

bridges



LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

\$5

May 2015

this month in history

May Anniversaries

635 years ago

May 31, 1380

Polish King Jogaila signed a secret treaty with the Teutonic Order, pledging not to aid Lithuanian Grand Duke Kęstutis.

515 years ago

May 3, 1500

Ivan III, grand duke of Moscow, initiated the Second Muscovite-Lithuanian War (1500-1503), while Polish and Hungary were pre-occupied with a campaign against the Ottoman Empire, and unable provide assistance to Lithuania. The pretext for the war was alleged religious intolerance, as Ivan's daughter Helen, who was married to Alexander Jagiellon, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, remained uncrowned because she was forbidden by her father to convert from Orthodoxy to Catholicism. By the war's end, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania had lost about a third of its territory.

355 years ago

May 3, 1660

The Treaty of Oliva was signed in Gdansk, Poland, ending the Second Northern War between Sweden and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. John II Casimir Vasa, king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania, withdrew his claims to the Swedish throne, which his father, Sigismund III Vasa, had lost in 1599. All occupied territories were restored to their pre-war sovereigns. Poland-Lithuania formally ceded to Sweden Livonia and the city of Riga, which had been under Swedish control since the 1620s.

200 years ago

May 27, 1815

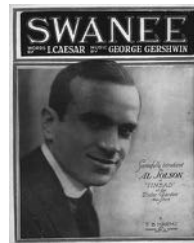
Educator and linguist Jonas Juška was born in Žarėnai. One of his most important contributions was his 1861 classification of Lithuania dialects into Samogitian, Prussian Lithuanian, dialect of Ariogala area and Eastern Lithuanian. His proposal for a common Lithuanian alphabet did not meet with much success but his suggestion that *cz*, *sz* and *w* be replaced by *č*, *š* and *v* eventually was adopted.

135 years ago

May 17, 1880

Mykolas Romeris, whose studies formed the basis for Lithuanian Constitutional Law, was born in Bagdoniškis. Romeris wrote the first scientific study on the history of the Lithuanian national movement. In 1932 he represented Lithuania in the International Court of Justice at the Hague in the dispute on the status of the Klaipėda region, winning the case.

Romeris's brochure "Sovietisation of Lithuania from 1940-1941," describing Lithuania's occupation and incorporation into the Soviet empire, was the sole reference for a 1989 commission to evaluate the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The publication eventually became symbolic of the independence movement.



130 years ago

May 28, 1885

Al Jolson, American jazz singer and silent film actor, was born in Seredzius as Asa Yoelson. His father, Morris, a rabbi and a cantor, brought the family to the United States in 1894.

125 years ago

May 19, 1890

Antanas Vanagaitis, popular early Lithuanian-American performer, was born. Vanagaitis came to the U.S. in 1924 with a four-person troupe, "Dzimdzi-Drimdzi," that toured the Lithuanian-American colonies. He composed and recorded hundreds of popular songs.

95 years ago

May 15, 1920

The first meeting of the democratically elected Constituent Assembly took place in Kaunas, with writer Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė as chair. The assembly elected Aleksandras Stulginskis president and adopted the Independence Resolution of February 16, 1918.

70 years ago

May 16, 1945

Battle of Kalniskės. Soviet NKVD troops surrounded Lithuanian partisans in the hills of Kalniskės Forest in Alytus district. The Lithuanians put up a persistent defense and half eventually broke through Russian lines to escape. The partisans lost 44, including machine gunner Albina Neifaltienė, wife of the troop leader. The Russians suffered heavy losses.



65 years ago

May 30, 1950

Antanas Vivulskis' 1916 Hill of Three Crosses monument on Kreivasis Kalnas (Crooked Hill), also known as Plikasis Kalnas (Bald Hill) above Vilnius, was blown up on orders of the Soviet government. It was rebuilt in 1989 as a project of the Lithuanian Reform Movement, Sąjūdis.

3



6



8



15



Front cover: Spring blossoms in Lithuania. Photo: Evelina Kutkaitytė
Back cover: Storefront in the Užupis district of Vilnius. Photo: Teresė Vekteris

bridges

May 2015

LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

3 Voyage to Freedom
by Gediminas Indreika

6 With Love for Lithuania, Languages, Sports and Serving Others
by Vilia D. Baumilaitė

8 Colorful Band-Aids
by Aistė Furajevaitė

10 Through Mother's Eyes:
 The Diaspora Diary of Rozė Kriaučiūnas, part 4
translated by Nijolė Gražulis

Special Section

25th Anniversary of Reestablishment of Independence
 The Long Road to Freedom: Milestones and Memories

12 Let Freedom Ring
by Arūnas Pauliulis

Departments

c2 this month in history

2 from the editor

A Mom Who Believed in Me, *by Teresė Vekteris*

15 a taste of lithuania

Start a Mother's Day Tradition With Koldūnai
by Jana Sirusaitė Motivans

our community

17 Club Represents Lithuania at International Fair

17 Annual Journal *Lithuanian Papers* Moves Online

18 Another Small Choir to Sing at Dainų Šventė

18 Yale Concert Band Plays Lithuanian Music

19 Honorary Consulate Opens in Richmond

19 Honorary Consul Prunskis Meets With U.S. Senators

20 Kaupas Center Opens in Mount Carmel, Pa.

20 Lithuanian Sign Language Interpreters Needed

20 Bilingual Interpreters Needed

21 Neringa Benefits From Two Concerts

21 Lithuanian Ambassador Addresses European Security

22 book review

Writing a Book Becomes Therapeutic: Review of *Where Do I Belong? An Immigrant's Quest for Identity* by Tony Mankus
by Romualdas Kriaučiūnas

23 current events

25 calendar

from the editor

A Mom Who Believed in Me

My mother was a pharmacist who worked at our local hospital, in addition to holding part-time positions at two other drugstores near our home. Yet she somehow was always there to encourage me and my brother in our childhood dreams and whims, not just with words but with actions.

When I look back, I'm really not sure how she managed it. Yes, my grandmother lived with us, and did a lot of the cooking, cleaning and everyday getting us up and ready for school. But my mother took me to ballet, swimming and horseback riding lessons and to Brownie and Girl Scout meetings. She arranged her schedule to chaperone our grade-school class trips and dances. She helped us with homework and extra-curricular activities. She drove us to the library every Saturday morning and helped me carry out my limit of 10 books. And even though she knew what it would mean to be a team mom, she let me try out for basketball, volleyball, gymnastics and cheerleading. My astonishing lack of coordination or athleticism provided her with a deserved measure of relief on that front.

Mom even indulged my unrealistically ambitious ideas, like when I selected, cast, produced and directed our fourth-grade class play. She helped me construct and haul props and costumes to school and ran interference with Sr. Calvaria, who suggested that I was perhaps a tad too zealous when trying to apply stage makeup to the boys in the cast.

In perhaps one of her greatest demonstrations of support, the woman who was deathly afraid of rodents went with me to purchase two gerbils for my sophomore class science project. Successfully playing to her greatest weakness, I had overcome her resistance with the plea, "Don't you want me to get an A?" (I did.)

Later in high school and throughout college, Mom and I ceased to see eye to eye on many issues, like choice of school, major and friends. Having put herself through night school and then pharmacy school with no support or encouragement from her parents, she had always been my model for independence and achievement. Perhaps she had modeled that a little too well. I strained to leave the nest as soon as I could to pursue life on my own terms. We began to repair the distance once I had established a successful career, even if it was in healthcare marketing rather than as the doctor she had envisioned. That period of reconciliation was cut short, though. Never have I felt such a loss as the one I felt after her death, at much too young an age, shortly after Mother's Day in 1988. Rarely does a day go by when I don't think of her—and thank her for believing in me.

Mothers make their influence known elsewhere in the pages of this issue:

- Aistė Furajevaitė tells the story of her project to aid Mama Unija, Mothers' Union, a Lithuanian organization dedicated to caring for pediatric cancer patients.
- In her 1945 diary entries, Rožė Kriauciūnas expresses a mother's worries about the future of her children at the end of World War II.
- Jana Sirusaitė Motivans teaches us how to make koldūnai and suggests making them a new Mother's Day tradition.

Our other features include a daring escape by sea from Soviet-occupied Lithuania in 1951 and a tale of how a young woman introduced the sport of lacrosse to Lithuanian children during a volunteer trip last year.

Happy Mother's Day!



