

¹
Vytis - The Knight

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Joy to the World! The Lord is Come!

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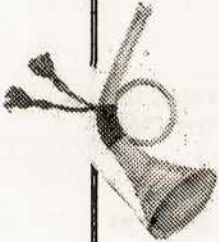



Mission Statement: The Knights of Lithuania endeavors to instill in its members an attachment to Lithuania, the land of our ancestors, and knowledge, appreciation and love of the Lithuanian language, customs and culture.



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To My Fellow Knights

This is the season for **giving** and **giving thanks**.

Families gather and exchange gifts. Parents, lovingly seek appropriate gifts for their children. Toys and warm clothing are collected to give joy to the needy, and the **Knights of Lithuania** continue to generously assist the seminarians, the orphans, hungry, and oppressed through the various organizational charities as well as many local projects in which we are involved.

In the midst of generous sharing, we feel the swelling of gratitude in our own hearts and on the lips of others. Letters of appreciation and gratitude appear on the desks of the local, district and charities leaders. Even the VYTIS office receives expressions of thanks from as far away as Lithuania.

This beautiful season of Christmas reminds us that Jesus is the prime example of selfless **giving** and the motivation for our generosity. God's love for humankind produced the Incarnation and Jesus gives Himself today in the Eucharist.

At Christmas and throughout the New Year, may we be inspired to heartfelt gratitude and even greater **giving** of ourselves for others in love as Jesus did for us. *Have a blessed Christmas season and wonderful New Year.*

Sister M. Janine



VYTIS REMINDERS FROM THE EDITOR

PLEASE HELP TO KEEP OUR COSTS DOWN.

If you leave your regular residences for the winter (or otherwise), please inform June Grenier, the Financial Secretary. When you are away, Vytis is not deliverable, and we are charged First Class Mail for the return of undeliverable periodicals. (The convention issue costs \$1.29 per issue.)

If you move, please inform your local financial secretary or president as soon as possible.

Council Financial Secretaries

You are responsible to send official changes of address and death notices of members of your council to June Grenier, the National Financial Secretary. **PLEASE FORWARD THIS INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Do not send this to the Vytis Office as this delays the procedure.

VYTIS Correspondents

Please send one copy of your Council News to the VYTIS Office by Jan. 2, 2004.

DUES REMINDER

Dues for the year 2004 are now payable to your **Council Financial Secretary**. Per the resolution passed at the National Convention, if a member has not paid his/her dues by **February 15, 2004**, they will be dropped from the *Vytis* mailing list. If dues are not received by **April 1, 2004**, they will be dropped from the K of L. **Please also notify your Council Financial Secretary of any address changes as soon as possible.**

Dear Fellow Knights Everywhere,

*May we, as God's children
always keep the true meaning of
Christmas*

in our hearts;

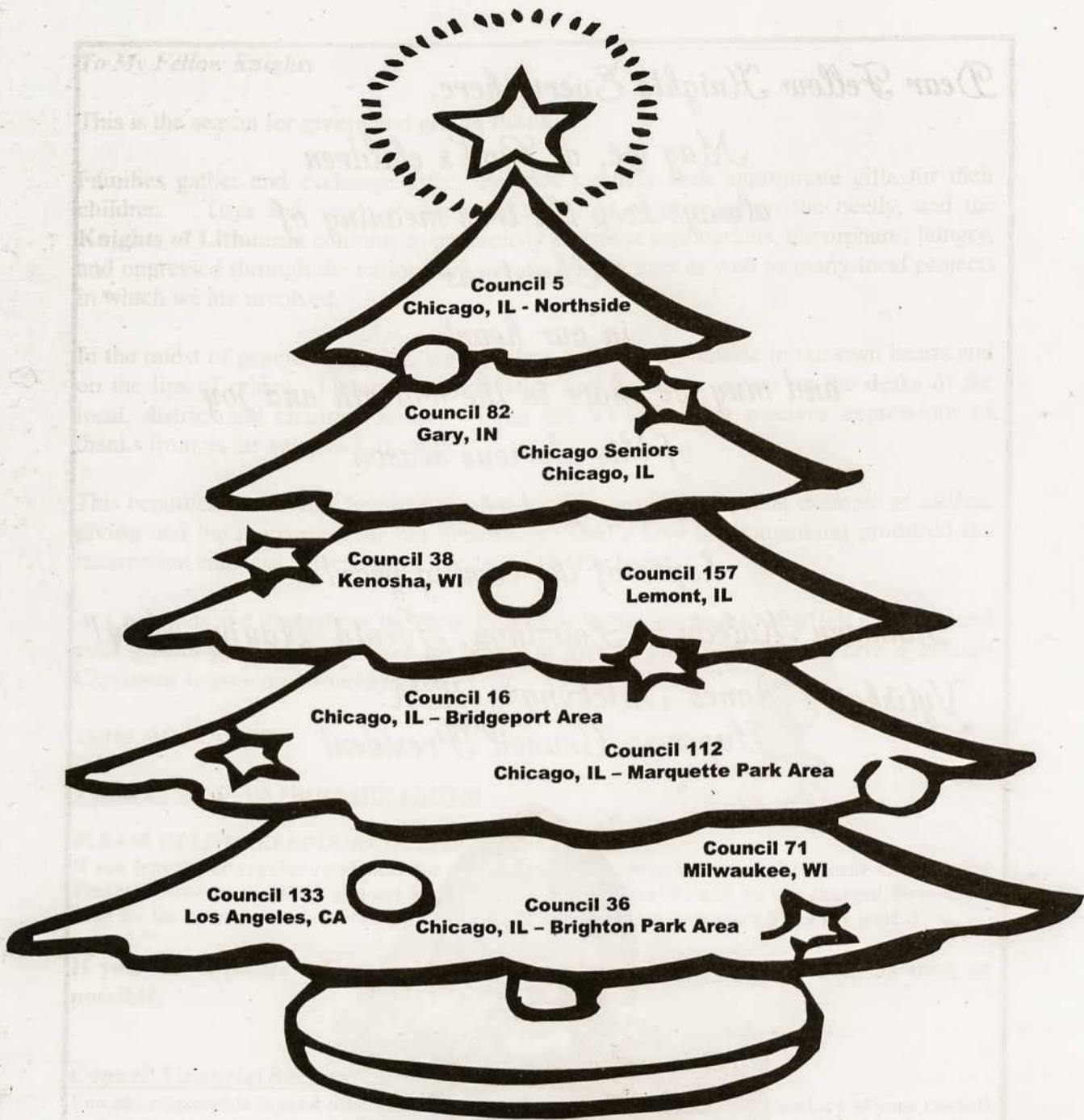
*and may we share in the warmth and joy
of this glorious season
and the*

hopes of the coming year!

Linksmų, Kalėdų ir Laimingų, Šventu Naujų Metų!

*Vytiškai, Annes Mickunas, H.M.
Supreme Council President*





*The Officers and Member Councils
of the*

Mid-America District

*wish everyone a Merry Christmas and send all our best hopes for
a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year 2004*



Linkime Visiems Linksmu Šv. Kalėdu ir Laimingu,
2004 Metu!

Ačiū.

and

Congratulations

You made it happen!

