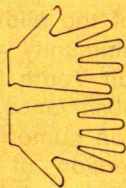


Lithuanian-
American
Community
of U.S.A., Inc.



BRIDGES



Lithuanian-
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NEWSLETTER

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NEW FERVOR OVER ETHNICITY

An ethnic rebirth is stirring across the United States. The immense popularity of Alex Haley's "Roots" is but one sign of the interest among Americans in their ethnic and national origins. Other signs include an increased interest in ethnicity by the institutions of higher learning, growth in the study of so-called ethnic languages, an intense search for ethnic information in public libraries, universities, governmental agencies, as well as the grass-roots organizations. Numerous magazines and newsletters directed to a specific ethnic group are hitting the scene, if not the newsstands. Similarly, BRIDGES Newsletter attempts to fill the void created by an overwhelming interest in the Lithuanian customs, traditions, history, language, and social values.

Kent State University is in the forefront of the news fervor over ethnicity. Prof. Lubomyr R. Wynar has compiled directories of ethnic organizations and publications in the United States. The directory on organizations lists 1,475 major national-ethnic periodicals and newspapers in the United States — two-thirds of them bilingual or non-English. Harvard University is presently compiling a major "ethnic encyclopedia" to be published in about three years. Michigan State University recently published a directory of ethnic publishers and a directory of ethnic-studies librarians.

According to the Modern Language Association of America in recent years on college campuses overall language-study enrollment has dropped significantly. The biggest losers were French and German. However, the study of so-called ethnic languages (Italian, Polish, Hebrew, Swedish, Japanese) is growing, bucking an overall declining trend in foreign language study.

As reported by Richard J. Cattani of "The Christian Science Monitor", the American Library Association (ALA) notes that a rebirth in ethnic interest is making extraordinary demands on libraries for materials. The ALA has seen fit to establish separate ethnic caucuses to study ethnic needs of libraries.

As a result of the interest, U.S. Census Bureau is weighing whether to seek a more accurate count of the ethnic population in the 1980 census. To date, the Bureau has somewhat haphazardly counted only first and second generation ethnics.

The Carter Administration has established a Commission on Mental Health to evaluate the country's mental health needs and to make recommendations for new policies and programs. The Commission is headed by Roslyn Carter. Ethnic consciousness is reflected in the appointment of J. Giordano, a director of the Institute on Pluralism and Group Identity, to the Commission. One of his objectives has been "to sensitize members to the special needs of white ethnic groups".

Gino Baroni, former president of the National Center for Urban and Ethnic Affairs, and currently Assistant Secretary of HUD in the Carter Administration, sees ethnicity as a salvation for our older cities. He finds that preserving ethnic ties to communities is useful in preserving threatened city neighborhoods.

A. Gečys

COMMUNITY WITH A CAPITAL "C"

The **Executive Board** of the Lithuanian American Community swung right into a busy session this fall. On October 18, Mr. Algimantas **Gečys**, National President, participated in a testimonial feting President G. R. Ford in Philadelphia. He conferred with Dr. Tomas Remeikis about his forthcoming book "Dissident in Lithuania" (the book will be published by Bendruomenė). Correspondence was exchanged with the Lithuanian American Council (ALT) over matters of cooperation and common interest in lobbying for the Lithuanian Cause. Vice president Aušra Zerr was a guest of honor of the Polish-American Congress during the Pulaski Day parade in Philadelphia. The Public Affairs Committee spearheaded a campaign for the release of dissidents Viktoras Petkus and Antanas Terleckas. As a result Senators Dole, Williams, Heinz, Case and other members of Congress wrote to Brezhnev urging the release of dissidents. Efforts were made in official Washington to keep the Brazinskases, father and son, from being deported.

