



SUNFLOWER
SEEDS
UKRAINE

Dear Friends of Ukraine,

If you are reading this newsletter, chances are you start your days much like we do: scouring headlines for some sign of the end of putin's¹ war on Ukraine. News out of and about Ukraine over the past few weeks hasn't done much to buoy hopes for a quick victory, and that reinforces just how crucial aid at all levels is. Here at Sunflower Seeds Ukraine, we hear this over and over directly from Defenders² on the frontlines and Ukrainian civilians: They tell us that knowing people from around the world are supporting them helps keep their spirits up and resolve strong.

And so, in this newsletter, we focus on the collective successes you all have made possible over the past few months, as well as upcoming initiatives and causes you can support going forward. At the core of our mission is to fulfill the medical and protective needs of Defenders and affected civilians in Ukraine with the contributions and support of people like you. Our 100% volunteer workforce ensures that the majority (96-98%) of your donations go directly to aid, with only a tiny (2-4%) portion going to shipping and other logistical expenses.

Read on to hear how your donations currently are making a difference, about the defenders and volunteers who are helping make our collective resolve reality, and to learn about how you can support current and upcoming initiatives. At the top of our list of recent successes was the Holiday Giving Campaign, which raised \$64,534.81 over the course of five weeks. Thank you all! This outpouring of generosity will allow us to continue to provide the medical, tactical, and personal supplies the Defenders need to continue their fight for Ukrainian sovereignty and the 40 million Ukrainian citizens who call Ukraine home.

Thank you again for your support!
Keep it up! Until the Victory!!!

Natalie, Andriy and all of us at
Sunflower Seeds Ukraine
Spread Seeds of Help!

¹ Misspelling and lower-casing proper names in this newsletter are intentional and used as signs of disdain and disrespect.

² Uppercasing of words such as Defenders are intentional and used as signs of respect and appreciation.

UNPRECEDENTED RESULTS AND YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

The incredible support we received in response to our #GiveToUkraine Holiday Giving Campaign (November 29-December 31) far exceeded our campaign goal of \$25,000. Thanks to the generosity of 243 supporters and numerous matching gifts, we were able to raise \$64,534.81 in less than five weeks! In addition, 24 supporters committed monthly pledges totalling \$1,848USD/month (that's \$22,176 USD per year!), and another 28 individuals purchased 134 gifts for Defenders that valued more than \$10,350 through our "[Send A Gift to Ukrainian Defender](#)" project. Due to its popularity and the immense need, the registry remains open. What a success!

All told, thanks to more than 1,264 donations from around the world, between February 24, 2022, when Russia attacked Ukraine and the end of 2022, Sunflower Seeds Ukraine (SFSU) provided more than \$284,000 USD in aid. As the table below shows, SFSU's emphasis is on providing medical gear (8,015 items), protective gear (2,534), as well as uniform and field items, such as thermal underwear, hats, gloves, socks and sleeping pads, electronics such as laptops, radios, drones and whatever else Defenders on the front lines tell us they most need.

 <p>From the beginning of the war Sunflower Seeds Ukraine provided the following for the Ukrainian defenders: (Last updated: December 31, 2022)</p>		 	
 Medical Aid		8015	
Tourniquets	1340	Medical pouch bags	1124
Hemostatics	1600	Burn dressings	935
Bandages	1020	Chest seals	960
Basic medical sets	1013	Paramedic backpacks	23
 Protective gear		1602	
Gloves	124	Active earmuff	176
Knee & elbow pads	261	Compasses	110
Safety goggles	95	Ponchos, tarps	304
Water filters & camelbaks	258	Other gear	274
 Optical devices · 560		 Body armor · 372	
Binoculars	271	Tactical vests	51
Range finders	39	Ballistic plate sets	51
Night vision	72	Ballistic helmets	18
Thermal vision	5	Chest rigs & belts	215
Headlamps	160	Backpacks	37
Other optics	13		
 Uniform		9570	
Uniform sets	105	Tablets, laptops	36
Thermal underwear	303	Modems, radios	42
Fleece & jackets	117	Power banks	57
Rain & snow clothing	120	Heaters	49
Hats & gloves	778	Cars	3
Boots	111	Drones	3
Sleeping bags & pads	36	Other devices	8
Hand & toe warmers	2000		
Socks	6000		
 Total expenses		\$284,517.54	
Operations (shipping, printing)		\$16,787.68	
Humanitarian projects		\$3,900.00	



