

BRIDGES

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Plus... more information.



Traditional Lithuanian Folk Art Erected/Standing In Memorial To Those Who Lost Their Lives At The Television Tower One Year Ago (January 1991).

To our readers:

We extend a sincere "thank you" to the Cleveland, Ohio; the Brighton Park (Chicago), Illinois; and the East St. Louis (Illinois) Chapters of the Lithuanian American Community; as well as to Ms. Valerie M. Hannon of Groton, Massachusetts; all for their recent, kind, contributions. We have forwarded those contributions to the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc. (the publisher of **BRIDGES**; and which is responsible for all financial activities related to this publication).

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Let's welcome these positive changes: Direct air service to Vilnius by three, yes, three, different, international carriers; and direct dial telephone service (no operators required!) to Lithuania. (More information about all of these new developments are in this issue.)

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The "world turned upside down". Ms. Ašta Banionis, Director of the Government Affairs Office, Lithuanian American Community, Inc., writes, in this issue, that Lithuanians recently began, and are continuing, a massive humanitarian aid effort for Russia. How long ago did we see Gorbachev imposing an "economic blockade" against Lithuania? Wasn't it about a million years ago? (Less than two years ago? Who would believe it!)

Gorbachev is gone. The Soviet Union is gone. Yet, Lithuanians, instead of sitting back, to rest; after having been the catalyst for all of that change, are, instead, again, leading the rest of the world, by example!

Should we be proud of our heritage? You bet - eminently proud!

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Mr. Vytautas Maciunas, President of the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc., has advised that the LAC will actively work towards establishing increased "lines of communications" between Lithuanians and Lithuanian Americans; so that we, Lithuanian Americans, can focus, and increase, direct assistance to Lithuania.

Lithuanians need our talents and our expertise - not just money; and many of us are willing - even anxious - to offer such.

Yet, without clear, delineated paths, contacts and priorities, much effort will be wasted; and frustration will grow.

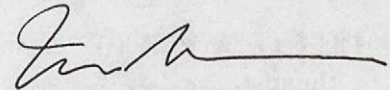
So, this editor welcomes Mr. Maciunas'

announcement; and this editor is confident that many of the readers of this publication do, as well.

We can all, in our own ways, help Lithuania at this time of need; and we are ready to meet the challenges laid before us.

What other "mission" is there which is so close to our hearts; so worthy of support; and which promises such a mighty return for our efforts? I can think of none.

Time is of the essence; so let's get on with it!



Joseph Arlauskas
Editor

(Cover photo by Ms. Jane Cox)

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BRIDGES: Lithuanian-American News Journal serves as a link between Lithuanian Americans and their Lithuanian heritage (as well as a source of information for those interested in Lithuania and/or the activities/goals/background of Lithuanian Americans), by presenting items on Lithuanian culture, history, conditions in Lithuania, Lithuanian related events and personalities in America; and serves the aspirations of those who want to assist Lithuania's integration into the community of democratically governed, free market economic system, nations of the world.

Editor: Joseph Arlauskas

A Lithuanian Journal

*Various Observations While Travelling In Lithuania.
Conclusion: Lithuania, Our Lithuania. Live Forever, Be Free.*

by Jane Cox

(Editor's Note: Ms. Cox was featured in a story in our last issue of *BRIDGES*; where she was identified as the recipient of the 1991 "Youth Award"; which is one of the five awards presented in the Pennsylvania Governor's Heritage Awards program. Sixteen year old Ms. Cox wrote this diary while travelling in Lithuania last fall. The photos accompanying this piece were all taken by Ms. Cox, during that visit. It should be noted that our cover photo on the last issue of *BRIDGES* was also taken by Ms. Cox, during this same trip.)

September 12, 1991:

It's not hard to understand how the forests of Lithuania have inspired her poets for centuries, nor is it hard to understand why her land has always been worshipped by her people.

What is hard to understand is how some of the worst atrocities and some of the worst crimes against humanity this century could have taken place in such a beautiful part of the world. It is hard to understand that the train tracks one sees running along deep, green birch forests, through flowery meadows and peaceful villages, forty and fifty years ago carried millions to their deaths in cold, bleak, hunger - and disease - ridden camps both many miles east and many miles west of here.

It is harder still to believe how, less than one month ago,

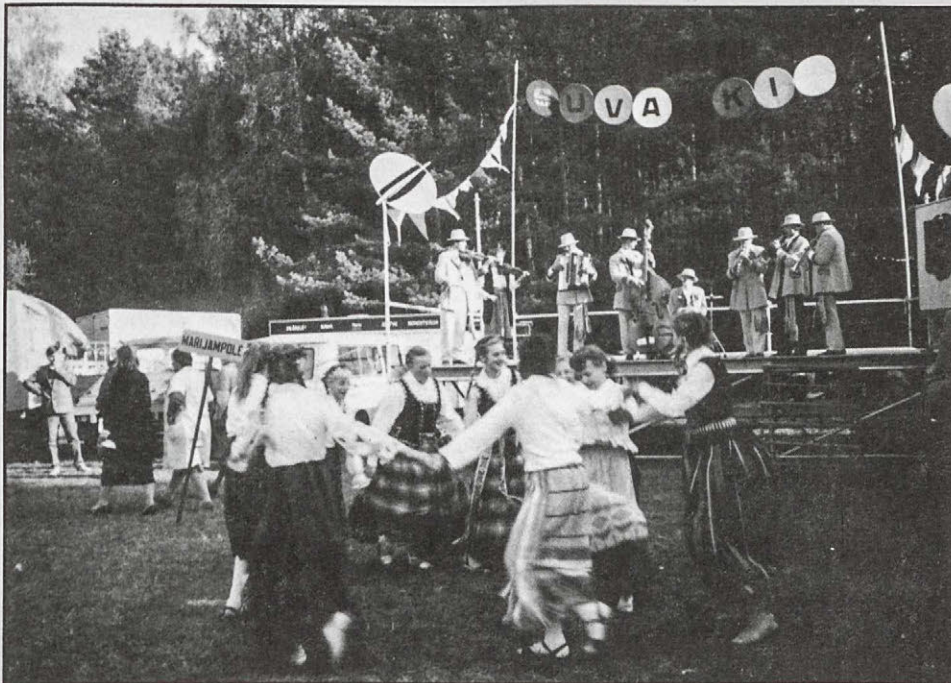
there was terror and death on the streets of this beautiful, old city.

September 14:

I'm sitting under a clear, blue, sunny sky with a few white clouds, under birches and firs, amidst high grasses, bees, chirping birds and a light wind. We are about twenty minutes from Vilnius in an area where people from the city have their *sodai*, or gardens. Like many others, the family I'm staying with lives in an apartment in the city. These gardens, each with its own little house, are a kind of refuge where one can grow vegetables (for most, the only source of vegetables and even then only during the few warm growing months), plant flowers (Lithuanians love flowers), swim, walk in the woods, fish and just be away from the city in a quiet, peaceful, beautiful place.

Life here is somewhat difficult (cold winters, sparse stores, long lines, shortages of almost everything), but people seem to be determined to stick it out. "Life has always been hard. It will be harder in the first few

months of independence. but we will survive. we want to be free. Next time you come, you will see, it will be beautiful. It will get worse and then it will get better. you will see...." The message is repeated over and over. The people have each other, they have their pride in Lithuania's culture and history, and they have their



Young and old, participate in fair activities celebrating harvest; in Vingis Park, Vilnius.

dream of a truly free and even more beautiful *Lietuva*.

September 15:

There are many similarities and many differences between life here and in the U.S. People walk more here and are closer to nature. It seems to be a more human, simpler lifestyle. There is less materialism, city streets are clean and fairly safe. Flowers and other aspects of nature play a major role in daily life. Vilnius is beautiful, from its ancient building to its flowing rivers, forested city parks, and flower-filled plazas.

Salom ja Neris, the school which I attend with Dovile, the daughter of the family I'm staying with, is very similar to my high school in the U.S. Teachers and students talk and joke with each other and seem to be on friendly, human terms. The schools includes kindergarten through grade 12. It seems to be fairly decent learning and socializing environment.

September 16:

Today, Dovile and I went to the Parliament Building, where Lithuania's government is housed and where people have, time and again, struggled to prevent Soviet tanks and soldiers from entering. The surrounding streets and bridges are blockaded, as is the actual building, with anything people could find--old trucks, barbed wire, huge rocks, concrete slabs and squares. These barricades are covered with poems, graffiti, posters and memorabilia, cartoons and crosses. The writing on these things is in Russian, German, Lithuanian, English and Spanish. Posters, graffiti and poems speak of the martyrs, of freedom, of culture, of Soviet repression, of patriotism and of future martyrdom. Posters thanked Iceland (the first to recognize the independence of Lithuania) and they called for the protection of Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis and of the Lithuanian people. Others urged Soviet "fascist tanks" to leave. Written in graffiti on the first set of barricades is *Lietuvos Sirdis* - the heart (or start) of Lithuania. This best describes



Lithuanians make, and enjoy, their folk music at a harvest festival.

the spirit of the parliament building complex; an incredible, powerful place where the spirit of Lithuania's struggle is alive and strong.

September 19:

Today marks one month since the Soviet coup which temporarily knocked Gorbachev out of power, sent waves of terror throughout the world and changed the march of history. One month ago today tanks rolled and soldiers marched through the beautiful old cities of what was once called the Soviet Union. The events that followed would capture the world's attention for days and weeks, and would bring an end to the Soviet Union faster than anyone thought it would happen. Although one doesn't have to go far to know that this country just two weeks ago was occupied by another, things are fairly peaceful and calm here--although tensions and hardships still exist. It is hard to believe that just one month ago, tanks, soldiers with guns, death and terror loomed in the streets of this and other beautiful old cities throughout the land. Things seems so peaceful and relatively calms. Yet hardships exist and tensions are everywhere. Many Russians and Poles don't want Lithuanian independence. There is tension between Lithuanians, and across ethnic groups.

September 26:

Today, Marija (Dovile's mother) and I went to the Church of St. Peter and Paul (šv. Petro ir Povilo bažnyčia), said to be one of the prettiest churches in Vilnius. However true that may be, it was the prettiest church I have ever seen. The walls and ceiling were all sculptured, intricately carved stone, with some paintings here and there. The sculptures were mostly religious, with all sorts of scenes, portrayals of people, and designs. It was just incredible. As I walked in, I was just astounded at the splendor and intricacy all around. As we walked away from the church, we passed what is still a Soviet army regional headquarters. Marija took pictures of them with my camera. One soldier on guard outside of the compound commented to her, in Russian, "perhaps now →

you'll give us the film?" Marija answered, "No, you'll give us your film."

