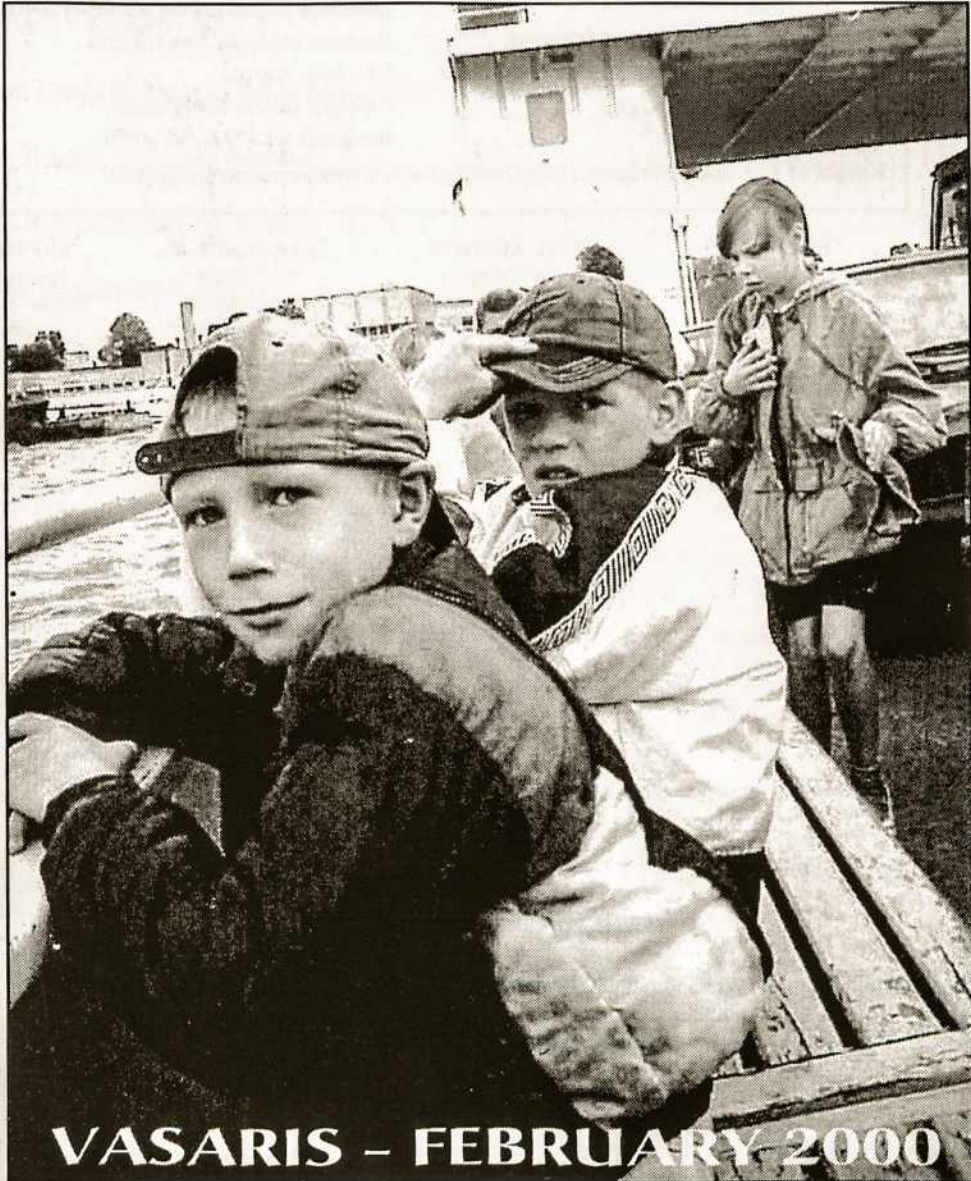


Y T I S



Volume 86 No. 2

THE KNIGHT



VASARIS - FEBRUARY 2000

Vytis- The Knight

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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 1917.**

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On the Cover:

“Lithuania’s Future on the Ferry to Nida”, photo by JJA 8/99

Dedication:

In Remembrance of February 16th

“A row of identical flags waving in the breeze, pupils freshly-scrubbed and adorned in their Sunday finery parading on the street, a celebration in my kindergarten class when I first learned why this day was so special. It was a beautiful holiday, strictly observed.”

Life in Lithuania in the 1930's by the late Dalia Bulvicius

To My Fellow Knights

The exciting thing done by most during this past New Year's Eve was to watch how the nations of the world celebrated the coming of 2000. Some television stations broadcast all day the midnight celebrations including Lithuania's television tower that was lit like a Christmas tree and was shown on 120 broadcasting companies all over the world. It made me feel proud that Lithuania is no longer just a soviet satellite.

Lithuania enters the new millennium a free country, but each Feb. 16 Lithuanian Independence Day, we should remember the prices in lives paid for her freedom and should pledge to do what we can to help the small republic continue to work towards a healthy economy. Some of the areas to work on are contained in Regina Juska-Svoba's article on the Gift to Lithuania conference on page 5. Whether it's helping out family in the "old country", donating to orphans, seminarians or soup kitchens, no act is too small. The little things add up.

I am still searching for writers and would enjoy some younger ones for the upcoming issues. Simply email vytiseditor@juno.com It is my desire to present interesting and thought provoking articles but cannot work alone.



Letters to the editor

To the Editor:

The Anthracite region of Pennsylvania had the double pleasure of two visits from Sister Elizabeth Ann from St. Casimir's Motherhouse in Chicago.

She was actually on a journey of vocations in our area, but while here, she gave two slide presentations on the life of Mother Maria Kaupas to promote the cause for Mother Maria Kaupas' beatification.

On October 17, 1999, at 2 p.m. a presentation was held in Minersville, PA at St. Francis of Assissi Church. The attendees were enlightened by the interesting slide presentation that Sister Elizabeth Ann gave and asked many questions afterwards.

It was also at this time that Sister Elizabeth Ann contacted Edward Narcavage (former member of Holy Cross Church) in Mt. Carmel, PA to make arrangements for a second presentation.

Mt. Carmel's Lithuanian church, Holy Cross, had been closed due to a merger a few years ago, so Mr. Narcavage made arrangements for Sister Elizabeth Ann to give her presentations at our local high school. When the people of Mt. Carmel heard that Sister Elizabeth Ann was coming to speak about the life of Mother Maria Kaupas, we all knew she was no stranger to us. No one can forget that Mother Maria

started her first school in the USA right here at Holy Cross in Mt. Carmel, PA.

Her name gives us a sense of pride and the flame of hope got a bit brighter in our hearts.

It has been a burning desire of mine to make Mother Maria's first school in the USA designated a Historic site.

After the Bishop closed the school, it was twice sold. I hope with the help of God and all good Lithuanians that the next time it is sold, it would be designated a historic site as Mother Maria's first school in the USA.

I think it is very important to preserve Lithuanian history for the next generation. I wonder how many places in the USA honor Lithuanians, I'd really like to know. When the first Lithuanian immigrants came to this area to work like slaves in the bowels of the earth digging coal, they earned very little money. Yet with pennies and nickels they built the first school so their children would not forget their heritage. Can we do less?

Vytiškai

Marion Saukaitis Wydra
President, C-144 Anthracite

Editor's note: Ms. Wydra is also seeking a small statue of St. Casimir that she'd like to display at meetings. Anyone know where to find one?

C-7's Florence Morkus is Honored

From the State of Connecticut, Florence Morkus of Council 7, Waterbury, accepted a check of \$50,000 on behalf of WIMSA - Women in Military Service for America. The presentation took place at the State Capitol in Hartford and was attended by women members and veterans of the US armed services from all over the state. Florence is a charter member of WIMSA and also Waves National Unit 42 Connecticut Yankees. During World War II, she served in Navy Communications security division in Washington, DC. The WIMSA Memorial in Arlington, VA was designed to honor the 1.8 million women who have served in all branches of the United States military from the American Revolution to the present. There were 14,700 Connecticut women who have served in the military throughout the last two centuries.

Within the walls of the memorial, visitors can view film, exhibits, a Hall of Honor and memorial register that lists 1.8 million women veterans throughout

the country. The memorial is an important reminder to show all of us that women have sacrificed a great deal and some have died on duty in order to proudly serve their nation.

Both of Florence's two brothers also served in the US Army and Marines, and her father, who emigrated from Lithuania in the early part of the last century had served in the Mexican Border Patrol Troop B Cavalry. All had received honorable discharges.



Did You Know?

The tricolor flag of Lithuania was created in 1918. Although there is no consensus on the meanings of the colors, there is a traditional meaning assigned to each color: yellow symbolizes the sun (or grain), green stands for the Lithuanian landscape and red stands for the blood shed in the struggle for freedom. ◆◆◆

10 Years Ago - On March 4, 1990, the first free elections were held since 1940, with pro-independence candidate Vytautas Landsbergis winning in a landslide.

Official News... Juniors & Y2K Dues

Dear Fellow Knights,

As we begin a new Millenium we must look very seriously at the future of our beloved organization. The Knights of Lithuania carries our a very important mission through our philanthropic endeavors for Lithuanian causes that are close to all of our hearts. For this work to continue in the future we must encourage younger generations to become involved now! Through our Junior councils we can share the importance of our heritage and our faith, these are the ties that bind all of us together.

Over the next several months I will be putting a Junior Council "start up" package together and I will send this to all of the Council Presidents. Please try to start a Council, your group can be large or small and can meet six times a year or every month. Whatever works out best for you! If you have any questions please feel free to call me or contact me via E-mail, both numbers can be found in the Vytis. This is a crucial time for us and we must take our future very seriously, it is up to all of us, and together I know that we can ensure that the good work we do today will carry on throughout the

upcoming years. I am also looking for items to be included in this packet, if you would like to share stories, language sheets, coloring pages, crafts, songs and dances, etc., I would be happy to include them.

Wishing all of you a peaceful & joy-filled year!

Vytiskai,

Annamarie Sluzas-Berger

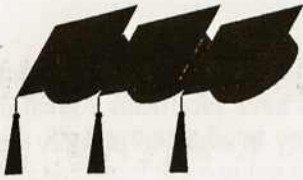
Third VP- Juniors

Remember, 2000 dues are now payable to your council Financial Secretary. Dues must be received and recorded by the National Financial Secretary by March 31, 2000 to keep your name on the Vytis mailing list. Also, please inform the National Financial Secretary or the Vytis Business Manager of any address or name changes. We have been getting a lot of returned Vytis' lately and it is creating a lot of bookkeeping problems for the mailing list and records.

Council Financial Secretaries--Remember to submit only one check for the total dues for that mailing.

Mark Bell

National Financial Secretary



***Notice of Approved Changes to the
Knights of Lithuania National Scholarship Program
Announced at the Philadelphia National Convention
(July 28-August 1, 1999)***

To prepare for the next generation of potential scholarship recipients, the Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Committee made one major change to the Scholarship Program beginning for the 2000 awards, to be announced at the National Convention in Los Angeles. Please read below the change is in **BOLD**. This change was approved by the Scholarship Committee by all 5 members as of July 1999.

Please read about the current key requirements.

