

Midwinter Ball raises \$350k for charity, including Ukraine Crisis Appeal

[Karen Barlow](#), Updated November 9 2022



Midwinter Ball charity recipients, Press Gallery President David Crowe (centre, back row) and Senator David Pocock (right, back row). Picture by Elesa Kurtz

Hundreds of vulnerable women, children and elderly people in war-ravaged Ukraine will get a much-needed new shelter thanks for the federal parliamentary press gallery's Midwinter Ball.

After a three-year, COVID-enforced break - [and amid calls for a boycott over fossil fuel sponsorship](#) - the 2022 event, held in the wintery Canberra September, collectively raised \$350,000 for charity.

Auction items included a game of tennis with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, a night cricket game with Opposition Leader Peter Dutton, dinner with Penny Wong and Tanya Plibersek and a dinner for four with Senator David Pocock and his wife Emma Pocock.

[\\$100,000 will go to the Ukraine Crisis Appeal](#). Set up by the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations, the charity has now raised \$7.5 million since February 24.

Appeal Chair Darka Senko said one of Ukraine's biggest problems is displaced people and "now just this week have tipped over one million of homeless people".

"It is critical. These people have lost everything," she said. "The saddest thing is that we have people because as you know, the war actually started in 2014. There are several families that have lost their homes three times over. These are people now in their 70s that will never be able to start again.

"We've built 16 shelters to date which house 7,600 people."



Defence Minister Richard Marles and Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek announce the 2022 Midwinter ball. Picture by Sithixay Ditthavong

The money will fund a new shelter designed to house around 500 people and she said time is of the essence with a harsh Ukraine winter approaching.

"It will hold a plaque and everyone in Ukraine and everyone who visits will know that the shelter has been funded by [the federal parliamentary press gallery]," Ms Senko said.

Other charities receiving Midwinter Ball support include Rural Aid Australia to help communities with recent flooding disasters, OzHarvest Australia, the group Fearless Women, which supports young women and girls in Canberra, Roundabout Canberra and Pink Elephants, which supports families through miscarriage.