

Vytis



The Knight - Volume 85 No. 4

Trakai Castle



Balandis / April 1999

VYTIS

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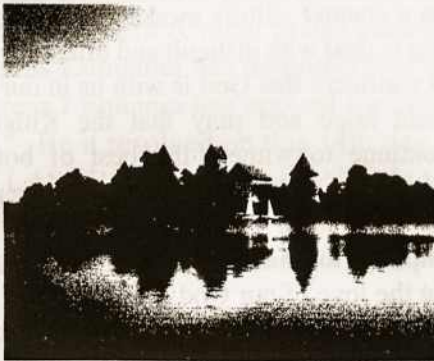


The Knights of Lithuania endeavors to instill in its members an attachment to Lithuania, the land of our ancestors, and a knowledge, appreciation and love of the Lithuanian language, customs and culture since the K of L began in 1913.

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Cover: The Castle at Trakai



Built on a peninsula in the middle of three adjoining lakes, Galvė, Luka and Totorišķiai, the castle was built during the reign of Grand Duke Kęstutis during the late 14th century. This beautiful Gothic castle is an impressive example of Lithuanian fortress architecture.

To My Fellow Knights:

Experts say that laughing can add years to one's life, and that's no April fool's joke.

As your editor, I receive lots of mail, and one note had informed me recently that Fr. John Savakinas, who edited and mailed "Laughing Matter" had relocated due to failing health. Fr. John's humor has been included in our column, Smiles without Wrinkles. A suggestion was made to write to Father and cheer him up. (Fr. J. Savakinas, c/o Fox River Pavilion, 400 E. New York St., Aurora, IL)

Also in the mail was A.P.P.L.E.'s latest newsletter which presented another great example on how Lithuania has come a long way partly due to the hard work and efforts of Lithuanian Americans.

During the spring of 1991, I had received a letter and invitation to work with a new group of teachers who had spent summers at their own expense to help instruct Lithuanian teachers with new techniques they had not been privy to as a former Soviet-governed country. At the time I did not have the time to take from my job, nor the means to assume all the costs, so in lieu of this opportunity, I chose to write about A.P.P.L.E. in a local Lithuanian paper instead. Since that time, I've eagerly kept up with the program (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) and the goings on of it's founders, Vaiva Vebra. Recently she has accepted an invitation from Lithuanian President, Valdas Adamkus to join his government as Minister of Education. Valo to Ms. Vebra! We hope to hear more about her and other that are making a difference.

Sveiki Sulaukė Šv. Velykų. Happy Easter.



L e t t e r s to the editor

More on the Tridentine Mass

To the editor:

In the February issue of VYTIS, Rob Medonis suggested that it was the Tridentine Mass that sustained the heroes of our nation and faith in the past and therefore should be the direction that the Knights of Lithuania promote in its future. I would disagree with this theological interpretation of our faith. What sustains is not looking backwards at the past and somehow wishing to recapture what is imagined as the 'golden era' but rather the strength of faith that comes from the fact of believing that God has not abandoned his people even as they struggle to move and grow and develop in the oftentimes confusing and painful reality of the present and the future.

Our Biblical faith tradition is one in which our God travels with his people in a linear way through history helping his people to grow and to develop. God's creation is not static and frozen in time, but dynamic and always calling to a faith that moves a person into the unknown future, confident in the promised love of a God that is unending and sustaining. Abraham was

called to let go of what he knew and venture forth with only the assurance of God's love; the Jewish people endured the struggle of the Exodus, their later exile and ultimate return to their homeland believing that God remained with them. The Council of Jerusalem, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, gives us a model of our Church moving with the power of the Holy Spirit from its familiar Jewish rituals and customs to embrace a reality of God's acting in new and unexpected ways in a larger non-Jewish world.

We remember, not in order to return to the past, but to use the knowledge of God's consistent faithfulness to help us have the courage to face our futures. What we can offer to young, 'assimilated' Lithuanian-Americans is a counter culture model that shows them people willing to deal with difficult and oftentimes fearful decisions confident that God is with us in our struggling. I would hope and pray that the Knights of Lithuania continue to witness the best of both our Lithuanian and Catholic traditions of faith to the people of America and Lithuania as we move into an unknown future, attempting to make good decisions, always believing that the love of our God is with us.

Sincerely,
Rev. Thomas R. Kasputis
St. Mary Church, Riverside, IL

Community Activist Brings Ethnic Pride

A hundred people gathered at Waterbury, Connecticut's City Hall Feb. 17th to commemorate Lithuanian Independence Day and to recognize the efforts of a woman whom many credit with the revitalization of the city's historically Lithuanian neighborhood.

Mayor Philip A. Giordano bestowed the Mayor of the Day honor to Lisa Velez, a lifelong resident of the Brooklyn area of the city who was instrumental in the clean-up. Velez is president of the Brooklyn Neighborhood Association, serves as secretary of the Brooklyn Neighborhood Revitalization Zone and is a member of a number of Lithuanian organizations, including the Lithuanian Club of Waterbury and the Knights of Lithuania.

Velez's concern for the neighborhood was just part of caring for her family, she said in a brief speech accepting the recognition. "I never had aspi-



C-7's Lisa Velez gets a hug from son Chris, after being made Waterbury's Mayor for a Day

rations to be a community leader except to be a great wife and mother," she said. "It's a great feeling to know that your children are proud of you."

The day began with the raising of the Baltic nation's red, green and gold flag outside of City Hall. Linas Balsys, vice president of the Knights of Lithuania and Lithuanian Community of Waterbury, began the ceremony by noting that the Lithuanian flag has only recently been flown over an independent country. February 16 marks the date of

Lithuania's independence from the Russian empire.

Giordano said that flag raisings are a way for the city to celebrate its many ethnic heritages. "It's important to recognize everyone's ethnic culture," he said.

The mayor attended St. Joseph School with Velez, where he was the only Italian at the then predominately Lithuanian elementary school. He praised work of his former classmate, calling Velez "a shining example of volunteerism."

(☞ Continued on page 7)

Feb 16 RESOLUTION (as submitted by Council 82, Gary, IN)

Whereas Lithuania is geographically strategic to western stability and security and
Whereas western /United States security is heightened by a stability of all European countries and
Whereas Lithuania has demonstrated unwavering advocacy of western ideals and
Whereas Lithuania has applied for NATO membership

Be it resolved on this 14th day of February, 1999, at the UFW in Merrillville, Indiana that we - ATLAS, Bendruomene of NW Indiana and the Knights of Lithuania Council 82 -support and encourage passage of Senate Resolution # 2 introduced by Senator Richard Durbin and Congressional Resolution # 21 introduced by House Representative John Shirnkus

*Vincent Gumulauskis, President of HLTRS of Indiana.
Birute Vilutis, President Bendruornene of NW Indiana
Izidore Tauaras, President Knights of Lithuania Council 82*

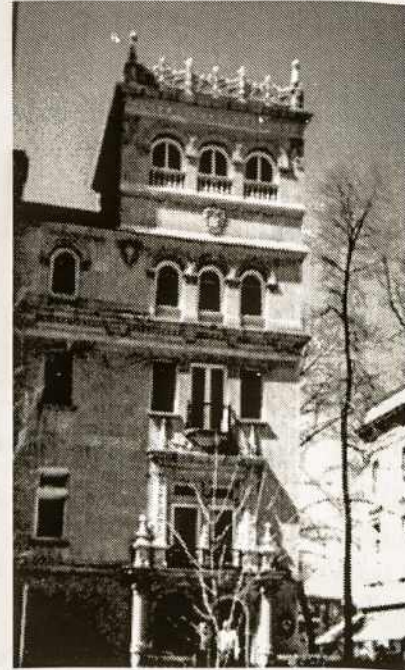
A Brief History of the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington D.C

by John R. Mankus

The baroque style building that today is the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania has a rich and interesting history. During the 1890's, former U.S. Senator John Henderson and his wife, Mary purchased large tracts of land in the vicinity of their residence at the 2200 block of 16th Street in Washington D.C. Their vision was to transform this area into diplomatic housing adjacent to their residence. Although John Henderson died in 1913, Mrs. Henderson continued their dream and eventually built embassies for Cuba, Ecuador, France, Holland, Lithuania, Mexico, Spain and Poland.

The construction of the building that was to become the Lithuanian Embassy was completed in April of 1909. Lithuania purchased the building from Mrs. Henderson in 1924 for \$90,000. The building has remained in Lithuanian hands ever since, even during post World War II Soviet occupation. Immediately after the re-establishment of Independence on Feb. 16th. 1918, Lithuania set out to achieve formal diplomatic recognition.

Julius Bielskis headed the Lithuanian Information Bureau, followed in 1919 by a special Lithuanian government mission led by Jonas Vileišis. Among the goals of these missions was to raise money and secure loans for Lithuania. Jonas Vileišis originated the sale of Lithuanian Freedom Bonds and recruited Lithuanian Americans, including many Knights of Lithuania members, for support. Between 1919 and 1921, under Vileišis leadership, nearly two million



Lithuanian Embassy Building, Washington, DC

dollars was raised. In 1921, Voldemaras Čarneckis succeeded Vileišis as Lithuania's unofficial representative to the U.S., and the fund raising continued.

In July of 1922, the U.S. recognized the Lithuanian Government de jure and in October of that same year, Voldemaras Čarneckis was accredited as Lithuanian representative to United States. In 1923 Kazys Bizauskas replaced Čarneckis and in 1924 purchased the Lithuanian Embassy building on Sixteenth Street. Bronius Kazys Balutis succeeded Bizauskas in 1928, and Povilas Žadeikis followed Balutis in 1934.

During the Soviet occupation, Žadeikis continued to represent Lithuania, even though there was no "legitimate Lithuanian government" to report to and no funding for the Legation was available.

In 1940, at the Legation, Žadeikis started the bulletin "The Lithuanian Situation", which was sent to Congress, other government agencies and governments friendly to the Lithuanian cause. Additional publications printed at the Legation were "Lithuania's Occupation by the Soviet Union" in 1960 and "The Story of Captive Lithuania" in 1964 and 1969.



(l to r) K. of L. President, John R. Mankus and wife, Grace, with Juratė and Ambassador Stasys Sakalauskas at the Lithuanian Embassy

Juozas Kajeckas succeeded Žadeikis in 1957, followed by Stasys Bačkis in 1976 and Stasys Lozoraitis Jr. in 1987. In 1991 Stasys Lozoraitis, Jr. was accredited as ambassador. In 1993 Alfonsas Eidintas succeeded Lozoraitis and in 1997, current ambassador, Stasys Sakalauskas succeeded Eidintas.