Teresė Vekteris, Editor

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Voyage to Freedom

Three Fishermen Make Daring Escape by Sea

By Gediminas Indreika



Lithuanian seamen (from left) Edmundas Paulauskas, Lionginas Kublickas and Juozas Grismanauskas arrive at Idlewild Airport on February 13, 1952. Photo: UPI

The story of the miraculous escape of three Lithuanians by sea from behind the Iron Curtain in 1951, during Stalin's rule, is little known today. Although overshadowed by Simas Kudirka's attempted defection in 1970, the voyage of Lionginas Kublickas, Juozas Grismanauskas and Edmundas Paulauskas across the Baltic was the most daring escape from oppressed Lithuania to date. During that escape, Captain Kublickas and two of his crew overpowered the Russian sailors on their fishing trawler, then crossed the Baltic Sea to Sweden.

The sailors' defection enabled truthful news from Russian-occupied Lithuania to reach the West for the first time since World War II. They revealed how the Reds used terror to intimidate and subvert the villagers. From 1947 to 1949, thousands of Lithuanian peasants were being arrested and deported to Siberian labor camps.

Under Soviet occupation, any farmer who owned 20 hectares of land or more was considered an "exploiter" and subject to arrest and deportation. Subsequently, their homes were looted and seized by the Russians, their cattle were let loose and their cows were not fed or milked. The three seamen reported how the peasants resisted collectivization of their farms, and how the underground Partisan movement was born.

Juozas Grismanauskas, the son of a farmer in Plateliai, was

born in 1927. He avoided being conscripted into the Red Army by enrolling in the Agricultural College of Kretinga. While there he studied the basics of vegetable farming and orchard growing, in addition to Marxism and Leninism. He couldn't find work after graduating in 1948. During this turbulent period, all he saw was the destruction of farms, the burning of homesteads and atrocities committed by the Soviets.

Little did he expect that he and his fellow students would be given arms and ordered to assist the NKVD secret police in their brutal operation of arresting the peasants. Many of their neighbors were separated from their families, herded into freight cars and shipped like cattle to Siberia. Given the choice of cooperating with the Reds or actively resisting them, Grismanauskas went underground and joined the resistance.

The Lithuanian Partisans, also known as "Forest Brothers," led the armed resistance, defending the farmers in their struggle against the forcible seizure of their land. The Soviets tried to organize communist youth brigades, but they could not break the spirit of the majority of Lithuanians or prevent young men from becoming Partisans. The young Lithuanians would rather sacrifice their lives fighting against tyranny than become instruments of the oppressor.

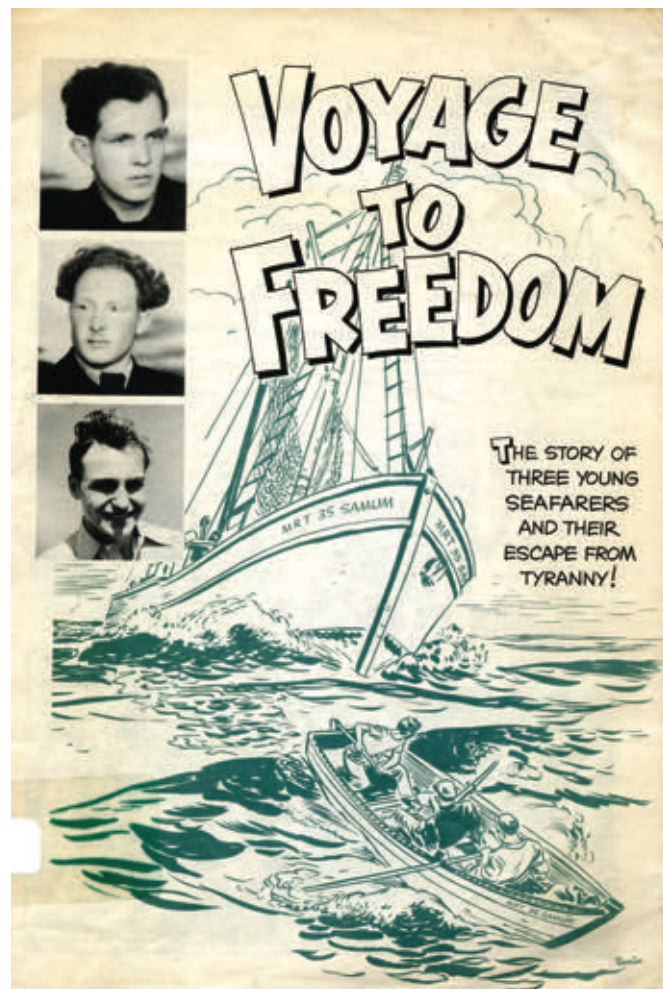
Lionginas Kublickas was born in 1929 in Zarasai. As a boy

he hoped to someday join the Lithuanian Navy, but his hopes were disrupted by the Soviet occupation. In 1948, Kublickas was admitted to the Soviet merchant marine academy in Klaipėda. Upon graduating, he was assigned to a commercial fishing unit in the Baltic Sea. The Soviet fleet of fishing vessels was being expanded at the port of Klaipėda. Kublickas was appointed captain; still, he harbored secret anger at the Russians. In 1949, he had a chance meeting with Grismanauskas, who had served a sentence of six months in the Kartena prison, and had just moved to Klaipėda. Captain Kublickas befriended Grismanauskas and helped him to get a job in the fishing industry. Immediately, they began planning their escape.

Edmundas Paulauskas was born in 1932 in Panevėžys. It was not known if he would be willing to join his fellow Lithuanians in their escape, because Kublickas was not familiar with his background. But on the day of the voyage, Paulauskas committed himself to join them.

Captain Kublickas decided that the best time to execute their mission would be in July, when they would be fishing at the farthest quadrants of the Baltic. Normally the crew consisted of eight persons, and the duration of the fishing trips would last six to seven days. This trip, the crew would be smaller. The Lithuanians assembled their supplies: they would need nails, boards and a crowbar to accomplish their task.

Their boat, the Samum, departed Klaipėda on July 15, 1951, and reached the fishing quadrant 70 miles from shore. They caught some 600 kg of cod and herring. The crew rotated shifts sleeping in the cubicle below deck. At 16:30 hours, while the Russians Misha and Sasha were sleeping and the other was peeling potatoes in the galley, Grismanauskas began nailing the door to the cubicle shut and sealing the windows with the boards. By the time the Russians realized what was going on, they were trapped in their quarters.



Cover of the book *Voyage to Freedom*, published in 1953. Photo: Gediminas Indreika, from LRSC archive.



From left, Edmundas Paulauskas, Lionginas Kublickas and Juozas Grismanauskas in 1952. Photo: Conrad Studio, originally published in *Lithuanian Days* magazine, now defunct.

The Captain removed the Soviet flag from their boat, changed course toward Sweden and accelerated their speed. Meanwhile the Russians removed their bed posts and began pounding on the door—but Grismanauskas warned them if they didn't keep still he would throw a grenade into their cubicle. For a while they complied. A Soviet submarine was sighted in the distance, but it passed by without incident. After the Russian crew made another attempt to break loose with knives, Paulauskas secured the windows again and issued another warning.

By sunrise they could see the coast—the island of Oland, Sweden. A Swedish patrol ship approached them and its officer asked them where they came from. “We are from Klaipėda,” replied Captain Kublickas, “and we brought you some

Communists.” The Swedes became concerned if the Russians were still alive or had been injured. Satisfied that they were unharmed, the Swedes instructed the Lithuanians to go ahead and row ashore on their own. The three sailors threw anchor, lowered their lifeboat and oared their way to freedom. They were granted asylum in Stockholm.

Following the escape, the Soviet Union’s War Tribunal tried the three Lithuanian sailors in absentia, sentencing all three to death.

Liberty at Last

After the three sailors arrived in New York on February 13, 1952, they travelled around Lithuanian émigré communities speaking on behalf of their oppressed brethren in Lithuania. Grismanauskas wrote a book about their escape and the events leading to it, *Tolimieji kvadrantai* (*Distant Quadrants*), published in New York in 1952. An English summary in comic book version, *Voyage to Freedom*, was also published. In 1953 Grismanauskas authored another book, *Songs of Lithuanian Partisans*, containing 15 original songs that were composed by the Lithuanian partisans during the guerilla war period. He settled in Cicero, Ill., and worked in a machine shop. He died on July 16, 1983, exactly 32 years from the date of his voyage.

A rare recording of Grismanauskas’ press conference given in Baltimore in 1952, during a Lithuanian Independence Day celebration, has been restored by Vytas Beleska of the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center. Grismanauskas described life in oppressed Lithuania, and how Russian colonists had settled in the cities. He stated that in Klaipėda, Russians then comprised 45 percent of the population. He answered questions about the trio’s escape to Sweden.

