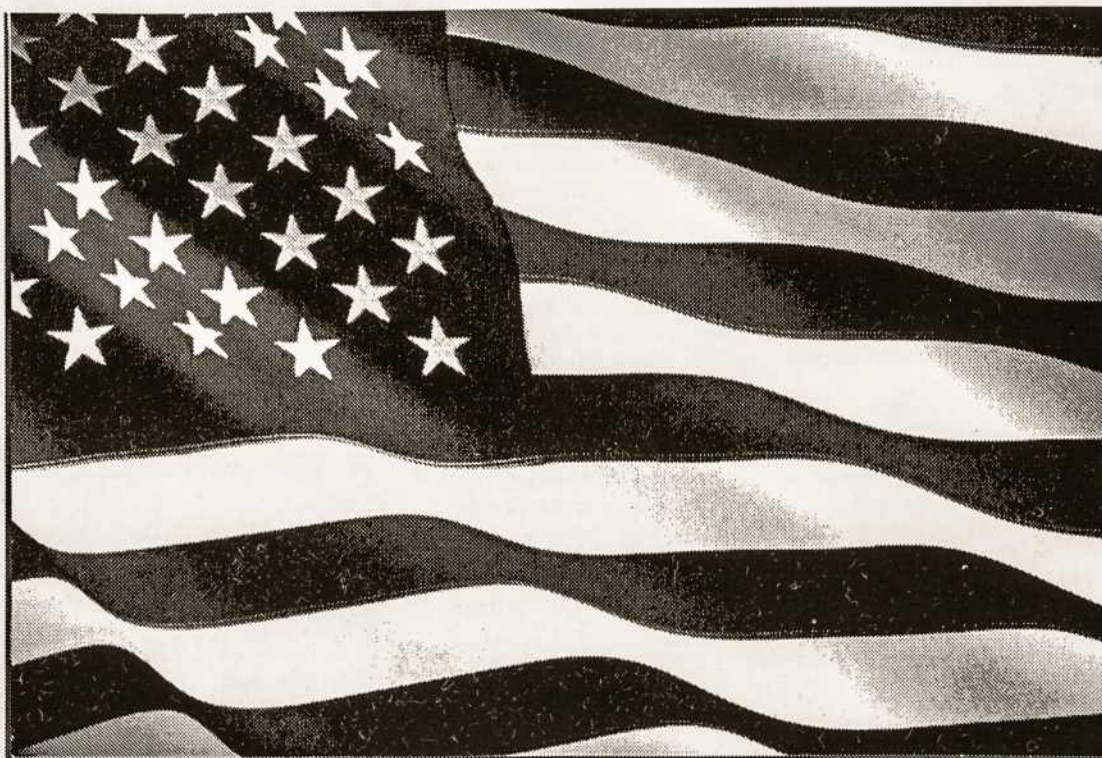




God

Bless America,



Land That I Love

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2001-2002**

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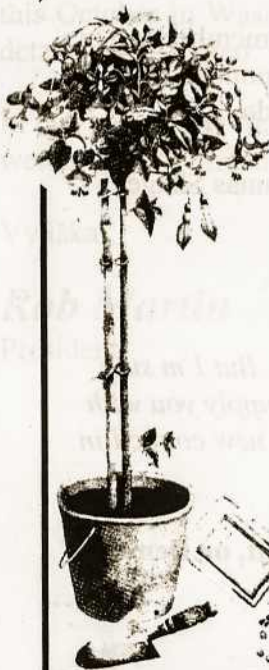


Mission Statement: The Knights of Lithuania endeavors to instill in its members an attachment to Lithuania, the land of our ancestors, and knowledge, appreciation and love of the Lithuanian language, customs and culture.

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To My Fellow Knights

Welcome to Chicago!

We will conclude the 2002 K of L Convention at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Casimir. It is with great joy and eagerness that Sister Johanna Marie and I wait to welcome you to our home. Here we invite you to see the Lithuanian and congregation's museum collections, the library, and weather-permitting, the outdoors. Here, too, is your VYTIS office.

But the heart of our community treasure is the Chapel where we will participate in the concluding Liturgy. Here now is housed the sarcophagus containing the remains of the community's foundress, Mother Maria Kaupas. In her care we may leave our heartfelt intentions assured of her intercession and her pleasure with the work of the Knights of Lithuania.

The Editorial Staff (Sister Johanna Marie, Mildred Jagiella and I) welcome you to CHICAGOLAND! There are so many places to see, Lithuanian areas to visit and friends to enjoy. We look forward to meeting with you.

Sister M. Janine



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I'm a former resident of West Hartford, CT and have kept up my membership in Council 6 of Hartford. Is there any K of L activity in the Boulder, Longmont or Denver areas? I miss not having any Lithuanian contact after my move to Colorado.

Thanks for any information you can give me.

Angela Norkunas Shages

(EDITORIAL RESPONSE)

Dear Angela,

Sorry to say we have no K of L Councils in the state of Colorado. But I'm sure there are many Lithuanians there. I am hoping our VYTIS readers will supply you with the information you seek. Wouldn't it be great if your letter resulted in a new council in Colorado?

Please send any information on Lithuanians in the Boulder, Longmont, or Denver areas to VYTIS. Addresses are in the inside cover of the magazine.

Knights of Lithuania
Supreme Council
 Established 1913

"For God and Country"



To my fellow members:

Where has the time gone? It's hard to believe that another year has gone by and we're eagerly putting the finishing touches on this year's national convention. It seems like only yesterday that we were meeting in Orlando. This past year has been a great one for the Knights of Lithuania and I'm sure all those who attend the national convention in Chicago will have an enjoyable time this summer. Remember, it's still not too late to attend. The members of this year's host council, Council 16, look forward to welcoming you to Chicago this summer, as do the members of the Supreme Council. Please make sure to check this issue for last minute convention information.

By now, I'm sure that everyone has heard the wonderful news concerning the positive vote passed in the senate concerning the Freedom Consolidation Act. A copy of the thank you letter I received from Ambassador Ušackas is printed in this issue. Let us all continue to keep up the good work of letting our representatives in Congress and the Senate know that we strongly support NATO enlargement.

Looking to the future, I'm happy to report that we are planning a Knights of Lithuania trip to Lithuania in 2003, to attend the Song and Dance Festival next summer. We hope to have all the information together by convention time. Also, don't forget the National Pilgrimage planned for this October in Washington, DC. Information packets will be mailed to each council once the details are finalized.

In closing, let me thank each of you for the opportunity to serve you this past year. I hope you weren't disappointed. I wish you all the best for a safe, healthy and wonderful summer.

Vytiškai,

Rob Martin

President



EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Nr. 801-01-15

May 20, 2002

To the President of the Knights of Lithuania



Dear Mr. President,

On May 17 the Senate of USA accepted by a clear majority of votes (85 – for, 6 – against) the *Freedom Consolidation Act* giving support to the expanding of NATO in the near future. This vote demonstrates strong USA support to this expansion and an increased hope for Lithuania to be invited to join NATO at the NATO 2002 November Summit Conference in Prague.

This voting for the *Freedom Consolidation Act* is not only a strong support for the decisions of the expansion, but also to a commitment of Lithuania and other candidates to seek becoming members of this alliance adding a valuable contribution to its vitality and strength.

Dear Rob, I am especially thankful to you and to all the members of the Knights of Lithuania for their activity in spreading the Lithuanian cause and explaining the importance of NATO expansion in the United States of America. As I appreciate your support, I would like to invite you to continue expanding this activity, because the support of the US Senate is so vital. During the process of ratification of the agreement to receive new members, this support will become even more important.

I am sure, that working together, we will achieve Lithuania's invitation into NATO in November this year at Prague and a subsequent smooth process of ratification at the US Senate.

Respectfully,

Ambassador Vygaudas Ušackas

2622 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20009, tel. 202 234 5860, fax 202 328 0466

Lithuanian Affairs

Newsletter

(contributed by John R. Mankus, K of L
Lithuanian Affairs Committee Chair)

POLITICAL ACTIVITY:

I would like to share a number of passages from President Valdas Adamkus' welcome speech on June 4, 2002, at the Wilton Park Conference, "The Changing Security Environment in the Baltic Region," in Vilnius City Hall. "Let me start by welcoming the Wilton Park conference that is held for the first time in Vilnius. I feel really honored to address this distinguished forum and to contribute to a frank and open discussion. It is also a pleasure to have this discussion in a country which, in a sense, represents transformations characteristic to the post-cold war Europe. I do hope that the participants will have a chance to see how much Lithuania has progressed since the days of the Singing Revolution, and especially, how much our people have come to terms with the European standards of living and thinking. Today's conference will focus on the changing security environment in the Baltic Sea region. We hope that, very shortly, the Baltic Sea will be embraced by the European Union and NATO. And with that, the possibilities for cooperation, economic development, and people-to-people contacts will only expand. We can already distinguish three factors that will have an immediate impact on the security and stability in the Baltic Sea region.

Factor Number One is, of course, the Euro-Atlantic enlargement. The Baltic membership in NATO and the European Union will finally put an end to speculations that the Baltic region still depends on the balance of power. In fact, in the recent past, our countries have tried to prove the opposite: that we have the will and the capacity to build a region that is open, friendly, and cooperative. Factor Number Two, which will affect the Baltic region's security, is, further removal of barriers and deepening integration in the Baltic Sea area. For centuries our growth and prosperity depended on free trade and movement along the Baltic coastline. Finally, Factor Number Three of immediate relevance to the Baltic security development is, our good

relations with neighboring countries and regions.

In ten years, a number of formats, such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States, were developed to encourage cooperation with Russia. Now the establishment of NATO-Russia Council has reinforced Russia's involvement. We welcome these developments and believe that they will have a positive impact on the Baltic region's growth and security."

President Adamkus also included Ukraine as an important part of the stability of the region when he said, "I also believe that the relations between our countries and Ukraine should be given a fresh impetus. Recently, Lithuania has come up with a new initiative to broaden and deepen its dialogue with Ukraine. This country is and will be of great importance to our continent."

I would like to share some passages from Ambassador Vygaudas Usackas' keynote speech at the Annual National Tadeusz Kosciuszko Observance at the United States Military Academy in West Point on May 4th. "It is a great honor to be at the United States Military Academy in West Point today. I did not hesitate a single moment to accept an invitation to speak to you today from Dean Bajdek during our meeting with Polish and Lithuanian leaders in Boston in October, 2001. I feel very privileged to have this opportunity to participate in the Annual National Tadeusz Kosciuszko Observance. Some time in August of 1776, less than two months after the Declaration of Independence had been signed, a military engineer from nearby the little town of Naugardukas in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania - Lithuanian part of the Commonwealth of Two Nations - arrived in Philadelphia. Seven years of service for the cause of American freedom earned him a tremendous respect among Americans. Thomas Jefferson later described him as his dear friend and colleague, by declaring that, "He is as pure a son of liberty as I have ever known. Educated at the finest military schools of Warsaw and Versailles, he joined the Army of the North as a Colonel of Engineers when the American Revolution broke out. His distinctive engineering skills helped to secure the American victory at Saratoga. He designed and implemented the system which prevented the British from entering the Hudson River, which, according to George Washington, was "the key to America."

NATO AND EUROPEAN UNITY:

On May 28th, President Valdas Adamkus and Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis met to discuss Euro-Atlantic integration. During the meeting, President Adamkus noted that Lithuania has to have in mind, not only what to receive, but also generate when being EU and NATO member. Foreign Minister Valionis briefed President Adamkus about the drafted National NATO Integration Program for 2002-2003, which Lithuania is to present this autumn to the Alliance.