In the early 1980's, the building required major repair and renovation. A committee was established in 1982 called "Lithuanian Legation Building Restoration Committee" for fund raising activities. Lithuanian American Organizations and individual donors contributed over \$130,000 for the renovation. The initial renovation was completed by the mid 1980's, but further improvements were necessary. Renovation projects to both building and grounds are continuing to the present day. By 1995 an additional sum of \$375,000 was spent. The Embassy grounds also saw major improvements. To honor and commemorate those who gave their life for Lithuania's freedom, a large Lithuanian wooden cross was erected on the Embassy grounds.

The old gardens were modified, a new entrance and parking lot was added and security was improved

with the addition of a new gate and fence. Even a basketball court was added in the rear parking area. Whenever possible, goods manufactured in Lithuania were used in the renovation and during Embassy functions, Lithuanian products are served. Of the 31 rooms in the building, the last one to be restored was the tea room or the Tower room. Many of the rediscovered archives stored in the building over decades were shipped to the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in Chicago. Others were shipped to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the National Archives in Lithuania. Among the treasures discovered was a mural entitled "The Christening of King Mindaugas", which was exhibited at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. Presently the portrait hangs in the office of Ambassador Stasys Sakalauskas. Those of us who have been privileged to be invited to the Embassy building, have seen the impressive results of the renovation. Since so many of us have made contributions, we all can be justifiably proud of the Embassy.

Today the Embassy building stands as both a symbol of Lithuania's statehood and as a partnership of cooperation of Lithuanian government and Lithuanian Americans.



IN MEMORIAM



Greg Pacocha
C-156, Shamokin, PA
Feb. 1999

Agnes Lazdauskas,
C-141, Bridgeport, CT
Feb.7, 1999

Algirdas Brazinskas,
C-29, Newark, NJ
Feb 2, 1999

Rev. Anthony Miciunas
MIC
C-36, Chicago, IL

Charles Vilnis
C-147, St. Petersburg, FL
Oct. 17, 1998

John Balesky,
C-144, Anthracite, PA
Jan. 13, 1999

Anna C. Lane
C-17, South Boston, MA
Jan. 19, 1999

Amžina Atilsi
Rest in Peace



Lithuanians in the news

Hunting for the Hero of Red October

For much of the world, "The Hunt for Red October" became coffee table talk after Tom Clancy's book was made into a Hollywood movie. Yet many remain unaware that the story of Soviet captain was based on the life of a real man. Lithuanian Jonas Pleškys, who was a consultant for the book. Pleškys secretly steered his submarine away from the Soviets to the Swedish island of Gotland in 1961.

This ignorance changed last January, when a documentary film directed by Henrikas Sablevičius and financed by the Lithuanian Ministry of Culture was released.

Before shooting the film in the places Pleskys lived - Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Sweden, Guatemala and the United States, Sablevičius became an expert on Plešky's life by talking with those who knew him.

"Pleskys was born in Žemaitija, a region of Western Lithuania where people are famous for being stubborn," said Sablevičius, adding that Pleškys was stubborn in his hatred of the Soviet occupiers of Lithuania. He had reason to be, since he was brought up by his sisters after his father and stepmother were deported to Siberia.

He hijacked a Soviet submarine in order to escape from a system he regarded as a total lie and a prison. He was called to serve in the Soviet army and attended a school for submarine captains, but before getting his stripes, he was told to become a member of the Communist party or marry.

Pleškys chose marriage to a Jewish girl in a large celebration that participants said looked fake.

After becoming captain Pleskys worked in

Paldiški, Estonia, and Liepaje, Latvia. In Latvia he fell in love with Paula, who was carrying their child when he escaped to the West. Paula, who still lives in Latvia, named their daughter Sondra.

On June 12, 1961, Pleškys' submarine was heading to port in Liepaja. While his sailors were sleeping, he secretly changed course by 180 degrees and headed to Gotland. When the Swedish shore came into view, Pleškys explained to his marines that he did not know what shore it was. He ordered the only other Lithuanian on the submarine, sailor Jurgis Kryžiokas, to accompany him to shore "to find out where we are."

After meeting with a Swedish border guard, Pleškys asked for political asylum, but Kryžiokas rejected the Swedes' offer to stay in the West and instead returned to the submarine. The sub was directed to neutral waters and then returned to Liepaja.

Kryžiokas, 59, a construction worker in Kaunas, kept silent for 35 years. A wise choice, considering his legendary shipmates, Belorussian Genady Shchedow and Khramcov, a Russian, died under "mysterious circumstances" in Paldiski and Liepaja soon after the event.

This true story might have remained secret if Sablevičius had not embarked on a 1992 documentary about Jonas Pajaujis, a legendary participant in Lithuanian anti-Soviet and anti-Nazi resistance who lived in Gotland for more than 50 years. He was one of the first men to meet Pleškys after his 1961 escape.

Pajaujis gave Pleškys' Soviet officer's documents to Sablevičius, asking him to bring them to Eugenija Pleškytė, a sister of Pleškys and a Lithuanian movie star then living in Vilnius. The documents were the first news she had from brother Jonas in 31 years.

"Pleškys never made any official statements to the mass media because he didn't want to provoke any

Community Activist Brings Ethnic Pride

(cont. from page 3)

"I can't think of a better person to recognize as mayor of the day," he said.

Velez was also presented with citations from offices of U.S. Rep. Jim Maloney and state legislators Tom Conway and Mike Jarjura. "Part of our job is to go into communities and get ideas," Jarjura said. "And wherever we go, Lisa is there and she is not bashful."

Heritage and community are closely tied for Velez; her parents and grandparents live in the house next door to her. Even her endurance was inspired by her family, she said. "I was asked where I got my energy and I said, 'You think this is tough, try growing up with seven brothers and being the only girl,'" Velez said.

Among her accomplishments for the neighborhood are trash pickup, the establishment of the second police precinct, and a new campaign to mark houses with clear address numbers so police can see them more easily. The greatest accomplishment this year is receiv-

ing funding to begin building a youth and senior center, she said.

"We think she's doing a marvelous job, especially around the Brooklyn area," said Kathryn Urban of Wethers-field and who is first vice president of the Lithuanian American Women's Alliance, a national organization with a chapter in Waterbury. "It's getting so clean around there. It just shows what one woman can do," Urban said.

Waterbury Knights of Lithuania president, Joseph Stikhus said that Velez has done much to inject new energy into the city's Lithuanian community.

The shared loyalties were evident. Many in the crowd were clad in crocheted badges of the Lithuanian flag or amber beads, the country's gem. And when the program concluded with a singing of the Lithuanian national anthem, most joined in.

"That was really impressive. Everyone just got up and sang with their hearts. I even saw some tears," said Billie Cipriano of Waterbury.

Submitted by J. Sticklius, article by Liz Acas © 1999 Waterbury Republican-American

repression of his relatives left in Lithuania," Sablevičius said. He left four sisters and a brother behind.

While Pleškys never spoke publicly, Pleskytė still suffered because of his escape. She was never allowed to go to the West even though she was invited to film festivals and to act in movies. But after marrying an American, she has finally been able to go abroad.

Pleškys life was not much better, since he was always moving and in constant fear.

"It was difficult for him to live in the free world because he feared the KGB. A Soviet court had passed the death penalty on him and he was sure the KGB was hunting him," said Sablevičius.

He worked as a computer specialist and, according to Sablevičius, was financially supported by the CIA. He married a Guatemalan woman, Laura, and had a daughter with her.

In 1992, Pleškys, avoiding any contacts with the mass media, visited Lithuania. His wish to see relatives and his fatherland was stronger than his fear of the Russian army that was still in the country. He also traveled to Latvia to meet with his youthful love, Paula, and their daughter, Sondra.

Sondra later visited him in San Francisco before he died of a brain tumor in California in 1993. Just before his death, he feared KGB agents had poisoned him with special gas through a ventilation hole while he lay in an American hospital.

Pleškys' last wish was that the ashes of his body be scattered in the places where he was happy, such as where played as a child and the path he took to school. This seemed too extravagant to his Lithuanian relatives who buried his ashes near the grave of their mother.

submitted by Dalia Bulvičius (The Baltic Times)

TONY RAPŠYS GETS HIS GREAT WHITE SHARK, FOR A WHILE...

Dalia Bulvičius

He has been hunting and fishing for over 20 years from Canada to the Amazon. But what recently happened to him in the Floridian waters happens very seldom to fishing enthusiasts. It happened to Antanas "Tony" Rapšys, a 34 year old of Marquette Park in Chicago, IL, who is the son of R. John Rapšys.

On a hot February day, fishing recently in Florida, about 12 miles east from Islamorada of the Florida Keys chain, Tony realized that he had "a big one" on his 80 lb test line. His boat was a 40 footer, named the Sea Byrd.

A two hour battle started. The shark tossed and turned, but very slowly rose to the top. This was unusual, since most sharks in this situation tended to dive, where they are able to remain for almost 8 hours. In such a case the angler usually loses patience and lets the shark off the hook. Little by little Tony's hands became sore and his reel started to smoke so water had to be poured on it and his shoulders had to be massaged.

As the boat towing the shark approached the shoreline, a crowd had gathered and shouts such as: "What a monster!" "My God, it's Jaws!" were heard. According to the captain of the boat Kevin Kelly's expert opinion - this one was 20 feet long and weighed over 2,000 pounds. He said that in his 35 years of fishing in the Florida waters, he never saw such a monster.

But red tape ended some of the jubilation. A recently enacted law stated that one could not keep such "treasure". You could tow it to shore but not bring it upon the boat or land.

Nevertheless, as a legally caught shark, in front of a few witnesses it was recorded in the book of records. Bill Holwell, Tony's fishing buddy, recorded all this on his videotape. The news spread like wildfire and a crowd of people, reporters and pelicans met the

boat at Whale Harbor marina. It was here that the shark was set free.

"I could have made a great deal of money, if the law had not been passed last year" - remarked Tony Rapšys, but he is not sorry. At home in Chicago, Tony remarked to a "Chicago Tribune" reporter "My hands were almost pulled off and my knuckles are still sore!"

According to captain Kelly, an authority on fishing, this great white was the biggest one caught in the Florida waters. According to the International Game Fish Association statistics, the recorded largest shark caught was a 2,664 pounder in 1959 on the shores of southern Australia. The record stands for 50 years.

NATO Entry Seems Closer

Lithuania is now one of the top three applicants for a NATO membership, according to a recent report by the Congressional Research Service of the US Congress.

