

# VYTIS



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VASARIS / February 1998



**VYTIS**

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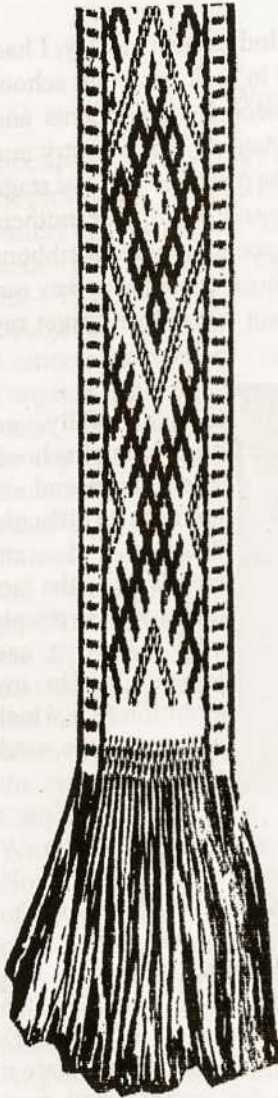
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*The Knights of Lithuania  
 endeavors to instill in its  
 members an attachment to  
 Lithuania, the land of our  
 ancestors, and a  
 knowledge, appreciation  
 and love of the  
 Lithuanian language,  
 customs and culture.*



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“The Lithuanian Council, the one and only representative of the Lithuanian nation, acknowledging the right of self-determination for all nations, including Lithuania, and having thus resolved at a conference in Vilnius on Sept. 18-23, 1917, announces the restoration of democratic independence...As of this date (Feb 16, 1918), Lithuania dissolves all national ties, past and present, in effect at this time.”

*-From the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence*

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## To My Fellow Knights:

After asking a number of people what impressions they had of Lithuanian Independence Day, I had to add my own. As a member of St. Casimir's parish in Amsterdam and a student in their grammar school in the 1950's, Feb 16 meant putting on a production for our parents, parishioners, local residents and politicians. The Sister's of Jesus Crucified, our teachers, had each grade perform dances, recite poetry and sing patriotic songs. Right after the Christmas holidays rehearsals began so we'd be "perfect" for the stage at the Lithuanian American Club hall on the big day which was the closest Sunday to Feb 16. Our mothers would sew "Lithuanian costumes" which we'd wear along with wreathes of red, green and yellow ribbons in our hair. Although I was shy and dreaded the stage fright, I now look back at those events as a way our culture remained unified. And I'm grateful for the good job the Sisters did in not letting me forget my heritage.



### Letters to the Editor

To the editor:

My deepest and most heartfelt appreciation to all Knights of Lithuania members for awarding me the Knights of Lithuania Merit Scholarship. The Knights of Lithuania have done so much for me in my life already. The Knights of Lithuania have provided me with wonderful memories and experiences since my first days of membership at my mother's side. The further honor of the merit scholarship is far beyond anything I ever expected.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my mother and father. My mother has been the motivation and teacher in many beautiful Lithuanian customs and traditions. Both my mother and father have been very encouraging and supportive of all that I have done in my life thus far. Without their guidance I know that I would never have accomplished nearly as much. To all of my Lithuanian teachers and professors that had worked with me so many years in Saturday School, thank you for your time and patience. Finally, I would like to thank the head of the scholarship committee, Irena Gecas and, past president, Evelyn Ozelis for the time and effort they put into the scholarship and the countless hours they spent working with the Knights of Lithuania.

In the years to come, I realize that I have massive amounts of work to do and there is still much I would like to accomplish. I still am going to pursue a degree in Biology at Marquette University



*Nina Padalino*

*C-24, Chicago*



To the Editor, Readers and Knights,

As a lifelong parishioner of St. Casimir's Church, in Amsterdam, NY, I am sharing in a state of magnificent euphoria over the recent good news concerning our church's reopening. When our beautiful church was closed due to structural defects over a year ago, many felt that it would never be reopened. (See related article in Dec. '97 VYTIS.)

This magnificent edifice, cornerstone and lifeblood of so many Lithuanian Americans will once again become our house of worship, hopefully for Easter this spring. With this joyous news, the entire parish family is helping in the reopening of our church. We are engaged in raising funds (approximately \$100,000 is needed), and volunteering our time and talents in this restoration

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and, hopefully, go on to dental school. The times ahead are going to be difficult, however, I am reassured by the fact that there are people who care and support me in my ambitions which will make the work all the easier.

Sincerely,  
*Nina Padalino,*

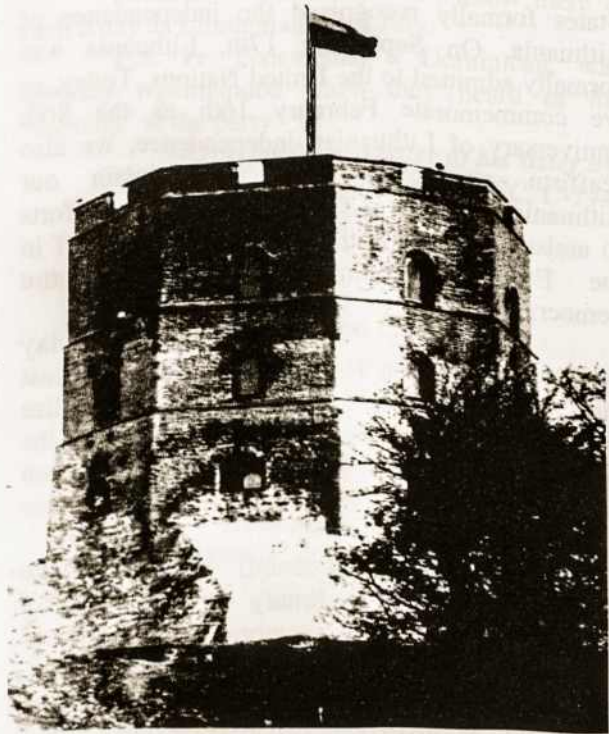


# Independence Attained - February 1918

## February 1998 - 80 Years Later

**D**uring World War I the Germans occupied a great part of historic Lithuania. On September 18, 1915, the German armies entered Vilnius. The German government authorized the gathering at Vilnius, on Sept. 18-22, 1917, of a congress of 214 Lithuanian delegates and the election of the 20-member Lietuvos taryba or council of Lithuania. The congress called for an independent Lithuanian state within the ethnic frontiers and with Vilnius as capital. As the leaders of the taryba (Antanas Smetona, Steponas Kairys, Jurgis Šaulys and others) rejected all idea of union or federation with Poland, the local Poles refused to co-operate with the taryba. On February 16, 1918, the taryba proclaimed an independent Lithuanian state and the dissolution of all political connections that had existed with other nations. Germany recognized this on March 24 with the proviso of a "perpetual alliance" of Lithuania with the Reich. On July 11 the crown of Lithuania was offered to the Roman Catholic duke of Urach, Wilhelm von Wurttemberg, but the offer was withdrawn on November 2, and the final solution of the question of the form of government was referred to the constituent assembly. Meanwhile, the supreme power was vested in a three-man presidium (Smetona, the Rev. Justinas Staugaitis and S. Šilingas) which on November 5 designated Augustinas Voldemaras (1883- 1955) as prime minister of independent Lithuania. He formed a government on November 11, 1918.

On April 4, 1919, Antanas Smetona became provincial president of the republic and Mykolas Sleževičius (1882-1939), a Democratic leader, succeeded Voldemaras as prime minister. Lithuania was received into the membership of the League of Nations on September 22, 1921. On September 29, 1926, a Soviet-Lithuanian treaty of non-aggression was signed in Moscow. But that did not last long. In 1940 once again Lithuania



*Gediminas Tower in Vilnius*

was occupied by the Soviet Union.

### The 80th Anniversary of re-establishment of Lithuanian Independence Day on February 16<sup>th</sup> - how some react and reflect in 1998:

"Lithuanian Independence day, February 16th, is a day for celebration. After 52 years of Soviet occupation, Lithuania, again, is a free and independent nation. The struggle was difficult, and nearly 800,000 Lithuanians lost their lives during this Soviet occupation. But, Lithuanian people never gave up their struggle to be free. On March 11, 1990, the Lithuanian freely-elected parliament declared the restoration of independence. Despite Soviet blockades, despite the massacre of innocent, unarmed civilians by Soviet troops in



January of 1991, Lithuanian people stood firm, although often alone. Finally, after the failed Communist coup in August of 1991, independence was achieved. On September 3rd 1991, the United States formally recognized the independence of Lithuania. On September 17th, Lithuania was formally admitted to the United Nations. Today, as we commemorate February 16th as the 80th anniversary of Lithuanian independence, we also reaffirm our commitment to maintain our Lithuanian heritage and to participate in the efforts to assist our native Lithuania to establish itself in the European community and the entire democratic world.

Lithuanian independence day commemorations on February 16th have not lost meaning, rather these commemorations symbolize our bond with the people of Lithuania and the development of a viable relationship between Lithuanians in our ancestral homeland and those living abroad.

At the local (council) level, we have participated in the February 16th Lithuanian independence day commemorations for many years. We never lost hope, we never wavered. February 16th commemorations remind us and the rest of the world of Lithuanian perseverance and sacrifice in her quest for independence. February 16th Lithuanian independence day shows the world that brutality and force cannot squelch the Lithuanian people's desire for freedom. We, as Knights of Lithuania members, must continue to observe February 16th Lithuanian independence day commemorations. Today, Lithuania faces new challenges and our commitment to safeguard Lithuanian independence must persevere. This is our challenge this is our goal, it must be achieved, it will be achieved."

**-John R. Mankus, President, Supreme Council  
Knights of Lithuania**

"When I was a child, our Parish always celebrated Lithuanian Independence Day in February with a special Mass and movies about Lithuania in the church hall. I did not fully understand what it was all about, but knew it was a time of celebration.

As a teenager during WWII, the celebration was no longer held and didn't think of it. After the war was over and there was no news about Lithuania, my parents were upset and we lost touch with relatives.

It was after I joined the Knights of Lithuania that Lithuanian Independence Day became important again. We wrote letters, went on demonstrations to Washington and New York. We held prayer vigils and did whatever we could for Lithuanian Freedom.

It was a joyous day that March 11, when the land of our forefathers regained her independence. Now, I feel on this date we should pray that the problems that came with freedom will be resolved and Lithuania will again become the Nation it was from that February 16, 1918 until it lost it to the evil Soviet Union."

**-HM Anna Klizas Wargo**

"For the past few months, ethnic celebrations such as Spanish month, German days, Puerto Rican month and many others remember their heritage. On TV, there are two Spanish channels, and one Latino dignitary complained that his people are not keeping up with their language. Very many of us Lithuanian-Americans are starting to lose contact with our backgrounds. We should be proud of our language and not be ashamed to let people know about our heritage.

When I was young, I foolishly told my parents not to speak Lithuanian in public. Lithuanians are a minor-minority compared to other ethnic groups in this country. Many of our parents lived in groups in Ridgewood, Williamsburg, East NY, Elizabeth and Newark, NJ with their own churches, bakeries and butcher shops. Most of the original families have scattered and spread all over New York, New Jersey and beyond. I believe the Knights of Lithuania is one organization striving to maintain a Lithuanian presence in America."

**-Bruno Rutkunas, Pres., C-110, Maspeth, NY**

### **51 Years Ago...A Washington Celebration**

"My first celebration of Lithuanian Independence was at the Lithuanian Legation in Washington in 1947 where about forty people



were invited. My sister wanted a full description of that event and recently I found the letter I had written her about it...

"What keeps memory alive? It is the pleasures of life: those fleeting moments that are remembered all your days.