Lionginas Kublickas settled in Wheaton, Ill., where he worked as an electrical engineer. After Lithuania regained independence in 1990, he hoped to visit his native land again. But his deteriorating health would not allow him to fulfill his wish. Kublickas died on August 4, 1994, and was survived by his wife, Krystyna. He was buried next to his partner in flight Juozas Grismanauskas at St. Casimir Lithuanian Cemetery in Chicago. Their monument, shaped in the form of a sailboat, has the words “Laisvės Žvejai” inscribed on its face, meaning “Freedom’s Fishermen.” Also inscribed is the prayer “Lord, all we wanted was to reveal the suffering of our people.” Edmundas Paulauskas passed away in May 2001 in Cicero, Ill.

Gediminas Indreika is an associate at the Lithuanian Studies and Research Center.



Monument of Kublickas and Grismanauskas in Chicago, St. Casimir Cemetery. Photo by Gediminas Indreika

With love for Lithuania, languages, sports and serving others

By Vilia D. Baumilaitė



Vilia at Neringa Family Camp in Brattleboro, Vermont.



Campers in Plungė, Lithuania, with their donated lacrosse gear. Camp Draugai is sponsored in part by the U.S.-based Kazickas Family Foundation.

When you have to rush from one camp to the next, there is no time to waste. Especially when that camp is four thousand miles away in Lithuania. Rushing out of my favorite place on Earth wasn't easy—to say goodbye to someone for a whole year knowing that you will only see them maybe one more time before next summer. It's hard living so far away from people who mean so much to you.

I left Neringa [Lithuanian Heritage Camp in Brattleboro, Vermont] crying, remembering all of the amazing memories that my friends and I shared. Neringa was the camp where I volunteered for a week and camped for three. Then again, I knew that where I was going it would be fun, too.

I left Vermont, and that very same day I was on my way to JFK Airport and then to

Lithuania. I was going to be a counselor at Camp “Draugai” (in Plungė, Lithuania) and would get to show the children there my favorite sport. Yet this game had not been introduced to Lithuania. It was a game played in the States that many teenagers enjoyed—lacrosse.

In Lithuania, the day came when the children played lacrosse. At first nobody, except for me, knew what they were doing. All of the equipment had been donated from my local Southampton, N.Y., school district. The children flung the balls into the air, then ran away panicking. They thought I was crazy bringing them this game that I played and loved. But a week later they had gotten the hang of it, and they were throwing, catching and running, and they felt proud. I felt proud watching them and knowing that I showed these kids something of another part of the world.

My volunteering didn't start in Lithuania in the summer of 2014. Volunteering in the Dominican Republic where we built a school in 2013 provided me with the deeper knowledge of the world. Kids are kids but their lives and habits were different from those of us who came from the U.S. I realized that life is completely different outside of Southampton, N.Y., where I live.



Vilia (at left) teaching lacrosse to Lithuanian children at Camp Draugai in Plungė in 2014.

Traveling to Lithuania and other countries has given me amazing opportunities to see the world and to change my point of view on life, view of where I live and view of myself. Those experiences were more genuine because where I went, I spoke the language: Lithuanian in Lithuania, Spanish in the Dominican Republic ... and I am still waiting for a volunteer trip to a French-speaking country.

Vilia Baumilaitė's parents came to the U.S. from Lithuania in 1997. Vilia, now 15, was born in Southampton, N.Y. When Vilia

was 6, she was inspired by the Southampton Elementary school's fundraiser for Locks of Love. Over the next few years she donated her hair twice and encouraged her girlfriends in Lithuanian school to do the same, for a wig for a girl with alopecia (an autoimmune disease that results in hair loss) in Lithuania. She also encouraged her family to become involved in the National Alopecia Association of Lithuania. Locks of Love, Camp Nerlinga and the A.Kazickas Lithuanian school, which Vilia has attended for nine years, keep her connected to Lithuania.



Vilia with U.S. Lithuanian campers at Neringa in 2014.



Vilia in 2013 during a volunteer trip to help to build a school in Constanza, Dominican Republic.



Colorful Band-Aids

Student Organizes U.S. Effort to Help Pediatric Cancer Patients in Lithuania

By Aistė Furajevaitė

"Mothers Union" logo and some of the money and boxes of colorful Band-Aids collected during the "Gift of Kindness" Colorful Band-Aid fundraising event.

Last fall I visited my family in Lithuania. During my visit, my aunt, Sigita Stasiukynienė, who is a volunteer at "Mothers Union" (a non-profit organization that supports every Lithuanian child with cancer), told me different stories about how she was involved with little cancer patients. Some stories were very sad; some were a little more cheerful. One of them touched me very deeply.

At the hospital, the pediatric cancer patients go through many painful injections. When the nurses take them for their shots, they always hear the same question: "Will there be a colorful Band-Aid? If yes, then let's go—it won't hurt," the children say. However, the colorful Band-Aids only reach the hospital when people donate them.

The minute I heard it, I knew that I wanted to do something to help these little cancer patients. At first I thought I would just go to pharmacies and ask them to donate colorful Band-Aids. Then I thought, I could ask my fellow AKLS [Alexandra Kazickas Lithuanian School, Aquebogue, N.Y.] students to help. I had an idea that we could collect around 500 boxes of Band-Aids together. Then my mom, Snieguolė Furajevienė, joked,

"How about collecting 1,000 boxes of Band-Aids?"

I thought it was impossible, but then I remembered a phrase that Dr. Kazickas said to me during our school opening, "Always reach for the highest goal!" So, I said, "Why not go and try to collect 1,000 boxes?" To help us reach the goal I decided to invite all the Lithuanian schools across the United States. I sent invitations to the schools asking them to join in.

A million things were racing through my mind. I thought we could also do a fundraising event "Colorful Band-Aid" at our Lithuanian community and have even more people involved to help the little patients and learn more about "Mothers Union" overall.

The event was the "finish" to the whole project. It was organized and hosted only by the youth of A. Kazickas Lithuanian School—current students and alumni. This was the first time that an event was organized only by the youth. Aldas Levišaukas helped me host the event and we also asked Jokubas Balčiūnas and Roberta Kurbonavaitė to tell everyone a little more about "Mothers Union."

The fee for the event was two boxes of colorful Band-Aids. To



The Kazickas family (John, Marcie, Lucy, Joseph and Sophie) with the General Consul of Lithuania in New York Julius Pranevičius have their order taken for food.



General Consul of Lithuania in New York Julius Pranevičius making a speech.

support the youth, VIP guests came: General Consul of Lithuania in New York Julius Pranevičius; John and Marcie Kazickas; and Joseph, Lucy and Sophie Kazickas.

All guests were treated to crepes, which were made, by Justas Klimavičius, Arnoldas Kurbanovas and Justas Laužadis. All guests were served by Gabrielė Petrauskaitė, Indrė Zinkevičiūtė, Gabrielė Vakeikaitė, Miglė Mitrulevičiūtė, Vilia Baumilatė and Ema Vilčinskaitė. During the event, we also had a bake sale. All baked goods were made by the moms: Snieguolė Furajevienė, Neila Baumilienė, Marina Levišauskienė, Renata Petrauskienė, Gintė Genender, Renatė Zinkevičienė, Vera Žilionienė, Irma Diržius, Rita Klimavičienė and Martyna Ulskienė.

The “Gift of Kindness” project goal was to raise 1,000, boxes of Band-Aids. During the fundraising event, we collected 208

boxes of colorful Band-Aids and \$3,328. Over the course of the whole project, we exceeded our goal by collecting 1,206 boxes of colorful Band-Aids and \$4,167.

The Lithuanian schools that took part in the project were Maironis Lithuanian School (New York), Boston Lithuanian School (Massachusetts), “Lietuvelė” Lithuanian School (New Jersey), Dr. V. Kudirka Lithuanian School (New Jersey), Saulutė Lithuanian School (Florida), Atlantus “Saulės” Lithuanian School (Georgia), Lithuanian School “Banginukas” (Massachusetts), Sv. Kazimier Lithuanian School (Ohio), V. Krėvės Lithuanian School (Pennsylvania), and more good hearted people from different Lithuanian communities. Also, a big thank you to the president of the Lithuanian American Community, Sigita Šimkuvienė-Rosen, for her support during the project.

We also want to thank the company M&E Baltic (International auto shipping) for sponsoring the sending of the packages to “Mothers Union” in Lithuania.

Aistė Furajevaitė is a student at Alexandra Kazickas Lithuanian School of Aquebogue, New York.



A. Kazickas Lithuanian School students and alumni who helped organize the fundraising event.



Aistė Furajevaitė thanks event participants for coming out and supporting the “Gift of Kindness” project.