SFSU focuses on supporting needs that governments and larger aid organizations miss due to lack of infrastructure or overwhelming demand. For example, just when colder temperatures began to set in, Ukraine's power grid was attacked, making warm tactical clothing and heat sources an even more critical need. In response, our team members on the ground in Ukraine connected with locals who could fabricate wood-burning pot bellied stoves (called burzhuika) for \$100 each, which also helps support Ukraine's war-torn economy. Over the past two months, donations to the ["Keep Ukrainian Defenders Warm" campaign](#) have provided \$5,000 in aid, which is about half of its \$10,000 goal.

CURRENT FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE: PUTTING EYES IN THE SKY

In October, we provided a top-of-the-line drone with a high-resolution thermal camera, in collaboration with Yuri Kochevenko from the 95th brigade, which is now in action on the front lines in Eastern Ukraine. **Currently, we are [fundraising for another drone system](#):** "Sirko" is a Ukrainian-made reconnaissance system that can fly up to 50 kilometers behind enemy lines and send streaming video from up to 25 kilometers away. The drone's small size (wing length is 90 cm) and quiet electric motor help Sirko perform aerial reconnaissance operations in the deep rear—exactly what our heroes need to achieve victory!



In 2022, we supplied the aerial reconnaissance unit of the 54th brigade with a drone operation trailer. Now we need your help to provide this unit with a Sirko: We are a third of the way toward our fundraising goal to make this a reality. Helps us put another eye in the sky on the Eastern front lines! Here is how: <https://givebutter.com/mara54>

If drones are not your thing, click [here](#) to learn about other fundraising initiatives that support both Ukrainian Defenders and civilians including villagers, kids and pets.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: This month we would like to take an opportunity to thank our **monthly** donors, especially those who recently joined our new [Patreon](#) page, which features exclusive video interviews and other content. Monthly donations allow us to supply Ukrainian Defenders and affected civilians with the specific aid they request exactly when they need it most. Thank you to: [Illia M.](#), [Akiko A.](#), [Dmytro. O.](#), [Sonia C.](#), [Andriy Z.](#), [Matt O.](#), [Roman M.](#), [Eeva I.](#), [Misha Y.](#), [Martin P.](#), [Natalie C.](#), [Christophe T.](#), [Timothy G.](#), [Alina K.](#), [Robert J.](#), [Slava F.](#), [Ava G.](#), [Marina K.](#), [Mike R.](#), [Becky R.](#), [Sarah S.](#), [Jay J.](#), and [Lily K.](#) You are advancing our common victory month by month, so we can deliver the supplies week by week, and our defenders can keep up their day-in and day-out fight for freedom. Together, we are actively making history rather than just watching it go by. Without your regular help, Ukrainian Defenders and civilians wouldn't be able to defy the odds and take the heroic stance we have all seen them take! Slava Ukraini!

EVENTS & CAUSES

During the fall months, together with Rivne Regional Youth Plast Scouting Center, we organized a weekly weekend camp near Rivne in western Ukraine for children who have been impacted by the war. Some of them have been forced to leave their homes because of the war, others have parents who are fighting in the war, some are from large families where needs exceed means, and yet other participants have special educational needs. In the Plast camp setting, these youth were able to spend time together, learning new skills, building connections and celebrating their heritage.



Thank you to the donors who earmarked their support for the [Help Ukrainian Kids Smile](#) Campaign, which helps implement such projects. We plan to continue partnering with the Rivne

Regional Youth Plast Scouting Center to host camps this spring; if you're interested in learning more and/or supporting this cause, click [here](#).