*As of June 2003, medicines and supplies worth over
\$71 Million Dollars*

sent to Lithuania in 92 containers

At St. Joseph's Provincial Seminary in Vilnius

13 Seminarians have been "adopted"

4 Priests have been ordained

2 Deacons have been ordained

*A trade school to benefit Lithuania has been established in Vilnius
Mother Teresa's Shelter Program is in operation*

*All of these programs for the people of Lithuania made
possible by YOUR prayers and contributions of over
One Million Dollars to date.*



Merry Christmas





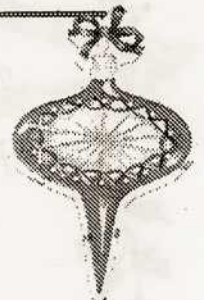
*The Officers and Members
of
Council 16, Chicago, IL
wish to extend their
sincerest holiday greetings
to all our fellow members
and friends.*

*May New Year 2004 be a
Healthy and Happy New Year for all!*



*A Joyous and Blessed
Christmas
and a*

*Happy and Healthy New Year
to all our Fellow Knights
From the Members and Councils of
The Mid-Atlantic District*





Linksmų Kalėdų Švenčių

ir

Laimingų Naujų Metų

to

All our Fellow Knights Everywhere!

Council 152, Eastern Long Island, New York



**All members of Knights of Lithuania,
Council 110, Maspeth, NY
sincerely wish all our fellow Knights,
a Healthy, Holy, & Happy Holiday !!**



Linksmų Kalėdų



**May the 2004 New Year bring us
lasting peace and joyous future years.
Let us not forget departed members,
with whom we shared the joys of life.**



CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS OF PEACE,
HOPE AND JOY, AND BEST WISHES
FOR A HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR !

FROM COUNCIL-112 CHICAGO,
ILL.

LINKSMŪ KALĒDŪ
IR LAIMINGŪ NAUJŪ
METŪ 2004



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Linksmų Kalėdų ir Laimingų Naujų Metų

Council 3 Philadelphia



Blessings At Christmas

From Saint Casimir Guild

And a Very

Happy 2004!



Best Wishes to Everyone



May the blessings
of peace,
The splendor of hope,
and the
Spirit of love
Be your special gifts
this holiday season !

Council 26
Worcester, Mass.



*Linksmų Kalėdų
ir
Laimingų Naujųjų Metų*

*May the New Born Savior Be
The Center of Our Lives*

*Members of Council 156
Shamokin, PA*



*Christmas Greetings
from
Frank, H.M. and
Irene Petrauskas
Council - 140
Syracuse, New York*



*Merry
Christmas
to
All!
Council 6
Hartford, Connecticut*



Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year
from
Joseph & Bette Ann
Lindzius
Council 6 - Hartford Ct.
Linksmu, Šventu, Kalėdu,
ir Laimingų Naujų Metų
Bakers of
Raguolis



Wishing You the Special
Joy
that only
Christmas brings!
A Happy New Year, too!
From
Council 157~ Lemont,
Illinois



Good Tidings
to You
as we rejoice
in the
Birth of Our Savior!
and
Blessings for the
New Year 2004
Rev. Msgr. J. Urbonas, FLM
Lemont, Illinois



Best Wishes for a
Blessed Christmas
and a
Healthy, Happy
New Year

Council 86, DuBois



Linksmu,
Šventu
Kalėdu



Council 19
Pittsburgh, Pa.



May the Peace and Joy
of
Christmas
Touch you and those
you Love!

Council 96, Dayton, Ohio



Peace on Earth

Linksmu Šventu Kalėdu
Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!

Greetings and Best Wishes

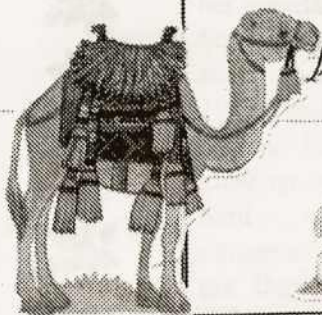
from the
Mid-Central District!





*Wishing Everyone
a
Blessed Christmas
and a
Healthy New Year!*

*Council 12
New York, NY*



*Wishes for a Joyful
Christmas
and a
Peaceful New Year*

*Linksmų Jv. Kalėdu
ir
Laimingų Naujų Metų*

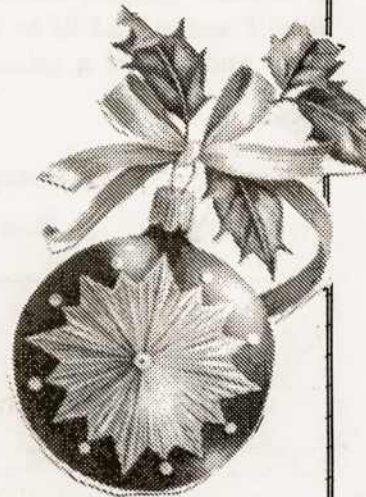
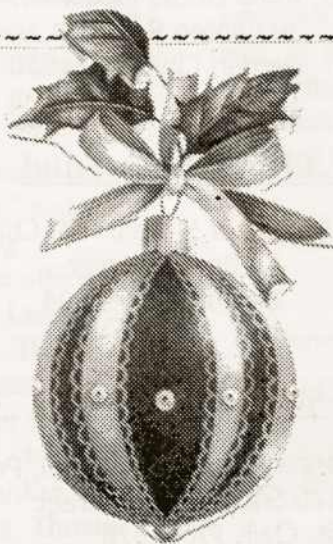
*Council # 147
Petersburg, Florida*



*Peace and Joy at Christmas and the New Year!
C-116 - So. Worcester, MA*



*Christmas Blessings and Happiness in the New Year!
Paul and Lee Moore*



HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS

Don't know what to get that special someone who has everything? How about making a donation in their name. During this holiday season of giving how about considering donations to our Knights of Lithuania Charities. Below is a listing of our charities and where you can send donations if you are so inclined. Have a great holiday.

Aid to Lithuania, Inc.

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

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Šiluva Chapel Renovation Fund

Send to: Joseph Chaplick, Co-Ordinator
2000 F Street NW #419
Washington, DC 20006-4229

Knights of Lithuania Foundation, Inc.

Send to: Loretta Stukas, HM, President
234 Sunlit Drive
Watchung, NJ 07060

Knights of Lithuania Scholarship Fund

Send to: Irena Gecas-McCarthy, Chair
30 Clinton Road
Garden City, NY 11530

Lady of Šiluva Fund

Send to: Elinor Sluzas, HM, Chair
55 Brandt Street
Dayton, OH 45404

St. Casimir Guild

Send to: Anna Klizas-Wargo, HM, President
125 South Morris Street
St. Clair, PA 17970



K of L Foundation Second Prize-Winning Essay



Daughter Honors Her Mother for Lithuanian Contributions

For my entry to the 2003 Essay Contest, I chose to dedicate this essay to my mom, Helen Rogers Hayner, for all her contributions she has made for the preservation of her Lithuanian culture and her generosity to the people of her heritage.

She was born in Averill Park, New York, a small town in upstate New York, on June 29, 1918, child of Joseph and Eva Kardok Rogers. She was one of four children who grew up on a family-owned farm. Life was hard - weeding gardens, taking care of numerous farm animals, and living through the Depression and World War II. Upon graduating from high school in 1936, she pursued work in the city, while still living on the family farm.

She married Bev Hayner, a man from Troy, New York, and they raised two children, my brother, Bob, and myself. Our family was a typical American family of the 1950's. Usually, most Sunday's we would visit my grandparents in Averill Park. I was aware that my grandparents were of Lithuanian descent, but was not aware of their rich culture.

