

VYTIS

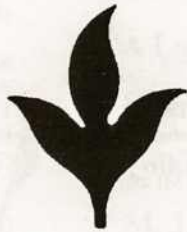


The Knight - volume 84 no. 4

Balandis



April



1998



VYTIS

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(615) 256-3790

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VYTIS - The Knight - STAFF

Editor: Marytė Abbott
Council News Editor: Dalia Bulvičius
Layout and Design: MBA Designs
Bus. Manager: Mary Kinčius
Business: tel. (773) 927-4990
Webpage: <http://www.geocities.com/heartland/prairie/3802> - **email:** vytiseditor@juno.com

Send all editorial correspondence to:
M. Abbott - VYTIS - The Knight
P.O. Box 1934
Grand Central Sta. NY 10163-1934
Editorial: tel/fax (718) 937-3352

TRUSTEES
Mary Beth Slakis
11113 Wisconsin Ct., -2C
Orland Park, IL 60462
(708) 479-3792

AMBER DIST. President
Dorothy A. Banos
11 Hill Top Road
Pittston, PA 18640
(717) 655-0976

MAMD President
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(937) 236-0395

NED President
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(401) 943-3495

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Henehan, Donovan, Issacson
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7028 Flaccus Rd.
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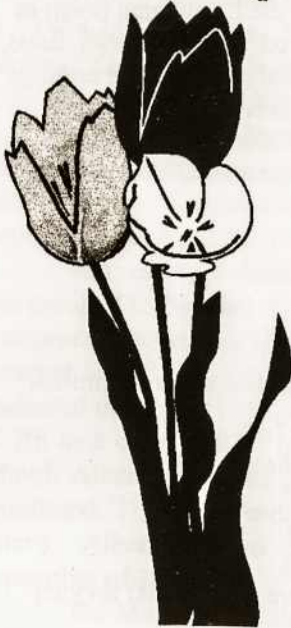
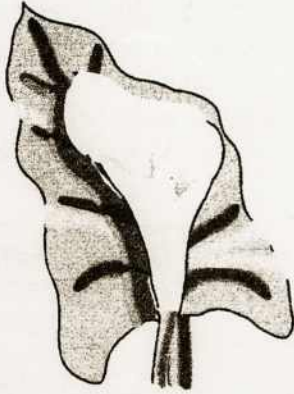
AID TO LITHUANIA
Robert S. Boris, Chair
4557 Fairway Court
Waterford, MI 48328-3483
(248) 682-0098

ST. CASIMIR GUILD
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125 So. Morris Street
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(717) 429-0132

K OF L FOUNDATION
Loretta Stukas, Chair
234 Sunlit Drive
Watchung, NJ 07060
(908) 753-5636

*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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Cover art adapted from Lithuanian Folk Art Designs, Balzakas Museum, Chicago- 1984

An Easter Prayer

Heavenly Father and Creator of all, We no longer look for Jesus among the dead. For He is alive and has become the Lord of life. From the waters of death, You raise us with Him. Renew your gift of life within us. Help us grow as your people that we may know you completely and come to share in Your glory. Free us from seeking after the passing things in life, that we may set our hearts on the kingdom of heaven. Watch over us, Lord, and make us worthy of Your love. Amen. (*From the Marians*)

TO MY FELLOW KNIGHTS

Easter is such a special time, not only for its religious significance of Christ's resurrection, but also because it brings us spring, the most welcome season of the year. Birds, new buds, warmer climate and the end of a dreary winter puts a smile on most faces. There's a freshness, a newness about this season.

The significance of the cross is especially noted during Easter. One illustration can be found in the viewpoint of our *Back Page poet*, Antonia Wackell of C-116, in her poem, Crucifix. Another way to is through this little piece sent to me by C-100 writer, Ed Baranauskas

The Cross Room

The young man was at the end of his rope. Seeing no way out, he dropped to his knees in prayer. "Lord, I just can't go on", he said. "I have too heavy a cross to bear." The Lord replied: "My son, if you can't bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then, go outside, go around to the other door, open it and pick out any cross you wish."

The man was filled with relief. "Thank you. Lord", he sighed, and he did as he was told. Upon opening the other door, he went inside and saw many crosses, some so large that the tops were not visible. Then, he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall. "I'd like that one, Lord", he whispered. The Lord replied: "My son, that is the same cross you just brought in."



Letters to the Editor

More Scholarship Thanks

To the editor:

I'd like to thank the Knights of Lithuania for the scholarship that you have granted me. The \$750. (One of two installments) will help me pay for my semester in college and pay for some of my books. Through this scholarship, I can pursue my career as a physical education teacher.

Sincerely,

Jessica Jasewicz (C-100)

Lithuanian Crosstitch Pattern?

To the Editor:

I am looking for a needlepoint pattern or crosstitch of the VYTIS symbol to put in an 8x10 or 10x12" frame. Does anyone have one or know where I can get one?

Vytiškai

Irene Senken, C-12, NYC

LITHUANIAN LESSON

Brangioji Maryte,

As I was reading the Lithuanian poem in the "Vytis" (back cover - ed.) January 1998 issue, I noticed a few grammatical errors on the endings of words. I just felt, they need to be corrected.

I am doing it with due respect to Ms. Jarusevičius (the poet Domicile K. - ed.) hoping she will not take offense.

Vytiškai,
Mary (Mamie) Pieri
4th degree member
Anthracite C-144

Corrections - poem "Reflections" "Prisiminimai"

Title ending should read: "ai".

The 1st verse, third line should be "iš".

2nd verse, 1st line - "esiu".

2nd verse, 3rd line, širdyj.

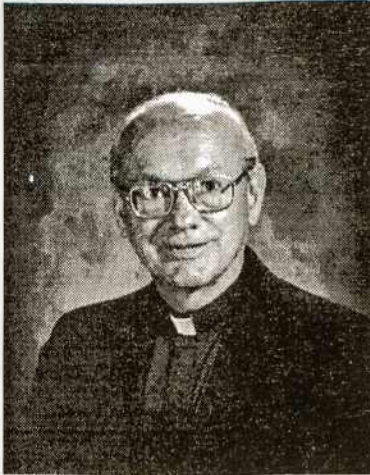
5th verse, 1st line - gatvėj.

5th verse 4th line (there are two words) tėvynėj and viduj.

Fellow Knights do you agree with Mamies corrections? Let's hear from you Lithuanian scholars.

Dear Mrs. Pieri,

Thank you for your comments and corrections. We are sure that the poet will not object to them. Please feel free to comment on any feature in VYTIS. Vytiškai, D. Bulvičius, CN editor



REVEREND ALBERT JULIUS CONTONS GOLDEN JUBILEE OF ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD 1948 - 1998

by *HM Alexander
J. Akule,
C-17 President*

Father Albert Julius Contons and his parish members will be celebrating his 50 years in the priesthood on May 3rd. He is the spiritual advisor for C-17, So. Boston, past SC spiritual advisor, Honorary Member, active and dedicated priest. The following are highlights of his interesting life.

Albert Kontautas (Contons) was born May 11, 1924. His parents, Steponas Kontautas and Viktorija Galdikas both emigrated from Kretinga, Lithuania to the United States in 1913.

Albert was baptized at St. Peter's Lithuanian Church, and confirmed by Auxiliary Bishop Francis J. Spellman with the Confirmation name, Paul, on April 18, 1936.

Expressing a desire to be a doctor, Albert was enrolled by his parents in September of 1935 as a student in the famous Boston Public Latin School, founded in 1635 as a prep school for Harvard. He graduated in June of 1941, with an academic ranking of 7th in a class of 279. In his Junior year in high school, Albert expressed a desire to study for the priesthood. The newly ordained (1940) curate at St. Peter's. Albert entered St. Clement's Hall in September of 1941.

On May 6, 1948 deacon Albert Contons, in a class of 43, was ordained to the priesthood in Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston by Most Reverend Richard J. Cushing, Archbishop of Boston. He was assigned to his home parish as assistant to Father Francis Virmauskis, pastor of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish.

During his five years as curate at St. Peter's, Father Contons was spiritual advisor of Council 17 of the Knights of Lithuania, comprising a

membership of 165 young adults. He was involved in a myriad of youth activities. He wrote many articles for "VYTIS", organized Junior Councils, initiated and edited the "Knights of Lithuania Leadership Manual," and inaugurated the Vytis Fund to assist the publication financially.

At the Knights of Lithuania National Convention of 1952, Father Contons was elected Supreme Council spiritual advisor and served in that capacity until 1961. He served a second time from 1968 to 1974. In 1960 he organized and led a four week Pilgrimage of 28 Knights of Lithuania to the Eucharistic Congress in Munich, Germany.

In 1954, Father Contons wrote a summary adaptation in English of the 50th Jubilee history of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish. To commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of St. Casimir he wrote a biography of the Saint in booklet form in 1958. Two printings totaling 17,000 copies were made. At the 65th national convention banquet of the Knights of Lithuania in Syracuse, NY, August 19, 1978 Father Contons was awarded an Honorary Membership.

On September 15, 1953 Archbishop Cushing appointed Father Contons to the faculty of St. Sebastian Country Day School for Boys in Newton, Mass. He continued to reside at St. Peter Parish and assisted in parish activities. On August 26, 1963 he was appointed chaplain at the Cenacle Convent, Brighton, residing in the convent chaplain's quarters. He continued his duties at the school. At St. Sebastian's he taught Latin and Religion for nine years, and then French for 11 years.

With the celebration of the 25th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood, a new phase of priestly ministry began for Father Contons. Cardinal Medeiros appointed him pastor of St. Margaret Parish, Beverly Farms on June 5, 1973. The parish was \$75,000 in debt when he entered and had \$90,000 in savings six years later, on April 2, 1979,

when Fr. Contons was asked to serve at St. Peter Lithuanian Parish in South Boston.

Parishioners came to the support of Father Contons as the new pastor. The weekly Sunday bulletin grew into a monthly parish newsletter mailed to a wider mailing list. The K.of L. and Ladies Sodality were the backbone of parish activities. To make up for the smaller weekend Mass attendance, parishioners increased their Grand Annual giving to reach the target of \$45,000 in 1997.

But the problem in this parish was its aging church buildings. St. Peter's Lithuanian Church was built and completed by a lay committee in 1901. It became a parish in 1904. With thousands of marriages and baptisms the new parish became a thriving Lithuanian community through mid-century. A new rectory was built behind the church in 1913. The property of the first Lithuanian parish in So. Boston on East Seventh St. was acquired by St. Peter's in 1921. Two school buildings were acquired in 1945. One was next to the church, the other a mile away at "I" and E. Sixth Sts.

In 1938, some 300 Lithuanian families living around the church were displaced and all housing torn down for a public housing project. Because of the Second World War construction was delayed until 1948-1949, very few Lithuanian parishioners were able to move into the new apartments. The project went into decline. The school building next door was often vandalized. Parishioners living in the suburbs hesitated to drive into the area. Father Baltrushunas solved the problem of school vandalism by consolidating pupils into the "I" Street school and tearing down the school next to the church for a parking lot. His patience and long-suffering held parish and school together.