Of the nine former Eastern Bloc countries that applied for NATO membership, the study found Slovenia most qualified, followed by Lithuania and Slovakia. The creation of a credible defense force is one of the deciding factors for membership and Lithuania has allocated a defense budget of 1.6% of the country's annual GNP. The figure will rise to 2 percent by 2001. Lithuania plans to have an active military force of 25,000 within 10 years. The force will be organized into three brigades and will include a rapid deployment force which will be available to NATO within 24 hours.

In addition, Polish President, Aleksander Kwasniewski pledged not to forget about its northeastern neighbor, Lithuania, as Poland nears the brink of NATO membership. In a recent meeting with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, Kwasniewski seemed happy about Polish-Lithuanian relations.

"Relations between both countries simply can't become better. They are just perfect. Look how often we are meeting." Kwasniewski added. ❖❖❖



Teaching English in Lithuania

By Leona Gustaff

"I'm very happy you gave us the opportunity to study from American books and to see all these wonderful things that we can use in our teaching now", were the words of Viktorija Lapyte, a student at Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute in 1992.

My husband and I are both Lithuanian Americans. We were preparing, after ten months, to leave Lithuania and return to our home in Frederick, Maryland, when we were presented with a tape by the students of one of my classes. This was not an ordinary tape. It was made by the students themselves as they each related their ideas about my teaching and all that I taught them.

Viktorija was by far the brightest student. Her English was perfect and she spoke with a delightful British - Lithuanian accent.

"In our first classes with you everyone had to strain for attention for every word that you said and now we can understand you easily," Viktorija continued.

Teaching English in Lithuania was interesting and exciting. I often wondered whether my students understood me, even though I spoke slowly and clearly when I first arrived. The Institute teachers had experienced no contact with native English speakers since World War II, so we were pleasantly surprised to hear them speak fluent English. Some of their words and pronunciation were outdated, but easily understood.

They spoke a Dickens' type of British dialect. One teacher commented, "We are glad you are here, but would you mind teaching British English?" Being an American I found this impossible. The phrase 'kitchen garden' was not familiar but my students insisted it was correct. 'Clothes' was pronounced with two syllables. Many months later I discovered that neither word was used in Great Britain any longer. Debates flourished in my class when I explained that language grows and changes with the years.

"I was real happy to see you in Lithuania, you

came to us on the 19th. of February, 1992. I was surprised and afraid a little. You were the first person who spoke with me in English. It was nearly fantastic." Sonata voiced her opinion.

In the beginning it was difficult. We were the first and only American English speaking instructors to come to this Institute in fifty years. In addition to teaching our students 25 hours a week we were asked to give seminars to the teachers at the Institute and those in the city public schools, to instruct students and adults in business terminology, and to teach the mayor of the city and his staff. We tried to explain the new teaching methods to the Institute teachers, but they found excuses not to listen. They had difficulty understanding us. To them, American English sentences seemed to blend into one word. He were in shock and realized we had a lot of work to do if we were to make an impression.

They found it hard to believe that we had come to teach and had planned to stay for some time. We heard from many a person, "It is too hard for Americans here;" or, "Americans are not that concerned about us."

But some people welcomed us with delight. One young man who hoped to be one of our students remarked with an apologetic smile, "You are a beautiful light and fresh air to us."

My students seldom, if ever, smiled. They were submissive, quiet, and scared, but anxious to learn. They were unaccustomed to creative or analytical thinking, stood at attention when I entered the room, and never contradicted or challenged me. English classes for future teachers were five days a week and each class was 90 minutes long. They had no textbooks so they copied lessons in small notebooks they brought each day to the classroom. They knew their grammar, studied their vocabulary, read and wrote English but had difficulty speaking, listening, and understanding.

We were glad to have with us a limited amount of the more current textbooks and literature books donated by American publishers. (☞ to page 12)

THE ANCESTORS OF SAINT CASIMIR

by Edward Baranauskas

This is a story about Saint Casimir, Patron of Lithuania, his family tree and his ancestors.

He was born on October 3, 1458 in Cracow, the capital of Poland at that time. His father was Casimir IV, the Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland, who ruled for 45 years. It was learned with certainty, by historical facts, that not a single one of his relatives, or ancestors, was a direct descendant of Poland. Saint Casimir is Lithuanian in origin.

(Source: "Šventas Kazimieras", by Zenonas Ivinskis (1908-1971). He resided in Rome after the war where he collected historical documents at the Vatican and other archives pertaining to the history of Lithuania.)

Grand Duke Gediminas was the great, great-grandfather of Saint Casimir. He founded the city of Vilnius. He was an excellent diplomat who united the Slavic people, such as the Belorussians, Ukrainians, and even some Russians, to form what became known in history as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Ethnic Lithuania was but a small part of the Grand Duchy. In addition to being the Grand Duke of Lithuania, he was also the ruler of the Grand Duchy.

When Gediminas died, Algirdas, one of his six sons, succeeded him as the Grand Duke of Lithuania and the ruler of the Grand Duchy.

Algirdas was the great-grandfather of Saint Casimir. Algirdas made it known that he wanted his son Jogaila to succeed him on the throne. It is interesting to note that Algirdas was married twice. His first child, with his second wife, was Jogaila.

You have to understand the politics of Eastern Europe that existed during that period in history. Pope Innocent VI encouraged the Teutonic Knights, and others, to convert the Lithuanians by force if they did not voluntarily agree to accept Christianity. The Pope

looked upon the Lithuanians as the "enemies of Christiandom".

As a result, "the German Teutonic Knights kept attacking Lithuania from the west, while the Livonian Order attacked the Lithuanians from the

north. To add to Jogaila's woes, problems with the Slavs in the east start to surface.

Poland was having their share of problems, too.

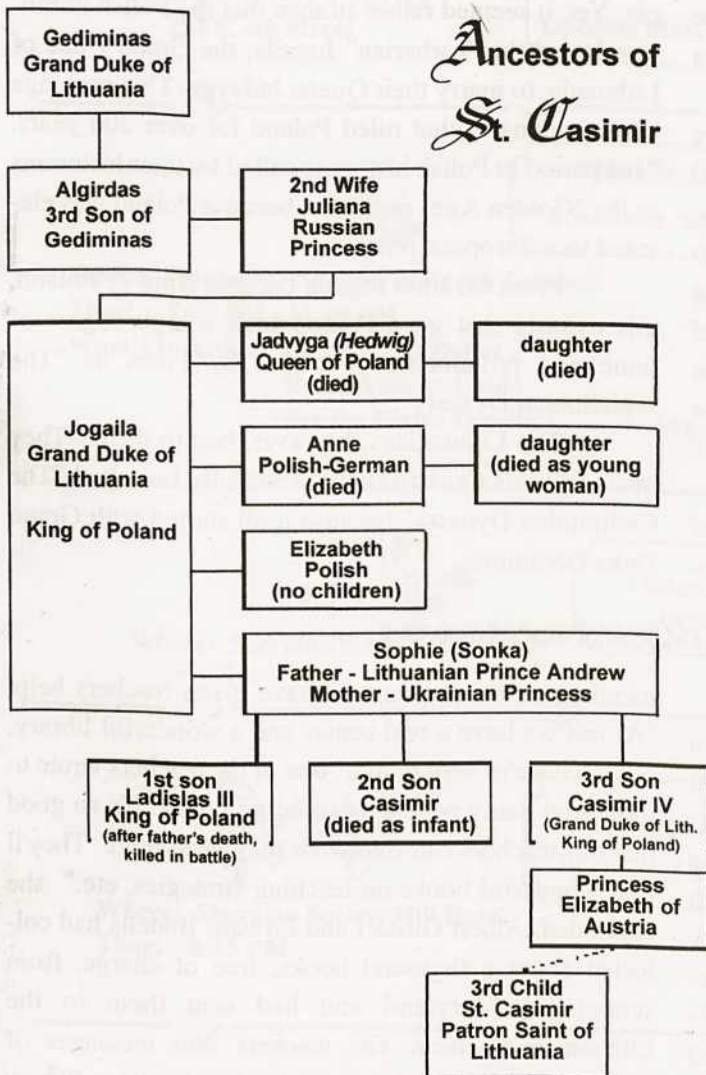
It might be best at this point not to go into detailed Polish history, but just mention the main facts. When their King Casimir the Great died, he left no heir to the throne. It was up to the Polish nobility to choose the person who would become their ruler, for they were the power brokers. Their choice was his grandniece Jadvyga, also known as Hedwig, who was residing in Hungary. She was only an eleven year-old child. She came to Cracow, and was crowned Queen of Poland. Now there was another problem. The nobility had to select a suitable husband for her, the man who would be the nation's king.

The nobility wanted Poland to be independent. They wanted no ties, or connections, with German, Austrian, Hungarian or other royalty. They decided that their best choice was Jogaila, the Grand Duke of Lithuania.

There were many advantages for Poland to arrange such a marriage. They would be united with a country three times bigger than Poland. They would also acquire an ally against their common enemy, the Teutonic Knights.

Jogaila realized that it was also in the best inter-





ests of Lithuania for the marriage to take place. If the Lithuanian people were converted to Christianity, it might bring a period of peace. Then, too, they would not be alone against the dreaded Teutonic Knights.

Queen Jadvyga did not want to marry Jogaila because of the age difference. He was old enough to be her grandfather. He was 35, while she was only 13. The nobility finally convinced her that it was in Poland's best interests, and that she would further the cause of Christianity. She agreed, reluctantly.

Jogaila arrived at Cracow with a delegation of Lithuanian princes. He was baptized, married the queen, and was crowned King of Poland on March 4,

1386.

Jogaila and Jadvyga were childless for thirteen years. Their first born, a daughter, lived for only a few days. Jadvyga died shortly after, at the age of 26, due to complications resulting from the birth.

Jogaila had a daughter with his second wife, but was widowed again after several years of marriage. His daughter, and only child, died when she was a young woman. She never married.

The death of his third wife ended a short marriage. They had no children. Jogaila was now approaching the age of 70, and he had no heir to the throne.

Vytautas the Great, his cousin, changed the course of history. He talked Jogaila into marrying Sophie, the 17 year-old daughter of Lithuanian Prince Andrew. It is interesting to note that even though Sophie's mother was from Ukrainian royalty, Polish historians referred to her as a Lithuanian princess.

Their first child was born when Jogaila was 73 years old. They had three sons, but their second child died as an infant. Jogaila died on May 31, 1434 at the age of 84. His first son succeeded him as king, and was crowned at the age of 10. He died in battle against the Turks.

Casimir, the sole surviving son, was crowned Grand Duke of Lithuania at the age of 13, and six years later became King Casimir IV of Poland. King Casimir IV married Princess Elizabeth of Austria. They had eleven children.