We then visited a beautiful cemetery, full of wooded hills, flowers, and traditional Lithuanian carvings. We went to the graves of the seven border guards killed on July 31st, and to the graves of those who died on January 13, 1991. The graves were obviously well-cared for, covered with flowers, plants, candles, crosses, flags, and other Lithuanian national patriotic symbols. It was beautiful and heartbreaking. We met the parents of one of the young men killed on January 13th. There were going to tend his grave; put flowers on it and light candles. Tears came so easily as we watched them make sure that life and beauty remained at their son's final resting place. He was eighteen years old, their only son, halfway through his 12th grade in high school when he was cut down as he peacefully defended his country and her freedom.

September 28:

We're on the family farm, not far from Siluva, in Tytuvėnai. Marija and twelve siblings grew up here. Their parents lived here up until their deaths three years ago. The family continues to maintain the farm to an extent. It's beautiful and peaceful, surrounded by rolling fields, rarely traveled dirt roads, animals, spacious skies, other farms and woods. It also smells wonderful here: pure, natural and clean. Marija's family has come together this weekend to work on the farm. Sisters, cousins, brothers, in-laws, and I are here, gathering and picking apples, plums, potatoes. The apples will be taken over to a nearby farm to be pressed into cider. We're also working on the house, cooking, eating, talking and telling stories, joking, and laughing.

A sense of history is very present here. This is where and how this family all of our Lithuanian ancestors lived and had lived for centuries. The father of the family was a *savanoris*, a partisan-volunteer (literally, of his own will), who fought Czarist Russian occupation of Lithuania in the early 1900's. One can just



A traditional Lithuanian wagon in use during harvest festival

imagine the violence, the fear, the tragedy, the atrocities and the horror which has had haunted this land and these farms: the raids on the homes by Nazi and Soviet soldiers, the trains which rumbled through the prairie, night after night, on the way either to Siberia or to Hitler's death camps, the battles which have raged for centuries over this land. And yet, much like their forefathers did centuries ago, these people still live and work here. They grow crops, raise children, and ride horse-driven hay wagons where trains once carried people to their deaths, where bullets once flew and so much blood has been shed.

October 4:

Back in Vilnius again, I've found that some of the things I love doing are walking through the *senamiestis*, the old city, sitting in the plaza or riding the trolley bus. It's become interesting and enjoyable just to observe everyone inside and outside, and to watch daily life as I ride, walk or sit. Vilnius is a wonderful city for strolling, riding, and just relaxing. There's so much life everywhere, so many people walking and riding buses that it's pleasurable just to be out.

I would like to end these recollections by quoting from President Landsbergis' speech at the closing ceremony of the Ciurlionis International Music Contest in early October.

"I was wondering, if you know what a beautiful thing music is. Obviously you do or you wouldn't be here. But do you know this fact generally or specifically? In music is one's ears and one's fingers--and between the two is one's heart. In music, is all of one's love. Music is full of life and love. It is a much more beautiful thing than politics."

I bring up President Landsbergis' comments because Lithuania is often called *dainava*, the land of song. The songs of Lithuania, those which came to have special meaning to me during my time there, will always echo in my heart and Lithuania, her land, her cities, her people and especially my

friends there, will always hold a special place in my heart and in my memory.



Street scene in "old city" section of Vilnius.

As a popular Lithuanian song puts it, "Aš Čia Gyva," "I Am Alive Here." Lithuania is alive in all of the Saturday schools, churches, homes and community centers across America and all over the world. Of course, she is alive in our dreams, our hopes, our memories, and in our hearts and minds. Let us keep her alive always.

(Editor's Note: We have included, elsewhere in this issue, even more photos taken by Ms. Cox; all of which demonstrate the beauty of Lithuania; all of which confirm that to visit Lithuania is to meet with and to share in the lives of people who have been so burdened, for so long - but people who have more joy, hope and optimism than many of us here! Lithuania may not, now, have many of the "creature comforts" we take for granted; but how much are/can such things be "missed" in the beautiful, creative, joyful and thoroughly optimistic environment that these photos show us exists in Lithuania!) □

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Isn't this a perfect way to help open up a dialogue on issues between Lithuanians and Lithuanian Americans?

From The Lithuanian Press . . .

Selected items excerpted from the Lithuanian Press in America; which should be of interest to our readers. Compiled and Translated by Ms. Ramune Kubilius.

On December 21st, local New York radio broadcast the Metropolitan Opera's presentation of the opera "Idomeneo" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Two of the title roles were sung by singers of Lithuanian descent: Jane Shaulis (Janina Saulys) and Carol Veness (Karolina Vysniauskas). (*Darbininkas*, 12/20/91)

Viewers of the 25th season of the classic holiday ballet "The Nutcracker" in Chicago's Arie Crown Theatre were able to see two Lithuanian Opera and Ballet Company dancers. Dancers Jolanta Valieka and Petras Skirmantas were invited to dance in the 12 performances, and their performance in the snow scene received good reviews from audience and critics alike. (*Draugas*, 1/3/92)

The *National Geographic Society* map director Bill Gotthardt bemoans the rapid political changes which make world mapmaking almost impossible. In some cases place names are returning to names of 300 years ago. 42 maps will have to be changed. In Society maps: Estonia will be brown, Latvia orange, Lithuania green. (*Draugas*, 12/19/91)

World Literature Today covers the literature of the ever changing political scene. The quarterly is edited by Prof. Ivar Ivask of the University of Oklahoma. Recent issues have covered the literature of Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Czechoslovakia and other countries. World Literature Today, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73019. (*Draugas*, 12/21/91)

Some Miami Lithuanian American Citizens' Club members have founded "S.O.S. Lithuania, Inc.". About 200 people attended an October Casino Night which collected funds to send medical instruments to Lithuania. The organization was lucky in getting help and donations of local businesses, a local Catholic parish provided the facilities and individuals (local artists and others) organized the winnings of the evening. (*Draugas*, 12/7/91)

As of the middle of January 1992, Swiss Air is scheduled to fly two days a week (Thursdays and Sundays) between Zurich, Switzerland and Vilnius, Lithuania. Austria's airline is scheduled to fly Vienna-

Vilnius on Mondays and Fridays, and SAS will fly Copenhagen-Vilnius Tuesdays and Saturdays. The flights are the first joint project of the European Quality Alliance. (*Darbininkas*, 12/27/91)

About a year ago, the printing press at *Draugas* published a small printing (50 copies) of an album of classical piano compositions. The 112 page album, with a cover illustrated by Dana Varaneckas and engraved by Kazys Skaisgiris, is simply entitled "18 Compositions for Piano". Its composer, Tadas Navickas of Coueur d'Alen, Idaho, previously had composed "35 Compositions for Piano" in 1986 and "20 Compositions for Piano" in 1987. One musician has seen similarities in Navickas' compositions to Norwegian Edward Grieg; someone else sees similarities to Chopin's poetic style. The composer has dedicated two pieces in the 3rd album to two Catholic holy places in Lithuania-Pazaislis and Pivasiunai, which honor Mary, Mother of God. A third piece honors Vilnius Archbishop Julijonas Steponavicius. (*Excerpted and translated from Kazimieras M. Puskorius article in Draugas*, 12/7/91)

Professor Dr. Vytautas Bieliauskas, president of the World Lithuanian Community spent the latter half of December 1991 in South America. During his visit there, he was scheduled to visit with Lithuanian Community leaders in San Paulo Brazil, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Montevideo, Uruguay. He was also scheduled to attend opening ceremonies of the Lithuanian World Youth Congress, taking place in Buenos Aires. (*Draugas*, 12/11/91)

(Elections of the new officers of the World Lithuanian Youth Association were to take place at the Youth Congress; elections of the new World Lithuanian Community officers are scheduled to take place at a weeklong conference, scheduled for the week before the IX Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival in Chicago, IL, July 5, 1992. - RK)

The Lithuanian Heritage: The Many Views of Youth is a book about the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture and its effect on young people. The book was edited by Dr. Dana Raciunas, Rev. Antanas Saulaitis, S.J., and Dr. Marija Stankus-Saulaitis. The 212 page book includes a history of the museum, Lithuanian ➡

poetry (and translations), various quotes of Lithuanian American young people. (*Draugas*, 12/13/91)

World Monitor in its December 1991 issue featured an article by journalist John Budris entitled "Orchestrating Freedom" in which the author implies that music professor-composer President Vytautas Landsbergis is conducting Lithuania's freedom orchestra.

Journalist John Budris is the son of Jonas Budris, Lithuania's Consul General in New York in the years 1936-1951. The journalist's comments about events in Lithuania have been heard on National Public Radio, his articles have appeared in Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, and elsewhere. (*Draugas*, 12/13/91)

A meeting of the American Lithuanian Professionals Association took place December 8th in a suburb of Chicago. The association, which now has over 80 members, was begun October 1990. It seeks to keep in touch with American Lithuanian professional and technical organizations; and work out ways for the exchange of information between U.S. and Lithuania's professionals. For more information about the organization, contact Dr. Raimundas Matulionis, College of Engineering, University of Wisconsin, 432 North Lake Street, Madison, WI 53706, tel. 608-263-3372. (*Draugas*)

As of January 6, 1992, the American Embassy in Vilnius, Lithuania will accept mailed applications for visas (non emigration) to the United States. Phone calls or personal visits should not be made since forms and instructions will be sent for completion, and travel plans should not be made until the visas are received. The visas will be processed in the order they are received by the American Embassy to Lithuanian citizens and permanent residents. By U.S. law, the recipients of the visas are not permitted to seek employment in the United States, and must return to Lithuania at the time of the visa's expiration. (*Draugas*, 1/4/92)

The Sisters of St. Casimir celebrated 50 years of work in Argentina on November 23, 1991 in Avellaneda. The first sisters travelled to Argentina in October 1941. They were: Sisters Adorata, Ester and Rosana. At first they lived with a Lithuanian family, and by 1945 built their own convent. As of 1942, the sisters took over the teaching at the Ausros Vartai (Our Lady Gate of Dawn) Parish grade school, where they teach to this day, teaching over 400 pupils. The present principal at the school is Sister Nilda Varanauskas. The November celebratory Mass and program in the parish hall was attended by St. Casimir Congregation Mother Superior Sister Marilyn Kuzmickus from Chicago. The program included a summary of the sisters' work in Argentina, presented by teacher Laura Puglisi and a program of Argentinean

and Lithuanian dances and songs, including a song dedicated to St. Casimir. (*Teviskes Ziburiai*, 12/17/91)

S.O.S. Vaikai-Lithuanian Childrens Relief, Inc. helps Lithuania's orphans and those living under difficult physical and family circumstances. Recent projects have included the purchase and sending of hearing testing equipment and hearing aids, clothing, and other medical and dental diagnostic equipment. One recent fundraiser was the distribution of postcards with drawings of Lithuania's children on them. A contest had been conducted in Lithuania called "I am drawing Lithuania" (Piesiu Lietuva) and the best drawings were selected for distribution by postcards. In the United States S.O.S. chapter headquarters for the Midwest and West - S.O.S. Lithuania, Inc., 9187 Southwest 96th Street, Miami, FL 33176 and in New England and Canada - S.O.S. Vaikai-Lithuanian Childrens Relief, Inc., P.O. Box 497, South Boston, MA 02127. (*Draugas*, 12/11/91)

The U.S. Conference of Bishops is distributing the color videotape "A Time to Build", a one hour program which was shown in the U.S. on over 150 ABC-affiliated stations. The film depicts the rebirth of Christianity in the ruins left by the fall of Communism in Easter Europe: in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Lithuania.