Through Mother's Eyes: The Diaspora Diary of Rožė Kriaučiūnas, part 4

Translated by Nijolė Gražulis

Modern-day Eichstätt, the Bavarian town to which the Lithuanian refugees in Pietenfeld were taken in May 1945. Photo: Martin Geisler.

May 3, 1945

It has been a week since the cataclysmic hostilities of war moved onward. Life appears to be somewhat more peaceful. The sound of airplanes overhead no longer seems menacing. But there isn't much to be happy about. Actually, things are rather bad at the moment. No one seems to be planning to issue food ration cards. There is no stable authority. Our food supplies are dwindling, and there is very little bread left. The future is uncertain.

Once again I am dreaming often of Mykolas. There is now more hope of finding him. Perhaps we'll be getting mail again soon. Perhaps the Red Cross will assist me. I only hope that he is not in the Soviet-occupied zone. One Lithuanian man told me that a Kriaučiūnas from

Panevėžys [Lithuania; near Gustonys] had been seen in Posen [Poznan, Poland]. Maybe it was he. When, oh, when will we meet again? When will my heart, so full of longing, be able to feel joy again? I firmly believe that he is alive and well. Our prayers to Mary will keep him safe and well and return him to us. How terrible to think that he might have been laid to rest in a foreign land. What would happen to our children? They would end up as drudges of foreigners. All by myself I would never have the means to provide for their education, even if they learned the language. I choose to believe in a brighter future.

May 4, 1945

It was announced today that the war ended yesterday. We should all be over-

joyed, but the Germans lost, and they are sad. I too have nothing to rejoice about. My homeland is still occupied by the Bolsheviks, and thus to return there would be a dreadful mistake. Besides, I am still alone. I don't know if I'll ever find out where Mykolas is. If we knew he is alive, we could all be happy. How I wish I could tell him about everything we have endured. I am sad and uneasy. There is no close friend, not even an acquaintance, whom I could trust, and who could advise me. Only my faith in God gives me hope.

May 17, 1945

It's just like in the Lithuanian song: "Foreign skies do not please, ever in my dreams my dear land appears." Yes, only on the wings of dreams can I fly to the land of my birth. Only in my dreams am I

living there. Oh, how I want to return to my own people.

Today all Polish and Russian refugees were taken away from our village. The plan is to return them to their homelands. They are happy and rejoicing. Most of them have not spent a year doing compulsory labor in Germany. Although I do not work here but pass my time in relative ease, the situation here is still worrisome. Actually, I too was asked if I wanted to return home, but I could only answer, "No!" To go back to my Soviet-occupied country would be disastrous. They might arrest me on the spot and deport me to Siberia. It will be better to remain here, even if I continue to long for my country and for my sisters and my brother. If only Mykolas were here! Then maybe this foreign land would not seem so dreary. After all, it is so beautiful here. Mykolas would compose long poems about the lovely hills and forests of Bavaria. But only God knows where he is. Will we ever be together again, or am I to be alone always?

May 20, 1945

This Pentecost morning reminded me of my wedding. It was fourteen years ago. Quite a lot has happened since that time. Many were the happy hours I experienced, and there were bitter ones too. I can still see my Mykolas, dressed in black, standing beside me, all in white. How indescribably unbearable it is that today I know nothing about him. Perhaps even on that long-ago day he was not dearer to me or more loved than he is now. That is why I am so sad, so grief-stricken whenever I think of this. But I have to believe that one day we will be together again. Then two hearts that have missed each other so terribly will be as full of joy again as on Pentecost Sunday in 1931.

May 21, 1945

Yesterday was our wedding anniversary. The days of youth sped by like the wind. Just as quickly passed the days of our life together. Now I am standing at a boundless [illegible text] and I wonder what will happen next.

Today all the Lithuanian refugees in Pietenfeld were taken to Eichstätt. We were lodged in a schoolhouse, which now holds several dozen Lithuanians. I barely know these people, although they are of the same nationality. There are about 20 persons in each classroom. The mood is not a very happy one, however. Each person is concerned about his or her own future. Most are family units that are bearing the uneasy burden of a refugee's existence together. There are several in a similarly unfortunate situation as mine. Where will they take us? Where will we next continue our struggle for survival? This troubles me all the more since I am without relatives, without my husband, and since my children are without their father.

Rože's diary pages are silent for the summer months of June, July and August 1945. She resumes her narrative in September 1945, and so shall we, in the September 2015 issue of Bridges, when we will learn where the family ended up after Eichstätt.

Get blown away this summer!

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The Long Road to Freedom

Milestones and Memories

Let Freedom Ring

By *Arūnas Paliulis*

After the newly formed council in Lithuania declared independence in 1918, the Lithuanian American Congress meeting in Chicago decided to gift a huge bell to the people of Lithuania that would be a symbol of liberty akin to the liberty bell rung by the Second Constitutional Congress proclaiming liberty in Philadelphia in 1776.

This bell was emblazoned with the *vytis* [the knight, the traditional symbol of Lithuania], and with the words of the diplomat-poet Bronius Kazys Balutis, “O, skambink per amžius vaikams Lietuvos. Tas laisvės nevertas, kas negina jos.” (“O, ring through the ages for the children of Lithuania. They are not worthy of freedom, who do not defend it.”)

That bell of freedom was silenced from the occupation of 1940 until the rise of *Sąjūdis* in 1988 (on that day the Lithuanian flag was also raised for the first time in 48 years), but it and all the bells throughout the land rang incessantly as the last echelons of the Red Army finally departed on August 31, 1993.

We are reminded of our long and proud history, from the first mentions of the Lithuanian state in 1009 to all of the struggles over the centuries to recover, maintain and enforce that freedom:

- 1230 – Invasion of the Mongols
- 1410 – Battle of Žalgiris against the Teutonic knights
- 1654 – Resistance against the Swedish invasion
- 1863 – Revolt against the czar’s army
- 1905 – Civil uprising against the Russian occupation
- 1918 – Declaration of independence
- 1941 – Uprising against the Soviet occu-

pation initiated by students at Vytautas Magnus University

1944-1953 – Guerilla war of the partisans

1972 – Massive riots after the self-immolation of Romas Kalanta

1988-1991 – *Sąjūdis* movement to secede from the Soviet Union

2015 – Preparation for an imminent threat from an aggressive Russia

At a recent meeting of the Vilnius University history alumni, virtually all attendees had acknowledged viewing the Vincas Sruoginis/Jonas Ohlmann film about the partisans’ war, “The Invisible Front,” and almost all of them confirmed that they are ready to join a new resistance effort if necessary. When I asked one lady if she had plans to flee to Dublin or London or Chicago in the event of a new invasion, she responded, “NO WAY,” and said she and her fiancé had already reserved a pair of Kalashnikovs to defend the Green Bridge accessing Vilnius, and that her fiancé’s father, a former Red Army marksman, had already chosen numerous rooftops and balconies in Kaunas’ Old Town from which to join the fray if necessary.

Today the Lithuanian Army numbers only 14,700 highly professional and motivated men and women (and some 4,150 reserves), with both regular army units and special operations teams seasoned by NATO peacekeeping duty in Bosnia, Georgia, Somalia and Afghanistan. Since last October, they are being advised and abetted by teams of U.S. special operations forces from Fort Benning, Fort Bragg and Fort Hood. There are another estimated 20,000 volunteers who are preparing themselves for any eventual-

ity throughout their towns and villages. That number is growing by some 100 per week. This is all happening as the Russian navy is on unprecedented maneuvers in the Baltic and a website called “Vilnius Russian peoples republic” has sprouted on the Internet.

Thus this year’s commemoration of March 11 had a special significance, sentimentality and motivation for all the peoples of the land, as all the bells of all the churches and municipal buildings, from the shores of the Baltic to the soldiers’ museum in Kaunas and to the cathedral in Vilnius, rang loudly and proudly.

And may they ring forever.

The following popular patriotic song could often be heard during the Singing Revolution, in *Sąjūdis* television programming and in Lithuanian National Radio broadcasts. It was adapted from the Lithuania Minor anthem “*Lietuvninkai mes esame gimę*” by Jurgis Zauerveinas (Georg Sauerwein).

Lietuviais esame mes gimę,
Lietuviais norime ir būt.
Tą garbę gavome užgimę,
Jai ir neturim leist pražūt.

Lithuanians we have been born,
Lithuanians we shall be,
That honor is our birthright,
And never shall it die.