The *Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Program* is intended to help a worthy and deserving Knight obtain a college education. Applicants must be a member of the organization for at least *two* years in order to be eligible to apply for a scholarship award. (This will be verified with the National Financial Secretary.) The Scholarship Program is intended to be a stimulus for young Lithuanian-Americans to join and be active in our organization. Service to the Knights of Lithuania organization is of prime importance to be considered for this award.

Scholarships are awarded annually as a grant. Applications must be complete (i.e., picture, transcripts, recommendations, etc) to be considered by the Scholarship Committee. Applications must be submitted usually no later than June 30th of each year. The awards are paid to the recipient in two installments. ******* APPLICANTS MAY NOW APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP MORE THAN ONCE. THIS IS OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION THAT AN APPLICANT MAY WIN MORE THAN ONE YEAR.*******

There are various scholarships available with individual amounts decided upon by the Scholarship Committee by vote each year.

Each applicant has the responsibility of completing the application and securing entrance to the college of his/her choice. If the recipient of an award drops out of college, or if his/her scholastic standing becomes unsatisfactory to the college, the unexpended balance of the award may be forfeited at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee.

Scholarship awards may be made to a person for undergraduate or graduate work. There is no age limitation. Organizational activity within the Knights of Lithuania is one of the most important criteria for obtaining a scholarship along with the following requirements and stipulations.

An applicant's qualifications will be based on recommendations made by his/her 1) *Council President or Council 3rd Vice President*; 2) *Spiritual Advisor or Pastor*; 3) *Former Teacher*; 4) *Character Reference*. Applicants will be evaluated on scholastic records, financial need, and most importantly, K of L involvement. The applications will be carefully studied by the Scholarship Committee and decisions of the committee are final. The recipients of the Scholarship Awards will be announced at the annual National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania.

For more information, please write to the Scholarship Committee Chairperson:

Irena Gecas-McCarthy

30 Clinton Road

Garden City, New York 11530

(516) 746-0820 – home

(212) 720-2617 – work irena.gecas@ny.frb.org (work e-mail)

KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA PARTICIPATE IN "GIFT TO LITHUANIA" CONFERENCE

by Regina Juska-Svoba

On November 5-7, 1999, the Lithuanian Human Services Council together with the Embassy of Lithuania and the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., Washington, DC Chapter, hosted the 3rd "Gift to Lithuania Conference" at the Key Bridge Marriott Hotel. The purpose of the conference was to summarize the work that has been done by various humanitarian aid organizations; to analyze what has and has not worked; to obtain an understanding of what is still required; to obtain information from individuals and groups who have worked and continue to work in and with Lithuania's people in providing humanitarian assistance.

The initial conference was held in 1993, in Washington, at the initiative of the late Ambassador to Lithuania, Stasys Lozaraitis. The second conference was held in 1995, in Chicago.

November 5, 1999, Friday, a "get acquainted" reception was held at the hotel. It was a good opportunity to meet and make new contacts from the different humanitarian aid organizations, network, and see old

friends. K of L participants included: John Mankus, Supreme Council President, Regina Juska-Svoba, President -Aid to Lithuania, Inc.(ATL), Bernice Aviza, S.C. 1st Vice-president, Apolonija Ziausys, C-100, Amsterdam, NY, and William Zager, Financial Secretary - ATL. In all, there were approximately 90 participants.

November 6, 1999, Saturday, the conference was officially opened by Jurate Burdry, Chairperson of

organizing committee. She introduced the distinguished guests that included: Ruta Kuciene, Lithuanian American Community, Inc. Washington DC Chapter president; Birute Jasaitiene, Chair, Lithuanian Human Services Council; Ambassador Stasys Sakalauskas; professor Vytautas Landsbergis, President of the Republic of Lithuania Parliament; Vaclovas Kleiza, Hon. Counsel of the Republic of Lithuania; and Major General Henry A. Keivenaar.



*ATL President Regina Juska-Svoba with
Lithuanian Ambassador, Stasys Sakalauskas*

Professor Vytautas Landsbergis was in Washington to receive the First Truman/Reagan Award for his input and contributions in the fight for achieving democracy in Lithuania. At a ceremony held on 11/05/99, Congressman Solomon referred to Prof. Landsbergis as the "Lithuanian George Washington."

In his greeting to the conference participants, Prof. Landsbergis thanked all the organizations for their assistance to the people of Lithuania. Humanitarian aid will always be needed. Individuals and organizations must remain involved in Lithuania's transition. Prof. Landsbergis stated that there

were, are, and always will be rumors flying around about the aid that is and is not received in Lithuania. He further indicated that we must also provide humanitarian value, such as truth and accurate news and information.

Prof. Landsbergis and Ambassador Stasys Sakalauskas took this opportunity at the conference to bestow an award, the "Gedimino ordinas" to major general Henry A. Kievenaar, US Defense Dept. Europe and

NATO's political director (retired or emeritus), for his extensive efforts in assisting Lithuania's efforts to become incorporated into NATO. Major general Kievenaar indicated in his speech of gratitude that he wants to be present the day when Lithuania will be fully accepted into NATO.

Vaclovas Kleiza, Hon. Counsel of the Republic of Lithuania, gave a comprehensive, historical overview and presentation entitled: "Assistance provided to Lithuania by US Lithuanians until 1940." It was interesting to note that various organizations such as the Red Cross and St. Vincent de Paul assisted by sending massive boxes of clothing by the boat loadfuls.

Monetary donations were sent to help the people of Lithuania after the first World War. After Lithuania declared its independence on 02/16/18, a new day dawned. Humanitarian aid organizations formed, educational institutions and newspapers were established.

Money and books were sent to Lithuania. (V. and Bernice Aviza with Lith. Ambassador, Stasys Sakalauskas Kleiza's complete report is published in DRAUGAS 11/17,11/18, and 11/19/99 issues).

Rita Kazragiene, 1st Secretary to the Ambassador, read Irena Degutiene's report. (Mrs. Degutiene was unable to participate in the conference due to the conditions occurring in Lithuania at that time). Mrs. Degutiene is the Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Social Services and Labor Ministry. In her comprehensive report, it was indicated that in 1998, nearly 80% of all charitable assistance and support received was received from foreign countries. One of the most active and charitable supportive donors who rendered most of the assistance was the United States. The most significant attention is slated for health and social care organizations/institutions.

Minister Degutiene attested that "Aid to Lithuania, Inc.", in Michigan, and Lithuanian

Mercy Lift, in IL, were the two organizations that sent the most humanitarian aid. There were, of course, other organizations that have assisted in helping support Lithuania's people.

Lithuania's ambassador, Stasys Sakalauskas, in addressing the conference's participants, stated that US-Lithuanian assistance in health and social care, and the educational system helped the country live through the turbulent and difficult times. It is his desire to see Lithuania so strong and independent that she would no longer need help and support from foreign countries.

Lunch was held in the restaurant, situated at the

top floor of the hotel. It was a clear, brisk autumn day, and the views of the Washington area were stunning and magnificent.

The afternoon session began with the symposium entitled: *Assistance provided to Lithuania by US Lithuanians from 1990 to Today.* The participants



included: John Mankus, Knights of Lithuania; Regina Juska-Svoba, Aid to Lithuania Inc.; Vida Jankauskas, Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid; Mr. Veitas, Lithuanian Children's Relief; and Birute Jasaitiene, Lithuanian Human Services Council. The symposium was moderated by organizing committee member attorney Saulius Kuprys. John Mankus gave a succinct and brief overview of the K of L organization and the functions and contributions of the ancillary groups - St. Casimir's Guild and the K of L Foundation - Mass stipends, sending books to schools and the lunch program.

ATL gave a comprehensive, historical report of the ancillary group's contributions to the people of Lithuania. Since its inception 10 years ago, 70 containers were sent to various hospitals, clinics, hospice centers, family centers, soup kitchens and churches. The container's value surpassed 57 million dollars. Sizable

donations were forwarded to establish the Vilnius Day Care Center, St. Clare's Hospice, and the Mother Theresa Emergency Shelter in Vilnius. The "adopt a seminarian" program is progressing well. An extremely generous benefactor, Anne T. Baronas, made it possible to establish an endowment fund under the auspices of Archbishop Backis to provide post-graduate study funds for newly ordained priests. The other organizations' representatives spoke of their contributions, successes and problem areas. A question and answer session followed.

Later the conference's participants broke up into three discussion groups according to aid type categories: medical aid, aid to children and senior citizens and partisans. The discussion groups were an interesting and stimulating exchange of information, ideas and thoughts. The results of each group discussion will be addressed in the summary.

Ambassador

Stasys Sakalauskas and his wife Jurate, in cooperation with the Lithuanian Human Services Council, Inc., and the Lithuanian American Community Washington, DC Chapter, extended an invitation to the conference participants to attend a special reception at the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania. Lithuanian delicacies were plentiful. The presentation of the hor'derves and Lithuanian pastries was magnificent. There were opportunities to further network and speak with the Ambassador and his wife on a personal level. The reception was well attended by not only the "Gift to Lithuania" participants, but by other local organizations and individuals. It was a memorable event and evening.

November 7, 1999, Sunday, Mass was celebrated by a local priest, Rev. Lape. He gave an interesting and profound homily about charity and assisting our brothers and sister in Lithuania, especially during their desperate time of need.

The second symposium held *Working in Lithuania* included doctors from the US who spent time working and training physicians in Lithuania. Dr. Renata Variakojis, M.D., assistant professor at the University of Chicago, spoke of her trip. Her area of expertise is pain management. She was interested in discovering the reasons why Lithuanian patients use less morphine (pain medication) than anywhere else in Europe. She and a group of other physicians trained the local doctors about pain management. Some of the doctors from the University of Vilnius hospital trained in

the US, and upon return to Lithuania, applied the principles learned. There were 11 physicians who studied in the program; 8 completed the courses. Vilnius has established the only pain clinic in Lithuania.

Dr. John P. Lubicky, Chief of Staff, Chicago Shriners Hospital for Children, worked in Lithuania since 1993, in cooperation with Lithuanian Children's



Vida Jankauskas (LCRA), M. Veitas (Lith. Children's Relief), Birute Jasaitiene (Lith. Human Services Council) and moderator, Saulius Kuprys listen as Regina Juska-Svoba gives report on Aid to Lithuania

Hope. With great humor and sincerity, he described his first visit to Lithuania in 01/93. His plane was detained over 10 hours due to the inclement winter weather. When he finally arrived in Lithuania, at his hotel, there was no hot water or heat. He was not at all prepared for his adventure. He took all this in stride. He states that orthopedic care is at least 30 years behind the times. The equipment and procedures used were antiquated. There was no X-ray filing system, medical records were not organized, CT and MRI equipment was unheard of, the journals and medical texts were outdated. Medical staff were skilled and professional. When they did not have the necessary equipment, tools, they improvised with what was readily available; and to Dr. Lubicky's surprise, these procedures actually worked! He and his team of physicians, nurses, anaestieologists, physical and occupational therapists, and modem equipment did exchange visits. The medical personnel traveled to the

US to learn the modern day procedures to hip replacement, casts, etc. While Dr. Lubicky and his team of medical personnel were in Lithuania, numerous consultations and operations took place. He has no prior connections to Lithuania, nor is he Lithuanian, but Dr. Lubicky has a truly sincere commitment to helping the orthopedic physicians and children who require orthopedic services.