In the Lithuanian portion of the program are interviews with Cardinal V. Sladkevicius and Catholic women's organization president in Lithuania, religious sister, Dr. Albina Pajarskis. Scenes of Lithuania's Hill of Crosses, the Vilnius Cathedral and other holy places are depicted as well. The Lithuanian Information Center (now re-absorbed into Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid - RK) of Brooklyn consulted on the Lithuanian portion of the program.

The videotape can be purchased for \$29.95 (plus \$3.50 mailing) from: USCC Publishing Services, 3211 Fourth Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017. Information can be obtained by calling 1-800-235-8722. (*Teviskes Ziburiai*, 12/17/91)

The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1991. On December 8th, its nomination committee awarded its "Excellence Award" to the founder of the museum, Stanley Balzekas Jr. The award in pervious years had been awarded to various Americans and American Lithuanians who have helped in the Lithuanian cause.

Various speakers honored the award recipient at the guests awards banquet, which took place at the newest downtown Chicago hotel - the Stouffer Riviere Hotel. Among the speakers was Lithuanian Honorary Consul, Vaclovas Klieza; Eileen Mackevich, Executive Producer, Humanities Festival; Jack Kahn, President of Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry; Francis Pettis, Executive Director of the Illinois Humanities Council. The Award was given to Mr. Balzekas by Ralph ➡

Newman, former Chairman of the Chicago Public Library Board. Stanley Balzekas was a member of the Board in the days when hot discussions were underway for the building or renovation of the new Central Library for the Chicago Public Library (The new building was finally built and dedicated in 1991.)

In his speech, Stanley Balzekas Jr. gave an overview of ethnic culture in the United States. In Chicago, it was commonly believed by politicians that ethnic groups (and their support?) is good politics, but not necessarily high culture. After John F. Kennedy's election, the great "melting pot theory" decreased in popularity. In founding the museum, he said he wanted to pay tribute to Lithuania's past, and also to the strides made in America by Lithuanian immigrants. The upkeep of the Museum requires many helping hands and loving hearts, he said, and he mentioned the Museum Director Val Ramonis, and other invaluable supporters and workers - Edward Mankus, Stase Semenas, Gailute Valiulis, Irene Norbut, Mary Stiblo and Eli Katauskas. (*Excerpted from J. Zygas article in Draugas, 12/13/91*)

(The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, formerly housed near the Balzekas family's auto dealership on South Archer Avenue in Chicago, for some years, is now headquartered in a former small private hospital at 6500 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60629. - RK)

(Lithuanian Provincial of Jesuits abroad, Rev. Antanas Saulaitis and other Lithuanian Jesuits, together with Jesuits in other countries have tried to support the Jesuits of Lithuania. One means has been to sponsor educational trips for their members for studies abroad. Two young Jesuit priests, for example, spent the Fall of 1991 in Chicago studying English as a Second Language at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The Jesuits now have other projects to support as well. - RK)

The Fall of 1991 marked the return of the Kaunas Jesuit-run boys' high school. The school, taken over by the Communists in the first year of post-World War II had been secularized and girls as well as boys were educated there. The name of the school became the 9th Middle School, later the Adomas Mickevicius Middle School. Now the school has been returned to the Jesuits and is renamed the Jesuit Beginning and Grade School (*Jezuitu pradine ir vidurine mokykla*).

The school will continue to teach boys and girls. Only in the first three classes, boys and girls are taught separately. The director of the school is Rev. Baniulis, S.J. Each grade will be taught religion as a subject. Mass for all students is held at the Kaunas Basilica, which was built in the 18th century. The Jesuit church has only recently been returned to the Catholics and is still undergoing renovation. In the post-war years, its organ was destroyed, which in pre-war years had been used in many Kaunas Radio broadcast organ concerts. The left altar, dedicated to Mary, was left intact. It is hoped that the renovation, including the refurbishing of

a statue of Mary, will be completed in time for Easter 1992. (*From Teviskes Ziburiai, 12/17/91*)

(The headquarters of the Jesuits in the U.S.: Jesuit Fathers of Della Strada, 2345 West 56th Street, Chicago, IL 60636. - RK)

Lithuanian Foundation - About 300 persons gathered in mid-November in Chicago at the annual Lithuanian Foundation banquet. The Foundation, which will celebrate its 30th anniversary on March 14, 1992, was established by Lithuanian American community activists who felt that such a foundation was needed as a source of funding for Lithuanian projects and supporting students of Lithuanian descent. (The Foundation works separately from the LAC and has its own Board of Directors, but it has supported the various Councils of the LAC and other LAC projects over the years. - RK)

Lithuanian Foundation President Algirdas Ostis announced that \$96,260 would be dispersed to 61 students. Those in attendance at the banquet were honored. 7 students from South America thus will have the opportunity to attend the Lithuania language high school in Lampertheim, Germany, *Vasario 16 High School*. 13 students from the United States and 41 from Lithuania will now receive some financial support for their course work in various universities.

The principal fund balance of the Lithuanian Foundation is now \$5.5 million dollars - the scholarships and other dispensed funds come from interest. Over the years a number of people have left money to the Lithuanian Foundation in their wills. (*Darbininkas, 12/13/91*)

The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. Human Services Council held its annual fundraiser dinner in Chicago on December 7th. About 100 persons gathered at the "Seklycia" Restaurant, met the area's alderman Virgil Johns, heard a short musical program, and Human Services Council president Birute Jasaitis speak about the work of the Council. Founded to help Lithuanian Americans (especially the elderly), the Council continues to serve meals on wheels, sponsor community events, feature Lithuania language lessons, etc. New recipients of the services recently have been visitors and permanent immigrants from Lithuania. Mrs. Jasaitis expressed deep gratitude to the volunteers who help keep the Council's center going, thanked the Lithuanian Foundation which funded \$6,000 in support of the Council's activities, and said she was pleasantly surprised that the latest fundraiser garnered \$12,000 in mailed donations from supportive Lithuanian Americans. (*Draugas, 12/10/91*)

The Our Lady of Perpetual Help Choir, Cleveland, Ohio, under the direction of Rita Kliorys, dedicated its Lithuanian Christmas hymns and songs record album and cassette on December 8th. The cost of producing the 1,000 cassettes and 300 record albums was over ➡

\$10,000. The choir also recorded hymns and songs for Easter in May, 1990; but the release of that album was held off, pending success of the Christmas album. Choir director Rita Kliorys indicated that Americans became used to seeing scenes of Lithuania; so they no longer thought "Lithuanian" was a religion or a disease. The time came to familiarize them with Lithuanian religious music as well. (Mrs. Kliorys was one of the directors in the 1991 Lithuanian Song Festival in Chicago and is well known for her work with Lithuanian choirs and musicians. - RK) The cost of the Christmas album is \$10 (plus \$2 postage) and is distributed by: Pr. Razgaitis, 6755 Parkgate Oval, Seven Hills, OH 44131. (From an article by Aurelija M. Balasaitis in *Teviskes Ziburiai*, 12/17/91)

In the January 4th cultural supplement of the Lithuanian language paper *Draugas*, an interview was conducted with Wisconsin bluegrass musician and ichthyologist Algis Byla who travelled to Lithuania in August 1991 with his band "Piper Road Spring Band". Byla, the veteran of four previous trips to Lithuania, travelled with his non-Lithuanian musician friends to Lithuania to participate in a music festival in Palanga, which was to have been held on August 23rd and to Snieckus to a country music festival. The Palanga concert was called off because of the coup attempt in Moscow, but the band played smaller impromptu concerts in Palanga, and played as scheduled in Snieckus, along with groups from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, in a stadium of 12,000 spectators. To the pleasant surprise of Byla and of his American friends, the Lithuanian audience loved the newly introduced genre of bluegrass music, were very enthusiastic, and the American group received the price-winning cup (perhaps for being the group which travelled the farthest to be in the festival, per Byla). The group also had the opportunity to visit the Hill of Crosses, and travelled along the Baltic Way August 23rd, where, every two kilometers, there were campfires and candles.

Besides being a bluegrass musician on weekends (the band won best bluegrass awards in Wisconsin in 1987 and 1988), Byla also plays second violin in a Mozart quartet - "Big Al and Wolfie's Girls". During the week Algis Byla is studying for his doctorate in Water Ecology and Ichthyology at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. In 1989 he had the opportunity to go to Lithuania to visit with professional colleagues and to meet the author of a book which he (Byla) had translated into English - J. Virbickas' book Lithuania's Fish. The "Piper Road Spring Band" is invited back to Lithuania in the summer of 1992, and Algis Byla has no doubt that he will also be cooperating with the Zoological Institute of Lithuania's Academy of Sciences on professional matters as well. (Excerpted from *Draugas*, 1/4/92)

A new university was founded in Lithuania in 1991 in the Baltic seaport city of Klaipeda. The city is home to 250,000 inhabitants, including many Russian soldiers and other non-Lithuanian workers; many of whom do not feel at home there anymore. To those familiar with Prussian history, there is a historical and geographical link between this new university and the University of Karaliaucius (Koenigsberg), founded in 1541; where many Lithuanian-Prussians were educated and worked, including Abraomas Kulvietis (the first rector), Emanuelis Kantas, Kristijonas Donelaitis, Merkelis Giedraitis and many others.