I wore my best blue suit and the special things that go with it. When I alighted at Meridian Hill Park, I met Fr. Galevičius, our spiritual advisor, and we walked down Sixteenth St. to the Legation. He was as bad off as I was; it was his first affair, too. At the door, we met the President of the Lithuanian- American Society, Mr. Walker. After leaving our hats and coats, we exchanged greetings, nervous complications and afflictions peculiar to the uninitiated at such times. At seventy-three, we were presented to the Minister, his wife and daughter at the entrance to the drawing room. I greeted the Minister and he smiled broadly and questioned, "Mažam studentas?" I replied, "Ne, Aš tik čia dirbu."... A Miss Varkala from Shenandoah insisted the cocktails were straight whisky because it made her cheeks burn after the first sip. I began to feel the potency after three.

May the time come when the hearts of all worldly nations will be united in understanding and recognizing the rights and dignities of man with brotherly respect and comity among all.

Madame Žadeikis announced the serving of supper which included stuffed roast turkey, ham and Lithuanian sausage ( made by an Italian), plus several salads rounded out the menu. Entertainment after the meal included traditional Lithuanian songs, "Plaukia Žasele" and "Du Broliukai" and many others. After the patriotic songs came polka music, where the rug was rolled back and everybody had rhythm. We met Fr. Gedra, a prominent Washington pastor and Director of Lithuanian Catholic Radio Hour who greeted us as he blew smoke from his big cigar. Agnes Varkala's white hat studded with sequins matched her winter white dress. The girls (and boys) wore their best, velvet being the choice of many. Later, the crowd thinned and people said their good byes.

Fr. Galevičius celebrated the Anniversary Mass the next morning, which was Sunday. Many arrived late, as they were "sleeping off the night before." Fr. Gedra's homily was on peace among

the nations. At a luncheon later on, Mrs. Kiautskas, the attache's wife, spoke in Lithuanian on looking forward to a day when we could genuinely celebrate with true spirit, not like now.

It seems to me many don't know there is such a day as Lithuanian 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

P.S. Fr. Galevičius, a Dominican, was severely reprimanded when they heard of his "dancing" at the party.

*-Excerpts from a letter to his sister by  
Bro. Joseph Zutelis, CSC, C-144*

## MANO GIMTINĖ

Ten, kur Nemunas banguoja  
Tarp kalnų, lankų,  
Broliai vargdienėi dejuoja  
Nuo senų laikų.

Ten močiutė užlingavo  
Raudomis mane,  
Į krutinę skausma savo  
Liejo nežinia.

Girios ūžė ten, minėjo  
Praeities laikus,  
Kai lietuvis netikėjo,  
Jog belaisvis bus,

Ten apleistos pilys griūva  
Ant kalnų aukštai;  
Milžinų ten kaulai pūva,  
Verkia jų kapai.

Ten užaugau, iškentėjau  
Aš kančias visas  
Ir pamėgau, pamylėjau  
Vargdienių dienas.

O tos dūmos vargdeninės  
Griaudžia kai kada,  
Tartum rūdys geležinės.  
Amžina žaizda. - 1895

*(Here the poet speaks about Lithuania's past, how powerful and great she was. But "Then the Lithuanians did not realize that eventually they would be slaves.") by Maironis (Jonas Mačiulis)*



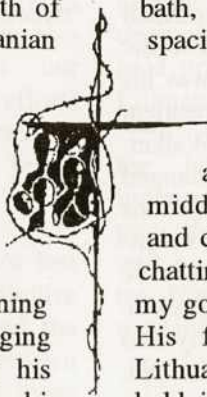
## Barbed-Wire Odyssey - Part 2

by ALGIS TOMAS GENIUŠAS

*We doze like shadows in the corners, Crestfallen, hollow-eyed and overgrown with beards. O Lord, how long wilt Thou put up with this barbarity, And shall we live to see its end? - 'Prisoners of Conscience' by A. Miškinis*

Back in the our cell after a month of solitary confinement, the popular Lithuanian poet Antanas Miškinis, with his comments and conclusions, brought a whole world of vivid recollections of the prewar independent Lithuania and Europe. His sparkling wit and picturesque narration cheered and lifted our souls stirring our innermost thoughts and dreams which started straining for expression. I remember a lanky aging farmer who used to talk aloud of his household matters even in his sleep, or his stark opposite - a young student, a musician, a magnet among the gentle sex of whom I never heard thereafter. The life in our cell became so enriched and inspirited with the poet's coming that the tormenting flow of time eased. Days were drawing out and brightening and in the afternoon a tiny sunbeam would pierce through the metal cover over our barred window and, penetrating through the dark and dusty space of our dungeon, shimmer a while upon the wall and then promptly vanish. We watched the herald of the spring, silent and submerged in its reveries.

On a dank and drizzly morning in early May we heard the noise of motorcars, women's voices and children's wails in the prison's courtyard and realized the horror of a new wave of massive deportation of civilians, most likely our kith and kin were among them. In early June, when my interrogation was concluded, I was ordered to pack up posthaste, driven up into the prison's courtyard and pushed into a waiting Black Maria along with a few other prisoners. We were driven through the dazzling sunlit, green and vivid city to a somber silent prison. After being propelled through the reception procedures and a hot



bath, we were ultimately brought into a spacious teeming cell. It felt, in contrast, like a nursing home.

On both sides of the cell there were two-tier bunks with bedding and a long table with benches in the middle. The cell mates were playing chess and checkers, reading or walking and freely chatting. I was overjoyed to find among them my good friend from the interrogation prison. His father, a distinguished bass of the Lithuanian Opera, Antanas Kučingis, was held in another cell at the same prison. We had a lot to discuss. I was elated to learn we were to be taken out into the open air for a walk. It was the first walk since my arrest. The walkway was in a tiny square under the azure sky. The vigilant guards' stood in watch-boxes, overseeing every move, but it was an unspeakable joy lasting but a few minutes. This brief joy, however, could be arbitrarily curtailed or altogether canceled on the whim of turnkeys at any time.

After the long confinement in the sunless vault of the interrogation prison I was awed by the infinite blue sky and could not tear my eyes away from the floating clouds that would be shortly sailing over my family's house and orchard. I was so overwhelmed by that longing I was oblivious to the curses of the wardens driving us back into the cell-block. I had a dream that night of vast green fields reverberating the words of a nostalgic military song: "We'll come back to our homeland, if we don't lay down our lives". We counted on a miracle, inspired by recent historical experience and never thought our imprisonment was destined to drag on so long.

I had not turned sixteen yet, when I was taken to the administration offices and was



informed that I had been sentenced in absentia by the MGB commission to eight years of imprisonment in the soviet corrective labor camps, known to the world as GULAG. I refused to sign saying that I did not recognize the verdict of a court I had never faced. While sleeping one night, we were awakened by the rattle of the heavy metal doors and loud commands in the neighboring cells, the sounds becoming more distinct as they approached our cell. The key rattled in our door and a number of officers holding lists of prisoners in their hands entered our cell. They called our names and ordered us to get ready instantaneously. We assumed we were being transported to the holding prison in Vilnius prior to deportation to the GULAG labor camps in the vast Arctic areas of Russia. As customary in such cases, the traditional "March of Friendship" rang throughout in the cells in spite of threats and curses of the jailers, allowing these transports to be known to all the prisoners.

In the midsummer heat, the oven-like courtyard of the prison was filled with pale convicts dressed in their winter clothes. Over and over again their names were called, they were searched and ordered up to the prison gate. When at last the gate was opened, the soldiers in the street loaded their guns, their barking dogs rearing. We were told to walk straight on without looking about or talking. We were warned, one step left or right

would be considered an attempt to flee and the soldiers would shoot without warning.

Accompanied by the soldiers' curses and the dogs' barking, sweltering in the intense heat, we moved along the side streets towards the railway station. We were crammed in metal carriages, oppressed from the suffocating heat and thirst, until we finally reached Vilnius. The transport prison was set up by the

soviet regime in the premises of a medieval monastery straddling the slope of a hill across the tracks from the railway station. We were placed in a large cell and there were no view-obstructing shields behind its barred windows, so that from the upper bunks we could see the looming towers of the city, the hazy hills and the hooting rumbling trains.

Surveying the panorama one day, I caught sight of my mother standing before the prison gate. I waved a towel and she saw me. I was taken to a meeting with her. She told me she had been fired from her teacher position, my father

had been paralyzed as a result of a stroke, my aunt, who had lived illegally in our home together with her teenage daughters after their escape from the Siberian exile, had been re-sentenced to imprisonment, and her daughters had been deported to Siberia. Their father, separated from his family during the first deportation, died of hunger in a

---

### IN THE GULAG OF SIBERIA

*If we die here, we will die like humans - nobly:  
For freedom and justice and homeland.  
Dissemblers will never share our lot  
For they thrive on the pains of their fellows.*

*We'll endure the ordeal and the arctic rigor,  
But more than with cold we tremble  
For fear lest man should turn beast  
And lose his integrity for ever.*

*If we survive and return, we'll return like humans,  
Brimful with spring-tide rebirth.  
We'll stand neither wrongs nor affronts  
And we shall forgive our debtors.*



concentration camp beyond the Urals. This was but a typical case of the genocide perpetrated by the Evil Empire in all captive nations.

A new echelon of convicts were being brought to the assemblage prison and it became overcrowded. I was included in the group of prisoners along with the poet Antanas Miškinis, Opera singer Antanas Kučingis and a large number of teachers, students, farmers and people from various walks of life to be transported to the Gulag in Russia. At night, we were loaded on a heavily guarded freight train which rumbled and rattled with frequent stops during which the carriages were checked by loud knocking on their floors, roofs and walls. We would then hear a command for all the prisoners to move to one end of the carriage, the heavy door would roll open and a few guards would climb in, driving the prisoners to the other end of the carriage. The guard would count prisoners, hitting those who were not quick enough to move. Our train, though, would stop and idle for very long periods of time on side tracks.

On the ninth day the train came to a grinding halt in the clearing of a forest. We were ordered out from the carriages and taken through a nearby settlement to a concentration camp. It was surrounded by barbed wire and high palisade fences with watch towers everywhere. The long timber barracks in the camp were empty and we never learned who

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## THE BALLAD OF A BLEEDING EAGLE

*In a prison sleep is restless,  
Dreams keep whirling - snow and snow.*

*On the concrete floor I writhe with cold,  
And then fall into a trance and, wonder-struck,*

*Descry in flight a snow-white bloodstained eagle.  
"Where are you dashing? Have you brought a message?"*

*Who was so madly scared by you  
That sought to stop your flight with bullets?"*

*"I am the messenger of liberty and justice.  
I can't be stopped by walls or slain by bullets.*

*I am free thought, I'm hope and consolation,  
Beyond the reach of any wretched bondage."*

*"Then hurry up, o wondrous bleeding eagle,  
So we may see our dreams come true,*

*Unless we lose our wits and life here"...  
And then I hear the ghastly clatter of the keys.*

*Shaking with cold, I wake and call to him:  
"Bear up, you wounded but unvanquished eagle!*

*Yours is the liberty of boundless space.  
Yet I shall have another brutal questioning to face. "*

---

had been there before us. It was Camp No.2 of Dubravlag (Yavas, Potma) in Mordovia. Because of the protracted isolation in the closely packed suffocating prison cells, we welcomed the possibility to enjoy the autumnal breeze and mellow sunlight, to walk around the zone and meet many interesting people. However, the days of "the Lithuanian idyll" shortly came to an end when they started bringing into the camp hundreds and hundreds of emaciated, crippled and brutalized convicts from the gold, copper and coal mines of the Arctic regions of Kolyma, Norilsk and



Vorkuta. We were told a number of them had mutilated themselves so they would not be sent down to the mines any more. When they stripped themselves naked in the bathhouse, we saw moving skeletons with sagging water-full bellies and vertebral rudimentary "tails" (coccyges) sticking out at the base of their backbones. Though we were famished ourselves, we would leave some part of our rations to those old-timers out of sheer sympathy. They would soon depart this life,

---

## COLLABORATORS

*Where do you come from? Who are you?  
Base slaves,  
Or mercenary rogues, or merely despicable  
cravens? Pleased are the oppressors with  
your canine faithfulness, But before long  
they'll feel contempt for you as well.*

*At their command you sowed the seeds of  
strife among your people,  
With them you shared the booty and  
spattered dirt on martyrs' wounds.  
Under the palaces you set up torture cells  
and boozed  
Just a few floors above, discarding dignity  
and conscience.*

*When you sober down, perhaps you realize  
your wickedness,  
But you lack the will and think your bridges  
burnt.  
Maybe you sometimes grieve and wring  
your hands  
But you are too mean to join your people's  
strife for freedom.*

---

and like autumn leaves, in numbers and would be collected in an open shed and transported by a mule-drawn carriage to the camp's gate where the guard would bid them last farewell by knocking them on their heads with an iron stick which he would later use to stir the leaving vans of excrement.

