

WAR IN UKRAINE

Continued Ukraine support crucial to Ukrainian-American community in Pioneer Valley

By **JIM KINNEY**

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WEST SPRINGFIELD — Ask Peter Mosijchuk how long the United States should continue supporting Ukraine in its war against Russia and he points to the most recent headline.

Fifty-one people, including an 8-year-old boy, were killed Thursday in a Russian missile attack on a café.

“There is no negotiations with dictators,” said Mosijchuk, senior pastor of the Bethesda Ukrainian Pentecostal Church “They are killing civilians.”

His church in West Springfield just held its most recent bake sale and has raised and donated \$90,000 in the last year for Ukraine, buying first-aid supplies, clothing and even military equipment like night vision goggles and two drone aircraft.

Mosijchuk believes the mission is critical for everyone to embrace, not just Ukraine and Ukrainian Americans like himself and members of his church.

“In my opinion, you can

never trust Russia,” he said. “If Ukraine doesn’t win the battle it is going to be terrible for everybody,” he said. Ukrainians are not only defending Ukraine, they are defending the west as well.”

The war is not the everyday, above-the-fold story in the United States it was when Russia invaded in early 2022.

Support for Ukraine’s war effort among the American public has fallen, but only a little, according to a new Reuters/Ipsos poll released Thursday. Just 41% of respondents agreed with the statement that Washington “should provide weapons to Ukraine,” compared to 35% who disagreed and the rest unsure. In May, the poll found 46% in agreement and 29% disagreeing.

“People are impatient. They want results, but wars take time,” said Anna Nagurney, the Eugene M. Isenberg Chair in Integrative Studies at the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and an expert on logistics and

supply.

Nagurney is the child of Ukrainian refugees who fled World War II. She was born in Canada and Ukrainian was her first language. Today, she plays a major role, remotely, in shaping and operating the Kiev School of Economics.

The invasion has killed innocent people and upended normal life in Ukraine, including education, health care and culture. Fatigue, on everyone’s part, is understandable, observers like Nagurney say.

“That means you are doing what’s right. Sometimes doing what’s right is not easy. It’s challenging,” Nagurney said.

Ukraine, without an official Navy, has damaged Russia’s Black Sea fleet and forced it to withdraw warships.

In the meantime, she’s heartened by Ukrainian exchange students, four of them, who are studying at UMass this semester. She is also cheered to be working with students at the Kiev School of Economics who are focused not on war but on the coming work of recon-



19-year-old Angelica Mosijchuk of West Springfield seals boxes for shipping to the people of Ukraine at the Full Gospel Church in Westfield. (DON TREEGER / THE REPUBLICAN)

struction and rebuilding in Ukraine.

The U.S. military is learning every day from Ukraine’s innovations on the battlefield.

President Joe Biden has requested an additional \$24 billion in funding for Ukraine that would include \$17 billion military aid.

The interim spending plan that averted the government shutdown went forward a week ago without Ukraine aid.

It’s likely to pass, despite opposition from some quarters of the Republican Party,

said U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal, D-Springfield. He told reporters last week that Ukraine has the support not only of Biden and of Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-New York, but of Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky.

“And you have a Democratic Party that is pretty united in the House about aid to Ukraine and there is at least half the Republican caucus in the House that are supportive of aid to Ukraine,” Neal said. “They have been a great force

for standing up to a punitive, unwarranted invasion of their county.”

Neal was asked last week about fiscal accountability. How can the American people know where and how money to support Ukraine was spent.

He said agencies in the American government, like the Congressional Budget Office, the General Accounting Office and the Office of Management and Budget, can and should give a full rundown.

“But you aren’t going to get that in real time,” he said.