

# Vytis - The Knight

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

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### Front Cover:

"Our Lady of Šiluva"

By Artist, Sister M. Mercedes, SSC



## To My Fellow Knights

I hope we will be friends again! In following the directives given to us, we edited, clipped and shortened your Council News. You saw a condensed version and didn't like it. You told us your views, and we've changed back.

Robert Martin, Supreme Council President, had instructed us to do this, and the change was discussed at the recent April Supreme Council meeting in Chicago. The Council News is your news. It reports your activities from your perspective, reflecting the particular nuances from your geographical area. It is the vehicle by which members who have moved away or are unable to attend local functions learn about the people with whom they have worked.

Therefore, the Council News should report council activities as well as Lithuanian, religious, civil and social affairs in which the members participate. The news about individual members may be included. The style should be short and to the point, not rambling. (Other national historical tidbits do not belong to this section). The editorial staff will try to be true to each reporter's style and content, but they reserve the right to edit for space and/or content as may be necessary.

Our dedicated council reporters deserve our lauds and thanks! Keep up the wonderful things you are doing, and continue to share them with us.

*Sister M. Janine*

**VYTIS DEADLINE: June 1** FOR ALL ENTRIES FOR THE July/August VYTIS



### THE BASEBALL PRAYER



Almighty Father, You who are called the "Mighty Umpire" in this game of life, we are not sure what uniforms we should wear. While we may be Angels in spirit, in reality we are Giants in pride, Dodgers of responsibility and Tigers in ambition. When it comes to faith, we find ourselves in the minor leagues. When it comes to good works, we strike out; when it comes to knowledge of Your Word, we are not even sure of the ground rules.

Therefore, we are thankful for Your mercy when we find ourselves in foul territory; for Your forgiveness when we commit one error after another; for Your uplifting spirit when we find ourselves in the pitfalls of a slump.

Dear God, may our game plan be Your will and our response a sellout crowd with standing room only. And when our number is retired here on earth, may we rejoice to hear you call out, "SAFE," in His name Who gives final victory to all who believe! Amen.





# *Knights of Lithuania*

## Established 1913

# *Supreme Council*

### **A REPORT TO OUR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Dear Fellow Members:

Last month the members of the Supreme Council gathered in Chicago, IL for their Pre-convention visit to this year's convention city. It's been eight years since our convention has been held in Chicago, and I am happy to report that all seems in order for what looks to be an outstanding convention for all of us. On behalf of the entire Supreme Council, I strongly encourage all our members to attend this year's convention. I also urge you to read this issue of *Vytis* from cover to cover. We have already received many resolutions that the convention delegates will be debating and voting on and have printed them in this issue in accordance with our national constitution. Please make every effort to read through them and let your council delegates know how you feel on each of these resolutions. Our organization works best when it has the input of all its members.

Now, regarding the Supreme Council meeting, it was, as always, a full meeting. It began at 10:00a.m. and concluded at 4:30p.m. Project updates were given. Elinor Sluzas, HM, gave a report on our plans to create a website devoted to Our Lady of Šiluva. Elinor and her committee have done a tremendous amount of work researching Our Lady's appearance in Šiluva and her in-depth report was truly appreciated by all. Of course, this project, as all good ones do, will need financing. Therefore we have asked Elinor to assemble the panel for this year's convention delegates to explain what has been achieved and what is yet to be realized. The future of this worthwhile project will then be in your hands. Elinor has agreed to do this and you won't be disappointed. Also, this fall the SC in cooperation with Council 142, Washington, DC, will be sponsoring our first National Pilgrimage weekend. Mark your calendars for Oct. 11-14, 2002. We have selected the Washington Marriott as our base hotel. During the weekend we will be touring Washington's National Cathedral as well as the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception where, in addition to attending the noon Mass, a rosary and prayer service are planned in the Chapel of Our Lady of Šiluva. More information on this event will be available soon.

Our *Vytis* Editor, Sr. Janine, presented plans for *Vytis* for the coming year. Sister is hopeful that we can increase the number of issues to seven. This would allow us to have regular bi-monthly issues and one issue devoted strictly to the national convention. She informed us that the discontent regarding council news has been handled. We apologize if the shortened council news articles that we were printing offended anyone. This was done on the recommendation of the SC. From the responses received, we see that this wasn't the best way to handle the news

and have gone back to printing whatever is sent, as long as it is news. In addition, we encourage you to submit articles on presentations that took place at your council meetings as feature articles for everyone to enjoy.

Finally, we discussed the financing of the organization for the coming year. I won't sugar coat this. With the decrease in membership over the last several years, the increase in printing costs for Vytis, and an increase this summer in postage expense, the possibility of a dues increase is probable. While I am sure this won't be a popular topic, it is one we may be forced to address this year. I would like to note that membership dues **HAVE NOT** been increased in eight years and during that time our expenses, because of inflation, have increased. We truly have tried to hold the line on spending but, unfortunately, the time comes when we have to appeal to the membership to authorize an increase in dues to cover our expenses. Please rest assured that any recommendation to increase dues will only be made after all other means of funding the organization for the coming year have been exhausted.

Concerning NATO enlargement, please continue to urge your senators to support NATO enlargement to include the Baltic Nations. Winning the invitation to join is only the beginning; we need to make sure that the US Senate ratifies that invitation. I strongly believe that Lithuania and her sister aspirant nations have a friend in President Bush. We need to insure that these countries also have many friends in the US Senate. Working together history can be made. Let your Senators know your feelings. I have asked the staff at JBANC to prepare an article to read on this subject. It is included in this issue.

This is one final reminder for the year about dues. If you haven't already done so, please send in your dues. We truly value every member and don't want to lose anyone.

A happy Mother's Day and Father's Day to all mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers! In closing, I once again encourage you to attend this year's national convention. You are bound to enjoy yourselves. Additional convention information and the complete convention schedule are included in this issue. I hope to see you at the convention this August.

Vytiškai,

*Rob Martin*



**Dr. R. Morkvenas and Bishop P. Baltalis joining the Women of the Knights who added color with their traditional Lithuanian costumes.**

**JOINT STATEMENT OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF ETHNIC  
COMMUNITIES ON THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC  
TREATY ORGANIZATION**  
Washington, D.C., March 16, 2002

1. We, the Representatives of the American ethnic communities of the Albanian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian Lithuanian, Macedonian, Polish, Romanian, Slovak descent, have gathered in Washington, D.C., to endorse the vision of a Europe whole and free as presented by President George W. Bush on June 15, 2001, and by former President William J. Clinton on October 22, 1996.
2. We believe that NATO is the backbone of the transatlantic community and has been an effective bulwark in the defense of freedom, democracy and human rights. We further believe, that a strong involvement of the United States in Europe serves the vital interest of the United States.
3. We thank the United States House of Representatives for overwhelmingly passing the Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001, and we urge its expeditious passage by the United States Senate.
4. We believe that the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to NATO has contributed to transatlantic security and strengthened and expanded the zone of peace, stability, democracy and cooperation in Europe.
5. We share President Bush's belief that "All of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie in between, should have the same chance for security and freedom—and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe – as Europe's old democracies have." Furthermore, we believe that the almost 55 million people who live in Europe's aspirant nations should contribute to and share in the benefits of the family of European nations.
6. We commend Europe's new democracies for their progress in solidifying democracy, establishing market economies and building stronger and just civil societies. We believe that the invitation to join NATO will be a major achievement in the struggle for freedom. In this regard, we honor all who have suffered in this cause and we thank the United States for its abiding support.
7. We recognize the significant progress that has been made by Europe's new democracies in their preparation to shoulder the responsibilities that membership in NATO requires.
8. We commend Europe's new democracies for their solidarity with the American people after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and for their willingness to act as de facto allies of the United States and NATO. We recognize the contributions of Europe's new democracies for opening their air and land facilities to the United States and NATO and for sharing their resources in promoting global security and in the fight against terrorism.
9. We applaud Europe's new democracies for their commitment to cooperation which was initiated in Vilnius, Lithuania in May 2000.
10. We urge Europe's new democracies to accelerate needed reforms to enable their invitations to join NATO at the Prague Summit. We also understand that this continued commitment to shared values is an essential component of such membership.
11. We express our thanks to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland for their support of the Vilnius process, to Denmark and Norway for their work in the security of the Baltics and to Greece and Turkey for their support of their closest neighbor nations.
12. We commit ourselves to support and promote the fulfillment of the vision of a Europe whole and free and respectfully urge the President of the United States and the United States Senate to support invitations to all aspirant nations who have demonstrated their preparedness for admission to NATO.

\*\*\*\*\*

**JOINT BALTIC AMERICAN  
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\*\*\*\*\*

**LITHUANIAN**

**LANGUAGE**

**COURSE**

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Lithuanian Language Course at Camp Dainava, Manchester, Michigan, will take place **July 28<sup>th</sup>-August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002**. This intensive course, operating under the auspices of the Educational Council of the Lithuanian American Community of the USA, is designed for beginners, intermediate, and advanced students, or those just wishing to refresh their Lithuanian. The course is taught by experienced instructors in vacation-like surroundings and atmosphere. There are no limitations regarding age or formal education. For more information or registration, please contact:

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<http://javlb.org/educat/mokytoju.html>.