Lithuanian Ambassador to U.S., Vygaudas Usackas welcomed the signing of the NATO-Russia Council accord May 28th in Rome, stressing that Lithuania will bring its significant share in the development of the new NATO-Russia relations as well. "Once accepted into NATO, Lithuania's constructive dialogue and experience in the regional cooperation with Russia will bring an added value to the new NATO-Russia relations," said Ambassador Usackas. Mr. Usackas delivered these remarks at the Portland World Affairs Council on May 28. He also expressed gratitude to Sen. Gordon Smith, co-chairman of the Senate Baltic Freedom Caucus, for his leadership in assuring the U.S. Senate vote on May 17, in support of the Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001, which endorsed the vision of further NATO enlargement of the NATO Alliance.

Also on May 28, Lithuanian Parliament adopted the National Security Strategy. The strategy says that Lithuania's position in the international security system is "the best over the past decade," and EU, NATO membership is the best way to ensure this status. According to the strategy, the main task for the near future is, to achieve membership in NATO, with invitation expected at the Alliance Summit in Prague in November, 2002, and the EU. NATO officials have already studied and given a high mark to Lithuania's draft National Security Strategy, which was prepared by Defense Minister Linas Linkevicius, led interdepartmental working group in cooperation with US experts. The strategy is the first document of this kind in Lithuania since the country regained independence in 1990.

On May 30, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis received a letter of gratitude from CoE Secretary General Walter Schwimmer. In his letter, the Secretary General thanked Lithuania for excellent organization of

the 110th CoE's Ministerial Committee session on 2-3 May in Vilnius. The letter says that the session concluded the ambitious and prominent Lithuania's chairmanship. Walter Schwimmer welcomed Lithuania for taking up the initiative to arrange the session not in Strasbourg, but in the country's capital. According to the Secretary General, this probably the largest international forum ever held in Lithuania, with over 40 states' delegations participating, was organized brilliantly.

On May 30, a session of Coordination Commission for Lithuania's integration into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at the Lithuanian Government was held. The Commission decided to start preparation of the fourth Lithuania's National NATO Integration Program. The Chairman of the Commission, Antanas Valionis, noted that Lithuania has made considerable progress in the field of integration into NATO, and should not slow down the reforms, but consistently continue their implementation. The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry hopes that the practical implementation of the new Alliance - Russia cooperation initiatives will strengthen the Euro-Atlantic security and stability. The establishment of the NATO-Russia Council marks a qualitatively new NATO-Russia cooperation level. Lithuania will make a substantial contribution to NATO-Russia dialogue by using its experience in the region.

Lithuanian Defense Minister, Linas Linkevicius, estimates positively the call to invite to join NATO seven new members, including Lithuania adopted on May 28 by NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Sofia. According to Linas Linkevicius, Parliamentarians cannot influence these decisions because the Alliance's enlargement will be preconditioned by heads of NATO states and governments. The Defense Minister stated that Parliaments will be directly connected with NATO enlargement when the agreements of candidates' Alliance accession will have to be ratified, if such decisions are adopted during NATO Summit in Prague.

ECONOMIC NEWS UPDATE:

On May 29, the Association of Lithuanian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation (CCIRF) signed an agreement on economic cooperation in Svetlogorsk, the Kaliningrad Region. The agreement provides for the exchange of

economic and legal information, cooperation in organizing exhibitions, fairs, and business meetings, aiming at establishing direct contact between small and middle enterprises. Klaipeda and Kaliningrad Regions' Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts also concluded a cooperation agreement on the same day. The documents were signed during the international conference on the economic prospects of the Kaliningrad Region, which included the chiefs of chambers of commerce and industry from seven countries of the Baltic Sea Region.

The Lithuanian Economy Ministry has released data showing that 26 Lithuanian enterprises have obtained ISO 14001 environmental management certification and over 250 companies have ISO 9000 certified quality management systems. Local companies are introducing the environmental management and quality systems in compliance with the ISO standards in order to keep a competitive edge in the EU markets.

The production of Lithuania's largest winery, "Anyksciu Vynas," won medals at Jalta-2002, the international competition of fruit-berry wine and string drinks. Apple cider Cool Drink won a gold medal in the group of fruit-berry wines, and Ledo Vodka won silver in the respective group. The winery started selling cider Cool Drink obtained through a natural fermentation and Ledo Vodka produced according to new technology involving freezing last year.

On May 31, Casino Planet, a Polish-owned company registered in the Netherlands, opened the first casino in Vilnius. The casino has four roulette and four card tables. Up till now, one casino has been opened in the port town of Klaipeda. The law legalizing gambling in Lithuania came into force on July 1, 2001.

CULTURE AND MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

On May 31, Klaipeda, one of Lithuania's oldest cities, commences a series of events dedicated to its 750th anniversary by an exhibition illustrating Klaipeda's history. The exhibition presents the city's foundation, growth and transformation to Lithuania's major city port and important cultural center. A video film introduces the future urban vision of Klaipeda.

Four Lithuanian military doctors left on June 3 for the Czech Republic to start training for the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Afghanistan, in which they will serve for 6 months in 6th Czech mobile field hospital. This is already the second joint mission of Czech and

Lithuanian military doctors. Lithuanians participated together with the Czech doctors in a NATO-led humanitarian operation Allied Harbor in Albania in 1999.

After 10 years of serving in the Baltics, the Peace Corps is closing its doors. But, it is not exiting without first having made a decisively positive impact on Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian society, says the Baltic's Times in an interview with Coralic Turbitt, Peace Corps' country director for the three Baltic States, published on May 9. "We set out in 1992 with very specific and narrow goals in the Baltic countries - to provide assistance to non-governmental organizations and small enterprises development and to fill the gap in the three countries' education systems in English language instruction," said Turbitt. "Our mission has been achieved here, and there is no further need for the kind of assistance Peace Corps can provide."



Andrew Pocius, is the son of Dr. Edward and Laurie Pocius, and the grandson of Edward and Anele Pocius, Council 112, Chicago. Andrew is a National Merit Scholarship winner, and will attend Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. Congratulations, Andrew!

Aid to Lithuania, Inc. Reaches Milestone

On March 4, 2002, ATL reached a pivotal milestone - \$1,000,883.60, collected since its inception in 1990! Beginning as a modest effort nearly 12 years ago, Aid to Lithuania, Inc., an ancillary arm of the K of L organization, a humanitarian aid project focused on securing medical supplies and equipment, medicines and then payment of the transportation costs of the aforementioned to our brothers and sisters in Lithuania. Aid to Lithuania began with the support of the Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid (LCRA) in Brooklyn, and the Detroit area Knights, who coordinated efforts with World Medical Relief, Inc.

In the summer of 1990, during the 77th K of L National Convention in Pittsburgh, PA, HM and C-102 member, Robert Boris, introduced the idea of sending medicine and medical supplies to Lithuania. The idea was ignited like fire, and the delegates enthusiastically responded to assist our dear brothers and sisters in Lithuania. At this convention, the Aid to Lithuania, Inc., (ATL) committee was formally established to underwrite the cost of shipping the supplies acquired from World Medical Relief, Inc.

There have been many dramatic highlights during the last 12 years. The first 40 foot long container arrive in Kaunas on 1/15/91, for distribution by Caritas. Historically, it is interesting to note that the container arrived just 2 days after the most heinous act of Soviet brutality, the attack on unarmed Lithuanian citizens at the television tower in Vilnius. Caritas responded immediately by dispatching the contents of the first container: antibiotics, bandages, sutures, etc., to assist these newest victims of Soviet brutality.

Hereafter, 88 additional containers of vital medications (vitamins, aspirin,

Hepatitis A,B, and C vaccines, medications for hypertension, cholesterol, glaucoma, cough syrups, protein food supplements, etc.), and supplies (medical, computers, medical journals, reference books and texts, X-Ray machines, hospital beds and tables, first aid kits, clothing, etc.), were shipped to Lithuania. The contents of two local Detroit churches were shipped - pews, altars, statuary, liturgical vestments and organ.

The contents of the total 89 containers were distributed to Caritas-Kaunas, St. James Hospital, Vilnius, the University of Vilnius Hospital, Vilnius, Caritas-Marijampole, Kaunas Catholic Maternity Hospital, Kaunas, St. Clare's Hospice in Utena, the Children's Day Care Center in Vilnius, the Family Center, Mother and Children's Home in Vilnius, Betanija Soup Kitchen in Vilnius. The contents of St. Peter's Church in Detroit, MI, was shipped to Rev. Leonas Jakimavicius in Alytus for his new church, Our Lady Help of Christians. (A lower chapel in the church was dedicated in honor of the original St. Peter's Church). The pews from Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Farmington Hills, MI, and St. Casimir's Church in Pittsburgh, PA, were shipped to Bishop Zemaitis in Vilkauskis.

One of Lithuania's greatest needs today is, spiritual renewal. Well trained priests are able to meet the challenge. ATL was approached by then archbishop Audrys Juozas Backis to monetarily assist in the establishment of the seminary fund, providing scholarships for seminarians studying at the newly built St. Joseph's Seminary in Vilnius. ATL initiated its second program, whereby a seminarian could be "adopted" by a donor willing to provide an annual scholarship of \$2,000. There are approximately 70 students enrolled in the seminary. To date, 17 seminarians have been adopted. An extremely generous benefactor, Anne Baronas, came to ATL's request for assistance with the seminary fund. The donor presented ATL with 3,600 shares of Bellsouth stock valued well over

\$170,000.00. Per her request, the "Baronas Family Endowment Fund" has been established under the auspices of Cardinal Backis, to provide post graduate study funds for newly ordained priests.

Due to the decreasing number of container shipments, a third program was established during the Board of Directorhs meeting at the 88th National Convention - Mother Teresa Homeless and Emergency Shelter. The Sisters of Mother Teresa feed the increasing number of homeless people and care for the indigent. On the average, 50 homeless people spend the nights at the shelter. Over 25 people receive emergency medical care daily. The Vilnius Archdiocese and the local government normally fund the program. However, due to the decreased grants received from the government, and increased heating and maintenance costs, ATL approved to financially assist the Mother Teresa's Homeless or Emergency shelter for one year, donating \$20,000.00.

Cardinal Backis met with several ATL officers in 2001, to discuss his vision for the Vilnius Handicraft Center (Trade School) and to request financial assistance to support the Center. At the Center, students would learn a specific trade - sewing, furniture restoration, food preparation, carpentry, and thereby becoming self-sufficient and independent. Hence, the fourth ATL program was established. Another generous benefactor couple, Petronella and Anthony Alexander, donated 200 shares of IBM stock worth over \$22,000.00 for the Vilnius Handicraft Center.

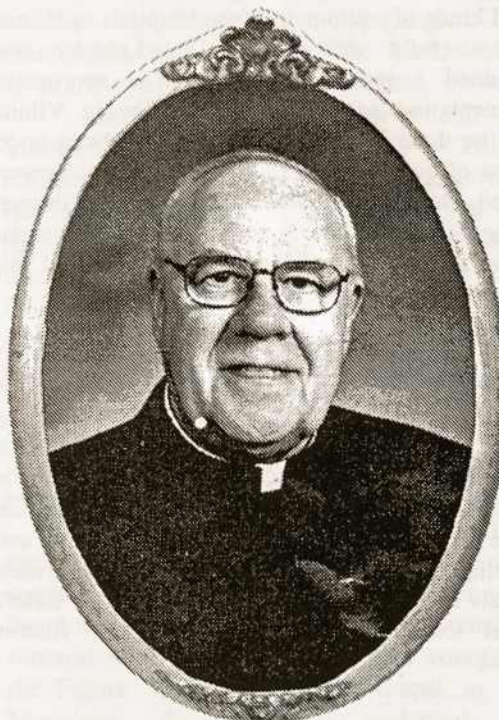
Aid to Lithuania's most notable achievement is, getting people involved. High level personal involvement and volunteerism from Michigan to Florida, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, has sustained its mission. It is individuals' participation coupled with donor organizations, the support of the Knights of Lithuania, and YOU, the most generous donors, supporters and benefactors, that has brought about outstanding success.