Father Contons saw that the most important challenge facing the parish was to consolidate the Seventh Street chapel, close to where many Lithuanians lived, and the project church with very few parishioners in its vicinity. The small Lithuanian community with only one priest could not continue supporting two church buildings.

Attention of the wider community to St. Peter's building problem was sparked by popular

Boston Herald columnist. Peter Gelzinis, whose feature article of June 4, 1981 was entitled "ST. PETER'S: BURIED ALIVE BY 'EXPERTS.'" After listing many of the problems of the parish in the project, Gelzinis wrote, "the state has a \$26 million investment in the proposed renaissance of the D Street Project. Rev. Contons sees a chance to learn from a nightmare created by the 'housing experts' of 30 years ago.... Those 'experts' were the people whose blueprints for the future in 1949 sealed St. Peter's inside a brick canyon."

Finally, in January 1990, His Eminence, Cardinal Law granted permission for the renovation of St. Peter's Church." The Building Committee was overjoyed at the news. Architects were interviewed.

Less known to parishioners is Father Contons' role as president of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Priests' League of America. Founded in 1909 this is the oldest priests' organization in the United States. In August 1971, Father Contons was elected president of the Priests' League and continues in that office today.

An underground publication, the *Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania*, surfaced in Lithuania beginning in 1972. Smuggled out of Lithuania it reached the United States, was translated into English, and published by the Lithuanian Priests' League and mailed to all bishops, Senators and Congressmen, officials, newspapers and libraries. More than \$100,000 was spent publishing 62 issues from 1972 through September 1, 1984. This was an extraordinary achievement in winning over world public opinion for freedom of the Lithuanian people.

The Priests' League from the beginning was involved in planning the celebration of the 600th Jubilee of Christianity in Lithuania to be observed in Rome in June of 1987. Father Contons agreed to organize a Pilgrimage Tour to Italy for the Jubilee celebration and the beatification of Blessed George Matulaitis in St. Peter Basilica, Rome.

Looking back on fifty years of priesthood. Father Contons feels enriched by a myriad of experiences as varied as the colors of the rainbow. The Church has outlasted kingdoms and empires, persecutions and defections, heresies and apostasies. Christ, and those who belong to Him, are the future.

ON THE CALENDAR...

1998 District Conventions:

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

October 2-4 - Mid-America District - Fall Meeting Weekend. C-133 Hosts, Los Angeles, CA. For Information: Diann Martin (773) 376-4779.

August 6-9, 1998 - K of L. Convention:
Host: Council 7 - Waterbury, CT
Sheraton Four Points -Waterbury, CT

Other Events

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

May 15-17 Mid-Central District - K of L Bowling Tournament and District Meeting. Best Western Inn of Burr Ridge, IL. Council 16 hosts. For Info: Rob Martin (773) 376-4779.

May 31- 90th Anniv. of St. Francis Church, Lawrence, MA.

July 26 -C-74 Lithuanian Mass, St. Ann's Basilica (lower church) 3:45 PM Scranton, PA.

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

Official News

Proposed Constitutional Amendment to be voted upon at the National Convention to be held August 6-9th in Waterbury, CT.

Whereas, in the past the Supreme Council Ritual Committee has been comprised of three people, and at times those three people have been from the same one or two districts,

Whereas, this has not been a true representation of the entire organization, nor does it provide an ability to understand the organizational involvement of members in each individual district

Whereas, at times this results in difficulty to properly award Fourth Degrees to deserving members;

Therefore, be it resolved that Article XII, Item Number 2 of the Knights of Lithuania Constitution relating to the Supreme Council, be changed to read as follows: "2.

The Ritual Committee consists of five Fourth Degree members - one from each of the five districts. They are each elected at the National Convention for a three year term on a rotating basis; two the first year; two the second year; and one the third year. The Committee elects its own Chair, Secretary and Treasurer annually.

The Ritual Committee determines the form and the rules for all degrees and the ceremony, after consultation with the Supreme Council, and approval of the National Convention. All decisions within the committee must be unanimous for approval of Fourth Degree or for presentation of change of rules from the Committee."

Submitted by the Ritual Committee to the Supreme Council - October 11, 1997.

KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC. 1998 ESSAY CONTEST

The Knights of Lithuania Constitution states, in part, that "The Knights of Lithuania promotes educational and cultural advancement and activity among its members ..." How does this goal affect **your** life and that of your family? What have you learned, in Lithuanian cultural topics, through your K. of L. membership, that you have especially enjoyed, and have shared with your family? What have you been able to bring to your fellow Knights, to share at K of L meetings and events? What do you especially like to pursue in increasing your Lithuanian cultural life?

Your answers might help other K of L-ers, and may even earn you some prize money.

The topic of this year's Foundation Contest is:

"What special aspect of Lithuanian culture do you find important, and how do you keep it alive in your family or extended family (e.g., your K. of L. Council)?"

Enter the Contest and share your thoughts. Rules are listed below.

- LENGTH:** 450 to 500 words (count all words).
- DEADLINE:** **July 1, 1998** - Essays received after this date will not be considered.
- ELIGIBILITY:** A contestant must be a Knights of Lithuania member (Honorary, Regular or Associate) in GOOD STANDING, OR a member of a Junior Council which is duly registered with the Supreme Council.
- CRITERIA:** Essays will be judged on content, originality, and ATTENTION TO CONTEST TOPIC. Correct grammar and neatness will also be considered in judging.
- MANUSCRIPT:** Must be typed or written legibly, double spaced. The FIRST PAGE should contain ONLY your name, address, council number, and the essay title. Succeeding pages should contain the essay contents but NOT your name. This is to assure anonymity in judging.
- PRIZES:** 1st Prize - \$300, 2nd Prize - \$200, 3rd Prize - \$100.
- JUDGES:** Adolf Klova (AMD), Clemencine Miller (NED), Evelyn Ozelis (MAMD), Aldona Ryan (MCD), Loretta Stukas (MAD), Bonnie Gulas (1997 Contest Winner)
- MAIL TO:** Mrs. Aldona Ryan, 6591 McEwen Rd., Centerville, OH 45459
- WINNERS:** Will be announced August, 1998, during the 85th National Convention in Waterbury, CT. Winning entries will be published in VYTIS.
- SPONSOR:** KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC., via a grant from Msgr. Juozas Prunskis.

*The **KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC.** is a tax-exempt endowment fund which uses interest from its investments to finance cultural and religious projects, helping the K of L AND Lithuania. This contest is just one of its projects. The Foundation has been in existence for 13 years. You can help keep it in existence by joining the Foundation to increase its capital and provide more funds to help Lithuania and Lithuanian projects. A donation of \$100 entitles you to membership in the Foundation, and supports the Knights' future. Are YOU a member of the Foundation? If not, why not join today? If you are a member, consider making an additional donation. Send your tax-deductible donation to:*

Mr. Peter P. Zansitis, Treasurer, 5939 S. Crandon Ave., Chicago, IL 60649

Vincentas Borisevičius, Bishop of Telšiai His Prophecy Came True

by Edward Baranauskas



His Excellency stood up to the Soviet Secret Police during those dreadful days of Stalin's rule, and was not intimidated by their threats. He was not afraid to speak out for what he believed in, and did not waver in his religious beliefs.

He was born in the hamlet of Bebrininkai, near Paežeriai, county of Vilkaviškis, on May 23, 1887. He studied at the Seminary of Seinai and the University of Fribourg, Switzerland. He was ordained in 1910. During the First World War he served as a chaplain to the 10th Russian Army at Minsk, where he also attended to Lithuanian war refugees. He returned to Lithuania in 1918. In 1940 he was consecrated bishop, and was appointed suffragan bishop of the diocese of Telšiai. In 1941 he was made ordinary of the diocese.

After the Soviets occupied Lithuania for the second time in 1944, Stalin ordered the Church hierarchy to be put under constant and close surveillance. The first to incur the wrath of the Soviets was Bishop Vincentas Borisevičius of Telšiai. They knew his background well; he was very active in Lithuania's drive for independence in 1918, and during the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania in 1941, he protested the arrests of priests and the denial of the Church's rights.

On December 17, 1945 the 59 year-old bishop was summoned to NKVD (later called KGB) headquarters in Vilnius. He was bluntly told to cooperate, or suffer the consequences. He wrote a letter after Christmas stating he would not. "If I am guilty of something, I must atone for my sins myself. That is what my religion tells me to do," he said.

A month later he was deceived into coming to Vilnius, and was arrested. Another period of interrogation took place, but this one was more brutal. It was conducted in Russian by the chief of the Interrogation Department himself, usually at night, lasting from 12 to 15 hours daily, and yielding only a few answers. His Excellency was fluent in Russian, as well as Latin, German, and Polish. He was charged with high treason and anti-Soviet agitation.

A military tribunal sentenced him to die by shooting, and confiscation of his property. The judge, after announcing the verdict, boasted tauntingly: "It is we who are the victors."

His Excellency, facing the judge, calmly replied: "Your hour of victory is brief. Christ will be victorious, just as my Lithuania will be victorious".

Bishop Borisevičius was executed in February of 1946, but what became of his remains was a mystery until recently.

All Soviet forces left Lithuania after she regained her independence. An examination was begun of the KGB documents that were left behind in Vilnius. They revealed that hundreds of people were executed and buried in the old Tuskulenai estate, facing Saints Peter and Paul Church on the opposite bank of the Neris River. Among the remains found and identified were those of Bishop Borisevičius.

How prophetic were the last words of his Excellency. The judge tauntingly boasted that the Communists were the victors, but as history now shows, they were the losers. The Soviet Empire collapsed, the Church is slowly regaining its strength and vitality, and Lithuania has regained her freedom and independence.

In 1990 the Holy See started the process to beatify Bishop Borisevičius.

LITHUANIA AND CATHOLICISM

By John Patrick

Part II

The Years of Communist Oppression

Lithuania regained her independence from Russia in 1918, and the Catholic Church began to prosper. The nation successfully established a stable government and economy despite tremendous odds against her. However, the winds of war were blowing across Europe, and, despite her declared neutrality, Lithuania was invaded in 1940 by Stalin's armies. Control of Lithuania changed hands several times during World War II, ultimately falling into Soviet hands, and Lithuania became a constituent republic of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union was a signatory of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and the Helsinki Accords. Those documents and the constitution of the Soviet Union declared that all people had a right to practice any religion. However, the universal practice of atheism was the fundamental aim of the government. Catholic Churches were forcibly closed and torn down, or converted into museums and warehouses. The remains of St. Casimir had to be relocated, as Vilnius Cathedral was converted to an art museum. Independent Lithuania had three active Catholic seminaries; captive Lithuania had only one, which was the only one in the vast Soviet Union.