Their third child, and second son, was named Casimir. He was born on October 3, 1458. It was he who became our beloved Patron Saint. He died on March 4, 1484. Records show that he was canonized by Pope Leo X, but the exact date is not known. Pope Leo X died in 1521.

Jogaila was the grandfather of Saint Casimir.

Footnote to history:

Jogaila was the longest reigning monarch in Polish history, ruling for 48 years. His son, Casimir IV,

was the second longest with 45 years. Between these two Lithuanians, father and son, they ruled Poland for a total of 93 years.

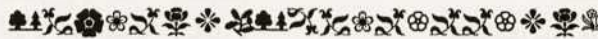
One fact that scholars of Lithuanian history should not overlook is that Jogaila's tenure as the Grand Duke of Lithuania ended in 1392. Jogaila and Vytautas, sons of "brothers, signed an agreement, which has also been called "The Astravas Treaty", in which Vytautas was able to gain control of the entire Grand Duchy of Lithuania. He became its unchallenged ruler. Vytautas later became known as Vytautas the Great because eventually the Grand Duchy stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

Polish historians regarded the Lithuanians of that day as barbarians, heathens, and an uncultured peo-

ple. Yet, it seemed rather strange that the Polish nobility selected the "barbarian" Jogaila, the Grand Duke of Lithuania, to marry their Queen Jadvyga. This marriage began a dynasty that ruled Poland for over 200 years. That period in Polish history is called by their historians as the "Golden Age" of Poland because Poland was elevated to a European power.

From the time Jogaila became King of Poland, this dynasty that gave Poland such a high degree of fame and prominence is called by Poles as "The Jagiellonian Dynasty".

The Lithuanians, however, beg to differ. They insist that this dynasty should truthfully be called "The Gediminian Dynasty" because it all started with Grand Duke Gediminas.



Teaching English in Lithuania

(☞ from page 9) We used these books, collecting them at the end of each class and taking them to the next class.

Lithuanians were very serious about learning English. Their language education started in the fifth grade, and in a few schools began in the second grade. Primary stress was placed on grammar. Most instructions were given in Lithuanian or Russian. Very little English was spoken in class. All textbooks were printed in Russia and gave adverse comments about America, which the students believed. Literature books were poor with bad translations of Russian translations of American and British authors. There were no English books from Britain or America in the library.

Textbooks are rare and expensive. Many teachers are forced to use the obsolete grammar translation method from books that had been supplied by the Soviet system. Most are generally unfamiliar with the latest developments in English as a Second Language methods of teaching. Others are turning to them as new books become available.

Since we have been there many Americans and

members of other countries have given teachers help. "At last we have a real center and a wonderful library, of which we're very proud," one of the teachers wrote to me. "And many people are sending books. It's so good that our teachers can find what they need there. They'll find wonderful books on teaching strategies, etc." she continued. Albert Gustaff and Edward Budelis had collected about a thousand books, free of charge, from schools in Maryland and had sent them to the Lithuanian teachers. The teachers sent messages of thanks and requests for more books. A center library was set up in Šiauliai, and the books are available now to over thirty schools in the city and vicinity. The news of the receipt of the books has traveled quickly. Since that time more requests are arriving from teachers in other towns and villages .

Approximately 15,000 more books have been collected and are packed and ready to ship to help continue with the teaching of English in Lithuania.

For more information on this project, contact: Albert and Leona Gustaff at 6910 Palace Court, Frederick, MD 21703 or email: guzevicius@aol.com



Come Have Fun With The Philly Knights!!!

Where: Old St. Mary's Church
252 S. 4th Street

Thursday, July 29
Opening Mass - 10:30 AM

2 blocks from hotel



Thursday, July 29
"A Summer Night in Philly"

Bus Transportation
Provided

Where: Outdoors - St. George Parish Grounds
Time: 7:00 PM - 11:00 PM
What's Included? Catered Hot Buffet -
Beer, Wine and Soda
(For the Entire Evening)

Is there Entertainment? Absolutely!
DJ Music and Dancing
Broadcasting Live from "WWSG"

What should I wear? Casual Dress



Where: Sheraton Society Hill Hotel

Friday, July 30
Luncheon

Time: 12:00 Noon



Where: Sheraton Society Hill Hotel
Time: 8:15 PM

Friday, July 30
"Echoes of Lithuania"

Songs and Music Lithuanian Style
by Guest Performers



Where: Sheraton Society Hill
Time: 6:00 PM (Cocktails - Cash Bar)
7:00 PM Dinner

Saturday, July 31
Inaugural Banquet & Dance

Music & Dancing



Sunday Breakfast Buffet
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM
Sheraton Society Hill Hotel

Sunday, August 1

Bus Service to Church
Convention Photo
After Mass

Solemn Closing Mass
Time: 11:30 AM

Where: St. George Church
Salmon & Venango Streets



KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA
86TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
JULY 29 - AUGUST 1, 1999



Convention Site: Sheraton Society Hill Hotel
One Dock Street
Philadelphia, Pa.

Host: Council 3 Philadelphia

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

First Name(s): _____ **Last Name:** _____ **Council No.** _____
 (Please Print)

Street: _____ **Phone No.** _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Early Registration - \$160.00 per person (Prior to June 1)

Amount _____

Late Registration - \$165.00 per person (After June 1)

Amount _____

Junior Registration: \$80.00

Name of Child _____

Age of Child _____

Amount _____

CONVENTION REGISTRATION INCLUDES:

All Bus Service as required; Thursday Night Get-Together; Friday Cultural Evening;
 Coffee after morning Mass in Hotel on Friday and Saturday; Friday Luncheon;
 Saturday Night Banquet and Dance; and Sunday Brunch in Hotel before the Closing Mass.

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITY:

Wednesday, July 28, 1999 – Bus Trip to Atlantic City Casino

Departure: 10:00 A.M. (ADULTS ONLY) - \$25.00 per person

Amount _____

Make Checks Payable to: Knights of Lithuania Council 3- - - - - Total Amount _____

**Mail Checks and
 Registration Forms to:**

Lillian Greymas, Registration Coordinator
2557 E. Ontario Street
Philadelphia, PA 19134
(215 - 426-6762)



**KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA
86TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
JULY 29 - AUGUST 1, 1999**



Host: Council 3 Philadelphia

Dear Members,

The Knights of Lithuania 86th National Convention will be held July 29 - August 1, 1999, in Philadelphia, PA..... the City of Brotherly Love and the City that loves you back!!!

Greet your fellow Knights with an ad in the Convention Program Book. Ad sizes and costs are as follows:

_____ \$100.00 Full Page
4" x 7"

_____ \$ 50.00 Half Page
4" x 3 1/2"

_____ \$ 25.00 Quarter Page
4" x 1 1/4"

_____ \$ 10.00 Patron Greeting (Use 3 Lines below)

First Line _____

Second Line _____

Third Line _____

_____ \$ 5.00 Philly Pal (Name Only)

You may submit your ad on a separate piece of paper. Camera ready copy is welcome.

DEADLINE FOR ADS: JUNE 1, 1999

Make Checks Payable to: Knights of Lithuania Council 3 - - - - - Amount _____

**Mail Ads with Payment to: Margaret Petronis, Chair - Program Book
223 Dickinson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147**

Information for Hotel Reservations

Sheraton Society Hill Hotel
One Dock Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: 1-800- 325-3535
Direct Phone : 215-238-6000

**Special K. of L. Room Rates: Single/Double - \$105.00 per room plus applicable taxes
(Please Note: You MUST mention that you are with the Knights of Lithuania for these rates!!!)**

**A Limited Number of Suites are Available:
One Bedroom Suite (with parlor) - \$275.00
Two Bedroom Suite (with parlor) - \$350.00
(Please Note: We suggest using Direct Phone No. to order suites.)**

Room reservations should be made by JUNE 1, 1999 to insure room availability.

Parking will be extra.

Smiles without Wrinkles

CHURCH BULLETIN BLOOPERS

-Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

-The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.

-The Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B. S. is done.

-Evening massage - 6 p.m.

-The Pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.

-The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.

-The Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Please use the back door.

-Ushers will eat late comers.

-The third verse of Blessed Assurance will be sung without musical accomplishment.

-For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

-The Rev. Merriwether spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.

AN EYE FOR AND EYE

A man is sitting in a diner eating his breakfast. Three bikers enter. One hits the man on the head, the other extinguishes his cigarette in the man's orange juice, and



the third spits into his cereal. The man quietly pays his bill and leaves.

The trio is roaring with laughter. What a dumb guy, right one asks the waitress.

"Sure he is, she answers. He just drove his trailer truck over three bikes!"

TRUE LOVE

Daughter telling her Father about her most recent love:

- He truly loves me Daddy. I am sure he will soon propose to me. He is very worried about the future. A few times he asked me how much money you earn.

CHILDPROOF BOTTLES

I often think I'd like to throttle
Inventors of the child proof bottle
It will of course, deter a kid
You need a wrench to lift that lid,

The bottle holds your medication
Which only leads to more frustration
"Use as directed" says the data
But what it says just doesn't matter

For all that you may strain and squint
You just can't read that tiny print
One more reason we should throttle
Inventors of that child proof bottle
-Sonia Alloy

(Ed's note: Our humor this month is dedicated to Fr. John Savakinas and his "Laughing Matter")

ON THE CALENDAR...

Supreme Council Meeting

April 24, 1999 - Chicago
Call Maria Deksnis for details
(773) 476-5896

District Meetings

Mid Atlantic - Spring
Convention
April 18, 1999
Hosts: C-29, Newark, NJ

MCD Meeting - Pilgrimage
Sept. 24-26, 1999
Hosts: C-25, Cleveland, OH

1999 National Convention

July 29-Aug. 1, 1999
Hosts: C-3, Philadelphia

Aug. 14-15, 1999

Lithuanian Days

C-144- Anthracite Council
Contact: Anne Wargo
(717) 429-0132

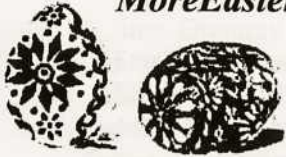
Lithuanian Open Golf Tournament

Sept 25, 1999
Benefit for Lithuanian
Children's Relief at Squirrel
Run Country Club, West
Plymouth, MA

Send in your district/council events at least 2 months in advance, to the editors to be included in this listing.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

More Easter Treats



HONEY CAKES MEDUOLIAI

Honey cakes are cakes in whose preparation honey is used. Butter, sour cream or sour milk is added to the dough of honey cakes or else the cake will be hard. Honey makes the dough heavier, therefore, to obtain a light cake, baking soda or other baking powder must be added to the dough.