We are still needed now, more than ever, to support and help the Church, seminarians, Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity Homeless and Emergency Shelter, and the continued progression of the Vilnius Handicraft Center. If ATL is to continue the great work of Christian charity, we ask for your support.- financial assistance and prayers - that our ongoing efforts to help our less fortunate brothers and sisters in Lithuania is successful.

Heartfelt ACIU to all the Knights of Lithuania for your ongoing support. You helped us reach one milestone. Let's see if we can make another significant milestone.

Together, believe, and we will achieve!

Regina Juska-Svoba, ATL President
Aid to Lithuania, Inc.
1594 Beaupre
Madison Heights, MI 48071-2622



Rev. John Kuzinskas, pastor emeritus of Nativity BVM Church in Chicago, celebrated his Golden Jubilee in the priesthood on May 5th. Over 500 guests attended the dinner after the celebration of the Liturgy in Church. Ad multos annos, Father!

YOUR 2002 "FRIEND OF LITHUANIA" RECIPIENT

DR. JOHN P. LUBICKY

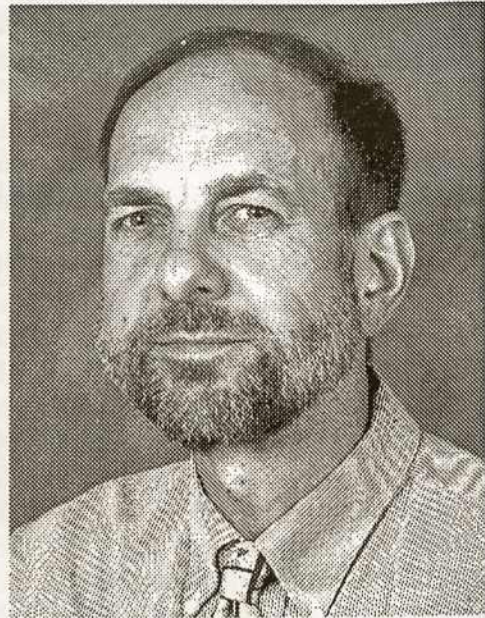
PREPARED BY: JOHN R. MANKUS,
SUPREME COUNCIL LITHUANIAN AFFAIRS
CHAIR

I am very pleased to announce this year's recipient of the *KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA, FRIEND OF LITHUANIA AWARD* is Dr. John P. Lubicky. Since the re-establishment of Lithuania's independence, his work for Lithuania has been monumental.

Since 1993, Dr. John P. Lubicky, Chief of Staff at Shriners Hospitals for Children, Chicago, has devoted nine days of his vacation time each year to bring the best in orthopedic care to the children of Lithuania. Every February since then, Dr. Lubicky, and a team of surgeons, nurses, and residents have been visiting the Vilnius University Children's Hospital to perform surgeries on our Lithuanian children and, more importantly, to teach young physicians the newest and best orthopedic procedures.

Dr. Lubicky began visiting the hospital in Vilnius just two years after Lithuania's re-establishment of independence from Soviet occupation. At that time, imaging instrumentation, surgical implants, braces, and all kinds of equipment in the hospitals in Vilnius were woefully deficient. Dr. Lubicky was determined to provide the appropriate instrumentation so that surgeries done in Vilnius would be done just as they would have been under the best of conditions in the United States. Toward that end, Dr. Lubicky, Norene Jamieson of Shriners and the Silver Service Foundation, and Lithuanian Children's Hope worked together to acquire and ship all the necessary supplies.

John P. Lubicky was educated in Catholic high schools in eastern Pennsylvania. He attended St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, studying biology, chemistry, and philosophy. After completion of his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College, he served an internship at Medical College of Virginia Hospitals and residencies and fellowships at Medical College of Virginia, Shriners Hospitals for Children, Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, and the University of Illinois Hospital.



In the past ten years, working with Lithuanian Children's Hope, Dr. Lubicky and his staff brought some 200 children with special needs to be operated in US. For his work for Lithuania, in 1993, Dr. Lubicky was awarded "The Excellence Award" from Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture and in 2002 President Valdas Adamkus awarded The Order of Gediminas to Dr. Lubicky. Dr. Lubicky's list of publications and presentations runs on for nearly twenty pages. He currently teaches at both Rush and Loyola University Medical School as a lecturer. He has served as Chief of Staff at Shriners for the past 14 years, garnering a reputation there as one of the busiest and the best pediatric spine surgeons in the country. Although parents come to Shriners because of Dr. Lubicky's surgical skills, they leave talking about his profound intelligence, compassion, and dedication to the success of their children. These same qualities have made him an invaluable asset to Lithuanian children as well.

Dr. Lubicky has four children. Two sons are in college and another son and a daughter are in high school. I am very pleased and honored that we are presenting this years Friend of Lithuania award to Dr. John P. Lubicky who has done so much for the people of Lithuania.

The Story of "The White Lady" of Vilnius

In the April 18, 2001 edition of "The Washington Times," one of the newspapers published in the nation's capital, there was a large supplement concerning Lithuania, which was divided into nine sections. One of them was devoted to "Arts and Culture," and, to me, the part that caught my eye was entitled: "White Lady of Vilnius Regains Her Glory."

This is a story about a 325 year-old statue that stands in a niche on the left side of a 14th century Franciscan Church in the Old Town of Vilnius, located at the corner of Traku and Pranciskonu gatves (streets). This church is known by other names, such as, the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To Lithuanians, it is called, "Svc. Mergeles Marijos arba Pranciskonu baznycia." This area of Vilnius, at one time, was called "Sands" and is also known by some as the "Sands Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

After my arrival in Vilnius in June of 2001, I decided to go to the Franciscan Church to personally view this devoted statue, and to get a better knowledge of its history. Much to my surprise, I learned that since this church has no parishioners, it does not have a pastor. When I was there, two Franciscan Conventuals, a branch that devoted themselves to studying and preaching, and put less emphasis on austere living, were the only ones to say Masses, one in Polish and the other in Lithuanian.

I talked with one of them, and received an information sheet, in English, that detailed the history of the Statue and also of the church itself. I would like to share with you the information given in "The Washington Times" story, and compare it with the facts as stated by the Franciscans.

According to the newspaper story, it is said that the statue in the Franciscan Church is one of two sculptures in existence that depicts the mother of Jesus while pregnant. If this is true, just where is the other one? More on this as my story progresses.

She is known by various names, such as,
The Figure of Mary's Immaculate Conception,"

"The Expectant Mother of God," and "The White Lady." Because she is fully clothed in white is perhaps why she is called by that latter name.

It is not certain who sculpted "The White Lady." There are two theories. One is, that Mykolas Pacas, the Great Hetman of Lithuania, commissioned two Italian artisans in 1676 to make a figure of the Virgin Mary, since they were already in Vilnius making statues for the Saints Peter and Paul Church in Antakalnis. The second theory is, that "The White Lady" was the work of a local sculptor, possibly an artisan from the School of Jesuits in Vilnius, or by an artist who worked at the nearby St. Catherine's Church.

Historians are confident that the Statue was delivered to the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary sometime during a major church renovation between 1743 and 1773. A logbook kept by the Franciscans observed, that by 1750 the Statue had been delivered to the grounds, and was being stored in the Monastery meeting hall.

After Russia invaded Lithuania in 1795, the Czar imposed strict laws on how the Lithuanian people could speak, write, and worship in their native language. The Franciscans, who cared for "The White Lady" for nearly two centuries, were banished.

In 1890, the governor-general of Vilnius ordered his lieutenant, a Polish Catholic, to have "The White Lady" destroyed. He, instead, took pity on Her and ignored the command. The niche, with the figure inside, was boarded up and covered with plaster. This fraud was successful for several decades, but after a long time, the walls started to crack, the plaster had fallen off, and the image of "The Expectant Mother of God" could easily be seen. Someone had carved a small window in the separations, and hung a light above it. Church goers started gathering there to pray.

In 1905, the Czar issued a decree that enabled the Lithuanian people to resume worshipping where they chose. An officer with the Vilnius Magistrate ordered the complete removal of the crumbling wall that concealed the Figure, than installed the chapel in the Monastery chamber, and undertook its restoration.

The chapel was solemnly consecrated by Edward Roop, Bishop of Vilnius, on November 8, 1906. Local authorities, clergy,

YOUR 2002 "FRIENDS OF LITHUANIA" RECIPIENT

and thousands of church goers participated in the ceremony.

Shortly after Lithuania asserted her independence from Czarist Russia in 1918, the Franciscans returned to Vilnius in hopes of getting back their church. While waiting, they settled down near their Monastery, and held Masses in the chapel of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.

In 1934, the church came back into the possession of the Franciscans. The following year, the Figure was transferred to St. Lawrence's Chapel in the church.

The Franciscan church survived World War II, and the early years of the Soviet occupation, when the majority of houses of worship were being closed. However, in 1948, the church was confiscated by the Communists, and the Franciscans were arrested and sent to labor camps.

Before work was to start in converting the church into a central storehouse for Soviet archives, unknown persons took it upon themselves to conceal "The White Lady" behind a wall of brick and mortar. Forty-three years later, after Lithuania reclaimed the independence that was taken away, tons of these files were removed, and it wasn't until then that "She" was found in her niche, covered by the crumbling wall that shielded Her from danger.

After reading Her story, I decided to go to the Franciscan Church on late afternoon to see Her. On my previous trip, I learned that the church was locked during the day, but a schedule of Masses was posted on the door: Lithuanian at 17:30, Polish, and hour later. Weekend hours were different. I opted to go to the Lithuanian Mass.

I was awed when I saw "The White Lady" standing gracefully, with a pleasant glow, in her chapel. She looked beautiful. Worshipers knelt before her and prayed, and some even stayed after the service to say the rosary. It was a moving experience for me.

This thought ran through my mind: if the newspaper story was correct, then where would the second such sculpture be? I decided to do a little detective work to find out.

I asked the Rev. Jaroslav M. Rekvardt, one of the two Franciscans who celebrates Masses in the church, he usually in Lithuanian, about the location of this second sculpture. I was told that an exact copy of Her was in the

Cathedral, in the first chapel, left hand side as I enter. I thought this was wonderful news.

I went to the Cathedral one morning, and met Rev. Gintaras Petronis, the Administrator. He escorted me to the Valavičiū Chapel (named after its benefactor), where a statue of our Blessed Mother stood in one corner. She was not "with child," her robes were not white, but brownish in color. Obviously, Rev. Rekvardt erred.

Rev. Petronis had no idea when the statue was placed in the Cathedral, but he told me he would find out. I returned a few days later, and learned that it was there, in the boarded up chapel, when the Cathedral was given back to the church in 1989. Other than that, he had no further information.

I had several pictures of our Blessed Mother taken in the chapels of the Franciscan Church and the Cathedral, and showed them to Rev. Rekvardt. After he compared them, I noticed that he was truly surprised. Was it possible that he, as well as the journalist who wrote that newspaper article, were both given this inaccurate information from the same source? Now this proved, at least to me, that there are not two sculptures depicting the mother of Jesus while pregnant. At least, not in Vilnius, anyway.

I next wanted to find out if anyone could possibly tell me when, and under what circumstances was the statue of Our Blessed Mother placed in the Cathedral? I received that answer from one of the Franciscan historians.

In 1864, a year after the insurrection against Czarist rule by the Lithuanians and Poles failed, the Franciscan Church and Monastery were closed, and the bell tower was torn down on orders from the Czar. A statue of our Blessed Mother stood in a niche, outside the church, but within the church grounds, at the Corner of Traku and Pranciskonu gatves (streets). The statue was taken to the Cathedral, presumably, for safe-keeping.

