

# BRIDGES

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## CONTENTS:

- 3 **Humanitarian Aid**.....Lithuanian's Forgotten Children ..... *Jeanne Dorr*
- 6 **Politics** ... Washington Update: The November Elections ..... *Asta Banionis*
- 8 **Technology** .....The Lithuanian Power System ..... *Vytas Maciunas*
- 11 **From the Lithuanian Press**.....  
..... *Ramune Kubilius*
- 13 **Cultural Arts**.....The New York Scene ..... *Aukse Trojanas*
- 14 **Traditions** ..... Kucios .....  
..... *Danute Bindokas*
- 16 **Events**.....Ambassador Eidintas in Seattle ..... *Ina Bertulyte-Bray*
- 19 **News**.....Bits and Pieces
- 20 **Sports** .....Lithuanian Athlete in New Mexico for High Altitude Training .....  
..... *Hypatia Ycas Petkus*
- 21 **Sports**.....*Sports News from Lithuania* ..... *Pranas Gvildys*
- 22 **Letters to the Editor**



*Lithuania's Forgotten Children*

## To Our Readers:

November has arrived with the hustle and bustle of the approaching Holidays. We chose to feature Lithuania's "Forgotten Children" on the cover, because the Christmas season is an opportune time to give the gift of caring. Most everyone reading Jeanne Dorr's article will be moved.


The November elections have brought major changes to the US Congress and Senate, as well as many local governments. Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) is featured in Asta Banionis' political section. Sen. McConnell will now assume the role of Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations (which determines levels of foreign aid). As Lithuanian-Americans it is imperative that we remain diligent in keeping our elected officials informed about Lithuania and her Baltic neighbors and their struggle on the road to economic development.

I look forward to the coming months and working with BRIDGES. I encourage all our readers to write and tell us what you like and don't like about the Journal. We will make every effort to improve what I feel is already a quality journal. Letters to the Editor concerning topics of broader interest will be published periodically. This section is intended to create a forum for discussion, present opposing viewpoints, comments on articles published in BRIDGES and so on. Bearing in mind that the entire BRIDGES staff and contributors volunteer their time and talents, complimentary letters will be published as well. I encourage our readers to take advantage of this forum, when appropriate.

November finds our Business editor, Antanas Dambrionas in Lithuania "on business", therefore we've taken the opportunity to present a more "tech" oriented article in Vytas Maciunas' (who happens to be a mechanical engineer by trade) discussion of Lithuania's Power Plants and related issues.

Pranas Gvildys, our Sports Editor is in China "on business" as well, not at a sporting event as one would suspect. Pranas provided the latest sports news from Lithuania before he left and we've supplemented his info with the story of two Marathon runners written by H.Y. Petkus.

Again, I invite our readers to submit articles and even "tidbits" of information for consideration.



Audrone Gulbinas  
Editor, BRIDGES

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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. **BRIDGES** – The Official Publication of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc.

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Jeanne Dorr

# Lithuanian's Forgotten Children

I would like to begin this article with the opening lines of Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." I am borrowing that quote to write about the eight weeks I spent in Lithuania this summer. It was my tenth trip since 1979, so I no longer consider myself a tourist. I wanted to see how the humanitarian programs were working in Lithuania, I was primarily interested in Lithuanian Orphan Care. Before leaving for Lithuania I spoke to Birute Jasaitis from the Human Services Council in Chicago. She encouraged me to look around and sent me a list of people to contact in Lithuania. I also received a telephone call from Dr. Albina Prunskis, the Lithuanian Orphan Care Committee President. She was going to be in Lithuania at the same time I was and suggested we get together in Vilnius. I envisioned sitting around a table drinking mineral water, making polite small talk and planning strategies to raise money. What I did not foresee were the ten and twelve hours a day we would be working with the children and their families. There was no sitting around a table; instead, we drove hours out of Vilnius, we walked through fields and down dirt roads, we climbed into barn lofts where families were living, and we took turns waiting in line to use the outhouse.

I worked with three different groups who are helped by Lithuanian Orphan Care. One is the "Countryside Children's Fund" which is headed by Dr. Regina Svoba and her husband, Jonas. Mr. Svoba is Editor-in-Chief of "Valstiečių" newspaper. He and his wife, along with the board of directors, administer the fund for children all over Lithuania. The second group I worked with was headed by Mrs. Grazina Landsbergis who also chairs a fund for children. The third one was a young priest from Vidukle, Father Viktoras Aukstakalnis. He has organized several small group homes for children so that they can grow and mature in a family environment rather than an institution. Because the work of these groups is so different, I will be writing about them

in separate articles. They basically share the same philosophies and goals, but the manner by which they achieve these goals is different. None of these groups work in any way with the government or bureaucracies which deal in endless paper shuffling without showing results. The children and their families were never treated as "charity" cases, rather, they were given the respect and dignity they deserve. I hope you will find it in your hearts to support one or all of these groups.

This month and next month I would like to take you on a trip with the "Countryside Children's Fund". I hope I can make you see and feel what I experienced. Dr.



*Faces of children that can be helped through the "Countryside Children' Fund"*

Prunskis warned me to dress "appropriately" for our trip. This meant sneakers and comfortable clothing. We left Vilnius with Mr. and Mrs. Svoba at 8 AM, not exactly the time I expected to be on the road during my "vacation". Before leaving Vilnius, I told my friends I would probably be home for an early dinner, little did I realize that a work day with these people would never end before 10 PM. We drove about an hour and a half out of Vilnius, bypassed Ignalina, and headed for the Švenčionius region. I learned that the Svobas became interested in the children of Lithuania for several reasons. They received many letters through their newspaper from people asking

for help either for themselves or for others. As they travelled through Lithuania, they saw how children in the villages lived. These are the "forgotten" children. Very little humanitarian aid reaches them unless someone specifically earmarks packages for a certain village. The Svobas are compassionate people who understand human suffering.

Our first stop was a small country school in the Švenčionių region. We were greeted by the principal, a teacher, an older woman who teaches weaving, and about half the students. The school has a total enrollment of thirty four students. The children who were there that day were dressed in their best clothing. The students sang and several young girls demonstrated their weaving skills. Dr. Prunskis and Dr. Svoba also did some weaving. I tried, but discovered that you need four legs and eight arms to work the huge loom. The children were so polite, but I could see they were trying to stifle giggles when I tried my luck at weaving. It is beyond me how a twelve year old could make it look so easy. Later, the principal told us about some of the students. She has been in the school for years and knows each student and family. Some lead a life that we, as adults, can hardly imagine. They are, at the ages of nine and ten, responsible for feeding and taking care of younger brothers and sisters. There is no time to be a child. We brought with us part of a charity shipment the Svobas had received from America. Some of the children were given bags of food and clothing to take home. One ten year old girl tried on her new dress, her eyes filled up, then she took it off, folded it neatly and placed it on a chair. I thought she didn't like it, but the principal explained that the child had to leave her "good" clothes in school because her mother would sell them for alcohol. What a sad lesson to learn about life at the age of ten. Another boy will be going to Vilnius for a leg operation, but there will be no one from his family there to comfort him. Can you imagine sending a child off on his own to face surgery in a strange city? His only visitors will be the Svobas.

With the help of other organizations, "Children's Countryside Fund" will buy four new looms for the school and some much needed thread. The loom that is currently being used is over a hundred years old. It is the only loom the school has and ten children are trying to learn on it. Weaving is becoming a lost art and the school encourages students to learn this wonderful Lithuanian tradition. We also discussed some vocational programs for boys that could be implemented at a future date. As I took a final look around the school, I couldn't help wondering how my students would react to sitting in a building all day that was heated by a wood burning stove and had no indoor plumbing. Yet for some of these

students this was a haven, a place where for a few hours a day, they could be children.

Maybe the next part of this story should carry a warning that some of the material will contain graphic details. Most of it is not very entertaining, but it must be told as it is. Our next stop was to visit a father and his two daughters. The father was thirty three years old, but appeared much older. The girls were in fourth and sixth grades, and had two of the most beautiful singing voices I had ever heard. The poverty was evident everywhere one looked. But these are proud people and there was no complaining. Where was the mother? She had not been seen for several years. In the beginning she would stay for a short time and then leave without warning. The father



raises the children as best he can. They were very thankful for the food and clothing that we left them.

Upstairs, in the same "house", we found a nine year old girl taking care of her two year old brother. They live in one room, the room reflected the abject poverty of their lives. There was no sign of food and the room was in a shambles. This is in no way a reflection on the children, it is simply a fact of life for them. When the baby woke, his sister hugged and kissed with such love that her eyes glowed. This was probably the one good thing in her young life. When we asked about her parents, she was very protective of them. She said they had to go out for a while. We knew that both parents are alcoholics. The children were also left with food and clothing along with instructions for using what was in their bags. It was evident that the nine year old was in charge of the house. Where did we find these children? We met with a very caring social worker from the village. She has a very large area to cover, but truly loves these children. Her work goes above and beyond the call of duty.