Throughout the years, I learned some basic words like, "karstas, saltas, pienas," and was able to sing a simple children's song.

When our local community college offered a class in Lithuanian Culture and Language, my mom and I eagerly attended. There we met many Lithuanian-Americans also wanting to know more about their heritage. With the assistance of our teachers, Edvardas and Genute Baranauskas, we entered the world of our ancestors. Through their efforts of translating old Lithuanian letters, we were able to re-establish our

family ties in Marijampole, Lithuania, and eventually visiting them several times. Words that my mom had forgotten from disuse were amazingly recalled. I know she was delighted that I still showed an interest in learning the language of her heritage. Even though I can't "roll my r's," she is very willing to teach me her first language. We became founding members of the Hudson-Mohawk Council # 136. She designed the Lithuanian costumes, complete with a crown and blouse of embroidered flowers, a vest, and long skirt that we wear at yearly Lithuanian events. Several years ago, she was honored with receiving her Fourth Degree, denoting the highest award for service in her Lithuanian community.

Even at the age of 85, you can find her explaining pictures of past visits to Lithuania, answering questions about customs and everyday life, translating letters, and sending much needed clothes and medical supplies. My mom has been such an inspiration to me by sharing the love she has for her heritage through language, music, food, her perseverance, and commitment to preserve her Lithuanian culture. For all these reasons, I dedicate this essay to my mom. I would also like to encourage our younger generation to take time to listen and learn all they can about those who have made important contributions for human rights, as well as political and religious freedom to ensure the future of all Lithuanians. I thank my Mom for having a rich culture to be proud of!

~Lynn Hayner~

Council - 136, New York



**Kudikėli Jėzau, išmokyk mus
mylėti Tave!**

NEWS RELEASE From Knights of Lithuania, 333 Davis Avenue, Mt. Ephraim, NJ 08059

FIRST APPARITION OF VIRGIN MARY IN EUROPE SEEN 250 YEARS BEFORE LOURDES, AUTHENTICATED BY POPE PIUS VI IN 1775, OPEN AGAIN TO PILGRIMS.



The Story of Our Lady of Siluva Shrine in Lithuania Suppressed by Soviets and Nazis for 60 Years Now Available on Internet

Since the recent liberation of Lithuania from the Soviet Union, the Shrine of Our Lady of Siluva has become an important and revealing destination for many thousands of pilgrims from around the world.

In 1608, two hundred fifty years before Lourdes and Fatima, our Blessed Mother appeared in Lithuania in a town called, "Siluva."

The story of Our Lady of Siluva actually began in 1457, when Peter Giedgaudas, a diplomat for Vytautas the Great, built the first church in the area and gave the land to the Catholic Church. On one of his many travels, he went to Rome, and while there, he obtained a magnificent painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Child Jesus. This he brought back to Lithuania and put it in the sanctuary of the new church in Siluva.

Over the next hundred years, the Catholic Church in Lithuania experienced troubled times. Since much of the nobility and intellectuals turned to Calvinism and Lutheranism, many people fell away from the church. Property owned by the Catholic Church was confiscated by the authorities. In 1570, Father John Halubka, the parish priest of the Siluva Church, fearing that his church would be targeted, took the treasured painting of the Blessed Mother and Child and other church documents. Father Halubka carefully wrapped them, put them in an ironclad wooden chest, and buried them under a large rock near the church. A short time later, the church was seized by the authorities.

Years later, a new law was passed which gave the Catholic Church permission to reclaim its property if it could prove, with official documents, that the property was previously owned by it. The church in Siluva could not

prove that 150 years earlier, in 1457, Peter Giedgaudas had deeded the land to it. The church remained the property of the state.

One summer day, in 1608, several children of Siluva were tending their sheep and resting near a large rock. They heard someone crying, and as they looked up, they saw a beautiful lady standing on the rock, shedding tears, and in her arms she held a child.

Frightened, one of the children ran back to the village to tell others of the happening. As the news spread, believers and doubters went to visit the place of the rock. One day, Our Lady appeared, and everyone heard her crying, and saw her tears fall to the large rock on which she

stood. Among the crowd was a Calvinist teacher who earlier had said that "she was the work of the devil," now approached her and asked, "Why are you weeping? Who hurt you?" The reply came, "Formerly in this place my Son was adored and honored, but now, all that the people do is seed and cultivate the land." Having said this, she vanished.

Father John Kazakevicius was appointed to investigate the phenomenon and question all witnesses as to the events. As a matter of historical record, the following is documented.

An old man who had heard of the apparitions remembered that Father Halubka, in 1570, buried a chest near the church in Siluva. Since the man was blind, he had to be led, and as he approached the rock, his sight was immediately restored. He led the authorities to the exact spot where the chest was buried, and when it was opened, they found the painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Child, undamaged, together with the documents, also intact, which proved the ownership of the land. Soon the property was returned to the Catholic Church.

Over the years, more miracles were recorded at Siluva, shrines were built, and devotion to Our Lady of Siluva grew until the destruction of freedom in Lithuania during World War II. Since the early 1990's, Lithuania has been free and pilgrims have been able to return to the shrine.

For more information and visuals, visit

www.ourladyofsiluva.com

Also, contact

Rev. Anthony Markus
10524 So. Sawyer Ave.
Chicago, IL 60655

or e-mail

ALM445@yahoo.com

Complete tour information is available at
www.tourism.lt



The altar at the "Chapel of the Appearance" in Siluva, Lithuania was built over the huge rock where the Blessed Mother appeared in 1608. A portion of the rock is exposed in the chapel.



Rev. Juan A. Dielinikaitis May 18, 2003
A Newly ordained Priest.



Council 26 – Our new Fourth Degree Members-
L to R – Vivian Rodgers, Rev. John Petrauskas,
and Lillian Kondrotas. This honor was awarded
at the Convention.

Juniors Enjoy the Pre-Convention Trolley Tour

The Juniors from Council 152 attended the Pre-convention trolley ride. It was the first time to Boston for all of the Juniors. The trolley ride takes you through all parts of the city of Boston, allowing you to get on and off at different stops as you wish.

The youngest junior, Zachary Barile, age 6, remembers the ships. That would be the first place we stopped at the replica of the USS Constitution aka "Old Ironsides" and the WWII battleship, the USS Cassin Young. Victoria and Anthony Barile, ages 12 and 8, loved riding on the trolley itself. The windows were wide open, and you could see a lot. Plus, the drivers were very funny. We stopped at Quincy Market for lunch and saw the site of the Boston Massacre. Heather Wagner, age 11, was struck by a monument in Boston Common. It was life size statues of riders and horses that were gaunt and thin. It represented Polish people during the Nazi occupation. Mark Wagner, age 12, enjoyed the Harbor Cruise that we took at the end of the day.

The trolley tour was a great way for first time visitors to see the City and learn about Boston.

.This report was written by:

~The Juniors of Council - 152~



On the Trolley Tour: Mark Wagner and Anthony, Zachary and Victoria Barile



Boston Common

Heather Wagner on the USS Cassin Young with the USS Constitution in the background.



At the Harbor: Back row - Victoria Barile and Mark Wagner. Front: Anthony & Zachary Barile and Heather Wagner.

"Oh, What Fun it is to Ride..."



"Chestnuts roasting on an open fire? Jack Frost nipping at your nose?" The Juniors of Council 157 and 82 enjoying themselves on the Jagiella's farm in Indiana Someone built the fire for a "LAUZAS?".

