

# Ukrainians show ethnic pride

By Larry O'Connor  
staff writer

A strong sense of cultural heritage sustains any ethnic group. For "Echoes of Ukraine" dance ensemble, such tradition is an unbreakable epoxy through several generations.

Members of the performing dance company have witnessed such ethnic pride in their parents and grandparents and they themselves have fostered the customs of Ukraine region. More importantly to them is the joy of Ukrainian pride they witness in the eyes of their children when they are on stage dancing.

"I enjoy teaching the kids and the kids enjoy learning it," said Joanna Kulchysky, director of the dance company that will perform Sunday, April 5, at the Fifth Annual International Dance Festival at the Southfield Civic Center. "You never have to push them to come to Ukrainian dance."

"The boys like it for the competitiveness. The girls find there's a great gentility to it. It's a great art form. Of course, they don't mind dancing with the boys either."

And in the children's hands, such traditions are bound to continue. All four of Christiana's sons, who are involved in "Echoes of Ukraine" (not "Echoes of the Ukraine," Kulchysky readily points out).

Zeno, 12; twins Larissa and Matthew, 10, and Oles, 7, are active in the dance company, which includes several levels from youth, junior, intermediate, senior to the performing company.

HOTRA, HERSELF, dances with the performing company. As a youth, she danced in the Ukrainian dance ensemble until she went to college. After marriage and having her children, the Troy resident found herself back with the company.

"I always enjoyed it as a child," Hotra said. "It was an option. It was not a requirement for me. So far, there are no problems. They (her children) don't ask to be left off the hook for practices or anything."

Likewise, Lydia Wroblewski of Troy has both of her children, Andrea, 15, and Peter, 11, involved in Ukrainian dance. Andrea, 15, has been dancing for five years while brother Peter, 11, is a member of the youth group.

"You put any child on stage, they enjoy the adulation," Wroblewski said. "It's ours and our own... you become very proud of your heritage. The children see the beauty in it."

Many kids start as young as 5 in Ukrainian dance, "the popcorn crowd," as Kulchysky refers to them.

They work their way up the various levels with becoming a member of the performing company the ultimate honor. A dancer has to serve a year apprenticeship in the perform-

ing company in order to become a full-fledged member.

THE PREPARATION instills the discipline required to perform the intricate, fluid dance movements indigenous to various regions of Ukraine.

For example, Kulchysky said a good deal of the squatting found in Ukrainian dance originated from the eastern region while those from western region feature more pristine, stand-up type dances.

Included in the "Echoes of Ukraine" program are ancient ritual dances, royal court dances as well as the historical pagantry and an array of colorful costumes. Some dances date to pre-Christian times. Authentic Ukraine folk instruments such as Bandura, Soplika, Driimba and Tymbaly are also used in the presentation.

"We don't make a mish-mash of our steps," Kulchysky said. "We keep the regional dances in original form as well as the costumes."

That is partly due to Kulchysky herself who has documented some 150 authentic dances and is known in this area for her vast knowledge of Ukrainian customs. She is a highly regarded instructor of Ukrainian dance.

"ECHOES OF UKRAINE" has toured the eastern United States as well as Canada with several TV appearances. The group received a first place award at the University of Michigan International Fair and was awarded with the Mayor of Detroit Trophy at the 1975 International Freedom Festival Parade in Windsor.

"Echoes of Ukraine" will be the first performance at the International Folk Dance Folk Dance Festival in Southfield.

They will be joined by nine groups Sunday including the Wilsa Pollok Folk Ensemble; Tim O'Hare's School of Irish Step Dancing; Hora Aviv Israeli Folk Dance Troupe; Sarisan Slovak Folk Ensemble; The Glendi Dancers (Greek); Troupe Ta'amulit Near East Folkloric Dancers; Audrys Lithuanian Dance Group; Art of Motion Dance Theatre (African-American); and the Vidyantali East Indian Dancers.

Though diverse, each group shares a common bond of celebrating their respective heritages.

"The Ukrainian people are very closed-knit to their heritage," Kulchysky said. "They're very American. In their homes and in their hearts, they're very Ukrainian."

The International Folk Dance Festival will take place 4-7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 5, at the Southfield Civic Center. Tickets are \$13.50 in advance (\$15 at the door) and available at Southfield City Hall. For information, call 354-4834.

By Ethel Simmons

SOMETHING OLD is new again when Lynne Eichinger of West Bloomfield gets ahead of it.

