



This day's goal, which stretched to two days, was to enroll Katika in university in Uzhhorod to study English and other languages. As officially an orphan, a status she achieved upon turning 18 (do not try to figure it out), she is entitled to free tuition. Tuition is not expensive in US terms but is a big bite for most Ukrainians.

Our trek started with a wide detour. The previous week, two girls had had foot operations and another two had eye operations. One of the girl's with the eye operation has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder by doctors from Hungary who are willing to begin to treat her there. The problem is the girl is not an orphan, but a social orphan whose parents are unable to care for her. Still she cannot cross the border with out both parent's permission. So we drove to Yarok, a village deep in the hills, ending in gravel roads, to fetch the parents. Then a trip to the notary in Ushhorod - everything in Ukraine gets an ink stamp from every agency and all papers are carried around in sheet protectors - "packets" - which are an obsession with Ukrainians as the packet documents your whole life.



The stop in Uzhhorod gave me a chance to get a coffee at an outdoor café along the street while waiting for Laci to finish with the notary. The parents stayed in the city afterwards and we went on to the university.



Main building and lobby/common area.

The university is located atop a hill overlooking the city with its back against the Carpathian Mountains and peering out to the southwest towards the Hungarian plain. This is where things started going sideways. Apparently there was a document missing that substantiated Katika's status as an orphan. The original is housed in Berehove, about 50 miles away and there is no way to electronically retrieve it, so load up the wagons, we are going to Berehove - hopefully before the office closes.



Views towards Hungary from the university.





By now it was past lunch time and we had a long drive ahead so we stopped at a Chicken Hut in Uzhhorod for a burger and fries. While it was certainly tasty, it was certainly not a burger. It was good but be wary of burger claims unless you are at McDonald's - never thought I would say that!

Transkarpattya is a fascinating place to drive. It has mountains, forests, farms, vast plains, natural springs and thermals and improving road conditions. Villages have different personalities and almost always offer individuals selling fruit, vegetables, wine, baskets, or brooms along the road side.

The government office in Berehove was standard Soviet construction and a maze of offices. The one we needed was locked but had a posted phone number and after calling, a man and woman arrived and dug through stacks of files and a computer, printed the missing document, stamped it and we were on our way. Surprisingly easy!



By now it was too late to get back to Uzhhorod. The next day we once again went to the university. First, Katika showed the new document to a registrar. Then we went to the program registration and two women went through about 30 pages from the packet and after we went to another office and had copies made of about 15 more, Katika was officially registered.



The screenshot shows a Google Maps interface with a route from Uzhhorod to Velyka Dobron' and back. The route is highlighted in blue and takes 3 hours and 45 minutes for 178 km. The interface includes a list of destinations on the left and a satellite view inset.

- Destinations list:
 - Velyka Dobron', Zakarpats'ka oblast
 - Yarok, Zakarpats'ka oblast, 89414
 - Uzhhorod, Zakarpats'ka oblast
 - Berehove, Zakarpats'ka oblast, 90200
 - Velyka Dobron', Zakarpats'ka oblast
 - Add destination
- Route summary:
 - via M25 and E573/M06
 - 3 h 45 min
 - 3 h 45 min without traffic
 - 178 km
- Map details:
 - Map data ©2018 Google
 - Ukraine
 - Terms
 - Send feedback
 - 10 km scale bar