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The **25th anniversary** of the **Midwest Region** of the Lithuanian American Community was observed on December 3rd at the Jesuit Youth Center, Chicago, Ill. Following the formal observance, the assembly was entertained by the Boston humorist Antanas Gustaitis and the Lithuanian version of "Second City" — Antras Kaimas. A dinner-dance followed. The Midwest Region was established on November 24, 1952 as the "Chicago District." The presentday Region has 15 chapters (apylinkes) and 11 Lithuanian-language schools. Encompassing the Greater Chicago area, the Midwest Region is quite active in various cultural, civic and educational endeavors. The Region can boast that it has provided 2 national executive officers, 3 members of the Court of Honor and 21 representatives to the 8th Council or Taryba of Bendruomenė. **Kazys Laukaitis**

Vytautas Radzivanas, Chairman of the New York First Chapter of Bendruomenė, has recently mailed out copies of the "Annual Report of the NY Local Com-



On November 12, 1977, an important conference between the Lithuanian American Community of the USA, Inc. (LB) and the Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) took place in Philadelphia. (For the story see the next issue of BRIDGES). From left to right: (first row) Dr. B. Nemickas (VLIK), A. Gečys (LB President), A. Zerr (LB), Dr. J. K. Valiūnas (VLIK Chairman); (second row): A. Vedeckas (VLIK), B. Vaškaitis, F. Andriūnas, A. Gailiūšis, R. Česonis, and J. Gaila (all LB executive officers). Photo — K. Čikotas

munity Nr. 1 for 1976 - 1977". The Report is a synopsis in English and in Lithuanian recording the varied activities of the Brooklyn-based Chapter. It consists of 10 mimeographed pages of small print. Copies may be obtained by writing to Mr. Radzivas, 84-16 110th Street, Richmond Hill, N.Y. 11418. The following excerpt is just a sample of this informative and in-depth report of events and activities: "The purpose of the Lithuanian-American Community is to stimulate, not to dominate in the organizing of Lithuanian cultural and social happenings. Where the Local Board perceives a lack or void, it will try to take the initiative to run an event or affair. Several years ago, there was no public Mothers' Day commemoration in New York, so the Board for several years held such commemorations. Last year, it was held at Annunciation Parish Hall, with a very delightful program by the Annunciation Parish Choir, directed by Mr. A. Kačanauskas, poetry recitals by Mr. Stasys Vaškys and three members of the Knights of Lithuania Junior Council 110 from Maspeth, N.Y.: William Sidtis, Marija Stungurys and Linas Vebeliūnas. Guest speaker was Mrs. A. Radzivas, and, by then a tradition, the children of "Gintarėliai" Lithuanian pre-school nursery program displayed an exhibit of their crafts. We are pleased to note that this year the N.Y. public commemoration of Mother's Day was organized by Chapter 29 of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Women's Alliance of America, who helped us in our affair last year."

The major social event of the **Brighton Park Chapter** of Bendruomenė is the traditional Autumn ball (tradicinis rudens vakaras), which was first held in 1963. Through the years the "earnings" of this ball were used by the Chapter for donations to Lithuanian institutions, Lithuanian schools, press, radio and the Chicago Lithuanian television program. To date some \$15,000 were raised. The traditional autumn ball was held on November 12 at the Pakštas Hall in Chicago. The Brighton Park Chapter publishes a newsletter in Lithuanian called "Žinios". Copies may be obtained by writing to the Chapter chairman, Mr. Vytenis Šilas, 4435 S. California, Chicago, Ill.

The Philadelphia Chapter of Bendruomenė sponsored an appearance by the zany Chicago Lithuanian humorous theatre group, **Antrasis Kaimas** (Second Village) which entertained area Lithuanians at the Lithuanian Music Hall, Philadelphia on November 12, 1977.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Searching for one's roots has made amateur genealogy a rapidly growing preoccupation. While state and local genealogical societies teach skills and methods for determining one's lineage, one may take some primary