This fashion-conscious woman reflects her taste both in her home and in the clothes and accessories she wears. Eichinger loves old things, from antiques to collectibles. Every corner of her house has something to hold your interest. Her wardrobe is equally intriguing, and she has the ability to carry off wearing bold, unusual things.

Originally from Bucks County, Pa., Eichinger said, "I started collecting at 18, with blue and white Meissen." She bought the porcelain at an auction in Princeton, N.J. "That's where I got the bug," she said.

Every since, Eichinger has added to her collection of household furnishings and accessories, and carried this "instinct" over to the way she dresses. "When I was young I used to wear old ballise sleeping gowns as dresses in the summer, back east. I love that old embroidery," she said.

EICHINGER, WHO is a widow, came to the Birmingham area in 1972. She has two grown daughters, who are both in the arts, which is not surprising considering her interests. Referring to the ballise sleeping gowns, she said, "My daughter in New York does wear them. She has unusual taste, too."

She doesn't have a job outside the home but Eichinger is an active, outgoing person who has kept busy doing charity work throughout the years. "My daughter graduated from Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills, and I joined the Christ Child Society when I moved here," she said. "I was on the Hospice board for awhile."

For daytime, Eichinger usually dresses in contemporary clothes — eye-catching separates along classic lines. With black pants and top she wears a black-and-white, broad-sleeved jacket, which she may accent with several old rings and old bracelets by innovative costume-jewelry designer Kenneth Lane.

For evening, she goes all out, cov-

ering simple separates with the flash of an embroidered shawl or scarf, from her collection of these articles. Another way of dressing up outfits is with a man's smoking jacket, "I collect men's smoking jackets," she said, and donned one to show a favorite outfit for going out to dinner or other night-time events. "I like the nice ones that are lined in Skinner satin."

One of her tricks to combining clothes and accessories seems to be keeping everything in the same color family. Black separates are worn with a black-and-gold-patterned smoking jacket, with dramatic gold jewelry. Brown velvet pants and top, combined with a gold linen jacket, are topped off with a large, leopard-skin-patterned scarf; tortoise-shell cuff bracelets and hoop earrings; and gold-toned headband.

ALTHOUGH SHE likes pants, she doesn't ignore skirts or dresses. "I have old skirts — long — embroidered. I wore one to the St. Francis tent party one year. I wore it with a white old blouse, and hat like a Gibson hat," she said. "I have an old white dress — all cut out. You have to be so careful when you wear it."

Her hair is beige-blond, with subtle streaks, and Eichinger particularly likes outfits in beige and gold tones, as well as things that combine with black. She is fairly tall (5 feet 6"), and she can enjoy the power of large jewelry, often wearing pendants.

She showed an old, large, sterling silver heart (with someone else's initials) that is actually a compact, on a black-tassled cord. She wore it around the wrist. She added another black cord, to turn the compact into a necklace.

"I go to shows, flea markets, the Salvation Army, resale places," she said, explaining where she finds the old wearing apparel. Besides old clothes and jewelry, she collects old hats, purses and shoes.

From her hat collection, Eichinger pulled out several soft summer straw hats designed by designers. One was by Lilly Dache, in a creamy white with red and blue trim. The others were beige-tone straws, in-

cluding one by Adolfo.

"I WEAR THEM to weddings," she said. "I have five weddings this summer."

Her warm personality and special way of dressing always attracts a lot of attention. A friend, Pat Hardy of Bloomfield Hills, said, "For a New Englander, she's more a Michiganian than anyone I know. I can't think of anyone I know who has more friends."

Describing Eichinger's outfits, Hardy said, "I think her jewelry is what sets her off. She puts it all together — chunky, small, antiques — everything. She can get away with it. She has the knack of putting things

together and always looking smashing. She's a walking conversation piece."

## off the cuff

Off the Cuff is an occasional feature that focuses on ordinary people with extraordinary flair for fashion. If you know an area resident — man, woman or child — with a distinctive clothing sense, be it classic, trendy, homespun or outrageous, give us a call at 644-1100, Ext. 243.



Brown tones go well with Eichinger's hair color. Gold linen jacket is accented with leopard-printed scarf and tortoise-shell jewelry, and paired with brown velvet pants.



Rings on her fingers and bracelets on her wrists — both by Kenneth Lane — adorn Eichinger.



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