A mixture of spices is used in preparing a honey cake. A sample of such a mixture is the following:

3 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
3 teaspoons aromatic pepper
1/2 teaspoon badiano
1 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/2 teaspoon cardamon
1 teaspoon orange peel
1/2 teaspoon mace

If some of the above spices are not available, a simpler mixture may be used.

Each spice must be ground separately, sift each and use in the quantity advised in the recipe.

When baked, the honey cake must be dark brown in color. This color is obtained by boiling the honey or by adding burned sugar. This is done in the following way: two tablespoons sugar are heated in a clean frying pan until the sugar melts and becomes a dark golden

foam. Then add 1/2 cup hot water and simmer until congealed sugar melts again. The amount of burnt sugar added to the dough depends on the intensity of the color desired — dark or light brown.

When baked and cooled, the honey cake should be immediately cut into serving pieces, placed into a tightly covered container and kept in a cool place. This way, the honey cake will keep its good taste and appearance for a long time. When the cake is kept in a covered dish for some time, it becomes moist and tastes even better.

There are two types of honey cakes: soft and hard. The hardness of the cake depends on the amount of flour used in the dough.

The dough for soft honey cakes is prepared similarly to that for tortes. Egg yolks are creamed with sugar; boiled and cooled honey and spice mixture is added to the egg mixture. Mix well, add flour mixed with the chemicals, and beaten egg whites. Mix and pour into prepared baking pan to a thickness of 1/2 inch. Bake in a medium oven 30 to 40 minutes.

Hard honey cakes are made by kneading all the ingredients listed in the recipe. When finished kneading, the dough is rolled out and various shapes are cut out with a cookie cutter. The dough may also be shaped into various shapes by hand. Bake in medium oven 15-20 min. Soft honey cakes may be filled with various fillings, hard honey cakes are glazed.

FILLED COOKIES

PERTEPTI PYRAGAIČIAI

3 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1 cup sour cream
4 eggs
1 package vanilla sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 cups thick preserves

Cream egg yolks with the sugar until white, add sour cream, vanilla sugar and beat well. Add flour mixed with baking powder, fold in beaten egg whites. Dough should not be thick. Spoon a layer of the dough into a prepared baking pan, spread with the preserves, and spoon another layer of the dough on top of the preserves. Bake 45 minutes in a 350 degree F. oven. When baked, sprinkle the cake with sugar and cut into squares.

SWEET TEA CAKES

SALDŪS RIESTAINĖLIAI

3 cups flour
3 tablespoons sugar
4 eggs
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup melted butter

Beat butter until white, add one egg at a time, continue beating until all the eggs are added. Add milk and flour. Dough should be medium firm. If the dough is too soft, add flour. Knead the dough very well. Shape into small figure eights. Place on buttered cookie sheet, brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with sugar crystals and bake in medium oven. (from *Lithuanian Cookery*, by Izabele Sinkevižiūtė, c 1989)

District & Council News

C-3, Philadelphia, PA

Victor Stepalovitch

February 16th all Lithuanians throughout the world celebrated the 81th Anniversary of regaining their independence. C-3 members observed this occasion with a Mass of Thanksgiving on February 14th at St. George's Church. Members in native costumes and juostas (sashes) participated in the Mass which was celebrated by our Supreme Council spiritual advisor Msgr. Joseph Anderlonis. Msgr. Anderlonis also held offered a Mass on February 16 the actual date of Lithuanian Independence Day.

Twelve members of C-3 also attended festivities at the Lithuanian Music Hall in Philadelphia on February 21, 1999 where the Lithuanian Community held its 81st anniversary of Lithuania's independence. At these festivities three American Army sergeants were given awards for risking their lives in order to retrieve the body of a Lithuanian serviceman who had been entrapped in a mine field in Bosnia.

C-3 members attended a Mass on March 7, 1999 at St. Casimir's church in Philadelphia. This Mass commemorated the feast day of St. Casimir. After Mass there was a brunch in the



Rita Zakarka (C-112) and Brian Johnson (C-19) were married on October 16, 1998

Courtyard of the Sheraton Hotel in Society Hill, Members of C-3 inspected the hotel and its surroundings since this is where this years convention will be held.

C-12, New York, NY

Dalia

We are happy to welcome back John Lostys and Alfred and Dot Szcznesny to our council.

Fr. Eugene Sawicki will hold his annual spring dinner on Sunday, May 16th at

Our Lady of Vilnius parish. The dinner will be served after the 11:15 AM Mass. Please circle this important date on your calendar and make plans to attend.

At our February 7th meeting we had a s h o r t commemoration of Lithuanian Independence Day prepared by Dalia Bulvičius. Fr. Daniel Staniškis spoke of what Lithuanian Independence means to him as an American-born Lithuanian. Dalia

had a list of the 20 original signers of Independence Day on February 16, 1918, who they were and what happened later.

Congratulations to Jurgis and Stanislava Aleliūnas on receiving their Second Degree in the Knights of Lithuania.

Best wishes and įlgiausių metų to Joe Sleder who was 80 years young on March 5th.

Get Well wishes to Frank Zilinsky - we all wish

you a speedy recovery.

Greetings from Irene and Ed Senken from sunny Florida. They went on a cruise to the West Caribbean. The music provider aboard was 9 time Grammy winner Jimmy Star Polka band. In West Palm Beach they enjoyed a performance by Rūta Lee and had a chat with her.

C-19 Pittsburgh, PA

Rob Medonis

Brian Johnson (C-19) and Rita Zakarka (C-112) were married on October 16, 1998 at Nativity BVM Church in Chicago with Rev. Tony Markus as celebrant. The wedding was wonderful with many Knights and Pittsburghers present. An enjoyable reception followed and Pittsburgh's Neris Lithuanian dancers performed several Lithuanian dances for the occasion.

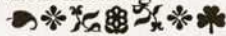
The following day, yours truly and two of the Neris dancers were given a tour of Lithuanian Chicago by the Knight's Legal Advisor, Saulius Kuprys. The tour was fun and informative. The evening was given over to a reception held at the Zakarka household hosted by Rita's mother, Julie. Julie Zakarka was a wonderful hostess as the food was delicious and everyone was made to feel at home.

Later in that same evening everyone went to O'Malley's Sports Bar in Alsip to hear Denise Zakarka and her country band. Denise has a great voice and everyone

enjoyed the show. However no one was able to explain to me how Denise, a Chicago girl, turned into a country singer.

I want to thank the Zakarkas for their wonderful hospitality. The wedding was a memorable one with lots of food and good times. It was a pleasure making new acquaintances such as John and Agnes Mickunas from Philadelphia and Sigute Gruodis of Chicago and seeing old ones such as Fran Petkus and Bob Boris. I want to especially thank Mark Bell, Vidas Noreika and Kathy Svelnis for their late night hospitality, as I have not had White Castle burgers in a long time. I also want to thank Saulius Kuprys for taking time out from his busy schedule to give a tour of Chicago's Lithuanian institutions and for taking us into his home.

Brian and Rita make a beautiful couple and may God bless their marriage.



C-19 had a busy year in 1998. Several members participated in the 43rd annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival, which was held over Memorial Day weekend. We held our annual picnic in July at the Lithuanian Country Club. We had 15 members who attended and everyone enjoyed themselves. Six members attended the National Convention in Waterbury where John Baltrus was reelected as treasurer and Bill Kolocius was elected as trustee on the Supreme Council.

The District Pilgrimage was held in

Pittsburgh on Oct. 9-11, 1998. A large reception on Friday evening was held to welcome the participants with food and snacks provided by C-19 members. The spiritual program was held on Saturday morning at the Sisters of St. Francis Convent in Whitehall with Rev Joseph Markalonis T.O.R., and a member of C-86 DuBois, as the spiritual speaker. Father spoke about his impressions of the Catholic Church in Lithuania from his recent visit there and on the life of St. Casimir. C-19 awarded 1st and 2nd degrees to its members before the meeting.

The District meeting was held after the spiritual program. A dinner was held at the Lithuanian Country Club with entertainment provided by the Neris Lithuanian Dancers of Pittsburgh. A warm welcome was shown to several guests from Chicago who attended that evening.

The holy sacrifice of Mass was celebrated at St. Francis Convent on Sunday morning and following Mass candles were lit for deceased members. Brunch in the convent's cafeteria concluded the weekend pilgrimage. A special presentation was made to long time C-19 members Sister Alverna and Francesca for their service to the District. The Sisters were presented with crosses hand carved by George Mikalauskas as a token of appreciation. Portions of the proceeds were given to the St. Casimir Guild and the Sisters of St. Francis. Many thanks go to Eric Grabowsky for his

work as chairman of the Pilgrimage. Also thanks go out to the Sisters of St. Francis, Rev. Joseph Markalonis T.O.R., Neris Lithuanian Dancers, George Mikalauskas, and finally John Baltrus and all the members of C-19.

Our Christmas Brunch was held on December 13th, which was attended by 23 of our members. Mass at St. Peter was followed by a brunch at Josies Restaurant. C-19 members danced with the Neris Lithuanian Dancers at the University of Pittsburgh Nationality Classrooms' Holiday Open House on December 7th.

C-19 did not have a kučios but rather participated in one on December 12th, which was organized by the Lithuanian Citizens Society of Western Pennsylvania.

C-26, Worcester, MA *Stephen V. Walinsky, Sr.*

So many of our people migrate to Florida for all of the winter, or part of the winter, that, if only a few more would do the same, a quorum would be present, and we could hold our C-26 meetings away from home. Rodgers, Waska, Kondrotas, Banis, Salkaus and maybe others that I don't know of got away from the winter wearies to make their days, hours and every minute of life more enjoyable.

Amongst those



C-36 "Candlelight Crew" helped raise funds for their parish. (L to r) Rev. Fabian Kireilis, Evelyn Ozelis, Lillian Micka, Dave Lornaitis, Lucille Kilkus and Mary Kincius.

vacationing were our president, the secretary and our treasurer. We missed them, but those of us left behind carried on and patiently awaited their return.

Even though it is a repeat, I must tell you about the great day of February 14th, Valentines day and the Commemoration day of the Independence of Lithuania. The hearts of love for loved ones surfaced during the services in church, and the hearts of generosity emerged and were evident by their donations to the causes of Lithuania. As I said, it was a great day.

Another mishap befell the Ivaska family. After a motor vehicle collision, symptoms of an injury did not

appear directly after the incident. Problems when detected and diagnosed required surgery. We can't share the pain and anxiety, but we can join the family with their prayers for a full recovery for Vitty.