investigative steps on his own. Talk to older relatives, look for letters and photographs nestled in the attic, examine old family records, such as prayerbooks, bibles, wills, medical certificates, immigration documents. Look up church records. Research may make it necessary to travel to areas where relatives once lived. If members of your family were buried there, contacting the local cemeteries may supply an exact date of birth and death, and lead to local newspaper obituaries. Once basic information is secured, experts in the field may be contacted. Sources which may provide assistance include the National Genealogical Society, the National Archives and Record Service, the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The Mormon Church has a genealogical library covering more than one billion names, however, its content of data pertaining to Lithuanian ancestry is rather limited. While the Mormon Church has a genealogical library covering more than one billion names, however, its content of data pertaining to Lithuanian ancestry is rather limited. While the Mormon Library will not conduct research for you, their personnel will provide information about their facilities at the Salt Lake City Library and their 231 worldwide branches. Non-governmental institutions frequently charge a fee for the conduct of research. Excellent Lithuanian sources for finding one's roots are the Consulate General of Lithuania, 41 West 82nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10024, and the two largest Lithuanian - American fraternal societies: The Lithuanian Alliance of America at 307 West 30th St., New York, N.Y. 1001, and the Lithuanian Catholic Alliance of America, 71-73 S. Washington St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18973. **S.A.G.**

A conversational course in Lithuanian, using audio-visual methods, is being planned in the Chicago area in January, 1978. It is open for all persons who have no knowledge of Lithuanian. Interested persons should call Ginta Pudymaitis (312-598-9124), giving their preferred day, time, and location (at the Jesuit Youth Center or out in a suburb). Antanas Saulaitis, S.J.

Somebody Else-ism. "Gee, if only I had the time! Somebody else will be able to do it!" Sounds familiar? It should, it's been said by everyone at one time or another. Unfortunately, most of the time, these words are used to avoid a responsibility. Too often, the state of the Lithuanian community's affairs are affected by the avoidance of responsibility. Thus, events are poorly attended or badly organized. In any case, every Lithuanian suffers for it. Those attending events regularly get "turned off" by the lack of organizational professionalism and amount of enthusiasm shown. Those who legitimately have prior commitments elsewhere are angry that "good" events are held too rarely during the year. They too eventually

start "dropping out" of Lithuanian activity. Yet, most of us would like to see things done "THE RIGHT WAY." We are all critics, but few do anything more than just talk. Personally I can agree with those who state that many Lithuanian affairs come out second best to "American" ones. Should this be so? Of course not! One can argue about the "grass is greener on the other side" syndrome. However, there is a certain validity to the fact that organizational activities seem to be slowing down, and not growing. Money, enthusiasm and innovation are becoming harder and harder to foster. Why? The answer is **somebody else-ism!** The Lithuanian community is a micro-society and just as **any** society, if it is to maintain itself and continue to flourish, society members must have a responsibility toward the society. What kind of responsibility? **Self-involvement!** The squeaky wheel **does** get the grease, but only if it is heard! You don't like what is going on, voice your opinion! If you're not the organizer-type, support those who can best express your views. For all those "deadheads" you see "running" things, there are some capable people. But these "good" leaders cannot lead if there are no followers to enable them to make changes. Too many bright leaders have quit Lithuanian activity because they thought they were "doing battle" by themselves. Ignorance and incompetence are rewarded by apathy and negligence. Responsible change means responsible involvement. Remember the old Lithuanian proverb: "The way you make your bed, determines how you will sleep in it!" (*Kaip pasiklosi, taip ir išmiegosi!*). **Vytautas Jurgėla**

In the fall of 1975, the Lithuanian Scout Association established the **Fund for Lithuanian Scouting** (Lietuviškosios Skautybės Fondas). The purpose of the Fund is to raise money for the continued activities of the Lithuanian Boy and Girl Scouts in the free world. Specifically the interest earned through investments of the Fund will be used to foster scouting programs, to train junior troop and patrol leaders, and to help senior leaders develop new skills in the crafts, camping, pioneering and other related scouting fields. A board of trustees was set up: chairman — Česlovas Kiliulis; vicechairmen — Jurgis Gimbutas and Mrs. Florentina Kurgonas, treasurer — Kostas Nenortas, secretary — Mrs. Saulė Šatas, and member — Julius Špakevičius. A network of local representatives was set up in Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Elizabeth, N.J., Hartford, Los Angeles, New York, Waterbury, Conn., Worcester, Mass., Philadelphia, Rochester, N.Y., and Toronto, Canada. More recently, representatives were designated in Chicago, Ill., and Washington, D.C. as well as in England and Australia. As of December 31, 1976 the Fund has accumulated assets of \$19,717.55 (figures are not available yet for 1977). Tax-deductible donations may be sent to: Lietuviškosios Skautybės Fondas. 17 Tyler Rd., Lexington, Mass. 02173. **A.M.B.**