But the followers of Stalinism underestimated the resolve of the Lithuanian followers of Roman Catholicism. Partisan activity against the Soviets continued until 1957. It is estimated that over 50,000 Lithuanian men and women died in this underground struggle against overwhelming waves of Soviet manpower and weaponry. Each partisan group was assigned a Catholic chaplain, and rare was a partisan soldier not in possession of a rosary.

Priests were arrested and sent to Siberian prisons along with great numbers of the faithful. Those priests who were permitted to tend to the faithful were under tremendous scrutiny. Outside of Sunday Mass, they were allowed to meet with their flock strictly on a one-on-one basis; any ministering or teaching of Roman Catholicism on more than that ratio was considered a criminal activity.

Each candidate for the priesthood was required to be a Soviet secret police (KGB) agent; only those seminarians whom the Communist government felt showed promise of being true to atheism were allowed to take the Sacrament of Ordination! Many candidates for the priesthood ignored their promises of collaboration with the KGB.

Because open practice of the Catholic faith by laymen was punishable by loss of job, loss of housing, or, occasionally, imprisonment, covert practice of the faith became the norm. The faithful met in secret for Holy Mass in barns and basements. Baptisms, Confessions, and Confirmations were likewise performed in secret rituals. When pastors were arrested for a "crime against the state" such as teaching catechism, the faithful parishioners rallied around their shepherds at the trial with pickets and petitions.

The underground publication, "The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," was a persistent thorn of truth in the atheistic government's side. This well-researched journal, written in secret and reproduced by hand-typed

pages, documented the torments of Catholics who suffered for their faith. To be caught in possession of a copy of "The Chronicle" assured its owner of an extended prison sentence.

The religious and laymen of Lithuania stood firm in their religion, despite tremendous odds. Their steadfastness bordered on the heroic. Legions of notables deserve mention, spending years in torturous prisons for adherence to their faith. But few are as well-known as a Catholic nun, Nijole Sadunaite.

Nijole Sadunaite was put on trial in 1975 as a distributor of "The Chronicle." At her trial, she said to her prosecutors: "And you rejoice in your triumph? What remains after your victory? Moral ruin, millions of unborn fetuses, defiled values, weak debased people overcome by fear with no passion for life. This is the fruit of your labors. Jesus Christ was correct when he said 'By your fruits shall ye know them.' Your crimes are propelling you onto the garbage heap of history at an ever-increasing speed." In her book, A Radiance in the Gulag, written about her trial and imprisonment, she wrote: "Going against Goliath in God's name, we shall always be the victor! Trusting in God, let us do everything that we must; without His permission, not even a hair from our heads will fall. God is our refuge and our strength!" So, the struggle continued: the faithful of Lithuania against the Soviet regime. Pope John Paul II, who said "Half my heart is in Lithuania; I pray for her daily," tried to visit Lithuania in 1984 and 1987, but was stymied in his attempts by Moscow. The Holy Father, born Karol Wojtyla in Poland, saw his native country suffer from the horrors of Nazi occupation and Communist oppression. His drive for human rights caused a chink in the atheistic armor of Communism to form, leading

to its downfall in Poland, spreading to the Soviet Union and the rest of Europe. In 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was no more, crushed by the ponderous weight of moral turpitude.

Papal Visit to European Christianity's Youngest Daughter

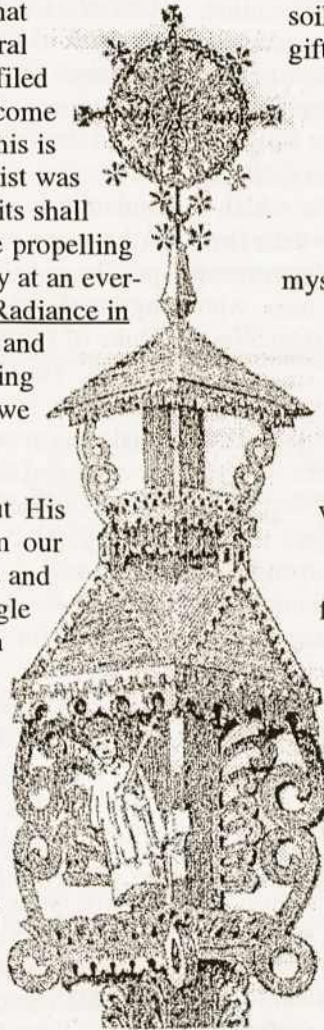
His Holiness John Paul II set foot on Lithuanian soil in Vilnius on September 4, 1993, the first Pope to ever visit Lithuania. Arriving only days after the last of the Soviet troops departed, he said, "With great emotion, I have kissed the soil of Lithuania, grateful to God for the gift of being able to come among you.

How deeply I have longed to visit your land, which is particularly dear to me.

Immediately after I was elected to the See of the Apostle Peter in accordance with God's mysterious plan, I went to visit the Lithuanian chapel of Our Lady of Mercy in the crypt of the Vatican Basilica. There, at the feet of the Blessed Virgin, I prayed for all of you.

"Your land is dear to the whole Christian people throughout the world. Lithuania has been the silent witness of a passionate love for religious freedom, which- as I have often said- is the basis for of every other human and civic freedom. In her being a part of the Catholic Church, Lithuania has become, in the course of her long and difficult journey towards freedom, a land of confessors and martyrs."

Pope John Paul II was greeted by throngs of followers at every step of his journey. After the arrival ceremonies, he proceeded to the magnificent Vilnius Cathedral, where Holy Mass was said. There, the Pope



Waydise Cross from the Village of ZAPRUDIŠKIS - Panevėžys Region

recalled the great sacrifices of the faithful, and reminded them of the witnesses to the true Faith that have gone on to their rewards in heaven. He said, "In your eyes, there must be neither winners or losers, but rather men and women who need to be helped to leave error behind." He exhorted the religious of Lithuania to be forgiving of the sins of those who suffered from fear of their tormentors.

The Holy Father then was escorted to the Gate of Dawn, where he led the faithful in the recitation of the rosary. There, he said "I thank the Mother of the Lord as I see Lithuania and its neighboring countries being freed from the dark clouds of occupation and persecution, of imposed silence about God and the debilitating deprivation of basic human freedoms ... Together with you I entrust to the motherly intercession of Mary most holy the hope of seeing Lithuania and its neighboring countries, beginning with the one in which I myself was born and baptized, renew their firm adherence to the Gospel and their determined desire to accept Christ - God made man, who died and rose out of love for man - as their Way, their Truth, and their Life." On

September 5, the Pope prayed at the tomb of the Martyrs of Lithuanian independence. The "martyrs" were eleven defenseless Lithuanian citizens who lost their lives on January 13, 1991, from an attack by the Soviet army trying to crush the independence movement. These unarmed civilians were among thousands in a human shield surrounding the television broadcasting tower in Vilnius as the heavily-armed Soviet troops advanced and fired their automatic weapons. They were buried alongside seven Lithuanian border guards who were executed, gangland-style with guns to their heads, by Soviet troops.

His Holiness then went to Vingis Park, site of demonstrations of hundreds of thousands against Soviet oppression, where he said Holy Mass before a vast multitude. During the Mass, he administered the sacrament of Baptism to ten catechumens. In the homily, the Pope reflected on the importance of Baptism and the need for all Lithuanians to renew their faith and the promises made in their name at Baptism.

"Each time a conflict breaks out it is the whole world that suffers and is disfigured!" John Paul II spoke these words during a meeting with the Diplomatic Corps credited to Lithuania the Apostolic Nunciature in Vilnius.

Afterwards, the Pope met with the world of arts and sciences at the Church of Sts. John the Baptist and the Evangelist at the University of Vilnius. There, he told them "The cordial welcome you have given me is not surprising, not only because it is characteristic of your noble sentiments, but also because it follows in the wake of an ancient history of friendly, productive relationships between your country and the Catholic Church. The history of this university testifies to that as well. As you know, it was founded in the same century by Bishop Valerijonas Protasevicius, so that Vilnius too could benefit from the culture and apostolic efforts fostered by the Society of Jesus in Europe and the world. In 1579, moreover, your Atheneum was endowed with rights and privileges by my Predecessor, Gregory XII, and by Stephan Bathory, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania."

His Holiness continued in his discourse, in which he proclaimed that militant atheism enslaves man, and pondered why intellectuals have denied the existence of the Divine Creator. He proclaimed, "Do not be afraid, my friends, to open the doors to Christ! He knows the human heart and can offer profound answers to its restless anxiety. He invites us to struggle together for a humanity of true freedom and solidarity."

On September 6, the Holy Father visited Kaunas and met with Lithuania's bishops at the site of the country's largest active seminary. After touring the city he celebrated Mass, after which he addressed the faithful: "I am grateful for this faith of the Lithuanian people, of your priests, your Bishops, of your Cardinal here (Vincentas Sladkevicius), a great witness to the faith and love of Christ, of love for God's people. For this reason I am thankful for being among you and for having celebrated Holy Eucharist with you. "I thank you for your presence, your participation, your prayer, your welcome here in this beautiful square for the Eucharistic

celebration, and throughout the city, where so many have waited for me and greeted me. I thank you for all this, because I take it as an expression of this victorious faith, this faith manifested in you.

"I hope that this faith will continue to be your strength, a strength for spiritually and externally building your homeland, your Life, your Lithuania and Christian identity, for the good of the Holy Church, our Mother, for the good of Europe and of humanity. "

He later met with the city's youth at the Darius and Girenas Sports Stadium. His arrival at the stadium was greeted with the release of 300 white doves. "Be the first to respond to the push for the new evangelization which your country, Europe, and the whole world urgently need," he exhorted.

On September 7, the Pope visited the Hill of Crosses at Šiauliai. The Hill of Crosses, unique in the world, is covered by many thousands of crosses and rosaries placed by faithful Roman Catholics in defiance of the tyranny of communism that Karol Wojtya

knew so well. After atheistic government officials ordered the bulldozing of the Christian monuments on the Hill, "miraculously" they began to appear again within days. "Everyone saw more clearly the truth expressed by the Second Vatican Council: man cannot understand himself without Christ, without His cross," declared John Paul II.

The afternoon saw the Pope at Šiluva, site of the famous apparition of Mary, Mother of God. His visit was brief, but he had time to meet with the sick and the elderly. Afterwards, His Holiness proceeded to Latvia and Estonia, before returning home to Vatican City.

The predominant theme expressed by the Pope during his trip was forgiveness. Do not look back to the past, but to the future, a future that is bright if Christ is in your life. Lithuania can be the example for the Catholics of the world to follow.

The author, John Patrick (Petruskevičius), is a writer and activist from Elizabeth, NJ.