Our alphabetical system for scheduling hosts and hostesses for the monthly meetings, works well only if those scheduled cooperate. When it is your turn, try to do it too like others do. I'll tell you all about the March Holy Hour and about the April dinner meeting in the May issue. If you didn't get to either of the two, you missed something. One had good food for the soul, the other had just good food.

C-36, Chicago, IL *Rūtelė*

The month of January brought what could have been called "The Great Blizzard of '99" to Chicago. We should be used to these heavy snowfalls. We've certainly had our share of them. Nevertheless, the January meeting was canceled due to the inclement weather.

There was a good representation of C-36 members at the 39th Annual Memories of Lithuania Banquet at the Martinique Ballroom on February 7th. Honorees this year included The Chicago Lithuanian School (Lituanistinė Mokykla). Mary Kincius and Evelyn Ozelis very capably handled the reservations and warmly

greeted the approximately 340 people who attended. The Strolia family under the direction of Faustas Strolia provided the entertainment.

The Immaculate Conception Parish Mardi Gras took place February 13th and 14th. C-36 was represented by Mary Kincius who prepared the mouth watering Lithuanian menu of kugelis, cepelinai and sausage and sauerkraut. She was assisted by Lucille Kilkus.

Maria High School was the location of the annual Lithuanian Independence Day celebration on Sunday, February 14th. Emcee was our own very busy Evelyn Ozelis. The Knights of Lithuania Choir under the direction of Faustas Strolia also participated.

We heartily welcome new member Pat Vacha, nee Damasauskas, of the well known Vacha Florist family.

Our Spiritual Moderator, Father Fabian Kireilis is in poor health. Our prayers are with you, Father. Please get well soon. Prayers and get well wishes also go to Victor Balanda who had a second double by-pass surgery.

We sadly report the death of two of our members on January 7, 1999, Vytautas Dijokas and Eva Apanavicius. Our condolences go out to their families. May they rest in peace.

I m m a c u l a t e



Binghamton Mayor, Richard Bucci presents Feb. 16th Proclamation to C-72's President, John R. Mankus and Anne Marie Distin

Conception Parish is celebrating its 85th Anniversary on April 25th at the Mayfield Banquet Hall. Evelyn Ozelis and Mary Kincius, with the help of Denise Hornik, are spearheading the event. It will be a salute to the years of service and dedication as priests, of Msgr. Damasus Mozeris, 60 years; Rev. Fabian Kireilis, 60 years; Rev. Edward Maxa, 40 years; and Pastor Rev. Anthony Pucenski, 27 years.

Mark your calendars for this coming event, our annual "Dinner is Served" to be held after the monthly meeting on June 21st. It is a delightfully catered affair and everyone is welcome to attend.

Happy Spring!

C-72, Binghamton, NY
John R. Mankus

GERBIAMIEJI:

Our Council commemorated Lithuanian Independence Day, on Sunday February 14th with a Mass, celebrated by Father John Mikalajunas at Saint Joseph's

Lithuanian Church. Binghamton Mayor Richard Bucci presented the Lithuanian Independence Day Proclamation to President John R. Mankus and Anne Marie Distin, who was dressed in a Lithuanian ethnic costume. After Mass, coffee and cake was served at Saint Joseph's Educational and Cultural Center.

With sadness we report the death of Casey Grikenis, on January 1st, 1999. Casey was a charter member of our council, a hard and diligent worker not only for the Knights of Lithuania but also to Alhambra Sidona 212 and as a member of St. Joseph Church Choir for over 30 years. Casey was involved in most of Council 72 activities including many years with Two Rivers Ethnic Festival, Humanitarian shipments to Lithuania and Roberson Center International Christmas Tree Forest.

Council member Pamela Joksas Rich, participated in the 90 year anniversary celebration of Saint George's Lithuanian Parish in Rochester, NY. Program hosts were Birutė Litvinienė and Raimundas Obalis. Among the clergy celebrating Mass was His Excellency Bishop Paulius Baltakis, both as an honored guest and celebrant. Afterward, a concert by *Moterų Oktetas Volungė*, directed by Saulė Viskontienė was enjoyed by everyone.

Council Vice president Ralph Sadauskas, Helen and Felix Svereika have worked



C-74's Marie Laskie speaks to council members at City Hall flag raising for Lith. Independence Day (photo by Butch Comegys)

hard for the Knights of Lithuania, and will be receiving their 3rd degrees at the Amber District Meeting in Binghamton.

Our members. Father John Mikalajunas, Irene Grikenis, Ralph Sadauskas, Barbara Miller, Art Stankevitz and John and Grace Mankus, working with *Viltis Lithuanian Relief Parcel Service, Inc.* and *Vilnius Cathedral Religious Center* continue to ship humanitarian aid packages to convents, orphanages and needy families in Lithuania. Twenty one packages were shipped by the council and Saint Joseph's parish members for Easter. Father John Mikalajunas is a very strong supporter of these shipments with donations, special collections and 50/50 raffles.

Our Junior Council under the direction of Barbara Miller met February 28th. Barbara is looking into an internet page for Junior activities and is also a very active Council 72 financial

secretary. After Sunday Mass, Barbara and Irene Grikenis often visit Council member Elizabeth Kunce at the River Mede Manor. Elizabeth continues to knit articles for our humanitarian shipments.

Charles Almanas, our Lithuanian Affairs Chair, gives us timely reports on current news and political activities in Lithuania.

John Mankus continues to write and translate letters from Lithuania for council members and friends. On March 5-7, as National President, John, will participate at the Joint Baltic American National Committee, Third Conference on Baltic Security in Washington DC.

Council members Bob and Mary Ann Skiba are on a three month vacation, their last location was Florida.

As we prepare to host our Amber District meeting, we would like to announce and welcome our newest members, Frank Juodaitis, Jane Mankus, Carole Mankus and Edith Missavage.

C-74, Scranton, PA Marie Laskie

Our warmest congratulations to Ruth and Casimir Yanich on their 50th

wedding anniversary.

We attended the 20th annual Diocesan Ethnic Rosary at St. Peter's Cathedral. Celebrant and homilist was Father Edward Shoback, pastor of SS Peter and Paul church, Scranton. The rosary was recited in Gaelic, Lithuanian, Polish, Italian, German, Spanish, Slovak, Filipino, and Ukrainian. Nellie Bayoras Romanas of St. Casimir's Church, Pittston offered the meditation of the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary. Considering the inclement weather we had a good turnout.

We had our Flag raising at Scranton City Hall. Msgr. Peter Madus, pastor of St. Joseph's Lithuanian church blessed the flag. Richard Laske was chairperson. Marie Laske and Regina Yetkowskas were refreshment servers. We had Knights from Forest City and Pittston, who always attend our functions. Regina Petrauskas and Danutė Krivickas represented the Lithuanian Community. George Saduckas from Lithuanian Catholic Alliance. Nellie Bayoras Romanas read the proclamation. We were honored to have Mayor Jim Connor and several other politicians.

Our speaker Randy Krakowsky, spoke on the environmental conditions in Lithuania.

Richard and Marie Laske attended the Wilkes Barre Flag raising. Nellie Rokanas had every politician from the city of Wilkes Barre

attending. All agreed that Nellie for many years, has put her heart and soul working for the Lithuanian heritage.

Congratulations to Mary and Doug Raisch a K. of L. member from New Jersey on the birth of their new son Gregory. This now makes 5 children. Their oldest daughter Victoria is an honor student in college. We wish the whole family and its newest addition all the best.

Martha Brack our financial secretary for a while was a bit under the weather. A speedy recovery Martha.

Casimir Yanich is mending after serious face surgery. He claims it was necessary, I think it was for cosmetic purposes. He looks 10 years younger, no wrinkles.

Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Men do not light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket. They set it on a stand where it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, your light must shine before men so that they may see goodness in your acts and give praise to your heavenly Father. *Mt 5: 14-16*

C-82, Gary, JR

On February 14th the Lithuanian organizations of northwest Indiana - including K of L Council 82 - held a Lithuanian Independence Day dinner at the VFW Hall in Merrillville, Indiana. Monsignor Ignatius Urbonas

held a prayer service for those who fought and died for Lithuanian independence and also for those Lithuanian-Americans who fought and died for us here in America.

Sister Janine (SSC) was our very able "toastmaster" and there were brief remarks by our member active in ALTAS - Vince Gulauskis - and Bendruomeme representative, Birute Vilutis.

A resolution was unanimously passed to support *Senate Resolution No. 2* sponsored by Senator Richard Durbin and *House Resolution No. 21* sponsored by Congressman John Shimkus. (See *Feb. 16 Resolutions* on pg.3) The resolution bears the signature of our council president, Izidore Tauaras, although pneumonia prevented his attendance at the dinner.

Our most recent activity was on March 13th which was Easter egg "lessons" for children of all ages at Tavaras's. Marie and Birute Ruzga taught "beeswax" and Ridona Uzdavinis demonstrated "etching". There was a "door prize" for the "oldest kid".

C-110, Maspeth, RY Elenute

Our matriarch member Helen Venis wrote to us about her grandson Frank Paul Venis, 25, who recently completed a six month deployment with NATO forces in the Mediterranean Sea aboard the destroyer USS Deyo. He had the opportunity to visit Croatia, Egypt, France,

Italy and Spain. Frank is the son of Frank and Catherine Venis. He had worked as a teacher in Lynbrook and Malverne before joining the Navy.

Our monthly meeting was held February 28. Father Vytas Volertas opened it with a prayer. President Bruno Rutkūnas reported that \$1,000 was sent to the "Alive in Hope" campaign, \$100 to the Bishops' Annual Stewardship Appeal and \$25 dues to the Fraternal and Veterans' Association of Maspeth.

Our St. Casimir's luncheon was held March 28th. Our Dinner/Dance is planned on April 25th.

Ann Morrissey reported that a shipment of 5 containers was sent to Lithuania in time for Easter. She is grateful to Captain (Navy) Phyllis Bartkus, Kazys and Ellen Vainius and Helen Matulonis in the packing of this material as well as Capt. Barkus and Rev. Vytas for delivering the goods to the Cultural Center.

The Lithuanian Independence Day Mass was offered at Annunciation Church with Bishop Paulius A. Baltakis, OFM officiating. The official program at the Cultural Center was interesting. Vytautas Volertas, the Father of our own Rev. Vytas gave an inspiring talk about the independence of Lithuania.

A special tribute was extended to Albina and Alex Sipplack who celebrated their 60th year of wedded bliss recently. May you see 75 years!