**The Way to Live in 2002...**

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That is why you pay him/her.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down. If you really need a grouch, there are probably a few dozen of your relatives to do the job.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Just never let the brain die.
4. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath. Laugh so much that you can be tracked in the store by your distinctive laughter.
5. Do not worry about situations beyond your control. Karma is karma. What shall be will be.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life is, ourselves.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it is family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever. Your home is your refuge,
8. Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. It is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Go to the mall, the next county, a foreign country, but not guilt.
10. Tell the people you love, that you love them, at every opportunity. Remember, Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

~~~~~  
Simplify life in three simple steps...

- Fill it when it's empty,
- Empty it when it's full,
- And scratch it when it's itchy.



**K of L CONSTITUTIONAL REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS**

**APPROVED BY SUPREME COUNCIL - April 6, 2002**

**Article VI Section 7 as it reads currently** Dues are payable in January of each year. A member whose dues are not paid by March 31 shall cease to receive VYTS. A member whose dues are not paid by June 30 shall cease to be a member.

**Article VI Section 7 with amendment:** A member whose dues are not paid by February 15 shall cease to receive VYTIS. A member whose dues are not paid by April 1 shall cease to be a member.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Article IX Section 7 as it reads currently** Council and district delegates must present to the National Convention an official mandate with signatures of their president, secretary, and if possible, spiritual advisor.

**Article IX Section 7 with amendment** Council and District delegates must present to the National Convention Mandate Committee Chair an official mandate with signatures of their president, secretary, and if possible, spiritual advisor, by a date determined by National Convention Mandate Committee Chair.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Article IX Section 8 as it reads currently** The number of National Convention delegates allowed a council depends on the number of fully paid members in the council, as determined by the financial secretary of the Supreme Council. Each council shall be allowed one delegate for the first five members, and one delegate for each additional ten members.

**Article IX Section 8 with amendment** The number of National Convention delegates allowed a council depends on the number of fully paid members in the council, as determined by the financial secretary of the Supreme Council on April 1. Each council shall be allowed one delegate for the first five members, and one delegate for each additional ten members.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Article X (to be added as Section 9)** The Knights of Lithuania Manual, as updated by the members of the Supreme Council, is to be followed by all councils and districts as official and binding policies and procedures when not in conflict with the Knights of Lithuania Constitution. Failure to do so can lead to the council or district's suspension of charter and benefits of membership.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Article XI Section 5 as it reads currently** The financial secretary receives and records all membership dues; transmits all money received to the

Supreme Council Treasurer; through VYTIS and by letters, reminds the councils and members of their financial standing; notifies each council of the number of National Convention delegates to which they are entitled; prepares a summary report of the membership standing for the National Convention.

**Article XI Section 5 with amendment**

The financial secretary receives and records all membership dues; transmits all money received to the Supreme Council Treasurer; through VYTIS and by letters, reminds the councils and members of their financial standing; notifies each council of the number of National Convention delegates to which they are entitled; prepares a summary report of the membership standing for the National Convention. The Financial Secretary must have knowledge of using a computer and have access to one, as the organization membership records are computerized.

\*\*\*\*\*

**THE HONORARY MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE IS PROPOSING THE FOLLOWING CHANGE IN THE KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA CONSTITUTION:**

**Article XII Section 3 (p.21)**

The **Honorary Membership Committee** consists of at least 5 elected Honorary Members, including one from each district where possible. One member of the committee is elected each year for a five year term. This is a rotating committee, hence the committee member with longest seniority assumes the chair's position. The committee itself elects a committee secretary.

**Proposed Change/Addition:**

The **Honorary Membership Committee** consists of at least five (5) elected Honorary Members, including one from each district where possible. One member, or more, is elected each year on a rotating basis for a five year term. \* The committee elects its executive chairperson. The committee may select a committee secretary, if warranted.

The National Convention's Nominating Committee, comprised of the District Presidents, shall submit the names of nominees for the Honorary Membership Committee to the National Convention for delegate approval.

\*The committee members felt there should be this option, as the senior member may not be in a position, or want, to be executive chair for the committee.

(The second paragraph of **Article XII Section 3** is unchanged).

**Proposed Amendments to the Knights of Lithuania Constitution****Presented by: Council 16, Chicago, Illinois****Subject: Secret Ballots for Honorary Membership Candidates at National Conventions**

Whereas, when a candidate for Honorary Membership is presented to the delegates of a National Convention, the approval/disapproval is done by a show of hands vote, and

Whereas, this practice may create an uneasy situation for a delegate to vote his/her true feelings, and

Whereas, delegates should never have to feel pressured when voting, therefore

Be it resolved that the delegates to the 89<sup>th</sup> National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania, gathered in Chicago, Illinois from August 1-4, 2002, adopt the practice of **always** using a secret ballot when voting on Honorary Membership candidates, and

Be it further resolved that, if approved by the delegates, this change would take effect with this year's convention voting.

**Subject: Term Limits for Chair of Supreme Council Standing Committees**

Whereas, Article X, Section 4, places term limits on Supreme Council officers allowing a member to only hold a given office for three consecutive terms, and

Whereas, these limitations do not extend to Supreme Council standing committee chairs, and

Whereas, allowing standing committees to have the same chair for an indefinite amount of time while other offices are limited, creates an unfair situation; therefore,

Be it resolved that the delegates to the 89<sup>th</sup> National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania, gathered in Chicago, Illinois from August 1-4, 2002, change Article XII, Section 1 to the following:

1. The Supreme Council standing committee chairs are elected at the National Convention for a one year term **and can succeed themselves for only two additional successive years**, except as noted elsewhere in Article XII.

Be it further resolved that, if approved by the delegates, this change would take effect with this year's elections.

## Report on V10 Update Conference in Washington, DC



On Saturday, March 16, 2002 a historic meeting took place in Washington, DC at the Slovakian Embassy. The Ambassadors to the United States of all member nations of the V10 Group along with the Ambassadors of those nations admitted during the last expansion round gathered to give an update on the status of NATO enlargement to the many ethnic organizations here in the United States. Representatives from the US Government were also in attendance. Our National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Bernice Aviza, and I were honored to be invited to attend this historic meeting and to represent the Knights of Lithuania. After a welcome address from the Ambassador of Slovakia the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the conference was chaired by Lithuania's Ambassador, Vygaudas Usaskas. Ambassador Usaskas gave a progress report on what has been transpiring in Vilnius among the 10 aspirant nations. He then introduced each of the ambassadors to those gathered. What an honor it was for him and indeed Lithuania, herself to be at the center of these historic proceedings! Our ancestral homeland has truly come a long way since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Each ambassador then made brief remarks and thanked all organizations for aiding them in their work to insure that if and when invitations to join NATO are given, that the US will support their admittance. Hopefully by this time next year that will be a reality.

Reports were then given from senior members of the U.S. government. The general theme that was expressed was that when invitations are given, we must continue our work to insure passage in the Senate. A great analogy that was given was that we should consider the NATO Prague Summit this fall as the finish line. After we reach that finish line, we must continue running through the ribbon which is Senate approval. President Bush has articulated on several occasions that any nation that has met the criteria for admittance should be invited. He has indicated that those nations receiving an invitation will have his support. From what I have heard and read I believe our hopes for Lithuania and her sister aspirant nations have a great friend in President Bush. However, we need to continue to write our Senator to insure that they have many friends there as well.

It was truly a remarkable meeting and an occasion that I will not soon forget. I encourage each of our members to continue writing letters to their Senators urging support for NATO expansion.

Robert A. Martin, Jr.  
Supreme Council President

# Representatives of Ethnic Communities<sup>13</sup>



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Meeting of the Ethnic Communities, March 16, 2002. Left to Right: Gintaras Cepas, Lithuanian American Community., Inc.; Jarek Nevirovic, Embassy of Lithuania; Robert Martin, Jr., President, Knights of Lithuania; Renatas Norkus, Embassy of Lithuania; Bernice Aviza, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Pres., Knights of Lithuania; Vygaudas Usackas, Ambassador of Lithuania; Algis Rimas, Lithuanian American Council; Audrine Pakstys, Lithuanian American Republican National Federation; Renata Alisauskiene, Embassy of Lithuania; Saulius Kuprys, Lithuanian American Council; Dr. Michael Pakstys, Lithuanian American Republican National Federation.

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**Important information from our friends as JBANC**

## **SENATE BEGINNING PRELIMINARY DELIBERATIONS ON NATO ENLARGEMENT**

This spring, NATO enlargement is coming under increased scrutiny in the United States Congress. The Freedom Consolidation Act is nearing a Senate vote. Hearings on NATO's Future and NATO Enlargement are being held in both the House and the Senate. Media interest is also growing; the recent amount of press coverage on the Baltics and their NATO chances is unprecedented. In addition, before invitations to join the Alliance are issued at the Prague Summit in November, Congressional elections shall have taken place – races which will determine 34 Senate seats in a Congress that will have the likely distinction of voting on Baltic NATO membership ratification in 2003 or 2004.

### **The Freedom Consolidation Act (S. 1572)**

For Congress, the road to Prague will be foreshadowed by the upcoming vote on the Freedom Consolidation Act, which is expected to occur sometime soon in April. This legislation, Senate bill S. 1572, endorses a bipartisan vision for the NATO enlargement process and also authorizes Foreign Military Financing (FMF) funding for the Baltics, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria.

The seven countries listed in the Act are the leading candidates for admission during the next round of enlargement. Along with Albania, Macedonia and Croatia, these ten countries compose the Vilnius-10 (V-10) group. S. 1572 passed Foreign Relations committee muster in December, but instead of seeing the bill "hotlined" to consensus

passage prior to Christmas, a hold was placed on the legislation by Sen. John Warner (R-VA). Sen. Warner's grip on the legislation wasn't relinquished until after hearings on NATO's Future were held on the last day of February in the Senate Armed Services Committee. Sen. Warner is that committee's influential Ranking Minority Member.

Sen. Warner has been perhaps the Senate's leading opponent of NATO enlargement. During the ratification vote for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in 1998, he proposed an amendment to freeze further enlargement for three years. The amendment was defeated, but Sen. Warner has not backed down, even after what was seen as a positive visit to Lithuania a couple of years ago. Sen. Warner's stance has gone against the grain of not only the prior Democratic administration's support for enlargement, but the current Bush Republican administration's as well. The House version of the Freedom Consolidation Act, named after the late Republican Congressman Gerald Solomon of New York, passed in November by an overwhelming margin. Opposition to the measure came mostly from fringe elements of both parties. The 86% margin of victory was even higher than for the 80% positive Senate vote for NATO ratification in 1998.