Space does not allow me to write about all I saw that day, but I want to touch on one other case. A twenty six

year old young man is raising two brothers - one seventeen and the other fourteen. Their mother died of severe asthma and the father died from a brain hemorrhage. They had no other family and lived alone. Again, poverty was evident from the moment we entered the house. It was clean, but almost falling down. They had started to dig the potatoes, even though it was too early, and the potatoes were barely larger than grapes. There simply was nothing else to eat. Once again, there were no complaints. At first they viewed us with suspicion and were reluctant to talk. They were also not used to having guests. Why would strangers offer to help them? What was the catch? After some warm-up conversation, we learned that the oldest brother made very little at his job, he was uneducated and unskilled. The middle brother left school after ninth grade, but was very proud of his diploma, his grades were the highest possible. However, few children in the villages are encouraged to go further with education. After talking to him, we learned he would indeed like to continue, but it didn't seem possible. Countryside Children offered him a student stipend each month to continue his education. We left the oldest brother with 200 litas (\$50) and an invitation to the middle brother to come to Vilnius to discuss his future. Before I returned to the US, Mr. Svoba told me that the seventeen year old had come to Vilnius, the fund enrolled him in school and he would be supported as long as his grades were satisfactory. He planned to finish high school and spend a year learning to be a furniture maker. Incidentally, he arrived at the newspaper office wearing new shoes, thanks to the gift we left with his older brother. Dr. Prunskis found a sponsor for the youngest brother, and it appears that this is one case that will have a happy ending. The seventeen year old has already promised to help his younger brother. All they needed was a little help and some encouragement. They needed to know they weren't alone and that someone cared.

I could almost hear the BRIDGES readers saying, "There she goes again, asking for money!" No, I'm not asking, I'm begging. I have a lot of pride and this is very difficult. But I am also a realist and there is a crisis in Lithuania. Democracy came with a high price tag. The government can no longer take care of everyone and people have to take responsibility for themselves. Many don't know how and others simply cannot. We can help these children or Lithuania can support them for the rest of their lives when they reach adulthood, if they reach adulthood, without the faintest idea of how to live in a family situation or how to earn a living. As I said, I am a realist, we can't reach every child, but isn't just one life worth the effort? There are so many we can help - these programs do work, I know because I saw them in action. Many of these children are technically not "orphans". Some have been abandoned and are being raised by

*Continued on p. 23*

## Modern Medical Care for Family and Friends in the Baltics

With the opening of the Baltic-American Medical & Surgical Clinic in Vilnius, Lithuania, people in America can now arrange for high quality medical care for their family or friends living in Lithuania or any nearby country. The cost is up to 50 percent less than the cost of the same care rendered in the United State, and major travel expenses are eliminated or sharply reduced.

- Joint venture private clinic employing Western medical and surgical standards. Multi-lingual Lithuanian and American staff.
- Through February, 1995, American staff includes a general surgeon and a nurse fluent in Lithuanian. Other American physicians and nurses to follow.
- Specialties available with American physicians will vary with rotations of physicians. Top Lithuanian specialists are available under contract with the clinic.
- Arrangements made in the United States. Payments delivered into Clinic's account at BayBank Boston, N.A.
- Payments not released until care has been rendered and a written report has been delivered.

Persons interested in further information should contact:

Dr. Kenneth M. Leavitt\*  
11 Middlesex Avenue  
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FAX: (508) 658-2919

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Asta Banionis

# Washington Update: The November Elections

Writing this column before the November elections has been difficult. Despite the development of sophisticated polling techniques, students of American politics know that "it's not over, till it's over". If the political pundits of October are correct, the November elections should have brought some major changes in the U.S. Congress, particularly in the United States Senate, i.e., Republican Party control of the Senate. It takes 51 seats to control, and if the Republicans have reached this benchmark, they will be taking over the critical positions of chairman of all committees and subcommittees within the U.S. Senate. What will this mean for American supporters of an independent and democratic Lithuania? A much more even playing field in Washington, D.C.

During the Bush presidency, Senate Democrats were more than willing to support issues which strengthened Lithuania's chances for independence, simply because President Bush refused to do the right thing and recognize the Landsbergis government as the legitimate, democratically-elected government of Lithuania when that endorsement was desperately needed. To the core group of Senators (both Democratic and Republican) who genuinely supported an independent and democratic Lithuania, it was relatively easy to add other Senate Democrats because there were few negative political consequences for joining the coalition. Over the last two years, those same Senate Democrats have been politically obligated to support the first Democratic President in 12 years. Even our core supporters were inclined at a basic, emotional level, "to give President Clinton the benefit of the doubt", when Administration policy resulted in weaker support or fuzzy support for an independent and democratic Lithuania.

Forgetting his strong criticism of the Bush Administration, President Clinton allowed his own Administration to take a "Russia-first" policy all too often. It is not surprising that the Senate Republicans during this period became a more active group defending what can be called the Central and East European bloc of new democracies; and from their ranks, Senator Mitch McConnell, a Republican from Kentucky, distinguished himself as a principled and effective leader.

As ranking minority member of the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations (the subcommittee which determines U.S. foreign aid levels), Senator McConnell led the fight to reestablish some balance in United States foreign policy in the region. Years from now, historians may credit the senator for saving President Clinton from becoming a second Democratic president to lose Eastern Europe.

Bridges readers know that during the last year the Yeltsin government has officially adopted both a military and a foreign policy doctrine which asserts for Russia the unilateral right to intervene in the affairs of neighboring states. To the Russian government it seems logical to claim that all the countries which now exist on the territory of the former Soviet Union are not independent nations but Russia's "near abroad" - a place where Russia has special historical interests. Within the speeches of various Russian government officials it is also



*Sen. Mitch McConnell*

clear that this “near abroad” includes the territory of Poland and other former Soviet bloc states. That this concept should seem logical to the Russian government only demonstrates that Russians have yet to shed their old imperialist attitudes and are far from being democrats.

Senator McConnell has understood that it would be fool-hardy for American foreign policy to base the future security and independence of the 24 non-Russian nations to emerge from the Soviet bloc solely on the successful evolution of a truly democratic Russia. And yet the Clinton Administration on many occasions has argued that there will be democracy in the region, only if Russia is a democracy. It is truly unfortunate that some Clinton Administration officials are willing to gamble with the lives of over 160 million non-Russians in the region. There should be a priority placed on securing peace and democracy for the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe even if Russia should not make it through its bold experiment from dictatorship to democracy, and from empire to nation-state.

In early October, immediately after Russian President Yeltsin’s visit to Washington, DC Senator McConnell gave a speech on the floor of the Senate which clearly articulated the fundamental problems in the President’s foreign policy for the region:

“... In the past 18 months the Administration’s Russia first policy has been all too evident in the distribution of aid. The lion’s share has gone to Russia. Given Russia’s size and nuclear status, this approach has some merit. Unfortunately, it has come at the expense of support for the other struggling republics. At every turn the Administration has deferred to Russian sensitivities and opposed earmarks for other republics. They have also worked to defeat language that conditioned aid on Russian respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of neighboring states.

In the most recent conference on Foreign Operations appropriations, the Administration worked with the Majority to delete an amendment that linked aid to Russia to a full withdrawal of troops from the Baltics. In spite of an 89-9 vote in the Senate, the Administration succeeded in stripping out the condition.

We have not only deferred to Russian concerns in the new independent states, we have also allowed Russia to dominate and define our policy in Europe. Largely because of Russian concern about expanding NATO’s membership, the Administration offered up the anemic alternative, the Partnership for Peace. Even those vague terms were opposed by Russia unless they were given premier standing - a NATO-plus-one status, if you will.

Moscow’s view prevailed then as now. Due to strident Russian opposition, recent bilateral military exercises between the U.S. and Poland were canceled. Apparently, no nation could be offered joint exercises in advance of those scheduled with Russia in September.

The Administration’s Russia first policy was under-

scored last month by our UN Ambassador, Madeleine Albright. She concluded a swing across Europe with a September speech in Moscow in which she said, ‘Russia is an empire where the mother country and the colonies are contiguous.’ Is an empire - not, was an empire. A slip of tense? Perhaps. But the speech went on to assert an equivalent status between the U.S. and Russia conceding, “Russia’s mandate and activities in the near abroad (were) appropriate.”

Fortunately, a Danish journalist in the audience reminded Ambassador Albright that history and human psychology made Russia’s emerging role more unsettling than the activities of a nation with a 200-year tradition of political pluralism and freedom.

Some might ask why this Russia first approach should matter. After all, important progress has been made in advancing democracy and economic reform in Russia. Clearly, this is true. None of us need reminding that the last summit was held in the wake of a near overthrow of the Yeltsin government, a violent attack on the Parliament, and defeat of key economic reforms. No doubt, Russia has changed for the better.

But there is a significant difference between our support for Russian internal reform and our approval of their aggressive, extraterritorial pursuit of national interests. Our commitment of nearly \$3 billion of aid to Russia has served our mutual interests in expanding trade and democracy. In contrast, U.S. consent to involuntary re-integration of the new independent states, recognition of a Russian sphere of influence or allowing a Russian veto over U.S. European security policy directly undermines American national security interests in regional stability...”

In summary, Senator McConnell said, “I had hoped the summit would offer President Clinton and President Yeltsin an opportunity to define and pursue common ground as well as clarify and work to reconcile differences. To that end, the occasion offered an opportunity to reinforce our support for Russia in its effort to establish itself as a successful international economic and political power. But, that success should not come at the expense of the political sovereignty, security or economic independence of any other nation.”

If the November elections have given control of the Senate to the Republican Party, Senator McConnell will become the chairman of Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations. As chairman, he would be in a far better position to defend Central and Eastern Europe from the short-sighted policies of some Clinton Administration officials. If the political winds don’t sweep the Republicans into power, then the rules that govern the current foreign policy game in Washington, DC stay the same — unless, citizens who care about the survival of the Central and Eastern European democracies get better organized.