Dr. Kestutis Saniukas, Chief of Orthopedics, Vilnius University Children's Hospital, is extremely grateful for Dr. Lubicky. He helped train him and his personnel to advance to modern day procedures. Since Dr. Lubicky's visits to Lithuania over the last 7 years, over 140 operations were performed, 1,500 consultations were conducted. Dr. Saniukas said current medical texts, journals and modern equipment are still needed.

Jurgis Lendritis, President of Lithuanian Mercy Lift gave the discussion group results. Re: medical aid - success is met when supplies, equipment, and meds are sent directly to hospitals; need more current medical texts, medical journals, education i.e. public health and safety concerning AIDS, contraception, abstinence, etc.; need to establish a more honest relationship between senders and receivers; use more companies located in Lithuania to purchase supplies and equipment - which would also aid the economy; send medications with at least a one year before expiration date, unless specifically requested meds. Goals for the future should include: coordinate US efforts via e-mail or web sites; focus on educational programs, i.e. public health education should commence in the middle schools with the help of the APPLE organization; address the use of cigarette smoking/hazards, alcohol and sex practices; tap into the resources for finding grant money.

Re: aid to children - success is met by the availability of professionals helping; hospitals maximize services and procedures needed; get help from other Lithuanian Americans by getting others involved or obtaining donations; sponsoring children by providing annual stipends. Goals for the future should be: need further analysis, newsletters, more aid sent directly to individ-

uals as opposed to governmental institutions; need to establish a reliable network; assist in payments for improvements.

Re: aging -20% of Lithuania's population is elderly. Most live in rural areas. There are minimal services and assistance available to them. There is a dire need to establish social work services, and money is needed to set up a mobile unit to visit the elderly. During the discussion group, a new suborganization was established, "Friends of Lithuanian Elders." A senior may be sponsored for one year at the cost of \$150. Birute Jasaitiene, Lithuanian Human Services Council, Chicago, IL, will be coordinating the new program. Goals include: two-way honest communication; education for personnel; apply to foundations for grants; coordinate efforts within groups; and seek more volunteers to help.

On behalf of the organizing committee, Jurate Budrys, thanked everyone for their active participation in the "Gift to Lithuania" conference. The conference was successful, well attended as well as represented from a variety of groups. A special "Index of Organizations Providing Humanitarian Aid to Lithuania" was published. Each of the participants received a copy. "Aid to Lithuania, Inc." is included in the index. It should be noted, however, that only 22 named organizations are listed. Other organizations did not respond to the request to forward information about their activities and contributions.

After the conference there was still plenty of time to take in and do some sight seeing. Visited the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum and National Museum of African Art. Took a bus tour to see the US Capitol, Library of Congress, Senate Office Building, Holocaust Museum, Washington Monument, Arlington National Cemetery, Watergate, White House, Treasury Dept., Navy Memorial, US Federal Court, Library of Congress, Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Franklin Roosevelt Memorial, Nurses and Vietnam Memorials, Korean and Iwo Jima Memorials.

It was a great, productive and interesting weekend in Washington !



In Memoriam

**Amber District
President
Dorothy Banos
January 3, 2000**

Dorothy Banos, 71, of 11 Hilltop Road, Hughestown, died Monday Jan 3 in the hospice of the VNA Unit at Heritage House in Wilkes Barre.

Born Oct. 2, 1928 in Hughestown. She was the daughter of the late James and Anna (Vershouski) Banos.

She was a 1946 graduate of Hughestown High School and a graduate of College Misericordia.

For some time, she was employed as a medical technician at Scranton State Hospital. She later graduated from the University of Scranton and taught science at Pittston High School, and then Pittston Area High School until retiring.

She was a member of St. Casimir's Church in Pittston, where she served as a Eucharistic minister, and president of the Altar and Rosary Society. She also served as President of the Amber District of the Knights of Lithuania, and was a past president of the Knights of Lithuania, C-143, Pittston, Pa.

Dorothy was a dedicated Knight of Lithuanian Member. She attended many activities, most national conventions, most district meetings and many activities in her own council 143. She was a 4th degree knight and was the past financial secretary of the Supreme Council and had been the chair of the Scholarship Committee. She spent many hours of volunteer work at the Lithuanian nursing home, ran by the Sisters of Jesus Crucified, at Elmhurst, Pa. She also gave hours of her time to take communion or the sick, at their homes.

She was the financial secretary of the Lithuanian Women's Club of Wyoming Valley, a member of the Lithuanian Ladies Club in



Pittston,, a past president of St. Mary's Villa Auxiliary, and a member of the Retired Teacher's Association and the Culture Heritage Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

She was preceded in death by her brothers, Peter and Edward Banos. Surviving are her nieces Patricia Ward, Julianne Ansilio, Mary Beth Banos and Susan Banos, and nephew James Banos. (Note-She is also survived by her Aunt, Sister Michael Marie, of the Sisters of Jesus Crucified in Brockton)

A funeral mass of Christian burial was held at St. Casimir's Church, Pittston.

*Submitted by Jean Kapochus Mihalick
President Council 143, Pittston, Pa.*



*Ann Challan,
October 6, 1999
C143, Pittston*

*Albert Matulis
December 10, 1999
C-112 Chicago*

*Adele Januskevich
November 25, 1999
C-17 So. Boston*

*Helen Kenny
July 16, 1999
C-152 E. Long Island*

*Joseph Boley
January 2, 2000
C-7 Waterbury*

*Sr. M. Francesca Walls
December 8, 1999
C-19 Pittsburgh*

*Albina Satkunas
September 22, 1999
C-7 Waterbury*

*Richard V. Simelis
December 7, 1999
C-19 Pittsburgh.*

*Alphonsus Balulis
December 14, 1999
C-144 Anthracite*

*Pauline Sutkus
(Lifetime Member)
November 1999
C-5 Chicago*

*Charles Vangas
December 13, 1999
C-96 Dayton*

Rest in Peace



**K of L Foundation Essay Contest Winners
Honorable Mention**

Live, Share and Enjoy our Heritage

*Helen Matulonis
C-110, Maspeth, NY*

Impressionable world history was made on June 28, 1970 when a group of seventy three Lithuanians from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Ohio and Pennsylvania assembled at J.F. Kennedy airport for a two week escapade to England and Italy.

The Knights of Lithuania and their friends lived through a most thrilling and rewarding experience in their lifetime.

The purpose of this trip to Rome was to participate in the dedication of a Lithuanian Chapel, called Mater Misericordia, or Mother of Mercy, by His Holiness, Pope Paul VI on July 7th.

The Chapel had been built with funds from Lithuanians in the United States and throughout the World. Designed by a Lithuanian architect, and built by Italians, the chapel was erected in St. Peter's Basilica. It was gratifying to see that some five hundred Lithuanians from the United States, England, Scotland, Argentina and Canada, a truly loyal and closely knit ethnic group, assembled for the dedication of this Chapel.

When Pope Paul VI dedicated the Chapel, he said that this was a very moving and happy experience for him because he knew Lithuanians (who are 97% Catholic) suffered persecution under Russian domination, and that he was very proud to see such a large group united here for the dedication.

The following day was equally enjoyed and one to be recorded in Lithuanian history. In St. Peter's Basilica, an attendance of some ten thousand people from various parts of the world assembled. The Lithuanians had a reserved section and their presence was mentioned several times during the Mass and homi-

ly. Several of our Lithuanian Bishops stood with His Holiness Pope Paul VI as he imparted the Papal Blessing on all of the faithful gathered. Briefly, our hearts swelled up as he commended our personal interest and prayerful remembrance to the past existence of Lithuania.

The days which followed this dedication were extremely wonderful since we shared a common bond with so many people from all four corners of the earth. The entire group, warm and intelligent, spoke the Lithuanian language, one of the oldest in the world, and a marvelous time was had by all in exchanging views and finding out how each other lives.

I am ever so grateful for this impressionable trip since I retained a long lasting friendship with Annie, who kissed the Pope's ring four times (I didn't), to Dot, while in a gondola in Venice, was christened and given the name Angelica, to Helen posing for a picture with the writer on St. Helen's Road in Shakespeare's Hometown of Stratford-On-Avon and, what can be more delightful and perfect than meeting a pen pal of four year's standing to cross my path?

This trip was my initial introduction to the existence of the Knights of Lithuania. It was the beginning of a beautiful lasting friendship and I am proud to wear the fourth degree medal.



Come Hear California Angels Sing

The Three Sisters – Trys Sesutes Grikaviciutes will be the featured singers at the 87th Knights of Lithuania National con-vention to be held July 27-30, 2000 in Los Angeles, California.

Los Angeles natives Mimi (Emilija), Ani and Loretta began singing classic Lithuanian folk songs at home with their mother, Ona, and brother, Vytas, while father, Jonas accompanied them on his accordion. They have performed professionally since 1987.

The sisters' singing harmony, smooth style and blend of old favorites and contemporary music soon reached the Southern California Lithuanian community. They were invited to sing at the first Lithuanian Days, at weddings, private parties, various social events and of course, the 50th

Anniversary Banquet of Council 133.

A highlight of their singing accomplishments include an invitation from the



Lithuanian Musical Youth Organization in 1989 to perform a three week, six city tour of Lithuania.

The popularity of the sisters' first musical cassette has inspired them to prepare a second cassette for release in early summer. The sisters would also like to tour various Lithuanian colonies throughout the United States and Canada.



If you'd like to purchase a cassette/CD or want more information about the sisters, call (818) 782-1248.
-Maryte Sepikas

C-133 and VIPs

(Photos at left)
Knights Adele
Reclatis and

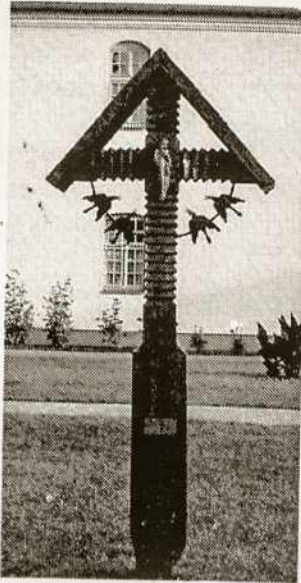


Maryte Sepikas attend Ruta Lee's charity ball, the Thalians, to benefit mental health at Cedars Sinai hospital. Ruta and her husband Webb Lowe are joined by cousins Onute and Vanda from Lithuania. (bottom) Knights meet with Congressman John Shimkus (R-IL) and Dennis

Kucinich (D-OH) at the Annual Baltic American Freedom League Awards Banquet.



Trinapolis RETREAT HOUSE



Under the direction of the Archbishop of Vilnius Audrys Joseph Backis, in 1997 the monastery at Trinapolis was reconstructed and dedicated as a retreat house and novitiate for religious sisters. The retreat house was given to the care of the Sisters of Christ the King. This is the first retreat house established in Vilnius. For many years only a handful of the faithful were able to attend a retreat houses in small apartments and private homes without any proper environment. Many faithful today do not even know or understand what a retreat is nor what the word implies or its benefits. With the dedication of the church and the blessing of the reconstructed building, the first retreat took place July 28 - August 2, 1997. This retreat was attended by over 100 religious women from various parts of Lithuania. Hopefully, with this beginning, Trinapolis will become the center of spiritual renewal and the house of prayer for many faithful in the new millennium.