Today, the once beautiful interior of the church is in desperate need of repair and remodeling. Much work has to be done, such as the installation of adequate lighting, a new floor, pews to replace the benches that are now being used, the filling in of all the missing bricks from all corners, from top to bottom, a choir loft and an organ.

The exterior of the church has new roofing, and much more work is being planned,

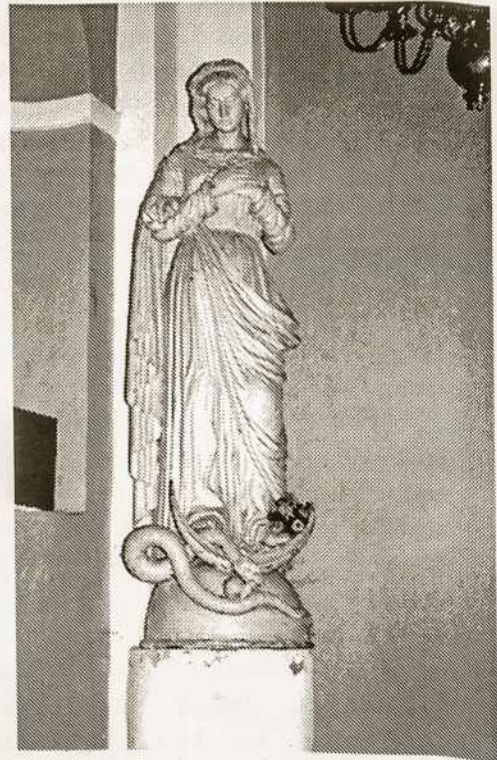
such as rebuilding the bell tower on the original site.

The Franciscan Church and "The White Lady" have survived perilous times. The church has now been officially designated as a "Historic Landmark," and their future appears to be much brighter .

~Edward W. Baranauskas~
edwillgen@mail.lt

Acknowledgements:

- "The Washington Times," April 18, 2001
- Franciscan Church Historians, Vilnius, Lithuania



Left top: Franciscan Church, Chapel of "The White Lady," Vilnius, Lithuania.

Left bottom: Franciscan Church, Chapel of "The White Lady," Vilnius, Lithuania.

Right top: Franciscan Church, Chapel of "The White Lady," Vilnius, Lithuania

Right bottom: Cathedral, Vilavičiū Chapel, Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (notice the difference)

"Want to Increase Your Knights of Lithuania Membership?"

On Sunday, March 17, 2002, Council 3 of Philadelphia sponsored a "Lithuanian Expo and Fair" at St. George Hall. Council 3 members manned the various displays to show everyone how the Knights of Lithuania promotes Lithuanianism, religion and culture. Displays exhibited the workings of Aid to Lithuania, St. Casimir's Guild, and Council 3 Activities. Also featured was a display showing the Knights of Lithuania Choir, along with videotapes of the Choir in concert. Lithuanian wooden crosses handcrafted by George Mikalauskas, C-96 Dayton, Ohio, were displayed and offered for purchase. People were intrigued with the intricacy of each cross. There also was a display depicting the history of Lithuania, stories and photos of the Lithuanian immigrants, and their place in society today.

The table displaying Amber jewelry, linen weavings and other Lithuanian artifacts, was popular with the attendees. People marveled at the beautiful items and evoked pleasure from the fact that these articles were available for them to observe and purchase.

Ruta seeds were offered for sale. In addition, people were given the opportunity to take home printed information concerning Kucios, Lithuanian wedding customs, and the art of dyeing Lithuanian Easter Eggs with beeswax.

The kitchen was a beehive of activity. Attendees feasted on kielbasa and sauerkraut, golunkis, kugelis, and Lithuanian rye bread. People were eager

to purchase the homemade gruzdukis and homemade bandukes. These foods made many people reminisce about the days of their youth, when their mothers made these delicacies for their families.

In spite of the Fair being held on St. Patrick's Day, Council 3 was delighted that a video and news team from the Fox Network appeared at the hall and proceeded to conduct interviews regarding the reasons for the Fair. The news team was given detailed explanations about the Knights of Lithuania organization, and also information on Lithuania, its origins and history. The Fair was featured on the Fox 10 o'clock television news that very evening.

The Fair was a result of an idea presented by John Mickunas of C-3 as a way to try to get new membership into the Knights of Lithuania. He felt that, if we could educate people regarding all the workings of the Knights of Lithuania, and show them that we are indeed a vibrant organization concerned with all aspects of Lithuania - cultural, religious, humanitarian and social - then we could sell them the idea, that being a member of the Knights of Lithuania would be in their best interests. We did get four new members into our Council as a result, and of course, made a lot of new friends who pledged their support in any forthcoming activities that the Council may sponsor in the future.

We urge all Councils to consider sponsoring an event such as this one, as we definitely feel that it was a success and opened the door to enhancing and enlarging membership in the Knights of Lithuania.

*~Agnes Mickunas, H.M.
Council 3 ~ Philadelphia, Pa.~*

Council 3 - Fair and Expo



L to R: Irene Ozalis, Dolores Herbert, Lillian Greymas, Irene Svekla and Dianne Drumstas working in the kitchen.



Alice Bacon and Alberta Weigand taking care of the Amber Display & Linen Weavings

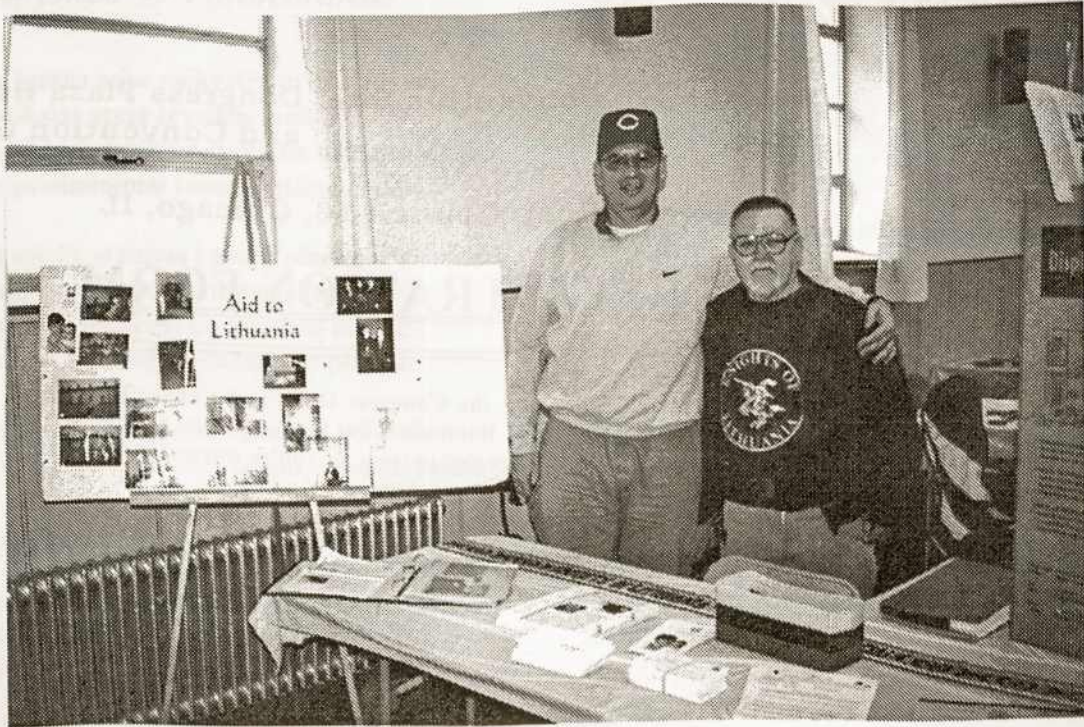


Stella Panaccio and Dolly Sprow taking care of the K of L Choir Display



Irene Svekla handling the sales of the Lithuanian Crosses handcarved by George Mikalauskas of C-96

Council 3 - Fair & Expo/ Knight Life



John Chernoski and Leonard Kapochus handling the Aid to Lithuania Display.



Presentation of Degrees - C-112, Chicago, IL. Back Row: Maria Deksnis; Sr. Johanna Marie, second degree; Rev. Anthony Markus, spiritual advisor; front row: Maryte Skemaite & Laima Vaiciunas, second degree; and Albert Miliauskas, first degree.



Knights of Lithuania

89th 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: 89th National Convention Committee
 929 West 34th 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: _____ - _____

Tėviškės Prisiminimai

Lyg šešėlis seka vaikystės prisiminimai.
Paveikslas stoja tėviškės laukai
Ten vidurių sodžiaus stovintis namelis
Ten prisiminimai laimė ir džiaugsmiai.

Ten upelis sraunus i ežerą plauke
Krantais išpintais krūmų žalių
Ten vaikų bureliai po vandenį braidė
Ten laimė ir juokas skambėjo plačiai.

Ten skambėjo dainos vakarais vėlyvais
Nors artojų prakaitas lašėjo dideliais lašais
Tai viską davė Sutverėjas
Pažint gyvenimo laimę ir vargus.

Išnyko lyg sapnas vaikystės laikai
Gyvenimo kelias vingiuotas
Ir nešė gyvenimo dalią toli
Per Marių giliųjų platybes

Paliko ten rūtų darželiai žali
Ir kriaušė palinkus prie namo sena
Vyšnynas driekės per visą sodybą
Ir daržas aguonų išpuoštas šale.

Paliko šalia purienų išmarginta pieva
Kur pempės kas rytą sveikino gyvi...
Ir gandas iš aukšto žiūrėdamas džiaugė
Nes visas gyvenimas ėjo sklandžiai.

Palikau aš ši pasakų kraštą
Tuos šešėlius vaikystės dienų
Ir iš tėviškės mielo krašto
Prisiminimai liko tik tie.

~ Valerija Leščinskienė ~

1996

C- 147

St. Petersburg, Florida

***November 21-22: NATO vote to accept
7 candidates into NATO.

Calendar of Events...

July 21 - 29th - "You Are the Salt of the Earth,
You Are the Light of the World" World Youth
Day, 2002 - Toronto, Canada

August 1 - 4th - 89th Knights of Lithuania
National Convention - Congress Hotel -
Chicago, Illinois

August 10 - 11th - Annual Lithuanian Days
at Schuylkill Mall, Frackville, Pennsylvania.
For information, call Anne Wargo:
(576) 429-0132 or E-mail akliz@ptd.net

October 5th - Mid-America District Meeting
at Sisters of St. Casimir Motherhouse.

October 11 - 13th - Pilgrimage to Our Lady
of Siluva Chapel at the National Shrine of
the Immaculate Conception in Washington,
DC

October 12th - K of L Supreme Council
Meeting at Washington Marriot Hotel

Summer 2003 - K of L Tour of Lithuania,
and "Dainu ir Sokių Svente"

Smiles Without Wrinkles

(Leondas J. Galinskas - C-79)

"Old" is when...Your friends compliment
you on your new alligator shoes and you are
barefoot.

Everyone has a photographic memory. Some
just don't have film..

I just got lost in thought - it was unfamiliar
territory.

Before you criticize someone, walk a mile in
his shoes. That way, if he gets angry, he'll be
a mile away—and barefoot.

Far better to have loved and lost than to be
buying shoes for six kids.

Sharing and Remembering in Song

As it continued in its tradition of sharing its Lithuanian heritage, the Knights of Lithuania (K of L) Mid-America District Choir welcomed an opportunity to take part in "Cultural Connections" on November 17, 2001, at the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture. This program was conducted by a partnership of cultural centers and museums organized by the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change of the Field Museum of Chicago. Because Chicago is home to so many diverse ethnic groups, it provides the perfect opportunity for their descendants to meet and share their rich cultural histories and begin to understand the commonality of their experiences with preserving their respective traditions.