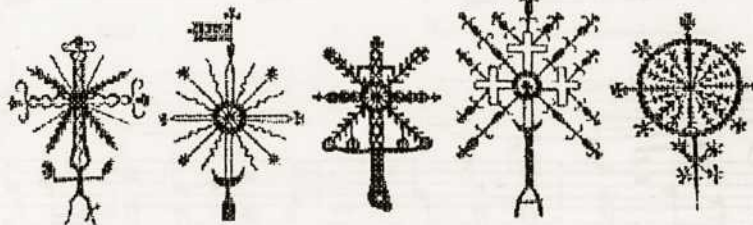
In Memoriam

Rev. Bernard Gustas
Feb. 16, 1998
C-136 - Spirit Advisor

Robert C. Barsh
C-156, Shamokin, PA
Jan. 17, 1998

Peter Grumblevich
C-135, Ansonia, CT
Feb. 1, 1997

Nellie Freer
C-136, Chicago, IL
Sept. 23, 1997



Charles Milius
C-79, Southfield, MI
Oct. 8, 1997

Helen Patocki
C-79, Southfield, MI
Jan. 26, 1998

Ann Ridick
C-26, Worcester, MA
Feb. 7, 1998

George Nugaris
C-90, Kearny, NJ
Dec. 27, 1997

Vlade Kassel
Feb. 22, 1998

*Amžina atilsį duok
mirusiems Viešpatie ir
amžinoji šviesa tegul jiems
šviečia. Amen.*

OI KAI MES AUGOM

(Liaudies daina)

Juozas Strolia
(Uchte 1948)

Andante **Duetas** *p*

1. Oi kai mes au-gom, mes dvi se - su - lės,

po vie - nu lan - ge - liu rū - te - ļē sē - jom.

Choras *f rit.*
Po vie - nu

1.-4.
2. Rū - te - lę sė - jom

a tempo

lan - ge - liu rū - te - le sé - jom.

p

a tempo

p

5. Oi min - - - ti.

5. Oi min - - - ti.

5.

2. Rūtelę sėjom, žodį kalbėjom,
Dėl ko mes, sesulės, baltos raudonos?
3. Dėl to mes baltos, dėl to raudonos,
pas savo motulę valio j augintos

4. Oi kai pateksim žmonių martelėm,
Reiks mumi, sesule, budriom būti
5. Reiks anksti keltis ir vėlai gultis,
Dainelės, giesmelės po pėdu minti

Lithuanian Countryside

by Mirga Bablin, C-100

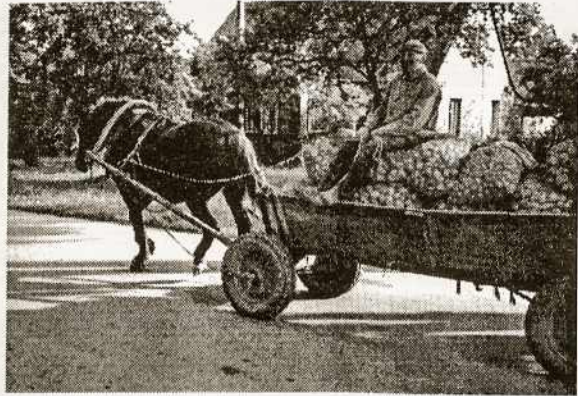
During the Fall of 1993, my husband and myself realized a dream! Like the famous late Dr. Martin Luther King with his saying, "I had a dream" - we had one too! As first generation Americans, whose immigrant parents from Lithuania suffered many hardships to arrive at our shores - steerage class in ships, no jet planes with fancy meals, etc., we wanted to see that hallowed land of our forefathers, now Free Lithuania. We also wanted to see, at least briefly, also a few other European countries.

We had no planned tour and were on our own for the greater part of the trip. We had 18 days to see the highlights of four countries, staying, but briefly, in England, Italy and Poland for 9 days. The other nine days we traveled in Lithuania.

Lithuania was not only the country of farm roads and horse-drawn wagons, though these vestiges of an earlier era were still a delight to see. We were amazed by the vastness of the terrain, large beautiful highways, impressive cities and many of the Westernized trappings we Americans are used to. It takes hours to get from one city to another. We saw some sophisticated, very expensive farm machinery, it amazed us.

We were pleasantly surprised when we arrived at the home of my husband's relatives in Kedaine. Rasa and Edmundas Gailiunas are the ages of one of our daughters. They have two young children, Justina (8) and Jokubas (3). Their beautiful large, stucco home in the suburbs was built by themselves and Rasa's father. The rooms were large and the decor was pleasant.

If it were not for the kindness of these wonderful people and their friends, we would not have seen all that we did. They drove us from morning to night, near and far, so we could see as much of Lithuania as possible. Some of the sights



"In the more rural areas were horse-drawn wagons, laden with huge bags of potatoes, filled to overflowing."

were Palanga, enroute to the Baltic Seashore, Kedaine Airport (maintained by the Russians, now abandoned) Vilnius, the Hill of Crosses and many others.

Saulius Urbonas, a friend of our host family, was assigned our chauffeur, in as much as he was a musician whose sporadic work schedule allowed for free time. Enroute to visit various kinfolk, we were thrilled by some of the unusual sights, unique to the Lithuanian countryside.

In the more rural areas were horse-drawn wagons, laden with huge bags of potatoes, filled to overflowing. Since potatoes are a staple food amongst the Lithuanians, almost everyone grows them. In the front yard of the Gailiunas lovely home is a small potato field, tended daily by our hosts.

On one of our other expeditions, Saulius drove us to see the remains of an old castle (Dvaras), occupied years ago by a land baron. This was a huge, imposing stone edifice, surrounded by a wall fence and complete with a small lookout tower on top of the castle. Legend has it that it was used to watch for any approaching enemy.

One of the most unusual and perhaps startling sights, were the many storks nests. We have

traveled extensively throughout the U.S. and the Caribbean, but never saw anything like this. High atop a utility pole was a huge pile of hay, over which the head of a gigantic bird, often standing on one leg, is visible - a stork! Less frequently, this appears on the roof of a building.

The Encyclopedia Britannica states "the (stork) is a well known bird, which is a summer visitor to most parts of the European continent, and is everywhere a cherished guest. Popular belief ascribes good luck to the house it attaches itself to. In winter, the storks retire to Africa, some of them reaching Cape Colony."

We stopped at great length to view these rare creatures and take many pictures. I even sketched one for my journals. The proud mother bird was standing on one leg, hovering over her brood of little chicks on top of an electric utility pole. A nice view of the Lithuanian countryside.

"High atop a utility pole was a huge pile of hay, over which the head of a gigantic bird, often standing on one leg, is visible - a stork!"



Šypsniai be raukšlių

Smiles without Wrinkles

Choosing

Wife to husband in a clothing store:

"You never can choose anything properly. None of these suits fits you!"

"That's true. I chose you, didn't I?"

Doctor to a new Father: "I knew you wanted a son, but you are the father of a baby girl."

"Don't worry doctor," replied the new Father, "that was my second choice."

Women's Lib?

These days the world is interested only in women. A baby boy is born and everyone asks how the mother is doing. A man gets married and everyone is saying how beautiful the bride looks. A man dies and all want to know how much he left his wife.

Fun at the zoo

Mother takes little Johnny to the zoo and he spots a big monkey.- "Look, Ma, she looks like

Grandma!"

Mother is furious: "You should not say things like that, she scolds.

"Don't worry, says Johnny, the monkey didn't hear me!"

Clever Ass

A preacher is giving a sermon on the evils of drinking. He states: "There are two barrels in the barnyard. One filled with wine the other with water. From which one will the ass drink?"

"From the former," came the reply.

"Why," the preacher inquired.

"Because he is an ass," was the answer.

Beauty in the Eyes of the Beholder

A second grade teacher is teaching her class the tenses. "I am beautiful" she states. Is that past, present or future?

Little Peter raises his hand: "Very past", he says.

LITHUANIAN CHEFS



Thanks to Mrs. Vincent Samaska of C-112, Chicago for these two recipes taken from the *cookbook*

LIETUVIU VALGIAI by Pauliukonene, Published by "Mokslas" Vilnius, 1984:

These are two delicious dishes if you happen to like cheese and barley. A few explanations: pusdubinis - a medium sized bowl, orkainė - stove oven, kalendros - spices. Enjoy!

MIEZINIU KRUOPU APKEPAS SU VARSKE PEARL BARLEY CASSAROLE WITH CHEESE

1 stikiine sinulkiu kruopu, 2-3 stiklines vandens, 400 g varskės, 2-3 kiausiniai, 50-100 g sviesto, 1 saukstas cukraus, druskos.

Isverdama smulkin perliniu kruopu kose, I varske idedama sviesto, imusami kiausiniai, suberiamas cukrus ir gerai istrinama. Tada sudedama kose, ismaissoma ir sukreciama i riebalais istepta ir miltais pabarstyta apkepo inda. Ant virsaus uzdedama keletas gabaliuku sviesto ir kepama orkaitaeje.

Valgoma su sviestu bei grietine ir uzsigeriama pienu.

MIEZINIU KRUOPU APKEPAS SU MESA PEARL BARLEY CASSAROLE WITH MEAT

2 stiklines smulkiu kruopu, 4 stiklines vandens, 40 g sviesto, 300 g. virtos kiaulienos ar avienos, 2 svogunai, 1-2 kiausiniai, kalendros, druskos.

Isverdama biri mieziniu kruopu kose. Ssvogunai smuilkiai supjaustomi ir pakepinami kartu su mazais gabaliukais supjaustyta mmesa, sudedami i kose, pasudoma, iberiama maltu kalendros grudeliu, ismaissoma, sudedama i paruosta apkepo inda ir iskepama orkaiteje.

Iskepės apkepas supjaustomas ir sudedamas i pasildyta pusdubeni. Valgoma su raugintais agurkais ar kopustais arba su rugusiu pienu.

Janet E. Lee and Mark Markiewicz of C-50, New Haven write how the Kolduni recipe (Feb '98) tasted like the same prepared by their late mother, Helen Gvildis Markiewicz. They ask for a Kugeli with salt pork and onions. Thanks for the kudos. Enjoy the kuguli!

Bulvių Apkepas (Kugelis)

4 lbs potatoes
2 cups of milk
4 eggs
1 onion
4 oz. Bacon (or salt pork)
Salt, pepper

Peel and grate the potatoes, drain off the liquid. Pour scalded milk over the potatoes, add pepper, salt, chopped onion sauteed with chopped bacon, egg yolks and mix well. Fold in beaten egg whites. Pour into a greased roasting pan. Bake in the oven for an hour or until done. At first the heat should be 450 degrees, then lower to 350.

When done, slice into oblong pieces. Serve with sour cream, sauteed chopped bacon or apple or cranberry sauce.

Thanks to Kathryn Urban of C-7, Waterbury, for this tasty side dish.

Kay's Korn Kasserole

1 16 oz can Whole Kernal corn, undrained
1 16 oz. can cream style corn, undrained
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup, (8 oz) sour cream
1 stick margarine, melted
1 pkg. Jiffy corn muffin mix
½ pkg onion soup mix

Mix all ingredients. Pour into a 12 x 8 inch greased pan. Bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees for pudding-like consistency; 1 hour for more cake-like consistency.