Historical Significance

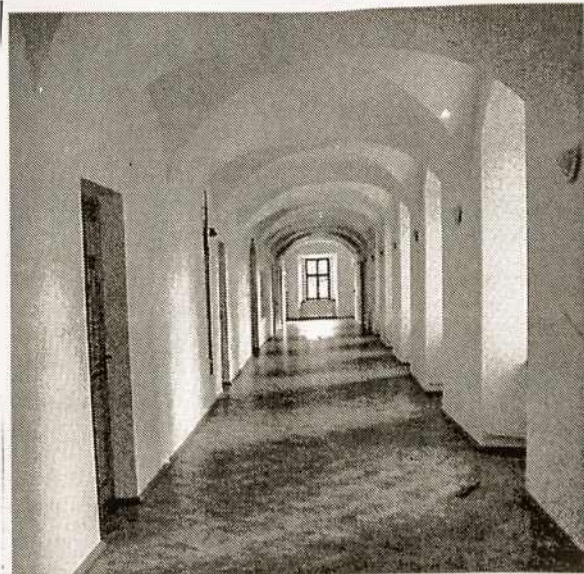
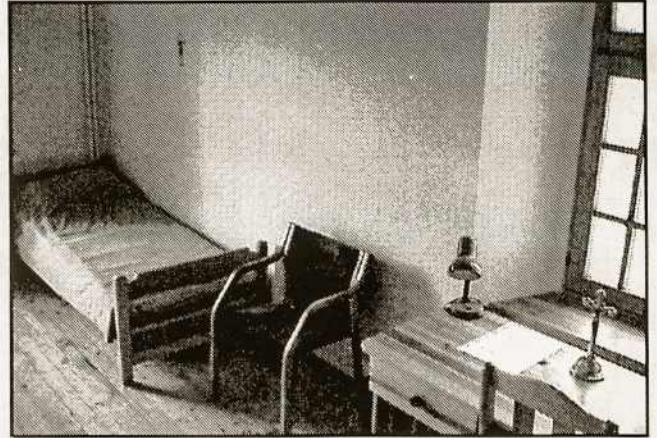
On the right hand side of the river Neris, stands one of the most beautiful sites in Vilnius - Trinapolis - the Church of the Holy Trinity-with its adjoining monastery. In 1700, Casimir Bzostovski,

the Bishop of Vilnius, established Trinapolis, the site for the religious known as the Order of the Holy Trinity. This order was established in France in 1198 for the purpose of liberating Christians taken into Muslim custody in the Near East, Northern Africa and Spain. The founders of this Order were John of Malta, a priest with a doctorate from Paris, together with the hermit, Felix de Valua. After the Crusades, the order underwent a reform and the monks worked as missionaries in hospitals and jails.

The Trinitarians first came to Lithuania at the end of the 17th century, when John Casimir Sapiega ruled Vilnius and established the monks at Antakalnis. The Trinitarians took up residence in Trinapolis in 1700. With his own revenue, Bishop C. Bzostovski built the wooden monastery with a church for the monks. According to the wishes of the founder, the site was named Trinapolis (trinitarian city).

Before this, the site was known as Old Slabada. On November 25, 1710 a fire destroyed the monastery, the church and all the documents. By the spring of 1715, a brick construction was begun which took seven years to complete and on June 21, 1722 Bishop C. Bzostovski consecrated the church naming it the Church of the Holy Trinity.

From 1752-1757 construction of a two story brick monastery was completed. In 1832, the Czar closed down the church together with the monastery and for the next ten years and the building stood vacant. The orthodox metropolitan Joseph Semaska reclaimed Trinapolis as the site for the Holy Spirit monastery and residence of the orthodox high priest in 1846. As a result, the buildings were



reconstructed, the convent converted into a summer residence of the orthodox high priest and the church converted into Russian orthodox. In 1917 Trinapolis was returned to the Catholics and once again became part of the Vilnius diocese.

The Bishop of Vilnius, George Matulaitis in 1918 gave permission to Rev. N. Rastutis to establish an orphanage and Lithuanian primary school for children at Trinapolis along with a senior citizens residence.

During the summer, Bishop George Matulaitis took his vacation here and often held Mass in the church. In 1926 R. Jalbzykovskis became Bishop of Vilnius, the orphanage was moved from Trinapolis and became his summer residence with an adjoining park and orchard. The Soviets closed the church in 1948 and the facilities were used as a tuberculosis hospital and, in 1959, into the Vilnius tourist headquarters.

In 1992 Trinapolis once again was returned to the Catholic Church. The church was consecrated and the reconstructed building was opened in July of 1997 as a

retreat house.

All are welcome to come who wish to spend a few days in silence and in the presence of the Lord. For many, this will be a new experience; hopefully many will be able to find spiritual renewal and experience the fruit of silence and prayer. A nominal fee is charged for living quarters and meals. We humbly ask all who can contribute in any way to assist us in maintaining this spiritual renewal center so that it truly could become Vilnius' center of spiritual renewal. The sisters residing at the retreat house are committed to daily prayer for the intentions of every benefactor.



*Article courtesy of Sisters of Christ the King
Photos by JJA 8/99 – page 13 (l to r) Holy Trinity Church,
(two views) wayside shrine near entrance, Aid
To Lithuania group enters retreat house. Top (p.14,
clockwise) chapel, single guest quarters, dining
hall, second floor hallway. Right, “little
nun” the cat.*





**KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA
87TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
JULY 27 - 30, 2000**



Convention Site: Sheraton Universal Hotel
333 Universal Terrace Parkway
Hollywood Hills, CA
Host: Council 133 - Los Angeles, California

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

First Name(s): _____ Last Name: _____ Council No. _____

Street: _____ Phone No.: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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

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

Junior Registration: \$80.00

Name of Child _____ Amount _____

Age of Child _____

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 - Reception at the church hall after mass.

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITY:

Wednesday, July 26, 2000 - Bus Tour of Los Angeles and attend a TV show.

Departure 10:00 a.m. \$25.00 per person Amount \$ _____

Make Checks Payable to:

Knights of Lithuania - Council 133

Total Amount \$ _____

Mail Checks and Registration Forms to:

Maryte Sepikas
Registration Coordinator
6143 Fulton Avenue
Valley Glen, CA 91401
(818) 782-1248 (telephone and fax)

If you have any questions or special requests, please do not hesitate to call or write. Thank you.



**KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA
87TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
JULY 27 – 30, 2000**



Dear Members,

The Knights of Lithuania 87th National Convention will be held July 27 - 30, 2000, in Los Angeles where there is nothing finer than a "Knight in California".

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"	\$10.00 Patron Greeting (Use 3 lines) First Line _____ Second Line _____ Third Line _____
-----\$ 50.00 Half Page 4" x 3 ½"	
-----\$ 25.00 Quarter Page 4" x 1 ¾"	-----\$5.00 (Name only)

You may submit your ad on a separate sheet of paper. Camera ready copy is always welcome. **DEADLINE FOR ADS: JUNE 1, 2000.**

Make checks payable to:

Knights of Lithuania - Council 133

Amount \$_____

Mail ads with payment to:

Adele Reklaitis
Chair - Program Book
3626 Monon Street, Unit 1
Los Angeles, CA 90027
(323) 666-9103 (phone)
(323) 953-0192 (fax)
email Reklaityte@aol.com

Information for Hotel Reservations

Sheraton Universal Hotel
333 Universal Terrace Parkway
Hollywood Hills, CA

Direct Phone: Nancy (818) 509-2755

Special KofL Room Rates: Single/Double - \$105.00 per room plus applicable taxes. Executive Suite - \$200.00 - One Bedroom Suite (with parlor) - \$350.00. (Please Note: You **MUST** mention that you are with the Knights of Lithuania for these rates.)

Special Parking Rates will be available.

Room reservations should be by July 1, 2000 to insure room availability.

Lithuanians *in the news*

Lithuanian Heritage Christmas Tree Wins Award

A Christmas tree decorated with Lithuanian straw art received the first place art award and the First Place People's Choice Award at the Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble's 1999 Treefest Celebration in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania. The tree was decorated by Elaine & Carol Luschas, members of the Anthracite Council 144 of the Knights of Lithuania.

The tree was selected the most artistic in the professional tree contest and was the people's choice by receiving the most votes. The Christmas tree was embellished by natural wheat straw ornaments strung together with thread. The Treefest 99' Holiday celebration features community organizations and sponsors to benefit the Bloomsburg Theater Ensemble and local families with special needs. The celebration included over 116 trees decorated for the holiday season creating an indoor winter wonderland of freshly cut Christmas trees festively decorated by business and community groups from throughout the Bloomsburg region. Following the festival many trees & decorations are made available to less fortunate families through area social service agencies. Proceeds from the festival support the BTE, the regions only professional resident theater company. The festival also includes arts & crafts exhibits, entertainment & ethnic foods.

The winning tree took advantage of a long history of natural wheat straw decorating in Lithuania. The intricate delicate and geometric patterns have been used with decorating in Lithuania for centuries. The Christmas tree did not become popular in Lithuania until the early twentieth century and even then it was not widespread. After World War I, the custom spread in the cities and later into the countryside.



In earlier times, the wedding tree, a symbol of youth and fertility, as used among Lithuanians. At the wedding feast, it hung from the ceiling above the Bridal Pair. It was decorated with beautiful straw ornaments.

From wheat and rye, they wove ornaments of great delicacy; chandeliers, baskets, stars, chains and an infinite variety of beautiful geometric forms. A straw cross was generally placed on the top of the tree to resemble the beautiful Lithuania Wayside Cross.

The family would place a cradle under the tree where family members would place a piece of straw for each kind and gracious work performed during the holidays. In many instances, carved wooden figures and others made of straw joined the cradle there.

by Elaine and Carol Luschas

Baltimore Priest honored Dec. 17 in Lithuania

For 17 years, the Rev. Casimir Pugevicius presided over a network that smuggled information on human rights violations out of his ancestral homeland of Lithuania for distribution to Western news media.

In appreciation, the Lithuanian government

presented the Baltimore priest the Order of the Grand Duke Gediminas, one of its highest honors.

"I benignly presided over this amateurish bit of religious espionage," said the retired 71-year-old Pugevicius, who resides at the downtown St. Vincent De Paul Roman Catholic Church.

"Our job was to translate and distribute any information we got from Lithuania and to get help into there as much as we could," he said. "We didn't do any cloak and dagger stuff, of course. They did all the risky stuff over there."

"This is one of the highest state awards," said Adrija Henley, assistant to Lithuanian Ambassador Stasys Sakalauskas, who will present the priest with the award in Washington. "It is especially unusual for Father Pugevicius to receive it because he is not a Lithuanian citizen."

The award was conferred on Pugevicius by President Valdas Adamkus on Feb. 16 on Lithuania's Independence Day. Pugevicius, who is battling cancer, was unable to attend because of his health.

Pugevicius, who was born in Pigtown, PA, the son of Lithuanian parents who immigrated to the United States after World War I, was executive director of the New York-based Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid. Between 1972 and 1989, the organization published 72 volumes of "The Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania," documenting human rights abuses and anti-religious activity in Soviet-occupied Lithuania.