All prisoners immediately formed rank outside for the morning count which usually would be repeated several times until the guards were pretty certain that no one had escaped. No sooner would sleepy prisoners return to their barracks when they were called on again to form rank and proceed to the huge barn-like canteen where in semi-darkness they had to wait for breakfast. That dreamy period would often conjure up most vivid visions of one's home and happy times. After breakfast the guards would summon prisoners to form in front of the gate to be roll-called again, searched and driven by guards to work in the surrounding forests and fields until dusk.

Since the first day of my arrest I looked everywhere for an opportunity to escape. When I arrived at the camp, I noticed that the administration building stood quite close to the barbed-wire and palisade fence that encompassed the zone. One dark night a friend of mine and I penetrated into the storage bin of tools and secured two spades. Then through the decayed boards of the substructure we crept into the basement just underneath the guards' room. We could hear their voices and see a faint light penetrating through slats in the floor. This facilitated our undertaking considerably. We began digging a subterranean passage for escape. The next night we were joined by two friends, each taking turns in scooping the headway of the burrow, while the others pushed the loose sand between our knees out of the hole and spread it on the ground over the basement. The following nights our number grew to ten. The further we dug, the more slowly our work progressed, we were suffocating from the lack of air and had to alternate diggers. The weather was growing colder with each day and we had to hurry. Finally, thinking we were close to freedom, we said good-bye to our most trustworthy friends, took along some food we had set aside from our meager daily rations and crept into the basement of the supervisors' quarters hoping to make our getaway that night. According to our calculations we still had to burrow ahead a few more meters. It was vital for us to get out on



the other side of the three rows of fences and the two brightly lit up belts of ground on both sides of the palisade. We could count on success only if we succeeded in getting out unnoticed by guards in the watch towers before midnight so that by the time of the morning count we could have moved a considerable distance away from the camp. The hours were slipping by and we were progressing slowly. There was some fainting due to the exertion and the lack of air in the narrow hole. The night was drawing to a close and we could not afford to dig the tunnel any further and began digging upwards to the surface. When we broke the frozen crust of ground, we saw above barbed wires sparkling in the flood of searchlights from the nearest watchtower. Getting out there would have meant a suicide. We covered up the slit and decided to try again the next night if the hole was not discovered. We cautiously crept out of our tunnel and dispersed into our barracks.

The prisoners were woken up very early by a huge uproar and the camp was swarming with soldiers. They barked orders for the prisoners to get up immediately and to form outside for a count. The prisoners were counted, over and over again, while the soldiers searched the barracks, breaking the floors and rummaging beneath. Finding no evidence, the guards packed prisoners in the punishment cell and questioned the elder of the long-term prisoners' barracks, a Moscovite wartime pilot Leontyev and some other prisoners from the same barracks, but, finding no proof of their involvement, released them a few days later.

The morning of this tumult ushered in a winter snowfall accompanied by hardening frost. I think now, we probably had been saved from certain doom by the very hand of Providence. The next summer, an attempt to flee was made by nine Polish officers and soldiers. They managed to make a short circuit in the electrical generators and, when the lights went out around the zone, they threw blankets over the barbed wire and scrambled over it. As they began to climb over the high palisade

fence, the guards in the watch towers fired flares and killed or wounded seven fugitives on the spot. Their bullet-ridden and dog-torn bodies were displayed in the camp a short time later.

Being young men, we would be inspired by deep reflections of the poet Antanas Miškinis on the national and world literature and carried away by the recollections of the distinguished Lithuanian Opera singer Antanas Kučingis about the theatrical life and his foreign tours. The recent period of the independent prewar Lithuania loomed large in retrospection of a former aide-de-camp to Lithuania's President, Tadas Sakmas, and the editor-in-chief of a popular prewar Lithuanian daily "Our Tomorrow", Antanas Bruzas\*, who jokingly maintained that at birth every individual is allotted a certain amount of accomplishments, pains and pleasures. Insisting that he had not yet exhausted his share of pleasures, he would untiringly reiterate his conviction that we would certainly return to our homeland.

**\*The journalist's forecasts did ultimately come true with the end of Stalin's gory era with the first signs of political thaw and crumbling of the Gulag system. Like many other political prisoners, he was released from the Gulag and allowed to return to Lithuania where he managed to retrieve a minor part of his honorarium for his postwar translations of literature. He discovered his family was still detained in the Siberian exile, so he collected his belongings in a few bundles and set out for Krasnoyarsk to join his wife and children. Later, I was told by his son, on arrival in Krasnoyarsk, his father began counting his bundles noticing one missing, when he suddenly beamed up with delight and shouted: "I have plain forgotten that the missing bundle is myself!". Nine years later, the family returned to Lithuania and settled near the seaside. He enjoyed this life together with his family for five more years when he died of cancer.**

Deep discussions would take place between our intellectuals and those of other countries, especially Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, to mention but a few in that Babylon of the soviet Gulag. The



elder of our barrack was a Russian colonel, Gladkykh, who had lost his arm in the Winter War with Finland and had been taken prisoner. Immediately after his release and his return to the USSR he was charged with treason for surrendering to the enemy, and shipped out to the Gulag. At first my knowledge of the Russian language was weak, but I would press through the daily crowd of avid readers closer to the newspaper stand outside the cultural-educational center of the camp, the so-called KVCh stretching my neck and straining my eyes and I tried to keep abreast with the goings on at large.

They organized a chess tournament and I joined it relishing the opportunity to improve my own proficiency. To my surprise, I soon became the center of attention. My hungering young mind was so keen that I could grasp the situation at a glance and envisage forceful ways of its development many moves ahead. Veteran chess-players, elderly Russian intellectuals openly admired my acumen and accompanied effective endings with Roman aphorisms. When I won first place, the officer-chief of the KVCh awarded me the winner's prize - three kilograms of carrots - a luxurious repast of which I shared with my closest friends.

While playing chess at the tournament, I used to hear the sonorous voice of our maestro Antanas Kučingis in the adjacent room rehearsing the part of Vyborny in the Ukrainian 19th c. musical play "Natalka Poltavka". Prisoners were laughing at his pupil-like strenuous efforts to bring his pronunciation of the Ukrainian text to perfection but when the play was staged his success was stunning. A Russian or Ukrainian professor exclaimed: "Though small (Lithuania), yet what a gifted nation! Their opera singer has obscured our stars and their teenage chess player beat our seasoned masters".

I am proud to say that at the initial stage of the Soviet occupation and in the Gulag, my countrymen still enjoyed the reputation of sturdy honest people. Once following a

complaint of theft, overseers began ransacking our barracks, however on approaching our bunks they read outlandish names on our wooden plates and one of them inquired where we were from. Before we could explain another overseer said: "We don't need to search here. They are people who wouldn't even touch gold if it blocked their way". (Such estimate of my countrymen's integrity, even by their enemies, sounds like a legend after the devastatingly brutal effect of the 50-year-long Soviet occupation.)

We arrived at the Gulag in early autumn and the days were nearing Christmas. Sapped by wood cutting and watery putrid grub, in the evenings we felt drained and dizzy, hardly dragging our legs across the barracks and needing utmost effort not to bump into another shadow moving from the opposite direction. We did receive an occasional letter or food parcel from home; the words and extra food kept us alive. One could not survive for long on the Gulag rations alone.

The guards opened a "commercial canteen" in our camp and by selling some clothes we could treat ourselves to some additional meals until it was discovered we had been feeding on roasted meat of cats and dogs instead of rabbits. I once managed to trade my jacket for a loaf of bread which I feasted on together with my schoolmate, chewing and savoring with inexpressible delight and I pledged to repeat such feast as soon as we returned to our home land. The principle source of our strength consisted of our unbreakable belief in the ultimate success of our fight for freedom. This was our constant speech and sustenance.

The blessing of my fate was a lasting friendship with our soulful poet Antanas Miškinis, he always raised and fortified my spirit. I would visit him in the special regime barrack for prisoners sentenced to a 25-year term, which was sometimes substituted for capital punishment. Every now and then I would find him lost in thought and, without being noticed, I would leave, I knew he was contemplating a new poem. When I would



## In Memoriam

**Rimgaudas Svoba**  
C-102, Detroit, MI  
Dec. 14, 1997

**Anastasia Yeshinskas**  
C-7, Waterbury, CT  
Nov. 19, 1997

**Albert J. Kazakevich**  
C-46, Forest City, PA  
Dec. 8, 1997

**Rev. A. Edward Gradeck**  
C-50, New Haven, CT  
Nov. 12, 1997

**Bruno Shukis**  
C-112, Chicago, IL  
Nov. 22, 1997

**Victor R. Ross**  
C-141, Bridgeport, CT  
Dec. 8, 1997

**Walter A. Brazaitis**  
C-29, Newark, NJ  
Dec. 10, 1997

**Anthony Glinskas**  
C-144, Anthracite, PA  
Nov. 3, 1997



*"Do not stand at my grave  
and weep;  
I am not there, I do not sleep  
I am a thousand winds that blow;  
I am the diamond glints on snow.*

*I am the sunlight on  
ripened grain;  
I am the gentle  
autumn's rain.*

*When you awaken in the  
morning's hush,  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circled flight  
I am the soft star that  
shines at night.*

*Do not stand at my  
grave and cry.  
I am not there; I did not die."*

*-IMO Wm Aubel*

return, he would generally welcome me with words: "Now sit down and listen". He would write his poems on scraps of brown paper torn away from sacks of cement and even on a shred of birch bark. He would recite these poems in an even yet highly expressive voice. His poems breathed out pain and love for his enslaved, profusely bleeding country, alternating the radiant visions of his dreams and his broken hearted thoughts:

*The azure sky, the earth is so lush green  
As it can only be at Whitsun!  
Why are you, deary, crying?  
And why are you, my child,  
shying away from me?*

Cast away a thousand miles, fenced off from the world, downtrodden and drained, the captive gazes at the evening star as the only contact with his desolated and yet undefeated

country:

*Beneath the frigid glitter of that star  
You are wrecked by dreadful snow storm,  
Yet you bear up and do not bow  
Your bleeding but defiant head.*

In the full conviction of his cause, the poet challenges the evil menace to mankind:

*Almighty God Himself has made me  
Face up to falsehood,  
perfidy, oppression,-  
Defy the virulent world's tumor  
That's sapping up the  
lifeblood of mankind.*

*All poems by Antanas Miškinis. Translated into English by A.T. Geniušas. From Magazine Vilnius ©1996. The author is a professor at Vilnius University. See Sausis/Jan. 1998 issue for Part 1 and biographies.*



# BISHOP ANTANAS BARANAUSKAS

*The Greatest Lithuanian Poet in the Nineteenth Century*

by Edward Baranauskas

He was a theologian, mathematician, translator, linguist and poet. His classic poem,



Lietuvių poetas  
ANTANAS BARANAUSKAS

Литовский поэт  
АНТАНАС БАРАНАУСКАС  
1835—1902

Anykščiu šilelis (The Forest of Anykščiai), entitled him to be called the greatest Lithuanian poet of the nineteenth century.