Pork with Horseradish Sauce Kiaulienos Gabalas su Krienų Padažu

Soak salted or smoked pork, the best meat from a ham, and then place in boiling water with spices and cook until very tender. When done, cut into small pieces and place into a greased dish. Pour thick horseradish sauce over the surface, garnish with boiled potatoes or mashed potatoes, brush with beaten egg and put into a 350 degree oven for a short time. When the surface is browned, remove from oven and garnish with carrots and parsley leaves. Serve.



Lithuanians in the News

Our Own Aldona...

By Celia Elliott
Reprinted from *Prime Life*,
Feb/Mar 1998, Centerville,
OH.

Vibrant Aldona Latovas Ryan, a striking presence, attired in purple, subscribes to the philosophy of wearing this color, but would reject the part about being old.

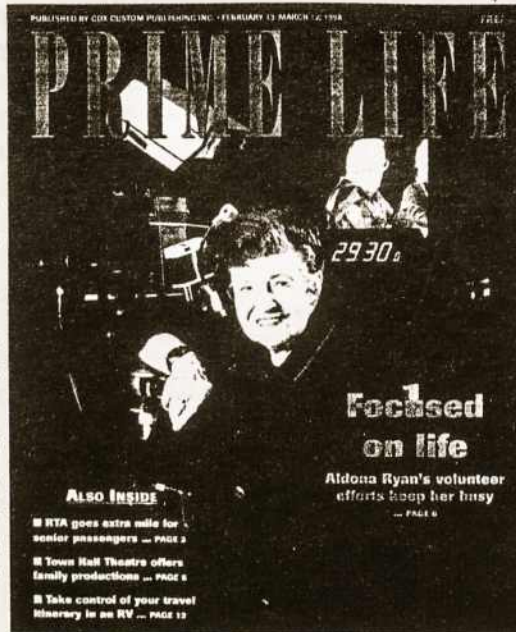
"But I'm still working on the red hat," she laughs, welcoming an interviewer at the door, while referring to the favorite poem of many senior women.

Anyway, a red hat wouldn't suit her, clashing with her trade-mark, upswept, red coiffure.

"I'm just a girl who can't say no," she says, sitting down to summarize a lifetime of remarkable achievements.

This multi-talented Washington Township woman, a quintessential volunteer, has seldom missed a challenge to further worthwhile community projects — operas, ethnic festivals, religious rites and in the last decade as a producer with her late husband, Joseph Ryan, of programs for Miami Valley Cable Council.

Aldona stands as a cultural icon in the area's Lithuanian community. She has spent 50 years perpetuating the heritage of Lithuania, her parents' native land, a small beleaguered country. President of the Federation of Lithuanian Organizations of Southern Ohio, she is recognized nationally and internationally for supporting the long struggle for Lithuanian independence. Her account of Lithuanian history in the United States appeared in the Congressional Record in 1984.



Cover Girl

"Warning" *"When I am an old woman I shall wear purple with a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me..."*

— Jenny Joseph, English poet

As editor of *Vytis*, published by the Knights of Lithuania, (*Thanks for the plug, Aldona. ed.*) for five years, she used her writing talents, particularly in a 1984 commemorative issue, circulated internationally.

She speaks fondly of her background and growing up in the Old North Dayton enclave of immigrants, whose activities centered around the family and Holy Cross Catholic church.

"My father, Paul Latovas, came to this country as a refugee, fleeing from the Russian army," she said. "Later he sent for my mother, Isobel, a former neighbor, and they were married in 1913 in Dayton. Until I went to school I spoke only Lithuanian.

"They, like most people in our neighborhood, were Democrats and FDR's picture was displayed on the wall of our home. But the day Roosevelt ceded Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia to Russia at the Yalta meeting with Stalin and Churchill, my mother tore the president's picture off the wall and stomped on it. Afterward, we became Republicans. From that day I have always worked for freedom for Lithuania.

"The night the Berlin Wall came down, marking the beginning of the end of Communist power, I stayed up all night celebrating," she recalls.

She is active in her old neighborhood church, Holy Cross, and currently is planning a World Day of Prayer ecumenical service there with six other congregations in March.

Her volunteer talents blossomed after working as a reporter at *The Dayton Daily News* and as a full-time secretary to Adam Kurpiel, Dayton's

welfare department director. Her first husband, Ralph Laux, a police detective, died at 33, leaving her with small daughters to bring up. Then she found outlets in the arts: as contributing editor of "Bridges" magazine; singing in the Philharmonic Chorus; working with the Opera Guild and Kettering's Holiday at Home; and recently as trustee and chairman of community relations for Seniors, Inc.

Known as founder and coordinator of Dayton's World A'Fair International Festival, Inc., she was awarded a plaque for her efforts from the Dayton Council of World Affairs, Its original sponsor.

But a turning point came as she was acting with a theatrical group, Dayton Chapter of National Blackfriars' Guild, when she met fellow actor Joe Ryan, a Wright-Patterson Air Force Base aerospace engineer. They wed and for 44 years supported each other's volunteer interests. He passed away In 1996.

They had officially retired in 1990, yet they were interested In videography. Miami Valley Cable Council was offering classes and they signed up, which led to their becoming co-producers of cable access programs. They originated "A Mnemonic Interval," an oral history series, filming 85 segments for the Centerville Historical Commission. They were honored by the Centerville Historical Society and the Commission in 1996 and re-named the series "AlanJo Oral Histories" with their photos and new covers.

Their other productions Include: "Historic Miamisburg," "Bellbrook Re-visited," "Grandma's Attic," "Family, Strategies for Care giving of Alzheimer Patients," "Community Action News" and music-dance specials.

"We found It to be cheaper than playing golf, more energetic physically and men-tally than playing bridge, and a great opportunity to meet, work with, and make Mends with people of all ages," Aldona says of their MVCC work.

In 1992 they were named the council's

The City of Centerville's Historical Commission presents
The Alanjo Oral History Series

A MNEMONIC INTERVAL



Walton House Museum, circa 1838
Centerville-Washington Township Historical Society

volunteers of the year. They also received six Amy and seven Philo cable access awards, as well as a state commendation.

Not content to polish her trophies, Aldona spends 12 hours weekly producing shows at the Miami Valley Cable Council. Aldona may be wearing purple, but don't expect to see her "with a red hat that doesn't go," especially atop a headset, as she produces yet another video.

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Details New Reforms

Lithuanian Foreign Minister, Algirdas Saudargas, says Lithuania is headed toward becoming an equal partner and ally with Western Nations. He indicated that Lithuania is not looking for handouts, but rather would work to merit NATO and EU membership to become an equal partner and ally. Lithuanian soldiers are a part of the international peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia

The Foreign Minister recently spoke in Cleveland at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church telling the Lithuanian congregations about Lithuania's efforts to become part of Western political and economic organizations.

"We're on our way," Saudargas added.

Saudargas flew to Cleveland following a meeting with President Clinton and Baltic leaders who signed a partnership agreement pledging U.S. support for membership of those Baltic nations in NATO and the European Union.

He said the republic has been restructuring its economy, getting inflation down and dealing with the transitional problems of returning to private ownership the farmlands the Soviet Union had collectivized.

Saudargas said that Lithuania had been increasing its military budget, to bring its forces up to NATO

standards, and taking other needed steps for the country to become eligible for NATO and European Union membership.

He also said the republic had been restructuring its economy, getting inflation down and dealing with the transitional problems of returning to private ownership the farmlands that the Soviet Union had collectivized.

He indicated that Lithuania was not looking for a handout, but would work to merit membership and wanted to be equal partners and allies. He pointed out that Lithuanian soldiers were part of an international peacekeeping force in Bosnia.

Saudargas also gave his country's gratitude and appreciation to the Lithuanian-American community for all its efforts to help rid the country of the Soviet occupation that began in World War II. *Submitted by Dolly O., C-25, from Cleveland Plain Dealer, Jan. 1998*

Pfizer to Expand in the Baltics

One of America's leading drug companies, Pfizer, announced in their latest Pfizerworld newsletter that it would be making its presence known in with new offices in Lithuania, as well as its Baltic neighbors, Latvia and Estonia. With a combined population of 7.5 million, Pfizer hopes to gain market share for some of its research-based products, according to Kurt Hahn, CEER (Central and Eastern European Region) regional manager. Doctors and patients in these countries recognize the value of Pfizer's products, like Diflucan, an antifungal, and Norvasc, a calcium channel blocker, which are top selling products in the Baltics, according to the company's newsletter. [In addition, a number of C-110's members are current or former employees of the Company.] *Submitted by Helen Matulonis, C-110*

Cleveland Lithuanians Vote in Election

Lithuanians living in Cleveland, some of whom have dual citizenship recognized by Lithuania, vote in the Presidential election. Nine voted in person and another 50 mailed in ballots. C-25 member, Benedict Karklius, was one of the voters pictured in the Cleveland Plain Dealer (12/22/97)

Submitted by Elizabeth August, C-25

Komrad Kasparaitis ?

"We're sick of hearing Russian hockey is no good," Darius Kasparaitis said. "All the talk is about Canada, U.S., Sweden. We're sick of all that. We're here to prove we can beat them all."

Tough talk. Somewhat amusing, too, since Kasparaitis is Lithuanian (and) a hockey mercenary who was developed in the Soviet system and opted at the 1992 Winter Games to forever hitch his international wagon to Mother Russia.

If any of Kasparaitis' Lithuanian countrymen have difficulty reconciling that, the Pittsburgh Penguins blueliner doesn't. "I have to play somewhere", he said. "Brett Hull is Canadian. He's playing for the U.S." (The Hockey News / Feb. 27, 1998 / "A Team of Brothers" - Bob McKenzie)

Hey, Darius, I guess you got *Czech-ed!* (Vytis Ed.)

Financial Advice

Rimas M. Milaitis made the *Sunday, March 8, NY Times Money & Business Section* with his savvy, Lithuanian-style business advise to investors. Along with his M.B.A. in business management and his company, Strong Growth and Income Fund, the 37 year old Chicago born Lithuanian-American adheres to three rules when it comes to investing.

1. Pay attention to the macro picture, particularly in the shifting global forces that can make or break the future - of an industry, a sector or an entire country. His prime example was that of his grandparents who lost everything when the Red Army took over Lithuania. 'My mother's family buried silver in a field and came to America only to start from scratch.'
2. Avoid unnecessary risks when you manage other people's money.
3. "If you produce, you survive," is the basis for Milaitis' third rule, which he says is rooted in his Lithuanian upbringing: "I don't like to finish in second place when it's within my power to finish in first," he concluded.



Plenty to Smile About

Tomas Auryla was born in Klaipeda 17 years ago. During those 17 years his face was wracked with pain. He had difficulty eating, speaking and smiling besides having to endure the hurt and anguish of the horrified looks of passersby as he and his mother, Janina, walked along the streets of Klaipeda. He was born with almost no lower jaw. His upper jaw receded and was skewed to the left.

When Paule Balciunas, 93, of the Lithuanian Retirement Center in Cleveland read about Tomas in a Lithuanian newspaper she vowed to bring him to Cleveland for help. She went door-to-door at the Center and raised over \$3000 for Tomas. She died after the campaign and missed Tomas' arrival in Cleveland by five months!