Just as other ethnic groups had planned programs to showcase their cultures, the program at the Balzekas Museum included traditional folk songs sung by the K of L Choir, under the direction of Alma Preisaitiene and accompanied by HM Faustas Strolia, a buffet of traditional Lithuanian foods, and a discussion period that allowed attendees to share their ideas about the value of preserving their cultural heritage and how that heritage has made important contributions to the nation's fabric. The singers, dressed in their traditional attire, were pleased to sit and lunch with the guests as well as to share their experiences with handing down Lithuanian traditions through music. This valuable cultural exchange was clearly appreciated by all participants, who understand the growing need for all members of the world's family to know more about one another.

Because the K of L Choir is active not only in preserving and displaying Lithuanian culture, but also in giving praise to God through its music, it sang at Maria

High School on December 13, 2001, in a program of Lithuanian song and prayer honoring Mary, the Mother of Christ. Our Lady of the Millennium statue was on display at Maria High School for a week in December, and each evening, various segments of the community were encouraged to view the statue and participate in a prayer service. On the evening of December 13, Sister Johanna Marie Shainauskas, SSC, choir president, led the gathered faithful in Lithuanian prayers, and the choir sang various hymns, including "Mylimoji Karaliene," and "Marija, Marija." Candles were lit and flowers were laid at the feet of the statue. Despite the evening's chill, hearts were warmed by the fervent prayers and song in the presence of this extraordinary statue.

Patriotism, too, is deeply valued by the K of L Choir, so when it was invited to participate in a commemoration program in honor of those who were killed at the Vilnius TV tower by Russian soldiers on March 10, 1991, it happily accepted. While K of L members recognize that their first allegiance is to the United States, they honor the heroes who have paid a heavy price for Lithuania's freedom. The invitation was extended by Salomeja Dauliene, President of the Brighton Park Chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community Inc. (Bendruomene) and a member of the choir. Traditional and Patriotic songs were presented by the choir under the direction of Alma Preisaitiene and accompanied by Manigirdas Motekaitis. Immaculate Conception Parish Hall in Chicago was the site of the program and a traditional luncheon afterward.

~Irene Macke~

Some dates to remember:

- July 15 - Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- July 26 - Sts. Joachim and Ann
- July 31 - St. Ignatius of Loyola
- Aug. 15 - The Assumption of the B.V.M.
- Aug. 22 - Our Lady Queen of the Universe



The Mid-America District K of L Choir in performance at Immaculate Conception Parish on March 10, 2002.



Mid-America District Juniors' Hayride Outing on the Jagiella Farm in Indiana, October, 2001.

Knight ²⁴Life...



C-72 members commemorating Lithuanian Independence Day with Mayor Richard Bucci of Binghamton. LtoR: Barbara Miller, Mayor Bucci, Rev. John Mikalajunas, John R. Mankus and Anne Marie Distin.



Council 72 Binghamton members, commemorating Lithuanian Independence Day at St. Joseph's Lithuanian Church Hall with a luncheon.

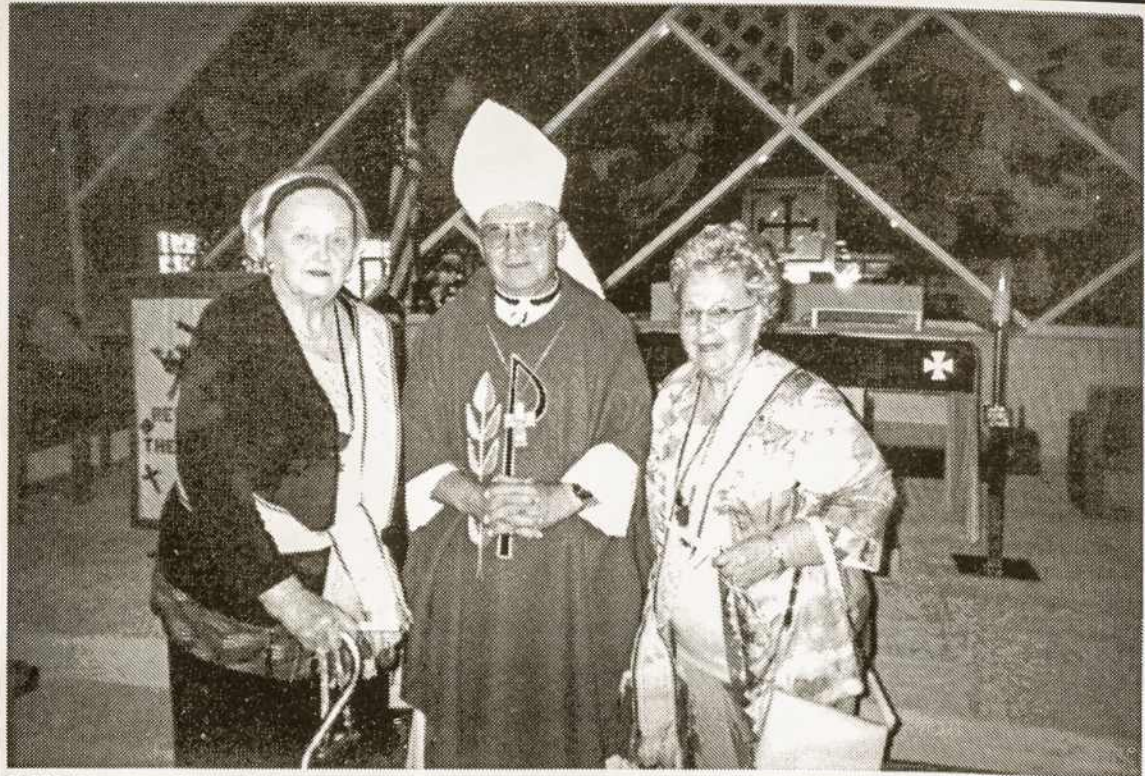


Fourth Degree recipients who received their honor at the Amber District St. Casimir's Day meeting. Back row: Rev. Ronald Jankaitis, spiritual advisor C-144, and Rev. Peter Alisauskas, Amber District Spiritual Advisor. Genevieve Kazlauskas, Frances Brillius, Albert Yockachonis, Anna Yockachonis, Joni Reinhart, National Ritual Member, Elsie Kosmisky.



C-112 members, John and Theresia Pocius, celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary, June 7, 2002. Congratulations, and May the Good Lord bless you!

Knight Life...



C-153 Treasure Coast, Florida - Fourth Degree Recipients with Bishop Paul Baltakis. Frances Daniels at left, and Florence Miskinis at right.



Council 72 Binghamton members, Les, Amanda, Anne Marie and James Distin, at St. Casimirs's Day luncheon.

Knight Life...



C-74, Scranton, PA., at Amber District Meeting, St. Claire: Margaret Clegg, Marie Laske, Ann and Frank Petrauskas. From Binghamton: John Mankus, Barbara Miller, Ralph Sadauskas and Art Stankewicz.



Flag Raising in Scranton, C-74. Liz Kaminskas, Martha Wagner, Martha Warnigiris, Nellie Bayoras, Marie Laske, Helen Cravath, Msgr. Peter Madus, and, of course, our new Mayor Dougherty.



At St. Claire Amber District Meeting: Margaret Clegg, Liz Kaminskas, Marie Laske, Rev. Jankaitis, Rev. Alisauskas, and Richard Laske.





"Lithuania Alive in the LeHigh Valley!" Flag-raising ceremony, Feb. 15th in Easton, PA. L to R: Ben Apanavicius, Filomena Apanavicius, Tom Shaulis, Helene Shaulis, Blanche Rinkunas, Ruth Collinge, Evelyn Harryn, Blanche Kohanski. Back Row: Mayor Goldsmith, State Rep. Robert Freeman, Melda Apanavicius, Christene Merlo. Also present were; Paul Harryn, Joseph Kohanski, Valeria Smickle, Maegan Zansitis



Lithuanian Amsterdam, NY residents meet with Mayor John Duchessi to discuss plans for celebrating with sister-city Marijampole of Lithuania. More information in future *Vytis* issues.



Council 6 - Hartford: Presentation of Lithuanian and American flags, at the April meeting, which were purchased by Kay Urban in memory of her late brother, Tom Sidlauskas. To Kay's right is Rev. John Rikteraitis, spiritual advisor. The flags will be displayed in the church hall at Holy Trinity Church, Hartford.



"Lithuania Alive" - Council 63. Our beautiful and most popular ethnic tree on exhibition amongst 14 other nationalities. They are displayed in Bethlehem, PA., from Nov. 23 to January 10th. The tree was decorated by Evelyn (Klinauskas) & Paul Harryn.





In Memoriam...

C-7	Julius Vilciauskas	November 11, 2001
C-10	Amelia Vaitkunas	April 5, 2002
C-12	Alice Zupko	June 7, 2002
C-17	Madeline Druzdis	March 22, 2002
C-17	Julia Mansfield	December 15, 2001
C-17	Mary Martus	March 17, 2002
C-17	Joseph White	April 11, 2002
C-19	Sister M. Valeria	
C-25	Grace Derus	April 1, 2002
C-25	Valentina Skarnus	March 1, 2002
C-29	Julius Cavallo	January 19, 2002
C-50	Helen Zaica	March 20, 2002
C-52	Anele Karalis	
C-52	Henry Keturwitis	April 1, 2002
C-63	Jane Lutick	October 4, 2001
C-63	Connie Duha	December 1, 2001
C-78	Helen Zuber	March 16, 2002
C-96	Karl Keivel	February 16, 2002
C-109	Alexander Norwesh	December 26, 2001
C-110	Rev. Robert P. Galchus, CM	March 3, 2002
C-110	Eugenia Kazakauskas	January 19, 2002
C-112	Matt Vilutis	February 2, 2002
C-116	Anna R. Miller	November 15, 2001
C-133	Charles Sable	
C-133	Samuel Shepherd	
C-136	Stephanie Dwulitt	April 3, 2002
C-140	Helen Mikelonis	April 12, 2002
C-141	John Argust	March 18, 2002
C-143	Helen Butsavage	
C-144	Helen Mackavage	February, 2002
C-147	Kazimiera Arlauskas	January 25, 2002
C-152	John Marcinka	February 28, 2002
C-156	John Charnosky, Sr.	March 22, 2001

GREETING THE BRIDE AND GROOM AT ENTRANCE TO RECEPTION...

A Lithuanian Wedding Custom

Before we officially greet the bride and groom, they will be greeted by their families with an age-old Lithuanian Wedding Tradition that has been followed for many centuries by ancestors of the bride and groom, who are of Lithuanian ancestry.

The Bride and Groom are being met by their mothers, who will give them traditional bread, salt and wine, as the first food Mr. and Mrs.?? will share as a married couple.

The BREAD

symbolizes their sharing of all the bounties and wants they will experience in their wedded life.

The SALT

is sprinkled on the bread, to symbolize the tears they will also share, for without tears, they cannot experience the fullness of life.

The WINE

symbolizes the joys and celebrations of this day and of all the days of their life together, and recalls Christ's first miracle, at the Marriage Feast of Cana.

The wine glasses are decorated with sprigs of Lithuanian "Ruta" from the ancient "rue" plant, the Lithuanian symbol of maidenhood.

(As researched by Loretta Stukas, C-29,
Neward, NJ)

"The Catholic Church shall abide and remain and stand fast with God and God fast with it."
~ St. Thomas More~

Prayer to Our Lady of Siluva for Our Country

MOST HOLY VIRGIN MARY, THOU WHO DIDST APPEAR TO THE SHEPHERDS IN THE FIELDS AT SILUVA, THOU WHOSE TEARS DID BATHE THE ROCK WHERE ONCE AN ALTAR STOOD, THOU WHO DIDST WITH PLAINTIVE VOICE SAY: "YOU PLOW AND SEED HERE WHERE FORMERLY MY SON WAS HONORED," GRANT THAT WE, MOVED BY THY TEARS, MAY, ONCE AS OUR FOREFATHERS DID, REVIVE THE SPIRIT OF ADORATION OF THY SON IN OUR FALLOW HEARTS, STRENGTHEN THE TOTTERING STRUCTURE OF THE SHRINE WHICH IS THE FAMILY, AND SEEK FORGIVENESS FOR THE NEGLIGENCES AND SINS OF OUR NATION.