His poem was later translated into Polish, Latvian, Russian, German and English.

Antanas Baranauskas was born on February 17, 1835 on the outskirts of the small town of Anykščiai. His father was a peasant of meager means, and his mother was the best singer in the church of Anykščiai.

In 1856, he entered the seminary at Varniai. In those days, Russia occupied and enslaved Lithuania, and the printing of books in Lithuanian was forbidden. The books were mostly in Polish and Russian. The Polish language and environment prevailed at the seminary. However, on the outside of the seminary, there existed a strong upswing of the Lithuanian spirit. At that time, the Lithuanian language was regarded as the language of the common people. Varniai was the residence of Bishop Motiejus Valančius, whose activities played a very important part of the Lithuanian national movement. Despite the Polish surroundings, Baranauskas took an interest in Lithuanian history and language.

At the seminary, the fame of Baranauskas as a poet was recognized and acclaimed. Bishop Valančius requested him to write church hymns, which he did, and they were highly poetic and

popular. The church authorities took notice of his abilities, and sent him for further studies to St. Petersburg, the University of Munich, and Rome. Bishop Valančius, who lost more than 100 priests during the revolt of 1863 against the Russians, recalled him to Kaunas. He was appointed Vicar of the Cathedral of Kaunas, and later professor at the seminary at Kaunas. There he taught theology and the Lithuanian language.

He was recognized as an authority on the Lithuanian language, and as the first Lithuanian philologist of any importance. He studied its dialects, prepared the grammar and worked to establish a standard written language.

In 1859, during summer vacation at the home of his parents, he completed his poem, "The Forest of Anykščiai" which he started a year earlier. One of the reasons he was compelled to write this poem was the despising remark made by one of the professors at the seminary that the Lithuanian language was not suitable for poetry. That offended Baranauskas, and he made up his mind to write a poem in Lithuanian which would be as good as any in Polish.

In 1884, he was appointed auxiliary bishop of Samogitia (the western part of Lithuania, known today as Žemaitija), and in 1897 became the bishop of Seinai. He died on November 26, 1902, and was buried in the cathedral at Seinai. Prior to World War I, Seinai was a Lithuanian cultural center. Today, it is a part of Poland, about six miles south of the present border with Lithuania.

One of the rooms in the house, in which he wrote his famous poem, has been preserved and made into a museum in Anykščiai, the town he made so famous. A monument, not far from the church, was dedicated a few years ago to honor him.

Bishop Antanas Baranauskas most certainly played an important part in the renaissance of the Lithuanian spirit and identity during those difficult times.

*The author, who bears the same surname as the famous poet, has not discovered for certain if he is indeed related to him.*







# OFFICIAL NEWS

HEY COUNCILS!!!!

Dayton did it! Brockton did it! Waterbury is doing it!  
HOW ABOUT YOU!?!?

We are looking for councils to submit bids for the 1999 National Convention, our 86th. Let's send the millennium out in style by a grand celebration in your city. What better way to usher in a new century of the Knights of Lithuania!

Can you imagine the saying "Back in 1999, we had a blast in ....!" It could be a milestone for the history of your city and your council. Be proud of your city--show how your council spreads Lithuanianism in your town. Bring your council together and decide to host your fellow Knights in 1999.

For more information contact the Supreme Council Trustees, Mark Bell and Mary Beth Slakis, for a convention bid form and helpful hints. Our addresses and telephone numbers are found in the front inside cover of this VYTIS issue. We look forward to hearing from you! We will present all bid's at the 85th National Convention in Waterbury, CT in August.

## The Year of the Holy Spirit

As a part of the preparation for the year 2000, our Holy Father has asked us to reflect in 1998 upon the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the expression of the connection of the Love between Father and Son and the perpetual source of God's graces.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Triune God created and sustains the universe. "By the Lord's word, the heavens were made; by the breathe of His mouth all the hosts." (Ps. 33:6)

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the prophets readied mankind for the coming of Christ, the Redeemer.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the son of God, Jesus Christ, became incarnate in the Virgin Mary.

The Holy Spirit guides the Church and all Mankind. "The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, will teach you everything...it will lead you to the fullness of truth." (Plg. Jn. 14:26, 16:13)

Pope John Paul II has stated that God's Spirit was influential in the dramatic political and social

changes of the last several years and he invites us to nurture Christian hope. "A new springtime of Christian life will manifest itself if Christians listen to the Holy Spirit working within them and, following the example of the Virgin Mother, look to the future with profound faith, humility and trust in God." (TMA)

My wish is that you prepare in a meaningful way for Christ's Third Millenium.

-From *Bishop's Brief*, Bishop Paul Baltakis, DD, OFM.- newsletter 12/97

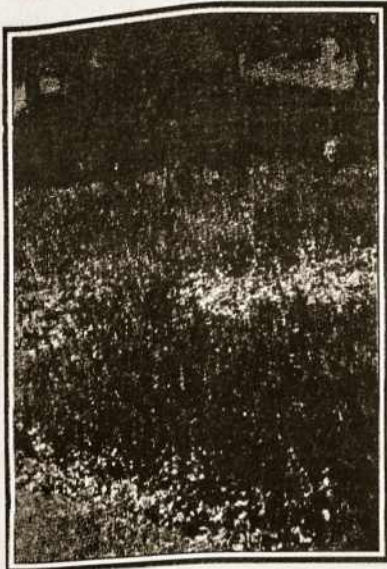


Over \$75,000 has been donated as of 12/97 toward the publication of the Holy Bible in Lithuanian. The entire cost of publication will be \$213,000. Donators of \$100 or more will receive two copies of the Bible. For more information, contact: Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc. 361 Highland Blvd. Brooklyn, NY 11207.





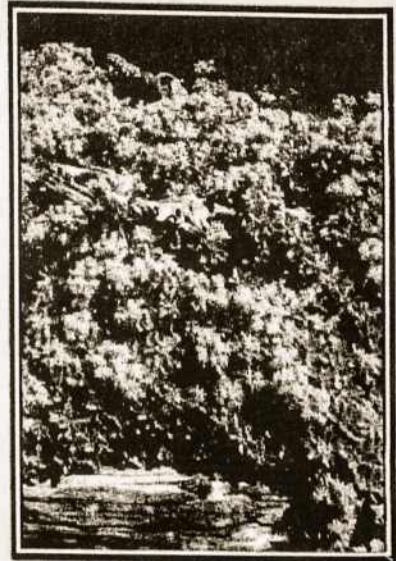
# THE LITHUANIAN GARDENER



AJUGA



PACHYSANDRA, JAPANESE



STONECROP, GOLDMOSS SEDUM

*by HM Frank Petrauskas*

Our most worthy Editor asked me to write a column on gardening entitled "The Lithuanian Gardener". It will appear four times per year, February, May, July-August, and November, with an appropriate subject and information for that particular time period. The subject for this issue is "Groundcovers". Spring is an excellent time to plant groundcovers.

My qualifications for writing this column are as such. I studied landscaping at the College of Forestry at Syracuse University. I had my own landscape business for 40 years. We received a number of awards for jobs done. The big one was the National Landscape Award from Mrs. Richard Nixon in a White House ceremony in 1969. I am now retired and live in Syracuse, NY.

Groundcovers can be any plant that covers the ground. Now, if we exclude grass

and trees and most shrubs, we come to the true groundcovers. They are used in areas which are more difficult to maintain such as banks. They are used for erosion control and low maintenance. Once planted and established there is very little maintenance. Groundcovers are suitable for sun and partial shade in wet or dry climates. They vary in height from a few inches to a few feet. They can be herbaceous, woody, shrub-like, biannual or perennial, deciduous, evergreen, semi-evergreen, twining, trailing, clumping or sprawling. They vary in textures and colors.

There are many, many plants that can be used as groundcovers. I'm just going to write about a few of the most common used plants because of space limitations. I'll go down the line with some of the most popular plants. Starting with the low growers we have: Ajuga, the Ivys- Baltic and English, Moneywort, Pachysandra, Lamium or



Beacon Silver, Snow on the Mountain, Sedums, Lily-of-the-Valley and Myrtle which is Vinca Minor.

For the medium growers we have: Crown Vetch, the Euonymus Wintercreepers, Fleece-flower, the Variegated Hosta's or Plantain Lilies, a number of Ferns, and the Honeysuckles with which you have to be very careful.

Some of the low shrubs which are excellent for sunny areas are: a number of Junipers, a number of Cotoneasters, Potentilla, Euonymus Vegetus, and a few of the low Arbor Vita's and Taxus.

Each planting situation is different so you will have to do a little investigation as to which plants are best for your situation. I would recommend you go to a few Garden Centers or Nurseries and look around. Ask questions—pick their brain for advice.

Once you decide which plant or plants you want to use then you must prepare the soil for planting. If the planting area has grass or weeds you should first spray it with *Round Up* or *Erase* or some other vegetation killer and wait 10 to 14 days before planting. If the soil is in better shape then a good rototilling should be sufficient. In both cases rototill before planting. Be sure to rake and remove all surface weeds and grasses. The cleaner your planting bed the less weeding you'll do in the future.

Planting distance between plants varies accordingly. The small plants such as Ajuga, Pachysandra and Myrtle should be 8 to 10 inches apart and the rows should be staggered. The medium plants such as Crown Vetch and the Wintercreepers should be 12 inches apart and staggered. The low shrubs such as the Junipers and Cotoneasters should be 18 inches apart and staggered.

If your plants come in trays or containers soak them good with water before planting. Once planted then spray with water until the water has penetrated into the soil. Container plants are usually root bound so when you remove the plant from the container, scratch the roots with your

fingers or a tool to loosen the roots. Then they will make better contact with the soil once planted. For the balled and burlapped and the larger container shrubs after digging the hole, place the shrub into the hole and fill the hole with water. If it drains quickly—fill it again with water. It is important for the root system to get a good soaking upon planting. Next backfill to the top of the ball and tamp lightly with your foot.

For fertilizer I like to use dried cow manure. A hand full or two for the small plants and a shovel full for the shrub plants mixed with the back fill is sufficient.

There are many items you can use for mulch. From wood chips to the shredded bark, to different size chunk bark, to various types and sizes of stone to just plain old peat moss.

If you watered your plants well upon planting and you watered your mulch well it won't be necessary to water again. Mother Nature should take care of the situation in the future.

Good luck to you with your plantings. In my May column there will be more on planting.



Cartoon submitted by E. Baranauskas





# Lithuania

(Lietuva, tevyne mūsų)

English version by William Griffith\*

(1898)

V. Kudirka  
(1858-1899)

**Maestoso**

**Voice**

Lith - u - an - ia, land of he - roes, Up. and face the day at hand;  
Lie - tu - va, tē - vy - ne mu - sų Tu did - vy - rių še - me

**Piano**

With the old he - ro - ic cour - age Fill your sons and daugh - ters.  
iš pra - ei - ties Ta - vo sū - nūs te stip - ry - bę se - mia.