Mrs. Grazina Kudukis, President of the Sister Cities Cleveland/Klaipeda, recruited Dr. John DiStefano, Medical Director of the Partnership in Hope, the Lithuania-Cleveland medical connection, to help Tomas.

In October, 1997, after 9-1/2 hours of surgery at University Hospitals of Cleveland, Tomas now has normal features and his grin is in place. Tomas received a lower jaw made with a bone graft from his hip and his upper jawbone was straightened and brought forward.

A team of physicians headed by Dr. John DiStefano, Clinical Professor of Surgery at Case Western Reserve University; Dr. Jerold Goldberg, Chairman of Oral/Maxillofacial Surgery and Dean of CWRU School of Dentistry operated on Tomas, assisted by Dr. Vytyas Gryskas, a neurosurgeon from

Lithuanian teen has plenty to smile about

not an accident with his face, the boy was born with the condition in 1980. ... The surgery and bone graft to straighten his jaw and his upper jawbone was a long process, involving many visits to University Hospitals in Cleveland. ...

THE CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER - SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1997



Tomas Gryskas, a Lithuanian teenager who had extensive surgery at University Hospitals in Cleveland, is shown with his mother, Janina, and brother, Darius.

... at University Hospitals in Cleveland. ... The surgery and bone graft to straighten his jaw and his upper jawbone was a long process, involving many visits to University Hospitals in Cleveland. ...

Cleveland Plain Dealer Story on Tomas

Klaipeda who traveled to Cleveland with Tomas and his mother. Dr. Gryskas will do further touch-up work on his nose and face back in Lithuania.

All the doctors, American and Lithuanian, donated their services and University Hospital donated all hospital services. Mrs. Dona Cipkus, founder and manager of the Lithuanian Center made all the living arrangements for Tomas and his mother.

On Sunday, November 23rd after Mass at the Coffee Hour at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Tomas was bid farewell by all his

new-found friends and benefactors, including State Rep. Ed Kasputis. Gifts were presented to Tomas by various Lithuanian Organizations as well as a gift from the Lithuanian High School Students presented by Darius Silkaitis with the promise to keep in touch. From the smiles of the doctors' faces they were proud of what he had accomplished for Tomas.

Tomas and his mother, Janina, were overwhelmed by the great outpouring of love and help received from the Cleveland Lithuanians and were especially grateful to all the wonderful doctors who created this miracle.

Submitted by Ursula Kunsitis C-25-Cleveland, OH



Rasa Silkaitis and son, Darius, present gifts

The SWANS of Lithuania

The passenger pigeon has vanished from the American scene. At one time the flocks were so great that they obscured the sun in their flight across the plains. Today they are extinct. Man's stupidity, greed and carelessness destroyed the species forever. Now the passenger pidgeon is in a class with the dodo bird, the heath hen and the Labrador duck. They too are extinct.

Long ago, beautiful white swans were a familiar sight on the many lakes of Lithuania. In song and story they were mentioned by the poets and writers. Then the swans disappeared from their favorite lakes. Poachers killed many of them and others ruined their nesting places.

After many years, a pair of white swans returned to Lithuania and settled upon the Lake of Metelis - near the town of Simnas - about forty miles southwest of Kaunas. The historical event happened in the spring of 1935. The local game warden appealed to the citizens to protect the beautiful birds. Parents warned their children not to frighten the swans lest they fly away and never come back.

Feeling safe and secure amid friendly surroundings, the swans began to build a nest, and in ten days they completed the project. Every two or three days the female swan or "pen" laid an egg until a clutch of five eggs were in the nest. Whenever the neighborhood children approached the nest in the bulrushes, the gander or "cob" would fiercely flap his wings and scare away the trespassers. After 35 days, five downy, gray signets or chicks were hatched.

During the summer hundreds of swan watchers came from far and near to see the family of swans, which were thought to have forever vanished in Lithuania.

When winter came, only 3 of the 5 young swans survived. One became entangled in a fisherman's net and perished. The second died while searching for food under the ice. When the entire lake was frozen solid, the swans migrated to a place where, even in winter, there is open water. Their favorite wintering haunts are in the waters off Denmark and France. Snowy squadrons in the skies

may be seen as winter approaches.

As spring

approached, the local inhabitants near Lake Metelis impatiently waited for the return of the swans. Some said they would never come back. To the joy of all, at the end of March, the

same pair of adult swans descended upon the waters of Lake Metelis.

A few days later, the three young birds also joined their parents.

About the middle of April, six more sygnets were hatched. The three young swans did not build their nests because it takes three or four years before they mature. That summer eleven swans sedately and gracefully sailed upon the waters of Lake Metelis.

In 1970 there were 365 swans on the various lakes of Lithuania. The swans glide again in the skies of Lithuania. If the King of Birds in Lithuania is the Stork, then the Queen of Birds must be the stately, beautiful and graceful swan.

The swans group consists of seven species. All swans are white, except the black native of Australia and the black-necked bird of South America. There is a legend that the swan sings just before her death, but not all swans sing. There is, however, one species that does sing. Perhaps that is where the legend of the "swan song" originated. It is fortunate indeed that the swans of Lithuania have not yet sung their "swan song."

Swans mate for life. They are loyal, and regal in appearance. They can fly at a speed of up to 50 miles an hour. Some live to be 70 years old.

The elegant swans of Lithuania will do their part to perpetuate their magnificent species. The rest is up to the people of Lithuania.

*by Msgr. Joseph A. Neverauskas (Deceased)
C-144, Anthracite (written 8/74) (Ed. Note: today swans still thrive in Lithuania today, no longer an endangered species.)*

THE KITE (Aitvaras)

A translated excerpt from *Lietuva Juodkrantė - Raganų kalnas Pasakos ir padavimi (Tales and Legends)* compiled by Feliksas Marcinkas

Many years ago on the shores of juodkrantė there lived a poor fisherman named Fiogė. His little hut looked like the leg of a chicken, his orchard had but one bush, the garden was overgrown with weeds, his boat but a trough. Fiogė did not have golden hands. Whatever he touched turned to failure. If he had a good idea he forgot it immediately. He also did not have much luck in fishing. With his boat he always ended up in shallow waters and his nets were full of grass and silt.

One night during the full moon, he bade his wife farewell and went out to fish for smelts. He rowed into the middle of the sea, threw in his nets and waited. As the sun was rising over the horizon he pulled the nets out.

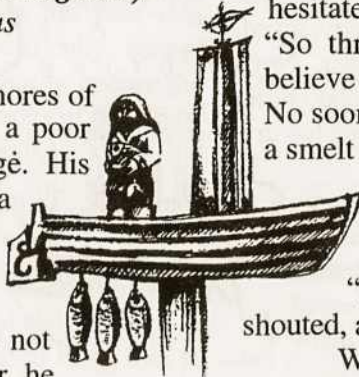
Not even a one fish. The nets were filled with clumps of grass and seaweed. What could poor Fiogė do? He sadly shook his head and decided to try again the next night. But again no fish, only a piece of wood. The wood he took home, it might come in handy.

On the third night Fiogė tried his luck again. In order that he would not fall asleep he decided to carve something out of the piece of wood he caught in his net. By the time he had finished his carved creation, it was morning and once again the nets were empty. Fiogė sat down and gazed at the carving: large ears, large eyes and a nose. "Looks just like a kite," murmured Fiogė to himself.

"It really would be nice if the kite would bring me luck and throw a fish my way."

"Here you are," he heard a voice saying.

"I'm throwing!"



Fearfully Fiogė gazed around for the source of these words. As far as the eye could see nobody was around.

Then Fiogė realized that the kite he had carved out had uttered these words.- Fiogė did not hesitate for a moment:

"So throw me a smelt or two, then I will believe in you!"

No sooner had Fiogė uttered these words that a smelt appeared in his basket.

"Amazing," shouted Fiogė. "If you could fill up my whole basket, the children would be so happy."

"I am throwing them," the voice shouted, and soon the basket was full of smelts.

When he came home with his full basket, his wife out of joy clapped her hands and kissed him on both cheeks. From then on whenever Fiogė went fishing, he took the carved kite with him. He build himself a large house, had a prepared large dowries for his daughters and for his son he build a large boat, so that he could go fishing to distant seas. And he and his wife lived happily ever after.



Are we like the following Lithuanians?

Kūmas ir lietuviškumas
Kas yra lietuviškumas?
"I don't know," atsako kūmas.
"I don't know," sakau ir aš!
Kas čia viską besupras!

Rodos klausimas tai rimtas,
Bet pinus, tegu jį šimtas:
Reik žinoti ir mokėt,
Kokiam ponui patikėt.

Nes tik ten lietuviškumas,
Kur gyvuoja partiškumas.
Pirma partija sava,
O paskui tik Lietuva.

Runcė Dandierinas (Leonardas Žitkevičius)

Marianne Jonaitis Loftus, Chicago's North Shore Artist

by Auste Vyantas, Winnetha, IL

We live in a progressive society. In our search for a better tomorrow, often we tend to ignore the past, to ignore our heritage and traditions, and join the mechanical march to the future. Often we forget that there is beauty in diversity, that by delving into our heritage, new thoughts and ideas are possible, which help to enrich cultural experiences.

One person, Marianne Jonaitis Loftus, a long-time resident of Chicago's North Shore, has raised her family, participated in professional and volunteer work, all with a conscious awareness of her Lithuanian heritage. Marianne's father came to the United States from Vilkaviskis, Lithuania. Her childhood was spent in Chicago's Brighton Park area where her father was a pharmacist and poet, a collection of his poems *Sielos Broliai* was published in 1967. Marianne attended Immaculate Conception grammar school, and the family developed close ties with the Lithuanian Sisters of St. Casimir. Often, an admired aunt, a Dominican sister, and an uncle, a priest, would visit, and Marianne, as a child, decided Lithuanians were intelligent, attractive people.

Marianne continued her education at Visitation High School and College of St. Francis, where, on a scholarship, she obtained a degree in chemistry. For a while, she worked as an analytical chemist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, then as a chemistry and biology teacher at Longwood Academy. Marriage to Bill Loftus, and raising 6 children, followed.

After raising her family, Marianne made a conscious decision to follow her artistic inclinations and pursue them to her potential. She received a Smith Scholarship from the Art Institute of Chicago to attend Oxbow in Sagatuck, Michigan for 3 consecutive summers. There, she gained experience in lithography,



The artist and her work

painting, watercolors. Having gained confidence in various media, Marianne found special enjoyment in mixed media-incorporating etchings and other printmaking techniques with watercolors.

It was in the mixed media technique that Marianne "pushed the envelope of creativity" and produced her 5 famous monoprints. In these works, she delved into her Lithuanian heritage and combined it with personal experience. Dancing double-helixed chromosomes of yellow, green and red frolic among quiet monochromatic pastel fruit patterns. Each painting has a musical title. The special significance of these paintings is that there is an identity being revealed. The tri-colored chromosomes signify her Lithuanian heritage, interacting intimately - with family and surroundings.