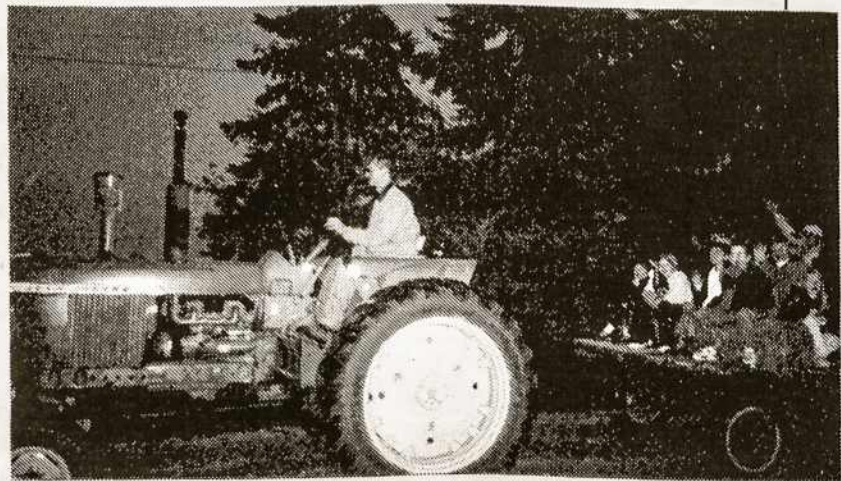


All on the wagon for a hayride!

But, where's the horse?

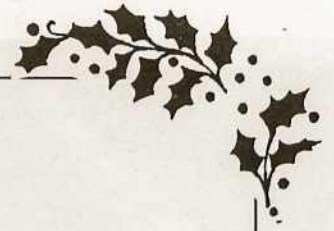


**Replaced by a modern tractor
and an expert driver!**





Juniors



Ride on!



Supreme Council Vice-President, Brian Johnson, with wife, Rita attend the 2003 K of L 90th Convention in Boston. With them are their two sons, the K of L's smallest Juniors. It's all in the family!



Christmas in Lithuania...

Christmas in Lithuania through the eyes of my sister's ten year old great-granddaughter, Kristina Rimkeviciute; Translation from Lithuanian by Kazimieras Vainius (great uncle).

Dear Aunt Ellen and Uncle Kazimieras,
I wish you a joyous, holy Christmas and a Happy New Year. I wish you good health, luck and joy. Christmas is not yet here, but I already received the very best present, a sister. Her name is Gabriele. She is very small and very pretty. Gabriele was born November 15th. I love her very much. I was ten years old in July. I grew a lot since you visited us last in Truskava. I am a very good student.

Two weeks before Christmas vacation, we make a very beautiful chest and we all put into it letters addressed to the students and the teacher. I am eagerly awaiting the last day of school before Christmas vacation. The last day of school we take out the letters from the Christmas chest and give them to the addressed students and the teacher. On Christmas Eve (during Kucios) we read the letters at home to our family. It is very pleasant to get many Christmas wishes from your friends.

I wrote a short poem for you:

The darling white snow already
covers the road and the hills
and the little, little house
with the little, little, roof.

Along that little white path
will trudge Santa Claus.
He will get into the little room
and leave each a little present.

I also drew a Christmas picture for you.

With love,

Kristina

Teta, Elena, ir dėdė, Kazimierai,

Sveikinu Jus su šv. Kalėdomis ir artėjančiais Naujaisiais Metais, linkiu daug, daug sveikatos, laimės ir džiaugsmo!

Artėja Kalėdos, o aš jau gavau pačią geriausią dovaną. Sesute. Jos vardas Gabrielė. Ji labai mažytė ir graži. Gabrielė gimė lapkričio 15d. Aš ją labai myliu. Liepos mėnesį man sukako 10

metų. Aš jau gerokai paaugau nuo to laiko kai jūs buvote atvykę į Truskava.

Mokslai sekasi labai, labai gerai. Labai laikiu paskutinės dienos prieš Kalėdų atostogas. Tą dieną mes iš Kalėdinės dėžės (dvi savaites prieš Kalėdų atostogas mes pasidarome labai gražią dėžę į kurią mes dedame laiškus vaikams ir mokytojais) išimame laiškus ir išsidalijame. Per Kučias namie juos skaitome. Labai malonu gauti daug Kalėdinių sveikinimų iš gerų draugų.

Jums parašiau trumpą eilėraštuką:

Sniegelio jau prisnigo,
Ant kelio ant kalnų,
Ant mažo nameliuko,
Mažu, mažu stogu.

Pro tą takelį balta,
Ateis senelis Saltis.
Ateis į kambarelių,
Padės po dovanėle.

Su meile,

Kristina



A New Lithuanian Priest *Juan Alejandro Dielinikaitis*

I attended a New England District Convention in April, 1999, when the District received a \$100,000 endowment from Irene Svilakas-Tamulevich, the interest to be used for scholarships to deserving people or organizations. A Committee was formed, and I became part of the committee. I went out looking for a Lithuanian Seminarian and Msgr. David Liptak put me in touch with Juan Dielinikaitis, who was being sponsored by Most Rev. Bishop Paul A. Baltakis. Juan was studying to become a priest to serve a Lithuanian community as determined by the bishop. Juan was asked to fill out an application for a scholarship. Brother Juan's parents, Juan Dielinikaitis from Alvitavilkaviskis, and Josefa Gudmonas de Dielinikaitis from Burbaicio Kelme had come from Vilkauskis, Lithuania and settled in Argentina. Juan was born April 19, 1945 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. When he was 12 years old, his mother died, and he and his father moved to San Pablo, Brazil, where he lived for 20 years. He graduated in Business Administration in Brazil and worked at Eastman Kodak in San Pablo until his father died. He had always had a desire to become a priest. He speaks four languages - Lithuanian, Spanish, Portuguese and English. He now plans to learn Italian. He is computer smart and will be missed at Holy Apostles College and Seminary, as he could solve the computer problems arising at the Seminary. When Juan was a Franciscan Brother, he spent his vacations at St. Anthony's Lithuanian Franciscan Monastery in Kennebunkport, Maine. He sent the Scholarship Committee his application, which was approved, and we presented him with \$500. Our Council 6 invited him to Holy Trinity Church functions and installed him as a member of our K of L Council 6. In each subsequent year he received a scholarship of \$500, \$500, and \$800. On April 6, 2002, Brother Juan was installed a Deacon of the church at St. John's Church in Middletown, by Archbishop Sheehan of Santa Fe, New Mexico. (Archbishop Sheehan has since played a big part in the Convention of Bishops in St. Louis, and is now taking the place of the fallen Bishop O'Brien of Phoenix). On May 18, 2003, June Grenier, K of L Supreme Council Financial Secretary, Lillian

Joseph and I of Council 6 traveled to Maspeth, Long Island to the Transfiguration Church to see Deacon Juan ordained by Bishop Paul Baltakis, OFM. June and I had the honor of presenting the gifts at the Mass. There were 16 priests in attendance - from Cromwell, Conn., Kennebunkport, Maine, Santa Fe, New Mexico and New York. The organ music and choir was stirring. At the church hall, over 150 people attended the reception. A buffet table of many Lithuanian dishes filled four tables, but Kunigas Juan was pleased that koseliena was on the menu, as he missed this delicacy at the Seminary. New Britain's Joe Lindzius' Lietuviskas Raguolis (a celebration cake) was on the dessert table. A delicious cake was presented with "God bless Father Juan" written on it. The reception was planned by five women from the K of L of the parish.