Church activity in Lithuania was never banned by soviet authorities, but religious orders were told to disband, and Catholics who attended church risked losing government-sponsored jobs and experienced other harassment. Children who were seen attending church or catechism classes were reprimanded when they went to school, Pugevicius said.

Information on human rights abuses was gathered by an underground Jesuit priest, who assembled it into a booklet and took it to Moscow, where he gave it to a Russian dissident, a member of the diplomatic corps of a foreign journalist who made sure it got to this country.

Pugevicius and a team of five lay people translated the information and printed it in booklet form, and then tried to get the media interested in printing it. But more important, he found a way of getting the material back into Lithuania.

"We would get the material, and we would give it to the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe to broadcast back into the country," he said. "That way thousands of people heard the word instead of just a hundred or so. In Lithuania, very few people actually saw the booklets. It was too risky to pass that along or be caught with it."

Pugevicius said he also did a lot of fund raising to buy religious materials and other aid for the Lithuanian church.

"We would get people going over to visit a relative to carry a catechism, a Bible, whatever," he said.

He recalled that once he sent an elderly nun, one of about 1,000 clandestine sisters in Lithuania, a package containing ajar of instant coffee and a pair of blue jeans, an extremely popular and hard-to-get item among young Eastern Europeans.

"We got a note back, 'Thank you for the package, the jeans and the coffee,'" he said. "But she said, I really have no use for the jeans."

"We had to suggest to her what to do with them - sell them on the black market and buy what you need," Pugevicius said, chuckling at the memory.

Submitted by Ed Budelis from the Baltimore Sun, 12/17/99 by John Rivera

Notable Graduate Awarded Grant

Dr. Susan M. Dallabrida, graduated from Pennsylvania State University's College of Medicine in Hershey with a doctorate in biochemistry and molecular biology. She is the daughter of Karen and Don Dallabrida of Wilburton and the granddaughter of K of L's Joseph and Marion Wydra of Mount Carmel, PA.

As a graduate student at Penn State, she was awarded a \$25,000, two-year grant from the American Heart Association for her research. Her research was selected as one of the top five finalists in the 1999 American Heart Association National Annual Contest for Outstanding New Research.

She has accepted a position as a post-doctoral research fellow in the surgical research department at Harvard Medical School and Children's Hospital in Boston, Mass. She is researching angiopoietins, which are recently-discovered regulators of angiogenesis (blood vessel formation from pre-existing vessels) and their role in vascular remodeling. ♦♦♦

*Lithuania's Past - A Land of Heroes***They Stood For Freedom**

**LORETA
ASANAVICIUTE**

For a few hours, a holiday atmosphere prevailed as a crowd gathered defiantly around the television tower in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Loreta Asanaviciute, a 24-year-old factory worker, watched young couples dancing in the shadow of the soaring structure. Most had assembled hastily as word spread that Soviet troops were seizing buildings throughout the city, hoping to re-establish Moscow's iron grip on the Republic.

Now, on January 12, 1991, it seemed only a matter of time before the troops moved on the television tower. The inevitable came an hour after midnight. A column of Soviet tanks rumbled down Kosmonauts Street and halted in a nearby woods, their lights visible among the trees.

Suddenly, tracer bullets lit the sky and percussion shells began exploding, shattering the tower's circular windows. Instead of running, the crowd drew closer together. Asanaviciute, a dark-haired, slender woman, joined hands with those around her to form a human chain.

Then a tank surged forward into the crowd. The earth seemed to shake, and Asanaviciute lost her footing. Instantly, she felt the steel grip of the tank tread on her legs. Her companions looked on in horror as the tank passed over her. The lower half of her body was crushed, but she remained conscious. Her friends carried her to an ambulance, where she was given an injection for the pain.

"Will I ever be able to marry?" she asked. Friends tried to comfort her and remained with her until she died five hours later.

Meanwhile, the crowd was routed in a hail of bullets. When it was over, 12 other Lithuanians lay dead and more than 500 were wounded. These were among the first casualties in Lithuania's renewed struggle for independence. This country's challenge to Soviet communist control has been turning ordinary citizens into heroes.

FATHER JONAS BORUTA

For Jonas Boruta, the word freedom summons one vivid image. It is just before dawn on October 23, 1988. A vast crowd, carrying candles and flags, is singing in front of the cathedral in Vilnius. The government has recently announced that the building will be returned to the Roman Catholic Church after 38 years. To celebrate, an outdoor Mass is to be held. As it begins, the first hints of light filter into the square.

Father Boruta was among the priests at the service on that historic day. It was a fitting milestone in a journey that had taken him from a career in science to the political underground to a public defense of Lithuania's faith.

"I had wanted to study for the priesthood after high school," Father Boruta told me. But he graduated in 1962, at the height of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's anti-religion campaign. So Boruta entered the university and studied physics instead.

Then, in 1975, a rural priest offered to train him. Boruta began instruction and was secretly ordained an underground priest.

The challenges Father Boruta faced were daunting. Religion had withered in Lithuania. There were young people who had never heard of the Ten Commandments. And those who attended services faced retribution.

But in 1987, two years after Gorbachev became the Soviet leader, the authorities began releasing political prisoners, and priests spoke out in defense of religious freedom. Many received anonymous calls threatening arrest. And they knew the KGB was monitoring their sermons.

Fr. Boruta, however, would not be intimidated. On February 16, 1988, the anniversary of Lithuanian independence, Father Boruta was celebrating Mass in a small church in the city of Alytus. The church was filled to overflowing, and the service was being broadcast over loudspeakers. Local communist leaders had surrounded the church, hoping to frighten him into remaining silent on the question of a free Lithuania. Undaunted, Boruta prayed for independence.

In 1990, he was appointed rector of the church of St. Casimir, named after the patron saint of Lithuania. He watched as churches filled each Sunday with worshippers—further proof of a religious revival.

Eventually the Communist Party felt so overwhelmed by the spiritual renaissance that it announced its members were free to attend services. Even teachers and official journalists who for years had been propagating atheism began showing up for prayer and confession.

It was truly a new era when a party boss of Alytus entered the Vilnius Cathedral and asked to be christened. At age 50, he explained, he finally had realized that without faith man is lost. "We see where the destruction of religion has led us," he said.

On a cold, clear night, as we sat talking just blocks away from the barricaded parliament, Father Bor-uta explained the meaning of religion to his countrymen: "We are a small people standing up against a modern army; the only force we have is spiritual."

ROLANDAS MEILIUNAS

Rolandas Meiliunas, a burly, sandy-haired 21-year-old, should have been on guard duty somewhere in the remote parts of the Soviet Union. Instead, he was with his countrymen outside the parliament building in Vilnius, aware that at any moment it could come under attack.

It was just days after the assault on the television tower, and the city looked like a war zone: apartment windows were braced with tape; the central library had become a makeshift hospital; painted slogans—"Freedom for the Baltics," "Occupant Get Out!"—were on the walls.

On Gediminas Street, concrete barriers blocked passage to Independence Square in front of the parliament building. Trucks and earth-moving equipment had been positioned to impede an attack.

But the most impressive line of defense was the huge crowd protecting the parliament building. Inside, young volunteers armed themselves as best they could—some shouldering hunting rifles, others wielding steel rods. In 1940, when the Soviets first invaded the country, there was little resistance in the streets. This time, Lithuanians would stand for freedom.

"I come from Panevezys, a city of 130,000," Meiliunas told me. "In our schools, they taught us that

Lithuanians had little identity outside the Soviet 'family of nations.' It was impossible even to learn traditional Lithuanian songs."

Then Gorbachev brought greater freedoms. On August 23, 1987, the emergent Lithuanian Freedom League held a protest demonstration. To everyone's surprise, the protest was tolerated, and parts of it were even shown on TV. The commentary described the demonstrators as extremists, but for Meiliunas, then 17, the seeds of doubt were sown.

Some of his classes at school were conducted in Russian, but one day in February 1988 his teacher came in for a shock. When she called on the students one by one, they answered in Lithuanian.

"The students were wreathed in smiles," Meiliunas said. They had found a bond in defying the teacher.

In June 1988, a national political movement, Sajudis, was proclaimed. And soon after, the Lithuanian Freedom League held a rally in the capital's Cathedral Square. Meiliunas stood amid the throng of 20,000 people, when Soviet troops attacked the crowd with night sticks, even beating pregnant women.

Soon Meiliunas was summoned by the local draft board. Instead of reporting, he went underground—cutting his hair, shifting his residence constantly. By refusing induction, Meiliunas had made a final break with the Soviet system.

At first, he was among a handful of draft resisters. But with the spring and fall call-ups in 1989, their ranks swelled to thousands. By the fall of 1990, only 1300 Lithuanians had been inducted into the Soviet army, out of a quota of 12,000. In Panevezys, young men were filling an urn in the central square with their draft cards.

On March 11, 1990, Lithuania declared its independence, and Lithuanian soldiers began deserting in droves. They sent messages to their units which read: "I consider myself a citizen of the Lithuanian Republic and renounce my service in the army occupying Lithuania."

The soldiers feared the Soviets would try to track them down, but when they did, an anti-conscription group Meiliunas had joined tried to protect them. On one occasion, he and two colleagues arrived just in time to grab a young man by one arm as his command-

ing officer was pulling him away by the other. The tug of war ended with the officer leaving empty-handed.

In January 1991, the Soviet army sent in special units to hunt down draft evaders. In Panevezys, paratroopers burst into a bread factory and seized a worker. They beat him and ordered him to report for service. Next time it could be me, Meiliunas thought.

Returning to Vilnius, he found increasing signs of defiance. A makeshift barricade, 12 feet high, protected the parliament building on three sides. On the barbed wire in front of the barricade, children hung drawings of a Soviet monster destroying a helpless Lithuania. Adults spiked Soviet draft cards on spurs of the barbed wire.

The day we spoke in Independence Square, I asked Meiliunas, "What will you do now?"

"I will be invisible," he said. "That is the thing to do, and hope that this country's ordeal will end."

LIUDVIKAS SIMUTIS

He will never forget the knock on the door. Or the words "Come quickly! They've found bodies!"

It was June 27, 1941 Three months earlier, Liudvikas Simutis' father had been imprisoned by Soviet secret police. Now, after the Germans had driven the Soviets out of western Lithuania, came the first word of the political prisoners' fate.

Simutis' mother took her five-year-old son 12 miles to a forest. There, amid a pile of corpses, was her husband. His face was puffed and bloodied. His eyes had been gouged out. His sexual organs were crushed. From that moment Simutis' path in life was set.

"Others had illusions about communism," he said. "My attitude was defined once and for all."

Simutis long struggle against communist rule began at age nine. When the Red Army reoccupied the country in 1944, thousands of young men—and even boys like him—took to the forest, forming a partisan army that became known as the Forest Brothers. His first assignment was to carry messages, but he soon graduated to scouting Soviet police units. At age 17 he was handed a pistol and told to appropriate supplies. He would break into offices at night and steal duplicating equipment and blanks for forging documents.

On June 20, 1955, Simutis was in a hospital in Klaipeda recovering from tuberculosis when KGB

agents arrested him. Sentenced to 25 years at hard labor, he disappeared into the gulag.

Ironically, while in prison Simutis regained his health. Of the 2000 prisoners in his camp, some 200 were fellow Lithuanians who showed almost familial loyalty to one another. They scavenged the parts for a shortwave radio that Simutis constructed so he could listen to the Voice of America and the BBC.