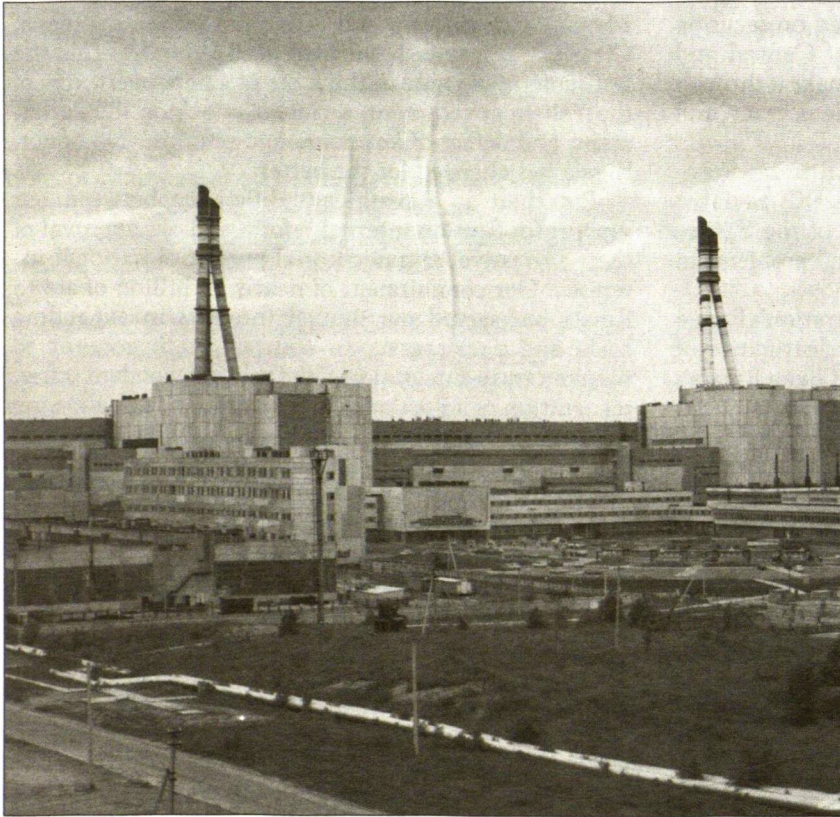
Fully half of the U.S. Congress is new since 1992.

*Continued on p. 10*

Vytautas Maciunas

# The Lithuanian Power System

The Lithuanian Power System supplies electricity throughout the entire territory of Lithuania. There are connections to the power grids of Latvia, Byelorussia and Kaliningrad which provide an outlet for surplus energy and a point of entry if there is a shortage in the system. It is significant to note, that the Kaliningrad area, which Russia has claimed as its own, imports most of its electrical energy from Lithuania.



*Ignalina Nuclear Power Station*

The installed capacity of Lithuania's power system amounts to about total of 5,700 MW. Fossil and nuclear power stations account for 98 percent of total capacity. Hydroelectric power stations provide the remaining 2 percent. Today, the most important components of the power system are the Ignalina nuclear power station, the Lithuania Thermal Power station, which is located at Elektrėnai and the pumped energy storage facility at Kaišiadorys. A number of other plants exist which provide the remaining capacity. A table identifying these other facilities has been included.

At current levels of electricity usage, the nuclear

plant at Ignalina or the fossil power plant at Elektrėnai can provide for all of Lithuania's power requirements. Since nuclear energy is significantly less costly to produce, Lithuania makes every effort to conserve its financial resources by keeping the nuclear plant operational. The fossil plant at Elektrėnai is essentially on standby. However, when Ignalina recently had an emergency shutdown, the Lithuania Thermal Power plant at Elektrėnai came flawlessly on line to replace the power production of the nuclear facility and the people of Lithuania didn't recognize any change in their electrical service.

Since demand for electricity universally drops at night, either power production must also be decreased or the energy obtained from nuclear fission or burning of fossil fuels must somehow be stored for later use when the demand is back up.

The pumped energy storage facility at Kaišiadorys provides the means for storing energy when demand in the power system is down, allowing power production to remain constant, which is particularly important when electricity is being supplied by nuclear energy. Nuclear plants can not safely and efficiently cycle their power production in response to daily changes in load requirements. When excess energy becomes available in the system, it is used to pump water from the lake at Kaišiadorys through very large pipes up a hill a short distance away to fill a man made reservoir, whose elevation is more than 100 meters above the elevation of the lake.

When demand for power in the system increases, water is allowed to flow down the pipes from the reservoir above. Before spilling back into the lake the water passes across the blades of water turbines, turning them to transform the power of water "falling" from 100 meters elevation to electrical energy. The size of this pumped storage system and the type of engineering problems that had to be resolved during design and construction are truly impressive. In the United States, the Duke Power Company has constructed a similar facility.

The Ignalina Nuclear power station is located in the northeastern part of Lithuania. Its first stage of 3,000



MW capacity was commissioned in 1987. The power station is fitted with Soviet design graphite water channel-type thermal reactors. The reactors at Ignalina are the largest in the world. Each generating unit of the Ignalina nuclear power station has a thermal capacity of 4,800 MW and a power capacity of 1500 MW. The generated electricity is delivered to the power system over 330kV and 750kV power lines.

Like all power stations with reactors of this type, saturated steam is generated directly inside the reactor by directly boiling the water, which is then delivered to the turbines to produce electrical energy. To complete the closed loop, the steam exhausted from the turbines is condensed back to water and returned back to the reactor to be boiled again. Since turbines and condensers are in contact with steam produced in the nuclear reactors, more components are contaminated by radioactivity and concerns for personnel and environment safety increase.

Each generating unit at Ignalina is provided with independent nuclear fuel transportation systems and control consoles. The generating units have a common machine hall, gas cleaning and water treatment rooms. The Druskiiai lake serves as the cooling pond.

The aerosol waste gases that are discharged to the surrounding atmosphere at a height of 150m through the station's ventilation stack are cleaned by a two stage process. The first stage of gas cleaning consists of a decay

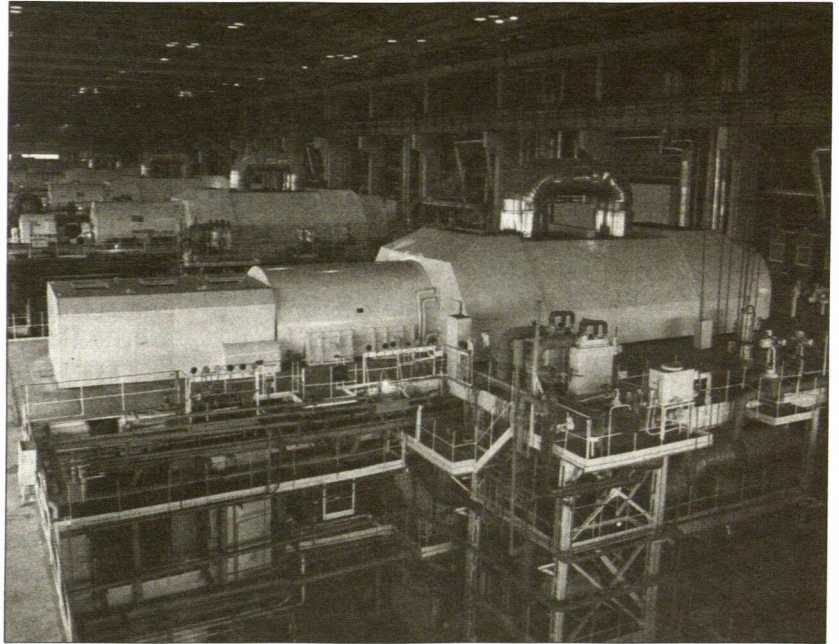
chamber where the radioactivity of the inert gases is allowed to decrease by natural decay. The second stage reduces gas radioactivity by the dynamic sorption in radiochromatographic coal columns. Continuous radiation monitoring of the gas aerosols and liquid wastes discharged into the environment is provided by the plant.

The Lithuania Thermal Power station, located at Elektrėnai, half-way between Vilnius and Kaunas on the highway joining the two cities, is one of the largest fossil power stations in Eastern Europe. It was brought up to its design capacity of 1800 MW in 1971.

The Lithuania Thermal Power station was built in accordance with a modular design to allow for power production to be generated by independent power units within one plant. Each unit consists of a steam boiler, turbine, generator and transformer and therefore is actually an individual power station. The Lithuania Thermal Power station has four 150 MW and four 300 MW generating units of this type. The generated electricity is conveyed over 330kV power transmission lines.

The Streva river was closed off to raise the level of water in Anykštis, Puikinas and Jagudis lakes to provide a water storage reservoir of sufficient capacity to meet the power station's cooling requirements. Residual oil is the main fuel, but the units can also oper-

*Continued on p. 10*



*The Lithuanian Thermal Power Station*

Electric Power Station	Turbine Capacity MW	Boiler Capacity	
		steam boiler, t/h	hot-water boiler Gcal/h
Lithuania thermal power station	1,800	5,800	—
Vilnius heat-and-power generating station	384	1,730	700
Kaunas heat-and-power generating station	190	1,500	600
Mažeikiai heat and power generating station	210	2,000	—
Klaipėda thermal power station	10.8	210	150
Ignalina nuclear power station	3,000	—	—
Kaunas hydroelectric power station	100.8	—	—
Small power stations	5.25	—	—
Single-unit stations	51	—	—
<b>Power system total capacity</b>	<b>5,751.85</b>	<b>11,240</b>	<b>1,450</b>

**WASHINGTON UPDATE***Continued from p. 7*

Most of these new Representatives and Senators aren't acquainted with and weren't paying attention to the historic changes that crumbled the Soviet bloc between 1989 and 1991. They are ill-prepared to make decisions which affect the future of both the United States and these new democracies, unless supporters of Central and Eastern Europe make them aware of the issues and the stakes involved.