Arūnas Paliulis was born in Waterbury, Conn., the son of displaced persons. A graduate of Harvard College, he works in agricultural product trading and marketing. He has lived in Lithuania as well as numerous other countries.

May 1, 1990

Thousands of protestors took part in the first anti-government demonstration permitted in Red Square following the official portion of the May Day parade in Moscow. A number carried banners and posters supporting Lithuania in its drive for independence and condemning the economic blockade that forced the beginning of food rationing in the Baltic republic.

May 2, 1990

The Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania adopted the law "On Persons Repressed for Resistance Against the Occupation Regimes, legal redress."

May 3, 1990

Lithuania introduced monthly rations of 2 kilograms each of flour, cereals, butter and sugar.

May 8, 1990

The anti-blockage commission of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania declares economic sanctions against the USSR and reduces planned deliveries of meat and milk by 10 percent.



May 3, 1990

During a visit to North America, Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskienė met with U.S. President George Bush at the White House. It was the first meeting between an American president and a leader of the Baltic republic since it was forcibly annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940. Prunskienė told Bush that her country would never revoke its declaration of independence, but that it was willing to suspend new laws passed by the Lithuanian Parliament in exchange for international guarantees that included recognition of Lithuania's government, sovereignty and boundaries. Bush, however, said the U.S. preferred dialogue with the Soviet Union and refused a request that the U.S. act as a mediator in the dispute between the Soviet Union and Lithuania.

Kazimiera Prunskienė gives a press conference in the Northwest Driveway of the White House after her meeting with U.S. President George Bush on May 3, 1990.

May 12, 1990

At a meeting in Tallinn, the presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania renewed the 1934 "Declaration on Concord and Cooperation by the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Estonia," reestablishing a united political alliance designed to enhance their drive for independence from the Soviet Union.

May 17, 1990

Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev met with Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskienė in Moscow. It was Gorbachev's first face-to-face meeting with a senior official of the Baltic republics since they declared independence. Despite optimistic press releases concerning their talks, it quickly became apparent that Lithuania would not back down on its claim to independence.

May 26, 1990

Picketing against the economic blockade of Lithuania took place in Moscow.

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Start a Mother's Day Tradition With Koldūnai

By Jana Sirusaitė Motivans



Several years ago, one of the food writers for our local newspaper wrote an article in which she declared her intention to start a new Mother's Day tradition. She decided to honor her grandmother's memory and her Ukrainian and Polish heritage by making pierogies on Mother's Day. The writer explained how her grandmother used to be a master at whipping up pierogies by the hundreds, and how much joy she brought to those lucky enough to eat them by the bowlful.

I think many of us must have a similar memory of Lithuanian food shared in our mother's and grandmothers' kitchens. For most of us, this memory would probably be one of "the big 3" of Lithuanian cuisine: cepelinai, kugelis and koldūnai.

I remember making koldūnai with my Močiutė Sofija in her kitchen in New York. Močiutė had a big, heavy metal meat grinder that attached to the edge of the kitchen table with a clamp, and she would grind the meat for the filling herself. The meat came from the Forest Park Pork Store. Močiutė would make a special trip by bus "pas Vokečius" (to the Germans) to buy top-quality meat for her koldūnai. The freshly ground meat went directly into a large bowl, where she would mix in

some finely minced onion and season with salt and pepper. The bowl would be set aside and the work area cleaned up for the next step, which was making the dough. The dough is very simple—just flour, eggs and water gently yet thoroughly kneaded together.

Once the dough was ready, Močiutė would really swing into action. The dough would be rolled out on the kitchen table and cut into circles with a special drinking glass reserved for just this purpose. The circles of dough would each get a spoonful of meat filling, and then Močiutė quickly and perfectly pinched them together into beautifully shaped koldūnai. Mine never looked as nice as hers did.

My reward for helping was the first delicious bowlful, served with bacon and onions and sour cream.

So, I think that the food writer's suggestion is a lovely idea and propose that we honor our mothers and grandmothers on Mother's Day by making koldūnai. Gather your family into the kitchen and share an afternoon together to create some lasting memories. Family and food, isn't that really what it's all about?

a taste of lithuania

Koldūnai (meat dumplings)

(makes approximately 50 large, generously filled dumplings, which serves five hungry people)

INGREDIENTS FOR DOUGH

- 4 cups flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup warm water

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING

- 2 pounds ground beef (or pork or veal if you prefer)
- 1 small onion, finely minced
- salt and pepper

INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING (spirgučiai)

- 1 pound bacon and 1 large onion, chopped and sautéed together
- sour cream



PREPARING THE FILLING

1. In a large bowl, combine ground meat with the finely minced onion.

PREPARING THE DOUGH

1. In another large bowl, mix flour and eggs.
2. Add water as needed to create a smooth dough, approximately 1 cup of water.
3. Knead the dough with your hands until it is smooth and workable, adding more flour or water if necessary.

FORMING THE KOLDŪNAI

1. Divide the dough in half. While you work with one half, cover the other half so that it doesn't dry out.
2. On a flour-covered surface, roll the dough out as thinly as possible.

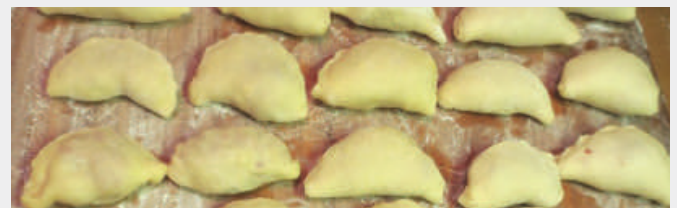
3. Cut rounds with a biscuit cutter or the open end of a glass (a good size is about 3 inches across).
4. Put the round in the palm of your hand and put a table-spoonful of filling in it.



5. Fold the dough over to form a half circle and press the edges together with your fingers, twisting as you go for a nice-looking edge.



6. Place the finished dumplings on a flour-covered board and cover them to prevent them from drying out. Reroll the unused bits of the dough and continue making the koldūnai, using up all the dough and filling.



COOKING THE KOLDŪNAI

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Gently place a few koldūnai at a time into the boiling water. Do not crowd the pot with too many dumplings at once.
3. Stir gently with a wooden spoon, lower the temperature and boil for 10-15 minutes or until the koldūnai are well puffed and float to the top.
4. Remove the koldūnai with a slotted spoon. Place in a deep dish with some melted butter and toss gently to coat them to prevent them from sticking together. Cover and keep warm while you continue cooking the remaining koldūnai.
5. Serve with the bacon and onion (spirgučiai) and sour cream.

Club Represents Lithuania at International Fair

By Aldona Tanner

This is the first year the Omaha Lithuanian Women's Club participated in the International Fair at Metropolitan Community College, held on April 7, 2015.

The fair was opened with the naturalization ceremony; 30 people from 14 countries became U.S. citizens. My parents became citizens in 1957 and now a new wave of immigrants is getting to learn and experience what a wonderful country this is to live in. How awesome is that!

We sold our products including our cookbook, mugs, bumper stickers and tote bags. Our profits are used for donations to Lithuanian and local charities. To commemorate the January 13th Defenders of Freedom Day, we distributed forget-me-not seed packets with a brief history of the events from that day in 1991 on the back of the packet.

Our table was next to the Omaha Sister Cities Association (OSCA) table, so we were in good company. There was music, dancers and other performers from various cultures and backgrounds. Ethnic food was served in the Food Court. We decided that if we are invited to participate next year, we will



Left to right: Marie Antanelis, Irene Matz, Aldona Tanner and Kristina Jonyka.

ask a young lady to wear a Lithuanian costume for the global fashion show.

The fair was covered by our TV stations; they all videotaped the Aztec Dancers from California. The costumes were so colorful, and the footwork was amazing.

Annual Journal *Lithuanian Papers* Moves Online

Lithuanian Papers, the annual journal of the Lithuanian Studies Society (LSS) of the University of Tasmania is now being published online. The journal is the only English-language Lithuanian periodical in Australia and the southern hemisphere. The University of Tasmania is Australia's only institution of higher education where systematic Lithuanian studies and research have been undertaken continuously since 1987.

LSS began publishing *Lithuanian Papers* in 1987 to make Lithuania and her people better known in Australia and beyond. The latest issue, vol. 28, is now online at issuu.com/lithuanianpapers. Future issues also will be published at that website rather than printed. Access to the new website is free, and all contents of *Lithuanian Papers* may be downloaded free of charge.

Algimantas (Al) Taškūnas, OAM, Ph.D., honorary LSS treasurer and honorary editor of *Lithuanian Papers*, would like to hear from American readers with comments and suggestions. He may be reached via email at al.taskunas@gmail.com or by mail at LSS/Lithuanian Papers, PO Box 777, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006, Australia.



