

## **Ukrainian Sports Club NY (YCK) is moving out of Manhattan.**

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For the last several months the location of the Ukrainian Sports Club of New York has experienced extraordinary changes due to gentrification of our neighborhood thereby having very little interaction with its members. Moreover, our New York Ukrainians soccer team players find it difficult traveling into Manhattan. Our home base for our adult soccer games is in McCarren Park Brooklyn, which is an area that would be a more appropriate and exciting new home for YCK. In the past few years, we have taken several remarkable steps to remain here in Manhattan as this has been our home for the last 46 years. It is with deep regret that our club's long-standing president, Mr. Willie Zinkewitsch, is announcing to close our doors and move out of our home on Second Avenue on September 13, 2020.

The Ukrainian Sports Club NY (YCK) purchased the building at 122 Second Avenue in late 1974 upon selling our soccer field in Flushing Queens. At that time, this Second Avenue building was a commercial one, fully rented, except for the ground and second floors with commercial and residential tenants on the 3rd, 4th and 5th floors. Once the purchase was finalized, we renovated the ground floor as well as the second floor with the guidance of Mr. George Rycar, the Architect of Record and the Clerk of the Works in 1975.

The club has meant the world to thousands of people over the last 5 decades. It always welcomed members and their guests with a smile. It is a unique location in the heart of the East Village. Upon entering the building, you would walk down a long hallway with blue and yellow stripes (symbolizing the colors of the Ukrainian flag), to a lobby that has an amazing mural of printed articles and photographs of the NY Ukrainians soccer teams over the years. On the other side is an impressive wall of outstanding trophies that their athletic teams have earned and show off with pride. Climbing up a few steps would be a classic and timeless no-frills bar, playing sports on any or all of their 3 TV monitors. This location let us conduct our operations, has supported our two New York Ukrainians soccer teams, hosted countless memorable social and community events like book readings and poetry (Yara Arts Group), holiday parties, and fundraisers (Ukrainian American Youth Association NY Branch - CYM), along with valuable meetings for members and its Board of Directors. Our club also hosted many other Ukrainian Club Teams and their club followers. Dynamo Kyiv, Shakhtar Donetsk, FC Karpaty, just to name a few, when they qualified in the UEFA Champions League and Europa League Championships.

Thousands of people have walked through our doors over the years and each of them could probably tell you a memorable moment here. Mr. Willie Zinkewitsch, current president of the Club, told us how it's been his "second home, watching international soccer matches via Setanta Broadcasting, when few sports bars in NYC were able to

transmit live games.” He goes on to say that “the 2006 World Cup, hosted by Germany, was one of the most exciting moments at YCK. We hosted many different ethnic soccer fans supporting their World Cup team to the finals.” When it comes down to a place to watch International Soccer, “YCK was the place to be in the Lower East Side/East Village.” In addition to soccer, boxing became a second sport of interest for many people to gather here. In particular, when the Klitschko brothers, Wladimir and Vitali fought and defended their heavyweight division championship titles.

*“I remember playing cards in YCK when we occupied two floors. I was teaching at St. George, coaching the youth team, and playing for YCK from 1975-80. Sadly, Manhattan has become overcrowded and too expensive. It is time for us to sell and move out. When YCK occupied two floors we had some joyous celebrations and gatherings. I have some fond memories of the YCK building.” - Dr. Nicholas Skirka*

*“In 1985 my family and I celebrated my First Holy Communion on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. It was a great time to be an 8 year old because my entire extended family was there to celebrate, along with plenty of room for all of the kids to run around! Ever since then, 122 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave has always been a great place to meet up with family and friends.” - Bohdan Pryjmak*

*“Back in 2013 I moved from Massachusetts to the Tri-State area. It was a surprise while walking on 2nd Ave in Manhattan I saw the sign УКРАЇНСЬКИЙ СПОРТОВИЙ КЛЮБ. I was so impressed when I walked in and saw all the trophies. I learned about the great history of our club that dates back to 1947. I signed up for the reserve soccer team. Since 2013, I am an active soccer player of YCK. I have great memories meeting with teammates at the club, especially for Christmas parties and inauguration ceremonies.” - Iurii Vovk*

Although we sold the building back in 2016, but remained in the back of the ground floor, the decision to move out of our Manhattan home has been a very difficult one. Our rental lease has expired and we are ready to find a new permanent location. We have many unforgettable memories here (as mentioned above) that we will hold on to forever. They were so great, however a few were not. Back in May 2010, for instance, we were devastated with an explosion on the fourth floor, along with a minor fire on the first floor shortly thereafter.

Rest assured, we have exciting changes ahead. We will continue to function with our respective adult and youth athletic programs during this transition and will wholeheartedly support you, our community, along the way. Our youth program, consisting of soccer and volleyball, is also eager to start a chess and ping pong club once we can safely be together indoors due to the hardships of the COVID-19 pandemic. These two youth clubs will actually take place in the East Village still, but in a neighboring building. Furthermore, we are restructuring our Board, expanding memberships, look forward to having the New York Ukrainians win more games and tournaments, and we are eager to find our new home in a location closer to our adult team field in Brooklyn. Upon

purchase, we will make a formal announcement so members and their guests can come visit us.

We will dearly miss our 122 Second Avenue home but look forward to finding another remarkable location for our organization to continue thriving for generations to come. Stay tuned and stay connected via our social media platforms including our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), and [Instagram page](#).