Several priests and laymen spoke. I told how the K of L Sviklas-Tamulevich Scholarship had helped Kunigas Juan to attain his goal. Just think - we were instrumental in bringing a NEW priest into the Lithuanian Community. Kunigas Juan celebrated his first Mass on May 25th at the Shrine Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 275 North 8th Street, Brooklyn, New York, 11211, where he is now working with Rev. Joseph Fonti, Pastor. His e-mail address is fatherjuan@earthlink.net

Article submitted by:

Kathryn Urban
Council 6 - Hartford, CT



Left to right: Rev. Juan Dielinikaitis, Bishop Baltakis and Rev. Joseph Fonti.

St. George's in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Welcomes a New Pastor

On a first Advent Sunday, December 1, 2002, there was a special reason for the usual morning Mass at St. George in Bridgeport, CT, to make it really unusual. Father Jose Rebaque, who gave this parish 11 quality years, 8 of which he served as its Pastor, was honored by the presence of Bridgeport's Bishop W.E. Lori, a religious Sisters' Order, and over 200 parishioners, with Knights of Lithuania Council 141 members among them at his farewell Mass at St. George's.

Father Jose is being transferred to organize a new ministry at St. Joseph Parish in Shelton, CT, to assist with the need of the All American Valley ever growing Hispanic population. Originally, he came to Bridgeport in 1992, and, two years later was appointed the administrator of St. George Parish, which historically was a center for the Lithuanian community.

First immigrants from the then Russian Tzarist regime oppressed Lithuania began to arrive in Connecticut through Ellis Island, New York by boat, and landed in Bridgeport at the turn of the 20th century, and soon there were enough Lithuanians to form their own Catholic organizations. However, earlier ancestors worshipped at the Sacred Heart Territorial French Parish of St. Anthony's, and also St. Michael's Polish Parish. It is a mere coincidence though, that Sv. Jurgio (St. George) Lithuanian Parish in Bridgeport, Connecticut was first established on February 16, 1907. That same date in 1916 became one of the most prominent dates in Lithuanian history. Lithuania was then proclaimed independent.

In 1912, there were about 1,000 Lithuanian families around St. George Parish. There were a number of prominent priests who served the Bridgeport Lithuanian Parish at different times after its inception meeting in 1907 under Father Joseph Zebris, from Waterbury, CT.

The first official priest at St. George's was Father Plausimaitis, who stayed there for 6 months. Father Pankus led the Parish for 26 years, and during his administration, in 1924, the present Gothic style red brick church was erected. Father Kazlauskas replaced Father Pankus in 1936. He is remembered for

renovating the church interior. Probably the most dedicated Pastor of this Lithuanian church has been Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Pranckus, who first came to Bridgeport in 1952, and later became the administrator in 1964. He served almost 55 years of his priesthood until he passed away in September of 2000. Thirty-seven years of this priesthood were given to our Lithuanian Parish at St. George's.

Although, recently, the parish became more Hispanic than Lithuanian or English, (hence the appointment of Rev. Rebaque, the Pastor in 1994 following Msgr. Pranckus' retirement), the statue of Saint George, a patron Saint of Lithuania, stands to the left of the main altar within the church, by the side of Our Lady of Guadalupe, reminding everyone of its Lithuanian roots.

Today, St. George Parish serves as host to a multi-ethnic community where people worship in three languages, and the Installation Mass on the first Sunday of last December gave a tribute to all of those cultures from this area. The first reading was in Spanish, and the second in English and Lithuanian. The Most Rev. William E. Lori, Bishop of Bridgeport, as well as Most Rev. Gustavo Javier Neto, IVE Provincial, introduced two new priests from Argentina - Rev. Julio Lopresti, who now will serve as Pastor of St. George's, and Rev. Jorge Montagna will become its parochial vicar, also serving the University of Bridgeport, which is situated just a few blocks away from St. George Church. Both of the new concelebrants have expressed a firm commitment to carry on the good work begun by Father Jose, and to reach out to the entire Catholic community of the parish, and to continue its evangelization effort. "Vetra" Lithuanian dancers, and a Hispanic group entertained the parishioners during the reception after the Mass.

It has become a tradition since the Lithuanian folk dance group was begun almost 20 years ago, that "Vetra" performs at St. George's every time there is a major holiday in the church or a special celebration hosted by the "Knights of Lithuania" Council 141, which was established nearby St. George's in 1974, and has been led by one of the most dedicated people in our organization, Clemencine Miller, for the past two decades.

Article submitted by: **L. Misevicius, K of L
Supreme Council Lith. Lang. & Culture Chair**



Left to right: Rev. Lopresti and
Rev. Montagna
(Photos by Kathy Balcius C-141)

Left to right: Clemencine Miller, Rev. Rebaque,
Rev. Lopresti, Rev. Montagna, A. & B. Prilvitch



In Memoriam...

Council	Name		City	State	Date of Death
19	David	Schoentag	Pittsburgh	PA	10/11/2003
29	Dorothy	Rimelis	Livingston	NJ	12/4/2002
29	Bronius	Sudzinskas	Putnam	CT	6/1/2003
29	Ruth	Berzanskis	Providence	NJ	10/22/2003
50	Charles	Zaremsky	Hamden	CT	8/9/2003
112	Edward	Balchunas	Palos Heights	IL	1/19/2003
112	George	Kairis	Willowbrook	IL	8/17/2003
112	Josephine	Mucha	Cicero	IL	10/12/2003
112	Anthony	Vaisnoras	Burbank	IL	8/29/2003
116	Raminta	Molis	Shrewbury	MA	10/30/2003
141	Peter	Januska	Fairfield	CT	10/13/2003
141	Lillian	Argust	Bridgeport	CT	10/25/2003
144	Valentina	Dancho	Hazleton	PA	10/29/2003
144	Mildred	Mikatavage	Shenandoah	PA	10/24/2003

Knights of Lithuania – Our Beginnings

1912 -At the Lithuanian Catholic Alliance convention in Boston, Mykolas Norkunas presented his plan for a new type of Lithuanian organization. The organization was aimed at stemming the tide of mixed marriages and the general loss of nationality among the youth.

April 27, 1913, Lawrence Massachusetts – ten delegates met for a two-day convention and laid the foundation for a Lithuanian youth organization, which was called the Lithuanian falcons. At the Lithuanian Catholic Federation Congress held in the summer of 1913, the Congress gave the organization its approval but recommended that the name be changed to Knights of Lithuania.

1914 – Second Convention. There were 12 councils in the Knights of Lithuania. Rev. Motiejus Gustaitis, a distinguished writer, was a guest at that convention. He was so elated over the first year's accomplishments and he put his feelings into verse. This became the organizations' anthem.

1915 – Third Convention: The music for the Vyciu Himnas was presented. It had been written by Professor Aleksandras Aleksis, a young organist who had recently arrived from Lithuania. This gathering also approved the Norkunas-designed membership emblem and decided to publish an organization periodical, Vytis (The Knight). Students Aleksandras M. Račkus and Kazys Pakštas

1916 – There were sixty councils and over 4000 members. Most of the councils were in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Chicago.



District & Council News



Amber District

C-63 Lehigh Valley, PA Evelyn Harryn

C-63, Lehigh Valley members have been working diligently to keep the Lithuanian spirit alive in the area. We have also been successful in keeping our members involved and active. By the way, we just admitted 2 new members. We welcome Henry and Kitty Kazlusky!