Widening Support for NATO Enlargement the Joint Baltic American National Committee (JBANC), has been working with local and national Baltic-American organizations, including the Knights of Lithuania, in generating support for the NATO enlargement process. A two-year

JBANC outreach campaign, directed at centers and communities on the statewide level, has served as an excellent opportunity to exchange views on the topic and distribute information. This has also helped increase public awareness.

For its part, JBANC has helped organize various recent public events to raise publicity for the cause. On March 13, a panel discussion with the three Baltic Defense Ministers was held on Capitol Hill in conjunction with the Aspen Institute in Berlin and the Lithuanian NATO Association in Vilnius. The target audience was congressional staffers.

JBANC has also helped with events on Capitol Hill with President Adamkus of Lithuania and President Freiberga of Latvia. In addition, JBANC hosted an interactive audio webcast with the three Baltic envoys to the United States, including Ambassador Vygaudas Usackas of Lithuania. JBANC is also planning its fifth conference on Baltic security in early 2003.

Along with its three constituent parent organizations, including the Lithuanian American Council, JBANC has been actively involved in coalition-building, to fashion wider public consensus for supporting NATO enlargement. Cooperation among all Baltic American organizations has been extremely close. JBANC, along with both the Lithuanian American Council and the Lithuanian American Community, are members of the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), representing 18 national organizations and 22 million Americans. The "Coalition" has been active for ten years and works closely with both the Administration and Congress. Regular meetings are held with White House officials to help outline policy objectives.

The CEEC is also currently planning a May conference on Capitol Hill on U.S.-Russia relations as they pertain to the Central and East European region. This will take place at about the time of President Bush's meeting in Moscow with Russian President Putin.

Another coalition which JBANC and its allies are involved in is the Campaign for U.S. Global Leadership – with over 300 organizations working for a stronger U.S. foreign affairs budget. More recently, there has been a developing relationship and cooperation with U.S.-based organizations with ties to the V-10 countries. On March 16, leaders of these U.S. ethnic organizations met in Washington, DC. The meeting was the first opportunity for individuals from all ten V-10 country associated organizations in the United States to meet and discuss strategy for the developing NATO ratification process. The first part of that process is to ensure full support and passage of the Freedom Consolidation Act. Participants at the meeting included Robert Martin and Bernice Aviza of the Knights of Lithuania, Saulius Kuprys and Algis Rimas of the Lithuanian American Council and Karl Altau of JBANC.

Sen. George Voinovich (R-OH) stepped out to lend a strong voice for NATO enlargement at the meeting. The Senator pointed to his long-time support for countries of Central and East Europe, and his help to promote the cause of the "Captive Nations" back in his days as Mayor of Cleveland.

#### 2002 Elections

November Congressional elections are approaching. The first primaries are already being held. All House spots are up for grabs along with 34 Senate

seats. It will be very important to "get the vote out", since it is the next Senate that will determine the fate of whether or not this next round of countries gets into NATO.

In the House, there are nearly 70 members of the Baltic Caucus, co-chaired by Congressman John Shimkus (R-IL) and another former Mayor of Cleveland, Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH). Baltic Caucus members have been very supportive of U.S.-Baltic relations and related legislation. Some Members are stepping down after this session and others will unfortunately fall victim to redistricting this year.

It is important to let the candidates know about the positive implications of a NATO enlargement that will include Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

This is especially true of the Senate.

Two of the races involve the two Senate Baltic Freedom Caucus co-chairmen, Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR). These two Senators have championed the cause and been very proactive with promoting positive U.S.-Baltic ties. It is imperative that they be re-elected to keep the momentum going. None of the other eight members of the Senate Baltic Freedom Caucus are up for re-election in November.

Four Senators, all Republicans, are retiring - Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina (who will be 100 by the time he leaves office), Sen. Jesse Helms (NC), Sen. Phil Gramm (TX) and Sen. Fred Thompson (TN). All four voted for NATO enlargement in 1998.

Of the remaining 30 seats, 16 of the current

incumbents voted for NATO enlargement in 1998 and also against the Warner "freeze" moratorium. Only one of these, Sen. Max Cleland, has changed course and now seems to be against enlargement. Of the remaining 14 Senators, six voted for NATO enlargement, but sided with Sen. Warner on the amendment. They were: Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Ted Stevens (R-AK), Pat Roberts (R-KS), Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), Jack Reed (D-RI), and Michael Enzi (R-WY). Seven earned double negatives by being a minority of only 19 total who voted against NATO enlargement for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. In addition, these seven sided with Sen. Warner on his amendment. These Senators were: Tim Hutchinson (R-AR), Larry Craig (R-ID), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Paul Wellstone (D-MN), Robert Smith (R-NH), James Inhofe (R-OK) and Sen. Warner. The remaining Senator facing re-election this November is Jean Carnahan, who was not in office at the time. In all the states where Senate elections are being held, it is important to contact the candidates to let them know early (and often) the importance of NATO enlargement. It will be, after all, the next Senate that votes on NATO ratification.

Reaching out from coast to coast to help exchange feedback about elected officials, JBANC has been involved in NATO enlargement informational meetings in over 25 centers throughout the United States over the course of the past two years. The first such meeting was held in Chicago in 2000, with the assistance of the Midwest Baltic Coalition. Other meetings in 2000 were held in about 15 centers in the Midwest and East Coast and were followed in 2001 with six meetings in five Western states. More recent visits have included meetings in Philadelphia and also Wilmington, DE, and Florida. In Florida, meetings were held in Orlando and St. Petersburg in early March



2002. One of the main focal points was to emphasize the urgency of getting support for the Freedom Consolidation Act. S. 1572 may prove to be an indicator of how Senators may vote when the actual NATO Ratification vote comes up.

Just a few words about Florida - the state has traditionally warmed up to the Baltics. Many Baltic-Americans have made Florida their home. The largest concentrations of each of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian communities are said to live in the Tampa Bay area. Florida's senior Senator is Bob Graham, Chairman of that body's Select Intelligence Committee. First-term Senator Bill Nelson is a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, which in December, sent the Freedom Consolidation Act to the Senate floor by unanimous consent.

At all the meetings, JBANC NATO Enlargement Handbooks have been distributed to participants (They can be obtained by contacting JBANC). One of the suggestions for participants was to encourage efforts for passage of state resolutions supporting Baltic NATO aspirations.

On March 6, the Michigan House passed a Baltic NATO bill, which had also received

the approval of that state's Senate in 2001. A similar measure is expected to be introduced in Delaware in April and similar efforts are underway in a handful of other states. Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota legislatures have also passed measures giving support for these aspirations. Participants at the meetings were also encouraged to seek contact with media outlets and to ask their Members of Congress to join the Baltic Caucus. JBANC is planning visits to Texas and other southern states in the near future.

### Ending

Invitations to NATO will be issued in November in Prague, but we probably won't get a good clue of which countries will be chosen until just before then. Even though the chances of the Baltics getting invitations are very good, we should not take this for granted. Moreover, even if invitations are issued to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to join NATO, the Senate ratification debate is still ahead of us, taking us into 2003 and possibly even 2004. There is a lot of work to be done between now and then. We should make good use of that time.

March 31, 2002

Karl Altau

JBANC Managing Director

C-25 Cleveland: The Paul Chalko family with Lithuania's President Valdas Adamkus in Vilnius, August 8, 2001



The Chalko Family with Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus in Vilnius, August 8, 2001.

## KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC.

### 2002 ESSAY CONTEST

Each year, the Knights of Lithuania Foundation asks K of L members to research a selected topic and write an essay on the topic. This project enables three lucky members to earn some prize money and all to share ideas with other members. This year, the Essay Committee decided to invite members to select from two proposed topics and write on either of them.

In short, we invite each interested member to write an essay about:

**"My Favorite Knights of Lithuania Memories" or**

**"What Special Thing or Things has the Knights of Lithuania Accomplished through its Years of Existence?"**

Members may expand on what special K of L Memories they hold in their hearts and that have affected their lives, or they may write about some special projects the K of L has engaged in that have made it an important organization to which to belong. The "memories" or "accomplishments" may involve councils, district, or national activities, or even personal events brought about by the K of L.

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

**LENGTH:** 450 to 500 words (count all words).

**DEADLINE:** July 2, 2002. Essays received after this date will not be considered.

**ELIGIBILITY:** A contestant must be a Knights of Lithuania member (Honorary, Regular or Associate) in GOOD STANDING.

Because Junior members cannot be expected to meet the standards of adult members, there will be a separate prize category for Juniors, who are members of a Junior Council which is duly registered with the Supreme Council.

**CRITERIA:** Essays will be judged on content, originality, and ATTENTION TO CONTEST TOPIC. Correct grammar and neatness will also be considered in judging.

**MANUSCRIPT:** Must be typed or written legibly, double spaced. The FIRST PAGE should contain ONLY your name, address, council

number, and the essay title. Succeeding pages should contain the essay contents but NOT your name. This is to assure anonymity in judging.

**PRIZES:** 1st Prize - \$300, 2nd Prize - \$200, 3rd Prize - \$100.

Monetary gifts will also be given to prize-winning Junion Member entries

**JUDGES:** One from each District plus last year's First Place Winner.

**MAIL TO:** Bernice Aviza, 8 Tremont Street, Albany, New York 11205

**WINNERS:** Will be announced August, 2002, during the National Convention in Chicago, IL. Winning entries will be published in VYTIS.

**SPONSOR:** KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC., via a grant from Msgr. Juozas Prunskis.

The **KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA FOUNDATION, INC.** is a tax-exempt endowment fund which uses interest from its investments to finance cultural and religious projects, helping the K of L AND Lithuania. This contest is just one of its projects.

The Foundation has been in existence for 17 years. You can help keep it in existence by joining the Foundation to increase its capital and provide more funds to help Lithuania and Lithuanian projects. A tax-deductible donation of \$100 entitles you to membership in the Foundation, and supports the Knights' future. Are YOU a member of the Foundation? If not, why not join today? If you are a member, consider making an additional donation. Contact: Mary Beth Slakis, Treasurer, 18263 Murphy Circle, Tinley Park, IL 60479



Attending the Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> celebration of the restoration of Lithuanian Independence, From L.to R.: Dr. Rimantas Morkvenas, Lith. Council General; Bishop Paulius Baltakis, Judge Fred Schmidt.; Dr. Giedre Kumpikaite; Knight Bruno Rutkunas, and Rev. Vytas Volertas at the Transfiguration church hall.

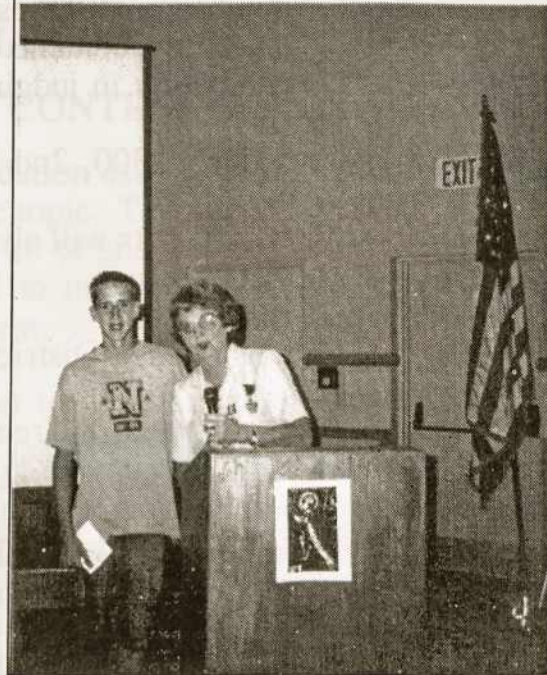
## Prize-winning Essays; Juniors' Category

### "How I Keep My Heritage Alive"

Ever since I can remember, in some way I have kept my Lithuanian heritage alive, and I thank my parents, grandmother and friends for helping me stay involved. My heritage is a major part of my life. Ever since I was a little boy, I've gone to conventions, been involved in the Juniors since I was five years old, and been a part of representing Lithuania in the Annual World Affair. My first convention was in the year of 1994, when I was seven years old. I was also there to celebrate my grandmother's Honorary Membership from the K of L. My grandmother, Elinor Sluzas, has always encouraged me to be a part of my heritage, as have my parents, Mark and Annamarie Berger.