SFSU TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Meet Liza! Like many team members of the Sunflower Seeds Ukraine team, Yelyzaveta Stifter (Liza) grew up in Ukraine, and her family still lives there. Were it not for a work-travel stint to the United States in 2014, Liza would likely be in Ukraine today, alongside family, friends and neighbors, and maybe even on the front lines. But as fate would have it, during her first travel abroad experience, she met Patrick (pictured below), who became her best friend and is now her husband. Today, the couple lives in Boulder, Colorado, where Liza works in logistics as a fleet manager for a transportation company, and Patrick is an optometrist.



While the couple plans to stay in the United States, their hearts and thoughts are never far from Ukraine, where Liza's father, a veterinarian, has been serving in the army since the start of the invasion. Her mother is a nurse at a women's and maternity ward. "She never stopped showing up to work and caring for patients, and even helped deliver babies despite constant air raids day and night," says Liza. "I miss my family so much and hope to hug them soon. Their bravery and selflessness shows just how strong and independent the Ukrainian nation is."

The couple did fundraising on their own at the start of the war and have been volunteers with Sunflower Seeds Ukraine since August of 2022. In addition to helping with events here in the Front Range, Liza has been coordinating aid distribution to Defenders with our volunteers in Ukraine. Working with Sunflower Seeds Ukraine, says Liza, helps her navigate the stress and frustration of watching the war unfold from afar. "If you are feeling angry and helpless when you watch the news about Russian crimes against Ukraine, channel that energy into volunteer work, help in the way that you are able to," says Liza.

To read more about Liza's life, including her participation in the Revolution of Dignity, the people who have inspired her and how she stays hopeful in the face of war, go to our [Patreon page](#), where we are posting longer profiles of our team members from around the world, as well as

exclusive behind-the-scenes videos that show how we get supplies where they're needed, and interviews with recipients of our aid at the front lines.

NEWS FROM UKRAINE

The last few weeks have been difficult for Ukraine: Russia and its Wagner group mercenaries continued to wage ruthless attacks in the Bakhmut region, and took Soledar (a settlement of 11,000 before the war). A helicopter crash killed 14 near Kyiv, including Interior Minister Denis Monastyrsky and a child at the daycare center into which the chopper crashed. The first good news of the week was announced on Wednesday, January 25, when Western allies finally agreed to provide Ukraine with the crucial tank power it needs, as well as other war vehicles. America and Germany have said they will send 31 M1 Abrams tanks and 14 Leopard 2 tanks, respectively; Poland, 14 Leopards; Britain, also 14 Leopards; and Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain may send Leopards, too.



As we all strive to stay abreast of the constantly changing situation in Ukraine and bordering countries, there are certain resources to which we turn for up-to-date insights. One such resource is [The Institute for the Study of War \(ISW\)](https://www.instituteforthe studyofwar.org/), which generates daily campaign assessments of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, including static maps such as this one.

DID YOU KNOW?

According to the European Commission, Ukraine accounts for 10% of the world wheat market, 15% of the corn market, and 13% of the barley market. With more than 50% of world trade, it is also the main player on the sunflower oil market. (November 1, 2022) Ukraine supplies nearly two-thirds of the world's sunflower meal, with exports valued at \$1.2 billion in 2021. Top markets in 2021 were China (48 percent), the European Union (25 percent), and Turkey (7 percent). Through March 1, 2022, Ukraine had shipped about 61 percent of forecasted 2021/22 sunflower meal exports. Source: USDA.

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD:

Please forward this email to anyone who might be interested, or use this [form](#) to subscribe or unsubscribe. The web version of this and all previous newsletters is [here](#). For more frequent updates about our work, please like our [Facebook](#) page, follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and

[LinkedIn](#), and subscribe to our [Youtube](#) channel and [Patreon](#) page, browse our [website](#) for multiple ways to donate, or send us an [email](#) if you have any questions. Last but not least, we appreciate your feedback: please fill out this brief [survey](#) to tell us a bit more about your impression of Sunflower Seeds Ukraine!

Note: *Sunflower Seeds Ukraine raises funds as an initiative of Ukrainians of Colorado, a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations and gifts are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed under IRS regulations and the U.S. law. To start or stop receiving our emails, please click [here](#).*