**Lithuania's Russian Military Transit Agreement**

As we go to press, the Russian government has rejected the military transit agreement proposed by the Lithuanian government. So, it's back to square one of negotiations, if the Lithuanian government feels compelled to provide the Russians with a separate military transit agreement. American citizens are still waiting for the Clinton Administration to issue a single complaint or protest to the Russian government for its use of economic blackmail against Lithuania to get a favorable military transit agreement. The Russian government has been on public record for at least six months, insisting on a favorable military transit agreement before ratifying and implementing the "most-favored nation" economic treaty they signed with the Lithuanians in November, 1993. Since July, the Russian government has increased the pressure against Lithuania by doubling tariffs for Lithuanian exports to Russia, drying up trade to a trickle.

President Clinton has called the 103rd Congress back for a lame-duck session starting November 29, 1994 specifically to get the U.S. Congress to adopt the "enabling legislation" for the GATT agreement - a multilateral treaty which seeks to reduce tariffs on most goods traded between the 100+ countries which are signatories of the treaty (including the U.S.). President Clinton says he's for barrier-free trade and open markets, yet he winks at the Russian government's use of tariffs as a weapon against Lithuania to extract political conces-

sions. Maybe some of the "lame-ducks" will remind the President that "what's good for the goose, is good for the gander".

**Kaišiadorys Election Update**

The fourth attempt to hold an election to fill the parliamentary seat left vacant by the ascension of Algirdas Brazauskas to the presidency of Lithuania, has been canceled. On two previous occasions, Bridges readers will recall, 40 percent of the required voters for the district failed to turn out for the election by very narrow margins (less than 1-3%) and the third time, the Chief Electoral Commission of Lithuania disallowed all candidates except one on the ballot leading to a paltry turnout of only 4% of the voters. This time, only the Conservative Party candidate, Liudvikas Sabutis, managed to qualify for the ballot and withdrew when it became apparent on October 26 that he was the only candidate. Rather than risk legitimizing the old Soviet tradition of "one-party democracy", Mr. Sabutis withdrew when his appeals to extend the time for registration of other candidates fell on the deaf ears of the Chief Electoral Commission. Mr. Sabutis has urged that the election for this parliamentary seat now be scheduled for the same day in March, 1995 when elections for city and county (local government) councils are to be held.

Although this most recent incident may seem comical to some of our readers, it belies the sorry state of affairs that govern democracy in Lithuania today. Voter apathy and the cynicism of government officials are a serious, if not the greatest, threat to Lithuania's fragile democracy. Mr. Sabutis with his principled stand has struck a small blow for liberty. Let's hope that more of his fellow citizens respond to the sound of that bell. It would behoove international aid givers to take a closer look at the goings-on in Kaišiadorys, Lithuania, since a recount of ballots after an election has never been conducted in Lithuania.

**LITHUANIAN POWER***Continued from p. 9*

ate with natural gas, which is used as the reserve fuel. The operation of the station equipment is controlled and monitored from unit control panels.

A common feature of any power system is that it concentrates the production of electricity and thereby promotes the intensive development of electrical networks of all voltages. The total length of 35kV and higher voltage networks in Lithuania is about 10,000 kilometers. There are approximately 100,000 kilometers of rural networks which have voltage between .4 and 10kV.

Lithuania has much more power generating capacity than it presently needs for internal consumption. Access to the electrical energy consumers of western Europe would require construction of a crucial link between the Lithuanian power grid and Poland's power grid, which is

connected to the power grid of western Europe.

It will be significant to note whether western financing becomes available to enable Lithuania to obtain access to western markets for electrical energy produced at the Ignalina nuclear plant or if western financing will only be available for short term safety improvements on condition that Lithuania proceed with early shutdown of the Ignalina nuclear plant.

The other area of importance for Lithuania is access to fossil fuel energy resources. To this end, the construction of an oil terminal on the Baltic Coast and a pipeline from the terminal to the refinery at Mažeikiai is critical. The current dependence on Russian supply poses continuous danger of political manipulation and blackmail.

*Information in this article is based on a report published by the Lithuanian Power System and discussions by the author with personnel of the Lithuanian Power System this summer.*

Ramune Kubilius

# From the Lithuanian Press...

Selected excerpt from the Lithuanian Press in America.

## Dr. Juozas Girnius, Philosopher, Dies

Dr. Juozas Girnius, philosopher, editor for 15 years of the Lithuanian language cultural/philosophical journal "Aidai", and editor of the Lithuanian language encyclopedia (Lietuviu Enciklopedija) died in Boston September 13th. Dr. Girnius was born in Lithuania in 1915. He completed his studies at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas in 1936 and continued his studies in Louvain, Belgium; Freiburg, Germany (studying under M. Heidegger); and at the Sorbonne in Paris, France. He taught before and after the war years, and later moved to America. He lived in Maine, completing his PhD in Philosophy at the University of Montreal. He later settled in Boston. His interests were in the area of philosophy, esthetics, and literature. His Lithuanian language books "The Ideal and Time" (Idealas ir Laikas), published in 1966 and "Man Without God" (Žmogus be Dievo) published in 1964 have enjoyed tremendous recent popularity in Lithuania. He wrote and edited several biographies of Lithuanian philosophers - Pranas Dovydaitis, Pranas Kuraitis and J. Keliuotis. He was in the process of working on a monograph about Juozas Brazaitis at the time of his death. Dr. Girnius was active in the Lithuanian Catholic Federation "Ateitis" and was its President 1963-67. Dr. Girnius leaves behind his widow Ona, and three sons- physicist Ramunas, philosopher Kestutis and historian Saulius. (The last two have worked at Radio Free Europe in Munich for many years.-rk) His loss will be felt by the Lithuanian community, both in Lithuania and abroad, but his works will live on. (DARBININKAS, 9/23/94, from an article by P.J.-Paulius Jurkus)

## President K. Grinius Remains Transferred to Lithuania

The remains of Lithuania's pre-war president, Kazys Grinius, will be transferred for burial in Vilnius, Lithuania according to his wishes. The re-burial ceremonies begin October 1st at a Chicago cemetery where Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas, on a tour of America, is planned to officiate. (DARBININKAS, 9/23/94)

## BALFas Celebrates 50th Anniversary

BALFas (the Baltic American Relief organization) celebrates its 50th anniversary September 22-23 in Chi-

cago. The jubilee will feature former political prisoner Balys Gajauskas, who will travel from Lithuania to deliver a speech at the event. (Many post-war refugees from Lithuania remember BALFas support which helped them reconstruct their lives; to this day BALFas continues to send packages of clothing and other assistance to poor areas of Lithuania and the Lithuanian regions of Poland in Punkskas, and assists new immigrants to America-rk). (DARBININKAS, 9/23/94)

## New Autobiography Published

The dedication of the book *Reaching For Freedom* took place in June in Lakewood, CA. The author, Aleksas Kulnys, is a resident of Palos Verdes. He is a chemical engineer, not a writer. His book, a project encouraged by his creative writing instructor, is an autobiography he never thought he'd write. After retirement, he decided to take English language courses to improve his language skills, and his instructor, Mrs. Thelma Kramer, listened to his lively remembrances about his hard life after the war. She thought they had the makings of a good book. There are a number of books written about life in the post-war years, but not enough written in English. An editor was found, Louise (Krasauskas) Giacoppe, a professional writer who came from a Lithuanian immigrant family in Massachusetts. Her small publishing company, Geocopy Educational Materials in Huntington Beach, CA published the paperback book in small quantities; plans for later printings include the publication of a hardcover edition. The book has only 156 pages for Part I ("Getting Ready for Life"), while Part II ("A Lithuanian on the American Continent") consists of 108 pages. Drawings, maps, and family trees illustrate the book. The book takes the author from his birthplace in Šiauliai to the environs which made up his world. He mentions his various relations; the most well-known is humanitarian and political activist Dr. Juozas Sliupas who worked on both sides of the Atlantic in the years between the wars. The author writes interestingly of the family sayings which guided his life, and of life during the post-war years in Germany. His experiences living in Colombia, South America are not that much different from those of other persons who attempted to settle there. Using his education, he secured employment and eventually was a professor at the University of Bogota. Not being entirely happy with life in South America, he eventually moved to America - and his memoirs end at that point. The

book may be obtained from the author himself- Aleksas Kulnys, 7034 Hartcrest Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274.

(DRAUGAS, 9/28/94, from an article by Hypatia Y. Petkus)

## Tibet Seeks Lithuanian Support

The Dalai Lama's representative for Middle and South-eastern Europe, Chope Paljor Tsering arrived in Vilnius September 27th. The visitor was met at the airport by Vytautas Umbrasas of the Religion and Ethnic Culture Center, and Alfonsas Vainoras of the Parliament (Seimas). According to information from "Lietuvos Aidas" the visitor met with a Parliamentary group which supports Tibet and he lectured at Vytautas Magnus University and Klaipeda University about Tibetan culture, religion and politics. Journalist Ovidijus Lukosius interviewed Mr. Tsering about the purpose of his visit. The most important purpose of the visit is to renew ties with the Tibetan support group in Seimas and with those people who are supportive of solving Tibet's problems. Asked if he feels support in Lithuania, he explained that Lithuania's and Tibet's histories have much in common. He feels the moral support of Lithuania's people and looks forward to each visit. He asks that Lithuania's politicians press China for its oppression of Tibet. He indicated that Tibet doesn't fight with weapons, though China has occupied Tibet. In seeking to oppress Tibetan culture, Chinese culture sinks down too. The two cultures are closely aligned.

Asked what kind of support he seeks for Tibet, the Dalai Lama's representative indicated that he admires democratic America's support for Haiti, but he does not seek similar armed support for Tibet-other indications of support would help. The latest news from Tibet is not good: 62 new industrial projects are scheduled to begin in Tibet, according to decisions made in Beijing in July. As of 1984, 40 new industrial projects were begun in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, but the city remains only 20% native Tibetan. That is the hidden colonization of Tibet. The Dalai Lama's representative seeks to highlight this fact and he hopes for Lithuania's help.