Together, national heritage and personal experience provide an immense source of inspiration to an artist attempting to understand the metaphysical self. The Lithuanian heritage, not forgotten but expressed, adds a touch of richness to a diverse national culture. These paintings were exhibited at the Nomad Central Gallery in Chicago, and received high praise from viewers and reviewers. We congratulate Marianne on her achievements, and consider her an inspiration to our endeavors.

District & Council News

C-12, New York, NY

Jeanne Janonis

We are happy to welcome the following new members to Council 12: Thomas Backis, Angela Janušas, Anthony and Anna Simulinas - we look forward to a long and pleasant association.

At our February 1 meeting, we had a short program prepared by Dalia Bulvičius. George Aleliūnas spoke about the events in Lithuania from 1940 until 1990 when Lithuania regained its independence. Birutė Gečiūtė recited a Lithuanian poem and we closed with the singing of "Lietuva brangi", accompanied by our musician in residence, Aldona Kepalaitė.

March 1st was our annual St. Casimir's Communion Breakfast. A good time was had by all. It was good to get together with some of our members and guests we do not see very often. We thank all the members especially the cooks for all their hard work in making this such an enjoyable affair.

Fr. Eugene Sawicki will hold the Our Lady of Vilnius annual spring dinner on May 17, so mark your calendars.

Get well wishes for continued improvement of health problems to: John Belavich, Vinnie Cuprevich, Tony Zagarino, Julia Gomes and Vincent Gendvilas - may they all recover quickly.

We extend to all our

members and their families a very happy and blessed Easter.

C-25, Cleveland, OH

Dolly O

Congratulations to Tony Oberaitis!



*Tony Oberaitis
of C-25*

His fourth degree medal was presented to him at the National Convention in Dayton, Ohio on August 10, 1997.

Hats off to our newly elected officers, our ever faithful and dedicated "carry-oners". T. Cupuria, is our Sunshine lay and doing a fine job.

After our first fall meeting, we were thrust into our first coffee hour on Sept. 7th. An astounding array of baked goods and ample help for a successful event. Thanks to you all!

Had a happy, entertaining and religious enlightenment when visiting Detroit, on the last weekend in September for our Fall

district meeting and pilgrimage. Many happy kudos to Southfield 102.

A busload of K. of L. trekked to the Corousel Theatre in nearby Akron, Ohio, for an evening of entertainment, of December 12th. Our guest for the evening, Fr. G. Kijauskas and all 46 of us, enjoyed the dinner and Fantasy Spectacular Show.

January meeting was canceled due to inclement weather - 50 degrees - that's inclement?

Sunday January 18, Vic Stankus, a C-25 member co-sponsored the Lithuanian Foreign Minister's visit to Cleveland. Algirdas Saudargas, spoke at Our Lady of Perpetual Help at the reception, after the 10:00 a.m. mass. He indicate, "Lithuania was not looking for a handout, but would work to merit membership and wanted to be equal partners and allies supported by the U.S.A. and E.U.". (See related story in *Liths in News.*)

Saturday, February 14th (Msgr. A. Goldikovskis 93rd birthday) Lithuanian Independence was celebrate with a banquet at O.L.F.H. auditorium. The program began with Tom Brazaitis, Cleveland "Plain Dealer's" Washington reporter, being the main speaker. Two and a half tables (of ten) seated our members. A representative of gov. George Voinovich, presented a proclamation recognizing the event, and stated the Lithuanian flag would fly over the State

Capital Bldg. on Monday February 16, in Columbus, Ohio. Cleveland Mayor Michael White sent a proclamation presented by the ward Councilman.

We're getting ready to establish averages for the MCD. Spring meeting and Bowling Tournament in May, to be held in Chicago. Bowling socials are a good way to stay, play and pray together.

U. and E. Kunsitis handled church arrangements for St. Casimir's Day Mass. March 1st. Our spiritual advisor, officiated, and R. an J. Marks arranged for dinner at Sterle's Restaurant. The good show of members, really made the day!

A big "Chapeau-off" to our "coffee-lady", S. Sankal, who diligently had the "pot on" for our two coffee hours on March 8th and 22nd. "We love you." says T. and D. Obe, for the bakery, donations and help.

Our deepest sympathy to J. Ivoska upon the death of his brother Vince of Du Bois, PA and to D. Marks and L. Yurkovic upon the loss of their sister Virginia Kohl.

Happiness is, never having to stop to ask if you are!

C-26. Worcester, MA

Stephen V. Walinsky, Sr.

Vice President Anne Leseman officiated expertly through out the entire February meeting while Pres, Viv Rodgers was regaining her winter exhausting stamina down south. Her stay there, serves a dual purpose, vacation and visitation with a sons family and to enjoy the

youth of her grandchild.

One officer left us, but, we also regained one. Aldona Waska returned from Florida to resume her duties as secretary. Substituting for her for two months was some what of an effort for me. She makes the job look easy. Once again, a pot luck supper was in the offering for the February meeting. As always, a super supper was supped by all.

Many letters of thanks were received from recipients of the generosity of C-26. Also, letters of announcements received from District and National Headquarters were read and offered for discussion.

The February 16th, Lithuanian independence Day commemoration began with a Solemn High Mass at Our Lady of Vilna church attended by many of the St. Casimir Parish parishioners included were a delegation of C-26 members. Fr. John Petrauskas was homilist.

The celebration continued at Maironis Park in the afternoon, with the gathering of concerned and interested individuals who have regard for the doings of Lithuania. The principal speaker of the So affair was Mr. Algis Gureckas. So very informative was his talk, that our attention was magnetized to the head table, and podium throughout his entire speech.

After 15 years of ALZHEI, the Good Lord summoned Anne Ridick to everlasting peace. She departed on February 7, 1998. We grieve with the family, and we pray for the repose of her soul. During the Holy Mass, Sister Joyce,

daughter of the Ridicks, eulogized her mother eloquently, reflecting emotion to the congregation. Despite the illness, she and husband John, remained faithful to C-26 and the K of L. Bill Buckley is on our sick list at this time.

C-74. Scranton, PA

Marie Laske

We had a beautiful turnout at St. Peter's Cathedral for the Ethnic Rosary. The Ethnic Rosary features recitation of the devotion in several languages including Lithuanian, Gaelic, Polish, French, German, Italian and Slovak. We had people from Forest City, Pittston and Scranton recite the Rosary in Lithuanian. The Rosary was led by Mrs. Nellie Romanas. The children from the Irish, Step dancers formed the coronation court accompanied by bagpipe music.

We are happy that John Ramoska is on the road to recovery after his illness.

We had our Flag Raising at Scranton's City Hall. John Ramoska and Dick Laske were chairpersons. Marie Laske was refreshment chairperson. Other participants were Nellie Bayoras Romanas, C-43; Dorothy Banos, Amber District president; Dr. Roman Dovydaitis, Regina Petrauskas, Lithuanian World Community; George Sadauckas, Lithuanian Alliance of America and John Pocius, Jr., Scranton City Council who read the proclamation.

The Rev. Kenneth Strawhand, pastor of Providence of God Lithuanian National Catholic Church conferred the blessing of

the flag and said a prayer for Lithuanians.

Happy 46th anniversary to Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Bozenko! Ilgiausią Metų! Lee is one of our best helpers, who is recuperating from back surgery.

Pray for a healthy recovery for Helen Churi, who is seriously ill.

Margaret Cliggs just returned from Florida after 2 weeks. Joan Noreika with a beautiful tan is visiting Scranton. She spends her winters in Florida.

Get well wishes go out to Lilian Labas husband Michael who is ill. More get well wishes to Ann Huffstutler and Dorothy Sarnowskas, my sister-in-law who are ill.

I think the golden years have tarnished.

We attended the Luzerne flag raising ceremony, Nellie Romanas was chairperson. Rev. Joseph Lasky gave a beautiful invocation. The court house was filled with faithful Lithuanians and many politicians. We also met several people who went on the tour with us to Lithuania, including George Wanta, attorney Dan Flannery and wife Karen.

Good luck to Mary and Doug Reisch with their first home. May you have only good health and happiness.

Pray for all our Lithuanians who died, those who are ill and offer your sufferings for all sinners.

C-96, Dayton, Ohio

HM Fran Petkus

Our deepest sympathies to Loretta Stukas, HM, on the loss of her mother, Vlade Kassel. May she

rest in peace of the Lord!

The Lithuanian community of Dayton celebrated the Annual Lithuanian Independence Day commemoration on February 22nd. Aldona Ryan HM chaired this very successful event. The celebration began with Mass at 10:30 AM in Lithuanian and English at Holy Cross Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church with Fr. Michael Holloran officiating. C-96's Junior Knights were the Offertory Bearers. The Mass closed with the singing of the American and Lithuanian National Anthems!

A brunch, chaired by Kitty Lamarr, was served in the church hall. Elinor Sluzas HM was Mistress of Ceremony for the program. The Dayton Vejeliai Dancers, under the direction of Molly Geiger, performed and were rewarded with enthused rounds of applause. Following the formal program there was audience participation which was fun to watch and enjoy. Guest speaker for this memorable day was Rimas Aukstuolis. Mr. Auktuolis, formally of Cleveland, OH, and now, with his family, lives in Cincinnati. Mr. Aukstuolis is associated with Provident Bank and recently returned to the US after spending several years in Lithuania with his family. He had worked with the banking system in Lithuania and had much to share with us. Things are looking better but Lithuania has a way to go to catch up with the rest of the world. Our prayers and help are still very much needed. On the lighter side, Rimas did share with us that his mother had been a K of L member when we had a council in Omaha! Rimas' father was an active

member of the Ciurlionis ensemble, Men's Octet of Cleveland and sings in Our Lady of Perpetual Help's choir in Cleveland.

Thanks must go to our Social Chair, Elaine Pacovsky, for the lunches she prepared for our January and February meetings ...homemade soups, sandwiches and desserts!

Get well wishes go to our Florida member Charles Vangas and our Arizona member Ann Boeke. Speaking of Arizona, C-96 members George and Frances Mikalauskas and C-25 members Charles and Nelda Machutas met in Arizona for vacation and also spent time with the Boekes and family. Congratulations to Larry and Elaine Pacovsky on their third grandchild, Abigail.

Recently in the Centerville-Bellbrook Times it was noted the local library had a new section added dedicated to local history. The area's history can be seen in "A Mnemonic Interval" and is also called Alanjo Oral History Series in honor of Aldona and (deceased Fourth Degree member) Joe Ryan. Congratulations!

C-100, Amsterdam, NY

Smile and Sparkle

We received great news. The bishop changed his mind and will keep St. Casimir's church open. As it appears now, we are hoping to have the church open for Easter.

The local radio station WCSS, had a Phonathon on February 28 and March 1 to help cover the cost of the repairs for St. Casimir's church. For more

information on how you can help, write Fr. J. Grabys, St. Casimir's Rectory, 260 East Main Street, Amsterdam, New York 12010.