It is hoped that with further development of the curriculum, this university will be able to gain recognition for its specialization in ecological and oceanographic studies of the Baltic Sea, etc. Help for the university is needed in terms of money, books and other educational materials.

It should also be mentioned that many feel that former Lithuanian Prussian lands ("Mazoji Lietuva", the Kalingrad region) should be returned to Lithuania. (It was divided away from Lithuania in the Potsdam Conference of 1945). VLIK-as (The Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania) in its conference of November 1-3, 1991 included mention that "Mazoji Lietuva" is ethnically and historically a part of Lithuania and should be returned to it politically. (Excerpted from Algirdas Gustaitis article in *Draugas*, 12/18/91)

The address of the University of Klaipeda Library Director is: (Janina Pupeliene) Mrs. Janina Pupelis, Salomejos Neries 5, Klaipeda 235799, Lithuania. (Algirdas Gustaitis article, *Teviskes Ziburiai*, 12/17/91)

A concert was performed by Lithuanian opera prima dona and Vilnius Conservatory of Music professor Grazina Apanavicius at the First and Second Church of Boston November 3, 1991. Her accompanist was pianist and composer Vytas Baksys, also from Lithuania, who presently is teaching in the U.S. at the well-known Tanglewood. The organizers of the concert were members of the Baltic Association. The soloist sang 24 songs, representing the main classical music time periods: 17th century Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th Century works of Lithuanian composers; as well as Scarlatti, Verdi, Wagner, Dvarionis, Bajoras, and others. Her concert was varied and familiarized attendees with the works of Lithuanian composers as well. (Excerpted from an article by Elena Vasyliunas in *Draugas*, 12/18/91)

Since the Baltic nations of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia became members of the United Nations, several new developments have occurred.

It has yet to be determined to which geographic region these countries should be designated: Eastern Europe, Western Europe, or Northern Europe (with the Scandinavian countries). Various issues and discussions →

take place in the regional groups before being brought before the UN membership. Some feel that by joining the Eastern European regional group, the Baltics representatives may have more possibilities of being elected to various UN committees.

A UN precedent has been set: the 1991 UN membership fees of the Baltic countries have been postponed until the International Monetary Fund finishes its economic study of these countries. As a gesture of good faith, the Baltic countries, on January 2, 1992, were to pay a symbolic sum which would be subtracted from their 1991 membership fees. In doing this the Baltics join Canada and the Scandinavian countries in being an example to other UN members who often do not pay their UN fees.

Other former Soviet republics no doubt will also try to use a form of political money evaluation as opposed to an economic one. Participating actively in the UN's 5th committee which considers budgetary questions was the Lithuanian Mission's representative -Darius Suziedelis. (*Darbininkas*, 1/3/92)

On December 24th, Vatican and Vilnius Radio programs announced that Pope John Paul II has reorganized the Church provinces of Lithuania, and that Archbishop Audrys Backis would become the Archbishop of Vilnius on March 4th, 1992 - the Feast of St. Casimir, Patron Saint of Lithuania.

Pope Pius XI on April 4, 1926 in his apostolic constitution "Lituanorum Gente" had organized the Church provinces of Lithuania into metropolitan Kaunas and four dioceses: Kaisiadoriai, Telsiai, Panevezis and Vilkaviskis. Under the new decree, there will be two metropolitan - Kaunas and Vilnius, and four dioceses. Two would be connected with Vilnius - Kaisiadoriai and Panevezis, two would be connected with Kaunas - Telsiai and Vilkaviskis. The reorganization become possible when Lithuania regained full political independence and Vilnius as Lithuania's capital became important in its Church structure as well. Archbishop Backis will be the "metropolitans" and Archbishop of Vilnius.

Pope John Paul II consecrated Prelate Audrys Backis Archbishop in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on October 4, 1988 on the eve of the feast day of St. Francis. Attending the ceremonies were his parents, his brother with his family, Lithuanians who live in Rome, and some priests and other Catholics who had been attending the 14th meeting of the Lithuanian Academy of Science. (*from Darbininkas*, 1/3/92)

An annual event in Chicago at its Museum of Science and Industry is its display of Christmas trees from around the world. The Lithuanians have long participated by decorating one tree in traditional Lithuanian Christmas ornaments. Another annual event is the depiction of the Christmas traditions of various Chicago ethnic groups. The Lithuanians presented their

hour long program on December 16th. About 25 members of the Knights of Lithuania folk dancing group danced, showed scenes from a Lithuanian Christmas Eve, explained the traditions of the "Kuciu" table, and a *Lithuanian Kaledu senelis*. The coordinator for many years of the Lithuanian program has been Frank Zapolis. (*From Rev. J. Prunskis article in Draugas*, 12/17/91) □

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* From The Past . . . *

BRIDGES began publication in April of 1977. In this section we re-print items from past issues; in an attempt to put current news and information in perspective; and to help us remember where we've been/how far we've come.

May 14th marks five years since 19-year old Romas Kalanta, in a park near the Music Theatre of Kaunas, poured flammable liquid on himself and flicked a match to set himself aflame. His last words were "Laisve! Laisve Lietuvai!" - "Freedom! Freedom for Lithuania!" The youth of Kaunas responded to his protest with two days of rioting, which was brutally put down by Soviet police troops. The protest of Kalanta and Kaunas' youth received worldwide attention. It is believed Kalanta was a member of Lithuania's hippie movement.


Long hair among Lithuania's youth is still popular as a sign of protest against authorities (and it is not restricted to hippies). Otherwise Lithuanian hippies are quite different from the West's. According to writer Vytautas Alantas, Kalanta himself described hippies as those who wear longer hair, practice poverty, avoid doing wrong to others, and draw inspiration from St. Francis of Assisi. According to a recent emigre, Lithuania's hippies, compared to the West's, are "models of elegance" in appearance. If the postwar partisans are a source of inspiration for older Lithuanians, Kalanta is the hero of Lithuania's youth. S.G. (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ♦

Letters to
Lithuanian political

prisoners in the USSR boost prisoners' morale, and even if a prisoner never gets letters sent to him from the West, the authorities learn that the West knows and cares about the prisoner. This aids the prisoner, for the Soviets are very image-conscious. Letters to prisoners may be written in any language; they should be personal, friendly (concerning everyday events, holidays, birthdays) regular (say, every month), and nonpolitical (anti-Soviet remarks may endanger the person you wish to help). Once you start writing, don't

stop; it would be heartbreaking for the prisoner. Number your letters, so the prisoner can tell if some do not get through. Make photocopies of your letter and envelope, and send them air mail and "registered return receipt requested." If you do not receive a receipt in 90 days, you can begin a procedure to collect a \$15.76 indemnity from the U.S. Postal Service, which in turn will demand payment from the USSR. Don't expect a reply from your prisoner' your letter will have its effect. Lists of prisoners are available from many agencies, including: Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid, Inc., 351 Highland Blvd., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11207. There is one general post office address in Moscow for all

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



BRIDGES

Lithuanian-American
NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 9061 Boston, MA 02114

VOL. I, No. 2

MAY 1977

IN LIEU OF AN EDITORIAL

Since its appearance last month among Lithuanian-Americans and other interested readers, BRIDGES has received many favorable comments. Among letters received were requests for information about where to obtain books, records, and handicrafts. By now our readers are familiar with such Lithuanian organizations as Bendruomenė (Lithuanian American Community, Inc.), VLIK or VLIKas (Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania), and BALF (United Lithuanian Relief fund of America). Apparently there are other terms which lead to confusion. BRIDGES will attempt to clarify some of these terms. BRIDGES will give tips where to obtain Lithuanian books and records.

Some of our readers would like to know beforehand about concerts, conferences and conventions. BRIDGES will comply because it is our purpose to provide timely information. July and August are the months for youth camps, seminars, conventions and outings. This issue will devote space to forthcoming activities.

The violation of human rights in Lithuania remains a key issue in Lithuania's fight for national independence and freedom. Noncompliance with the human rights provisions of the HELSINKI ACCORDS by the Soviets and the forthcoming BELGRADE CONFERENCE have sharpened the focus on Lithuanian dissidents and their plight. BRIDGES will continue to point out instances of callous disregard of basic human liberties in Soviet-occupied Lithuania as well as the activities of free Lithuanians to rectify the situation.

June was traditionally the month of youth. Young people celebrated the Eve of St. John (JONINES) with hilltop bonfires and midnight searches for the mythical "fern blossom." Today Lithuanians the world over observe the so-called "Terrible June Days." June 15, 1940 large Red Army formations invaded the Republic of Lithuania which led to forcible incorporation of the country into the Soviet Union on August 3, 1940. June 1941 witnessed the callous mass deportation of 45,000 Lithuanian men, women and children to Siberia. These June 1941 deportations were a prelude systematic Soviet genocide resulting in the deportation and annihilation of 500,000 Lithuanians. The "Terrible June Days" are observed at public gatherings of mourning among Lithuanians of the free world.

There are many requests from our readers for write-ups about prominent Lithuanians. In future issues BRIDGES will try to give more coverage. However, one major problem is that we still lack a network of local correspondents. For this reason, BRIDGES invites readers to submit news items or leads for stories. By the same token, we are interested in news about local Lithuanian events.

THE EDITORS

Cover Page Of Issue #2 of BRIDGES; With Editorial Comments.

prisoners whose exact address you do not know: SSSR. Moskva, Ucrezdenie 5110/1 Zch. (Name of prisoner) USSR. S.G. (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

According to recent testimony by Tomas Venclova, people who do not agree with the official way of thinking in Soviet Lithuania are subjected to various forms of persecution. One of these is known to us as "the case of the boys". In 1976, Vytautas Boguzis and four of his friends were expelled from the senior class of high school for being interested in religion, Lithuanian history, and Russian dissidents. They were expelled by order of the school director who took his orders from the KGB. Now these boys are in a difficult situation and are being pressured by the organs of the KGB. (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

On March 13 representatives of Lithuanian political institutions met in New York to expand the Lithuanian Human Rights Commission set up by VLIK. This extraordinary conference was attended by the chairman of ad hoc Lithuanian Human Rights Committee, prof. Domas Krivickas; representatives of VLIK - Dr. J.K. Valiunas, J. Valaitis, A. Vedeckas, B. Bieliukas, and J. Audenas; Lithuanian World Community representative K. Jankunas; Lithuanian American Catholic Services; and Prof. B. Nemickas of the Committee for a Free Lithuania. Ausra Zerr, Daiva Kezys, and Bronius Vaskaitis represented the Lithuanian American Community of the US, Inc. J. R. Simanavicius represented the Lithuanian Community of Canada. Prof. Jonas Balys was spokesman for BALF.