(DRAUGAS, 10/12/94)

## "Lithuanian Village" Opens in Boston

Boston celebrated a special weekend September 24-25th. The opening of "The Lithuanian Village" took place in the four-floor Boston Lithuanian Club. The weekend also included various dedication and religious ceremonies. The Lithuanian Village will include AMBERLAND (Imports and Exports); VILTIS-HOPE (Lithuanian Relief Parcel Service); DOVANA (Gift

Showroom) as well as a small cafe. A special guest during the weekend was Vilnius Seminary Rector K. Vasiliauskas (who had been sent to Siberia after the war). 9 priests and 250 guests participated in a celebration honoring him and acquired a book by Antanas Drilingas about him called "Monsinjoras". Rev. Valkavicius served as the Rector's translator. Also participating in the celebration was the ethnographic group SODAUTAS of Boston. Participating in the ceremonies were Bostonian Dr. K. Leavitt, founder of BALTIC- AMERICAN MEDICAL & SURGICAL CLINIC and his Lithuanian colleague



Monsignor K. Vasiliauskas discusses results of his physical exam in Boston, Sept. 30 with (l-r) Dr. S. Spokevicius (Vilnius), Dr. K. Leavitt and Dr. M. Bader of Boston.

Dr. S. Spokevicius. Dr. Leavitt indicated that Rector Vasiliauskas would have lifelong free medical care at their clinic. Dr. Leavitt, who only until recently had never been to Lithuania, has now devoted his life to improving Lithuanian health care and plans to live there. The Lithuanian Village is not yet completed, according to its founder, Bostonian Gintaras Karosas and his wife from Lithuania, Vilte. Plans are underway to acquire artwork and install a Lithuanian library-reading room.

(DRAUGAS, 10/12/94, from an article by Ed. Sulaitis)

## Ciurlionis Home to be Restored

Plans are underway to restore the home of Mykalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis in Vilnius. Vilnius mayor Vytautas Jasulaitis and Lithuanian Cultural Fund President Jurgis Svarionis signed an agreement. The city agreed to the project on February 23, 1994. The signed agreement designates responsibilities to each party: restoring and renovating the house, paying the bills, hiring employees, ensuring authenticity, selecting illustrations of the famous composer's and artist's work and life during the period he spent in Vilnius.

(DRAUGAS, 10/13/94)

Aukse Trojanas

# The New York Scene

Jonas Mekas' Anthology Film Archives recently hosted a month-long Fluxus program in New York. Fluxus was an art movement of the 1950's and 1960's which explored life as art in a playful, conceptual style.

For Lithuanians, the participation of Vytautas Landsbergis as a performer and speaker was a highlight of the program. Mr. Landsbergis, the first President of Lithuania after the fall of the Soviet Empire, was a childhood friend of the late George Maciunas, an avid artist and the principal organizer of Fluxus. Vytautas Landsbergis kept in touch with Maciunas even though they were on opposite sides of the Iron Curtain. He occasionally contributed to Fluxus events in the West, including a musical composition for a Carnegie Hall concert in 1968. For his musical program on October 8th, Mr. Landsbergis chose to perform some works by M.K. Ciurlionis. He played several works, including "Agnus Dei" Druskininkai, some Nocturnes, folksongs and excerpts from the symphonic poem, "The Sea."

Following the concert Vytautas Landsbergis and fellow Fluxists Jonas Mekas and Susan Sontag, the American writer and intellectual, participated in a panel discussion on the subject of "Art and Liberation." For Landsbergis, music is the most free of the arts. It was important in Lithuania since pagan times when native tribes fought the Teutonic knights. The pagans believed that the best aim of life was to fall in battle. Heroic songs would then be sung to inspire the continued struggle for freedom. The arts allow the expression of something that is worth living and dying for whether for pagans, post-World War II partisans or those engaged in the recent Lithuanian struggle for independence. In the latter struggle, a popular cartoon underscored for many people the ability to feel free even when imprisoned, whether as a nation or as an individual. The cartoon showed the caption, "I am free," emerging from a prison window while a guard paced outside a prisoner's cell. For Landsbergis, art is love and can be inspiring even in the face of imprisonment or death.

Jonas Mekas first felt that there would be an irreversible movement for freedom in Lithuania when he walked in Vilnius in 1971 and was astonished to hear the songs of Bob Dylan through an open window. He knew then that the "ice was breaking" if the Soviet regime could not stop art from reaching the Lithuanian people. While there are different layers of art in a culture, some are as "deep as blood" and can transport people to a vision of truth which gives them the courage to withstand oppression.

Susan Sontag presented the most abstract interpretations of "Art and Liberation." She feels that the most important role of art is the ability to be "oppositional" to many forms of oppression whether political, cultural or spiritual. While the oldest meaning of the arts is to express the spirit or soul of a tribe or community, art can also be used to promote racism or oppression. Even though she is the citizen of a big country, Ms. Sontag feels she knows what the role of art means to a victimized smaller country such as Bosnia, in which she has lived for months at a time. It gives the people of such a country a sense of dignity and that sense of inner freedom which was so effectively described by Vytautas Landsbergis.



*l to r: Susan Sontag, Jonas Mekas and Vytautas Landsbergis*

Foto: Robert Haller

Danute Bindokas

# Kūčios

*As Christmas draws near, we find ourselves looking forward to spending time with family and friends. Lithuanian traditions at Christmas, and especially Christmas Eve, have always done magic to bring the true Christmas spirit of sharing through our rich heritage, back into our homes. Again, we are proud to present an excerpt from Danute Bindokiene's book Lithuanian Customs and Traditions for you to enjoy. We hope that you will find this information useful and applicable during the holidays...*

## Christmas Eve

Preparations for Christmas Eve take all day. The house is cleaned, food prepared not only for the special supper (Kūčios) but also for the first day of Christmas. People fast and abstain from meat. Lithuanians still adhere to this custom though the Church has abolished abstinence: food may be eaten as often as desired, even meat.

Although official fasting no longer exists, we should refrain from meat on Christmas Eve so as to preserve Lithuanian tradition. It is vitally important that the Christmas Eve dinner (or supper) include no meat dishes because it could then no longer be called Kūčios but an ordinary meal prepared for any other evening.

On Christmas Eve the house must be thoroughly cleaned, all the bed linens changed and all family members must bathe and don clean clothes before the evening meal. For the Christmas Eve dinner, the table is prepared as follows: a handful of fine hay is spread evenly on the table. This is a reminder that Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger on hay. The table is then covered with a pure white tablecloth, set with plates and decorated with candles and fir boughs. Live flowers are inappropriate for the table, in particular red or white poinsettias which are so popular in some countries at Christmastime. A small plate with as many Christmas wafers as there are persons present is placed in the center of the table. In some Lithuanian regions these wafers were called God's cakes (Dievo pyragai) for they were obtained from the parish and were imprinted with Biblical scenes of Jesus' birth. Although "plotkelė" was the popular and better known term, the word is borrowed from the Slavic. It is better to say "paplūtėlis", "plokštainėlis" or even "Dievo pyragas".

All family members make an effort to come home for the Christmas Eve supper, even from a distance. Perhaps not so much for the meal as for the sacred family ritual which draws the family members closer, banding everyone and strengthening warm family ties. If a family member has died that year or cannot attend the meal

(only for very serious reasons) an empty place is left at the table.

A plate is still placed on the table and a chair is drawn up, but no spoons, knives, or forks are set. A small candle is placed on the plate and lit during the meal. It is believed that the spirit of the deceased family member participates in the Kūčios along with everyone.

Long ago, the principal dish was a mixture of various cooked grains: wheat, barley, oats, peas and beans. This mixture was called kūčia. It was eaten with honey diluted with warm boiled water. The word kūčia itself comes from the Byelorussian and means a porridge of dried grain.

Twelve different dishes are served on the table because Jesus had twelve apostles. All dishes are strictly meatless: fish herring, šližikai with poppy seed milk, kisielius (cranberry pudding), a dried fruit soup or compote, a salad of winter and dried vegetables, mushrooms, boiled or baked potatoes, sauerkraut (cooked, of course, without meat) and bread. In keeping with Lithuanian Christmas tradition, only the dishes as they were prepared in Lithuania for this meal should be eaten, while fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, exotic seafood should be left for another meal. It must not be forgotten that Lithuania is a northern European country where cucumbers, tomatoes, grapes, etc, do not grow in the winter. The people whose lifestyle produced Kūčios traditions made do with foodstuffs prepared in the summer and fall: dried, pickled and otherwise preserved for the winter.

Everyone gathers at the dinner table as soon as the first star appears in the sky. When everyone is assembled at the table, a prayer is said. The father (or eldest member of the family) then takes a wafer and offers it to the mother wishing her a Happy Christmas. "God grant that we are all together again next year" - the mother responds as she breaks off a piece of the wafer. She offers the father her wafer in return. The father and mother then offer their wafers to every family member or guest at the table. After them, all the diners exchange greetings and morsels of wafer. Care is taken not to skip anyone for that means terrible misfortune or even death the following year. In breaking a piece of wafer, each tries to get a piece larger than that remaining in the other's hand for it means his year will be better. The person holding the wafer tries to prevent a large piece being taken for this will "break his luck".

The order of eating the other dishes is not established, everyone eats what he wishes, but it is essential to at least taste every food. Whoever skips a Kūčios dish will not survive until the next Christmas Eve.

The meal is eaten solemnly, there is little conversation or joking and alcoholic beverages are not served. If anyone needs to drink, water, homemade cider or fruit juice is served. After the meal is consumed, no one hurries to leave the table: the first to rise while another is still eating will die first. The family remains seated, the mood lightens, predictions and forecasts are done about next year, health happiness, love, etc. Christmas Eve is rich in prognostications.