In 1977, 22 years after his imprisonment, Simutis was finally freed, and returned to Lithuania. He joined the dissident movement, writing public protests that found their way to the West. When questioned about life in the gulag, he would reply: "Ask yourself if it pays to be afraid of Soviet prisons. I went on crutches and came back on my feet."

On a fall afternoon in 1989, two men from the political movement Sajudis appeared at his apartment. "It is essential," they said, "that we have at least one person in our new parliament who fought with the Forest Brothers." Then they proceeded to plead with Simutis to run for a seat.

Simutis won handily with 65 percent of the vote—despite communist efforts to intimidate the electorate. He even captured a majority in an apartment block for Soviet officers.

On March 11, 1990, in the high-ceilinged hall of the parliament, Simutis took part in the historic vote to restore Lithuanian independence. "People in the West," he told me, "do not understand what communism is or what communists are capable of doing." Nonetheless, he has no doubt that the cause of independence will triumph.

Three days after the massacre at the television tower, hundreds of thousands of mourners lined the streets of Vilnius as the corpses were paraded in open hearses, past an ocean of flowers. Draped over each coffin was the yellow, green and red flag of Lithuania. Leading the procession was a man holding a portrait of Loreta Asanaviciute. As the cortege reached Antakalnis Cemetery, the marchers walked by a Soviet army school. Many stared at the red star on its gate. Their message was clear: we demand our freedom. Now, they have proclaimed it.

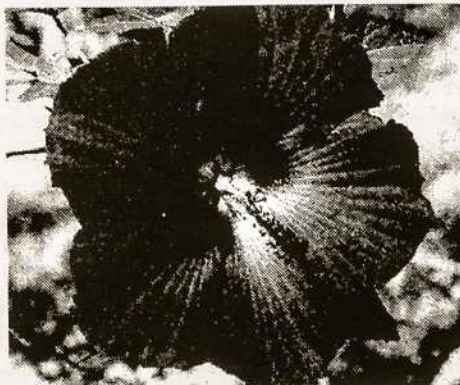
From the Reader's Digest, c October 1991 by David Satter, a Hooper Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia. ❖❖❖

The Lithuanian Gardener

Indoor Plants

by Frank Petrauskas

This is *Part 2* of the list of plants taken from the Lithuanian Internet by our Editor. As I told you in part 1, the first name of the plant listed will be the Latin name followed by the Lithuanian name and then the English common name if there is one. This group will be a mixture of flowering houseplants and foliage houseplants.



Hibiscus Lord Baltimore

very warm, humid growing conditions. Their leaves are prominently veined like a nerve network and they are very attractive. As they grow older they become straggly.

7. *Guzmania - Guzmanija*

Tricolor Guzmanias have spikes of bright petal-like bracts that remain colorful for months. The smooth-edged, glossy leaves are colorful also and they form a water holding rosette in the

center.

8. *Hedera - Gebene - Ivy*

Hedera or Ivy are a large genus. There are many indoor and outdoor ivies. Two of the most popular Indoor Ivies is Canary Island and English. On both the leaves are variegated which means the edge of the leaves has a yellowish color. Ivies are a compliment to taller plants.

9. *Hibiscus - Hibiskas arba kinroze - Rose of China*

Hibiscus can have a long lifetime for a houseplant. The fragile beauty of its 5 inch blossoms can range from snowy white in color to deep scarlet red. They bloom year round.

10. *Yucca - Juka - Adam's needle*

Yucca is more of an outdoor plant than an indoor plant. They tend to spread and grow tall. The leaves are sword-like and the stalk rises out of the center bearing a magnificent spike of highly fragrant, waxy flowers.

11. *Kalanchoe - Kalanke - Christmas flower*

Kalanchoes grow 8 to 12 Inches high with an equal spread. They are a winter-blooming plant with a colorful four petaled red blossoms that lasts for many weeks. A good Christmas plant.

12. *Maranta - Maranta - Prayer plant*

Marantas have a common name of Prayer plant because the leaves when at rest in darkness they are in a vertical position which makes them look like hands in prayer. Then when a light is turned on the

1. *Dieffenbachia - Difenbachija - Dumb cane*

Dieffenbachias are a popular houseplant. Their foliage is attractive and they can be grown under adverse conditions. They will reach up to 5 feet tall if not cut back.

2. *Dracaena - Dracena*

Dracaena is another popular plant. There are a number of varieties and they grow anywhere between 2 feet to 5 feet tall. Most varieties are extremely durable.

3. *Echinocactus - Echinokaktusas - Ball cactus*

Echinocactus is a member of the cactus family. Their height will be anywhere from a couple inches to 8 inches. The pot can be placed on a windowsill in direct sunlight. They love light, heat and dry conditions. Some have lovely flowers.

4. *Exacum - Eksakumas - Arabian Violet*

Exacum's prominent feature is its blue flower with a bright yellow center stamen. They bloom profusely for about 4 months. The plant will reach about 8 inches.

5. *Ficus - Fikas - Fig*

Ficus is a very popular foliage plant. The one most used is the India-rubber tree but there are others such as Weeping Fig and Fiddle-Leaved Fig which are widely grown. Some will grow as high as 6 feet tall.

6. *Fittonia - Fitonija - Mosaic plant*

Fittonias are 8 Inch long creeping plants that require

leaves will spread to their horizontal position in a matter of minutes.

13. Peperomia - Peperomija

Peperomias are an interesting small plant to grow. There are a number of varieties. Most have leaves that are silvery gray with dark olive-green valleys and pink stems. The watermelon peperomia has leaves like a striped watermelon. Very attractive.

14. Spathiphyllum - Papedzlalapis - Spathes

Spathiphyllums bear handsome, subtly fragrant leaf shaped white flowers called spathes that closely resemble the blossoms of calla lilies. The plant grows 12 to 18 inches tall and has shiny dark green leaves on wiry stems.

15. Washingtonia - Vasingtonija - Palm

Mashingtonia is a member of the large palm family. There are hundreds of species of palm. Some are among the best all around houseplants. One great advantage they have over most plants is that they do not need a large amount of sunlight - the light of a north window is usually sufficient. Most important to remember is the palm cannot take a sudden change in temperature. A sudden drop of temperature in a room will cause a chill and the leaves may turn brown and the plant may die in a short time.

This completes our Lithuanian plant list. I hope there were some plants on the list that appealed to you. There was a nice variety of flowering plants and foliage plants so there should have been something of interest to everybody.

Contact your local greenhouse or your local garden center as to the availability of the plants you desire. They should have most in stock. However you may have to wait until Spring when they receive their new shipment. Most of the tropical plants are propagated and grown in Florida and some of the other southern states. The small plants are then shipped north and grown onto salable size. With today's rapid transportation system plants can be moved all over the world in a matter of hours. We are so fortunate to be able to grow certain plants that we couldn't dream of growing 50 years ago. Happy growing to all and may 2000 be fruitful and result in a bountiful harvest.



Smiles Without Wrinkles

- Ever notice how the straight-and-narrow path

gets the most wear along the edges?

- The older you get, the better you realize you were.
- Politicians do not have an easy life. Somebody is always interrupting it with an election.
- The safest way to double your money is to fold it over once and put it in your pocket.
- If the number 2 pencil is most popular, why is it still number 2?
- Middle age is when the narrow waist and the broad mind change places.

WORDS NOT YET IN THE DICTIONARY:

- FRUST (*frust*) *n.* The small line of debris that refuses to be swept onto the dustpan and keeps backing a person across the room until he finally decides to give up and sweep it under the rug.
- PUPKUS (*pupkus*) *n.* The moist residue left on a window after a dog presses its nose to it.
- ELECELLERATTON (*el a eel er ay shun*) *n.* The mistaken notion that the more you press an elevator button the faster the elevator will arrive.

by Leondas Galinskas - C-79 -Southfield, MI.



In Memoriam-Charlie Cyzeski

Another familiar, face lost is Charlie Cyzeski who passed away November 12. He, along with Fr. Pappka, founded the K of L in Forest City, PA. He was a frequent shopper on own Main Stem where, for many years, he operated an amusement machine business. Charlie, of course, is best known for his devotion to his church, St. Anthony's. During the pastoral leadership of the late Father Ben Paukstis and his successors, Charlie. put his heart and soul, and pocketbook, into the maintenance of the church, rectory and cemetery. The excellent condition of these facilities, for years, was a direct result of his labors. He was saddened in recent years as the financial realities made it necessary to close St. Anthony's Church. However, he and his staff continued their hard work on the cemetery. He was also a volunteer for Old Home Week and other local worthy causes, especially the K of L whose purpose was to maintain and preserve the Lithuanian culture. We've sure his place in heaven was secure. We extend our condolences to his family.

-Blanche Motsko



Lithuanian Chefs



Award Winning Sweets for your Valentine

by Anna Helen McDonald
Republican Cook Off- 1984-
3rd place Winner

Grapefruit cake with cream cheese icing

2 tbsp butter, softened
2 Tsp all purpose flour
2 cups cake flour (not self rising)
sifted before measuring
2 Tsp baking powder
1/2 Tsp salt
1/3 cup strained fresh grapefruit
juice
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup water
4 egg whites
4 egg yolks
1/8 Tsp cream of tarter
1 cup granulated sugar
1 Tbsp finely grated fresh grape-
fruit peel

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. With a pastry brush spread the softened butter over the bottom and sides of two nine inch layer cake pans.

Add 1 Tbsp of the all purpose flour to each pan, tip it from side to side to flour all sides of pan, then rap them sharply to remove the excess flour.

Combine the cake flour, baking powder, and salt and sift them together into a bowl. Pour the grapefruit juice, vegetable oil and water into a glass measuring cup.

Set aside.

With a wire whisk or a rotary beater or electric beater, beat the egg whites and cream, of tarter until the whites are stiff enough to stand in unwavering peaks on the beater when it is lifted from the bowl. Set aside.

In a separate bowl but with the same beater, beat the egg yolks and granulated sugar together for 4 to 5 minutes or until the mixture is thick. Beat in about 1/2 cup of the flour mixture and, when it is thoroughly mixed add 1/4 cup of the juice-oil mixture. Repeat three times, alternating 1/2 cup of the flour with the juice-oil mixture and beating the batter well after each addition.

Stir in one Tbsp of grated grapefruit peel. With a rubber spatula scoop the egg whites over the batter and fold together gently but thoroughly. Pour the batter into the prepared pan, smoothing the tops with the spatula. Bake in the middle of the oven for about 25 minutes or until a cake tester inserted in the middle comes out clean.

Let the cakes cool in the pan for 5 minutes, then turn out onto wire racks to cool.

ICING

2 (8 oz) packages cream cheese,
cut into pieces and softened.
2 Tbsp finely grated fresh grape-
fruit peel.
1 cup confectioners sugar
1/2 Tsp vanilla extract

In a deep bowl cream', the cream cheese and confectioners sugar to gather until light and fluffy. Beat in the grated grapefruit peel and vanilla extract. When cake is cooled, apply the icing with a metal spatula. Decorate with grape-fruit sections and strips of grapefruit peel. Refrigerate.