The Lithuanian Human Rights Commission was expanded to include Dr. D. Krivickas, Rev. C Pugevicius, Prof. J. Genys, Mrs. D. Kezys, Mrs. A. Zerr, Prof. J. Balys, Simas Kudirka, Jonas Jurasas, Ausra Jurasas, and J. R. Simanavicius. Dr. Krivickas noted that the commission's will document and classify all information about human rights violations in Lithuania and will present this material to appropriate international human rights groups and officials of countries, which have signed the Final Act of the European Security Conference, scheduled to take place in June. "However," Prof. Krivickas said, "since it is unlikely that human rights violations in Lithuania will cease in the near future, the commission's work will continue beyond the framework of the Belgrade Review Conference." (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

Thirty-nine Congressmen are still waiting for Brezhnev's reply to their letter asking for the release of Nijole Sadunaite. The letter sent on February 10, 1977, protested the arrest and the subsequent treatment of the Roman Catholic woman, who was sentenced to three years of hard labor for her association with the "Chronicles of the Catholic Church of Lithuania." She was arrested on August 27, 1974, because a partly typed copy of the "Chronicle" was found in her

apartment during a police search. ELTA (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

Expanding its facilities, the Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania (VLIK) recently created the Lithuanian Information Service. Headed by Mrs. Daiva Kezys, English language director of the "Laisves Ziburys" radio program in New York, LIS will serve the media with timely news releases about the situation in Lithuania. The first LIS news release, dated March 28, 1977, dealt with the formation of an ad hoc Lithuanian Human Rights Commission. It was accompanied by Congressman D. B. Fascell's news release on the Statement of Tomas Venclova to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The address of the Lithuanian Information Service is 217-25 54th Ave., Bayside, NY 11364. (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

Women's Plea For Human Rights, a joint committee of New Haven Lithuanians, Jews and Ukrainians, sent a letter of thanks to President James Carter for speaking out against negation of human rights in the Soviet Union. Copies of the letter were sent to Connecticut Senators A. Ribicoff and L. Weicker. (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

The U.S. Congress observed the 59th anniversary of Lithuanian Independence Day. Senator Charles Percy tallied the violations of human rights in Lithuania. The formation of the Lithuanian Group to Monitor compliance with the Helsinki Accords was welcomed by Senator Clifford P. Case, himself a member of the Helsinki Commission. Representative Samuel S. Stratton urged that the United States press the USSR on human rights in Lithuania during the Belgrade meeting in June. Many speakers referred to the "Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania" and to the case of Nijole Sadunaite, a woman dissident. (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

Commenting on Lithuanian architecture in *The New York Times*, on October 20, 1976, journalist Christopher S. Wren wrote: "Without any particular architectural heritage to point to, the architects find it hard to explain why Lithuania has led the rest of the Soviet Union imaginative housing design. Some Lithuanians would say that it is part of a national creativity that becomes even more boldly apparent in the Republic's flourishing modern art and sculpture." (Vol. 1, No. 2, May 1977) ◆

Editor's Note: This feature in BRIDGES is made possible only as the result of the kind assistance of Mrs. Lione Simonaitis, of Hartford, Connecticut; who has a copy, in her private collection, of every issue of BRIDGES ever printed! □

A Hero Remembered

The Author Tells Us The Story Of An Authentic Hero Who He Knew Well/Who Was His Ally In Resistance.

by **Romas A. Shatas**

Thirty-five years ago, on 27 January 1957, Bagdonas Kontrimas died in the forced exile in Magadan, Far Eastern Siberia. Bagdonas Kontrimas' name is indelibly inscribed in the annals of the European Resistance against the Nazis, for he was the leading member of an underground radio broadcast group that constructed, maintained and operated, for almost one year, a scheduled short wave broadcast station right under the nose of the Nazi GeStaPo. This is a unique event in the annals of the entire Resistance. All other resistance stations either operated on a friendly territory or were on the air surreptitiously for short times only.

Kontrimas ... constructed, maintained and operated, for almost one year, a scheduled short wave broadcast station right under the nose of the ... Nazis.

The core of this group consisted of Pranas Staskonis, Bagdonas Kontrimas, Vytautas Suopys, Aleksandras Griauzde and others, including the present writer. Only two key members of this group are still alive in the United States.

The Soviet occupiers of Lithuania deemed it dangerous to have such a prominent member of the Anti-Nazi Resistance in the free. Through KGB agents-provocateurs, Bagdonas Kontrimas was arrested by Stalin's henchmen on 27 September 1947, imprisoned in Kolyma GULAG and released after Stalin's death in 1956 without the right to return to Lithuania.

He died in the Magadan hospital, on the shores of the sea of Okhotsk, on 27 January 1957 as a consequence of illnesses and injuries suffered in the GULAG.

I ask all to pray together with his classmate, graduate of Class 1939 of The Jesuit in Kaunas, His Eminence Vincentas Cardinal Sladkevicius, for the eternal repose of his soul on the day of the 35th

anniversary of his death.

Donations in his memory can be made to the *Lithuanian Foundation* honor roll number account 6432. (Editor's Note: Information about the *Lithuanian Foundation*, including address, etc., appears elsewhere in this issue of **BRIDGES**.)

○ ○ ○

The following contains corrections to the biography of Bagdonas Kontrimas (BK) published in *Lietuviu Enciklopedija* (Boston, USA), LE vol 37 p 297. (LE 2nd Supplementary volume) ("Lithuanian Encyclopedia").

These corrections reflect the information received from Mrs. Irena Kontrimas-Labanauskas during her stay in Toronto, Canada, during 1991.

Bagdonas Kontrimas, *nome de guerre "Kocius"*, was born on 20 February 1920 in Jekaterinodar (Soviet name: Krasnodar), Northern Caucasus region of the contemporary Federation of Russia, and died on 27 January 1957 in forced exile in the port city of Magadan on the shores of the sea of Okhotsk in Far Northeastern Siberia. He graduated in June 1939 from the Jesuit lycee in Kaunas. His class included the present Vincentas Cardinal Sladkevicius. Subsequently, he was admitted to the University Vytautas the Great where he studied electrical and electronics engineering in the Faculty of Technology. He joined the Resistance during the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania and actively participated in the uprising of June 1941 which briefly restored the sovereignty of the Republic of Lithuania; until the invading German Nazis liquidated Prime Minister Brazaitis' government.

Kontrimas ... died ... in forced exile in Far Northeastern Siberia ... on 27 January 1957.

During the Nazi occupation of Lithuania, BK joined the Sakalas (*nome de guerre of Pranas Staskonis*) ➡

group that designed, constructed and operated the clandestine Lithuanian Resistance's short wave voice transmitter. BK was the principal designer and constructor of this transmitter that broadcast first under the name "Zalgiris" and subsequently under the name of "Laisvos Lietuvos Radijas" ("Radio of Free Lithuania"). (See LE vol 37 pg 482).

After his release from the forced labor camp in 1954 ... Kontrimas ... [was not allowed] ... to return to Lithuania.

The operation eluded an intense search by the GeStaPo for almost an entire year. It should be remarked that this was the only clandestine radio broadcast station in all of the Nazi occupied Europe that succeeded transmitting according to a previously announced schedule and frequency for nearly a year within the actually Nazi - occupied territory.

After the mass arrests of Lithuanian resistance members by the Nazi GeStaPo of April 1944, the "Zalgiris" transmitter was mothballed primarily because it became known that the Nazi interrogators were using third degree methods to extract the information. Of all the arrestees, only Juozas Rudokas knew the details about the "Zalgiris" operation. A continued broadcast would have destroyed the Nazi illusion that they had seized the transmitter and the crew. Although severely beaten, Rudokas never revealed details, and as a consequence died in 1945 in Bayreuth, Germany, just after the American liberation from the Nazi prison.

Hardly two months after these arrests, at the end of May 1944, the Nazi war machine in Eastern Lithuania collapsed and the Resistance was thrown into the throes of the returning dictatorship of Stalin.

The change in Lithuania's occupiers in late 1944 found BK in Vieksniai where he stayed with his mother and stepfather together with his new bride, the former Irena Skaisgiryte. Subsequently, the pair moved to an apartment in Kaunas on the Seinu Street. BK continued to participate in the Resistance. On 25 Sept. 1947, BK was arrested.

In 1946, Jonas Deksnys, a leader in the Resistance of disputed renown, asked BK to repair a short wave transmitter ostensibly for the purpose of communications with England. Shortly thereafter Deksnys was arrested, and the transmitter seized by the Soviet KGB. It is now evident that Deksnys shared the operational details of the Resistance with Albinas Markulis, an agent infiltrated by the KGB into the highest levels of Lithuania Resistance.

After his arrest, the KGB trial troika condemned him to the GULAG. He was transported in a prisoners boxcar to Vladivostok by train and then from

the port of Nachodka to Magadan by ship. From there, he was placed in one of the many GULAG camps in Kolyma, in the permafrost region beyond the Arctic circle. In this entire region, with slave labor, the Soviet Union was erecting military encampments and missile bases against Alaska, and the Western United States and Canada.

In the GULAG, BK was assigned linemans labor. A short while later, during the spring thaw, a telegraph pole embedded in the permafrosted ground gave way and fell to the ground with BK on it. His arm and foot were fractured and he sustained injuries to his head. He was nursed back to health in the GULAG by Hungarian and German doctors among fellow prisoners. Subsequently, an epidemic of dysentery broke out in the camp. There was no medication except large doses of potassium permanganate and a diet of dried bread and boiled water. BK barely survived but sustained diverticulitis and ileitis that flared up occasionally.

After his release from the forced labor camp in 1954 without the right to return to Lithuania, his wife rejoined him during March 1956 in Burchata, a village near the Kolyma river where he worked as an electrical engineer of a gold mining dragster.

Subsequently, in June 1956 he developed an acute obstruction in the intestines. He was operated in the nearest surgical facility in Yagodnoe; by the time he was transported there, the gangrene has set in and a 2,7 meter long section of his intestines was removed. After his operation, he was doomed to an early death due to an insufficient ability to digest food. Slowly, his life ebbed away despite the best efforts of his wife.

Bagdonas Kontrimas' name is indelibly inscribed in the annals of the European Resistance against the Nazis. Only two key members [of the group in which he participated] are still alive in the United States.