I've enjoyed being part of my Lithuanian heritage in having fun and making friends through things like the National Conventions. I will always stay a member of the K of L. Right now I'm only a Junior Member, but I always felt that the adult members have taken time out to make the Juniors feel like a major part of the K of L.

My family members pushed me to know more about my heritage in encouraging me to dance for the Lithuanian Dance Group two year ago. Since then, I have learned many ethnic Lithuanian dances and much about the history behind the dances. Now, over time, I have learned about every dance at performance level. We practice to perform in the Annual International World Affair. I'd like to acknowledge all the other dancers for their patience in teaching me the dances, and especially the director, Eric Geiger, for having patience to teach others and myself the ethnic dances. Being one of the younger Lithuanian dancers has always been easy, since the adults treat me with the same respect that I give them.



Growing up in my grandma's restaurant, "Elinor's Amber Rose," helped me appreciate Lithuanian cooking as well. Food such as, Cabbage Rolls, Kugelis, Virtiniai, Bacon Buns, homemade soup and homemade bread. Did that last sentence make you hungry? I especially enjoy Lithuanian Wedding Cake served at the past World Affairs. I've always liked Traditional Ethnic Lithuanian Cooking.

Knowing the history of my family heritage has been a great pleasure in my life. My great grandmother, Anna Ambrose, came to America in 1914, at the age of thirteen. I was fortunate enough to become close to my great grandmother, who I called "Gram," until she passed away in the year of 1995, at the age of ninety-three.

Being Lithuanian has always given me a reason to honor my heritage and a proud reason to respect my nationality. Knowing my roots gives me a feeling of belonging and knowing where my family and I come from.

~Joe Berger~  
Council 96 - Juniors  
Dayton, Ohio

## *"What I Enjoy About Being Lithuanian"*

I am a K of L junior who is all American, but comes from a Lithuanian family. My great-grandparents came from Lithuania. I speak fluent Lithuanian, just like my mother, who was taught by her mother before her. On Saturdays, I attend Lithuanian school, where I learn to read and write this ancient language. Even though it is shorter than regular school, most of the time I must give up my friends, but in the end, it's worth it. Along with the grammar studies, we sing folk songs and learn dances. Every year all the scouts in our school put on a Disney play. This year's play was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," and I was chosen to be the Evil Queen. That's my favorite part of Lithuanian school.

In Vermont, there is a camp for children of Lithuanian heritage called, "Neringa." Lithuanian speaking youth from all over the United States and Canada come for a fun-filled two weeks or more. There are bonfires, night games, swim time, sport days, reading and learning about important Lithuanian people, our own original plays based on these individuals, and so much more. It's a great place and it's lots of fun!

Late in the summer, I attend Lithuanian Scout camp. Scouts from the area meet to learn skills you can use in life and have fun for a week. You wear navy blue all of the time, and for special events, you wear your uniform. You sleep in regular tents in the woods. In spite of mosquitoes, it's a lot of fun.

The summer activity I look forward to most is, the Knights of Lithuania Convention. I have been to five of the last six and I love it. I can hardly wait to see my friends and make new ones.

There are many Lithuanian traditions, but I have two I enjoy the most. On the night before Christmas, we have a special dinner with our family called



"Kucios." There are often extra "family" members who celebrate with us, which sometimes brings the total to 25 diners. We have some of the old traditional foods like, silke, but also tasty things like chowder. Of course, there is always plenty of fried fish and potatoes. The floors of the house near the Christmas tree are hidden with beautifully wrapped gifts. After opening all the gifts, we all attend "Berneliu Misios," which is a beautiful evening Mass. We also have an American Christmas with presents from Santa on Christmas morning.

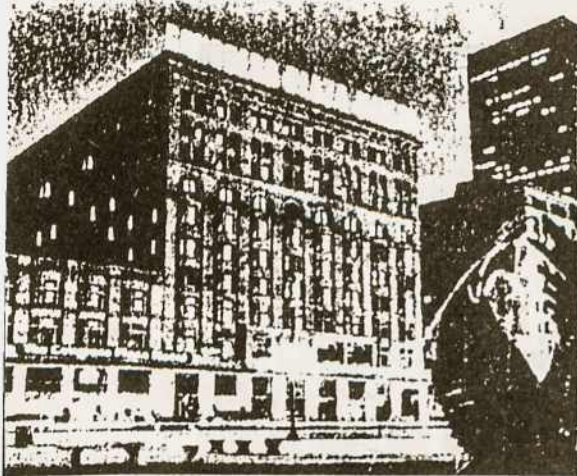
At Easter time, we make real Lithuanian wax decorated eggs. We melt the wax and, with the head of a pin, draw decorations and then dip them in dyes.

The Lithuanians are also known for making beautiful straw pictures. They first have to soak the hay in water, then slit them open and iron them flat. While they're flat and hard, they cut them to the shape they want, and you get a beautifully handmade picture that lasts a life time. They also made beautifully carved wooden statues.

I love dressing up in my Lithuanian costume. It makes me feel very special to represent my country. The costumes are very colorful and they are hand embroidered.

Through all of these activities, I learned to appreciate my heritage and have fun with all of our traditions and passed down skills. I hope to pass these on to my children one day.

~Vilija Bizinkauskas~  
Council 1 - Juniors  
Brockton, MA



# Knights<sup>22</sup> of Lithuania

## 89<sup>th</sup> National Convention

### August 1-4, 2002

Convention Site: Congress Plaza Hotel  
and Convention Center

Host: Council 16, Chicago, IL

## CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

**Hotel Information:** Please make your hotel arrangements by contacting the Congress Hotel and Convention Center, 520 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605, 312 427-3800 or 800 635-1666. Room rate are: Single/Double: \$109.00 plus tax. If a third and/or fourth person will be sharing the room there will be a \$25.00 charge per person. If you're interested in a suite, please check with the hotel for pricing. Please remember: You must identify yourself as Knights of Lithuania to get the convention rate. Reservation Deadline: June 30, 2002. The convention rate is on room availability basis after deadline.

Early Registration - \$175.00 per person (Before June 1, 2002) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Registration - \$185.00 per person (June 2 to June 30, 2002) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Late Registration - \$200.00 per person (After July 1, 2002) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Junior Registration: \$95.00 (Please use a separate form to register each junior) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Junior \_\_\_\_\_ Age of Junior \_\_\_\_\_

**ADULT CONVENTION REGISTRATION INCLUDES:**

All Bus Service as required; Thursday "Taste of Chicago" Lunch; Thursday Night Get-Together; Coffee+ at hotel after morning Mass on Friday and Saturday; Saturday Night Banquet and Dance; and Sunday Brunch at Sisters of St. Casimir Motherhouse after the Closing Mass.

**JUNIOR CONVENTION REGISTRATION INCLUDES:**

All items listed above and Thursday afternoon trip to Navy Pier; and Friday excursion to Chicago's Museum Campus

**PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITY:**

Wednesday, July 31, 2002 - Bus Trip "Sights of Chicago - Lithuanian and Otherwise"  
 Departure: 9:30a.m.(Adults-\$45.00 p.p. /Juniors-\$30.00 p. p.) Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA COUNCIL 16 Total Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Checks and Registration Forms to: Diann Martin & Frankie Zajauskas, Registration Coordinators  
 c/o: 89<sup>th</sup> National Convention Committee  
 929 West 34<sup>th</sup> Place  
 Chicago, IL 60608-6720

Got a question on registration? Call: Diann (773) 376-4779 / Frankie (847) 587-1419

First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Council No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please Print)

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_



## Scholarship Committee

### *Knights of Lithuania National Scholarship Program for 2002 Awards To Be Announced at the 89<sup>th</sup> National Convention in Chicago, Illinois*

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 **NO LATER THAN JUNE 15, 2002. APPLICATION INFORMATION RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR THE 2002 AWARDS FOR CONSIDERATION.** 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 Scholarship Committee will carefully study the applications 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) 492-4700 – work

e-mail: [macgecas@msn.com](mailto:macgecas@msn.com) (home) or [igecasmccarthy@deloitte.com](mailto:igecasmccarthy@deloitte.com)



# The Saint Casimir Guild

Of the  
Pontifical Lithuanian College in Rome  
šv. Kazimiero Kolegijos Gildija



### *Cardinal A. Backis of Lithuania*

At the 75<sup>th</sup> National Convention, held in Washington, D.C., July 28-31, 1988, the following resolution was adopted by the body:

**Whereas The Lithuanian Pontifical College of St. Casimir in Rome is a center for Lithuanians studying and visiting in Rome, and a place that serves as headquarters for Lithuanian clergy from all over the world, and, whereas the Knights of Lithuania have adopted the college, pledging to aid it financially and spiritually,**

**Be it resolved that the Knights of Lithuania 75<sup>th</sup> Diamond Jubilee National Convention, meeting July 28-31 In Washington, D.C., establish a post within our organization of "Pontifical Lithuanian**

**College Affairs Liaison."** The person in this position would work with the officials of the college to coordinate fund-raising efforts and publicity for the College.

**Be it further resolved that each Council be periodically reminded and urged to make an annual donation for the college.**

The inauguration of the St. Casimir's Guild took place at a meeting in April of 1989. The St. Casimir Guild is a free-standing "not for profit" organization under the guidance of the Knights of Lithuania. Attorney Saulius Kuprys applied for a "tax-deductible" status. This was approved on April 5, 1989.

Robert Boris was appointed chairperson of the Guild at the 1989 Convention. Under his guidance, the Guild logo was designed and accepted. Guild membership was set at \$25.00 per year. Additional categories are:

|                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Donor</b>      | <b>\$26.00 to 99.00</b>   |
| <b>Patron</b>     | <b>\$100.00 to 499.00</b> |
| <b>Sponsor</b>    | <b>\$500.00 to 999.00</b> |
| <b>Benefactor</b> | <b>\$1,000.00 and up</b>  |

Robert Boris served as President of the Guild until his resignation in 1991, at which time Anna Klizas Wargo was appointed as Chairperson. Our thanks to Robert and the original Board which consisted of Msgr. Bartkus, Dr. Jack Stukas, Victor Mathieu, Saulius Kuprys, Legal Advisor, Nijole Baltrulionis, Secretary/Treasurer, Anna Klizas Wargo, Ex-officio: Spiritual Advisor, Rev. Joseph Anderlonis; Rev. Zenonis Smilga, Representative of Kunigu Vienybe. Victor Mathieu and Nijole Baltrulionis both resigned, and Dr. Stukas is deceased. Replacing them were; Betty Tumas, Secretary; Treasurer, Mark Bell; Victor Stepulovitch, Loretta Stukas and Robert Martin, Ex-officio.

In the 13 years since its adoption by the Knights of Lithuania, the members of the



Saint Casimir Guild have accomplished much. There were three tours of Rome: one in 1984 for the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Feast of St. Casimir; one in 1986 for the celebration of the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lithuania's Christianization and the Beatification of Blessed George Matulaitis; and one in 1998 for the Golden Jubilee of the College. On each of the trips, the members were welcomed by the members of the College with great affection and gratitude.

Many of our members, through the efforts of Msgr. Bartkus, received Holy Communion from the Holy Father. Each time, the Holy Father greeted us warmly, and we were highly honored by his regards.

Through the efforts of the members of the Knights of Lithuania, new vestments were purchased for all the Priests and Students, and these were used for the first time during the 600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lithuania's Christianization. The vestments prior to that time were used vestments donated by some priests, and no two were alike. All the new vestments are labeled, "Donated by the Knights of Lithuania."

The College and Guest house were in need of new beds. The Knights, individually, and Councils donated \$100.00 for each bed, and were able to purchase 64 beds. A new computer system was also donated. Currently the need is for the Library. Since everything changes yearly, new books are needed by the student priests. Books cost \$100.00 or more, and Msgr. Bartkus asked the K of L to help with this project. As of August of 2001, the library was already \$2500.00 in debt. To date, \$2780.00 was donated to the Fund as follows:

|                                              |           |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Council 144, Anthracite                      | \$1000.00 |
| Angela Klizas C144                           | 1000.00   |
| Dr. Mark Mikatavage, C144                    | 200.00    |
| C-46, Forest City, PA                        | 105.00    |
| New England District                         | 100.00    |
| MidCentral District                          | 100.00    |
| Jayne Danco in memory of<br>Mary & Bill Hart | 200.00    |
| C17 So. Boston, MA                           | 100.00    |

|                                         |        |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|
| C10 Athol Gardner, MA                   | 100.00 |
| C26 Worcester, MA                       | 100.00 |
| C30 Westfield, MA                       | 100.00 |
| C50 New Haven, CT                       | 100.00 |
| C103 Providence, RI                     | 100.00 |
| C19 Pittsburgh, PA                      | 100.00 |
| C152 Eastern LI, NY                     | 100.00 |