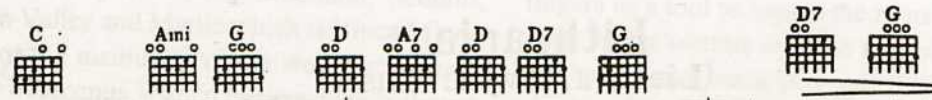
Lith - u - an - ia, lead your chil - dren In the path that beck - ons on;  
Te - gul ta - vo vai - kai ei - na vien ta - kais do - ry - bės

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems. Each system has a voice line and a piano accompaniment line. Above the voice line, guitar chord diagrams are provided for each measure. The first system starts with a 'Maestoso' tempo marking and a dynamic of 'f'. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system concludes the piece with a final 'f' dynamic marking.

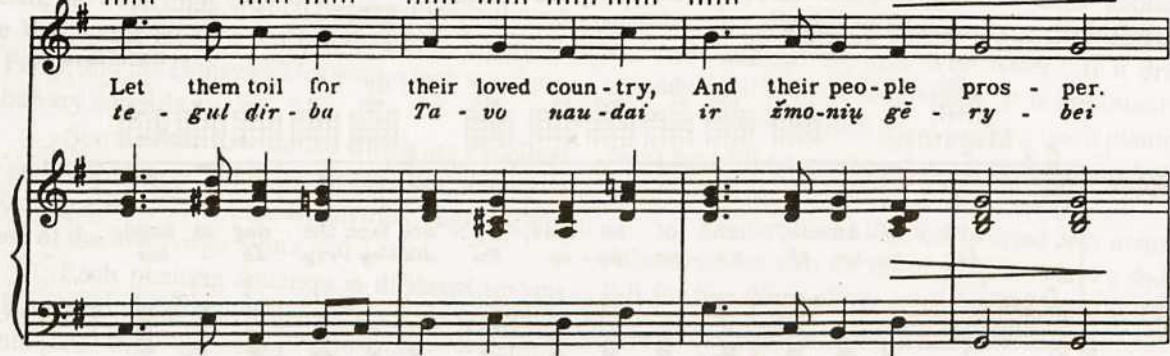
\* From "The Botsford Collection of Folk-Songs" by permission of Mrs. Botsford and the publisher.

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Let them toil for their loved coun - try, And their peo - ple pros - per.  
*te - gul dir - bu Ta - vo nau - dai ir žmo - nių gė - ry - bei*





Let the sun - shine o - ver - head, Let the night be not too dark,  
*Te - gul sau - lė Lie - tu - vos tam - su - mus pra - ša - li - na,*





Give us light, give us light, Lead our steps in jus - tice. —  
*Ir švie - sa ir tie - sa mus šingsnius te ly - di. —*





D A D D7 G

*f*

Let the love for our dear land Burn and beat in  
 Te - gul mei - lē Lie - tu - vos de - ga mū - sų

D7 G C G Emi Ami Emi

*ff*

ev - 'ry heart, In this love, in this love,  
 šir - di - se var - dan tos Lie - tu - vos

B7 Emi G D7 G Bmi Emi G D7 G

*rit.*

Let us be u - ni - ted,  
 vie - ny - bē te žy - di.

*rit.* *a tempo*



# LITHUANIAN CHEFS



Here are some more great favorites to warm one up (or a favorite Valentine) on frigid February days. Thanks to Vincent Samoska of C-36 from his cookbook, *Dumplings and Kolacky*.

## Lithuanian Filled Dumplings

### Dough:

1 cup sour cream  
2 eggs  
3 cups flour (or more)

### Cheese Filling:

1 pt. ricotta or dry cottage cheese  
1 egg, beaten  
salt to taste

### Beef Filling:

1 ½ lbs. ground sirloin  
1 or 2 eggs, beaten  
grated onion  
salt and pepper to taste

Dough: Combine ingredients in order listed. Mix together until workable. Let set about 20 minutes before rolling. For filling desired: Mix ingredients as listed; mix well. Roll dough into about 1/4 inch thickness, cut into 3 or 4 inch circles. Place a little filling into each circle and fold over; seal dough with a little water dampened on edges; press to hold.

Drop dumplings into boiling water to cover. Cook until they rise to the top, then continue cooking 10 minutes longer. Serve with sour cream or diced bacon and onion, cooked crisp.

## Pierogi - Sauerkraut or Cheese Filled Dumplings

(serves 10)

6 egg yolks  
4 cups flour  
1 cup milk  
1/4 cup butter  
½ teaspoon salt  
Sauerkraut Filling:  
1 cup sauerkraut  
5 strips bacon  
½ small onion, diced  
1 tsp. caraway seed

### Cheese Filling:

1 pkg. Farmer cheese or dry cottage cheese  
1 egg  
1/3 cup sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla

Sauerkraut filling: Rinse sauerkraut; simmer in covered pot with caraway seed and 2 cups water for ½ hour. Chop bacon into small pieces; fry with onions. Drain sauerkraut; add to bacon. Fry mixture for 5 minutes; cool. Cheese Filling: mix all ingredients together in bowl.

Dough: combine eggs, flour and salt. Scald milk; melt butter into milk. Add scalded mixture to first mixture. Roll on floured board to

about 1/4 inch thickness. Cut into 3 inch circles. Place a spoonful of cheese or sauerkraut filling in center of each dough circle; fold in half and seal with edge of fork. Drop into pot of boiling water. When they float to the top, remove. Fry in butter just before serving

## Kolduni - Lithuanian Beef Filled Dumplings

3 cups flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 egg  
½ cup milk  
½ cup water

### Filling:

1 ½ lbs. Lean ground beef  
2 eggs beaten  
1 small onion, grated  
salt and pepper to taste

Beat egg, add milk, water, and salt. Add flour gradually, using enough to make a soft dough. Roll thin and cut in 3 to 4 inch circles. Fill with rounded teaspoons of beef filling. Fold over circles of filled dough; press edges together to seal. Drop into boiling water; simmer about 20 minutes.

Filling: combine ingredients well



*Have (or want) a favorite recipe? Share it with us by sending it to VYTIS editors address on inside cover. Email it to: [vytiseditor@juno.com](mailto:vytiseditor@juno.com).*





# Smiles without Wrinkles

*Šypsniai be raukšlių*

*Thanks again to Fr. John Savukynas, MIC, for his "Laughing Matter".*

- We have two ears and one mouth that we may listen more and talk less.
  - "Whenever I'm in the dumps, I go get a new dress."
  - "Oh, yes, how interesting," responded her catty friend, "I was wondering where you got them."
  - Patience: Ability to count down before blasting off.
  - Housewife (to salesman at door): "I'm not in a the market for a vacuum cleaner, but try the people next door. We borrow theirs and it is in terrible condition.
  - You know you're getting old when you take a stroll down memory lane and you get lost.
  - A Dutchman explained the symbolism of the red, white and blue in the Netherlands flag to an American. He said, "Our flag is symbolic of our taxes. We get red when we talk about them, white when we get the bill and blue after we pay them."
  - The American replied, "It's like that in the USA, too, only we also see stars."
  - Teacher: "Patricia, the story you handed in called "Our Dog" is exactly like your brother's."
  - Patricia: "Of course. It's the same dog."
  - What is big and yellow and comes every day in the morning to brighten Mother's day?  
(The school bus)
- (Readers are encouraged to send in material for this column to the editors. Jokes can be in English or Lithuanian.)*



## WORDS AND NAMES

The shortest Lithuanian words: a, è, į, o.

The longest word:

nebeprisikiškiakopūstlapiaudavome  
- 33 letters.

The shortest inaugural speech (January 22, 1997) said by the mayor of Jonava, Donatas Juodelė - "Gera kalba - trumpa kalba.

Stengsiuosi pateisinti jūsų pasitikėjimą". (A short speech is a good speech. Therefore I will respect your confidence in me).

The longest female last name" Gediminaitė-Beržanskaitė-Klausutaitė. She hails from Kaunas.

Shortest last names - I and K.

Shortest Lithuanian last names: Eva, Ila, Yla,

Oja, Oka, Uba, Ūba, Uka, Ūka, Uža, Ūža.

Shortest street name: Ozo street in Vilnius.

Longest one word name of a business:  
"Lietbalkankarservisas".

Longest multiword name of a university:  
Vilniaus Darbo raudonosios  
vėliavos ir Tautų draugystės ordinų valstybinis  
Vincio Mickevičiaus-  
Kapsuko vardo universitetas" (during the  
Soviet occupation).

Most popular names for businesses: Aušra,  
Rūta, Rasa, Eglė, Viltis,  
Ažuolas, Klevas, Paslauga, Rytas, Dobilas.

*Compiled by Dalia Bulvičius*



## Lithuanians in the News

### *Lithuania's new president*

Valdas Adamkus was elected president of the Republic of Lithuania in the January run-off elections. Adamkus, a Lithuanian-American from Chicago, won by a slim 1% margin from his rival, Arturas Paulauskas, in the run off election.

Adamkus, who is considered a 'right wing' conservative, pledged to stick to a pro-Western foreign policy, maintaining good ties with all neighboring nations. He was granted Lithuanian citizenship in 1992 and fought a long court battle to be permitted to be on the Lithuanian ballot. A retired government employee, Adamkus renounced his US citizenship upon winning the election.

- ELTA (website news), Knight Ridder 1/5/98



**Valdas Adamkus, President Elect of the Republic of Lithuania**

heavy bureaucratic red tape. This improvement began last year when the Homeland Union Party won power from the former ruling communists. Privitization of the remaining state-owned companies is foremost on the agenda. According to the Lithuanian Development Agency in Vilnius, 500 new start-up companies were founded month this year (1997), much greater than before.

There is still much work to do. Lithuania's indebted

energy sector, which helped to spark the major banking crisis two years ago awaits full liberalization.

Direct foreign investment is expected to grow more than 75% in 1997, an estimated \$1 billion cumulative since 1991.

Submitted by Albert Cizauskas WSJ 10/15/97

### **Lithuanian Remade Economy Gains Investors from the West**

Vilniaus Bankas, Lithuania's largest commercial institution signed a \$50 million revolving credit deal with Western heavyweights including Citibank and Chase Manhattan Bank. The funding will boost Vilniaus' lending and leasing operations.

"Lithuania is going in the right direction and we want to help it stay there," said Zoe Shaw of Bankgesellschaft Berlin, the bank that organized the credit agreement.

Foreign investor's are showing greater interest in Lithuania due to the reduction in

### **Lithuanian Community of Greater Cleveland**

On Sunday, Dec. 6, 1997, the Cleveland Plain Dealer featured a full page story on its Lithuanian community that others would envy. The article, by reporter, Zina Vishnevsky, pointed out numerous aspects of our culture in the Cleveland area, such as the continuation of Lithuanian Saturday schools for children, where the Lithuanian population is located, leading immigrants and other tidbits about Lithuanians. Among the interesting info, in a sidebar story, was the fact that one of Lithuania's former President's, Antanas Smetona, once lived in exile in Cleveland and died there in a house fire in January 1944.



## ***Volunteer Nurse in Klaipeda***

**Maria Gruzdys** spent the last three vacations as a volunteer nurse in Klaipeda. She, along with a medical team of 2 surgeons, 2 dentists and an anesthesiologist have done this each year to help the impoverished in Lithuania with the Partnership in Hope program that began in 1995. The program was started by a group of Lithuanians in the Cleveland area to inspire good will between the sister cities of Cleveland and Klaipeda.

"I want to give back to my parent's country and my heritage," she cites as the primary reason for the mission, where she also acts as a translator.

Over 20 surgeries are performed each summer, usually on children with birth defects, such as cleft palates, during this 2 week mission. Ms. Gruzdys and the staff work 12 hour days. This coming summer, Maria intends to return with her group to help perform more complex

surgeries, such as bone grafting and plastic surgery. For more information on the Partnership in Hope program, write to 6315 Pearl Road, No. 101, Parma Hts. OH 44130.