⁴ **The 65th National Convention of the Knights of Lithuania** will be held August 16th through 20th in Syracuse, N.Y. The host council will be 140 Syracuse. The council is in the process of planning a good and interesting convention; one that people will enjoy and be thankful that they had attended. "We Lithuanians are small in number. Let us work together for better harmony and unity among our people!" — are the sentiments of Chairman Frank Petrauskas. The Syracuse Lithuanians extend an open invitation to all Lithuanians to come and share with them, to enjoy with them good friendship. The convention motto is: "Upstate in 78 — Syracuse!" For more information contact the convention chairman: Frank Petrauskas, 201 Bennington Drive, Syracuse, New York 13205 (telephone: 315-492-0689).

Father **Casimir Pugevičius**, Executive Director of Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, recently returned from Belgrade, Yugoslavia, where he was sent by the Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) to present the case for human rights in Lithuania to participants at the **Belgrade Conference**. He met with U. S. Ambassador Scherer, with the Vatican representative, and with members of the Irish delegation. On the way home, Rev. Pugevičius met with Bishop Marcinkus, head of the Vatican Bank, and with Msgr. A. Bačkis of the Vatican Secretariat of State, as well as with Lithuanian spokesmen in Germany and England.

On October 15th, under the leadership of Frackville's Evelyn Prep, a bit of Lithuania came alive in central Pennsylvania during the extremely successful **Lithuanian Day** at the **Capital City Mall**, sponsored by the Knights of Lithuania Anthracite Council No. 144 and Hess of Camp Hill. Various delegations from Schuylkill, Northumberland, Carbon, and Luzerne Counties attended the gala affair, first of its kind in the Harrisburg area to focus on Lithuanian customs. Old coal region friends and neighbors were thrilled by the beautiful Lithuanian displays and the tasty Lithuanian food that was served by Knights of Lithuania members. Entertainment at the mall featured the Lithuanian National Kalvelis Folklore Dance Group under the leadership of Al Vitkauskas, and a choral group that included local Knights of Lithuania members, led by Stanley Vaičaitis of Frackville and Mary Koons of Shenandoah, Pa. Eleanor Vaičaitis of Frackville was the mistress of ceremonies, and the Frackville committee members were Evelyn Prep, general chairman; Victor Prep, co-chairman; Anna Butts, food chairman; Elsie Kosmisky, sales chairman; Clem Kosmisky, Esther Bartashus, Margaret Zelonis, and Anna Brennan. Carole Grabauskas of Harrisburg read a proclamation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives presented by State Representative James A. Goodman of Mahanoy City.

EVENTS

S. Stallone of "Rocky" fame is working on a movie to be called "F.I.S.T." In it, the character he plays, a Hungarian American named Johnny Kovak, marries a Lithuanian girl named Anna Zerinskas. In preparation for the movie, the set director came to Chicago to Marquette Park to get background information for the "Lithuanian girl's" home and also for the wedding scene in the movie. **Raymond Silkaitis** acted as consultant for the Lithuanian background and ethnic artifacts. Mr. Silkaitis, his wife Kaysa and brother Ed were also hired as extras for the movie's wedding scene. Nine other young Lithuanians from the Chicago area were hired as extras for the wedding scene. They played Lithuanian wedding guests. The Lithuanian extras traveled to Iowa in June for the filming. This is the first that a character in an American movie has been identified as a Lithuanian. **Kristina Silkaitis** How many Lithuanians live in **Phoenix, Arizona**? It's difficult question to answer, because unless the Lithuanians associate with one another it would be difficult to find them in this city of 750,000. According to the **Arizonos Lietuvis** (Lithuanian of Arizona), published by the Lithuanian Catholic Mission, there are 90 persons in Phoenix who were born in Lithuania. Among them are 30 representatives of the old emigration and 60 of the new. They are senior citizens, 40 of them are over 80 years of age. Phoenix and its environs (including Tucson) has another 150 residents of the American-born Lithuanian group. Most of them have formed mixed families. Some of them speak, but do not write Lithuanian. Others understand a little of the language. And still others are merely aware that they have Lithuanian surnames. And then there are some who do not understand that they are Lithuanians. For example, a certain Mr. Waičelunas thinks that he is Polish. **J. V.**