| C147 St. Petersburg, FL                 | 50.00  |
| C90 Kearny, NJ                          | 50.00  |
| C90 John & Ellie Nakrosis<br>Kearny, NJ | 25.00  |

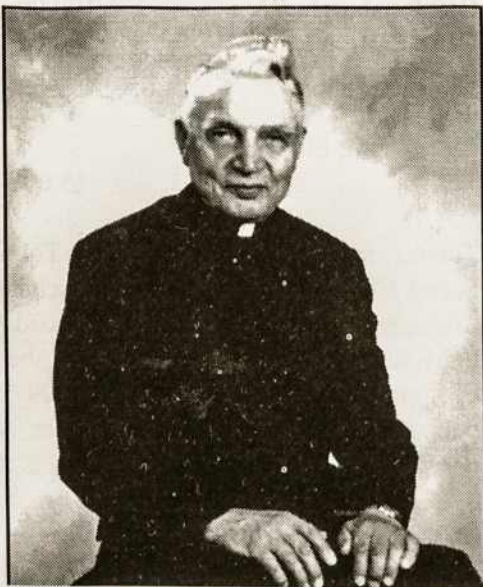
Thanks to all who contributed: To C46, Forest City, PA, who, instead of exchanging Christmas gifts this year, decided to donate individually for the Library. The members of this small council donated \$105.00. Our thanks to the New England District, who, once again were first to donate a total \$700.00. To date, we have forwarded \$2780.00 to the Library Fund.

Our thanks to all who have contributed in any way, including those who request Masses. This is of enormous help to the student priests, who depend on the Mass stipends for their expenses. Masses can be requested by E-mailing or writing to the Guild, Anna K. Wargo, President.



Food sent to Vaiku Sanatorija, Kaunas, Lithuania, by Children's Relief, Inc.

*Monsignor Ignatius Urbonas*  
*Candidate for Honorary*  
*Membership*



The members of C#82, Gary, Indiana, have nominated Monsignor Ignatius Urbonas for Honorary Membership in the Knights of Lithuania, with approval from the Mid-America District. Msgr. Urbonas has worked for the Knights of Lithuania for almost 50 years, both on the council and Mid-America District levels. He encouraged the continuity of the Knights of Lithuania and was responsible for the survival of C-82 at critical times through its resurgence in 1998.

Due to Msgr. Urbonas' dedication and steadfastness as pastor under the most difficult of circumstances, the Northwest Indiana Lithuanian Catholic Community continued to preserve its identity (the lone surviving Lithuanian parish in all of Indiana), and also to lend support and help to Lithuania through various projects.

Msgr. Urbonas was ordained in 1935, and while in Lithuania, served as parish priest, chancery archivist and youth director for the diocese of Kaisiadorys. In that capacity, he brought a group of youth (Ateitininkai) to the "Pax Romana" Congress in Washington, DC

in 1939. Returning to Lithuania despite the simultaneous outbreak of war, he continued his ministry as a chaplain, teacher and rector. Threatened by the imminent Russian invasion, Msgr. found himself a refugee in Germany. While there, he procured his Ph.D. from Bonn University while performing priestly duties at a local parish and convent. Arriving in the United States, Msgr. worked in East St. Louis, IL, with his friend, the future Bishop Anthony Deksnyis, until his call to St. Casimir Parish in Gary in 1954. Here he found time to be chaplain at the Dainava Youth Camp, Ateitininkai, serve as officer for the Lithuanian Priests' League and on various committees in the Chicago area. Msgr. Urbonas always worked with the youth and the needs of Lithuania, contributed articles to various publications and periodicals, including the Lithuanian Encyclopedia in which his biography is also included.

Monsignor continues to serve as Spiritual Advisor to Councils 82 and 157, celebrates with the Gary Council their annual outdoors Mass, their participation in the regional Lithuanian Independence Day commemorations and continues to provide energy to the Northwest Indiana Lithuanian Community even though the church itself was closed in May of 1998.

During this millennium, Monsignor Urbonas marked not only his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, but also 65 years of active priesthood. Msgr. Urbonas is now working with the Supreme Council committee, whose goal is to bring to the world Lithuania's best kept secret - Our Lady of Siluva!

This covers, in part, the many works Msgr. Urbonas has performed and continues to perform for the Knights of Lithuania. Because of **Monsignor Ignatius Urbonas'** continued dedication to the Knights and devotion to it's motto, "For God and Country," may he be elevated to **Honorary Membership** in 2002.

*William Kolicius, Jr.*  
*Candidate for Honorary*  
*Membership*



Since his birth, more than 70 years ago, Bill has been involved in, and supported Lithuanian activities, culture and languages. For more than 50 years he has served on various levels of the Knights of Lithuania.

Raised in a Lithuanian-American neighborhood, Bill's early memories include learning by heart and reciting Lithuanian poetry at community programs, singing with the Lithuanian Fine Arts Club and in the choir now based in the recently closed Lithuanian Literary Society of Soho.

Lithuanian was the language Bill spoke at home. His father was from Rasainiai, Lithuania, and his mother, also of Lithuanian heritage, was from Ellsworth, PA. Like many of the Lithuanian youth, Bill learned English from his friends at school. He was active in a Lithuanian Boy Scout Troop and earned the rank of Eagle Scout at the age of 16. He worked briefly in a steel mill before volunteering in the U.S. Army as a Private.

He participated in Central Europe, Aradennes and Rhineland campaigns where he won a Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star, Purple Heart and a Belgian Croix de Guerre. Promoted in the field to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, he attained the rank of Major at the age of 21.

When C-19 of the Knights of Lithuania was re-established at St. Casimir's Church, Bill joined, beginning a half-century of service to the organization, and became active in the council, making efforts to keep Lithuanian culture alive and to work for the restoration of Lithuania's Independence.

Bill met his wife, the former Anne Skrabis, through Council 19, and they have raised three children. When their son, William joined the Boy Scouts at age 11, Bill was recruited to serve on the Catholic Committee on Scouting and eventually became Diocesan Chairman of the committee. He was awarded the highest honor given to adults - the St. George Medal.

In 1952, Bill was elected for the first time to a Knights of Lithuania Supreme Council office, serving three years as Treasurer. He was the first Treasurer to serve an additional two years. During this time he received his Fourth Degree. He also established the K of L Scholarship Fund. In 1990, Bill was again elected to the Supreme Council, serving two years as Trustee before poor health forced him not to seek another term.

On the District level, Bill served several terms as Mid-Central District Trustee and as Council 19's delegate many times. At the council level he served as council President in the 1980's and on various other offices or committees.

Bill was also program director and host for the radio program called, "The Lithuanian Catholic Hour," which was sponsored by Council 19 for over 12 years. He was active in the American Lithuanian Council and still serves as Pittsburgh's chapter Treasurer. Wanting to share his Lithuanian heritage, he volunteered for many years at the Pittsburgh Folk Festival.

(continued on p. 29)

## *Distinguished Guest Visits the Vilnius Handicraft Center*

November 5 - 8, 2001, Great Britain's Prince Charles and his 8 delegates visited Lithuania. On Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>, they toured the archdiocese of Vilnius established "Vilnius Handicraft Center (Vilniaus Amatu Centras).

In May, 2001, the Economy service of the Vilnius Archdiocese established the Handicraft Center in Vilnius. The Handicraft Center is a branch of the Economy service of the Vilnius Archdiocese engaged in social, educational and cultural spheres and provides needed services in the aforementioned to the members of society.

Joining the efforts of the Catholic Church to decrease poverty and solve the problem of professional training of the Catholic youth, the Handicraft Center's aims to help young people, including physically and mentally challenged youth, to learn a trade or handicraft tuition free, to become self sufficient, integrate them into society and educate them in the Christian spirit. The responsibility of establishing the Center and its further activities lies with the Archdiocese of Vilnius. The Handicraft Center provides training in the following areas: exterior and interior construction restorers, carpenters, cooks, culinary experts, seamstresses, weavers, knitters, jewelers and art restorers. Restoration - the conservation and making of ecclesiastical painting, various art valuables, religious and ritual articles are also taught in the Handicraft Center. These works are performed by master, who possess the professional skills and expertise. The opportunity to train young people in these specialized fields by masters is significant, as the trade is infrequently taught in Lithuania. In the future, it is anticipated to also train the youth as painters and restorers, guilders, sculptors, stained glass workers, ceramic masters and laundresses.

Prince Charles, the ambassador of Great Britain in Lithuania Christopher Robbins and his wife, and a delegation of 8 walked from the British Embassy to Sts. Peter and Paul Church where they were met by His Eminence, Cardinal Juozas Audrys Backis, and toured the church. Cardinal Backis explained the church's history, architecture and statuary. After the tour, Prince Charles, Cardinal Backis and the delegation walked to the Vilnius Handicraft Center, where they were met by the Center's director, Rasa Vysniauskiene, Aid to Lithuania's in-country representative, deacon Balys Stankus, staff and students. An exposition of restored art objects and art objects in their varying states of restoration along with a photographic display of the Handicraft Center's (the formal opening of the Center and a XVII century tabernacle which was restored) was viewed. The distinguished guests toured the restoration workshop, met and spoke with the wood and stained glass masters and students. Prince Charles and his delegation had the opportunity to see religious paintings that were currently being restored.

Prince Charles met the students, shook hands with each of them and asked them many questions about themselves, their studies and their aspirations. When he asked student Andrew if he was fed at the Handicraft Center, Andrew's response of: "I come to the Center to learn and not to eat," drew a smile from the Prince and his delegation. As a remembrance of his visit, Prince Charles gave the Handicraft Center's director, R. Vysniauskiene gifts for the Center - several palettes, drawing boards, paint sets, brushes and special corrective lenses for restoration work. The director, Handicraft Center's collective, and students thanked the distinguished guest for the gifts. Prince Charles' sincere and genuine interest in the Handicraft Center's purpose, activities, importance and students, left a sincere and positive impression. Prince Charles' visit was a new impulse to further

develop and strengthen the Center's activities.

Cardinal Backis requested that Aid to Lithuania, Inc. assist in the Handicraft Center's ongoing project. The initial "seed money" of \$510,000 USD to start the Center was received from the United Lithuanian Relief Fund (BALFas) through the organization's president, Maria Rudis. When ATL president, Regina Juska-Svoba officially met with Cardinal Backis in Vilnius in August of 2001, the Cardinal was assured that ATL would assist in obtaining donations for the Handicraft Center. Aid to Lithuania now has a special program, Vilnius Trade School, whereby an individual may make a contribution specifically for the ongoing needs of the trade school: equipment, continued remodeling, updating of the old building and heating costs. Anyone interested in contributing toward the success of the Vilnius Handicraft Center's future, may contact: ATL, c/o Regina Juska-Svoba, 1594 Beaupre, Madison Heights, MI 48071-2622. Telephone inquiries may be directed to (248) 547-2859, evenings.

*~Regina Juska-Svoba - ATL*

## WORLD TRADE CENTER FLASHBACK

(Hitherto unpublished from K of LC-12)

It is with a heavy heart that I am writing this report.

Our Council is located very close to the "WORLD TRADE CENTER," approximately one mile. The church and hall are next to the Holland Tunnel, where tons of debris are transported through constantly. Our own pastor and moderator, Father Sawicki, a retired fireman himself, helped volunteers and other workers by handing out coffee, buns, etc. to them.

~Irene Senken  
Council 12 - New York

**"The heritage of the past is the seed that brings forth the harvest of the future."**

**"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles by it."**



Prince Charles waves to the students as Cadinal Backis and Rasa Vysniauskiene look on.

## A Royal Guest...



From L to R: Sister Aldona Dalgedaite, Cardinal Backis' secretary, ATL in-country representative deacon Balys Stankus, and Rasa Vysniauskiene, director of the Vilnius Handicraft Center.



Prince Charles inquires about painting restoration as Rasa Vysniauskiene, Cardinal Backis, part of the Prince's delegation and Center's students listen.

## *A Royal Visit*



Prince Charles listens attentively as Sister Aldona discusses the "Betanija" Soup Kitchen. Cardinal Backis and Rasa Vysniauskiene listen.



Prince Charles and Cardinal Backis meet with painting restorers to discuss restoration techniques.

During the critical time of the 1980's and early 1990's, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Bill was involved with multi-national efforts in support of Lithuania. In 1986, he participated in the Baltic Freedom Conference in Copenhagen, the Baltic Freedom Cruise along the Baltic shores from Stockholm to Helsinki and the post-cruise conference in Stockholm. He also participated in two Baltic security conferences in Washington and NATO.

Bill refused to visit Lithuania while it was under Soviet control. In 1994, he made his first trip to his father's homeland, staying for four weeks.

Bill often quotes the opening line of Georg Julius Sauerwein's "hymn" for Lithuania Minor: "Lithuanians we are born, Lithuanians we must be."

This covers in part, the dedication Bill has for his Lithuanian heritage and activities in the Knights. Because of **William Kolicius Jr.**'s continued dedication to the Knights and Lithuanian heritage, may he be elevated to **Honorary Membership** in 2002.