MOTHER OF GOD, WE DESIRE TO RAISE UP THE GLORY OF YOUR REVELATION FROM FORGOTTEN RUINS, THAT WE MAY ALL THE MORE HONOR THEE, THE PATRONESS OF LITHUANIA, AS WE NOW INVOKE YOUR INTERCESSION FOR OUR COUNTRY, AND WITH THY HELP OBTAIN FOR OUR NATION THE SPIRIT OF A LIVING FAITH. AMEN.

"A Christian family is a natural heir to the Holy Family of Nazareth." ~St. Peter Julian Eymard~

District & Council News

Mid Central District

MCD Spring Meeting Regina Juska-Svoba

On the weekend of May 17-19, 2002, all roads led to Cleveland for the Mid Central District's Meeting and Bowling Tournament which was hosted by C-25. Friday evening, approximately 50 delegates, local K of L members, and guests converged at the Comfort Inn for a welcome back to Cleveland get-together. President Richard Marks and his energetic and enthusiastic committee greeted the guests with a variety of home-cooked delicacies and decadent sweets. So that no one would become ill from the cool weather, "medicinal libations" warmed everyone. It was good to see and "catch up" with many members who we have not seen in the last six months.

The District meeting was held on Saturday, May 18th. The District officers, council presidents, committee chairs and ancillary charities' representatives reported on their biannual activities. District delegates to the 89th convention were selected. SC National President Robert A. Martin, Jr. attended the meeting and as Convention co-chair, gave a comprehensive update about C-16 Chicago's preparations and progress toward the 89th National Convention which will be held 8/1-4. Robert also updated the delegates about the first National Pilgrimage which will be hosted by Washington C-142, 10/11-14. Visits will be made to the Chapel of Our Lady of Siluva and the National Cathedral.

The upcoming Fall Meeting and Pilgrimage will be hosted by C-96, Dayton, on 10/4-6. The next Spring

Meeting/Bowling Tournament will be announced during the upcoming months. It will be hosted by C-102, Detroit, MI.

Andrea Baltrus, C-19, Pittsburgh, won the 50/50 raffle.

The meeting concluded with a prayer and the singing of the Vyciu hymn.

All energies were in high gear for the bowling tournament in the afternoon. Eight bowling teams participated in the heated competitions.

In the evening the delegates and local C-25 Knights and friends gathered at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church Hall to participate in the closing dinner and bowling award announcements. A delicious dinner was served by Paulina, the parish caterer. Lively musical entertainment was provided by accordionist Don and violinist Rose Slogar. A Chinese raffle with many Lithuanian motif items was held. The winners of the MCD raffle were: Robert A. Martin, Jr., C-16- \$250; Irena-Gecas McCarthy, C-96-\$150; Rick Oberaitis, C-25, men's high series, C-25, team 2 led by Jim Waterman, won first place. C-102, team 3 led by Jerry Perretino, won 2nd place; C-25, team 3 led by Richard Marks won 3rd place. The winners were satisfied and happy with their prizes.

Sunday, closing Mass was celebrated by the MCD Spiritual Advisor Rev. Gediminas Kijauskas at OLPH Church. Before Mass, Andrea Baltrus, C-19, received her Third Degree medal. Congratulations, Andrea. Fr. Kijauskas gave a warm and touching sermon about the K of L's contributions and assistance to the people of Lithuania. The offertory gifts were taken to the altar by MCD President, Fran Petkus, C-25 President Richard Marks, and Andrea and John Baltrus, C-19.

Following Mass the delegates gathered in the lower church hall for coffee,

pastries and an opportunity to browse in the Lithuanian Book Store.

A special aciu to C-25 Richard and Jean Marks and their dedicated committee for hosting a well-organized, wonderful and memorable weekend.

After a successful and productive meeting and bowling tournament, delegates bid their farewells until we gather again in October for the Fall Meeting and Pilgrimage hosted by C-96, Dayton, OH!

C-25 Cleveland Ursula Kunsitis

Our St. Casimir's Day celebration at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church where Mass was officiated by our Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Gediminas Kijauskas, was a little different this year - we shared St. Casimir with the Ateitininkai Youth Group. We had both K of L and Ateitininkai Gift Bearers and the procession was very impressive. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our council could have such a large, youthful membership? At our luncheon, following Mass, Ben Karklius was the lucky winner of our 50/50 raffle. Missed at our celebration was our President and his "First Lady" - Dick and Jean Marks - who were vacationing in Florida at the time but promised to be with us "in spirit".

The past 2 months have been very sad for our council. On March 1, Valentina Skarnus (Vi) passed away. Vi will be missed by all our members and also by the nuns at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine where she volunteered for many, many years and at OLPH Church where she served as Eucharistic minister. A month later, April 1, Grace Derus was also called by God. Grace was the originator of the "Kentucky Derby" party where so many of our members had such a great time! At her funeral, Fr. Gilles of St. Mary's-Chardon spoke very highly of her

service to his church and in closing, said that Grace was "one classy lady" and he couldn't have described her any better. May they both rest in peace!

Steve and Lil Yurkovic enjoyed their Easter visit to see their son, Fr. Dale, in Montana. Fr. Dale made sure they earned their keep by assigning them church duties during this busy season.

Our council accepted an invitation from our Honorary Consul General Ingrida Bublys to attend a Country briefing on the Republic of Lithuania which was held on April 11th at the Four Points Sheraton. Dick and Jean Marks, Joe and Ann Ivoska, Dolly Oberaitis and Ed Pranckus represented our council at this very interesting presentation. Ingrida Bublys spoke on "The Country Profile and Cultural Background of Lithuania"; Rev. G. Kijauskas, on the "Historic Significance of Lithuania's Struggle for Freedom"; Dr. V. Stankus, on "Lithuanian Contributions to Cleveland and to the U.S."; and Algis Ruksenas on "History of the Lithuanian Community in Cleveland". There were performances by Gintarines Stygos and Grandinele. The program was very well received by the attendees.

After a brief hiatus our meetings resumed on April 12th where the MCD Bowling Tournament and Meeting plans were finalized. Good Attendance!

Betty August moved to Kennesaw, GA to live with her daughter and family, is doing well and is happy, but misses her home and her many K of L friends. We miss you, too, Betty - enjoy the sunny South.

Thank you Lil and Steve and all our faithful bakers and workers for our April 14th Coffee Hour at OLPH Church. Another successful event and thanks to Dick Marks and Gene Kunsitis on selling our raffle tickets for the MCD Meeting and Bowling Tourn.

Bill and Helen Jakubs and Charles and

Nelda Machutas had a great Mexican Riviera cruise in March. One of their waiters on the cruise was Darius Sviekauskas from Kaunas. He works on the Princess Line 7 months a year. Darius will marry this Fall to a school teacher in Kaunas. What a small world!

A big "hello" to Nellie Arunski, Helen Garnis, Angela Perko, Catherine Schneider, Adelle Tanneer and Al Wallis. We miss you all and wish you well!

Snowbirds Helen and Bill Jakubs were at our May meeting just like the Good Old Days! Jack and Helen Valley both looked well even after the throes and woes of selling their family home of many years. We wish them much happiness and good health in their new lifestyle in the Condo Community.

Joe Ivoska, VP, initiated Theresa Capuria and Kathy Kaczmarek into the First Degree at the close of our meeting. Congratulations to both!

Dolly Oberaitis and daughters Christine and Emily, along with granddaughter, Carly, had a wonderful trip to Alaska during our Tournament. They were on the Inaugural Cruise of the Princess Star and were made Charter Members! They were overwhelmed by the beauty of the country and were thrilled to see whales, porpoises and bear cubs up close. What's next on your travel agenda, Dolly?

We wish everyone a happy, safe summer!

C-96 Dayton, OH Frances Petkus, HM

Recently the St. Peter's Society of Holy Cross Church celebrated its 100th Anniversary. This is the group that started and helped to build Holy Cross, never once going to the diocese for financial help! The various organizational heads of Holy Cross

were invited to dinner, along with St. Peter's Society members and spouses, to be part of this very special occasion. Our president, Robert Pant, represented C-96!

Once again, Dayton's Annual World A'Fair was a tremendous success. The Lithuanian community of Dayton was well represented. The theme this year was "Many Cultures, One Nation". The Lithuanian display covered Lithuanians as they came through Ellis Island to the New World. It won the Blue Ribbon for Cultural display and third place for overall set up for their area! It was good to see so many C-96 members doing their part. A project like this needs many hands to make it work. As usual, our kugelis was the 'big' seller followed by our 'famous' Saltibarsciai! Our Dayton Vejeliai Dancers, as always, received much applause for their fine performances! Thanks go to their director and coordinator, Eric Geiger and Kristy Geiger! Many thanks must go to the co-chairs and their committee who put a great deal of time and planning to pull this all together - Jim and Connie Geiger!!

The Junior Knights held their Annual May Crowning of the Blessed Mother on Mothers' Day, May 12, before the 10:30 Mass. Their newest First Communicant, Adam Fletcher, had the honor of placing a wreath of fresh flowers on our Blessed Mother's head. The Juniors then led the congregation in prayer to the Blessed Mother. Following Mass, everyone headed for the church undercroft for a special buffet breakfast prepared by the Juniors and their advisors, Christine Fletcher and Julia Goecke! Theme this year was a hall decorated very creatively, revolving around the "Survivors"!!! The Juniors presented gifts to their mothers and helped with the clean-up.

The MCD held its Spring Convention/Bowling Tournament May 17-19, hosted by C-25, Cleveland. As

usual, the council committee and its members did a wonderful job. C-25 always, comes up with a surprise, which adds to the function, and this time was no different! For the bowling dinner on Saturday evening they had real 'live music'. The music was from an era most remembered well! George Mikalauskas was winner in guessing most of the old time songs!

It was a pleasure to have our District Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Gediminas Kijauskas, SJ, from OLPH, Cleveland, at our meeting. With parish duties, Father has little chance to be with us in person but he does much for us in the 'background' and always very supportive! Delegates from C-96 were Mark H. Bell, SC Financial Secretary, of Nashville, TN, George, Frances and Elena Mikalauskas. Also from Dayton was the District president, Fran Petkus. Guests at our meeting were K of L National President, Robert A. Martin, Jr. and 89th National Convention Coordinator, Diann Martin.

Bowling went very well with special thanks to Sam Perritino, Jr. and Bea Gramblet of C-102, Detroit, helping to put it all together for us. Winning team was C-25 - #2 taking home the traveling trophy! Bowlers from C-96 were Elena Mikalauskas and Fran Petkus. All who bowled were the winners, also. Without them we could not continue to hold these tournaments!!

It was good to see our Florida member, Michael Pant in town recently!

Happy summer to all! See you in Chicago!!

C-19 Pittsburgh Len Barcousky

Pittsburgh's Lithuanian-American community marked the Feast of St. Casimir this year with ethnic and religious symbols, sounds, foods and

ceremonies. In what is itself becoming a tradition, the celebration was held March 3 at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis. The Rev. Suhoza, the Sisters' chaplain, celebrated the Mass. Organist Patti Donohue Burns led the singing of several Lithuanian hymns, including "Pulkim ant Keliu" and "Jezau pas mane ateiki"

K of L members Ausra Cunningham, Al and Audrey Lesutis, Dalia and Lorraine Yucius and Len and Peter Barcousky were among those taking part in an offertory procession. It is traditional to bring forward a picture of Saint Casimir, a crown of gold, a crown of thorns, a cross and a white lily to the altar along with the wine and hosts.

Sr. Louise Marie Simcoe served as sacristan and John Baltrus, president of C-19 was lector.