Once again, we held a council picnic. It was held on Sunday, July 20th. The talented "Musical McDonalds" provided the entertainment. There was dancing and singing of Lithuanian folk songs by the St. Michael's Choir. Bill Fleming was MC for most of the day. That is his specialty. We had many raffles and door prizes.

We resumed our business year in September. Some new officers took a job. Officers are: Pres - Evelyn Harryn; 1st VP - Ann Helen McDonald; 2nd VP - Steven Tichy, also membership; 3rd VP - Ben Aponavicius; Treas - Walter Balchunas; Recording Secretary - Frances Smith; Sgts-at-Arms - Tom McDonald and Tom Shaulis; Chaplain - Walter Balchunas; Trustees - Valeria Smickle, Evelyn Harryn, and Walter Balchunas.

Our emergency fundraiser for school supplies and donations toward shipping them to Sisters Dolorita and Michelle began in June and ended in September. Our membership responded to the project very generously. *Aciu labai!* Also *aciui* to Tom and Ann Helen McDonald for their generosity and hard work of packing and shipping.

Ed and Heidi Klova vacationed in

Lithuania this summer. He gave us some highlights of the trip and showed many photos. He also displayed some artwork done by students at a school where his cousin teaches.

Our council completed their fall flea market. Many of our loyal members turned out to work. We certainly did have unity and cooperation. It's what breeds success! Thanks so much to Valeria Smickle! She is still the backbone of the operation.

Five of our members attended the Amber District meeting in Pittston, PA, on Oct 5th. Norma Lipsen, Ed Klova, Evelyn Harryn, Ann Helen and Tom McDonald. Thanks go to Pittston members for being terrific hosts. The tables were decorated with an autumn motif, the meal and refreshments were great! Congratulations and thanks to Diane Drumstass. She so graciously accepted the post of Amber District President!

On Nov 16th we will hold our annual "Harvest Covered Dish" affair. We always have a great turnout and an enjoyable time.

On Nov 15 we will decorate our beautiful "Ethnic Lithuanian Tree" at the South Bethlehem Comfort Suites. This will be our 12th year in the exhibition amongst 13 other trees. There is also a community tree. The opening ceremonies will be held on Nov 30. Following the lighting of our trees and festivities, the City of Bethlehem has their tree lighting and city lighting, including the Star of Bethlehem.

C-63 lost a dedicated and hard-working member in September. My husband, Paul Harryn, ended his journey here on earth. *Amzinai atsilsi!* He was a proud Knight. He served us well.

Our Kucios will be Dec 7 at St. Michael's Church. We are all looking forward to this traditional event.

Mid Central District

C-19 Pittsburgh, PA Len Barcoucky



Pittsburgh-area Lithuanians played host to a dozen out-of-town members of the K of L recently when the Catholic Fraternal Organization held a recent meeting here.

Led by MCD President Michael F. Petkus, Knights from Dayton, DuBois and Cleveland visited their Pittsburgh friends for the weekend of Oct 17-19. One highlight was a Sunday Mass and brunch at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Francis in Whitehall. The event attracted about 20 people from C-19 and from the Lithuanian Citizens Society of Western Pennsylvania. The Rev. Bernard Tickerhoff celebrated Mass with organist Patti Burns playing traditional Lithuanian hymns. Several nuns joined the group for the service and for a meal that featured Lithuanian bacon buns. Sr. Marian Blodis coordinated the event. As she has for many other events, Sr. Irene Pacekonis provided hand-made gifts - small crosses and copies of a prayer.

Earlier in the weekend, John Baltrus, Pres of C-19, and his wife Andrea hosted the group at their home.

The local Knights combined the regional meeting with their annual All Soul's prayer service in St. Casimir's Cemetery. There was unexpected sadness as part of this year's event. The Knights visited the cemetery on Oct 18, the same day that K of L member David Schoentag was buried there. David, a 20 year employee of IBM, was the son of Jean Walkauskas Schoentag who is a member of the Citizens Society and the Knights of Lithuania.

Rounding out the weekend was a visit to the Lithuanian Country Club for dinner on Saturday night.

New England District

C-6 Hartford, CT Bette Ann Liudzius



"Sirdingai Aciu", heartfelt thanks, was the Lithuanian phrase at our November meeting. A timely phrase, indeed, as that evening a new slate of officers was elected unanimously for 2004. We are grateful to Alyce Gegecksky and her nominating committee members Florence Grigas, Leona Sawka, and Kay Urban for a job well-done. Elected were Gene Ziurys Jr, Pres; Joseph Stiklius, 1st VP; Kathryn Urban, 2nd VP; Louise Pivoski, Rec Sec; Florence Grigas, Treas; Brian Daigle, Fin Sec; Mary Birute Daigle, Ritual; Leona Sawka and June Grenier, Trustees; Jonas Kasputis, Sgt-at-Arms; Tomas Nenortas, Lithuanian affairs and sports; Richard Huck, Cultural; Lillian Joseph, Social; Gertrude Kruzinauskas and Birute Pellerin, Hospitality; Angela Balskas, telephone contact. Congratulations to both old and new officers.

Al Dzikas also was thanked for his work in updating C-6's By-Laws. Pres Gene Ziurys gave an A-plus to the A team of Al and Alyce for accomplishing a daunting task. All Soul's Day (Velines) was celebrated on Nov 2.

Elizabeth Ellis and Irene Leiberis Belanger joined our membership!

Is our chaplain Father John Rikteraitis retired? You would never know it. His latest project is to aid in the printing of a Breviary in the Lithuanian language, God bless all who donate to the printing of this official prayer book of the Church and God bless Father John and Msgr. Contons who undertook such an arduous task. As Father John says, "It is a privilege to be a Lithuanian catholic and we are so fortunate to be living in the US where we are able to help in so many causes.

C-17 South Boston, MA Regina Alexander



The October meeting was well attended. The refreshment committee did a fine job. The meeting started with Fr. Steve Zukas's prayer and then the swearing in ceremony for the new members: Martha Gaide and Bertha S. Gillis. Pres Frank Markuns had the meeting moving along rapidly because of an early, big baseball game between the Red Sox and Yankees. Again, we have to say, "Wait til next year!"

The NED annual cultural picnic was held at Maironis Park in Worcester. Seen in the kitchen, in assembly-line-fashion, helping out with the popular 3-K dinner plate were: Pres Frank and Virginia Markuns, Albert and Elaine-Theresa Kniupis, Billy Olevitz, Barbara Trybe, Bertha Gillis, Mildred Daniels, Phyllis Gendreau, Florence Zaleskas, Sonja Varochi and Regina Alexander. Also busily working along with C-17 were the Norwood C-26 members.

Anne Norinkavich, sunshine committee, reported on Frances Zerveskes, Walter Bossi, Mary Kleponis and Patricia Akule. We wish all good health.

Our sympathy goes to the family of deceased, long-time C-17 member, John Baltrashunas. John was the brother of former St. Peter's pastor, Father Anthony Baltrashunas.

Nominating Committee members Virginia Markuns, Mildred Daniels and Elaine Kniupis presented the coming year's new slate of officers. Pres Markuns presented a list of possible upcoming activities: Blynu Vakaras prepared by the members, a Christmas Party in Jan, the annual St. Casimir Communion Breakfast on Feb 29.