Another Small Choir to Sing at Dainų Šventė

By Nijolė Semenaitė Etwiler



Left to right, Susanna Herro, Gediminas Vidugiris, Daina Zemliauskaitė Juozevičienė, Jonas Juozevičius, photo of Suzanne Kmetz held by Dan Garvin, Debbie Kmetz holding Dainų šventė mascot Ritmas, and Michael Etwiler.

Madison, Wisconsin's few Lithuanians pursue any chance to promote Lithuanian culture. We've had a Sister Cities exchange with Vilnius for more than 25 years, and have supported a dance group, Žaibas, for more than 20 years. When the 10th North American Lithuanian Song Festival, Dainų šventė, was announced we eagerly formed a choir to participate in that event. As Madison is the state capital, we named our choir Capital Voices—Sostinės Balsai. Eight singers responded to the recruitment notice.

Our little choir includes members of Žaibas Dancers and Madison Vilnius Sister Cities, and represents all three generations of Lithuanians in America.

Debbie Kmetz and Susanna Herro are descendants of the first wave of immigrants, counting among their great-grandparents the settlers in Pennsylvania's mining country. Debbie's niece, Suzanne, a teenager in Washington, D.C., is learning the repertoire with the help of her high school music teacher at Elizabeth Seton High School. The music teacher went on to teach one of the songs (Partizano Mirtis) to her all-American girls' choir, who has performed it at concerts in the D.C. area.

Children of the second wave of immigrants, the "dipukų" or DP [displaced persons] generation, are Daina Zemliauskaitė Juozevičienė, president of Madison Vilnius Sister Cities (MVSC) and her husband, Jonas Juozevičius, who happens to be the grandson of Lithuanian President Aleksandras Stulginskis [in office 1920-1926].

The third wave of recent immigrants is represented by Gediminas Vidugiris, vice-president of MVSC.

Our choir director is Michael Etwiler, a professional singer and dancer, the son of a DP and an American. Rounding off our number is Dan Garvin, who is our token Norwegian, but an experienced singer who has performed countless Baltic, Balkan and Easter European folk songs.

The group has been preparing assiduously for Dainų šventė, and are captivated by the repertoire, which runs the musical gamut from folk and fireside songs, through romantic and patriotic music, to the exceptional Singing Revolution, written especially for this festival. We are hoping to see many of our friends at the festival, July 5 in Chicago.

For more information about the 10th North American Song Festival, please visit dainusvente.org/en/.

Yale Concert Band Plays Lithuanian Music



The Yale Concert Band featured music by Lithuanian composer and painter M.K. Čiurlionis, along with a repertoire of American pieces, in its April 11, 2015, performance.

Ugnius Vaiginis, music director of Lithuania's official wind orchestra, Trimitas, conducted the band in its performance of the symphonic poem "Miške" ("In the Forest"), Čiurlionis' first major success. Vaiginis arranged the piece for concert band. He is conducting the band in a rehearsal in the photo at left.

Honorary Consulate Opens in Richmond

Lithuania's latest honorary consulate opened in Richmond, Va., in April, with Jeff Nelson, vice president of Strategic Staffing Solutions, named as honorary consul.

"We love Lithuania and we love Virginia, and we are trying to make new connections with this office," Nelson said at the honorary consulate's opening event. "Lithuania and many countries in that region are building stronger economic ties with the United States."

Defense supplies are shipped from the U.S. from Norfolk, Va., via ports in Lithuania on their way to Afghanistan. "We want to leverage that to sell Lithuania more products from Virginia," Nelson said. He will co-lead a trade mission to Lithuania in July.

Nelson worked in Lithuania from 2006 to 2008 as general director of international operations for the Detroit-based IT staffing firm Strategic Staffing Solutions, then moved back to the U.S. to oversee the company's Richmond operations as well as its Lithuania business. The company has hired about 2,000 people in Lithuania to work there for its U.S. and U.K. clients.



Žygimantas Pavilionis, Lithuania's ambassador to the United States, presents the Lithuania shield to Jeff Nelson, vice president of Strategic Staffing Solutions in Richmond, Va., who was named honorary consul to Lithuania.

Honorary Consul Prunskis Meets With U.S. Senators, Ukrainian Leaders

In March 2015, Honorary Consul of Lithuania in Aspen John Prunskis, M.D., met with U.S. Senators John McCain and Mark Kirk, Consul General of Ukraine Andriy Pravednyk and Consul General of Lithuania Marijus Gudynas, along with Ukrainian leaders, to discuss the current situation in Ukraine, Lithuania and Eastern Europe. The meeting took place during a scheduled visit to the Ukrainian center in Chicago by the senators.

Prunskis had a one-on-one discussion with Senator McCain on several issues, including McCain's many visits to Lithuania; his support of, as well as urging President Obama to approve, provision of U.S. weapons to Ukraine; his positive feelings toward Lithuania and Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius; the recognition that Lithuania is already sending weapons to Ukraine; and McCain's service in Vietnam.

Prunskis thanked Senator Kirk for his role in leaving U.S. armed weapons in Lithuania that are being withdrawn from Afghanistan.

Prunskis also showed Kirk on a map of eastern Ukraine where his counterpart, the Hon. Consul of Lithuania in Ukraine, was killed. Ukrainian leaders showed on the Ukrainian map the current status of aggression by the Russian-backed troops and separatists.



our community

Kaupas Center Opens in Mount Carmel, Pa.

"Always more, always best, always with love." This motto of Mother Maria Kaupas, Lithuanian foundress of the Sisters of St. Casimir (SSC), is inscribed on a wall inside a new center at 412 West Avenue in Mount Carmel, Pa., that was dedicated in her honor on April 12, 2015.

Attending the Mass and ribbon-cutting ceremony was a delegation from the now Chicago-based Sisters of Saint Casimir (SSC), the religious community that Kaupas founded. Also participating in the dedication ceremonies were representatives of four other religious orders that served the Mount Carmel community or had strong relationships with the SSC.

The date of the dedication was set to coincide with the 75th anniversary of Kaupas' death from cancer, on April 17, 1940, in Chicago. Marija Kazimiera Kaupaitė (Kaupas) had originally come to America in 1897 to work as a housekeeper for her brother, who was a priest in Scranton. In 1907 she returned to Mount Carmel as Mother Maria to establish Holy Cross School for the children of Lithuanian immigrants. That school opened in January 1908.

Her legacy includes establishment of the order of the Sisters of St. Casimir, several schools and ministries in 14 states and Latin American countries. She has been declared "venerable," the first step in the process toward sainthood.

The Kaupas Center will be a focal point for learning and community volunteerism by college students in partnership with nearby Bucknell University.



Representatives of the Felician Sisters, the Sisters of St. Casimir, the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sisters of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, four religious congregations that have served Divine Redeemer Parish in Mount Carmel and the parishes from which it was formed 20 years ago, present portraits of their foundresses during the dedication of the Mother Maria Kaupas Center on April 12, 2015. Photo: Emily M. Albert, courtesy of The Catholic Witness.

Sister Regina Marie Dubickas, general superior of the SSC, said during the dedication that the sisters hope that people who visit the center are inspired by Kaupas' example.

SSC considers Mount Carmel "home" because it was the religious community's first mission.

Lithuanian Sign Language Interpreters Needed

Lionbridge Interpretation Services, which provides interpreters for organizations such as the Department of Justice (Executive Office of Immigration Review) and the Department of Homeland Security, needs interpreters for Lithuanian Sign Language in the United States.

Interpreters would work in the immigration courts throughout the United States; Lionbridge would pay for all travel costs. Their interpreters work on an as-needed/freelance basis. Interpreters must be either a U.S. citizen or permanent resident (green card) and have been living in the U.S. for at least three years. Prior interpretation experience is preferred.

If interested, please apply online at interpretation.lionbridge.com or contact Allie Fritz at: Lionbridge Federal, 1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 240, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or call 202.652.4586.

Bilingual Interpreters Needed

CyraCom International is looking for experienced, independent contractors with professional certification and training to facilitate interpretation in over-the-phone and on-site sessions. Interpreters must be able to communicate accurately in two languages and be able to facilitate many kinds of conversations, which could include emergencies, medical procedures and legal situations.

Ideal candidates would have a two- or four-year degree in interpretation, higher education in both the U.S. and in programs taught in Lithuanian, and have experience in relevant areas other than interpretation; for example, healthcare.

Interested candidates should contact Sara Hooper, Operations Recruiter, at SHooper@cyra.com or call 800-713-4950, ext. 1820. For more information, visit cyra.com/careers.

