

THE LYRA PROJECT – HUMANITARIAN DONATION

Rotary Club of Las Vegas Southwest

9/14/22

One of our Southwest Rotarians, Bruce Pope, was chatting with one of his Masonic brothers at a lodge meeting last week and was made aware of an opportunity to help with an imminent humanitarian shipment to the Ukraine. After quickly discussing the project with our club directors, and receiving their approval, we donated all the remaining hygiene kits (50) that we have been using for our “Feed the Homeless” project (we have enough time before our next “Feed the Homeless” event, to replenish our supply.)

Here are a couple of pictures of Bruce delivering the kits to his friend:



Following below is the account of Bruce's friend, Seth Dyal, of his trip earlier this month (including pictures) to the Ukraine.

“Like many others I watched in disbelief when Russia raced into Ukraine with their modern blitzkrieg. February 24 was a devastating, and terrifying shock to the Ukrainians as they have been working to join the European Union and NATO since before the 2014 Orange Revolution.

Compelled to do something, my brother, brother-in-law, and his brother organized a trip to the border town of Medyka, Poland (which is the closest border crossing to Lviv, Ukraine). I was between employment and with short notice my friends crowd funded my expenses for the trip. This was accomplished in just 12 hours. We meet in Warsaw and drove to Przemyśl, Poland, where a shuttered Tesco, think Walmart, has been opened by the gracious Polish people and it was converted to a humanitarian shelter. it is like a city within a city. We mostly helped at the hygiene booth, which was staffed by the full-time missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from their Poland mission.

The Tesco has Polish military and police guarding the premises, and everyone has to be registered to enter and leave.

There were throngs of people living on cots or on pillows on the floor. Sections for just mothers and children and other sections for the terribly wounded (who need proper beds to more easily get up and out into a wheelchair) were set aside. Food, medicine, and psychiatric help are available to the refugees.

A surprising representation from the world’s concerned citizens were there, helping.

At the hygiene booth we had everything from diapers and baby food to feminine products, shampoo, soaps, backpacks, toys, and the highly coveted sandals and towels (most people’s shoes were worn out from walking countless miles). With the Google Translate app and pantomiming hand gestures we were able to help many people get what they needed.

All of these families are on the run with no men between the age of 18 and 60 (they staying in Ukraine to help fight for their freedom to choose a more European way of life).

I worked at least 12 hours a day and up to 18. We were busy with organizing the numerous pallets of donations, as well as sterilizing and cleaning the donated bedding and sourcing towels and soaps and other supplies for hygiene booth.

Ukrainians are kind and patient despite the horrific things they’ve been through. We kept little chocolates on hand to give to the scared children or to a mother who looked run down. Chocolate and a smile can help.

One elderly and obese woman had her grandson with her. He was able to leave Ukraine, despite being in his 20s, because she had sole custody over him due to his physical and mental handicaps. They walked all the way from Mariupol. You can only imagine the stories this babushka and her grandson had lived through.

Many of these people looked like your neighbor, but several had deep jagged scars on their faces and others were missing limbs. Cluster bombs and shattered glass are no respecter of persons. I helped a few volunteers that were Georgia Legionnaires. One had been injured in

the intense fighting at Bucha. He was a young Frenchman, who had been a sniper until two rockets exploded near him, damaging his face and interfering with his eyesight to the point that his unit medically discharged him. He felt lost, his job not done. He and I spoke often, and despite his good spirits, he said that he doesn't sleep because of the nightmares.

It's estimated that nearly 20,000 foreign volunteers have come to Ukraine to help these people win back their freedom.

On the last day of my trip. I asked the refugee registration desk if there was a family that I could transport to the Warsaw Central Train Station, as I would be flying out from there, and my rental car would be returned there. I was paired with a beautiful family. Nine-year-old Lyra, her mother, and grandfather were my special charge. They were on the run. Three generations of hopes and dreams reduce down to a few backpacks and a duffel bag. They were trying to get to Latvia, where their extended family could take them in.

Before I left to Poland, my nine-year-old daughter gave me a special gift to give to a special Ukrainian child. Upon meeting Lyra, I knew she was that special child. I gave the handmade note to Lyra and inside my daughter had given all the money she had (she made sure it was stapled shut so no one could get to it, except for that special recipient). I translated the note to Lyra and in return Lyra, gave me little stuffed toy for me to give to my daughter. Her mother insisted I take it to my child. There in the busy Warsaw Central Train Station I fought back tears as I received the many thankful hugs from Lyra and her family.