St. Peter Parish's Annual Christmas Bazaar was Nov 1 and 2 with the traditional Lithuanian Dinner.

C-26 Worcester, MA Ruta



We are so proud of our new Fourth Degree recipients, Rev. John Petrauskas, Lillian Kondrotas, and Vivian Rodgers. They were awarded this degree at the K of L National Convention in Brockton.

Fr Jakubauskas recently hosted a tour to the Benedictine Abbey in Harvard, MA. On the way, they made stops at Hebert Candies and the Bolton Orchards store. Once everyone had purchased some goodies, they were on their way to the Abbey. There they were treated to a tour, attended vespers and then enjoyed a delicious dinner. On this trip were 19 K of L'ers and 7 guests.

Congratulations are extended to our members who were elected to offices for the New England District - Vivian Rodgers, Pres; Ann Leseman, Ritual Committee; and Marion Racicot, Treas.

We are so excited that St. Casimir's Church now has a cantor - she is Barbara Thompson, a member of our council. She has a beautiful soprano voice and will be singing at the English Mass, Sat 4PM and Sun 8:30 AM.

Raymond Jakubauskas is now home from the hospital and is recovering at home. Terry Adomavicius also spent a brief stay in the hospital. She also is well on the road to recovery.

For the Oct meeting, everyone was asked to donate an unwrapped gift for a Penny Sale that was held after the meeting. Once everyone purchased tickets and made selections. A drawing was held for each gift with the winners being announced. It was a fun evening for everyone and a good way to earn some extra money to be used for the support of our young needy child in Lithuania.

Also in Oct, the election of officers

took place. Our new slate for this year comprises of: Pres-Vivian Rodgers; VP-Ann Leseman; Treasurer-Ruth Gadilauskas; Sec- Joan Wojciak; Fin Sec- Marion Racicot; Trustee - Bill Leseman; Publicity- Olga Kersis; Vytis Corresp- Ruth Sarafinas; Lithuanian Affairs- Victoria Augustine; Sunshine Lady- Anne Bacinskas; Sgt-at-Arms - Terry Adomavicius. We wish them a very productive year for our council.

C-27 Norwood, MA Zaibas



C-27 was so pleased that their Spiritual Director, Rev. Wm. Wolkovich, received Honorary Membership at the National Convention hosted so capably by our neighboring C-1, Brockton. The parish held a joyous celebration for Fr. Bill's 50th anniversary of priesthood in September. Our new Bishop Sean O'Malley came to personally give him congratulations. Then Fr. Bill was hospitalized for many weeks with a serious illness. He is back at his parish house and slowly recuperating. We are all so fortunate to have Rev. Wm. Lucey in residence who is doing a superior job in keeping all the parish activities and services going. St. George LRC Church has 2 wonderful priests.

This fall was busy for so many members. George Barton and his wife Birute returned to their winter home in Norwood. They spend 6 months here and 6 months at their 2nd home in Lithuania. George keeps us informed on Lithuania's political directions and economic status.

Louise and Paul Zukas celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a special Mass at St. Peter's, South Boston, where their son, Rev. Steve Zukas, is pastor. Their friends and family had a festive time in the parish hall.

Ramona and Ed Gonski had a family reunion this summer, renewing family

ties with relatives they hadn't seen in a long time. Sandra Melish and Dorothy Ausevich came from Las Vegas with coins jingling in their pockets. Chas. and Carol Treciokas, Terry and Stan Wasil, George Barton attended the NED convention in Bridgeport.

Many of our members joined with the Southie to help out in Maironis Park for the N E Cultural Fair. Betty Skricki is now a jet set member, flying back and forth to be with her daughter, Irene, son-in-law, Stephen and grandson, Alexander.

We send good health wishes to Kay Perednia who is recuperating from surgery. We wait for her return to join us at our meetings and activities.

Ed and Mary Ann Motyka are heading south to Florida where they will spend the winter. Ed's brother was installed recently as a deacon.

Albie Jarvis will chair the Ham and Bean Supper to be held in Dec. He has a fine working committee.

All officers were reelected for another term. Betty Skricki stepped into the place, Sgt-at-Arms, left by the passing of her husband, John. We thank and congratulate all of you. Likit Sveiki.

Mid Central District Pilgrimage



The Fall meeting and pilgrimage of the MCD of the Knights of Lithuania was hosted by Pittsburgh C-19 on Oct 17-19. It proved to be a beautiful but cool Fall weekend. The weekend began with a reception at the home of C-19 President, John Baltrus and his wife, Andrea, on Fri evening. There the guests from out-of-town had a chance to relax and share some food and drink with a few of the members of C-19. John was able to show some of his finds from his trip to Lithuania this past summer which included the

Lithuanian version of the game Monopoly. Some lively discussion on the future of our District meetings and activities also took place.

On Sat morning, the District held its business meeting at the Lithuanian Country Club which is located in the south suburbs of Pittsburgh. The meeting was led by District Pres Michael F. Petkus of C-96, Dayton. The meeting included reports on recent activities by the district's councils and officers that were in attendance. The discussions then moved on to reports by the district's delegates to the National Convention. Some extended discussions took place on subjects from the National Convention, including the subject of Social Membership for the organization. The District also approved donations to St. Casimir's Guild and Aid to Lithuania. To help raise funds for the coming year, the annual district raffle was approved with slight modification in the prize structure. Election of officers for 2004 closed out the meeting. Michael Petkus was elected Pres; Jean Marks (C-25) VP; Richard Marks (C-25) Treas; and Fran Petkus (C-96) Secretary. Most of the other officers remained the same. John Baltrus is the District's new representative to the Scholarship Committee and Lee Moore (C-86) is the District's Ritual Chair.

The religious portion of the Pilgrimage was held on Sat afternoon at St. Casimir's Cemetery. The church associated with the cemetery has long closed but the cemetery contains many of its former parishoners as well as deceased C-19 members. The annual reading of deceased members of the councils that make up the MCD took place within the context of a prayer service the C-19 usually conducts around All Souls Day. A series of prayers and readings were said focusing on remembering the deceased and looking forward to eternal life in the hereafter. All those in attendance were able to take part in some part of the

ceremony. The service ended with a visitation to the graves of deceased religious of C-19, including Sisters Alverna, Francesca and Valeria, along with former Spiritual Advisor Rev. Walter Karaveckas. Finally a prayer was said for David Schoentag, a young member of C-19 who was laid to rest that very morning.

On Sat evening, a delicious authentic Lithuanian meal was served to those attending the pilgrimage. The meal was prepared by Erika Maciuliene, a relative of John Baltrus from Lithuania and was served at the Lithuanian Country Club. Everyone was able to eat as much as they could and there was still plenty left over. It was a relaxing evening of eating and conversation.

The traditional closing Mass for the Pilgrimage was held at the chapel of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God. The Mass was celebrated by the Sisters' chaplain, Fr. Bernie. Traditional Lithuanian hymns were sung and played with the assistance of the Sisters. Members were kindly greeted by the Sisters' General Superior, Sr. Lora Dambroski. Sr. Marian Blodis was responsible for the arrangements with help from many of her energetic associates. Sr. Janet Gardner was also able to say a few words about the Sisters' current work in Lithuania. Following Mass, a delicious brunch was hosted by the Sisters. The meal included some prized bacon buns that are only served to the Sisters on special occasions.

After some parting words by Mike Petkus, the district's members were on their way until meeting again for the Spring Meeting and bowling tournament which will be hosted by C-86, DuBois, next May.