The Knights of Lithuania sponsored a **Human Rights Vigil for Lithuania** at the Church of the Transfiguration, Maspeth, N.Y. A similar vigil was held at Holy Trinity Church, Newark, N.J. Both vigils were held on October 15. The following day the Church of Our Lady of Sorrows, Kearny, N.J., was the site of a Human Rights Day. All were initiated by the Knights of Lithuania. "We hope that this will not be a K of L exclusive", said a spokesman for the knights. "We hope that more and more groups and parishes will take hold of the idea of arranging such vigils". Suggestions for format are available from the Knights of Lithuania, Lithuanian Affairs Committee, 351 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207.

The Chicago Lithuanian Women's Guild sponsored an exhibit honoring **Michael Vaidyla**, beginning with a reception on Sunday, September 25, at the Balzekas

Museum of Culture. The exhibit ran through the month of October. Mr. Vaidyla was editor of "Sandara" weekly newspaper and was a long-time treasurer of the Lithuanian American Council, an organization working for the freedom of Lithuania. He visited Washington many times and met with presidents and vice presidents. He was also very active with the Lithuanian Alliance of America. Mr. Vaidyla was admitted to the Hall of Fame by the late Mayor Richard J. Daley in 1968 and was named Man of Chicago. The Museum exhibits consisted of the Vytautas the Great Medal he received for his efforts for the freedom of Lithuania, one of the highest honors to be bestowed, one of his diaries, photographs and various citations and papers. Mrs. Aldona Olis was chairman of the exhibit. **Lithuanian Museum Review.**

The **Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc.** has a supply of posters like the ones which appeared at the recent Baltic Human Rights Rally. Printed, 2' x 3', the posters bear a life-size portrait of Nijolė Sadūnaitė, who is serving a three-year term in Soviet labor camps for distribution of religious literature, and the motto: "Human Rights for Sadūnaitė and Lithuania". The poster is suitable for display in churches, halls, meeting rooms, or as a personal reminder at home. The poster can be obtained by sending a tax-deductible donation of any size to L.C.R.A., 351 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207.

The **Lithuanian Priests' League of America**, with a dues-paying membership of two hundred clergy, held its 68th annual convention at the retreat house of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Putnam, Conn., on October 12 - 13. The theme of the conclave was "Spiritual Renewal — The Future of the Lithuanian Parish". The key-noter was Brother Ronald Paquariello, S.T.D., President of the Catholic Conference on Ethnic and Neighborhood Affairs, who spoke on the plight of national parishes today. The president of the Lithuanian Priests' League, founded in 1909 as a national council of Lithuanian American clergymen, is Rev. Dr. Zenonas Smilga, S.T.L., of Middletown, Conn. **K. P.**

On October 8th a Lithuanian dinner and social was held at Stephen Foster Memorial on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh. Its purpose was twofold: to bring Lithuanians together socially, and to raise money. The money is to be put into a fund to pay for the upkeep of the linen walls of the **Lithuanian Room** of the **University of Pittsburgh**. They were woven by Mrs. Tamošaitis of Canada. The dinner was very successful in meeting both goals, as 165 people attended. The committee chaired by Robert Medonis is undergoing a successful renewal to preserve and maintain the beauty of the Lithuanian Room. A new "Vargo Mokykla" was unveiled at the dinner and will be placed in the room. **Marlene Aglinskas**