On 27 January 1957 he died in the Magadan hospital and was buried there by his wife Irena. Subsequently, Irena returned to Lithuania and in 1962 was married to Dr. Kostas Labanauskas, MD; at that time assistant professor of medical physiology at the "Kuno Kulturos Institutes" in Kaunas, Lithuania. Their daughter, Dr. Daiva Labanauskas-Norkus, MD, resides in Toronto, ONTARIO Canada.

(Editor's Note: Mr. Romas A. Shatas, author of this article, and a member of the group in which Bagdonas Kontrimas operated, resides in Sunny Hills, Florida.) □

Lithuanian World Community Foundation

The Lithuanian World Community Foundation raises funds and provides support to Lithuania and its institutions; to the families of the killed and injured Lithuanian freedom fighters during the January 13th, 1991 massacre in Vilnius and elsewhere; to the newly reestablished Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas; to the Endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies at the University of Illinois in Chicago; to the Lithuanian World Youth Congress in South America, and to other important projects which need your personal support.

Lithuania needs medical supplies, humanitarian help, technical and scientific knowledge, economical assistance, and other support. Every dollar given to the families of the killed and injured people during the last year of Lithuanian struggle against their oppressors buys food, medicine and other needed supplies, and shows them the friendliness and tremendous generosity of the American people, who care about others in need. We provide funds for the Textbooks for Democracy project and learning materials for the Vytautas Magnus University.

The Lithuanian World Community sponsors many cultural, educational and other Lithuanian ethnic projects throughout the world. One of its projects is the Endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies at the University of Illinois in Chicago which conducts seminars, special studies, grants Master and Doctor of Philosophy in Lithuanian Literature and Language degrees, and maintains exchange program for the scholars between the University of Illinois and the universities of Vilnius and Vytautas Magnus in Lithuania. This past year your contributions through the Lithuanian World Community Foundation provided eight grants-scholarships for the Lithuanian scholars doing their graduate studies here in the United States. They will be returning to Lithuania in a few months to apply their new knowledge in rebuilding of their country. Additionally, your generosity supported the Lithuanian World Youth Congress in South America and benefitted many young Lithuanians.

The Lithuanian World Community Foundation sends reports every year to the Internal Revenue Service, to the Attorney General and other proper authorities in the states of Illinois and Michigan, and our books are audited by Certified Public Accountants in Michigan. The officers and directors are: chairman Vytautas Kamantas, treasurer Joseph Lukas, directors Dr. Petras Kiselius, Kazys Laukaitis, Dr. Edmundas Lenkauskas, Dr. Antanas Razma and Horatio Zibas, legal adviser attorney Saulius Kuprys. All donations are deductible for tax purposes.

All donations should be sent to: Lithuanian World Community Foundation, 1851 Skyview Drive, Sparta, MI 49345. Checks should be made payable to: Lithuanian World Community Foundation. Tax Deductible Donation Tax ID # is 36-309-7269.

We thank you sincerely for everything you did [in the past, for support, work and contributions which have benefitted Lithuania] and we ask you again for your generous support of the many projects sponsored by the Lithuanian World Community and the Lithuanian World Community Foundation.

Knights of Lithuania Present \$5,000 to Lithuanian Embassy

Ambassador and Mrs Stasys Lozoraitis hosted a reception on Wednesday evening, Oct. 30, for visiting representatives of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, led by Gediminas Vagnorius, Prime Minister, and Mrs. Vagnorius, and Ceslovas Stankevicius, Vice President of the Supreme Council. The reception was held at the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington.

At a special ceremony during the evening, Mrs. Frances Petkus, National President of the Knights of Lithuania, on behalf of all the Knights, presented Mr. Lozoraitis a check for \$5,000 for the upkeep of the Embassy, stating that this is a "downpayment", and that he can expect more donations from individual councils and districts. Also at this time, members of New Jersey's Americans for an Independent Lithuania, through President Loretta Stukas, presented Mr. Lozoraitis, Mr. Vagnorius, and Mr. Stankevicius each with a specially designed watch bearing the Lithuanian VYTIS on its face.

The event was attended by 100 or more leaders of Lithuanian standing and ad-hoc organizations from various cities, Ambassadors of other countries, journalists, and others who have in one way or another aided the Lithuanian campaign for independence. Light refreshments were served and guests were able to mingle and meet the Lithuanian government representatives, and discuss how Americans can further help Lithuania, as she begins her independence.

Vice-President Stankevicius was emphatic in stating that the most important task is the removal of the Soviet troops from the Baltic Republics. He asked that we tell the world that Lithuania cannot be fully free until these troops leave. Only pressure from the free world to the Soviet Union can get this done.

Many leaders and members of the Knights of Lithuania were present. Besides President Frances Petkus, other officers included Lithuanian Affairs Chairman Vince Boris, K of L Foundation President Loretta Stukas, MCD President John Baltrus, AMD President and Secretary John and Agnes Mickunas, C-29 Lithuanian Affairs Chairman Danguole Didzbalis, and many members of the Washington Council.

The event was made possible through the generosity of Mr. Clayton Potter of Chicago.

- From a news release prepared by Ms. Loretta I. Stukas

Lithuanian Foundation, Inc.

During 1991, \$300,000 earned from the investment on donations were distributed by the Lithuanian Foundation to support Lithuanian cultural, educational and youth endeavors in America and throughout the world. Of this sum \$68,500 were given for selected projects in Lithuania and scholarships to post-graduate students from Lithuania who are undertaking advanced studies primarily in the United States. Thereby, since its incorporation, the Foundation has contributed over \$3 million toward the preservation of Lithuanian heritage.

This year saw the principal capital of the Foundation grow to \$5.5 million. Pursuant to the decision of Foundation members at the July 27, 1991 special meeting, \$1 million has been set aside from the capital for use in independent non-soviet Lithuania.

(Write to: Lithuanian Foundation, Inc., 3001 W. 59th St., Chicago, IL 60629; Tel: 312 471-3900)

- Povilas Kilius, Chairman of the Board; Algirdas Ostis, President

⇒ Updates ⇐

Bringing you "up to date" on activities, projects, initiatives which are underway; and which have been previously reported/about which you've probably heard; so that you know "where things stand".

U.S. - Baltic Foundation:

U.S. - Baltic Foundation receives \$27,000 grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development to conduct capacity assessment on assistance to Baltic States.

Linus Kojelis, President of the U.S. - Baltic Foundation (USBF) recently announced the receipt of a grant of \$27,000 from the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) by which USBF will conduct an assessment of the capacity and interest of private U.S. voluntary organizations (PVO's) and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) to support development programs in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Mr. Kojelis explained that the Foundation's strategy is to reach out to the American private sector -- including businesses, universities, professional and trade associations -- to solicit their interest in helping the Baltic States make the difficult transition from communist to democratic, free market societies. "America's private sector has a long and noble tradition of helping those who want to help themselves," stated Mr. Kojelis. "Our goal is to help channel this volunteer spirit into concrete programs with the new generation of Baltic leaders."

USBF will send out thousands of questionnaires to PVO's and NGO's, inquiring about their interest to accept Baltic interns for job training in the U.S., offering short and long term scholarships in the U.S., their willingness to send qualified volunteers to teach and train in the Baltic States and similar types of programs. The survey will be conducted through written questionnaires, telephone and personal interviews.

More News:

Mr. Kojelis recently met with the new White House Chief of Staff, Samuel Skinner, to discuss U.S. technical and economic assistance programs in the Baltic States.

Upon leaving the meeting, Mr. Kojelis stated, "This meeting was a good first step. Mr. Skinner invited comments and even criticism of current U.S. efforts, and asked for recommendations for future programs." The discussion focused on the management of the current Baltic program (\$14 million for Fiscal Year

1991) by the U.S. Agency for International Development and future funding needs. At the meeting, Mr. Kojelis stated that U.S. estimates that funding needs for the Baltics will end in 3-5 years are overambitious, and that the transition from Soviet to democratic, free market systems will take longer.

This was the ninth meeting by USBF representatives with White House staff over the past year. Also attending the meeting with Mr. Skinner were six representatives of organizations working in Poland, Russia, Estonia, Czechoslovakia and Armenia.

And, Finally:

The Honorable Stasys Kropas, M.P., Chairman of the Lithuanian Parliament's Committee on Local Government and Democracy and a member of the Parliamentary Commission drafting Lithuania's new constitution was hosted for three days of meetings in Washington, D.C., from January 6-9, by the U.S.-Baltic Foundation (USBF).

Mr. Kropas met with a host of leading individuals and institutions in the field of local democracy and municipal government. The meetings culminated with a visit with the Honorable Anna Kondratas, Assistant Secretary at the Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, and the senior U.S. government representative at the USBF-hosted municipal government seminar in Vilnius, Lithuania last June. The seminar was funded by grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Endowment for Democracy. Other meetings included; the Heritage Foundation, the International City Management Association and the staff of the House Appropriations Committee for Housing and Urban Affairs.

In addition, Mr. Kropas held lengthy meetings with USBF staff to develop future plans for the Baltic Municipal Institute (BMI). BMI was established as a permanent institution to develop and implement programs to strengthen local democracy and municipal management training in the Baltic States.

Before departing, Mr. Kropas stated, "After fifty years of isolation, I am grateful for this opportunity to get better acquainted with both the private and public U.S. institutions in the field of local government. This orientation will help us in our work to develop our ➡

own, democratic system of government."

USBF is a not-for-profit foundation established to develop and implement programs in local government, business education, management, public health, English language, and journalism in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Write to the USBF at: 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 601, Washington, D.C. 20036; or call: 202 986-0380 (Fax: 202 234-8130).

- from News Releases



A.P.P.L.E.:

Seminar For Lithuanian Teachers: The Ministry of Culture and Education in Lithuania has a main goal calling for the full implementation of educational reforms by 1995. In Lithuania, various specialists of education have come together to help to achieve this goal. In the West, the organization A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) has formed to provide direct technical assistance in the area of education so that the reforms can be accomplished.

In the past year A.P.P.L.E. has been successful in providing contacts for the Ministry of Culture and Education with many American educational organizations, foundations, publishers. Several Lithuanian specialists have visited the U.S., while many American specialists have worked in Lithuania. A grant from the Kennedy Foundation has been awarded to provide for training of a Lithuanian Educational specialist. One of the most significant accomplishments by A.P.P.L.E. in the past year is the Teachers Seminar held in Vilnius this past summer on various teaching disciplines. This Teacher Qualification Seminar was viewed to be an outstanding success by the participants, who were teachers and education specialists from all over Lithuania.