Victoria Augustine was honored by the Worcester Senior Center as the Volunteer of the Month. Council 26 -

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sister Golubickis,

In reading about the Knights convention, I was reminded of one pursuit, that of the greater knowledge of Our Lady of Siluva and the significance of her dedication at the National Shrine of our Blessed Mother in Washington, D.C.

Perhaps this would be of interest to our fellow Knights.

Following are the prayers in the Chapel of Our Lady of Siluva:

Most Holy Virgin Mary, you who appeared to the shepherds in the fields at Siluva, you whose tears bathed the rock where once an altar stood, you who with plaintive voice said: "You plow and seed here where formally my Son was honored," grant that we, moved by your tears, may, once as our forefathers did, revive the spirit of adoration of your Son in our fallow hearts, strengthen the tottering structure of the shrine which is the family, and seek forgiveness for the negligence and sins of our nation.

O Mother of God, we desire to raise up the glory of your revelation from forgotten ruins, that we may all the more honor you, the patroness of our country, and, with your help, obtain for our nation the spirit of a living Faith. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

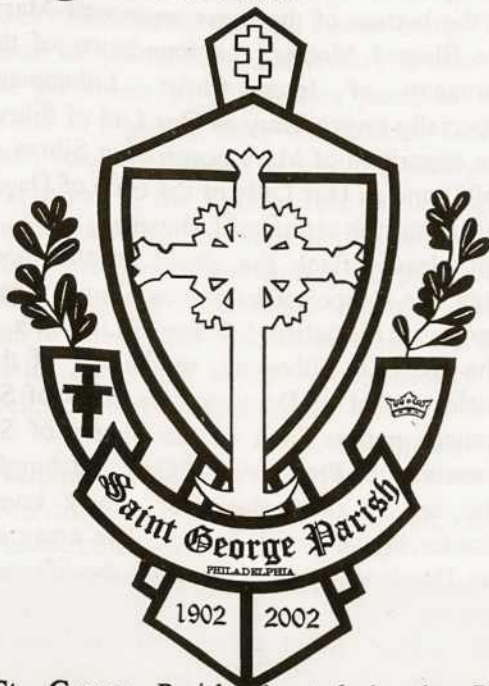
I thank you for the greater depth of spirituality that you bring about, have brought forth, in VYTIS.

With prayers,

Mrs. Alice Kauneckas Graff  
 Founder of Council 152  
 807 Parkway Street  
 Riverhead, Long Island 11901-2945



*St. George Parish  
A Century  
in God's Hands*



St. George Parish, located in the Port Richmond section of Philadelphia, owes its existence to a group of Lithuanian immigrants and first generation Lithuanians who held their initial organizational meeting on December 11, 1901, and formally established the parish on February 15, 1902. On Saturday, February 9, 2002, God's hand was raised in blessing upon St. George's, as the parish officially began its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary jubilee celebration with the 4:00 P.M. Mass. The church, filled to capacity, was resplendent in Lithuanian tricolor—yellow, green, and red—with bows on the pews and a beautiful floral arrangement before the altar.

Thirty school children from grades 4 to 7, dressed in white hooded robes and bearing lit white tapers, led the procession into the church. They were followed by Bishop Joseph F. Martino, Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, the main celebrant of the Mass, and co-celebrants, Rev. Msgr. J. Anderlonis, STD, pastor of St. George Church; Rev.

Peter Burkauskas, pastor of St. Andrew's and St. Casimir's Lithuanian churches; and Rev. Joseph Rymdeika, faculty member at Bishop Shanahan High School in Downingtown, PA.

Bishop Martino began the celebration with an installation ceremony of the thirty school children trained to be altar servers by Vincent Szarko, senior acolyte of the parish. After the Bishop hung a medallion around the neck of each boy and girl as a symbol of their office and congratulated them, he began the celebration of the Mass.

Choir members, wearing ceremonial Lithuanian juostas (sashes), led the congregation in sacred song throughout the service.

Father Rymdeika gave the homily, which was reminiscent of the Gospel, (Matthew 5: 13-16). We are called to be the salt of the earth and bright lights in our community, our country, and the whole world. How we treat people, especially the poor, every single day affects all of humankind. The powerhouse of prayer, too, makes a difference in the world. "Prayer changes people, and people change things," Father Rymdeika said. We need to pray that our hearts will be open to God's grace so that we may live out our faith and our commitment to make our community a better place in which to live.

During the Offertory procession, eminent representatives of the parish carried gifts to the Bishop. Irene Ozalis, President of Council 3 of the Knights of Lithuania, presented a relic of St. Casimir, patron Saint of Lithuania. Katherine Butler, principal of St. George School, presented a relic of St. Francis, patron Saint of the order of Franciscan nuns who faithfully served, for many decades, as teachers at St. George. Daniel Markowski, pre-kindergarten teacher, presented a relic of St. George, patron Saint of the parish and co-patron Saint of Lithuania. Monica Palka, President of St. George Auxiliary, presented the chalice containing the Communion hosts for the congregation. Helen Eraminas, treasurer of St. George Sodality, presented the

celebrant's host. Rose Riggio, an officer of the Home and School Association, presented the wine, and David Szczepanski, parish council member, presented the Offertory collection basket.

Toward the end of the service, Bishop Martino addressed the parishioners. He reminded us, that when considering St. George as it exists now, we must look to the past. We need to consider the stewardship of our ancestors, the dedicated service rendered by priests and religious, and the fidelity of the laity. As for the present, we need to rely on God to help us to form the future. For an entire century, our predecessors provided us with a firm foundation of faith in the Lord. By following their example of prayer and mutual support, the St. George community will have a magnificent future with continual blessings from the hand of God.

The religious ceremony concluded with a stirring rendition of "God Bless America," sung in both, Lithuanian and English.

As he recessed down the main aisle, Bishop Martino blessed the congregation and personally greeted the parishioners as they left the building.

The majority then walked over to the hall to attend the parish's 66<sup>th</sup> annual Pre-Lenten Banquet. Tickets to the banquet in this jubilee year went like Lithuanian blynai (potato pancakes) and were sold out a week before the event.

Grace before the meal took the form of a blessing sung in Lithuanian and English, to the melody of "Edelweiss," a popular song from The Sound of Music. A 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Prayer, composed by Msgr. Joe, the pastor, was read aloud by all.

Msgr. called everyone's attention to the jubilee year logo, designed by teacher, Daniel Markowski, which was displayed on the stage. The individual elements which comprise the logo derive mostly from the Lithuanian origins of the parish. The shield and cross in the center of the logo represent St. George, patron Saint of the parish. The cross itself is an image of the Lithuanian cross which hangs in the sanctuary of the

church. The circle surrounding the crosspiece represents infinity and the eternity of God. The tulips emanating from the circle and from three ends of the cross represent life, springing up from death. The crescent moon at the bottom of the cross represents Mary, the Blessed Mother, the foundation of the humanity of Jesus Christ. Lithuanians especially revere Mary as Our Lad of Siluva (an apparition of Mary occurred in Siluva in 1608) and as Our Lady of the Gate of Dawn in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania.

Ruta leaves flank the shield on the logo. Ruta, the symbol of innocence, virginity and eternity, is the national flower of Lithuania.

The cross, in silhouette, to the left of the shield, is that of Damiano, the cross of St. Francis, patron Saint of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, Pittsburgh, who served as teachers for nearly seven decades in the parish school. The cross of San Damiano represents respect for life and creation.

The crown to the right of the shield represents St. Casimir, patron Saint of Lithuania, Poland and the Knights of Lithuania.

The words, "Saint George Parish, Philadelphia," identify the congregation and its location. The numbers, 1902 and 2001, identify the 100 years of the existence of our parish.

The two-barrred cross at the top of the logo is a symbol which appeared on Lithuanian coins and seals dating back to the time of Grand Duke Vytautas (15<sup>th</sup> century Lithuania).

After explaining the symbolism of the jubilee logo, Msgr. Joe graciously thanked the parishioners for their support during all the years he has been pastor at St. George.

The celebration continued with a buffet dinner. A wide selection of meats and vegetables greeted the hungry diners. The dessert table, with a variety of cakes and pastries, acted like a magnet and attracted a huge crowd.

Dancing allowed the diners to work off some of the calories they had consumed during

their meal. More contemporary music drew Msgr. Joe to the floor where he joined in a lively line dance and once again demonstrated his mastery of the chicken dance.

To attain 100 years of age is a grand achievement in the life of a human being. To reach its one hundred anniversary is akin to the placement of a priceless jewel in the crown of a parish. Over ten decades, God's hand has wonderfully blessed St. George's and given it the right people at the right moment to make it a vital, active part of the Port Richmond community. We pray that God will grant us continuity to worship Him and to care for our brothers and sisters in the parish and in the broader global society as well, for many years to come.



Ausra Maknys (left) and Stephany Gutauskas, stand before the Jubilee logo.

~Stephany Gutauskas~  
Council 3  
Philadelphia, PA.

Julie Kowrak, Adolfin Sarcewicz, and her daughter, Irene Sarcewicz at banquet.



Above: Bishop Joseph Martino processes into St. George Church to celebrate the Mass.  
Right: Irene Ozalis, president C-3, presents a relic of St. Casimir to Bishop J. Martino.



## District & Council News

### Amber District

#### **C-72 Binghamton NY** **John R. Mankus**

Council Officers for 2002 are: Fr. John Mikalajunas, Spiritual Advisor and Spiritual Programs; John R. Mankus, President, Vydis Correspondent, Lithuanian Culture & Language; Ralph Sadauskas, VP; Irene Grikenis, Ritual Chair'; Arthur Stankevich, Secretary; Barbara Miller, Treas. and Jr. Chair'; Robert Skiba, Financial Sec. & Trustee; Charles Almanas, Lithuanian Affairs & Sgt-at-arms; Ralph Sadauskas & Felix Svareika, Sgt-at-Arms; Helen Svareika, Trustee & Public Relations; Ed Radin, Trustee; Marcella Semcho, Trustee; Pamela Rickerl, Trustee. In the past year, nine council meetings were held at St. Joseph's Hall, Binghamton, NY.

During 2001 our council - with the assistance of many parishoners and friends- shipped over 90 packages of humanitarian aid to convents, orphanages and needy families in Lithuania. Individually, our council members have also shipped many packages of humanitarian supplies directly to families and friends in Lithuania. John Mankus continues to help write and translate letters to and from Lithuania for council members and friends.

Our council, under the direction of Barbara Miller, John Mankus, and Irene Grikenis prepared a display for the Roberson Center International Christmas Forest Program. Traditional Lithuanian straw ornaments were used to decorate our Christmas tree. Various displays of traditional Lithuanian Christmas and cultural items were exhibited,

including a replica of a wayside cross, a cultural display, juostos, ethnic Lithuanian costumes, and our Lithuanian flag.

Our council commemorated Lithuanian Independence Day on February 16th with a Mass celebrated by Fr. John Mikalajunas at St. Joseph's Lithuanian R.C. Church. Binghamton Mayor, Richard Bucci, presented the Lithuanian Independence Day Proclamation to President John Mankus, Anna Marie Distin, and Barbara Miller. Anna Marie and Barbara were dressed in Lithuanian costumes. After Mass, a luncheon and meeting were held at the St. Joseph's Educational & Cultural Center.

Four of our members attended our St. Casimir's Amber District Meeting held in St. Clair, Pa., March 10th. They were John Mankus, Anna Marie Distin, Barbara Miller, and Arthur Stankovitz. Junior members from the Frackville area had a wonderful program of Lithuanian ethnic dancing. As District Cultural Chair, John Mankus continues to make cultural presentations at our District meetings. Our council will be the host of the Amber District meeting in June.

Our Council St. Casimir celebration was held March 3 at the Spot Restaurant, Binghamton. 19 council members participated. Fr. John Mikalajunas said the opening and closing prayers. Barbara Miller chaired the event and distributed information about St. Casimir for all to read and discuss. Our Junior member, Debbie Miller, made a presentation on Lithuania at her school. Junior Council is very active under the direction of her mother, Barbara.

As Lithuanian Affairs Chair', John

Mankus and his wife, Grace, have participated in a number of meetings at the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, DC, with the leaders of Lithuanian -American organizations, Republic of Lithuania elected officials, and Embassy staff. John and wife, Grace, were invited to Lithuanian Independence Day Commemoration at the Lithuanian Embassy on Feb. 14th. by Ambassador, Vygaudas Usackas. Among the many prominent disnitaries were Virginia Senator George Allen and his wife, Susan, whose mother is Lithuanian.

### Mid Atlantic District

#### **C-12 New York, NY** **Irene Senken**

While loking back at past events, I thought that it would be a good time to write a few words. March 4th was St. Casimir's Day and we went to church on that morning at a church in West Palm Beach, FL where the priest spoke a little about his life.

On March 3rd we attended a celebration of St. Casimir given by C-153 (Treasure Coast) with a Mass at St. Jude's Tequesta, FL, followed by a banquet at the Doubletree Hotel-Palm Beach Gardens. Bishop Baltakis celebrated Mass and was guest speaker at the banquet. C-12 - Ed and Irene Senken - also C-86 - Paul and Lee Moore - were represented. C-12 had very few meetings during the winter months due to illness and other problems.

Belated News: Congratulations to Vinne and Helen Cuperwich on the birth of their 3rd grandchild.