The **Ninth Congress of the Lithuanian Catholic Academic Federation Ateitis (Ateitininkai)** was held in Cleveland on September 1 - 4th. The sessions were attended by alumni, students and high school students. Among the numerous clergy were bishops V. Brizgys, K. Salatka, and A. Deksnys. Among prominent laity in the ranks of the Ateitininkai the following activists and scholars were present: Dr. A. Damušis, Dr. P. Kisielius, Prof. S. Sužiedėlis, Prof. B. Vitkus, Prof. A. Rubšys, Rev. Dr. K. Bučmys, Rev. Dr. K. Trimakas, Dr. K. Keblys, J. Nainys, and others. The Congress deliberated on the Federation's constitution, the maintenance of ties among members scattered throughout the Western World, organization publications and press, and various internal matters. The courage of Lithuanian Catholics in the occupied homeland was lauded. The Congress heard A. Mikulskis' specially composed **Missa**, sung by the Čiurlionis Ensemble. Algirdas Landsbergis' play "Šventas narvas" (Sacred Cage) was performed for the benefit of the Congress.

Garsas, the official monthly organ of the Lithuanian Catholic Alliance, recently observed its 60th anniversary. Founded on May 17, 1917, **Garsas** was the major Catholic newspaper among Lithuanian Americans during its first ten years. The editors have been Julius Kaupas (1917-18), Leonardas Šimutis (1918-1926), and **Matas Zujus** (1926 -). Mr. Zujus is the "dean of Lithuanian-language editors" in this country.

The first meeting of the season of the **Alliance of American Lithuanian Jews** was held on September 11 at noon at the UMHA, Broad and Pine Streets, Philadelphia. A "Gruss" (Greetings) from Israel with pictures by Ruth and Edwin Kabler was presented.

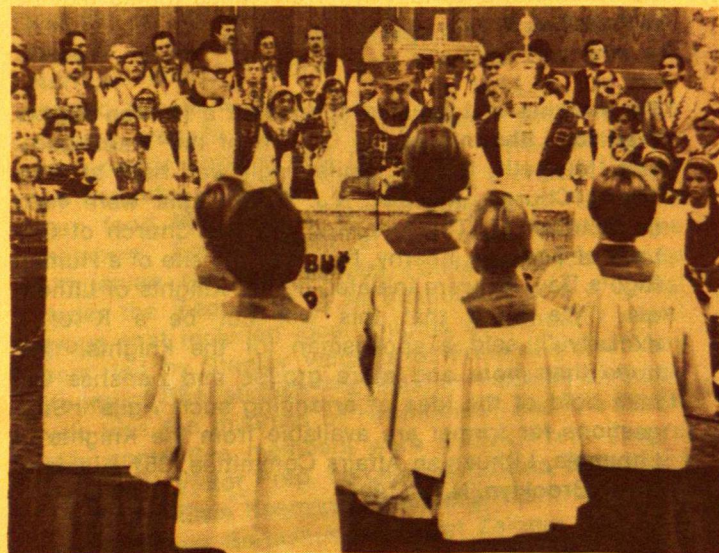
The following were elected **Mid Central District Officers** of the **Knights of Lithuania** for 1977-78: Rev. Walter Katarskis — spiritual advisor; Mrs. Aldona Ryan — president; Ruth Grasha, Ada Sinkewitz — vice presidents; Eloise Barczelly — recording secretary; Frank Zager — treasurer; Victor August and Mag dalena Smailis — trustees. Committee chairmen are: Bertha Janus (Catholic Action), Peter Luiza (Lithuanian Affairs), Mary Lucas (Cultural), Nellie Arunski (Ritual), Eleanor Mantz (Public Relations), and Andrew Rozger (Sergeant at Arms).

On Sunday, October 16th, at St. Casimir's Hall in **South Philadelphia** the **Knights of Lithuania** held their Annual Bazaar of all Lithuanian items. The main objective was to reintroduce the Lithuanian Americans of the Philadelphia area to their heritage. Since all the ethnic awareness programs were so successful during the Bicentennial year Council Three of the K. of L.