Camp Neringa Benefits From Two Concerts

Two concerts in two days with two very different programs benefited Camp Neringa, a Lithuanian heritage children's, youth and family camp in Brattleboro, Vt.

On April 11, 2015, violinist Eglė Jarkova performed pieces by Bach, E. Balsys, Corigliano and Paganini in Putnam, Ct. Jarkova is a top prizewinner of several national and international competitions in Europe and the United States. She is the founder and artistic director of the International Summer Music Festival "Vivace Vilnius." She teaches and performs in the Boston area.

The fundraiser "Singing for Neringa" at the Lithuanian Music Hall in Philadelphia on April 12, 2015, featured Rūta Pakštaitė Cole and Rimas Polikaitis, who form the band Eastlande - Iš Rytų Šalėlės. Fiddler/guitarist Cole and accordionist/percussionist Polikaitis, from New York and Connecticut, entertained the audience with a lively show of traditional folk tunes and songs.



Rūta Pakštaitė Cole and Rimas Polikaitis perform at Neringa's Philadelphia fundraiser. Photo: Rimas Gedeika

Lithuanian Ambassador Addresses European Security at Penn Law

On April 8, 2015, Lithuanian Ambassador to the United States Žygimantas Pavilionis spoke in Philadelphia with University of Pennsylvania Law School professor William Burke-White at a "fireside chat," part of a series of conversations with ambassadors and international dignitaries.

The discussion focused on Eastern Europe's current role in the EU, especially the power dynamic and tensions among Russia, the West and the rest of Europe. Pavilionis, who had been chief coordinator for Lithuania's presidency of the Community of Democracies and for the Transatlantic Cooperation and Security Policy Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, played a key role in Lithuania's integration into NATO and the EU following Lithuania's independence in 1990.

Burke-White served on the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Staff from 2009–2011, where he advised on a range of issues spanning Eastern Europe, the Baltics and the Russian Federation.

"Lithuania is a country that I will simply say I love," said Burke-White. "But it's also a country that today finds itself at the very heart of the biggest challenges in Europe."

Pavilionis noted Lithuania's accomplishments in 25 years since

achieving independence from Soviet rule: joining the EU and NATO, presiding over the Council of the European Union in 2013 and currently heading the Security Council of the U.N. "For a country that was a captive nation, these are big steps," he said.

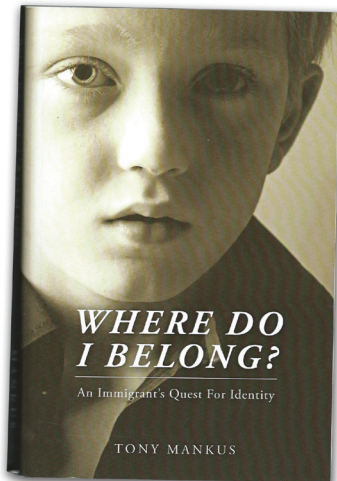
Pavilionis voiced concerns over the democratic state in Europe as a whole and the effects of Russia's actions on international affairs. "We started the twenty-first century with some kind of accommodation [to Russia]," he said. "In 2000 when one of the KGB was elected president, he started killing democracy. What was the response of the West? Nothing."

Pavilionis also addressed the series of diplomatic crises he believed were a result of the West's policy of accommodation to Russia. "It took two months for NATO to forget what Russia did in Georgia in 2008," he said. "One year ago it was Crimea. This year it's Eastern Ukraine. So we're just asking, who's next?" Despite these setbacks, Pavilionis says he still has faith in the West to preserve freedom and rule of law around the world. "We take freedom for granted," said Pavilionis. "We forget that we have to fight for freedom every day. Democracies have to help each other stay democracies."

Writing a Book Becomes Therapeutic

Where Do I Belong? An Immigrant's Quest for Identity by Tony Mankus.

Reviewed by Romualdas Kriaučiūnas, Ph.D.



The year 2014 was a year for the DPs. It marked the 70th anniversary of many (around 60,000) Lithuanians leaving Lithuania in 1944 and running from the advancing Red Army. During 2014 a number of special events took place to commemorate this tragic saga. A few publications, including books, were a part of these efforts. Tony Mankus jumped the gun and published his memoirs in 2013.

In the introduction, the author is clear and to the point. He wrote the book because he could not afford a shrink. Then he added that he said it only partly in jest. Being a clinical psychologist, I was already intrigued by his candid disclosure on the very first page. For a number of years he felt an imbalance inside. He suspected it had to do with his past. "Getting therapy would've been the usual way to deal with it except that I could not afford it. Even if I could've, I didn't feel comfortable about therapy." So he wrote a book instead. Good for us!

Writing the book, he made progress. He realized that he was not alone and that many others had experiences that have been worse than his. Tony's book became a part of his family history, a sharing experience with those who felt a sense of displacement, alienation and a need to find themselves.

The back cover of the book gives a promotional promise. It notes that at age 5, Tony Mankus and his family were forced to leave Lithuania toward the end of World War II. This resulted in a lifelong feeling of banishment that followed him from his experiences in a displaced persons (DP) camp in Germany to adult years as an immigrant in America. Then came the promissory note to the prospective readers: "Honest and strikingly unsentimental, this evocative retelling of an immigrant's personal transformation is certain to engage readers of all ages who relish an authentic life story, particularly those with an interest in first generation immigrant experiences."

Here is a brief bio about the author before we get deeper into the book. Tony Mankus is an attorney in Lisle, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, specializing in IRS tax issues and bankruptcies. His wife, Margarita, is also an attorney focusing on Social Security disability issues and real estate matters. They have four daughters. His literary background includes writing and publishing

a number of technical articles in various legal journals. Tony is now working on a novel.

This book contains 22 chapters, and an appendix with three articles. In many ways, the book follows a similar chronology of many other published books pertaining to Lithuanian refugees at the end of WWII. But there is an important difference. Most of the other books focus on the struggles in a foreign county at the end of the war, the aftermath in DP camps and end with immigration to another country. This book's first six chapters, covering 56 pages, cover a similar territory, but with Chapter 7—Trip to America—new vistas open up. It starts in Elizabeth, New Jersey, then goes to New York, Chicago, etc. In these chapters the author not only describes what he did, but also what he experienced, thought, felt—and resented.

The main object of his resentment, perhaps hate, was his own father, who was not only a harsh disciplinarian, but a person with serious drinking problem. It did not help that his parents had limited education, so the author had no real positive role models to imitate. That lack comes across clearly as the author drifts from job to job, starts college, but does not pursue. His self-esteem at that time did not have room for personal and educational growth and development.

There is a proverb in Lithuanian, to the effect that an apple does not fall far away from the apple tree. That seems to apply to Tony's own social unease and drinking habits. He openly discloses it and talks in great detail about it. He is also very much open in talking about others and mentions numerous friends, coworkers and others by name. I think they should buy and read the book and then reflect on their part in forming another person's personality.

By Chapter 14 the author is ready to ask: "Who Am I?" Is he a Lithuanian, American or Lithuanian-American? He believes that on the surface his Lithuanian identity was the strongest. His mom and dad kept fueling it. He writes about his efforts to get more into Lithuanian cultural activities and joins the Knights of Lithuania Rūta Ensemble. He makes references to his hormonal attraction to various girls, but end up marrying a girl from Puerto Rico.

Of special interest are his mixed efforts to seek higher education. Eventually he succeeds and completes his bachelor's degree at Fairleigh Dickinson University. While still there he was chosen for a study-abroad program that took him to Cuernavaca, Mexico, in 1967. His experience while there is written up in the appendix of the book. While many of his peers joined the Peace Corps to avoid being drafted into the armed forces, Tony Mankus joined it after being declared medically unsuitable for the military draft.

The Peace Corps opened the door to other-than-manual-labor opportunities. The experience itself, especially in the beginning, was disappointing and Tony was ready to withdraw, to resign. However, new opportunities arose and he stayed with the Peace Corps for the expected two years. Government experience and connections eventually led to various jobs at increased responsibility level with the Internal Revenue Service.

The book ends after the reader learns that the author started and finished John Marshall Law School in Chicago and eventu-

ally opened his private practice law office. That, to me, was the most unexpected outcome of his book. What has happened in his life since then may end up being covered in the new book that he is writing. Of course, it will have to be fictionalized to protect the guilty.

Tony Mankus. *Where Do I Belong? An Immigrant's Quest for Identity*, self-published in the USA, 2013. 275 pages, softcover. Available on Amazon for \$12.87.

current events

In the EU

... Lithuania's budget deficit in 2014 was at 0.7 percent of GDP, the smallest budget deficit in the EU, according to Eurostat. Latvia's budget deficit of 1.4 percent was second smallest. The largest deficit was held by Cyprus, at 8.8 percent of GDP.