C-133, Los Angeles, CA

We have a lot of upcoming events: May 1, 1999: Spring Dinner Dance with live band music, 7:00 pm in church hall. June 27, 1999: 50th Anniversary Jubilee and LA reunion of Spindulys Folk Dancers, 1 pm at the Hollywood Palladium. For info. Call (818)249-7574.

Thanks to Valerija Hale for hosting the council's Christmas party, also thanks to Alfa Pažiūriene for her demonstration of straw Christmas ornaments.

Deepest sympathy to Teresa Avižienis on the passing of her husband, Algis. Sympathies also go to the Srs. of St. Casimir motherhouse on the passing of Sr. Angela Balchunas.

C-135, Ansonia, CT**J. P. Sabulis**

Well they have been getting us mixed up again. Maybe this time we will get the story straight. It is now the story as it should be. The gang had elections and the results were as follows: Spiritual Advisor, Father Pat Berkery; President, Frances Barsevich; Vice- President, J. A. Sabulis; Recording Secretary, Mildred Driznus; Treasurer, Ruth Tyson; Financial Secretary, Lil Chaplik; Trustees, Al Shurkis, J. P. Sabulis, Ruth Doherty; Sergeant at Arms, John Yudas; Ritual, Frances Barsevich; Lithuanian Culture/Historian, Al Shurkis and Vytis Correspondent, J. P. Sabulis. Best of luck to all.

Well it has been a long

time since we had a few words about the Sisters at the Immaculate Conception at Putnam. At one time we used to have a lot to say and the nuns were always busy doing all the things they could to achieve their goals.

Matulaitis Nursing Home used to be the focal point of all action that was going on. We used to visit all the sisters there (Sisters M. Aloyza, Sister M. Bernadette and Sister M. Delores) and it was great to remember them all. We would like to wish Mrs. Jane Logan lots of good luck in administration and doing her new job is not an easy task. My grandmother (Mrs. Tillie Sabulis) spent many years at Matulaitis, and I have many fond memories of there.

I would like to wish Father Stephen Zukas lots of luck in his new parish in South Boston. My folks used to speak highly of the old days in Worcester and how Father's father who came from Cambridge and met Louise Grazulis who came from Worcester, then they ended up in Norwood. That seems like many years ago. Best of luck Father, and I hope you really enjoy South Boston.

**C-136, Hudson-Mohawk
Dorothy Richmire**

On February 14, Sunday we celebrated Lithuanian Independence Day with a solemn mass offered at Holy Cross Church in Schenectady. Fr. Joseph Biondino was celebrant and

our former pastor and Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Bernard Gustas was remembered on the first anniversary of his death.

Since four recipients of the 4th Degree were not able to travel to the National or District Conventions to receive their degrees, they were awarded prior to the mass. Fr. Joe blessed and presented the medals to: Genevieve Deery, Stella White and Frank Zebuda. Congratulations to all. Clara Tulio was not able to attend.

Fr. Joe was fortunate to accompany the late Fr. Gustas to Lithuania several years ago. They were very good friends for many years. In his homily, Fr. Joe reminded us of the legacy we all enjoy in this country thanks to the courage and perseverance of our parents and/or grandparents who left their homeland with the hope of a brighter future in a new country. They were hard-working, proud, unselfish and totally dedicated to God and family.

Thanks to the wonderful culinary skills our members boast, we offered many of the traditional dishes in addition to many more. So much so that all who attended the reception following mass did not leave hungry. We were blessed with a bright, sunny but cold day and the church was filled to capacity with our families and friends including some members of C-100 in Amsterdam.

Tina Panetta Zaza, representing Congressman

Michael McNulty, presented our council president, Charles Rupsis with an American Flag and Mayor of Schenectady, Albert Jurczynski proclaimed February 16 Lithuanian Independence Day in Schenectady. Charles accepted the proclamation and flag in behalf of the council.

It was great to see Margaret Sheehan at our celebration looking so hale and hearty after undergoing heart surgery recently. We hope and pray she will continue to heal. Also on the sick list are: Helen La Pierre, Stephanie Dwulitt, and Clara Tulio. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

C-141 Bridgeport, CT *Aldona Marcavage*

The 81st Anniversary of the restoration of the 1918 Lithuanian Independence Proclamation was celebrated Feb. 21, 1999. A mass of thanksgiving was celebrated by Msgr. Francis Pranckus with a full church of worshipers. Flag bearers were Stephen Wilcinskas and Peter Peters. Eucharistic Minister was Helen Janiunas. After church an interesting variety of refreshments awaited the guests. HM president Clemencine Miller extended a warm welcome and promised a great program. The collection was earmarked for medical aid for Lithuania.

Speaker Gintarė Ivaška asked Clemencine Miller to



C-141 members awarded 1st and 2nd degrees include: (bottom row) Peter Balcius, Ray Buzak, Lem Matejka, Anna Ross (top) Carol Buzak, Claire Carrol, Mary Spelman, James Megensis, Helen Simanis and Stefa Armmas (not in photo)

light a candle for all who gave their lives for their country's freedom. A minute of silence followed.

Gintarė commended HM Clemencine for her dedication to and her encouraging and promoting Lithuanian culture—reflected in the many projects C-141 members have undertaken over the years. Gintarė said freedom from oppression is a precious commodity and Lithuanian citizens are still struggling to restore and repair the devastation left by the Russians—and trying to build Lithuania to what it can be again. She reminisced about the past and all we in USA did to help Lithuania. We wrote letters and sent telegrams to our president, senators, Congressmen. To friends and relatives behind the Iron Curtain we wrote letters of encouragement, we prayed for them, and we sent care packages.

After Gintarė's speech, our attention focused on the beautiful Folk Art exposition in back of the hall. Many peoples' treasures were in the

collection. The Folk Art Display was the inspiration of Ray Buzak and Gintarė Ivaška.

We were honored with the well-known Hartford Men's Trio, directed by Jurgis Petkaitis and performed by him and Vytautas and Alfonsas Zdanys. It was a pleasure to hear their beautiful voices again.

The VETRA dance ensemble provided lively entertainment. One dance includes audience participation and is always a great hit. A new addition to their repertoire was called "The Lithuanian Hoe-Down". Everyone loved it.

In the audience we had two happy families with visitors from Lithuania. Mrs. Sakalauskas was visiting her daughter Jurate her new grandson Ažuolas and her son-in-law Laurynas Misevičius.

Daiva and Juozytis were with daddy Juozas Karamuza. They spend half their time in Lithuania and half in Connecticut.

On March 21st we enjoyed our annual St. Casimir's Communion brunch. This year Kugelis was on the menu by popular demand.

March 27th the egg dying workshop had fun designing Easter eggs with HM Clemencine Miller.

There are two groups in Milford, Ct. with caring hearts who donate things to help Lithuanian orphans. One is St. Ann's Church choir who save and donate oodles of stamps. The other group is a

4th grade class in Orchard Hills School. As part of their "Kindness Project--to help those in need" they collected items to fill 11 boxes with clothing including shoes, hats, hand made mittens coats, etc. Also a carload of children's books for reading pleasure from their school library were included. Aren't they great?

On a sad note I report one more K of L member has been called Home by our Heavenly Father. Agnes Lazdauskas left this world on her 81st birthday- 2/7/99. Every year she helped the Sisters of Immaculate Conception in Putnam prepare for their annual July picnic. Her job was well done and finished. She was very humble and devout, with never a negative word about anyone. She is survived by two sons, a daughter and seven grand children. She is missed.

I hope everyone had a happy, blessed Easter!

C - 143 Pittston, PA *Mary Ann Connor*

The Kučios is back. It was a wonderful evening on Sunday, December 6th, in St. Casimir's Church Hall in Pittston, PA. Since it has been a few years, Co-Chairmen Rosemary Durling and Jean Kapochus Mihalick worked diligently and made sure that not another year would pass without this traditional Lithuanian Christmas Eve Dinner.

The first star was spotted at 4:00 p.m. by Rachel and Sarah Connor. They then

joined Maryanna McGill, who led all 65 guests in singing Silent Night as candles were lit at each table. Mary Ann Cipolla was the ticket seller; Maureen Salley played the piano; Frances Evans gave the toast in both English and Lithuanian and Ursula Danoski read a poem about Christmas Eve traditions in Lithuania. Monsignor John Bendik offered the invocation and blessed the Plotkeles which everyone joyously shared.

Dinner was a joint effort and proved to be a great fundraiser. Among the items offered on our Kučios menu were: Juoda Duona (Dark Bread), Virtos Bulves (Boiled Potatoes), Silke (Herring), Aguonų Pienas (Poppyseed Milk), and Ausukės (Lithuanian Cookies).

The following Council members provided various donations: Eleanor Bellanco; Mary Ann Connor; Genevieve Dajnowski; Ursula Danoski; Anna Davala; Rosemary Durling; Helen Karpovich; Rosalie Kizis; Jean Mihalick; Pamela Smith; Anastasia Stanley; Anna Walatkas; Martha Warnagiris and her brother, Bob and Patricia Weiksner. A special Thank You is extended to Len Kapochus, Council 3, and his crew who helped tremendously.

The evening concluded with everyone singing Christmas Carols. Door prizes were awarded and the Mystery Auction winners were announced. We all had such a great time and are looking

forward to next year. Thanks so much to all who assisted in our success.

Council 143 held Officer and New Member installation on a snowy Sunday, January 3rd, at the 11:00 Mass at St. Casimir's Church. Rev. Hugh McGoarty administered the Oath of Office to all officers in attendance. The 1999 - 2000 officers are, Jean Kapochus Mihalick, President; Martha Warnagiris, Vice-President; Rosemary Durling, Secretary; Anastasia Stanley, Financial Secretary and Mary Ann Cipolla, Treasurer. Rev. McGoarty also performed the installation of our newest member, Mary Ann Connor. Mass was followed by a brunch in the church hall, served by the men of the council. Our next major event was the celebration of St. Casimir's Day with a breakfast served in the church hall on Sunday, March 7th.

Spiritual Advisor, Father Peter Alisauskas, is currently recuperating at home after spending time in the hospital due to surgery. We are praying for a speedy recovery.

C-147, St. Petersburg, FL *Dolores Jonaitis*

Our retiring President, Anthony Gudonis of Council-147, and also retiring as president of the Lithuanian American Club (8 years), was honored "atsisveikinimas" at the Lithuanian Club. Master of ceremonies was Albinas Carnius, current president of

the club. Gifts of appreciation were given to him and his wife who helped him very diligently. The invocation was delivered by Rev. Matas Cyvas, our Spiritual Advisor. Followed by a delicious dinner (Kugelis etc.) and a bottle of wine at each table. Audra Dance Group performed and presented roses to both Anthony and Petronėlė Gudonis. Dancing followed and during intermission, many joined in singing Lithuanian Folk-Songs.