A few of these predictions worth mentioning, that are made while still at the table:

- While seated, look at the walls where the candlelight casts the shadows of those dining. If your shadow is large, wide and of the whole person, the year will be good, there will be no illness, everything will go well. If the shadow lacks a head - a terrible calamity will occur; if it is skinny, unclear and wavering, the year will be difficult.

- A stem of hay is pulled from under the tablecloth. It cannot be picked, the first one the fingers encounter must be drawn. If a long slender stalk is drawn, the person's future spouse will be tall and slender, while a short, fat, bent stalk means a short, fat spouse. Married persons can also guess next year's happiness from the kind of stalk pulled. A thin stem means a flat, empty wallet, a "lean" year, while a fat one means a prosperous year, a full wallet. If a married woman pulls a straw thicker in the middle, she will have a baby that year.

- Sitting with their back to the door, a girl or young man throws a shoe over their head: if the shoe lands with the toe pointing to the door, he or she will leave home that year (marry, go to a distant school, etc). If the shoe heel faces the door, he or she will remain home.

After finishing the augury, the family gathers around the Christmas tree to continue enjoying their evening with Christmas carols, reading Bible excerpts, storytelling or performing for Santa Claus...

## *Some essential Christmas Eve recipes:*

### **Marinated Herring with Mushrooms**

2 herrings	1/4 c. oil
2 onions	2-3 bay leaves
8 oz. can mushrooms drained	1/2 ground white pepper
	1 tbl. lemon juice

Soak herring for 48 hours in cold water, changing water at least three times. Wash, skin, remove bones and cut into small pieces. Saute chopped onion in oil only until tender, do not brown. When onion is soft, add mushrooms, seasonings and bring to a simmer. Cool well and mix with herring pieces. Allow the herring and mushroom mixture to stand several hours in refrigerator before using (may be prepared a day ahead).

### **Fresh Cranberry Pudding (Kisielius)**

3 cups cranberries*	1 cup sugar
2 cloves	3 tbl. potato starch
4 cups water	

Pick over cranberries, cover with cold water and simmer until berries burst. Force cooked berries through a strainer, place in saucepan, add sugar and cloves. Dissolve potato starch in a small amount of water and slowly add to boiling liquid, stirring constantly. Boil 2-3 minutes until pudding thickens. Serve cold.

\* cranberry juice may be substituted for fresh cranberries and water.

### **Šližikai with Poppy Seed Milk (Christmas Eve biscuits)**

1 c. self-rising flour
2 c. all-purpose flour
2 tbl. powdered sugar
1 egg
1/2 lb. margarine (2 sticks)
1 c. cold water (approx.)

Mix all ingredients (margarine should be room temperature), knead dough, refrigerate 2-3 hours or overnight. Roll into finger-width strips, cut into inch long pieces and bake on a cookie sheet in 350 oven until golden brown.

### **Poppy Seed Milk**

Cover about 2 c. of dried poppy seeds with boiling water, let stand 5 minutes, drain and crush the seeds in a food mill. Pour sweetened water or milk over crushed seeds to make a thin liquid. Place desired amount of šližikai in a bowl, cover with poppy seed milk and eat like cereal.

### **Note:**

#### **In Philadelphia:**

Knights of Lithuania traditional "Kūčios" at St. George Parish Hall **Saturday, Dec. 10th**. For tickets and info call the Rectory (215) 739-3102

Lithuanian Scouts traditional "Kūčios" at St. Andrew Parish Hall **Sunday, Dec. 18**. For tickets and information call Mrs. M. Susinskas: (215) 927-2467.

#### **In Los Angeles:**

Šauliai traditional "Kūčios" at St. Casimir's Parish Hall **Sunday, Dec. 18**. For information call K. Karuza at (213) 664-6857

Ina Bertulyte-Bray

# Ambassador Eidintas in Seattle

The plane carrying Ambassador Alfonsas Eidintas set down in Seattle on Sunday October 23. From that moment on, the next three days were filled with meetings, lectures, and presentations, starting at the airport where Ambassador Eidintas met and chatted with Senator Slade Gorton, a solid supporter of Baltic interests, who had arrived in Seattle on the same flight. The primary focus on this trip, however, was the University of Washington (UW).

Ordinarily, one would assume that a major university, far from any Lithuanian center, would not necessarily show an interest in the Baltics. However, the UW has already implemented a Baltic Studies Program. Ambassador Eidintas was invited here to find national and international support for this unique program and to promote the cause of Lithuania.

Students from around the nation enrolled at the UW this past summer to take courses in intensive Lithuanian, Baltic history, and Baltic folklore (see articles in the Dec. '93 and March '94 issues of BRIDGES). The Baltic Studies Program has continued into this current academic year, with Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian language courses being offered. The more intense "summer only program" will be rotated among the 5 universi-

ties in Lithuania by Ambassador Eidintas to enhance to the summer course. Unfortunately, this had to be postponed until this Fall when various organizations could collaborate on the invitation and on what turned out to be an expanded program.

The following organizations and institutions made the Ambassador's visit possible: The World Affairs Council of Seattle (Ronald Woods, Executive Director), the University of Washington's (UW Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature (Professor Tom DuBois), and the Russian, Eastern European, and Central Asian Studies Program of the prestigious Jackson School of International Studies of the UW (Professor Daniel Waugh, Chair), the Lithuanian American Community of Washington State (Jurate Mazeikaite Harrison, President) and the National Public Affairs Council of the LAC (Ina Bertulyte Bray, member). The resulting meetings, contacts, exposure, interviews were rather impressive both in scope and in numbers.

## University of Washington

The aforementioned departments of the University of Washington, in addition to making financial commitments for the visit, provided the Ambassador with various opportunities to present the story of his country. They hosted a luncheon where the Ambassador met a number of faculty members with interests in Lithuania. At a seminar for graduate students in political science, and at a lecture for the general public, the Ambassador laid out the positive and negative facts of the rebirth of his nation on its way to reintegration into Western Europe. Incidentally, he was introduced by the world-renowned expert on Eastern Europe, UW Professor Herbert Ellison. The Ambassador also met with representatives of the University's Suzzallo (main) Library with an eye on expanding book exchanges with institutions back home.

A dinner meeting with local Baltic activists and representatives from the UW, provided the Ambassador with insight into the incredible opportunity that the UW Baltic Studies Program offers. In addition to direct assistance at any level, the Baltic leaders sought



Foto by I. Bray

Amb. Eidintas with Alan Boyle, Foreign Desk Editor Seattle Post Intelligencer

ties in the Baltic Studies Summer Institute consortium. Initial plans included a lecture on the current situa-



the Ambassador's endorsement in promoting this program. Support is sought from within the Baltic communities on a national level, American contacts, and from the Baltic countries themselves. It is interesting to note that the Baltic Studies Program was conceived and pro-

Club, where the Ambassador spoke to individuals interested in business ventures in Lithuania.

Ambassador Eidintas devoted his first visit to Seattle exclusively to helping his country. In addition to new contacts, the Ambassador met and thanked organizations already involved with Lithuania, such as the ESU. This year, the English Speaking Union (ESU) has sent nearly two tons of books to the Municipal Library of Panevėžys, additional books to a school in that same city, and is currently in the process of bringing an English language teacher to Seattle for one month of study. Ambassador Eidintas met with the leadership of the ESU, Seattle (Ann Newton, President) during a dinner meeting on Tuesday at the Rainier Club.

### Lithuania American Community (national and local)

From the initial suggestion for the visit to the final farewell at the airplane, the Lithuanian involvement in this visit was vital. Working closely with the above mentioned institutions, the LAC National Public Affairs Council and the local LAC Chapter offered

names, scheduled events, and developed a cohesive plan for the visit.

Of course, we also provided the "warm and fuzzy feeling." On an exceptionally balmy October Sunday, at a dinner reception at the Bray residence, Ambassador Eidintas was introduced to Americans and Lithuanians who had fledgling yet potentially fruitful interests or already deep commitments to his country. Former Congressman John Miller (one of the four Congressmen whom the Soviet authorities had denied entry visas at the time of Lithuania's first elections in 1991) was one such guest.

Four days in far-flung Seattle may seem insignificant when compared to standards set in more populous centers. However, regardless of our numbers, we Lithuanian Americans were able to play a pivotal role by being the bridge that connects American interests with those of Lithuania. Ambassador Eidintas, in turn, did not come hat-in-hand, but with confidence that Lithuania can offer opportunities to others. He did not minimize problems that exist in every sphere of Lithuania's life. However, he emphasized, that gaining independence is a process in which we in the West can participate in and benefit from. In only four days, the visit of Ambassador Eidintas left his mark on Seattle that will hopefully resound in Lithuania.



At Boeing Corp from left: T. Basacchi, VP Sales, Amb. Eidintas, and S. McMurray, Regional Dir. Sales - Europe

moted by American faculty members at the UW, in direct response to a student's (Amanda Floan's) search for summer courses in Lithuanian. American supporters believe that such a program may help insure future scholarship in the area of the Baltics. From the Baltic perspective, the program offers insight for the leadership of their countries as they struggle to regain their Western orientation.

The existence of any program that is based on soft money, as is the Baltic Studies Program, is precarious at best. The Ambassador's interest can have considerable influence in creating more permanent financial support.