C-112 Chicago, IL

JMShain



Nov.8 found 26 K of L members attending the

special annual Liturgy to pray for all the deceased members of the Mid-America District Councils. This memorable event took place at the Holy Family Villa, a home for the Aging in Orland Park, which is directed by the Sisters of St. Casimir. Rev. John A. Kuzinskas, Chaplain, was the celebrant of the Liturgy. The K of L choir sang hymns, to the accompaniment of Faustas Strolia, HM.

Nov. 15, was a special annual day of pilgrimage for anyone who wished to attend. A bus left from the SSC's Motherhouse to Marytown, directed by the Franciscan Fathers and Brothers, located in Libertyville, IL. A special feature there is the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (which has been continued, non-stop, since 1927. Also located on the same premises is a museum featuring the story and memorabilia of the life and death of St. Maximilian Kolbe. All 26 pilgrims had a wonderful, spiritual day of Retreat, a truly valuable and enriching experience.

A video, special lecture, Mass, recitation of the Rosary, and a trip to the Gift Shop before leaving, filled the day. Playing Bingo on the bus and singing Lithuanian hymns and songs to the accordion accompaniment of Faustas

Strolia added to the enjoyment of a perfect day. Thanks to Terry Strolia, who again coordinated this event!

The last meeting of C-112 found 7 very pleased members excitedly relating their amazing experiences at the 2003 Convention in Boston. All agreed that C-1 did a superb job!

Estelle Rogers, Ritual chair, reported the names of the sick members to whom get-well cards were sent, being, Lucille Shotas, Mary Rudis, Mickey Petrosius, Geraldine Chaplin, and Maria Deksnis. She also added the names of deceased members and their families to whom sympathy cards were sent and Masses offered. The deceased members were L. Josphine Mucha, James Kreuger, Grazina Sakevicius, and Ruth Zein. Throughout the year of 2003-2003, our Council has lost 9 members in death.

Estelle also thanked members who always attend the wakes and participate in the special ritual prayers.

A special congratulations greeting was sent to Rev. Anthony Zakaruskas on the occasion of his receiving Honorary Membership.

Our Council 112 will be holding its next meeting and annual Christmas Party on December 16, in the Parish Hall of Nativity BVM Church.

Council 112 wishes all of its fellow councils a most blessed and merry Christmas and a truly healthy and prosperous New Year, 2004! God bless you.





PLK. LTN. JOZAS SIRVINSKAS, SABINA RUCAITE HENSON

**III LAIPSNIO
ŠAULIŲ SAJUNGOS PASIŽYMĖJIMO ŽENKLAS
„UŽ NUOPELNUS ŠAULIŲ SAJUNGAI“**

SABINA RUČAITĖ-HENSON

**APDOVANOJAMAS
UŽ ŠAULIŠKŲ TRADICIJŲ PUOSELĖJIMĄ
IR AKTYVŲ DALYVAVIMĄ ŠAULIŲ VEIKLOJE**

Knight Life...



C-112 - proudly carrying their new banner in procession.



Council 112 - Chicago, IL, Nativity B.V.M. parish, celebrating "Our Lady of Siluva" with the annual procession and Benediction in Church, in September.



Council - 63, LeHigh Valley, PA., Officers: L.toR. Steven Tichy, 2nd Vice Pres. & Financial Secr. ; Walter Balchunas, Treasurer; Evelyn Harryn, President; Francis Smith, Recording Secr.; Anna H. McDonald, Vice-Pres.

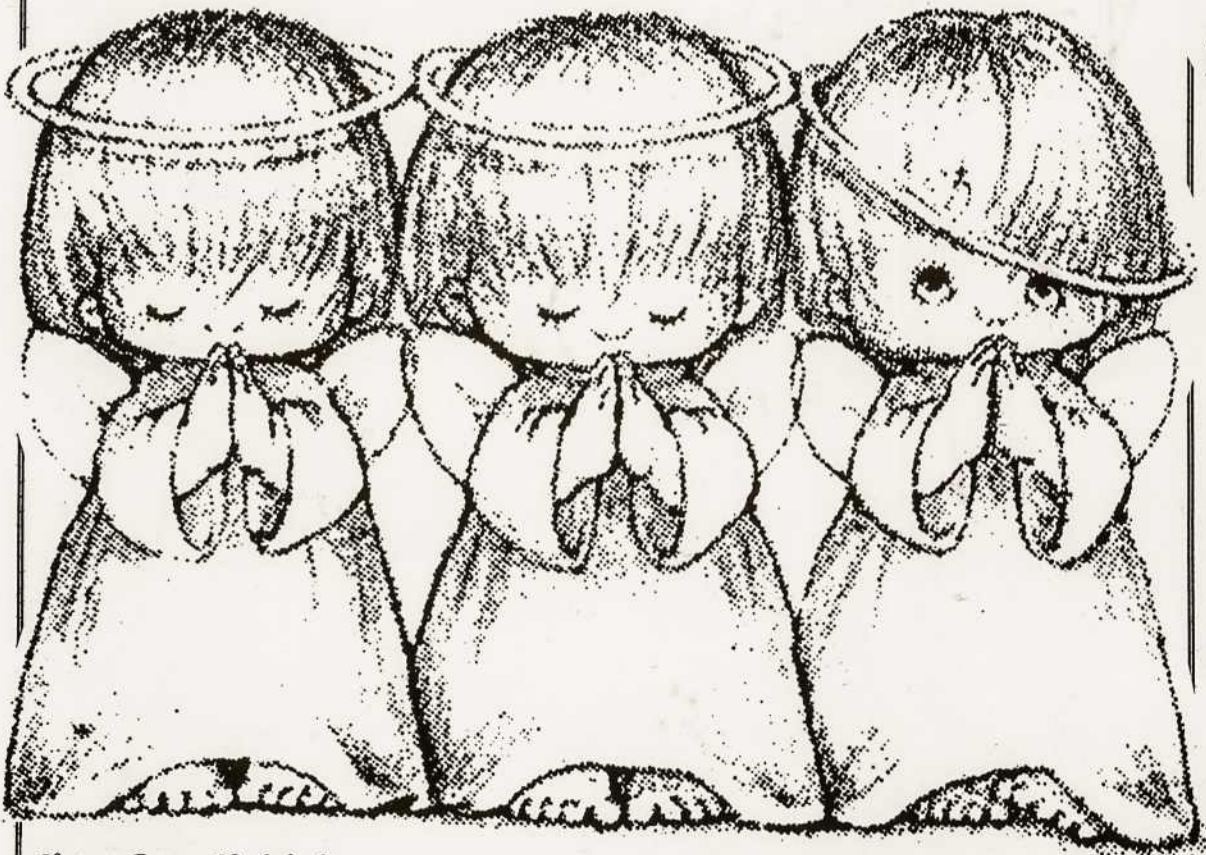


Lithuanian "Lady Birds," 3 - 6 year olds, recite poems about Advent and chant, "Jesus wants to live in our hearts."

God grant you
His Peace and Love
at Christmastime and
Throughout the New Year 2004!

*Linkime Jums Dievo Ramybēs ir Meilēs
Kalēdu Šventēse ir per Naujus Metus 2004!*

From your Vytis Staff



Sister Janine Golubickis

Mrs. M. Jagiella

Sister Johanna Marie

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Peace on Earth



Let Heaven and Nature Sing!