Prize Winning Republican Cook-
Off - 1981- 3rd place winner

Apple Cheese Loaf

1 cup unpeeled, ground apples and
juice
2 cups whole wheat flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter
2/3 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
1/2 cup grated cheese
1/2 cup chopped nut meats

Preheat oven to moderate 350 degrees. Sift together the flour, baking powder, soda and salt. Cream shortening. Add the sugar gradually and continue working until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time beating about 1 minute after each addition. Add the apples, cheese and nuts, mix well. Add the dry ingredients in two portions mixing only until all the flour is dampened. Turn into a greased 9 X 5 X 3 loaf pan. Push the batter well up into the corners of the pan leaving the center slightly hollow. Bake 1 hour. Makes one loaf.



C-3, PHILADELPHIA, PA

V. Stepalovitch & S. Gutauskas

In September, Council #3 received the happy news that Barbara Mickunas became engaged to Mr. Jim Currie. Their wedding date is set for October 14, 2000. Congratulations!

The month of October found members heading to the Svekla residence for a triple occasion. On the 3rd, all gathered to celebrate the retirement of Walter Svekla. We combined his retirement festivities with a birthday celebration for his wife, and a remembrance of their anniversary.

Nine members of Council #3, and some friends, journeyed to Cape May for a Polka weekend, on November 19th and 20th. While there, it was discovered that it was the 34th anniversary of Marge and Charles Petromis. So, they combined both and had a joyous weekend. C-3 also learned that on November 30th, Agnes Mickunas retired. Welcome to the group, Agnes.

December came as a mixed month. We learned of the death of one member's mother, Alberta Weigand. Also, her husband, Charles, had to have surgery done. At the same time another member, Joe Drumstas, also had to have surgery. C-3 sends their condolences to Alberta. We also pray for a quick recovery to Joe Drumstas and Charles Weigand.

On Sunday, December 5, two dozen C-3 members attended a Christmas Party with Pollyanna held at the Coastline Restaurant in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

On Saturday, December 11, we held our 15th Annual Kucios Dinner in St. George's Parish Hall, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 150 friends and members were in attendance. A fir tree decorated with natural straw



**Anthracite C-144 members
Bernice Mikatavage and Marion
Wydra sell bumper stickers and
books to help Lithuania's poor.**

ornaments stood beside the lectern near the head table, and small Lithuanian flags graced all of the dining tables in the hall. After Christmas wafers were broken and greetings exchanged, those in attendance ate a traditional kucios meal served by members of C-3. Walter Svekla, as master of ceremonies, spoke briefly about how a traditional kucios is celebrated in Lithuania. The after-dinner program consisted of poetry readings. Ausra Maknys read "A Christmas Memo From the Shepherds," written by Karen Muensterman and Tamra Oliver, which appeared in the St. Anthony Messenger, and Stephany Gutauskas read her original poem, "The Gift," which appeared in the December 23, 1998 issue of the Port Richmond Star, a local newspaper. Both poems emphasized that the birth of Jesus Christ represents the true meaning of Christmas. Next, the Kucios Chorale, comprised of singers Julie Kowrak, Ausra Maknys, Antoinette Petrone, Raymond Pukis, and Victor Stepalovitch with Agnes Mickunas at piano, led the diners in the Lithuanian songs, "Gul Siandiena" and "Sveikas Jezu Gimusis," and the English version of "Silent Night." A raffle brought the affair to a happy conclusion.

Special thanks go to Kucios Committee Chairpersons Irene Ozalis and Victor Stepalovitch, and ticket sellers Lillian Greymas, Nellie Pandza, Margaret Petronis, and Victor Stepalovitch, whose combined efforts made for a successful event.

Family, friends, parishioners, and other well-wishers were on hand for 11:30 A.M. mass at St. George Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Sunday, December 19 to congratulate Monsignor Joseph Anderlonis on the 30th anniversary of his ordination as a priest.

**C-10, ATHOL-GARDNER, MA
Vincukas**

An old fashioned Kucios, the Christmas Eve supper of Christian Lithuanians, was held on Sunday, December 19th, at St. Francis Church, and sponsored by the local K of L, Council 10.

In the absence of President Dr. Henry Gailunas, Bill Wisniauskas greeted all to our annual celebration. Reverend Joseph Jurgelonis, Spiritual Director, read the Christmas Gospel of Luke. Father explained the significance and traditions of the evening. The lights were dimmed, candles were lit, and the wine was poured. Prayers were said for deceased members. Father then distributed the sacred Plotkalis to all for breaking, representing the sharing of the Last Supper. The meal consisted of more than twelve meatless dishes. Traditional Christmas Eve superstitions were enacted under the direction of Cultural Chairman, Brone Wisniauskas.

General co-chairmen of the Kucios were Sophia

Council News

Fiorentino, Brone Wisniauskas, and Armand Bouthillier. Both of the local daily newspapers wrote up our festive event.

Member news includes that Nellie Melaika recently spent three weeks in Florida. We welcome Albert Wilumaitis as a new member. He resides in Vermont, and found out about the K of L through the Internet. Dr. H. Jaiunas spent the Christmas holiday in Lithuania.

Member James Kraskauskas is to marry in Lithuania on February 12th. Congratulations to Jim and his bride!

C-17 SOUTH BOSTON, MA BALANDIS

We welcome the new century with the unanimous re-election of our dedicated, loyal officers for the 2000 term:

Spiritual Adv - Father Steve Zukas
President - Alexander Akule
1st VP - Frank Markuns
2nd VP - Longinas Svelnis 3rd
Vice President - Emily Lehman
Treasurer - Joseph White
Recording Sec'y - Adele Martus
Correspondence Sec'y - Ann White
Financial Sec'y - Vera Yuscavitch
Sgt. at Arms - Albert Kropas
Trustees - Eleanor Mikalonis,
Lou Bazzinotti
Cult. Affairs - Florence Zaleskas
Lith. Affairs - Longinas Svelnis
Sunshine Committee - Anne
Norinkavich, Mary Mickavich
Ritual Committee - Mary Martus,
Mildred Daniels
News Corres. - Regina Alexander

Thank you, Council-17 officers, for your continuance of Council 17's traditions del "Dievui ir Tevynei". The giving of your time and efforts is greatly appreciated.

The annual C-17 Christmas Party followed the January meeting in the church

hall, after the 4 PM Mass at St. Peter Church.

There will be a C-17 St. Casimir Day Communion Breakfast on Sunday, March 5, 2000, following the 10:30 Mass at St. Peter Church.

The Council is looking forward to hosting the coming semi-annual New England District Convention to be held on April 30, 2000 at St. Peter Church.

Patricia Akule was given a special thank you from C-1, Brockton's President, Veronica Bizinkauskas. Patricia is responsible for selling over 50 tickets to C-1 annual Kucios, held in Our Lady of Sorrows Convent, Brockton. C-17's member, Sr. Eugenia, was the narrator and announcer for the 11th year. This year Maryte Bizinkauskaitė presented her delightful children's chorus from St. Casimir School.

Msr. Albert Contons has all the information regarding the Pilgrimage Tour to Lithuania, May 29 - June 14, 2000. The tour features the National Eucharistic Congress of Lithuania celebrating the Third Millennium of the birth of Jesus.

C-17 lost a loyal and dedicated member when Adele Januskevich passed away. Her talent in crafts and decorations helped out many council affairs and the Christmas bazaars. Our sincere sympathy is extended to her husband Joseph and family. Their two daughters danced internationally.

Best wishes to one and all for peace, health, happiness in this new century! Iki pasimatymo!

C-26, WORCESTER, MA Stephen V. Walinsky, Sr.

The proceeds from a blind auction, held after the November meeting, was allocated to the welfare of the orphaned

children of Lithuania. The enthusiastic bidding, with no concern of the contents, put a big plus to the profits. Thanks to all who came and spent.

Cheese and cracks, punch and wine, followed by a choice of dishes to dine, together with a jolly group and gifts galore, just made this Christmas Party the best of this millennium by far. Greetings and good wishes resounded throughout the evening intermixed with choruses of hymns and traditional songs of the season. Ho-Ho-Ho... we had a good-good-good time.

HM Joseph Sakaitis spent some time hospitalized during the month of October, the hip of Anne Buchinskis is still mending and Ms Ceaska was on the sick list for a while.

A news item worth a mention, though not of K of L activity. Individual problems, civic questions, political controversies were overshadowed by a fatal fire in our city. What can I say, or what could I say that would be different from what has been said about the fearless application of the six fire fighters who perished in the conflagration. Dear Lord, forgive them their sins, and extend hands and welcome them to the heavens to be with You forever.

While C-26 was vacationing, came the heat, the drought and other tricks and talents of nature, also came miseries and misfortunes and health problems or some of our friends.. Antoinette Ivaska, a knee replacement, William Leseman, surgery, Ruth Serafinas, auto mishap, Regina Barisas, knee replacement, Frances Glaskas, hospital confinement. May time heal all and give them strength to return to active participation in C-26 affairs.

Council News

C-74, SCRANTON, PA

We wish all our members and their families a holy and healthy millennium. It would be a nice gesture to start the year by saying just one "Hail Mary" each day for all our members and families.

We had our advent traditional Kucios, December 12th. The weather was beautiful and we had a wonderful turnout with people from Scranton, Pittston, and four from Philadelphia. This was a great Christian fellowship and unity. I know our ancestors would be proud that we are keeping up this tradition.

Msgr. Peter Madus said grace, then we broke the plotkele, and wished peace and good health to one another. The planning and success of this event was tremendous. Thankfully, we had an abundance of help from many members and friends. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a memorable and happy occasion. We ended our Kucios with members and choir members singing English and Lithuanian carols. Marie Laske was chairperson of Kucios. A very special thank you to Mary.

Sending a small hello to Aldona and Bob in Connecticut, from Helen Z.

Della Zvirbles and daughter went to Oklahoma to Della's grandson's wedding.

I must tell you about my mother's Christmas tree, which we all get a chuckle out of each year. After my parents' children left the nest, she would give me one dollar and say, "buy me a small tree." Of course for a dollar the tree looked like a Charlie Brown tree, with about four branches in total. She placed it in a corner between two busy doorways. We were all having Kucios at her house, and it was knocked over more than a few times. She immediately got a nail



C-74 's Fr. Clemend Kasinskas with Marie and Richard Laske and Sr. Liz Zemaitis at St. Ann's novena and mass

and hammer and nailed the tree to the wall. Then, she sat down to continue eating. You can bet the tree didn't fall again. This is our family's funny Christmas memory.

Please remember "it will never be night again when the Lord shines His light on us!"

C-96 DAYTON, OHIO

Fran Petkus

Hopefully everyone has survived the "2000 glitch", if it even happened. We have much to look forward as we speed on to the 'official next century'. Highlight of our December meeting was the annual distribution of our Charity Fund. This year the donations were sent to Old North Dayton Food Pantry, Aid to Lithuania, Inc., Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid. A special vote for a donation to the Apple Program came from our general fund. After the meeting we headed to The Barnsider for our Annual Christmas Dinner. Thanks to chair Anna Louise Tucker for making all the arrangements. All participating had a wonderful dinner. Instead of exchanging gifts, an envelope was passed with donations going to Aid to

Lithuania, Inc.