Following Mass, the sisters played host at a brunch featuring traditional Lithuanian foods prepared by Bonnie Wright, their dietary director. This year's ethnic treats included Balandeles su lasiniais, a traditional bacon-filled bun that was unfamiliar to many, but judged delicious by the guests.

Sr. J. Lora Dambroski, the order's provincial minister for the U.S., welcomed the visitors. Guests also enjoyed a visit to the order's "crafts room" and gift shop. Each visitor was given a small candy-filled basket made by Sr. Irene Pacekonis, decorated in the colors of the Lithuanian flag - yellow, green and red.

The event was a joint project of the Sisters of St. Francis and the K of L C-19. Sr. Marian Blodis coordinated the event.

The St. Casimir celebration is the latest element in an ongoing effort by the Pittsburgh council of the Knights to do joint projects with other local Lithuanian-American organizations.

Amber District

C-3 Philadelphia Victor Stepalovitch

C-3 membership has increased. Welcome Christine Moncrief, James M. Gaspris, Peter Williams, Kathleen Williams, Jacqueline Fox and James Currie. Also Mary Cyupick, Veronica Lafferty, Albina Fox Petraitis and Charles Cherrick.

Our Lithuanian Expo has passed and with great success.

C-3 welcomes back Walter and Irene Svekla from a pleasant vacation in Florida. Hope you had a wonderful time. Incidentally where is your suntan?

As expected, C-3 had a very good attendance for its trip to the Padre Pio Shrine.

A large gathering was held for the Reunion and Loyalty Day Celebration held at St. George's Church in connection with its 100th Anniversary. Many K of L's were present, including Lillian Greymas, Irene Ozalis, Walter Svekla, Ausra Maknys, Stephany Gutasukas, Stanley Petraitis and Daiva Bennington who were graduates of the school.

We are happy to report that John Mickunas and Joe Drumstas are doing well after spending time in the hospital.

We plan for our next meeting - the final one for the summer - a combination meeting and picnic with each member bringing a tasty dish.

All of us here at C-3 wish all of you a wonderful summer.

C-63 Lehigh Valley Evelyn Harryn

Here in Lehigh Valley C-63 has a small

group working very hard to keep Lithuania alive. We started the season with a determined membership drive. We were successful - we recruited 7 new members. They are Steve Tichy, Helene Shaulis, her son, Tom Shaulis, Ann (Navikauskas) Gilbert, Victor and Peg Ulba, Jr. and Dr. Richard Sharpless. He is the son of former member Frances Sharpless. We are grateful to each of these people for joining us.

In October, we dug into our treasury and worked on our budget. As usual, we made our very generous donations to Aid to Lithuania, Children's Aid Relief Program, St. Joseph Seminary in Vilnius, College in Rome, LCRA, Deborah Hospital, and our own St. Michael the Archangel Lithuanian Church, Easton, PA. We also send contributions for catechisms for the schools in Lithuania. We are now working very hard to replenish our treasury.

In November we held our Annual Fall Covered Dish Affair. Door prizes and raffle prizes were won by several members. We had a generous amount of them. Many of them were donated by our members Lillian and Joseph Russell. Aciu for their generosity! Steve Tichy's Mom was a guest on this day. It was a pleasure to have her! Her son is a very good cook, also! Also in November we joined 14 other nationalities with the decorating of ethnic Christmas trees. The opening tree-lighting ceremonies took place on Nov. 25 at the University Comfort Suites of South Bethlehem.

On Dec 9 we held our annual portrayal of Kucios.

In Feb we celebrated Independence Day with a Luncheon and festivities. We also held a flag-raising ceremony and breakfast brunch afterwards. We were happy the weather cooperated with us.

We held a St. Casimir's Day Celebration with a catered luncheon.

Again, in April we had a very successful "Flea Market". It was a full week of the Labor of Love for Lithuania! Our treasury netted over \$1100.

C-63 is planning a picnic for Aug. 25. This is to commemorate our 20th anniversary in existence. Members of other councils are invited to attend. It will be held at a beautiful Municipal Park in Bethlehem Twp. Pa. The food will be catered. Donation is \$10 per person.

Many of our members are writing letters to President Bush, Senators and Congressmen, also to Colin Powell to vote "yes" for Lithuania's entry into NATO. Hope a lot of you have done the same. Aciu to our Blanche Kohanski for her hard labor in getting addresses, phone numbers, and copies.

Congratulations and best wishes to the Convention Committee for all the fine work they do.

C-74 Scranton Marie Laske

We, a few of our members, attended the Amber District at St. Claire's. Fr. Peter Alisaukas and Fr. Ronald Jankaitis concelebrated the Mass which was beautiful with Lithuanian songs. This was especially nice since we rarely have the Lithuanian songs in our church.

John Mankus recited his wonderful poems, by heart, again. He is very talented. The meal and the gathering were a real pleasure.

Mary Twardzek visited her daughter Connie in NY. Margaret Clegg is visiting in Florida again.

Pray for Della Zvirblis, Mary Costello, Ann Dudwicz and Casimir Yanish who are home-bound.

We are looking forward to our Lithuanian Mass, again, at St. Ann's Basilica on St. Ann's Day, July 26.

We were happy to have Alma Krevine, Donald Krevine and Tomas Masaitis visit us for the weekend from Lithuania. They are considering making their home here in the US. Good luck to all.

Wish all a great summer!

C-144 Anthracite Ona

Thanks to chairperson Anne Bendrick the Amber District meeting was very nice. The Siluva Choir sang the Lithuanian hymns at Mass. Spiritual Advisor Rev. Ronald Jankaitis concelebrated with District Spiritual Advisor Rev. Peter Alisaukas. Ann Wargo, C-144 president, was lecturer.

Prior to the Mass Fourth Degree medals were presented to Fr. Jankaitis, Anna and Albert Yockachonis, Joni Reinhart, Ginner Kazlauskas and Frances Brillus.

Lithuanian Days will be held Aug 10 and 11 at Schuylkill Mall in Frackville, Pa. Chairman is Peter Teresavage. Co-chair Eleanor Balsis, Food, Joseph Ames. Sales, Eleanor Vaicaitis, Displays, Bernice Mikatavage, Raffle, Betty Tumas. We hope to make these days better than ever.

Visiting at our last meeting was Irena Zilaitiene from Lithuania, our Bernie's wife. Irena made delicious Lithuanian pastries for refreshments and she gave an inspiring talk on Lithuania today.

Our Humanitarian Aid committee is still working hard on sending needed items to small country schools, hospice, and orphans in Lithuania. Proceeds from Lithuanian Days will again go to this project. Many of our members are going to Lithuania in July and will visit some of these places. We wish all a Happy Summer!

New England District

C-6 Hartford Leona Sawka

While President Kay Urban is convalescing from knee surgery, the May 7 meeting was conducted by our 2nd VP Alyce Gegesky. 5 new members were inducted by Fr. John Rikteraitis, Spiritual Director. They are Brian and Mary Daigle, Juozas and Betty Liudzius and Cathy Salka. Congratulations to the new members!

Social- Lillian Joseph spoke on finalized plans for our trip to the Mohegan Sun Casino. In the future, copies of the minutes of all the meetings will be sent to membership who are absent from meetings or who live too far out of range to attend meetings, thus keeping them apprised of goings-on in the council.

Our June meeting was a pizza party organized by Leona Sawka, Lillian Joseph and Judy Landers. Salad and desserts were also served.

Juozas Giedraitis who recently spent a month in Kaunas and Palanga, Lithuania, spoke on the present improved living conditions, the economy, and how the culture has advanced in recent years. More theaters are now open and the country is more prosperous. Anyone interested in a haircut? Juozas said that a haircut is \$1.50 but if your hair doesn't need much cutting the next time you go, the barber will not charge the full amount.

"Birds of Lithuania" was the topic of Dalia Dzikas' well-written and entertaining presentation on the stork, lark and lore on the cuckoo. Well done, Dalia!

C-7 Waterbury Adele Klenske

Greetings, fellow Knights! It has been

some time since we have contributed to the Council News - so, some of the following is actually "Ancient History"!

In September we elected Linas Balsys, President; Richard Dubauskas, VP; Doris Snirpunas, Financial Sec; Adele Klenske, Treas; Eleanor Barkauskas, Rec. Sec; Lisa Velez, 3rd VP. All but Doris - new kids on the block, although Linas held the VP office for a short while.

Lisa Velez, 3rd VP, immediately started a Junior group. Initially there are 7 young members: Jeffrey and Brian Gay, Kaila Diggetts, Kaitlin Stokes, Leanna Velez, Christopher Velez and Crystal Velez. As a group, they have learned about Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, and other cities, as well. They have studied maps of the country, discussed traditional clothing, learned a new Lithuanian word at each meeting and are slowly being introduced into their heritage. As a community service to the Brooklyn neighborhood, they helped decorate the Christmas tree. *Lisa hopes there will be more members to this Junior Council in the future, as we all do. After all, children are the future! Way to go, Lisa - good luck in your endeavor!*

In Dec we had our 2nd tag sale. As a fundraiser, it proved to be a success. Thanks to all who donated time, items, and to all who supported this sale.

As to current events, first on the agenda, our ever-popular pancake breakfast was held Mar 24 in our clubrooms - as usual, a success. Our hard-working committee consisted of the following: Joe and Holly Albino, Eleanor Barkauskas, Ed and Betty Bebrin, Vera Puzas, Ann Valuckas, Marlene Shea, Ann Rutkauskas and Julia Puodviukaitis (who, as usual, handled our cake sale), Adele Klenske, Doris Snirpunas, Richard and Rose Dubauskas and our very supportive president, Linas Balsys. A hearty thank

you to all! Extra special thanks to Betty Bebrin, who added considerable to the fundraiser by selling her very beautiful Easter related, decorated discs and besides her time, Betty donates all the material necessary to make these lovely keepsakes. Her contribution really boosted our profit. Bless you.

Two couples from our council have reached their Golden Anniversaries! We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Ed and Betty Bebrin and Richard and Rose Dubauskas. Both couples have aged most gracefully, look terrific and are active and supportive members of our club, as well as other activities. We wish you many more happy years together!

Doris Snirpunas ran another successful casino trip on April 13 - a good time was had by all. As usual, some winners, some losers!

At our April 19 meeting, a spaghetti supper as a different fundraiser was discussed. A tentative date of May 18 was mentioned.

The parishoners of St. Joseph Parish are deeply saddened by the news of the impending closing of their school at the end of June. Our immigrant parents, relatives and their countrymen, with their support and determination, built the church and school and since the school hall is used for most Lithuanian community functions and is the only available facility, it is really necessary for the community. In particular, the children will be affected and that is the saddest part. A moment was generated to pray for a change of heart from Archbishop Cronin and a plea to send letters asking him to keep the school open. Hopefully, the good Lord will listen to these many prayers and change the minds of the decision makers. Prayer is a powerful tool!

C-26 Worcester Ruta

The NED Convention was held at St. Casimir's Church with our council as host. There were over 100 people in attendance. Rob Martin, President of SC, was also in attendance. We were quite honored to have Rev. Shakelis, the Spiritual Director for NED, concelebrate the Mass with Rev. Richard Jakubauskas, our Spiritual Advisor, and Msgr. Contons HM joined in the concelebration at the Holy Hour which was conducted in the afternoon. Everyone enjoyed the participation in this convention and the companionship of old friends and members. The next convention will be held in September in Hartford.

We pray for Dorothy Virbasius, Nell Salkaus, Ann Walinsky, Bill Leseman, Judy Maleckas that they soon will be well on the road to recovery and feeling better than new.