Dec 2nd we had a short meeting and Christmas Party with pretty good attendance.

Good to see our President Jovita Sledar back from a long illness.

Fr. Sawicki unable to attend District meetings presented by Fr. Daniel Staniskas - Congratulations.

'Heard Vincent Gedvila died on Sept 25th, 2001 after a long illness.

Helen Matthews, long-time member, moved to Canada due to illness. Our prayers are with you.

### **C-110 Maspeth Bruno Rutkunas**

On February 16, 1918, the Lithuanian Council proclaimed the establishment of the Lithuanian State; with Bishop Paulius Baltakis, our council celebrated the 84th anniversary on Feb 17th at the Transfiguration Church during the 11:30 A.M. Mass. Present were many newly-arrived visitors from Lithuania and many from other Lithuanian organizations. The Annunciation Choir joined up with our choir and with Virginius Barkauskas at the new organ, the service was fulfilling. Pastor Ted Rooney and Rev. Vytas Volertas participated in this joyous anniversary Mass, where deceased Msgr. F. Bulovas and John Pakalniskis were always present. The celebration continued in the church hall and everyone will remember this outstanding social event.

Maryte Abbott received word that our MAD District meeting will be held in the warm climate of St. Petersburg, hosted by C-147!!! What a chance for our members to get away.

On Feb 16, the shipping agents came and picked up donated packages of clothes for the orphans in Lithuania; it really feels good to be charitable for those in need.

The closing of activities at the Zidinys (Cultural Center in Brooklyn) made the school teaching children the Lithuanian language, transfer their Saturday morning classes to the Transfiguration Church. This brings memories of attending the Lithuanian school at the Citizens' Club in Brooklyn held by V. Matusevicius and P. Bijoras in the 1930's.

Our council still sponsors bus trips to Atlantic City for those who want to walk on the boardwalk and watch the ocean waves!

### **C136 Hudson Mohawk Dorothy Richmire**

Our recent commemoration of Lithuanian Independence was held on a sunny Sunday morning. Rev. Richard Carlino officiated at Mass which was well-attended by K of L members and guests. A reception featuring Lithuanian dishes was enjoyed by all.

Mayor Albert Jurczynski, on behalf of the City of Schenectady, presented a proclamation to our president, Ed Barkowski.

Ed also acknowledged a gift from the family of the late Helen & Steve Dougall, long-time members of Holy Cross Church. A beautiful Lithuanian table runner now adorns our side altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

An update on our sick list brings good news: Joan Parker, present at our celebration, informs us that her sister, Betty, is doing well and her upbeat attitude is an integral part of her recovery.

How great to see Stella White at meetings and functions again after a long illness. Sue Freer, after months of pain and discomfort, is

back looking and feeling fit. Welcome back, Sue, and thanks for a job well done on that day. Fran Maslanka, also recently missing, is in recovery of her malady and looking great. Jo Sasinowski, also back and doing great, demonstrated how great by making Farmer's cheese for the event. Virginia Barkowski, sporting a spiffy cane and looking very stylish, is doing well. Thank God for the gift of recovery for the above members. Our prayers will continue to pray for them and for Helen LaPierre and Frank Zebuda.

Thought for today: We stand tallest when we stoop to help others.

### **C-152 E.Long Island Julie Lott**

Hope everyone had a very blessed, glorious Happy Easter. Spring arrived ever so gently after a mild winter. We didn't have to put up with the usual winter doldrums this year. We express thanks for our blessings.

The St. Casimir's celebration was held on March 10 this year. Our members attended Mass as a group at the Lady of Ostrabama Church as we usually do. We are so fortunate to have the church so near by our meeting hall. The attendance was Knights out sick and others away. Regardless, the outcome was both positive and festive. The foods prepared were delicious and plentiful.

We made the business part of the meeting brief as everyone was eager to eat. Nevertheless, we always manage to address the most important issues on the agenda. As with most organizations, we get many requests for donations and invitations to attend other K of L events. All these issues have to be addressed and require everyone's

opinion - such as the amount of donation and to whom it should go. Attending conventions and out of town functions help us to reach our goals and to get our degrees

Welcome to our new members: Ginger Alekeynas, Isabel Trunce, Stephen Aromskis and Marie Valentino. Also welcome back to Flo Ostroski, who has rejoined after being busy bringing up her grandchildren and are now old enough. Good to have you back, Flo.

We all mourn the loss of our member, John Marcinka, who passed away in February. May he rest in peace.

### **C-6 Hartford, CT Leona Sawka**

With the usual meeting preliminaries completed, a new member, Helen Riccardi, was installed. A welcoming applause was given to Helen. Receiving their first degrees were Eleanor and Leo Tajmajer and second degrees went to June Grenier, Fr. Rikteraitis, and Florence Morkus. Congratulations, K of L'ers.

Weren't the Olympics great? Ellen O'Neill, daughter of our former president, Wanda Ambrose Kruk, was an Olympic Torchbearer in Henefer, Utah. Ellen was nominated by the Chamber of Commerce in Green River, WY where she resides with her husband, Kevin, and daughter, Erin. What an honor!

Judy Landers and Alyce Gegesky ran a booth at the recent annual Lithuanian Scouts Food and Craft Fair which was a great success and added a hefty sum to our treasury.

It was voted to give a donation to the Lithuanian Radio Hour which is

hosted by member Al Dzikas. Another donation will be sent to Aid to Lithuania for the Trade School program. Also, once again, we are supporting A.P.P.L.E. toward a scholarship for teachers.

Brother Juan Dielinikaitis, a member of the Holy Apostles Order, and recipient of the Tomalavich Scholarship, will be installed as a Deacon at St. John's Church in Middletown. Brother Juan will be ordained into the priesthood next year. Congratulations, Bro. Juan!!

Our St. Casimir's dinner and fundraiser, chaired by Leona Sawka and Lillian Joseph on March 9 was a huge success. The dinner was preceded with music and singing by The Hartford Trio. Many hours were spent rehearsing for this evening by Jurgis Petkaitis and his fellow entertainers. Table decorating and centerpieces were in the artistic hands of Louise Pivoski and Agnes Gagnon and what a superb job they did. Louise's daughter, Beth, worked all day and was a great help. Thanks also go to Dianne Yusias and Judy Landers for their help in the kitchen, and Wandie Kruk, Francie Ambrose, and Alyce Gegesky. Aciu to Pauline Kruk and her friend, Mary Conlon, thanks also to Dalia Dzikas, June Grenier, and Kristina Serksnas.

A suggestion was made that we purchase a Lithuanian and American flag for Holy Trinity Church Hall where our meetings are held and that started the ball rolling for Kay Urban. Kay thought it most appropriate to buy the flags in memory of her late brother, Tommy Sidlauskas, since he had such a fancy and love for flags all his life. That is exactly what happened and we now have two beautiful flags to grace our hall, thanks to Kay.

The membership agreed to set aside monies for paint for the church hall

floor and also a donation was sent to Aid to Lithuania.

Members viewed a video featuring the Feb 16th Lithuanian High School in Germany, compliments of Irene Petkaitis.

Members who attended the NFD meeting in Worcester in April were June Grenier, Leona Sawka, Alyce Gegesky, Louise Pivoski, Arlene Stiklius, Wandie Kruk and Francie Ambrose.

Thanks to Dalia Dzikas and the Berzelis Dancers, concert program held in April in the Holy Trinity Church Hall was a great success and was beautifully performed.

### **C-10 Athol Gardner Vincukas**

Jane O'Hearn, formerly of Gardner, now residing in Nashua, NH, daughter of late members James and Barbara Faemen, was re-elected State Senator of Dist 12, NH. Travels every day to Concord State House to her duties. Congratulations, Jane!!

Congratulations to Worcester K of L'ers Tony and Danute Miner on the occasion of their wedding in St. Casimir's, Worcester.

It is good to see Roberta Landry back in circulation after months of illness.

Wishing a return to good health to Wally Mikas who is seriously ill. Wishing the best to all our home-bound K of L'ers.

Our council raised \$1200 to benefit St. Francis ongoing \$fund. Armand and Pam Bouthlier did a great job at coordinating the kitchen, Doc Gailunas and Nell Melaika co-chair raffle, Roberta Landry, parish Scout

Troop set-up, Mylda Stasiunas coffee and pastries and host of K of L helpers.

Brone Wisniauskaas, hostess of the Greater Gardner Artist Association, had a Lithuanian Easter display at the MultiCultural Festival held at the Gardner highschool.

Our council elected the following slate of officers: Spiritual Advisor, Rev. Joseph Jurgelonis; Pres. Henry Gailiunas; VP, Bill Wisniauskas; Treas. Nell Melaika; Rec. Sec. Pamela Bouthlier; Fin Sec Marie Colo; Ritual Chair Maryann Langlois; Cultural Chair Brone Wisniauskas; Marshal, David Lucas.

Condolences are extended for the family of the late John Smith of Hadley who was a Guidance Councilor at So. Hadley High School for 31 years.

Howie Beaudette was one of 3 members of the Gardner VFW who were honored as 50 year members of the veterans' organization.

## **C-26 Worcester Ruta**

A Valentine Pot Luck Supper kicked off our first meeting of the New Year. Members really outdid themselves with all kinds of delicious offerings. Everyone brought something and many made their favorite specialties.

At this time it was announced that Victoria August was honored as the Volunteer of the Month at the Worcester Senior Center. Some of her achievements were to coordinate their first Senior Center Holiday Chorus and crocheting afghans for their project Linus. This is a program that sends warm throws to sick and critically ill children in local pediatric units. She is

everywhere at the Center and is always willing to lend a helping hand. We are proud to have one of our own recognized.

A special Mass was held at St. Casimir's Church to celebrate St. Casimir's Day. The living and deceased members of our council were remembered. All the members assembled in the rear of the church and marched together as a body. Everyone was asked to wear their medals. There was a large attendance.

On March 17, our annual Holy Hour was held. Even though it is sponsored by our council, all parishoners and friends were invited. Fr. Richard Jakubauskas was the celebrant assisted by Rev. John Petrauskas. The service included a rosary, benediction and a penance service. It was a good time for everyone to fulfill their Easter duty requirements. Refreshments were served in the parish hall.

Anthony and Danute Minor and Peter Chunis recently joined us. They were former members of C-116. Also, Judy Maleckas rejoined our council.

John Putis has returned home after spending 14 weeks with his son in Walnut Creek, CA. While there, he was able to enjoy 4 delightful sailing trips on his son's 34-foot sailboat in San Francisco Bay. In all the time he was there, it only rained 5 days - guess he brought the good weather with him. John is now looking forward to a return trip this summer.

Aldona Waska and Lillian Kondrotas are spending their annual 6 weeks in Florida. They are enjoying the sun and beaches there. By the time they returned home, the warm weather will be here.

It is with great sadness to report that

we recently lost 3 long-time members: William Grigas (4th degree), Charles Kulakusky (4th degree) and Gadmin Troupes. Please remember them in your prayers. At each wake, members participated in the Knights of Lithuania Ritual. Also, they assembled at the Masses to pray for them and to bid their friends farewell. President Vivian Rodgers received very positive comments from the families, especially the young people, who were very impressed and thanked the council for their kindness and assistance in these sad times.

## **C-27 Norwood Zaibas**

The entire council extends its deepest sympathy to Adele Macys and her family on the death of her husband, member Edward Macys. May God rest his soul. We will miss him.

Parishoners and members gathered in Founders' Hall to commemorate Lithuanian Independence Day, enjoy refreshments and listen to Fr. Wolkovich's talk giving us the very interesting real story and details behind Lithuanians risking their lives to help Jews escape death at the hands of the Nazi's and how so many of them paid with their own lives.

Our parish is celebrating its 90th anniversary with several events. On March 3, Maryte Bizinkauskas gave us a wonderful performance in a Lenten Concert. Fr. Wolkovich joined her with violin and voice in several pieces. The audience showed their appreciation with a standing ovation.

On April 14, a special anniversary Mass was held, followed by a brunch at a local restaurant. Commemorative afghans designed with a sketch of St. George Church

have been very popular.

The ever-popular NED retreat at the Franciscan Monastery in Kennebunkport in June will be the destination of many of our members. This is always a wonderful event, spiritually and socially, and a chance to renew old friendships.

We welcome back "snowbirds" Albie and Leonora Jarvis and await the return of Mary Ann and Ed Motyka.

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

Well the holiday season is just about over. Our Christmas Bazaar went well as did St. Casimir Day on March 3 with dinner in the church hall.

Our new slate of officers is: Pres. Isabel Peterson; 1st VP M. Cronin; 2nd VP Mary Geipel; Sec. Audrey Toole; Treas. Evelyn Lepinsky; Fin Sec. Helen Klimazewski; Sunshine Fund Helen Medley; Rituals Ed Toole; Vytis Corresp. Genute Strmaitis-Valente; Historian Ann Kodorsky; Ways & Means Irene & Mike Meizes; Sgt at arms Charles Valente; Telephone squad Helen Lostys.