6 felt that an affair of this kind was a fun way of reminding people of their "Roots" rather than a stuffy academic approach. The Bazaar drew many people who do not necessarily join any particular group but who make contact to get items or information about Lithuania. Lithuanian foods and pastries were served. There were exhibits, live folk art demonstrations and games for children. Lithuanian music was provided by Jonas Puodžiūnas. **Dianne Drumastas**

A wide center for Lithuanian ethnic activity is once again showing signs of renewed life. The defunct organization of the Knights of Lithuania in Scranton, Pa. was resurrected as Council 74. When a native of Scranton, **Sister Virginia Marie Vytell (Vaitelevičiūtė)** was honored at the Public Library on the occasion of the publication of her book, **Praise the Lord, All You Nations**. As active interest was shown both by Lithuanians and people of other origins in a book dealing with Lithuania's people. A few months later the residents of Scranton and nearby towns responded wholeheartedly when Lithuanian language courses were initiated in the same library. In fact, the large numbers attending made it necessary to transfer the three classes to St. Joseph's parish school hall. The pastor, Rev. Michael Ozalas, graciously extended permission to the two instructors Sister Virginia Marie and Eva Kazokas, the local president of the K. of L., to use the school hall. The courses are free and available to anyone who would like to take advantage of the offer. **Sister Virginia Marie, CJC.**

The annual conference of the **Lithuanian Catholic Academy of Sciences**, was held on November 6th at the Convent of the Immaculate Conception, Putnam, Connecticut.



Bishop Vincentas Brizgys celebrates the High Mass, assisted by 22 priests, during the Ateitis Federation Congress in Cleveland, Ohio. Photo by Jonas Urbonas

Kris Kringle's Kitchen, operated by the Krisinger family in Ida Grove, Iowa, carries a Christmas theme throughout the year. Mrs. **Krisinger**, nee **Didžpetrytė**, is adding Lithuanian Christmas ornaments to enhance the theme. **J. D.**

Dr. Emelia J. Girytas was recently honored by Mary Thompson Hospital, Chicago, for fifty years of service. Dr. Girytas graduated with three other women in her class from the University of Illinois. When she was admitted in 1938 to the American College of Surgeons it was a rare honor for woman. A former surgeon at Mary Thompson Hospital, she still serves as an emergency room physician one day a week. That's when she is not "keeping people in line" as medical director of the hospital, which is Chicago's second oldest.

Kurt Arden, performing at Circus Hotel in Las Vegas, with his trained poodles, is a native of Lithuania. His original surname is Šepokas and he is proud of his heritage. Mr. Arden has covered the entertainment circuit of this and other countries with his troupe, which consists of his wife, daughter, and their trained poodles. **J. D.**

Did you know that during the Vietnam War, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul General in Hanoi was **J. M. Ludžius**, an English-born, second-generation Lithuanian? — Did you know that Father Dominic Valenti, Brooklyn-born Italo-American, with no Lithuanian blood in his veins, speaks Lithuanian flawlessly and is pledged as a priest to serve the Lithuanian people? **Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc.**

"Hang around actress **Rūta Lee** for a while and life turns into a pep rally with Miss Lee as cheerleader," wrote Charles Staff of the *Indianapolis News* (October 26, 1977). Commenting on her appearance in the comedy "Goodbye Charlie" at the Beef 'n' Boards Dinner Theater, Indianapolis, Ind., Charles Staff called the Montreal-born actress (Rūta Mary Kilmonis) "a blonde bundle of energy." Besides her marriage of a year-and-a-half to Texas businessman Webb Lowe and her career, Ruta Lee devotes much time to the Thalian Society of which she is chairman of the board. Made up of Hollywood personalities, the society was founded to provide services for mentally retarded children. Miss Lee explained that she keeps her tours short now so that she can spend time with her husband. "I'm practically a new bride, or I feel like one, so it's home to protect the marriage. I had three goals: An Oscar, a Broadway show and a husband. Now I have two".