We held our first Scavenger Hunt. Members, at a previous meeting, were given a list of items to find and bring to the next meeting. Some of them were quite challenging to find. Marion Racicot was the acting judge to review all the treasures. Winners were: First place: Paul and Gen Puris and Emily Gudzevich; Second place: Vitty and Ruth Gadilauskas; third place: Vivian Rodgers. We congratulate them for their perseverance in hunting for all the unusual items on the list.

Megan Fitzpatrick was our guest at a recent meeting. She is a student at Holy Cross College and was working on a special assignment. Her project dealt with Catholicism in action and she chose our group as one of her subjects. She listened attentively to our meeting and spoke with members during refreshments. Hopefully, we will be able to see the results of her paper.

Our Annual Blind Auction was held at the May meeting. This is one of the most exciting events that we hold. Members bring beautifully wrapped items. Ann Leseman does an outstanding job as auctioneer. The bidding gets quite frantic as people bid on the unknown contents. When an item is obtained, all eyes are set on the lucky winner to see what is underneath all the wrapping paper. It is an evening of fun and merriment. All the money that is collected goes toward the orphans in Lithuania that we support.

C-27 Norwood Zaibas

Our April meeting held in the parish hall was spirited with positive directions. In the absence of George Barton, pres - who is in Lithuania - Stan Wasil presided. Our church, St. George, has had many celebrations for the 90th Anniversary. In June a program dedicated to the martyrs of the Tragic Days.

Betty and John Skricki, Terry and Stan Wasil, Louise and Paul Zukas, Leonora and Albie Jarvis attended an informative and interesting NED Convention in Worcester. The presence of Rob Martin, SC Pres. was important to the delegates as he was able to field and answer questions on the constitution, the direction of the Lithuanian Affairs committee, and the new approaches of the Vytytis in its articles and council news items.

C-27 looks forward to being with its fellow New England knights at the June retreat at the Franciscan Monastery in Kennebunkport, Maine.

Mid America District

C-157 Lemont, IL Irene Macke

Early this year, C-157 had nine members who were honored to receive

K of L degrees from Ann Marie Kassel, Council Ritual Chair, and Georgianna Macke, District Ritual Chair. First degrees were bestowed on Albina and Jonas Martinkus and Eleanor and Vyto Shukis. After taking the K of L oath, second degrees were conferred on Sister Janine Golubickis, SSC; Barbara Kotlar; and Chuck and Irene Macke.

Sadly, our dear member Eleanor Shukis passed away on Feb 13. Her ever-present smile and the warmth of her friendship are greatly missed. Anyone who met her immediately sensed the goodness of her heart. Those of us who enjoyed her companionship on two trips to Lithuania will always treasure those memories along with countless others. God bless and keep you, Dear Friend, as He watches over Vyto and your bereft family.

At our pre-Easter meeting, Sr. Janine led us in a personal reflection on the Passion of Jesus. As we prayed "I speak to Mary", we were encouraged to consider Mary's sorrow at her son's crucifixion and to examine our lives for parallels to her suffering. And as we did so, were we aware of the source of our strength and courage in bearing our burdens?

The May meeting was devoted mainly to plans for hosting the June Mid America District meeting and for looking ahead to the National Convention in Chicago. Our delegates will include Theresa Strolia, Georgianna Macke, Donna Juraitis, and Irene Macke, with Chuck Macke serving as alternate. We are particularly proud that our Spiritual Advisor, Msgr. Ignas Urbonas, has been nominated for Honorary Membership. His long career as a priest of many talents and devotion to K of L make him a most deserving candidate.

Mid Atlantic District

C-110 Maspeth Bruno Rutkunas

Our council's frequent shipments to Lithuania include clothes, food, etc. to many different needy orphans at the Kaunas Child Development Clinic.

It is very difficult now with the bi-monthly issues of the Vytis to present up-to-date info, since April and May news will appear sometime in July or August. Our Atlantic City bus tours are not flourishing since there is a lack of interest by our members - guess there are not many winners! In our general area in Maspeth, we do occasionally meet some new arrivals from Lithuania who sometimes attend the 11:30 A.M. Lithuanian Mass at the Transfiguration Church.

Our council observed St. Casimir's remembrance in March. As our council has done for many years, we will join with the United Veterans of Maspeth and parade down Grand Street to honor all Lithuanian Freedom Fighters. To observe Memorial Day, we will have our traditional frankfurters and home-made sauerkraut after the march.

Our talented members, Virginius and Asta Barkauskas keep our Lithuanian spirit alive with Virginius at the Transfiguration organ and choir and Asta heading up the choir at the Annunciation Church in Brooklyn.

The June meeting will have the drawing for our fund-raising raffle, featuring a super buffet and beverages. It is getting almost impossible to sponsor an old fashion dinner and polka dances since few volunteer to set this up. We just have to ride out this unfortunate situation at this time.

C-136 Hudson-Nohawk Dorothy Richmire

We had incredible weather this year for our Festival of Nations - sunny and cool. Our booth, as always, was tastefully decorated in the 3 colors depicting our Lithuanian heritage. Many of our friends of Lithuanian background stopped at our booth, enjoyed our many foods and renewed acquaintances. Others, curious about our food, enjoyed the many examples of our heritage.

Bernice Aviza and Helen Hayner left for Marijampole on May 22 and returned June 3. Bernice, coordinator of the Sister City Project will present T-shirts and artwork from students from Amsterdam and will bring back artwork from the students in Marijampole.

As the summer season approaches, we look forward to our annual dinner, June 9, our annual visit to the convent at Putnam, CT and our day at the Auriesville Shrine. Hope to see you all there.

Our thought for today, from Mother Teresa: Every act of love is a work of peace, no matter how small.

We wish all a safe and happy summer!

C-153 Treasure Coast Florence Miskinis

Our present Officers are: Pres - Connie Scheibelhut; VP-Josie Lubinski Sec- Florence Morris; Treas-Fin Sec-James Marcinkus; Ritual-Valarie Bissol; Sgt-at-arms-Al Miskinis; Draugas corresp-Aldona Biliunas; Vytis corresp-Florence Miskinis.

Sen. Bob Graham, Vice-chairman of the NATO expansion committee wrote to Dorothy and Jim Parrilli that Lithuania is a good candidate for the NATO list. "America for NATO" sheets were distributed to all members to be signed

and sent out.

The Christmas party was held Dec 2 and red poinsettias and miniature Christmas trees graced all the red-covered tables. The buffet table with all our favorite delicacies were on display for all to enjoy. Included, of course, was Valarie's suris; desros-Al Miskinis; delicious kugelis by Aldona Biliunas; and Frances Daniels' scrumptious kapustys. At the head table Rev. Anthony Chepanis, our Spiritual Advisor, distributed "plotkelys" to all who wished to bring them home for their individual Kucios. The raffle was a great success. Lou Stukas won the centerpiece, a Lithuanian "straw ornaments" tree. The tree and ornaments were donated by Florence Miskinis. The day was enjoyed by all and thus started our holiday season. The able committee included Connie Scheibelhut, Florence Morris, Jim Marcinkus, Valarie Bissol, Florence and Al Miskinis, and Josie Lubinski.

March 3 was our annual St. Casimir's Day celebration and started with Mass in St. Jude's Chapel. Jim Marcinkus carried the Lithuanian flag; Jim Parrilli, the American flag; cross-bearer, Victor Malakas; St. Casimir picture- Valarie Bissol; Crown of thorns- Dorothy Parrilli; Regal crown- Connie Scheibelhut; Lillies, Eva Koboski. Third degree recipients-Aldona Biliunas and Josie Lubinski. Lee Moore escorted 4th degree recipients - Frances Daniels and Florence Miskinis, Eucharistic minister Mr. Barris; Rev. Anthony Chepanis and Bishop Paul Baltakis. We were so honored to have Bishop Baltakis as concelebrant to make our day so memorable! Rev. A Chepanis blessed and bestowed the medals to our 4 recipients.

At our last meeting of the season, our favorite charities received generous donations. Tremendous thanks to Anarena Anextis of NY for her gift.



* * * * *

God Bless America

ždž. ir muz. Irving Berlin

Laimink Ameriką (liet. vertimas F.Strolios)

~~Kviečiame visus įsijungti~~



Laimink Ameriką – mylimus namus,
Ir apšviesk ją, ir paliesk ją
Savo meile, o Dieve brangus!



Nuo kalnynų lig žolynų,
Ligi marių mėlynų,
Laimink Ameriką – mylimus namus!

God Bless America – land that I love,
Stand beside her and guide her
Through the night with a light from above!
From the mountains through the prairies,
To the ocean white with foam,
God Bless America – my home, sweet home!

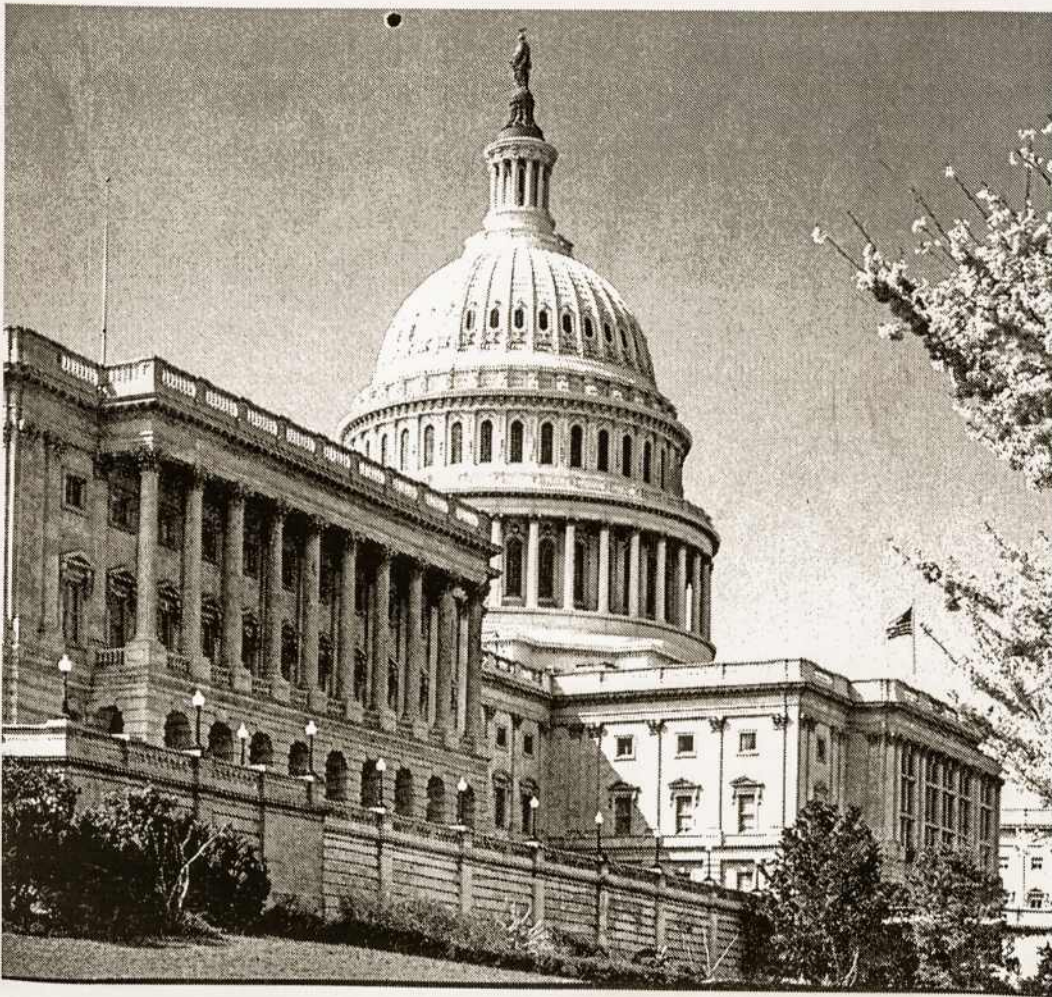
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and Guide Her...