Dr. Katherine Baker, D.S.W., an A.P.P.L.E. member and a family therapist in Washington, D.C. was invited to present several seminars on Family Therapy in the Soviet Union this past autumn. She also elected to spend a few days in Vilnius to facilitate a critique of A.P.P.L.E.'s summer seminar by the participants. In their opinion last summer's seminar structure was a good beginning approach, but now the teachers want the training to have more depth. Suggestions included: having one group for staff from the Ministry, taking one theme at a time and going more deeply, offering two levels/beginning and advanced, lectures on physical education, history, art and music, practical activities, such as American games and songs, more focus on relationships between teachers and administrators. The teachers would like to know the content of each program ahead of time to allow more informed choices for participation. They also want supplementary English language courses offered in the evenings. Many teachers had not heard the lecture on critical thinking. Those who had were very interested in it. They felt it

helps to understand child development, individual variation among children and self-understanding among teachers. Along with these suggestions and desires there was much gratitude and love sent to all the A.P.P.L.E. teachers who had come to Vilnius last summer.

The Ministry of Culture and Education has requested A.P.P.L.E. to again organize a seminar this summer. The seminar is planned to begin on July 18, and last until August 15. Some sessions are expected to be held outside of Vilnius. The following topics will be covered: Educational Administration, Special Education, Montessori Methodology, Social Studies, Educational Psychology, Foreign Language Teaching, Music Education, Classroom Techniques.

A.P.P.L.E. invites anyone who is concerned about the future of Lithuanian Education to join the organization. Anyone interested in joining or in teaching in a seminar in Lithuania are asked to write to the following address by February 29, 1992: A.P.P.L.E., P.O. Box 1370, West Hartford, CT 06107.

- from a News Release

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Lithuanian American Community, Inc. Organization News

News of various activities, projects, initiatives, as reported by LAC Chapters and Committees throughout the United States.

From The Government Affairs Office

by Asta Banionis, Director

Experts Needed:

Call the LAC Government Affairs Office if you would like to register with the U.S. Agency for International Development as an environmental expert. The two necessary qualifications are a degree in the environmental sciences and a working knowledge of Lithuanian. U.S. AID is assembling a roster of experts for future contract work in Lithuania.

The LAC is also looking for individuals who speak Lithuanian and have 10-15 years of experience in the oil-gas and utilities industries.

Humanitarian Aid:

The Lithuanian American Community, Inc. is greatly disappointed that the U.S. Department of State failed to invite Lithuania to the recently held, US sponsored aid conference (held in Washington, DC). Both the Lithuanian government and private organizations in Lithuania have been and are providing humanitarian aid to Russia and other former soviet republics. Much of the shipments are foodstuffs which the Russians can no longer afford to buy from Lithuania, or even to barter for oil.

The most recent shipment was based on an executive order issued by the Lithuanian government on December 12, 1991. The following food items were delivered to the Moscow City Council between December 15, 1991 and January 8, 1992: 244.6 tons of chicken, 30.6 tons of cheese, 10.74 tons of smoked sausage and 36,000 cans of vegetables.

During the last 12 months, Lithuanians have volunteered on numerous occasions to provide humanitarian assistance to their eastern neighbors. In March and April of 1991, the Lithuanian Workers Union organized large shipments of food (dozens of tons) to the coal miners of Donbass and Kuzbass regions, as well as to Vorkuta; all were privately donated. Other private associations have organized relief efforts to industrial cities in Russia over the last year.

Mr. Stanley Gecys, Chairman of the Public Affairs Council of the LAC, Inc., commented, "We are proud

that Lithuania has tried to do its fair share of helping the Russian people during their difficult transition to democracy. Although it inflicts a hardship on Lithuanians themselves, they understand that everyone bears a responsibility, small countries like Lithuania and large countries like the United States to help Russia become a democracy with a free market economy." Mr. Vytas Maciunas, President of the LAC, Inc., added that, "Lithuania has a roven track record of getting their food shipments to the people who need it. That's why it's hard to understand why they would be excluded from this week's aid to the CIS conference. Besides, large western food shipments will need to move through the ice-free ports of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia."

Soviet Troops In Lithuania:

Only 27 senators (as of January 24, 1992) have signed onto the Riegle-Hatch letter asking President Bush to raise the issue of troop withdrawals from the Baltic States with President Yeltsin. The most common objection being raised to the letter by Senate staff personnel is that Yeltsin has enough to worry about and we shouldn't burden him with troop withdrawals. These staff personnel need to be reminded of the following: In raising the issue of troop withdrawals, our President would give Yeltsin an opportunity to ask for U.S. assistance in relocating these troops (housing for the careerists) and even in demobilizing these units (the draftees) to reduce the overall size of the "Commonwealth" or "Russian" army.

Call your Senators, today; and ask them to press this issue. Lithuania is a sovereign state; and foreign troops do not belong on its soil for even one more day.



From The National Executive Committee

by Ramune Kubilius

"Lithuanian Children's Hope":

It's nice to get positive feedback - the January 4th and 7th issues of the Lithuanian language paper *Draugas* featured the farewells and thanks expressed by Laima Vezyis and her mother Elena. Laima is the young 14 year old girl with severe scoliosis who, ➡

thanks to the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. "Lithuanian Children's Hope" committee and the Shriners Hospital in Chicago, is now back in Lithuania, cured of her physical ailment (Her story was written up in previous issues of **BRIDGES**).

Laima indicates that she feels reborn (she "grew" 1.5 inches after the surgery), her back and sides no longer hurt each evening and all of her dresses fit. Mrs. Vezys mentions that the 12 days Laima spent in the hospital were amazing - the care and food was good, the nurses helpful, the doctors friendly. Both expressed thanks to the LAC "Children's Hope Committee", to its Coordinator Terese Drutys-Soliunas. Mrs. Vezys thanks Lithuanian Americans in advance on behalf of those who will in the near future be brought to America for treatment not yet available or not easily available in Lithuania. She also said that though there are some visitors and new immigrants to the U.S. from Lithuania who do not behave honorably and disgrace the Lithuanian name, they are, she says, in the minority.

The "Lithuanian Children's Hope" committee headquarters office is at: 2711 West 71st Street, Chicago, IL 60629.

LAC Educational Council:

As the new Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. National Executive Committee began its work, so did each of its councils. The Educational Council begins a new term under the experienced leadership of Regina Kucas. Mrs. Kucas not only already has served a three year term as president, but served on a previous Educational Council in another capacity as well.

A major focus of the Educational Council in the next three year term will be to morally and financially support 21 Lithuanian language schools, 1 correspondence program, 2 Lithuanian Montessori schools, and 14 adult Lithuanian language programs in the United States. The directions of the schools may have changed, but their primary focus continues to be the instilling of an appreciation and knowledge of Lithuanian language, literature, history, and culture in the students attending the programs. Some schools are now being attended by and taught by native Lithuanian speakers visiting from, or immigrants from, Lithuania. Some of the larger schools include the Maironis school in Lemont, IL with 219 students, the St. Casimir school in Los Angeles, CA with 120 students, Kristijonas Donelaitis school in Chicago, IL with 105 students. Some of the smaller programs include the Mindaugas Tamonis school in Rochester, NY with 7 students, the Kristijonas Donelaitis school in Washington, D.C. with 15 students, and the Vincas Kreve school in Philadelphia, PA with 23 students.

In recent years, the Educational Council has established close ties with Lithuania's Ministry of Culture and Education, in particular with Audrys Antanaitis of the Ministry. The Ministry and the Council have exchanged publications produced in each

country, seeking to see if some can be adapted for use in the other country. Some wonderful publications recently received from Lithuania include a Mickey Mouse book, Richard Scarry's dictionaries, and a series of religion workbooks/textbooks translated into Lithuanian from English or other languages. The Educational Council may help with distribution in the U.S., since in many cases they fill a gap for Lithuanian language materials perceived by families and teachers in Lithuanian language schools. The Ministry has sent lists of advanced English classes in Lithuania which seek to find penpals in American schools - the LAC Educational Council will network with teachers and try to help in this area.

In the summer of 1992, the Ministry is planning to conduct two sessions of summer camps for children (8-14 years of age) of Lithuanian descent who will travel around Lithuania and learn arts, crafts, etc. Although these camps are for children who do speak some Lithuanian, similar camps may be planned for non-Lithuanian speaking children as well.

The Educational Council serves in the second area purely in a consultative and collegial manner since the Council doesn't represent an official ministry in the U.S., and the schools and programs it oversees are mostly weekend and evening schools attended voluntarily by the students. The president of the Council also keeps in contact with the counterpart Council in the Canadian Lithuanian Association, and with the World Lithuanian Community vice-president for education.

"Easy Way To Lithuanian"

In July, 1991, the Educational Council of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. released a self-learning program for adults called "Easy Way to Lithuanian". The program, which consists of audiotapes and a workbook, was quite well received. Since it was first released, over 500 copies have been sold. Among those interested are persons who don't presently speak Lithuanian, but who would like to learn some phrases before they travel to Lithuania, including the "Peace Corps", university linguistics departments, and other motivated individuals (even one in Fairbanks, Alaska!).

A major publishing company also is seeking to list the program and to distribute it, and the Ministry of Culture and Education in Lithuania has received a copy and is examining it for possible adaptation for bilingual education. A similar program geared for children is being considered. The cost of the program is \$50 plus postage.

Container

Although a third 20 container of educational materials was recently sent to Lithuania, donations continue to come in, and the shortages of basic school supplies in Lithuania continues to be a problem. Therefore, it is planned that another container will ➡

probably be making its way to Lithuania from the United States sometime in the spring. Priority for the Educational Council's container will be given to materials such as school supplies and materials for Lithuanian orphanages, while persons wishing to donate for other projects will probably be sending separate containers.

For more information about any of the aforementioned Educational Council projects, please contact Mrs. Regina Kucas, LAC Educational Council president, 8626 S. Mozart Ave., Chicago, IL 60652.



We Want To Hear From You!

What are all of the other LAC Chapters, throughout the country doing? We know you're busy and productive; so share, please, with us, here, information on your activities. With such information sharing, we'll all learn from each other; and we'll stay "fresh" in our programs and efforts. Why not - if you don't already have such a person - appoint a **BRIDGES** liaison; who will send us information on your activities?

Letters To The Editor

Dear Sir:

The "Lithuanian Children's Hope" Committee wishes to express its gratitude for your help during the 1991 year. We wish you a very happy and prosperous New Year.

(Signed) Terese Drutys-Soliunas, Lithuanian Children's Hope Coordinator, Chicago, Illinois

(Editor's Note: Elsewhere in this issue we have an update on Lithuanian Children's Hope activities.)