December saw us making the rounds to nursing homes, private homes, etc. for our Annual Christmas Caroling. We visited 20 homes with poinsettias! Thanks must go to Frances Mikalauskas for making all the arrangements. Thanks to MaryAgnes Mikalauskas for accompanying the carolers with her guitar. When the carolers returned to the church hall, Elaine Pacovsky had a warm supper ready for all to enjoy. As usual, the carolers so enjoyed watching the faces light up as we visited and sang!

On December 11-12 the Juniors held their Annual Holiday Bake/Gift Sale. Under the guidance of Junior Advisors Christine Fletcher and Julia Goecke, the event was very successful. Thanks go to the Juniors for all they did, to the regular council members and their donations and support of this successful event. The Juniors then participated in the Christmas Caroling. Earlier in the month, our Juniors attended a very special Christmas Program at the Salem Church of God.

Holy Cross Parish, sponsored by the Parish Cultural Committee, held its Annual Kucios on December 19th. This was well attended by parishioners and guests. Fr. Michael Holloran began with the gospel reading followed with prayers. After sharing the plotkele and apples, each took part of the twelve dishes. Jim and Aaron Geiger were the fortune tellers with all enjoying their 'prophesies'. Aaron, with his keyboard, led the singing of Christmas Carols and held a musical contest. Cost to attend was food goods that would be distributed by Old North Dayton Food Pantry. Thanks go to Elinor Sluzas and her committee for a wonderful shared evening, true to

Council News

the Christmas spirit. Laurreta Pant has volunteered to represent C 96 on the Parish Council and Sarysis Committee.

Our council holds a 50/50 raffle at each meeting. Half proceeds goes to the winner and half goes to our Charity Fund. Winners for 1999 were Janina Bucmys, Norma Petkus, Robert Pant, Eloise A. Berezelly (2), Elaine Pacovsky, Fr. Mike, Sr. Regina Welza and Fran Petkus. Winners of the Christmas ornaments donated by George A. Mikalauskas were Laurreta Pant and Elaine Pacovsky. Congratulations to one and all!

Our deepest sympathies to Frances Vangas on the loss of her husband Charles. Charlie was a Fourth Degree Knight and in the '40s and '50s directed the Vejeliai Dancers along with performing. Fran accompanied the dancers with her accordion. Charlie and Fran have lived the past several years in Florida but still were a part of Holy Cross when they spent their summers in Dayton. Charlie, rest in the peace of the Lord!

C-110, MASPETH, NY

Our 25th annual KUCIOS was celebrated on December 12. We had a variety of Lithuanian foods served to the 13 tables of friends that were present. At mass, and during our candlelight ceremony, Helen Matulonis, Maria Stungurys, Julia Matulewich, Fran Jakatt, Stella Stripeikis, Ann Morrisey, and Evelyn Walles wore Lithuanian costumes. A special thanks goes out to the following members who helped to make this event such a great success: John Klimas for his work as chef; and to Alice Laukaitis, Jean Mactutis, Fran Jakatt, Ann Ackalitis, Joe and



C-96 Carolers Connie Geiger & AnnaMarie Sluzas-Berger

Mary Stelmokas for their assistance with the kitchen and serving. Our choir members added to the joy by singing and playing entertaining music. We received donations from many friends, and the cheese was supplied by Fran Jakatt, both of which contributed to a financial profit. Not forgotten were the Holy Blessed Christmas wafers for all guests present. Christmas gifts were given to Pastor Ted Rooney, Rev. Vitas Volertas and Rev. Stasys Raila, thanking them for their guidance and blessings throughout the year. Chairpersons for this wonderful event were Ann and John Kingsley.

C- 141 BRIDGEPORT, CT

Aldona Marcavage

Lithuanian tradition for Kucios calls for 12 meatless dishes in honor of the 12 Apostles, we in Bridgeport honored not only the Apostles but their friends and relatives as well. The tables were laden with Christmas eve specials. The decorated hall looked real pretty—and the brand-new white damask tablecloths, chosen by Alice Wilcinkas and Barbara Schmidt looked elegant.

On Peter Balcius suggestion the Christmas tree with all blue lights accented a blessed Christmas and a Jubilee New

Year. President Clemencine filler B/M welcomed the council family celebrating the last Kušlos in this century. Msgr. Pranckus blessed the Kaledaiciai, the food, and all present. Our spirited M/G Peter Balcius took over. Stefa Yaikutis was called to read the Gospel in Lithuanian, followed by Mary Spelman, who read it in English. A

small table and an empty chair were set up for our missing members, moment of silence was observed, in their memory. Faithful Eucharistic Minister, Helen Janiunas led in the singing of Carols in Lithuanian and English. Father Jose sitting next to Msgr. Pranckus at the head table seemed to be enjoying it all. He reminded us, that in spite of the diminished Lithuanian activity at St. George, this was still our church—"our—home"—and we should attend to assist our Msgr. at monthly Masses.

We had a surprise free raffle dreamed up by our much-loved M/C Peter. The happy winners were: Op Marlin, Nell Shaw, Frank Sciarappa Sr., and Joe Janiunas. Monetary gifts were presented to Msgr. Pranckus, Sr. Jose. Christmas plants were given to organist Mary Grosso "Lithuanian teacher Grintare Ivaska—with our thanks for their services---and a get-well plant to H/M Clemencine Miller.

On December 4th. Clemencine Miller, Helen Simanis and Aldona Marcavage travelled to Worcester to the NED board meeting, getting to St. Casimir church was a long, tiring nightmare, due to the disastrous warehouse fire—not far from the church—that took the lives of the 6 firefighters. All streets were detours!

This year the Victor Millers hosted the Spanish las

Council News

Posadas, Jesus, Mary and Joseph (in costume) arrived at the front door, singing in Spanish--and 65 choristers marched in. Two guitars and tambourines accompanied the chorus. Father Jose prayed the Mass and distributed Holy Communion. Happy Spanish melodies filled the home. This Advent Novena is such a beautiful custom. We are honored that they have invited the Lithuanians to join them.

Get-well prayers are requested for: Stella Witkavich, ill during the holidays--Peter Radzwillas recovering from disc surgery--Macie Brilvitch and Clemencine Miller recovering from recent surgery.

Celebrating Christina's and the New Year at the time of this writing, are Helen Simanis and her sister-in-law, in Paris and various European countries. We pray the wild weather missed them. The news was frightening.

C-144, ANTHRACITE, PA "Ona"

Our Christmas season was saddened by the loss of three good members. Mary Brennan, who never missed a meeting, was always willing to help in whatever way she could. Edmund Carlitus, who you may remember from Conventions, he looked like Colonel Sanders, was always faithful, worked hard and was so proud to be a K of L'r. Alphonse Balulis, who assisted at the Lithuanian Day Camps we had for our Juniors. We will miss them all.

Bernice Mikatavage chaired our Kucios this year. It began with a Mass where the Friends of Siluva Choir sang Lithuanian hymns.

Our newly elected officers for this year are; President, Marian Wydra; Vice Pres., Eleanor Vaicaitis; Secretary, Ann Wargo; Treasurer, Anna

Radzavage; and Financial Secretary, Elsie Kosmisky. All were installed by Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Ron Jankaitis, during the Kucios Mass. Following Mass, everyone gathered in the church hall for a typical "Kucios". At the head of each table, the oldest person sitting there started the Plotkeles and all shared them. Fr. Ron said the opening prayers and everyone sang "Sveikas Jezus Gimusis". It was wonderful seeing the young families in attendance. After the meal, Lithuanian Christmas Superstitions were done and the young people participated in this. More Lithuanian carols were sung and there was then a visit by Father Christmas, who distributed gifts. It was truly a beautiful affair and the attendance was great. Thanks to our Cooks who prepared the meal.

To help enhance our Christmas experience, the Council sent a Christmas gift to our adopted Orphan and to the Carmelite Nuns at Pastuva. Also, many other boxes of gifts were sent to the Orphanages and schools we support. We thank all the members, who contributed in any way. We are grateful to Father Ron, our Spiritual Advisor, who takes time out from his busy schedule to assist us whenever he can. God bless and keep us all.

C-152, E. LONG ISLAND

Julie Lott

We are now in the third Millennium. Our Holy Father proclaims this the "Holy Year", the "Jubilee Year", and a time of great celebration. We must strive to achieve the expectations and goals laid before us.

As of this writing our council has not had our opening meeting of the New Year. With the efficient staff of officers that were elected for the New Year, whatever issues will come up will

be handled with much thought and capability. We are proud to have you all aboard again!

We ended the last millennium with our annual Christmas party, which was well attended by the Knights and friends. It was a happy time of dining, dancing and singing. Joe Thomas, once again, provided the music for this festive party. What wonderful prizes were on display on our raffle table. Thanks Members! You out-did yourselves again.

Perhaps we should reflect on the occurrences of the last century. Such progress occurred throughout the world. It was these advancements and new knowledge that made it possible for our ancestors to come to America. It was a beginning of a new life, good times, hard times, and many sacrifices that were made to make the transition from their homeland successful. "Survive" they did, and thus when more Lithuanians came to this country, they started their own churches and groups. So was born the "Knights of Lithuania" an organization for "God and Country", that now unites us with our fellow Knights everywhere. What a blessing to have these councils where we gather and work together to help our fellow Lithuanians here and in the homeland of Lithuania. It's the part that has brought us to this place we're at today. It's time to forget what might have been and open our hearts to making our future goals a reality.

One more reminder! Don't forget to pay up your membership dues for the year 2000. (Be careful how you date that check)

Leaving you with this quote: "We do not stop playing because we are old; We grow old because we stop playing".



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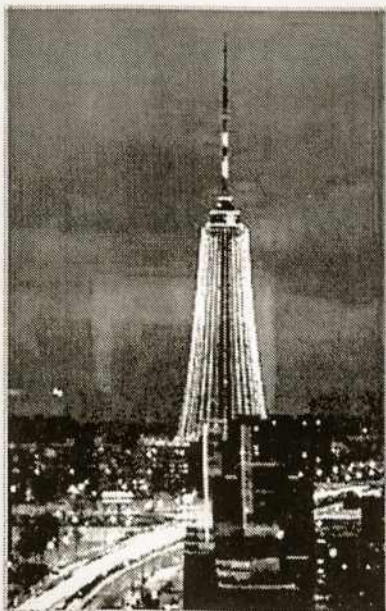
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Vilnius TV tower was turned into the world's tallest "Christmas Tree" and was lit on millennium eve broadcasted around the world.
 Photo by Elta

To the Knights of Lithuania

***Welcome to the New
 Millennium***

**We Wish You Peace
 and Prosperity**

**Council 112
 Chicago, IL**

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TO MY COMPATRIOTS

If a tempest arises and causes to fall
 One of the pillars supporting your
 wall,
 The house will not topple - don't run
 off in fright:
 Replace it - just find a new pillar,
 that's all,
 And everything will be all right.

If at the hands of a foe or of fate
 Falls one of our best - let your will not
 abate;
 Let another, his comrade-in-arms, his
 true friend
 Step forth and continue his cause so
 great
 Until its triumphant end.

Lithuania! Invaded by enemies dread
 You must be like the hydra, which,
 losing one head,
 At once grew five others instead of
 just one.
 Only so you'll survive and will not fall
 down dead
 Though the enemy thinks he has won!

*1896 by Vincas Kudirka
 Translated by Dorian Rottenberg*