*Submitted by Dolly Oberaitis, C-25 from the Cleveland Sun Herald, 11/27/97 article by Krystine Shea*

## **Basketball's Number 11**

**Zydrunas Ilgauskas**, a 7'3" 22 year old was acquired by the Cleveland Cavaliers in 1996, drafted in the first round of picks. Although he missed all of last year's season with a broken foot, he played with the Cavs rookie/free-agent team that won the Atlanta Summer Shootout at Life University in July 1997. In his first competition in two seasons, he led the summer league with 8.7 rebounds per game and 3 blocked shots. He led the Cavs with 15 points per game, and when he was with Atletas Basketball Club in 1995, he averaged 20.3 points, 12.8 rebounds and 2.8 blocked shots per game.

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## **Letters to the Editor**

☞ from page 3

effort. A special not-for-profit organization called C.A.S.I.M.I.R. (Committee in Amsterdam for Saving, Improving, Maintaining and Insuring Restoration) was formed for the purpose of repairing the church. Funds for this repair are being collected by this group and also the St. Casimir's Memorial Fund. Mass intentions may be offered in this latter group.

Anyone interested in finding out how to help our cause may write to either group.

**St. Casimir's Church Memorial Fund**, 260

East Main St., Amsterdam, NY 12010

**C.A.S.I.M.I.R.**, Attn: Robin Chase, Amsterdam

Federal Savings and Loan, 161 Church St.

Amsterdam, NY 12010

Širdingai Ačiū, Vytiškai,

**Mirga Bablin, Pres. C-100, Amsterdam, NY**

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## ***NASA Probe Finds Jupiter Moon has Atmosphere***

Arvydas Kliore, the lead Galileo investigator at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, CA, has helped to find evidence that Jupiter's Moon, Europa, may have atmosphere.

"While this discovery does not relate to the question of possible life on Europa, it does show there's a surface process occurring there and Europa is not just some dead hunk of material."

Kliore, who reported his finding in Science magazine, said Europa's ionosphere was discovered during a series of lengthy experiments.

*-Submitted by Albert Bartulis, C-133(Reuters)*



**Did you know?** The highest tree in Lithuania is a 46 meter larch in the Prenaysky region; the tallest church steeple is the 70 meter St. Peter and Paul Church in Šiaulai; the tallest man is Arvidas Sabonis at 7 feet 31/4" from Kaunas.



# District & Council News

**C - 10, Athol-  
Gardner, MA  
Vincukas**

Our council again this year held an old fashioned Kūčios at the barn of the Lucas family in Gardner. It was attended by 36 persons. The lights were dimmed, candles lit, wine poured and the festivities began. Rev. John Petrauskas, MIC, of St. Casimir's opened the festivities with a prayer of thanksgiving and for the deceased members of the past 83 years. He broke and shared the plotkeliai with all present and they in turn shared it with each other.

The highlight of the event came with the appearance of the Holy Family dressed appropriately. Emilie, our youngest member, who had just given birth to Ethan, and husband Christopher Joseph formed a living Nativity scene that was greatly received and put us all in the right spirit.

The menu consisted of 12 meatless specialties, symbolizing the 12 apostles. Among it was Mrs. Lucas famous chowder, various fish dishes, kugelis, kopūstai, poppy seed bread and šližikai with poppy seed milk.

The Lithuanian Christmas Eve superstitions were acted out under the directions of Bronė Wišniauskas. The narrators were Paul Krustapentus, Roberta Landry

## On the Calendar...

**Sunday, Feb 1, 1998**

**Mid America District**

**38<sup>th</sup> Annual Memories of Lith. Banquet**

**Martinique Rest., Evergreen Pk., IL**

**Contact: Rob Martin (773) 376-4779**

### 1998 District Conventions:

**March 15** - Amber District's St. Casimir's Day Celebration in Philadelphia

**April 19** - MAD spring conv. following the 11:00 a.m. Lithuanian Mass, Annunciation Church, Bklyn, NY - C-41.

**April 26** - NED spring convention in Lawrence, MA. Contact: NED Pres.

### August 6-9, 1998 - K of L. Convention:

**Host: Council 7 - Waterbury, CT**

**Sheraton Four Points - Waterbury, CT**

### Other Events

**March 29, 1998** A Holy Hour is planned for St. Casimir Church - Worcester, MA. Hosts: C-26

**April 19, 1998** - Fr. A. Janiunas' 50th anniv. of priesthood. Celebration at St. Francis Church, Lawrence, MA.

**May 31, 1998** - 90th anniv. of St. Francis Church, Lawrence, MA.

**July 26, 1998** - Please plan on coming to at 3:45 in the lower church of St. Ann's Basilica C-74, Scranton.

*Send in your council's upcoming events along with council news for the calendar.*

and Elizabeth Penney. Special were sung, opening with "Sveikas dinner benefactors were Bronė Jėzau gimusis"! Qualters and Mary McCallom.

Thanks gals!

Co-chairmen were of this Following supper, carols successful event were Sophie



Fiorentino and Bronė Wišniauskas., setup - Maryann Langloso, David Lucas and Bill Wišniauskas.

Jeanne Chastney was the chairman of St. Francis parish annual Whist party that netted \$1,600. Nice job, Joanne! Dr. Henry Gailiunas gave an excellent talk to the K. of L. and the Women's guild of the parish, and his recent trip to Lithuania.

John Baltakis recently underwent a knee replacement. Ed Lelpkouski, our Mayor Marica's election chairman recently chaired a fund raising dinner for the mayor that was attended by about 700 persons. Oh, by the way, our Mayor made it for the 5th term. He is a great friend of the Lithuanians. Congratulations, Charlie!

Bronė Qualters of Athol has worked at the election polls for many years.

Condolences extended to cousin Genė Mordas on the death of husband, Walter Mordas.

Spiritual advisor Rev. Joseph Jurgelonis was recently featured in the "Worcester Telegram" in the religion column.

It is sure good to see Kay Paliulis back among us after major surgery.

### **C - 12, New York, NY** *Jeanne Janonis*

In October, Our Lady of Vilnius had a successful parish dinner. A delicious dinner was catered by Vytautas Beleckis of Ridgewood, NY. The next dinner will be May 17.

Annual elections were held at our November meeting and we



*C-12's John Lostys enjoys his new hand made sweater*

are pleased that the same board and committees were reelected.

In December, Council 12 held their annual Christmas party. In included a visit from Santa Claus, Joe Sleder.

Get well wishes go to Stella Marcinauskis, our president, Jovita Sleder and Tony Zagarino, our pastor Father Eugene's right hand man.

Our treasurer, Helen Yurkus' daughter, Barbara, participated in the New York City Marathon in November and we congratulate her on the successful completion of this 26 mile race.

On December 1st, our member Ed Meškys of Center Harbor, NH surprised us with a visit. Along came his seeing eye dog, Judge. Ed gave us a talk about his work in the organizations for the blind. We could not believe how busy he is.

Also in December, we celebrated the big 40 birthday bash for John Lostys. Our talented member Stasė Aleniūnienė knitted him a beautiful sweater.

Stasė's husband Jurgis our talented cultural chairman, gives us each month a run down on what

is happening here and in Lithuania. His speech is translated into English by Egdūnas Račius, a Fullbright scholar from Lithuania.

Our council members, Irene and Ed Senken went on a well deserved vacation in Florida. When the snow comes down we will think of them.

### **C - 17, So. Boston, MA** *Regina Alexander*

Reverend Anthony P. Baltrushunas, the Pastor Emeritus of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish, South Boston, Mass., was ordained on December 17, 1937. To celebrate Fr. Anthony's 60th anniversary of ordination to the sacred priesthood, the parishioners of St. Peter's Parish and its pastor, Father Albert Contons, hosted this joyous occasion.

The Jubilee Committee was spearheaded by the Knights of Lithuania, Council 17, its president, Alexander Akule, recently awarded Honorary Member, and food chairmen Frank and Virginia Markuns. Many volunteers helped prepare the





**C-17's (Brother) Jack Baltrashunas, Fr. Albert Contons, Pastor of St. Peter's in So. Boston and Fr. Anthony Baltrashunas**

sumptuous buffet in the church hall after the Mass. After the reception and buffet, the Lithuanian Men's Sextet, under the direction of Daiva Navickas, and also soloist, Marytė Bizinkauskas of C-1, provided special musical entertainment of Lithuanian songs.

The joyous and spiritual music for the Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving was under the direction of Mrs. Alice Ruseckas with the St. Augustine Parish Choir, and with Sr. David Romanauskas, C.J.C., at the organ.

Fr. Anthony, the Dean of New England Lithuanian clergy, was pastor of St. Peter's for 13 years, 1966-1979. This was a most difficult time, for the parish is situated within a housing project. At that time, crime was rampant and security lax. In 1972, the rectory was broken into 12 times. On two occasions Father's life was in serious danger. One time the intruder entered the rectory while Father slept upstairs on the second floor. He strung a wire one foot above the top step on the landing, thinking Fr. would follow him down the stairs and trip on the wire while he made noises on the 1st floor. However, Fr. remained calm and quickly called the police and

the robber fled. Another time the robber took the statue of St. Anthony from a niche on the staircase and proceeded up the stairs to the bedroom. As he raised the statue to strike, he tripped on the bedpost, and St. Anthony fell harmlessly on the bed waking up his namesake. The criminal fled.

What to do? Upon the advice of a good friend, Father acquired a Doberman Pincer. Fr. Gerald, a visiting priest, then took the newly acquired dog and walked all around the parish property and the housing project. Later on that day, Fr. Albin Janiunas walked the same dog around the property and the project, making themselves very visible. The news spread rapidly -- the Pastor had two Doberman Pincers, attack dogs on guard duty. That finally ended the break-ins. Fr. Anthony had kept the parish together despite difficult times.

Father Anthony expressed his sincere gratitude for the joyous 60th anniversary celebration to the Pastor Fr. Albert Contons, to the Concelebrants, his fellow priests, to the Sisters, to his brother Jack, to the K of L C-17, to the parishioners, and to all who helped share in his Jubilee. His words

were: "May God's choicest blessings be with you and all your loved ones."

## **C-26, Worcester, MA**

*Stephen V. Walinsky, Sr.*

Not having completely digested the Thanksgiving at home dinner, we of C-26 were feasted nobly during the December Christmas Party meeting. The executive committee outdid themselves this year. Their culinary creations delighted us with appetite teasing entrees, topping them off with a main course of chicken and a variety of veggies. The salubrious bill of fare, left us licking our lips, to make sure that we got every crumb. I had to consult my Thesaurus to find an appropriate word to describe it. Thank you committee, all.

As pictured, ladies first at the punch bowl, joyfully exclaiming that the spike was punched, the stake was pinched, tongue-twisting the punch was spiked. The gentlemen present did not believe until they tasted, they too found a slight added refreshment to the spinch, no, to the punch. The room was filled with smiling faces. Santa also helped to broaden the smiles as he presented presents to the good boys and girls.

Fr. John entertained guests from Lithuania, father and mother, parents of Vytautas Brazdauskas, a student at Marianapolis Prep. A friend and fellow student, Christian Poliakov, was also at the party. They also enjoyed the frivolity of the Christmas party.

The meeting was short and



informative, letters of thanks were read, recollecting the donations and considerations that the council had presented to worthy requests. President Viv Rodgers adjourned the pleasing proceedings,

wishing all well and well ness for the holidays and the new year. And, so, with the greetings, our year of business was concluded favorably, and with true membership cordiality.

