanfranko.ca or call our Society at 604 274-4119 to leave a message.



NEXT FRIDAY NIGHT SUPPER IS DECEMBER 18th — TAKE OUT ONLY!

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