... According to Eurostat, in 2014 the share of Lithuania's population aged 30 to 34 who had completed tertiary education was 53.3 percent, the highest in the EU. The country has already exceeded its 2020 national targets for this indicator.

... The European Commission has recommended that Lithuania, one of the fastest aging nations in the EU, invest money in improving the performance of the healthcare system, as well as broadening its tax base, improving tax compliance and reducing the tax burden for low income earners.

... The European Commission has suggested moving 207 refugees to Lithuania as part of the resolution of the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean region. The EU envisions relocating 20,000 displaced persons among its member states based on each country's ability to integrate the newcomers based on factors like population, GDP and unemployment rate. Lithuania would be expected to shoulder 1.03 percent of the refugees, or 207. Priority regions for resettlement include North Africa and the Middle East.

In the World

... Lithuania has ranked 56th out of 158 countries on the World Happiness Report 2015. Switzerland is ranked first, followed by Iceland and Denmark. Estonia ranked 73rd and Latvia 89th.



... During an audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican in April, Speaker of the Lithuanian parliament Loreta Grauziniene invited him for a papal visit to Lithuania and presented him with a silver medallion with an image of the Gates of Dawn in Vilnius.

... Former Snoras Bank executives Vladimir Antonov and Raimondas Baranauskas lost their bid against extradition from England to Lithuania to face fraud charges. Two high court judges in London dismissed their challenge, saying there was no evidence to support the claim that they were being used as scapegoats in the bank's failure.

... Lithuania held a military exercise in May to simulate an attack on its new gas terminal. "Lightning Strike" involved 3,000 troops in a simulated response to armed groups seizing government buildings, weapons stockpiles and airports to form a separatist government, as happened in parts of Ukraine.

current events

... Sweden and Lithuania have accused Russia of interfering with the laying of the 280-mile high-voltage Nordbalt cable in the Baltic Sea, meant to integrate Scandinavian and Baltic electricity markets and ensure Lithuania's supply of electricity. Sweden claims the installation has been interrupted four times, once when a Russian warship entered Lithuania's economic zone and illegally ordered a Swedish-owned ship to change course.

... Lithuania denied entry to a group of pro-Putin bikers traveling from Moscow to Berlin to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the allied victory over Nazi Germany. Members of the Night Wolves motorcycle club tried to cross into Lithuania from Belarus and Kanlinigrad, but could not produce documents necessary to enter into the Schengen zone. Poland and Germany also turned the bikers away.

... Lithuania opened its first Honorary Consul in Saudi Arabia in April during the first official visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania Linas Linkevičius with King Salman bin Abdelaziz al-Saud. The two discussed increasing exports to Saudi Arabia, promoting business contacts and regional stability.

... On April 15, 2015, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) updated the status of Lithuania from emerging to advanced economy. The IMF expects Lithuania's economy to grow in excess of 3 percent in 2015 and 2016.

... Lithuanian duo Monika Linkyte and Vaidas Baumila made it to the Eurovision Song Contest finals in Vienna with their song, "This Time," but went home winless. They made headlines for their semifinals performance, which featured their backup dancers exchanging same-sex kisses.

... A new Environmental Democracy Index, which tracks and scores 70 countries' progress in enacting national laws that promote transparency, accountability and citizen engagement in environmental decision-making, named Lithuania among the top three countries on the index.

... Russia reported on May 20 that it had arrested a suspected Lithuanian spy, Arstidas Tamosaitis. Espionage charges carry a prison term of 10 to 20 years under Russian law.

... The Lithuanian and Ukrainian ministries of health are teaming to establish two psychological rehabilitation centers in Eastern Ukraine to provide services to persons affected by the war there.

... Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have asked NATO to permanently deploy thousands of ground troops to their nations. NATO has not made a decision, but the U.S. has authorized a small contingency of U.S. troops to be stationed in the Baltics.

In Lithuania

... Moody's Investors Service has upgraded the government bond ratings of Lithuania to A3 from Baa1, with an outlook rating of stable, citing the country's economic resilience, success a fiscal consolidation and euro accession.

... Lithuania's consumer prices dropped for the fifth straight month in April, according to Statistics Lithuania. Prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages declined 0.6 percent, utility costs dipped by 5.3 percent and transport costs dropped 7.5 percent.

... Kaunas University of Technology (KTU) and the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU) have announced the launch of Lithuania's first ever Health Informatics degree program, with specializations in Electronic Health Technologies and Biomedical Informatics.

... Lithuania has banned wearing separate elements of military uniforms and insignia in public. Parliament says the purpose of the law is to protect the public when people who are not soldiers may be mistaken for such because they are wearing elements of a military uniform and to prevent confusion in case foreign troops without insignia turn up in the country.

... Air Lituania, the only remaining Lithuanian scheduled airline, ceased operations on May 22, 2015. Air Lituania became the fifth Lithuanian airline to fold over the course of a decade.

... Lithuania commemorated the end of World War II on May 8 with events at several sites in Vilnius followed by an evening concert at Vilnius Congress Hall. Two thousand candles were lit in the Cathedral Square to form the letters "WWII." Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė refused to attend Moscow's May 9 Victory Day commemoration.

... Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Museum archivists have found some 26,000 previously unknown identification cards belonging to Jewish citizens in the national archives in Kaunas. The cards represent about two thirds of the Jewish population in the city before WW II. The cards, from 1920 to 1940, were moved during the war and returned following liberation. The collection is considered rare, as most Eastern European communities did not keep orderly lists of residents before the war.

... During the April 16 Day of Remembrance, the State of Israel awarded Righteous Among the Nations status to six Lithuanian families, who in spite of the danger during WW II, rescued Lithuanian Jewish people during the Holocaust. Also on that day, hundreds of people attended the traditional March of the Living from a railway station to the memorial where 70,000 Jews had been massacred.

Please verify all events, as places and times are subject to change.

JULY 2015

July 3-5
10th North American Lithuanian Song Festival
 University of Illinois at Chicago Pavilion, 525 S. Racine St.
 Info: dainusvente.org/en

July 5-11
Family Camp for Lithuanian Speakers
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

July 6-18
Moksleivų Ateitininkų Stovykla
 Camp Dainava, Manchester, Mich.
 Info: mesmas.org

July 12-26
Children's Camp for Lithuanian Speakers ages 7-16
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

July 18-26
Jaunujų Ateitininkų Stovykla
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: ritarack@gmail.com

July 26
Lithuanian Friendship Day "Putnam Picnic"
 600 Liberty Hwy., Putnam, Conn.
 Info: neringa.org

July 26-August 1
"Third Week" Youth Camp for Lithuanian Speakers ages 12-16
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

AUGUST 2015

August 2-9
Lithuanian Heritage Camp
 Camp Dainava, Manchester, Mich.
 Info: rimapolikaitis@aol.com, dainava.org

August 2-15
Heritage Children's Camp in English ages 7-16
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

August 7-9
Knights of Lithuania 102nd National Convention
 Hilton Orlando Lake Buena Vista, Orlando, Fla.
 Info: knightsoflithuania.com

August 9-16
LTSI Dance Course for 15th North American Lithuanian Dance Festival
 Camp Dainava, Manchester, Mich.
 Info: ltsti.org, netzg2a.net, 608-356-6549

August 15-16
101st Annual Lithuanian Days
 Schuylkill Mall, Frackville, Pa.
 Info: kof1144.weebly.com/101st-annual-lithuanian-days.html

August 15-22
"Third Week" Youth Camp in English ages 12-16
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

August 16-21
Lankas Lithuanian Camp
 West Coast Latvian Education Center, Shelton, Wash.
 Info: lankostovykla.com

August 22-30
Meno8Dienos Adult Art Camp (Lithuanian language)
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

August 28-29
Portland Lithuanian Community "Hood to Coast" Run
 Timberline Lodge to Seaside, Ore.
 Info: portlandlithuanians.com

SEPTEMBER 2015

September 19
Omaha Lithuanian Community Golf Outing Fundraiser
 Info: omahoslfb.blogspot.com

September 12, 12-5 p.m.
Portland Lithuanian Community Picnic
 Rooster Rock State Park (shelter A), Exit 25, highway 84, Corbett, Ore.
 Info: portlandlithuanians.com/events

September, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

OCTOBER 2015

October 9-11
Iškyla/Walk-a-Thon
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

October, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

NOVEMBER 2015

November, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

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