### **C-46, Forest City, PA**

*Blanche Motsko*

On September 14, Joan O'peka and husband, Frank attended the Amber District meeting. Joan gave us the highlights. January 1, 1998 came in on a frigid zero temperature with 17 inches of snow! Everyone was digging themselves out. Two days later, the temperature soared to 50 melting the snow fast. On December 8, 1997, we lost another of our faithful active members, Albert Kazakavich died after spending several weeks in intensive care at the Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia. He was one of our auditors for many years. Attended every meeting unless he was on vacation. He is sadly missed by all members. On Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> we had a lovely Christmas party at the Beacon. Santa was there. Many prizes were given out. Dr. Margaret Cyzeski, MD was visiting her mother and attended our party. And finally, I've been sick for a month and ended up in



**C-26, Worcester K of L'ers enjoy Christmas Party**

the hospital for four days at Christmas. Wishing all good health for 1998.

### **C-50, New Haven, CT**

*Audrey Toole*

Council 50 has elected its slate of officers for 1998. Those ready to work for the new year are: President - Isabel Peterson; 1st Vice Pres. - Magdalen Cronin; 2nd Vice Pres. - Mary Geipel; Secretary - Audrey Toole; Treasurer - Anne Meskins; Financial Secretary - Helen Klimaszewski; Asst. Fin. Sec. - Helen Lostys; Ritual - Edward Toole; Sgt. at Arms - Anthony Kordorsky; Sunshine - Helen Medley; Historian - Anne Kordorsky; Publicity - Elizabeth Gybowski; Ways and Means - Irene and Mike Meizies; Hostess - Elizabeth Gybowski; VYTIS correspondent - Audrey Toole; Trustees - Leo Tamulis; Helen Case and Evelyn Lepensky; Telephone squad - Mary Bachinski.

Members of the telephone squad, who keep others informed of council activities are: Mary Geipel, Magdalen Cronin, Mary Ann Cappelli, Helen Lostys, Anne Lukaszewski, Genevieve Michalik,

Viola Plant, Marcella Standolnik, Evelyn Lepensky, Helen Balchus and Mary Bachinski.

Several activities kept members busy

during the last months of 1997. In October, C-50 was well represented at the Maironis Park cultural festival. Workers and supporters were: Isabel Peterson, Marion Meshako, Helen Medley, Evelyn Lepensky, Leo Tamulis, Irena and Mike Meizies, Anne and Tony Kordorsky and Ed and Audrey Toole.

Another end of the year activity was the Christmas Boutique held at the end of November. It was both a financial and a social success under the able chairmanship of Marion Meshako. Many of the officers and committee heads worked and were helped by Joan Augustine, Eleanor Dapkus, Ann Gedrim, Mary Meshako, Edward Dickus and Theresa Strimaitis. The tasty Lithuanian food, the baked goods, the white elephant table and the many raffle prizes all offered something for everyone who attended.

The Christmas party in December was also an enjoyable occasion due to the planning of Irene and Mike Meizies and Isabel Peterson. The delicious food the music, the festively decorated St. Casimir's church hall and the company of K. of L. members and friends all contributed to the wonderful time together.





*C-29's VP, Harold Kaminskas introduced his granddaughter, Michele, a second grade student who prepared a presentation on Lithuania. It beautifully depicted Lithuanian culture, dress and music. Pictured is Kazys Sipaila, C-29 pres, Harold and Michele and Emila Sadonis, C-29 Cultural Chairperson.*

## **C-72, Binghamton, NY** *Gerbiamieji*

Elections were held at our November meeting. Officers for 1998 are : Father John Mikalajunas - Spiritual Advisor and Spiritual Programs; John R. Mankus - President, VYTIS Correspondent, Lithuanian Culture and Lithuanian Language; Ralph Sadauskas- Vice President; Irene Grikenis -Ritual Chairperson; Arthur Stankevitz- Secretary; Barbara Miller - Treasurer; Robert Skiba - Financial Secretary and Trustee; Charles Almanus -Lithuanian Affairs and Sergeant at Arms; Ralph Sadauskas and Felix Svereika - Sergeant at Arms; Helen Svereika - Trustee and Public Relations; Ed Radin - Trustee.

During 1997 our council

with the assistance of many parishioners and friends of St Joseph's Church has shipped over 125 packages of humanitarian aid shipments to convents, orphanages and needy families in Lithuania, our council members have also shipped many packages of medical and humanitarian supplies directly to Caritas in the city of Varena, Twenty eight packages were shipped to convents, orphanages and needy families during Christmas, Thank you letters received throughout the year, were translated by John Mankus and shared with our members. Father John Mikalajunas also shared these letters with Saint Joseph's Church parishioners.

Council members Irene and Casey Grikenis, Art Stankevitz, Mary Ann and Harry Pakel, John and Grace Mankus, Ralph and Mary Ann Sadauskas,

Barbara Miller and John Kruse have been very active in donating and packing boxes for shipping. New council members Joseph and Carole Mankus and Anthony and Jane Mankus have contributed generously to these shipments. Thanks also to Elizabeth Kunce for her handiwork in knitting scarfs, mittens and slippers for the needy families and orphanages.

Irene and Casey Grikenis and Barbara Miller organized a birthday party for Elizabeth Kunce. Many members of our council attended and celebrated Elizabeth's ninetieth birthday.

Our council, under the direction of Irene and Casey Grikenis participated in the Robertson Center International Christmas Tree Forest program during the Christmas season. Traditional Lithuanian straw ornaments were used to decorate the Christmas tree. A photograph of the Lithuanian Christmas tree appeared in a special section of the Binghamton newspaper. Various displays of traditional Lithuanian Christmas and cultural items were exhibited, including a replica of a wayside cross, cultural display, Irene's beautiful Lithuanian painting and our Lithuanian flag.

Our Junior Council under the direction of Barbara Miller has been very active throughout the year. Barbara organized various youth activities for the Juniors including a Christmas party at her house. Barbara is also very active as our Council's financial secretary.

Charles Almanas, our Lithuanian Affairs representative has been doing an outstanding job. At each council meeting Charles reports on current news, latest



activities and the situation in Lithuania of special interest were his reports on the various candidates for president.

Plans are under way to commemorate Lithuanian Independence Day, February 16th with Binghamton Mayor Richard Bucci.

### **C-74., Scranton, PA**

*Marie Laske*

We celebrated our Kūčios on December 14th at St. Joseph's hall. Grace was said by Sister Elizabeth Žemaitis in English and in Lithuanian, and we all broke bread together.

We had to recruit help to serve the meal. Jean Kavelines was our coordinator along with Elizabeth Kaminskas, my daughter, Susan, and her son (8 years old) Nathan and my daughter Sandra and her husband Charles and their daughters Elizabeth age 12 and Rachel age 9. Peg Romanauskas served punch and viritas. Chairpersons Margaret Clegg and Roza Stanches gave out prizes. John Ramoska, Casimir Yanish and Richard Laske were ticket sellers. Our council was very generous towards donations for our meal.

We had guests from Wilkes Barre, Pittston and further down the line. All agreed that this Kūčios was the best ever. Mary Costello's and Sister Lee Bozenko's table won the most prizes.

Yours truly was interviewed by the "Scranton Times" about our Ethnic holiday traditions. We received many compliments on how great it is to keep up our traditions.



### **C-96's Third Degree Recipients:**

***Robert Pant (C-96 Pres. & MCD Trustee), Annamarie Sluzas Berger (MCD 3<sup>rd</sup> VP) and Michael F. Petkus (C-96 Sports Chair)***

My daughter-in-law, Patricia Laske, was extremely ill and had to have a badly infected kidney removed. But thanks to all who prayed it was not cancerous and she is as good as new. Praise God! This was our best Christmas ever! Wishing everyone health, wealth and happiness for the coming year!

### **C-96, Dayton, OH**

*Fran Petkus*

Through the efforts of Robert, Linda and Laretta Pant, Jim Geiger, Elena, George and Frances Mikalauskas and members of C-96, our second No Bake Bake Sale/Koffee Klatch once again proved to be very successful. With many members working and busy in so many areas, a No Bake Bake Sale requires little work and helps the council income.

The council's Annual

Christmas Dinner was held at the Hickory Bar-B-Que. Linda Pant must be thanked for her work in putting this together. Those who attended had a great time. There was a gift exchange and a collection for Aid to Lithuania, Inc. Junior Advisor, Christine Fletcher must be congratulated in organizing a very successful Junior Council Holiday Bazaar. The Juniors themselves did some of the baking and made many of the craft items that were for sale. Donations and support, also, came from the Junior parents, regular council members and parishioners of Holy Cross Church.

This year's Annual Christmas caroling took us to three nursing homes and several individual homes. MaryAgnes Mikalauskas chaired and gave us live music by her accompanying the singing with her guitar. Flowers were distributed to 21 members and Holy Cross parishioners. This was followed with a supper held in the church hall prepared by MaryAgnes, Elena, George and Frances Mikalauskas. Our monthly meeting closed out the day!

Elinor Sluzas chaired and was Mistress of Ceremony for the parish's Kūčios Supper on December 21st. Many council members helped. Participation was great with everyone partaking of the twelve dishes served. Elinor and George Mikalauskas were the 'fortune tellers' as young and old alike had their fortunes told!

At our monthly meetings we hold a 50/50 raffle. Half the proceeds go to the winning member while the other half goes into our Council's Charity Fund.



Winners for this year were Fr. Michael Holloran (2x), Sally Miller, Fran Petkus, Elena Mikalauskas, Joseph E. Mantz, Betty Nash, Robert Pant, Norma Petkus, Henry Pant and Michael F. Petkus! Donations from our Charity Fund went to Old North Dayton Priority Board (they supply food and need of the people in the area), Aid To Lithuania, Inc. and L.C.R.A. Children's School Lunch program. A special donation was sent to St. Casimir's Guild, Inc.

Our deepest sympathies go to Regina Juska Svoba, C-102 Detroit, on the sudden loss of her husband Rimgaudas. They had been married a short two and a half months! We pray Ray's soul rest in the peace of the Lord. We are happy to know that Robert A. Martin, Jr. and Mary Beth Slakis, C-16 Chicago, were not hurt any more seriously than they were on returning home from Ray's funeral!

Congratulations must go to Irena Gecas, C-96 member and SC Scholarship Chair, on her marriage to Michael McCarthy, New Hyde Park, LI, NY. Wedding congratulations must also go to Frank Ambrose and Jessica Stuart who were married in Pensacola, FL. Members and family attending the weddings shared how beautiful the services and receptions were.

### **C-102, Detroit, III**

#### *Dvynukes*

After four years of faithful, diligent service as our President, Lorry Heftier, turned the gavel over to Richard Straksys, with the following slate to support him: Spiritual Advisor, Rev. Alphonse



*C-110's Ann Morrissey (l) visits with Regina and Erika Zembickaja in Vilnius. Erika, the 10 yr. old in the foreground is one of the children "sponsored" by the council.*

Babonas, Vice Presidents: 1st - John Stanievich, 2nd - Joseph Stark, 3rd - Lorry Heftier; Secretaries: Recording - Patricia Zyren, Financial - Theresa Shea, Corresponding - Merri Hofner; Lithuanian Cultural - Aldona Stanievich, Lithuanian Affairs - Bill Zager, Ritual and Vytis Correspondents - Aldona Bunikis and Theresa Medonis. Sgt. at Arms: Della Zyren. Last, but not least - After 15 years as "faithful keeper" of our financial records, Joe Guerriero turned the books over to newly elected treasurer, Michael Shea. You served us well, Joe, and we are very grateful. Congratulations Richard and staff, and a Nuoširdingą Ačiū, Lorry, for a job well done

Kimberly Pluto, daughter of long standing 102 member Donna Pluto, was united in marriage to Kevin Clary on October 4th. Kim's sister, Lisa,

and brothers, John and Billy were attendants. A gala reception followed, and the newlyweds are now residing in N. Miami, Fl. Not only have Theresa and Michael Shea been caught up in the hustle and bustle of holiday preparations, but were busily preparing for their son, Michael Jr.'s wedding, (which happened January 2nd) to Stephanie Fisher. Congratulations and Best Wishes to the happy couples!