Our February Council Meeting was held at the Florida Power Welcome Center in St. Pete Beach. The meeting was called to order by our President John Jonaitis. Following was the opening Prayer by Rev. Matas Čyvas. Irene Diktanas read the minutes from the last meeting. All was accepted as read. Maria Gelažius gave the Treasurer's report. Our Financial Secretary was busy collecting dues.

A Mass for our deceased members was requested for St. Casimir's Day at Holy Name Church. Dinner after Mass is planned for at the Lithuanian Club. Valeria Lesčinskas read a passage on Feb. 16th "Nepriklausomybės".

It was also voted to send \$150 again to Rosa Gervickaite, a Našlaite in Lithuania. Also \$100 to the Pontifical College in Rome Italy. Aldona Kirstuk told about her trip to Arizona. She



C-147's party for retiring president, Anthony Gudonis with Petronele Gudonis, Rev. Matas Cyvas and new president, John Jonaitis

had the pleasure of having lunch with Archbishop Marcinkus who lives in Sun City. She says he looks and feels well. It was great to see Alena Vilnis back at our meeting. Get Well cards were sent to Ona Miniatiene and Dr. Joseph Petrikas. Hope you're both feeling better.

Lucy and Victor made a delicious cheesecake for the second time. It never got here the first time. Everybody enjoyed it. Brone Urbonas baked a lovely torte. Because it was her birthday, we all sang "Įlgausią Metų". Other Donaters were Kazimiera Arlauskas, D. Jonaitis, V. Pleskienė, E. Jurkynas, G. Bakas, I. Diktanas, Dana Jurenas, E. Bacevičius and A. Acienė.

Our guest, Kunigas Astijus Kurgys OFM, from Kretinga Lithuania, explained the monastery they are building at The Hill of Crosses. It will also have some guest accommodations.

We also had as guests Laimute Alvarado, Adele Acienė, Eglė Ragauskas, and Aldona Oliene.

Welcome to two new members. Adele Aciene and Aldona Oliene, whose mother is Kazimiera Arlauskas. Congratulations to both of you, and again a most hearty welcome.

C-152 E Long Island Julia Malinauskas Lott

Our officers have been so busy with running the meetings and keeping abreast of old business, new business and elections, we just haven't gotten a report in for the Vytis. We have had a good past year, hosting the Mid-Atlantic Convention and we do want to extend our sincerest thanks to all the council delegates that attended. It was a pleasure to have you here.

Our annual Christmas Party was well-attended and fun for all, with good food catered by our usual source and you all know our famous one and only "Joe Thomas" who provided us with the best music for dancing and listening. We also had our table of prizes, supplied by our dedicated members who are always so obliging at these affairs.

The results of the election of officers for '99 are: Pres. Delbert Vance, Vice Pres. Muriel Lekstutis who is now Mrs. Raymond Lofmark. Congratulations to the newly-weds. Treasurer Thomas Tarmey, Financial Secretary Beatrice Lucka the Ritual is Felix Zorskis and committee

and I just volunteered for the Vytis Correspondence spot. I'll do my best to keep our council news forthcoming.

Would like to mention also that the Council has shipped packages to Lithuania and money donations were made where needed. We did quite a bit this year and must give credit to Beatrice and Fred Lucka who got the packages together and took the time to deliver them to the shipping destination.

Our very traveling member Peter Dykovitz spent time in Lithuania visiting relatives in Siauliai. He gave an interesting report on his travels, having arrived there at one of their coldest times. Temperatures were zero to ten degrees below. He also visited Vilnius, Siauliai, Klaipeda and the Kryzna Kalnas (The Hill of Crosses) which he said has many more crosses. His visit went very well even though he wasn't prepared for such freezing weather. After seeing such bad conditions and poverty it was "God Bless America" when he got back.

Our St. Casimirs Celebration Mass and Luncheon is slated for March 14th. A covered dish buffet again like we had last year which was just fabulous. Our ladies just out-do themselves when it comes to refreshments. We'd love to see other councils join us in this celebration as well.

I'm trying to update as much as possible our council's activities and meetings, especially to our silent

members. Perhaps someday they may surprise us by attending a meeting. We'd love to see you all again or at least let us hear from you. We need you! And to all the members who are in recovery for one reason or another, we extend our get well wishes and hope to see you back again soon.

C-156. Shamokin, PA Olympia M. Zelinski

We had our regular meeting at the Lithuanian Club. It was opened with a prayer by first VP Dave Kinder, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Olympia Zelinski took a roll-call, with 24 members present.

President Bob Wislock announced the recent death of Greg Pacocha. He asked for a motion to donate \$100 for a memorial at the library in Greg's memory, which was voted on and passed.

Rev. Ted Keating gave us an informative talk on his trip to Jamaica. We don't know how good we have it here in the USA, even if we don't have all the luxuries we want. After Father's talk, the meeting closed with a prayer and we enjoyed all the goodies members brought.

A spaghetti dinner was held March 6 and 7. The proceeds raised went to the Seminary in Lithuania. Our goal is to send \$1,000 for that cause.

Some of our members attended the Amber District meeting held in Binghamton on March 14th.

We also had a birthday

celebration with our members on March 12 at O'Brien's Pizzeria.

Our next regular monthly Bingo will be held on April 18th at the Transfiguration Hall. This is our one means of raising money for our charities.

After much discussion, it was voted to adopt a highway which will have a sign in our council's name to let more people know of us.

Some of our men will be attending a retreat at the Malvern Retreat House from April 20 to May 1st. Our council president was there last year and he gave a good report on the retreat house.

Plans are also in the making for a trip to the Shrine in Washington, DC on May 22. Some of our members look forward to seeing the Lithuanian Chapel for the first time.

Our next monthly meeting will be held April 25th at Our Lady of Hope Hall at 2 pm. Our guest speaker will be Jim McCormack of the U.S. Army. Other council members are welcome.

Do You Know? According to the New York Times, (3/7/99) Lithuania leads the world in dependence on nuclear energy produced by nuclear power plants. Using 82% of nuclear power energy to supply its energy needs, Lithuania is followed by France, using 78%, and Belgium at 60%. In contrast, the US produced only 20% of its energy needs from nuclear power. (data from the International Atomic Energy Agency)

**Share the beauty of the Easter Season -
Support our Knights of Lithuania
causes:**



AID TO LITHUANIA, INC., is a semi-autonomous organization under the aegis of the Knights of Lithuania, that obtains donated medicine, medical supplies and other humanitarian aid items which are then shipped in 40 ft containers to Lithuania. ATL covers the cost of transportation. Financial support is provided to select projects, church related soup kitchens, orphanages, hospice and day-care centers with ATL acting as a catalyst between these projects and donors in the USA.

Since this project began in 1991, \$568,216.83 has been donated by members and friends of Lithuania enabling ATL to ship 65 containers, worth over 53 million dollars.

In 1998, ATL began a drive to provide scholarships for seminarians at St. Joseph's Provincial Seminary in Vilnius. Individuals are able to "adopt" a seminarian by donating \$2,000 to this very important means of contributing to the moral rebirth of the Lithuanian Nation.

As of 3/1/99 10 Seminarians have been adopted through the efforts of ATL

Checks should be made payable to Aid to Lithuania, Inc. and mailed to:

Regina Juska-Svoba, President - 1594 Beaupre, Madison Heights, MI 48071

THE ST. CASIMIR GUILD, is a semi-autonomous activity dedicated to the support of the Lithuanian Pontifical College of St. Casimir in Rome. The Guild sponsors three programs: collection of donations for a general endowment fund administered by the Rector, obtaining Mass stipends for the support of Lithuanian priests studying in Rome, and coordinating a program of "adopting" seminarians from Lithuania by providing regular contributions to their non-academic needs. Checks should be made payable to: The St. Casimir Guild and mailed to:

HM Anna Klizas Wargo, 125 South Morris Street, St. Clair, PA 17970

KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS are presented each year to deserving members who are pursuing studies at the college level. The Scholarship Fund is totally dependent upon donations and bequests from members. Checks should be made payable to: Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Fund and mailed to:

Irene Gecas-McCarthy, 30 Clinton Road, Garden City, NY 11530

THE KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC., is an endowment fund which supports and funds projects to further the cultural, religious or humanitarian objectives of the Knights of Lithuania.

Donations are tax deductible. Checks should be payable to:

Knights of Lithuania Foundation and mailed to:

HM Loretta Stukas, 234 Sunlit Drive, Watchung, NJ 07060

THE NATIONAL SHRINE - An endowment fund supports the upkeep of the Chapel of Our Lady of Šiluva

at the Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception located in Washington, D.C. was adopted at the 75th Knights of Lithuania Anniversary Convention. Donations are tax deductible.

Checks should be made payable to:

Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and mailed to:

Joseph Chaplick, 2000 F. Street, N.W. Apt. 419, Washington, DC 20006

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Wooden Christ

In his father's home an old man of a hundred
 Carves a little god of miracles and wonders.
 His son was exiled from their farmland to Siberia:
 He chisels pain upon the face of the Almighty.
 He whittles - woodchips fly - and soon a godling gazes
 At the godwright who is carving his Creator.
 Pain has crucified his heart and all his being:
 He spears the side and spikes the feet of his Redeemer.
 To crown the little Lord with twisted thorns, he tortures,
 Hacks, and tears white wood, he slashes and gouges.
 A living wooden god is born, a spirit harrowed:
 His hand upon his bony knees, He sits in sorrow.
 To ease an anguished heart - such heaps of woodchips risen
 The Lord Himself arises from the godwright's chisel.
 The godwright glows for it's a miracle he is seeing:
 A coronet of sun rays spikes the head of Jesus.
 He strips and planes away the last of all the splinters;
 Then his lips move slowly and he whispers:
 "I doubt a hunk of wood, God, needs my hands and labor
 To be a miracle created by my Savior.
 "O Lord, through agony, with both your temples bleeding,
 You wiped away my tears and turned my pain to sweetness
 "If you are making miracles, may I request you:
 Protect the innocent and chastise all transgressors."
 To church he bore his godling: people from all over
 Saw the little Lord and mended their behavior.
 "Forgive me for my wayward youthful days," he pleaded,
 With his lips upon the wooden wounds of Jesus.

-Faustas Kirsa

(Translated by D. Jonaitis)

*Rūpintojėlis - Lithuanian peasants portrayed their Savior as profoundly concerned,
 "His hand upon His bony knee, He sits in sorrow."*