Members on our sick list are Adeline Raila, Frances Babinas, and Jennie Burimaukas (Mount Loretto Nursing Home) and Helen Radzevich (Palatine Nursing Home).

Member Joseph Shatas is the president of our church council.

Officers elected for 1998 are: President - Mirga Bablin; 1st Vice president - Regina Kot; 2nd vice president - Gene Gobis; treasurer - Sophie Olbie; secretary - Helen Kiuber; Chairpersons of committees are: Polly Žiaušys - Lithuanian language; Lithuanian culture - Eleanor Olechowski; Lithuanian affairs - Edward Baranauskas.

Regina Kot and husband John have been spending a few weeks in Florida. We hope they didn't encounter any bad weather.

Ann Czerw and Agnes Rokit have been visiting the sick members of our parish in the hospitals and nursing homes. Bill and Beatrice Jasewicz have also made visits to the sick.

We also wish to extend our thanks for the tremendous joy that Mr. and Mrs. Karl Andrejczyk have accomplished in persuading the bishop to reopen St. Casimir's church.

C-110, Maspeth, NY *Helen Yakaitis*

On February 15th, our council helped celebrate the 80th



Msgr. Frank Bulovas, Bishop Baltakis and HM Fr. S. Raila at Feb. 15th Mass hosted by C-110

anniversary of the independence of Lithuania by hosting the Mass at Transfiguration church in Maspeth. Bishop Paulius Baltakis, OFM celebrated the Mass with our chaplin, Msgr. Frank Bulovas as co-celebrant, with Rev. Ted Rooney, pastor Father HM Stasys Raila also as co-celebrants. The choir of Annunciation and Transfiguration was directed by Asta and Virginijus Barkauskas and added solemnity to the Mass with their beautiful singing.

We received sad news our spiritual advisor Msgr. Frank Bulovas is very ill. God, please help him to heal so we can enjoy his joyful ways and his good advice. Please hurry and get well, we miss you Msgr. Frank.

March 29th, our St. Casimir celebration will take place at the Transfiguration church with a mass and a luncheon.

Ann Morrissey reported on the clothing which was sent to

Lithuania. We also sent our contribution to support our adopted orphan, Erika. Anne Morrissey is currently collecting clothing and other items needed for the orphans, such as pens, soap, pencils, paper and notebooks, and clothing for children from 7 to 14 years of age.

C-136, Hudson-Hohawk, NY

Dorothy Richmire

All members of our council mourn the loss of our spiritual advisor, Rev. Bernard J. Gustas, pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Schenectady as well as former administrator of Holy Cross Church, also in Schenectady.

We extend our sincerest sympathy to his family, parish members and the community at large. After nearly four decades of service to the community and lives of countless Catholics, may he now experience life with the God he so faithfully served. He will be sadly missed.

Sunday, February 15 was a special day for us as we celebrated the 80th anniversary of Lithuanian Independence. Mass at Holy Cross Church was offered by Rev. Anthony Curran, who is a native of Ireland. Council members from our sister council, C-100 Amsterdam, and our families and friends attended. Following mass, council members hosted a buffet which included a potpourri of tasty Lithuanian dishes, desserts and beverages.

U.S. Rep., Michael J. McNulty, addressed the congregation and presented the Knights of Lithuania with a Lithuanian flag. Mayor of Schenectady, Albert P. Jurczynski read the proclamation naming February 16 as Lithuanian Independence Day in Schenectady.



C-143, Pittston Officers

It was a great day for renewing acquaintances, meeting new friends and sharing thoughts with old friends. The best part was when it came time to clean up. We noted that all the serving dishes were completely emptied, an indication of the talented cooks we proudly claim.

C-141, Bridgeport, CT

Aldona Marcavage

A bright young 4th grader, Sean Miller, aroused the interest of his classmates as well as his teacher by reading them his story of a young boy a life in today's Lithuania. The story was translated from "EGLUTE" (A children's magazine—in Lithuanian) by his grandma's friend Aldona. He spoke of the boy's home life, his school days and ball games after school, and his unfortunate episode of the broken window. The fear of telling his father, and asking for money, was quickly solved by an unexpected spring snowstorm, enabling him to earn the needed money. Happy ending!

Our deepest sympathies to the families of Ross and Silk.

First Victor Ross died December 8th—then his sister Ann Ross died Jan. 20, 1998. Theirs was the loss of husband, father, aunt,—all in about one month. May Victor and Ann enjoy the wonders of Eternity.

Prayers are requested for Edward and Mary Anne Yokstas, who are seriously ill. Donations of clothing, nursing care needs and used postage stamps are still coming in for the benefit of Sister Helen's needy in Lithuania.

We are happy with the results of our Independence Day celebration. A generous sum was collected for AID TO LITHUANIA and the VETRA dancers were better than ever! I am looking forward to seeing many old friends in Lawrence on April 26th—the NED spring convention. So iki---

C-143, Pittston, PA

Rosemary Durling, Eleanor Bellanco

The 1998 year for Council 143 started on Jan. 4 with the swearing in of the new officers before the 11 A.M. Mass at St

.Casimir's Church in Pittston, Fr. Peter Alisauskas installed our officers.

President:

Jean Kapochus

Mihalick Vice

President: Martha

W a r n a g i r i s

Secretary: Rosemary

Durling Financial

Secretary; Helen

Karpovich Treasurer:

Mary Ann Cipolla

Trustees: Frances Shoppel, Marcella Bartoli and Marie Lauck.

After Mass a short meeting was held at which Rosalie Kizis presented past President Ann Soha with a small gift of appreciation. New President Jean Mihalick gave Ann Soha 1 yellow rose and one red rose. The men of the council did a great job of hosting the Continental breakfast in the church hall.

Plans were made for St. Casimir's breakfast on March 1st. Chair person Patricia Weiksner, Co chair person Marie Lauck.

With the joys of one occasion, come the sadness of another. The members of Council 143 would like to offer Nellie Bayoras Romanas our condolences on the the death of her husband Professor Vaclovas Romanas on Jan. 1.

C-147 St. Petersburg, FL

Dolores Jonaitis

Get well wishes are in order for many of our members. This has been a month for medical problems. Genovaite Bakas had

surgery, Mary Sarka was hospitalized, John Jonaitis had emergency surgery, and I myself broke my shoulder. A sad state of affairs for all of us. Victoria Kleiva is still convalescing. We think of you often Victoria. Best of health to you.

February 16th Minejimas was held at the Lithuanian American Hall on Saturday 2/14/98. It was quite a colorful affair this year. Flags were brought in by Romas Kalantos Sauliai, and Knights of Lithuania C147, John Jonaitis our Flag Carrier, and Valeria Lescinkas and Maria Gelazius as flag attendants. Brazenas Vilius was the main speaker. The Lithuanian Club Choir and the Dance group "Audra" participated. Joseph and Dale Dana, members of our K of L, have joined the Dance Group and performed beautifully.

The 1st Florida Lithuanian Festival in St Petersburg, was held Feb. 20 thru 22 at St. Jude's Cathedral Center. There was a Golfer's and Tennis Open. Various exhibits were set up for viewing. Ongoing entertainment was from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. The Lithuanian Cafe was open all day 9 to 5, featuring Traditional Lithuanian dishes and pastries. A Thanksgiving Mass was celebrated on Sunday at the Cathedral of St. Jude, officiated by his Excellency Bishop Paul Baltakis, assisted by Rev. Matas Cyvas and Father Stephonas Ropolas O.F.M. Flags were also carried in by Romas Kalantos Sauliai and Council 147 by Antanas Grabauskas assisted by Maria Gelazius and Genovaite Osinskiene. Lunch and closing

ceremonies followed at the Lithuanian Club.

C-156, Shamokin, PA

Robert Wislock

A Tribute to Our Brother Knight, Robert C. Barsh

Robert Barsh was an active and enthusiastic Knight of Lithuania. He was a charter member of St. Michael's Council #156, Shamokin-Coal Township since its formation. Bobby, as he was known to all council members, actively participated in every council event and liturgy. He is the first member of our council to depart from his earthly home. He died on Saturday, January 17. We wish to pay him the following tribute.

In the Bible, the book of John, Chapter 14, Verse 20, it is stated "On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I in you". Frequently, our society values the extraordinary, the attractive, and the powerful. In contrast, the emphasis seems to be away from simplicity and true happiness: the beauty of a rose, the strength of our faith, or the kindness of a human being. These attributes certainly symbolize the Lord's true gifts to us. They are the gifts that we should cherish, hold close to our hearts, and practice in our daily lives. Bobby was one of the Lord's rare gifts to our council. He represented quiet, Christian kindness and generosity. He worked tirelessly for his church and charitable organizations performing a number of tasks throughout the years. He never

said "no" to anyone who requested his help. In fact, he always responded, "Sure, why not!" He stretched out his hand in the spirit of integrity.

Bobby was also true to himself and to the people around him. He was a humble man. He was not a person of pretenses, excuses, or preoccupation with outward appearances. He demonstrated a subtle spirit of straightforwardness and character no matter who you were. He treated every person with quiet respect and at times with playfulness. This playfulness was represented by his humor. It seemed to be delivered at the most appropriate times-the times when things were tense or when individuals took themselves too seriously. It was almost like a reminder to people that there are more important things in our lives than the insignificant things that we worry about. His humor ranged from his Christmas decoration scoring contests, to his tales about his fishing trips to the use of his favorite expression "Something just does not sit right with me." Although he is no longer present, the Lord once again in his mercy and love asks us to examine the gifts that he presented to our council members through Bobby's life. These treasures are the gifts of humor, helpfulness, kindness and integrity. Our council members will truly miss Bobby. As we do, please pray for the repose of his soul. ✠✠✠

"We can do no great things, only small things with great love."

-Mother Teresa

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED:**VYTIS (The Knight)****P.O. Box 32020****Chicago, IL 60632-0020**

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The Crucifix

You say that you received the crucifix I sent
 With some curiosity and bewilderment.
 Would it shock you if I made it known
 That it is chiseled out of an exile's bone?
 Here we have no trees from which to carve
 Nor coffins for the bodies of those who starve.

Here a healthy heart soon weakens and dies,
 For the body that sheltered it could not disguise
 The desolation existing everywhere.
 What can one do? Where can one go - where?
 For him who dies. Eternal Rest will be more kind
 And into the shallow grave the body is consigned.
 To rest in peace in the warmth of the sod

On which despondently in life he trod?
 There is no peace, no warmth and no relief
 From yesterday's suffering and grief.
 The wasteland's beasts uncover the dead
 And over the sands the bones are spread.

From such a fragment that cross was made,
 Not to be encrusted with jewels or jade;
 The work is crude, the lines are plain,
 But it shall never see the wastelands again.
 The exile's bone obtained its freedom and reward
 When an aching heart carved it
 Into the image of Our Lord.

-Antonia M. Wackell