"El Nino" did a number on the Bunikis' traveling to their Florida condo, encountering periodic torrential rainstorms. The good news is that they arrived safely, and several weeks later, flew to Beaverton, Oregon for a most enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday with their daughter Margy, former 102 Pres., and their granddaughters, Genevieve and Monica.

By the looks of things, 102's bowlers are really gearing up for the MCD tournament in Chicago, with Dan Baibak rolling a perfect "300" game recently - Way to go Dan! "Ačiū" to Bea Cramblett and all the supportive Social members, who made a monetary contribution to ATL. They aren't boasting about their scores, but mystery jackpot No. 133 was gladly shared by Ruth Wagster, Tim Baibak and George Kayganich. If you are in need of a new bowling ball, just see George. Bowler, humorist, joke-teller, partygoer, "tikras Lietuvis" is how we describe our friend and fellow bowler, Al Shigo, who has passed on into his eternal reward, Amžina Atilsį!

The approaching holidays were saddened by the news of the untimely death of Regina Juska



Svobas' husband, Rimgaudas, of two and a half months. Our heartfelt sympathies, love and prayers are extended to Regina and the family of Rimgaudas. May he rest in peace!

Our most gracious host and hostess, Joe and Eve Stark, once again opened their cheerfully decorated home for our annual Mass and Kūčios. We missed Vince Boris in our midst, who always assisted Fr. Stan at Mass, as well as putting the Missalettes together. Vince and Rimgaudas were remembered in our Mass intentions. Nice to see Lou Bogart, who has become quite the traveler; Maryanne Guerriero, after her lengthy illness and hip surgery; Mariella and Raymond Klucens, who are anxiously awaiting the birth of their firstborn any day. In spite of her bout with the flu, Aldona Stanievich managed to prepare her tasty vinigretas, sending it along with hubby, John. Along with our traditional foods, we enjoyed feasting on Merri Hofner's kugelis, Theresa Shea's, mushroom cookies and the silkes prepared by Bob Boris and Patricia and Della Zyren. Joe Stark delighted us, as usual, at the baby grand, with some oldie, but goodie tunes along with Christmas carols. Linkeme visiems Vyčiams Laimingų, Sveikų Naujų Metų. Su Diev!

### **C-110, Maspeth, NY**

Kučios '97 was celebrated on December 14 following the 11:15 Mass at Transfiguration Church. The traditional 12 dishes were served following Lithuanian tradition. A number of our ladies

were dressed in Lithuanian costumes, partaking in a solemn candle lighting and caroling. Choir members sang Lithuanian and English carols along with the audience. Over a hundred people enjoyed this annual event. Many thanks to Maria Stunguryš, chairperson and her crew of able assistants did a wonderful job.

On Feb. 15, Bishop Paulius Baltakis will be celebrating Lithuanian Independence Day's special Mass at 11:15. All are welcome to this part of a yearlong celebration for our Transfiguration parish which celebrates its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary throughout 1998.

### **C-112, Chicago, IL Gerrie**

Members were deeply saddened to learn of the passing of our beloved Spiritual Advisor of more than 35 years. Canon Vaclovas Zakaruskas. While we knew Canon had been seriously ill last year, we were glad to see him feeling well enough to resume joining us for our regular meetings during the past year. A Wake Service was conducted by Rev. Anthony Zakaruskas at Nativity B.V.M. Church and attended by C-112 members and friends. A teacher, an author, a dynamic speaker, so many qualities that this quiet, unassuming man of the cloth embodied. He is irreplaceable. Our blessings go with him and we wish him eternal rest.

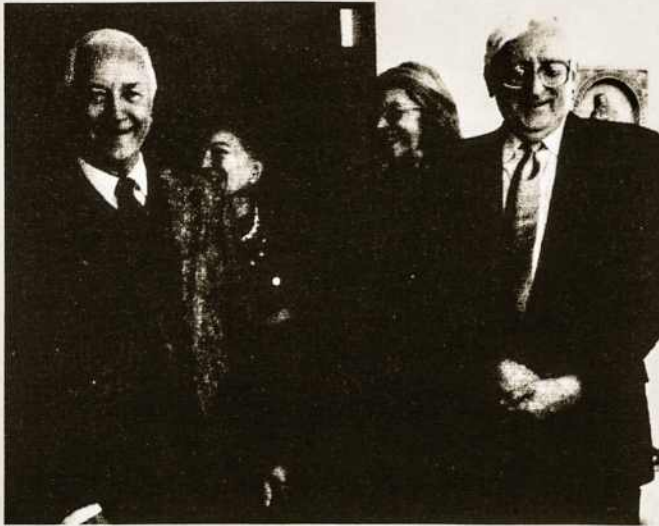


*C-133 leaders Adele Reclite, Valerija Hale and Maryte Sepikas were honored to accept an award for the best Christmas tree, judged at the Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley, CA ~*

The council's annual Christmas Party was held following a shortened regular meeting in December. Dinner was catered and desserts provided by the ladies of the council. Faustas Strolia was the strolling musician who led us all in the singing of Christmas carols. Our thanks to president, Mickey Petrosius, for helping to coordinate the dinner and setting up the tables, Julie Zakarka for taking reservations, Al Mockus for manning the refreshments booth, and Gerrie Chaplin for coordinating the desserts. Everyone enjoyed themselves and it was a very festive affair.

Don't forget to plan on attending the council fund raiser which will take place on Sunday, March 29, 1998, at Nativity parish hall - a pre-Easter Champagne Brunch. You will be receiving more details very shortly and know





*C-142 members at their annual Christmas event*

we can count on your support.

### **C-142, Washington, DC** *Kay Yankoski*

Florence Smith and her sister Mary Draugelis hosted our Christmas Party again this year at their home in Bowie, MD. And once again, Florence made her mushroom soup, perfect on that wintry afternoon while Mary made a fruit compote to end our feast. Former President Julia Burlen made a brief appearance with her brother Joe and sister-in-law Colleen driving her over from Larkin-Chase Nursing Home. Julia brought a gift from her extensive collection of amber for Kay Yankoski who just completed 10 years as party/picnic planner, Vytis correspondent and Council bulletin author/distributor.

Clare Sponis stopped to pick up our Lithuanian priests. Father Andrus let Father Antanas say the blessing before our buffet. Pat and Bob Carlton brought beets and Bob, of course, brought his camera as did Joe Chaplick, who surprised John Waylonis with a birthday cake (John's actual birth date is later in the month). Father Antanas led us in a rousing rendition of *Ilgiausią Metų* with verses we'd never heard before. Beverly Meder brought a kugelis and also Helen Szpakowski. Mary Semel, of course, brought a kugelis — it's not a K of L Christmas Party without Mary's kugelis! Emily Paukstis came minus husband, Al; they recently celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary and their children are sending them to Florida for 2 weeks this winter. Irene and Len Redecke came with kapusta and a Lithuanian guest. Jean Lutwin brought her

fish pate, also traditional at our party, and ordered fabulous *dešru* from PA. Florence invited a couple; the Lithuanian wife made authentic and delicious *balandeles* (no tomatoes, just cooked in broth with sour cream added later). Since this was an overlap with the Americanized/tomato sauced *balandeles* that Kay Yankoski usually brings, she made a chocolate chip cheesecake that was gobbled up. Some good rye bread, *krienai* - we were in Heaven, albeit, for the afternoon. As always, it was a wonderful party!

*Editor's note: We will miss Kay's informative articles, not only in Council News, but she penned some interesting feature stories as well. Hope Kay and others in the political hotbed of the nation continue to let us know what's going on in Washington.*

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### **Did you know?**

The Lithuanian *lita* was introduced originally in 1922 replacing German *Ostmarks* and pre-revolutionary Russian currency. The *Lita* was backed by gold and considered one of the most stable and strongest currencies.

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## **Make a 1998 resolution ... support our Knights of Lithuania causes:**

**Priestly Vocations through the St. Casimir Guild,**  
a semi-autonomous activity dedicated to the support of the Lithuanian Pontifical College of St. Casimir in Rome. The Guild sponsors three programs: collection of donations for a general endowment fund administered by the Rector, obtaining Mass stipends for the support of Lithuanian priests studying in Rome, and coordinating a program of "adopting" seminarians from Lithuania by providing regular contributions to their non-academic needs. Checks should be made payable to: The St. Casimir Guild and mailed to: HM Anna Klizas Wargo, 125 South Morris Street, St. Clair, PA 17970

**Humanitarian Aid through Aid to Lithuania, Inc.,** a semi-autonomous organization under the aegis of the Knights of Lithuania, that provides medical supplies, equipment and medicines to Lithuania during this crucial transition period from a Soviet-occupied and suppressed nation, to a free and self sufficient democracy. 40-foot containers of donated materials are shipped each calendar quarter; this past year, 53 of these containers were shipped as of 1997.

Checks should be made payable to: Aid to Lithuania, Inc. and mailed to:  
HM Robert Boris, 4557 Fairway Court, Waterford, MI 48328

**College Education through K of L Scholarship Awards** presented each year to deserving members who are pursuing studies at the college level. The Scholarship Fund is totally dependent upon donations and bequests from members. Checks should be made payable to: Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Fund and mailed to:  
Irene Gecas, 446 Joan Court, West Hempstead, NY 11552

**Cultural Advancement through the K of L Foundation,** an endowment fund which supports and funds projects to further the cultural, religious or humanitarian objectives of the Knights of Lithuania. Donations are tax deductible. Checks should be payable to:  
Knights of Lithuania Foundation and mailed to:  
HM Loretta Stukas, 234 Sunlit Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060

**Upkeep of the National Shrine** The development of an endowment fund to support the upkeep of the Chapel of Our Lady of Šiluva at the Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception located in Washington, D.C. was adopted at the 75th Knights of Lithuania Anniversary Convention. Donations are tax deductible.  
Checks should be made payable to:

Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and mailed to:  
Joseph Chaplick, 2000 F. Street, N.W. Apt. 419, Washington, DC 20006



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**Poezija**

Poezija - visų pirma - svajonė,  
 jausmas ir muzika, meilė  
 ir neapykanta,  
 apmaudas ir ilgesys,  
 nuoširdus vaiko juokas  
 ir mąstančio žmogaus sarkazmas,  
 verksmas su ašarom  
 ir ašaros be ašarų...  
 Viskas, kas žmogiška.  
 Ir visa tai poetas  
 pats turi pajusti, išgyventi.  
 Poeto kūryba -  
 daugiau ar mažiau -  
 jo paties autobiografija.

**Paulius Širvys****Poetry**

Poetry - first and foremost  
 is a dream, emotion and music  
 love and hatred  
 annoyance and nostalgia,  
 a child's unaffected laughter  
 and a thinking man's sarcasm,  
 weeping with tears  
 and tears without teardrops...  
 Everything, that is human.  
 And all that the poet  
 himself must experience, live through.  
 A poet's creation -  
 more or less -  
 is his personal autobiography.

*Translation by Antonia M. Wackell. Author's note: "(the poet) Domicile sent me a booklet of Paulius Širvys poems to read in Lithuanian. Although I did not feel Poezija was really a poem, I felt it was rather good description. 'Tis a free license, poet's have!"*