### World Affairs Council

The other American organization sponsoring the Ambassador's visit was the World Affairs Council (WAC). It provided most of the funding for hotel accommodations and also engaged the Seattle University (Jesuit) to cosponsor an evening lecture on its campus. In addition, working with the Public Affairs Council of the LAC, the World Affairs Council arranged for the tours and a meeting with a high-level contact at Boeing, set up interviews in local Public Radio (KUOW) and with the Foreign Desk Editor, Alan Boyle, of the Seattle morning paper, the *Post Intelligencer*. The WAC also provided a breakfast forum at the prestigious Rainier

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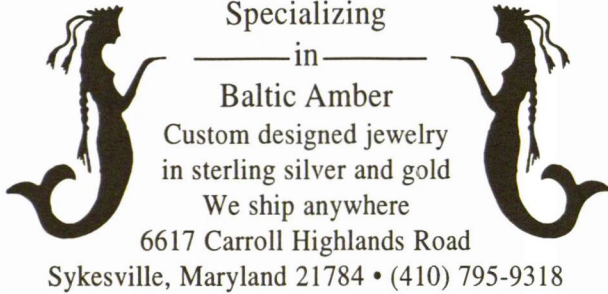
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# Bits and Pieces

## Estonian Ferry Victim Relief Fund

The Estonian Ferry Victim Relief Fund has been created by the Estonian American National Council and the U.S.-Baltic Foundation to assist the families left behind by the tragedy of Sept. 28, 1994. The ferry sank off the coast of Finland, taking with it the lives of almost 1,000 people. Hundreds of the victims were Estonian; many Lithuanians and Latvians perished as well. 100% of all donations made to this fund will be delivered directly to the families of Baltic victims. Tax deductible donations can be made to: The Estonian Ferry Victim Relief Fund, 1211 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 506, Washington, D.C. 20036 Tel. (202) 986-0380

## International Theatre Festival Planned for Spring

The Second International Theatre Festival in Vilnius, Lithuania is planned for May 12-21, 1995. Enthusiastic organizers hope that it will become another prestigious European festival, already recognized by UNESCO. Performers from France, Spain, Belgium, US and Great Britain as well as Poland and Russia have already signed to participate. For more information regarding participation in the festival, contact: Ruta Wiman, LIFE director, Jovaro 9, 2009 Vilnius, Lithuania. Phone - 0113702, Fax -632930. *From Internet Balt-L*

## Baltic Geography

GeoJournal, an academic geography journal, recently devoted an entire issue to Baltic geography. Vol. 33, No.1, 1994 covers "Baltic Peoples, Baltic Culture and Europe". The journal includes 12 articles written by scholars which discuss topics such as the demographics of the Baltics, environmental co-operation in the Baltic Sea region and more. A limited number of copies are available at the Latvian Studies Center for US \$20.00. To order call (616) 343-0254, fax (616) 343-0704 or write: 1702 Fraternity Village Dr. Kalamazoo, MI 49006. The journal is also available in many academic libraries.

*Internet Balt-L*

## AABS Awards for Baltic Studies

To encourage the development of comparative Baltic studies in a rigorous and substantive fashion in extended works, the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies announces publication prizes for the best original scholarly books published by a Western Press between 1993 and 1995. Works must meet further criteria established by AABS. For further information write to Robert Vitas, Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, 5600 S. Claremont Ave., Chicago, IL 60636-1039, USA.

*From the AABS Baltic Studies Newsletter Vol. XVIII Number 3(71) September, 1994.*

## Ruble tumbles - little effect in Baltics

Interfax reports that the recent dramatic fall of the Russian ruble has not had as disastrous an effect on the Baltic economies as on the Russian economy due to precautionary measures taken by Baltic experts. Bank of Estonia President Siim Kallas said Estonian export-import dealers have been concluding contracts in either hard currency or Estonian kroons, especially on account of the ruble's instability. Daina Bruvere of the Bank of Latvia also pointed out that the fluctuations on the Russian currency market will not affect the Latvian economy, as transactions between Russian and Latvian enterprises are generally carried out in hard currency. Meanwhile, the Riga-based Parex-Bank on October 12 stopped concluding contracts on the conversion of Russian rubles after Moscow banks refused to underwrite such contracts because of the unstable currency market. Stasys Kropas of the Bank of Lithuania said the events will not have a considerable impact on Lithuania, though they will affect trade between the two countries. While some Lithuanian entrepreneurs have made low-risk investments in rubles, Kropas stressed that the Bank of Lithuania will not take steps to compensate their losses.

*From JBANC's Baltic Hotline*

## New publication

The premier issue of *Lithuanian Heritage* magazine reached the offices of BRIDGES. The magazine includes many articles on Lithuanian culture and history. Subscription rates for the bimonthly magazine are \$24.95 for one year (6 issues). For more information contact: Baltech Publishing, P.O. Box 225, Lemont, IL 60439-0225.

## New officers for Knights of Lithuania Council 52

K. of L., Elizabeth, NJ, Council 52, held its annual election of officers on Saturday, Sept. 24 and elected: Annine Mitchell Matalavich - Pres., Ann Baronas - Vice-Pres., Ruth Brazinski - Secretary and Juliana Liana - Treas. Rev. Al Zemeikis will continue as spiritual advisor of the club.

In conjunction with the celebration of Sts. Peter and Paul R.C. Church's centennial celebration which will begin in Jan. 1995, Rev. Zemeikis is searching for old photos of the parish, especially pictures of the old church (now the church hall).

*From K of L Council 52 bulletin*

Hypatia Ycas Petkus

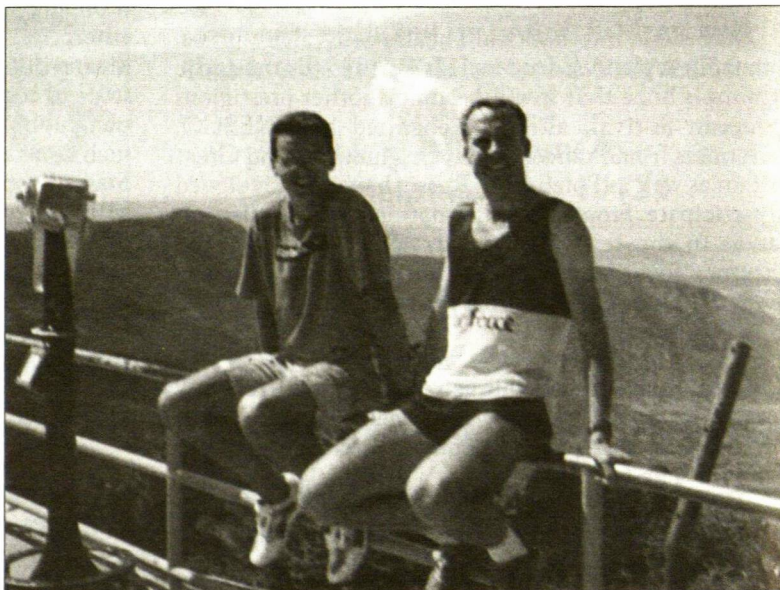
# Lithuanian Athlete in New Mexico for High Altitude Training

The sun shines hotter and the mountain air is clearer in the Albuquerque area than in most other places. The high desert climate makes this a good spot for the training of athletes in high altitudes. It appeals to runners of many countries of the world. Several Lithuanians are among those who have come here under the auspices of a local club titled "Nosotros Trck Team". In general, these are athletes who have achieved outstanding records in their own countries and elsewhere. One such runner is now here from Lithuania for a six-month training stint under the watchful eye of the well-known trainer Brian Appell.

Before we go any further, some explanations are due. Not everyone knows the exact location of New Mexico, let alone how to spell "Albuquerque". Questions are still being asked - by foreigners but sometimes Americans too - whether a separate visa is needed in order to enter our state! True, it borders on Mexico and on Texas, but it is very much a part of the United States. Settled by Spaniards, the city with the strange spelling was named after one of their Dukes, deriving from the words for "White Oak". Many locals actually shorten the name to the three letters "ABQ" (in which case outsiders may not know what they are talking about). There is no overcrowding, runaway population growth or pollution here, so perhaps it is a good thing that New Mexico is not known as well as it might be.

The runner from Lithuania currently visiting here is 22 year-old Dainius Virbickas, born in Prienai. He is a student of Physical Education at the Vilnius Pedagogical University, looking forward to getting his diploma in 1995 and working in this field. He is a graduate of the Polytechnicum or Technical School. He came to this country in April and is going home in November. He is busily studying English and experimenting with the strange foods of the U.S.A. and of New Mexico which has its own unique cuisine. Dainius has been interested in sports since early childhood, at first playing basketball. He started taking part in cross-country races while still a schoolboy and at age 15 decided that running was his sport. From the beginning, he was inclined toward long distance running up to 10,000 meters. In 1988 Dainius participated in the Youth Games

in the former Soviet Union and won 12th place among runners of many nationalities. In 1990, he won the Lithuanian Youth Championship and first place in the Athletic Games of 1989. In the World Lithuanian Games of 1991 he won second place. Lately, he got first place in the Lithuanian Winter Games in Panevžys. In 1994 he was the winner in the Cross Country races. Becoming aware of his special abilities and remarkable endurance, Dainius began training for Marathon racing. After making a good showing in the International Marathon races



*Capt. Andrew Klemas and Dainius Virbickas in Albuquerque, NM.*

in Luxemburg in 1994 (he came in 9th at 2 hours 16 minutes and 51 seconds) Dainius resolved to specialize in this area. In the U.S.A. he won new laurels in the San Francisco Marathon race of August, 1994. In this race, there were close to 5,000 participants and Dainius came in third at 2 hours 18 minutes and 54 seconds. The name of this young Lithuanian was prominently mentioned in the San Francisco Chronicle.