Upon returning home, my daughter was so moved by Lyra that she wanted to do something for the refugees. So, we started the Lyra Project. We've been so thankful for the donations that have come.

A Ukrainian company will receive our shipment in Warsaw and it will be given to a school teacher in Ukraine, one with whom we are in contact, and she will personally and discreetly deliver the goods to children and their families in central Ukraine.

I am hoping to source Ukrainian Bibles as well as more funds for the shipment. Any help would be appreciated.

Thank you for your kindness and help and all of your donations. God bless you."

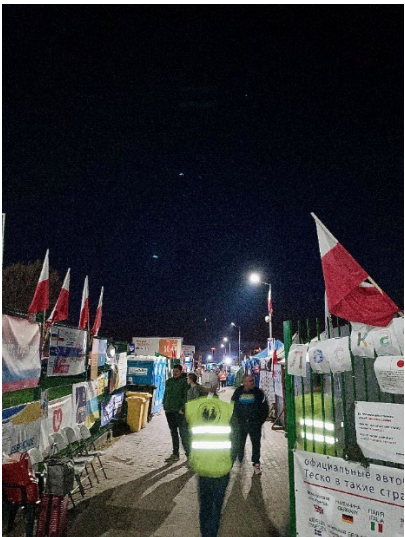
Inside the Tesco in Przemyśl, Poland.



A typical meal.



At the Ukraine border crossing, where countless refugees walk in tears to freedom.



Baby Maxim, his mother and aunt and grandmother. Many miracles came together to get these four on a van to Warsaw Central Train Station.



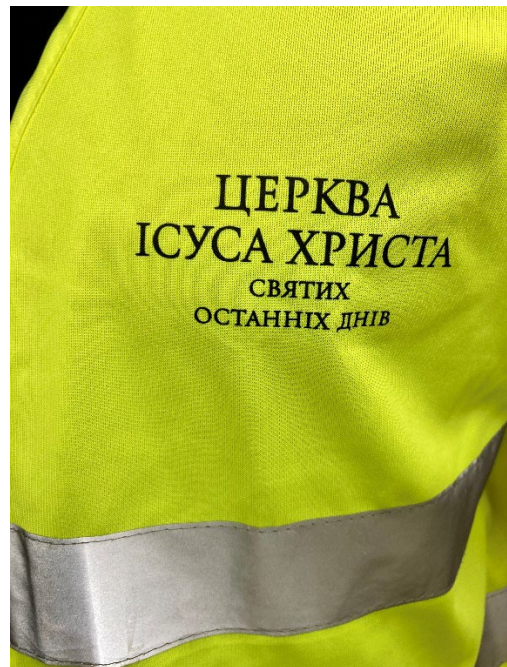
My brother, Adam, looking at the large amount of bath towels we had secured (before we arrived these people were given one small washcloth for their needs).



The injured sniper and I saying goodbye.



Helping out at the hygiene booth.



Outside the Tesco, my car on the right and the old Soviet Lada, which limped in from Ukraine bearing refugees.



Me and some of the missionaries at the hygiene booth.



Lyra and her mother and grandfather as we left the Tesco.



Their whole life in just a few bags.



Saying goodbye at Warsaw Central.



Food and Supply Drive

Donate to the Lyra Project



Donations will be sent to Ukraine for Children and Families like the ones you see here.

ITEMS WE NEED

- Foam Sandals or Backpacks
- Personal Hygiene Items
- Very Small Toys or Books
- Non-Perishable Food or Candy
- Clothes for Spring Weather



Donations will be picked up at your office this Friday.

September 16th
2022

For more information you can contact Andrew or Seth

Andrew: 702-353-9874


Seth: 702-371-9909



Donate to The Lyra Project !!!




We are collecting all kinds of humanitarian aid to donate to Ukrainian refugee kids and their Mothers.

Items They REALLY WANT: 

- Drawstring Backpacks
- Roller Suitcases
- Foam Sandals / Slides of all sizes

Items That are Nice Surprises: 

- Candy
- Very Small Toys
- Makeup
- Colored Pictures
- Letters of Encouragement

Other items needed are: 

- Personal Hygiene Items
- Diapers / Wipes
- Ear plugs
- Eye Masks
- Non-Perishable Food
- Water
- Clothes for Spring Weather



*This is my friend,
Lyra from Ukraine*



**All Items will be shipped to the TESCO Transit Center in Przemyśl Poland.*