Dear Sir:

Today I received my copy of **BRIDGES** - I am always delighted and disappointed when it arrives. Delighted because I read it cover to cover, but disappointed because today (January 11, 1992) I received the October/November 1991 issue.

Will I receive the Christmas issue in time for Easter? Please speed up delivery of **BRIDGES**.

(Signed) Kathleen Vaiciulis/Vernon, Connecticut

(Editor's Note: I share your frustration (and many other people have shared their frustration with me, as well. I need to tell you how this whole process works. Preparation of each issue of **BRIDGES**, right

through the point where it goes to the printer, is in my hands. As editor, I solicit articles, gather information, check/revise, as necessary, items submitted, etc.; and, thus, perform all normal editorial duties. (Of course, I am also the "point of contact" for all advertisers - and I welcome more of those!) Additionally, I completely "lay out" each issue (on a computer); thus getting it ready for the printer. (Most items come to me on paper; so the items have to be input into the computer; and then they all have to be made to fit, to appear to make sense, to be "attractive", etc. Advertisements usually come in the same way; with an advertiser telling me "about" how he, or she, wants the advertisement to look/what size to be.)

Once I send the "camera ready" pages off to the printer, that particular issue is out of my hands. The printer usually takes about a week to actually print and bind the issue.

So far, in the process, as I've described it, and since I've been editor, believe me, everything is/has been "on time". The problem, as I understand it, to this point, has been the actual mailing of each issue to you, the subscribers.

Already printed issues have been, in some cases, not mailed out to subscribers for as long as two months. This has been the case because there was (- no longer is, as this is being written, I'm told -) a problem in getting subscriber labels prepared. Such labels need to be updated each month as new subscribers are added, as old subscriptions expire.

Responsibility for preparation of these labels was shifted, in December, to the Lithuanian American Community, Inc., National Executive Committee offices in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. All subscriber additions and deletions are now handled there. (That's why we are now asking you to direct your subscription inquiries to those offices.)

I am told that the "problem" is now just about solved; and that future issues - to include this one - will reach you in the month(s) noted on the cover of the issue.

The new people maintaining the current subscriber list are anxious to make it a "good" list; and want to hear from subscribers who aren't getting their issues, or who have an incorrect address, etc.; so please, if you have a problem, you can help in getting this whole thing straightened out by sending a letter to Philadelphia.

Finally, let me note that all of this work is done at night, and on weekends; because all people involved with this publication are unpaid volunteers.)



(Editor's Note: We welcome letters. We will print those which we feel may be of interest to other readers; and as space permits. We reserve the right to edit letters before publication. Mail to: Letters to the Editor, **BRIDGES**, Post Office Box 363, Gloucester, Virginia 23061-0363)

“ Bits & Pieces ”

Information which might be of interest to you; gathered from near and far; as well as provided by readers like you. We look forward to having you share information with us for future issues.

AABS Conference:

The 13th Conference on Baltic Studies will take place June 10-13, 1992 at the University of Toronto, Canada. The logo of the conference is "Terra Baltica". "The objective of the conference is to evaluate the cultural, social, political and economic processes of rebuilding the national institutional structures of the Baltic States against the backdrop of a revolutionary and disintegrating Soviet Union. The conference will focus for one whole day exclusively on the problems associated with rebuilding the universities and higher education and assisting Baltic academia to catch up with 50 years of developments in Western scholarship as rapidly as possible." The deadline for papers was October 1991. The program chairs: Art and Film, Stephen Feinstein, University of Wisconsin; History, Olavi Arens, Department of History, Armstrong College, Savannah, GA; Literature, Rimvydas Silbajoris, Department of Slavic Languages, Ohio State University; Ecology, Juris Dreifelds, Department of Politics, Brock University; Linguistics, Stephen Young, Modern Language and Linguistics, University of Maryland; Social Sciences, Thomas Palm, Department of Economics, Portland State University; Special Topics, Toivo Miljan, Department of Political Sciences, Wilfrid Laurier University. The conference is sponsored by the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies (AABS) whose president is Tomas Venclova of Yale University. For more information-AABS, 111 Knob Hill Road, Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840

- (Ramune Kubilius, from AABS Newsletter, June 1991)



United Lithuanian Relief Fund of America, Inc. (BALFAS):

BALFAS was established in 1944 as the Soviet occupation was devastating our Lithuania. From the start, it was dedicated to the idea of helping Lithuanians in need, wherever they may be.

After fifty years Lithuania is free again.

BALFAS thanks all for their generosity; and appeals to all, with an invitation to help the Lithuanian people as they nurture their newly regained freedom. BALFAS has already collected and sent clothing,

medicines, and other necessities to Lithuania. *But more assistance is needed.*

The newly elected Board, and the outgoing President, Dr. Danute Harmon, extend their heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to a successful collection of packages for shipment to the Union of Lithuanian Exiles and Political Prisoners based in Kaunas. A debt of gratitude is owed to the BALFAS chapter in Philadelphia; which invited the Baltimore and Washington chapters to participate in this container shipment. The Washington chapter collected some \$1,500.00 which was sent to Lithuania. Also, sincere thanks are due Vincent and Henry Cesnauskas, for again giving unstintingly of their energy, time and labor. They personally drove their truck and delivered to Philadelphia some 220 packages to meet the November 25-26 deadline for further shipment to Kaunas. Thanks, as well to those who helped load the truck: Edward Bacanskas and his son Andrew, Arunas Tamosevicius, Mindaugas Juodeika and Drs. Danute and Joe Harmon.

On January 26, after the Sunday 2 PM Mass, BALFAS held a public meeting. All were invited. BALFAS welcomes questions and suggestions for the year of activity ahead. Write to: Marijona Dymysaite Ogden, President, United Lithuanian Relief Fund of America, Inc., 6650 Barnaby Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20015. - adapted from a letter signed by Marijona Dymysaite Ogden



New Officers:

The World Lithuanian Youth Association has just elected new officers. Representatives from member countries recently met in South America at the World Lithuanian Youth Congress. Elected as President of the Association is Paulius Mickus of Washington, D.C. Among the other officers are Siga Snipas and Darius Suziedelis; who along with Paulius at one time have been active in and officers of the Lithuanian American Youth Association. The next Congress is scheduled to be organized in two and a half years in Europe, possibly in the Puskas region of Poland, and in Lithuania. More information about the Congress will appear in **BRIDGES** as it becomes available.

- Ramune Kubilius ➡

Success Story:

The monthly paper, *Today's Chicago Woman*, in its January 1992 issue, featured "Women to Watch: 100 Women Making a Difference". The authors, Cali Bergold and Sharon Roebuck sought through nominations and questionnaires to identify women who are "truly making an impact and effecting change." They identified women active in the volunteer or non-profit community, private sector or pioneering a specific area... One of the 100 is Daina Jaras, 34, owner of a chain of stores called "2nd Hand Tunes". Ms. Jaras' accomplishments are listed, "As the daughter of Lithuanian immigrants, Daina is enjoying 15 years of success with her seven-store rare and hard-to-find record stores...To become a successful entrepreneur in the almost entirely male-dominated music business has also been a real personal accomplishment." Her goals for 1992: "Go beyond selling rare music and open a night club to showcase obscure but important musicians". (Perhaps she will feature a Lithuanian or Lithuanian American musician from time to time? - RK) - *Ramune Kubilius*



New Book:

Lithuanians In The USA: Aspects of Ethnic Identity, by David Fainhauz, is, "...devoted to the issues of ethnic identity concerning the Lithuanian-American community as a whole. This book is devoted to the old Lithuanian immigration, which chronologically belongs to the period before World War II." (From the author's introduction.) Available from Lithuanian Library Press, Inc., 3001 West 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60629-2501. \$15.00 per copy, soft cover.



A New Service:

US Sprint, a long distance telephone carrier, recently announced that it is the first international telecommunications carrier to offer direct dial voice service from the United States to [Lithuania].

The new service is being offered via digital satellite circuits to a switching facility in St. Petersburg that has an automatic routing capability to automatic exchanges in all the republics.

"Direct dial service will enable Americans to reach families and business associates in the former Soviet Union as they never could before," said Dave Schmieg, president of Sprint's Consumer Services Group. "Calling now will be easier and less expensive." Direct dial service to and from the U.S. is available to customers served by automatic exchanges in [virtually all of the republics, including Lithuania].

Approximately 85 percent of all telephone calls in the [newly independent] republics are handled by automatic exchanges.

To reach [Lithuania], callers can dial "011" for an international line, "7" to reach the former Soviet Union,

the city code, the phone number, and the "#" key to ensure the fastest connection.

Access to the Intersputnik satellite is being provided under a new agreement between Sprint and IDB&T of Rockville, Md., a unit of IDB Communications Group Inc.

"This unprecedented service offering opens a door that has never before been open in these countries," said Paolo Guidi, president of Sprint International, Sprint's global telecommunications and private networks subsidiary. "For a year now, Sprint has brought high-speed data and messaging services to the former Soviet states through our joint venture, Sprint Networks, and by deploying access facilities for the SprintNet(R) global data network. Now we are doing the same in the voice arena."

Sprint is a unit of United Telecommunications, Inc. (NYSE: UT), a diversified international telecommunications company with \$8.7 billion in revenues. - *from a News Release*
(Editor's Note: Please see, elsewhere in this issue, an advertisement from Sprint; in which they announce this service. That advertisement contains a telephone number to call for additional information about this service.)



Air Service Update:

Vilnius, Lithuania becomes the first EQA destination opened jointly by the three alliance partners, Austrian Airlines, SAS and Swissair with inaugural flights on Jan. 20, 21 and 19 respectively.

The EQA services to Vilnius are coordinated so that the Lithuanian capital will be served daily except Wednesdays from the outset. Austrian will fly from Vienna on Mondays and Fridays, Swissair from Zurich on Thursdays and Sundays, and SAS from Copenhagen on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

"For quite some time, the Lithuanian communities in the U.S. have urged us to start this service," stated Jorgen Jensen, Austrian Airlines general manager for North America. "With our already extensive route network in Eastern Europe, Vilnius is a natural addition."

The joint staff in Vilnius will cooperate on traffic and passenger services at the airport. They planned, renovated and equipped the shared offices together during the recent holiday season.

None of the EQA airlines are newcomers to the region. SAS was the first western carrier to serve Tallinn, Estonia and Riga, Latvia. Austrian and Swissair have developed joint services to Kiev and St. Petersburg. - *from a News Release*



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