Thank you to everyone for donating their time and efforts in support of K of L Council 50.

### **C-141 Bridgeport Aldona Marcavage**

The highlight of the month of Dec was our wonderful annual traditional Kucios which was well-attended. It set the mood for a happy, holy Christmas holiday.

Several of our talented crafts people decorated a Christmas tree with beautiful straw ornaments. We donated it to the Wadsworth

Antheneum Museum in Hartford. It was on display with other holiday trees for one week. The Lithuanian tree sold for \$150. The sale of these trees benefits children's educational programs.

Our January meeting was snowed out.... and we haven't seen any snow since.

The celebration of Lithuania's 84th anniversary of its original Independence Day began with Holy Mass at St. George Church on Feb 17th. Flag-bearers were Stephen Wilcinskas and Eric Karpauskaas. Carrying the Gifts were William Brilvitch, Nancy Pawasauskas, and Barbara W. Schmidt dressed in lovely Lithuanian costumes.

After Mass our guests enjoyed great refreshments, great entertainment by the lively VETRA dancers. We also are happy to announce a great collection which will aid Lithuania's Children Relief, St. Casimir's Guild, Aid to Lithuania, and APPLE.

Vaiva Vebra-Gust was our honored guest speaker. She reported on her experiences with UNESCO (UN Educational component) in Africa as a representative of Lithuania's government, Dept. of Education. She was a co-founder of APPLE, served as president for 8 years, and was recipient of the first Lifetime Membership Award. She also was former Asst Minister of Education in Lithuania and served on its Board for a number of years. Her talk was very enjoyable. It ended with a productive question and answer period. We welcome her back home to the USA.

Mrs V. Tumoniene - who is director of the children's sanatorium in Kaunas wrote that the institution lives in great poverty due to Lithuania's economic situation. All

support is greatly appreciated. In answer to the plea, Sr. Helen Iveraluskaite, an officer of LCR, with support of K of L, responded royally. A huge container was filled with child-size wheelchairs, crutches, beds, comforters, linens, furniture, medical needs and money. The food bank was also replenished. Children ages 1-16 are treated there. Most are tubercular patients; some suffer various bone joint diseases - congenital or acquired deformities. Besides treatments, the children also receive schooling right in their beds. Most cannot walk. God bless Sister Helen's caring heart.

One of our members, Larry Misevicius, was a patient in that sanatorium when he was a child.

Keep in your prayers: John Argust, who is seriously ill, and his weary wife, Lillian; Stella Marcinauskis, who is slowly convalescing at home; wheelchair-bound Peter Radzwillas; and Ann Gecevich.

We welcome new members: Vyto Vaitekunas, Dorothy Minkus, Wallace Zokus-Hamel, Deivis Valenta, Monica Karnuseviciute, Saule and Alfonsas Radzivicius.

This year our council celebrated St. Casimir's Day on St. Patrick's Day, causing some amusement. Our bountiful brunch was enjoyed by a hall full of hungry Knights and happy, happy faces. Many thanks to our hard-working committee, led by our dedicated president, IIM Clemencine Miller. Matthew Anderson, one of our Junior members, gave a very interesting talk on the life of St. Casimir.

All profit from this brunch was donated toward the extensive renovation project of St. George Church which is in the hands of tireless administrator, Father Jose - in memorial for Msgr. Prancus.



We hope everyone enjoyed a happy, holy Easter, in good health.

## **Mid Central District**

### **C-25 Cleveland Ursula Kunsitis**

On Dec 12th, 30 members, including our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Gediminas Kijauskas, enjoyed themselves at our annual Christmas Party held at the Croatian Lodge. Entertainment was provided by the Ink Spots and the Four Aces. Both groups brought back great memories of times past!

After a brief Winter Hiatus, C-25 meetings resumed April 12th at OLPH Church Hall.

MCD Members: C-25 is looking forward to welcoming you to Cleveland on May 17, 18, 19 for the Mid-Central District Meeting and Bowling Tournament. The committee is working to make this a memorable event for all. Come to Cleveland whether you bowl or not and enjoy the fun and camaraderie. We'll welcome you with open arms!

Congratulations to Joe and Ann Ivoska who celebrated their 56th Wedding Anniversary with family at the Dubrovnic Gardens on Feb 24th.

Ben Karklius, Dick and Jean Marks, Ed Pranckus, Gene and Ursula Kunsitis and Stella Sankal attended the Feb 17th Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church. Dick Marks had the honor of carrying the Lithuanian Flag in both the church procession and later in the afternoon at the cultural program. Mr. Vygaudas Usackas, Lithuania's ambassador to the US was Guest Speaker.

Nelda and Charles Machutas and daughter, Linda, traveled to Los

Angeles to see and hear granddaughter and niece Samantha Farrell perform with North Olmsted's High School SPECIAL EDITIONS Jazz Group and Band. No. Olmsted was one of three high schools in the US chosen to perform at the International Jazz Festival (IAJE) in January!

CONGRATULATIONS SAMANTHA on a great performance!

Please remember our seriously ill members Grace Derus and Vi Skarnus in your prayers and a big "HELLO" to our house-bound and ailing members; you are in our thoughts and prayers!

### **C-96 Dayton Fran Petkus, HM**

March 3rd saw C-96 members assemble and march into church in a body for the celebration of St. Casimir's Day Mass led by the council's Sgt-at-Arms with the council's cross, Michael F. Petkus. Stefanija Rastikis, in Lithuanian, at the end of Mass, led the Litany to St. Casimir. The services were closed with the singing of the Vyciu Himnas. Members then headed to Franco's Restuarante for dinner and the council's monthly meeting. Thanks must go to Gary and JoAnn Thiele for chairing the day for the council. Another job well-done!!

C-96's Annual Palm Sunday Bake Sale, held March 23rd and 24th, proved, once again, to be a great success. Thanks go to chair Linda Pant and her committee, Rob, Henry, and Laurretta Pant. Elaine Pacovsky set up all the trimmings for a wonderful Koffee Klatch that added to the proceeds for the day. Big winner for our basket of cheer was Judy Petrokas. Our Junior Basket winner was Alex Fletcher!!

SC 3rd VP Annamarie Sluzas

Berger, SC Financial Secretary Mark Bell, Honorary Members Elinor Sluzas and Fran Petkus along with C-96 President Robert Pant returned home from a very busy Supreme Council meeting on April 6th. Elinor is putting together a very informative and interesting panel to be shared at the National Convention covering the K of L project of informing the world of Lithuania's best-kept secret - Our Lady of Siluva!

Happy Mothers' Day to one and all!!!

## **Mid America District**

### **C-82 Gary, IN Daisy Ann Talley**

Council members Sr. Janine and Mildred Jagiella joined other MAMD members in Kenosha's impressive observation of St. Casimir's Day and follow-up meeting. A delicious Lithuanian dinner was enjoyed, as was the entertainment. 'Many thanks to Kenosha for having us!

Member Loreta Vician conducted 2 egg-decorating classes in elementary schools in Gary, after demonstrating egg-techniques to our District Juniors. Marija Deksnis was hostess in her Mom's (Julie Zakarka) home. Thanks to all for contributing to the preservation of Lithuanian traditions!

Members Tom and Kathy Jagiella and 4 children are transferred to Hutchinson, MN where Tom is a product engineer for 3-M. Our loss is MN's gain.

Please remember our ailing member, Izidore Tavaras (long active in Lithuanian activities), in your prayers, as well as his wife and caregiver, Ursula, our council president.

## Juniors in Washington



*Bernice Aviza,  
Mid-Atlantic District Vice President for Juniors*

Juniors from Hudson-Mohawk Council 136 traveled to Washington. The purpose of the trip was to learn more about their own government and to explain to their congressional representatives why Lithuania should become a member of NATO.

Saturday was a traveling day. In the evening they had the opportunity to visit the Washington and Lincoln monuments.

On Sunday, they visited the Our Lady of Siluva Chapel at the National Basilica. After that they attended Lithuanian Mass with the members of the Lithuanian-American community in Washington.

After Mass, they attended a reception for a departing Embassy staff person who was returning to Lithuania. At the reception, Petras Klimas spoke to the boys about the visits they would make to their Congressman and Senators the next day.

Monday morning they visited the Lithuanian Embassy. Each youngster bravely introduced themselves – attempting to speak perfect Lithuanian. Dina Kopilevič, Third Secretary at the Embassy, patiently accepted their introductions. She told them about a young girl in Lithuania who wrote an essay to NATO president, General Robertson. She gave them a copy of the essay to give to Senator Hillary Clinton.

Monday afternoon was the time for the Juniors to practice everything they had been taught so far. Their first appointment was with Eric Woodard at Senator Hillary Clinton's office. After introductions, the

Juniors expressed to Mr. Woodward that they wanted Senator Clinton's support for Lithuania to become a member of NATO.. Keith Westerling served as spokesperson. His brother, Adam, assisted him and gave to him the copy of the essay that the young girl from Lithuania had written to NATO president. Mr. Woodward thanked the youngsters and said that he, too, hoped Lithuania would become a member of NATO. He encouraged them to continue learning about their own government and provided them passes to the Senate gallery chambers.

Their second appointment was with Congressman Michael McNulty. Congressman McNulty is a member of the Baltic caucus. In this visit, Adam Westerling served as spokesperson. After listening to the Juniors' comments, Congressman McNulty said – I agree with you, Lithuania should become a member of NATO.



Rimas Rimkunas, Keith Westerling, Eric Costanza, and Adam Westerling at Our Lady of Siluva Chapel.



*Bernice Aviza, Hudson-Mohawk Council 136*

The individual in charge of keeping medical equipment functioning at the Kaunas Medical University Hospital is Vytautas Laskauskas. Recently his responsibilities grew due to the donation of a hospital-wide patient monitoring system. The monitoring system had been in use by St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, NY which decided to replace it with a different system. Last year's Friend of Lithuania award recipient, Ginger Houghton, asked the firm that was responsible for removing the old system – what are you going to do with the old unit? They said nothing, the wires would be cut and the system thrown out.

Ginger Houghton hates to see good things go to waste and explained how Lithuania could use it. So instead of cutting wires, the system has been dismantled for re-use in Lithuania. Ginger emailed the chief of cardiac surgery in Lithuania about her latest acquisition. Dr. Rimantas Benetis was thrilled.

The bio-medical technicians at St. Peter's Hospital asked Ginger if she thought the technicians were capable of re-installing the system. Ginger knew Lithuania's technicians were quite capable; but she also knows that actually seeing something in use makes installing it and maintaining it much easier. The Hudson-Mohawk Knights of Lithuania Council 136 donated monies to help pay the airfare of a Lithuanian technician to come to the United States. The Mid-Atlantic District contributed additional funds to make the trip a reality.

The Kaunas Medical University Hospital reluctantly let their most qualified technician travel to Albany to observe the monitoring system in use and to learn more about maintaining it. Vytautas Laskauskas made

his first trip to the United States. It took Vytautas and the bio-technicians at St. Peter's hospital just a few days to overcome language handicaps. After that they tended to the business at hand – a crash course on how to install and maintain the patient monitoring system being transferred to the Kaunas Medical University Hospital.

The American technicians took apart the equipment in every which way they could. Their student, Vytautas, had to figure out how to put it back together. And while this was going on, both were learning about each other's culture and the state of health care in the U.S. and Lithuania.

On his weekend off in the states, Vytautas traveled to New Hampshire to help pack medical supplies and equipment for Lithuania. He learned first hand what it was to sort, inventory, pack and stack.



Ed Barkowski (C-136 and Mid-Atlantic District President) and Vytautas Laskauskas

When he returned home to Lithuania, he had two weeks of work to catch up with. It was a little bit overwhelming. But he got it all under control. He is now working with the hospital directors at installing the monitors in the most needed areas of the hospital. He has a few new tools to help him and he also has that sprit of love, friendship and encouragement from his new friends in the U.S.

Vytautas extends his heartfelt thanks to all those that made his trip to America possible.

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**O ATSIMENU NAMELĪ**

Oatsimenu namelī  
 Aš gimtini, savo.  
 Kur motulē prie ratelio  
 Supdama niūnavo.

Ir dainelē ta lopšinė  
 Ta daina motulės  
 Ir šiandieną man ausyse  
 Skamba čiūčia liūlia.

Čiūčia liūlia, mažutėli  
 Auk, greičiau užauki.—  
 Ir tėvynė ir Dievulis  
 Taveš jauno laukia...

Kai išklystu į pasaulį  
 Platu, begalinį,  
 Tėviškėles atminimas  
 Man laimužė mini.

Kai į saulę pasižiūriu.  
 Vakaro saulužė,  
 Man ji primena kaip gyvą  
 Mylima mamuzė,

Ir kasdien regiu tą kaimą  
 Tą namelį savo.  
 Kur gyvenimo palaima  
 Man lopšy liūliavo.

~V. Nemunelis~