⁷The October 27, 1977 edition of the **Evening Bulletin** (Philadelphia) carried Rev. Casimir Pugevičius' rebuttal to a statement printed in the paper that there was something wrong with "referring to ourselves as German-Americans, Italian-Americans, etc." Our BRIDGES regular contributor wrote: "I happen to have been born in this country of Lithuanian parents. I was fortunate to be raised in a large Lithuanian neighborhood where everyone knew everyone else, and it was safe to be out after dark. I had a couple of years in the neighborhood public school and then transferred to a Lithuanian parochial school. (Rev. Pugevičius grew up in Baltimore — the Ed.) I feel I can identify with a thousand years of Lithuanian history just as I can identify with two hundred years of American history. Nor am I the worse for all that." Rev. Pugevičius admitted: "There was a time when I succumbed to a subtle kind of pressure to feel uncomfortable with my ethnicity". And then pointed out: "However, the more I learned about my own roots, the more I could appreciate other people, and their viewpoints. Now I feel quite comfortable with both sides of the hyphen. I don't need to put anyone else down on ethnic grounds, because I see similarities as well as differences".

Walter (Gates) Grigaitis, arranger, composer and pianist, died on November 27, 1977 in Germantown Hospital, Philadelphia. Known for his work with many rock'n'roll stars, Mr. Grigaitis was a pianist at Frank Palumbo's CR Club until he went into semi-retirement three years ago. His father, the late Walter K. Grigaitis, Sr., was a former conductor with the Philadelphia Opera company and the Pennsylvania Grand Opera Company. In the late 1950's, Mr. Grigaitis conducted his own orchestra at the Warwick in Philadelphia. He wrote several songs, including "My Pa Pa" and "Red Top," which were recorded on the Swan label. In the early 1960's Mr. Grigaitis was with Swan Records and did arrangements for Chubby Checker, Bobby Vinton, The Supremes, Freddie (Boom Boom) Cannon, Gene Pitney and others.

Thomas Labanuskas of 3307 So. Litanica Ave., Chicago, was named "Executive of the Day" by Chicago FM radio station WEFM. The Lithuanian funeral director was selected from among professionals and business executives in the Chicago area.

The world's ninth ranked male **tennis player, Vitas Gerulaitis**, was the subject of a recent feature article in *Sports Illustrated*. Entitled "It's Veni, Vidi, Vici for Vitas", the feature article with photos pointed out the ascendancy of Vitas in the pro-tennis world, his life style and his Lithuanian background. The 23-year old Vitas, who at times practices up to six hours a day, according to the article, "has all the ingredients, everyone agrees, to reach the top". Winner of the Italian Open and a semifinalist at Wimbledon where

he played Bjorn Borg, the article stated "that match elevated Gerulaitis to new heights . . . losing in an epic five set struggle that even people with long memories say may well have been the best in Wimbledon history". With Adriano Panatta, he was second in the world championship tennis doubles tournament. Earning close to half a million dollars this year, Vitas, who attended Columbia University for a few months before turning pro, has a two year \$240,000 contract

with the WTT Indiana Loves a themselves Vitas' G-Men. His teammate on the Indiana Lov the *Sports Illustrated* article as "a young man at ease in elegant surroundings," Vitas has a \$250,000 Lond Island home with a tennis court, sauna and a swimmig pool in the shape of a tennis racket. He buys his clothes in Paris and Rio and owns \$164,000 worth of automobiles — two Rolls Royces, a Mercedes 450SL and a Porsche 914. He is also angling for a modeling contract. Noting that Vitas was named "after Vytautas, a 15th century Lithuanian king, and the let balls always seem to fall right for him", the article emphasized the influence of Vitas' father, Vitas Sr., who was tennis champion of Lithuania in 1938 and then won the Baltic championship. The article also pointed out that the elder Gerulaitis had "fled Lithuania and the Russians in 1944 and 5 years later emigrated to the U.S." A. M.



Vitas Gerulaitis, Sr. proudly looks at photo of his son taken at the Italian Open 1977 which proclaimed V. G. Champ!

THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY

"Can a mentally ill person shake the foundations of the Soviet State? How unsure of itself must this state be when it considers all who have their own ideas either 'mentally ill' or enemies of the state." **Yosip Terelja**, Ukrainian poet and political prisoner, quoted in **Boston Globe**, August 17, 1977.

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