Similar Marathons, open to amateurs as well as professionals, take place in various American cities throughout the year. In September there was such a race in Albuquerque. Distance for this race, dating back to classical Greece, is set at 26 miles and 385 yards. The Marathon was a part of the earliest Olympic Games on record. This is the distance from Athens to the fields of

Marathon, where the Athenians won a great victory against the Persian armies. They sent their swiftest runner to Athens to tell the great news. When the Olympic Games were revived in the year 1896, Marathon racing became a part of the athletic program.

There were other Lithuanian athletes training in Albuquerque in earlier years. In 1992 - some months before the opening of the Olympic Games in Barcelona - two prominent runners, Laimute Baikauskaitė and Regina Cistiakova were here with their trainer Algimantas Vilkas of Vilnius. Both girls were prize winners in their own land and abroad. There were special exercises at the University of New Mexico Stadium in their honor as well as proclamations of honorary citizenship by the Mayor and Governor. Visits of athletes from Lithuania are largely due to the efforts of a local resident, Captain Andrew Klemas of the U.S. Air Force. He himself is a runner of distinction who has won prizes in athletic contests in many parts of the world. He is a member of the "Nosotros Track Team" club mentioned above.

Andrew grew up in the state of Delaware and is proud of his Lithuanian heritage. His parents, Vytautas and Vida, came here at an early age, fleeing the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. His father and mother both teach at the academic level in Delaware, specializing in Marine Science and in Mathematics respectively. Andrew has two younger brothers, one of whom seems to be following in his footsteps: his favorite sport is running and he is also planning for a career with the US Air Force. Andrew obtained his diplomas in physics, optics, electronics and related fields at universities in Boston and San Diego. He graduated from Officers Training School in 1985 and came to Albuquerque the following year. His work at the local Air Force base takes him to many places in the US and to foreign countries, where he represents the US Armed Forces at the military games and other sports events. He travels so frequently, that indeed it is hard to find him at home.

Andrew speaks Lithuanian and has visited the Old Country several times. The first time was in 1991 for the World Lithuanian Athletic Games. Here he won the Marathon race between Trakai and Vilnius. During this time he became acquainted with Dainius Virbickas who impressed him as a runner of great potential, well worth bringing to Albuquerque for further training. We feel that the last word should belong to Dainius. He tells us that his next big event is participation in the Marathon in Columbus, Ohio. He hopes to achieve even greater success than in San Francisco. So let us all wish him good luck on November 13, 1994! The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco which is "at least two kilometers long" made a great impression on Dainius. He knows the bridge every step of the way as he had to run across it. The bridge was the starting point for the Marathon race where Dainius achieved such distinction, competing with several thousand runners.

## Sport News from Lithuania

### Pranas Gvildys

#### Basketball

Six Lithuanian basketball teams are participating in European tournaments. Four teams advanced to the second round. Vilnius "Statyba" defeated Tbilis KK 110:85 in Georgia, and 94:92 in Vilnius to advance to the next round. Kauno "Atletas" lost to "MZT Skopje" from Macedonia 74:80 in the first game, but defeated them at home 60:44 to advance to the second round.

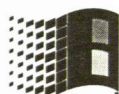
*Continued on p. 22*

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XI

# Letters to the Editor

July 5, 1994

To Whom it May Concern,

Enclosed is a check for \$28.00 (18.00 plus \$10 donation).

Thank you for the interesting, informative June, 1994 News Journal.

It is a delight to read articles from "Draugas". I subscribe to "Darbininkas". I do not understand everything that is written in Lithuanian today, so am not active. My parents migrated to the USA about 1905. I have been to Lithuania 5 times with friends of relatives (including Dainų Šventė).

I am passing on BRIDGES to others hoping they subscribe.

Sincerely,  
Nellie Shumbris  
Bayside, NY

*We'd like to thank Ms. Shumbris as well as all the other readers who include a donation with their renewals. In addition, we'd like to encourage all our readers to follow Ms. Shumbris' example and "pass" BRIDGES on to your friends and relatives who may not know of our publication.*

August 26, 1994

Dear Editor:

I read and enjoyed a friend's copy of the July-August issue of BRIDGES. As a participant in the Chicago conference on Baltic Studies, I was interested in the list of Lithuanian and Lithuanian-American participants on pages 17 and 19. There was one notable omission that should be corrected and one smaller one that need not be.

Natalija Kazlauskienė traveled from Vilnius to present a paper, "Price and Income Comparisons and Implications for Future adjustments in the Baltic Countries: An Overview." She is the advisor to the Minister of Agriculture and the Head of the International Trade Development Unit in the Lithuanian Ministry of Agriculture. She has become a prominent scholar in agricultural economics, and she has been a visiting professor at Iowa State University. She deserves some recognition.

I served as chairman of a session on economic reform in the Baltics, and I also presented a paper on "The Lithuanian Economy in Transition". I am a Lithuanian-American, although I have not been active in Lithuanian-American organizations. My grandparents were born near Skaudvilė, and I have relatives

currently living in that area as well as Vilnius and Kaunas. My grandfather's name was (Juozas) Grinius before it was Russified to Grinovich and subsequently translated as Grennes. I have gotten interested in economic reform in Lithuania since visiting the country in May 1993 and lecturing at Vytautas Magnus University.

Omitting my name is not so serious but we shouldn't want to offend Ms. Kazlauskienė, who traveled so far to be with us.

If your journal is interested in a short article on the Lithuanian economy, I would be willing to write one. A current interest of mine is inflation, the litas, and the new Lithuanian currency board.

Sincerely,  
Thomas Grennes  
Professor of Economics and  
Agricultural and Resource  
Economics  
North Carolina State  
University

*We thank Prof. Grennes for pointing out the omission of two very important participants of the Baltic Studies Conference. This list had in no way been intended to appear complete, yet whenever listing names, we run the danger of omission.*

*BRIDGES has accepted Dr. Grennes' gracious offer to write an article for a future issue.*

## SPORTS

*Continued from p. 21*

Their next opponent will be Hapoel from Jerusalem. In the first game Kauno "Lavera" defeated "Planje Basket" in Sweden 87:71, and at home 90:81. Their next opponent will be Galatasaray from Turkey. The new Lithuanian team Vilniaus "Sakalas" defeated "KHKS Stal-Bobrek" in Poland 82:81 and 91:79 at home. They now face Chijuta-Panion from Athens. Kauno "NCEA" defeated "OzetaTTS" from Slovakia 68:54 at home, but lost the second game in Slovakia 65:83, and thus was eliminated from further competition. Kauno Zalgiris had a bye in the champion trophy tournament.

## Soccer

In the European qualifying tournament, Lithuania defeated a strong Ukraine team 2:0 (0:0) in Kiev. The first Lithuanian goal was by V. Ivanauskas at 53 min. The

*Continued on p. 23*

**LITHUANIA'S CHILDREN***Continued from p. 5*

grandmothers or strangers. Some are living with either one or both alcoholic parents. Life has dealt these children a cruel blow. We cannot hold them responsible for their parents. Are we encouraging the parents not to care for their children by feeding and clothing them? Absolutely not! These parents will not take care of their young ones whether Countryside Children's Fund is there or not. The fund does not simply put money into a bank account every month. They seek out children who are in dire need. In these cases, a priest, teacher, or someone who can be trusted provides the children with food and clothing. Unfit parents do not receive one cent from the fund. Trust me, no one gets rich from these programs.

The cost to feed and clothe a child for one year is \$150, however any donation is gratefully appreciated. If 15 BRIDGES readers each send \$10, we can support a child for a year. If everyone who reads this article sends \$10, we can lessen this crisis. If you already support a child, please consider supporting that child for another year. How about some "creative financing"? The holiday season is an ideal time to open your heart. Instead of trying to find the ideal gift for someone who has everything, why not send a check to Orphan Care in their name? Large families, why not pool your resources and sponsor a child? Clubs and organizations - let's pass the hat around at your annual party. How about a living memorial for a loved one? I'm sure you can think of many other ways to raise money, but at the same time, try to think of these children waking up Christmas Day without food, heat, or anyone who cares about them. You could give one of Lithuania's Forgotten Children the gift of love, the gift of knowing that someone, somewhere cares whether they live or die.

Yes, those eight weeks were the best of times and the worst of times. I saw the worst, but I have hope that some of these children will someday see the best of times because of your generosity.

Thank you to Birute Jasaitis for her help before my trip. To Dr. Albina Prunskis, my most profound gratitude for sharing her gifts of compassion and understanding, not only with Lithuania's children, but with me. Her patience and encouragement seem to have no bounds. She is, in every sense of the word, a lady - one who can hug and dry the tears of a dispirited child and at the same time insist on excellence in scholastic achievement. God bless you Albina, may you have the strength to continue your work for many years.

Please send your tax deductible checks to: Lithuanian Orphan Care

2711 West 71st Str  
Chicago, IL 60629

**SPORTS***Continued from p. 22*

second goal was by A. Skarbalius helped with a spectacular pass by V. Ivanauskas at 61 min. V. Ivanauskas is playing professionally for the first division German Hamburg team. The Lithuanian junior team lost to Ukraine 2:3.

**Swimming**

Seven Lithuanian swimmers participated in the world swimming championships: Raimundas Mazuolis, Arunas Savickas, Mindaugas Spokas, Tomas Tabulevicius, Nerijus Beiga, Laura Petrutyte and Dita Zelviene. Zelviene and Petrutyte failed to qualify for the finals in the 100 meters free style event. In the 100 and 200 meters backstroke event M. Spokas also failed to qualify. His teammate A. Savickas qualified for the finals in the 200 meters' event and came sixteenth with the time of 2min 55 sec. The best Lithuanian, R. Mazuolis, qualified for the finals in the 100 meters' free style event, but only finished seventh.

In the 50 meters event Mazuolis did much better. He won the bronze medal with 22.52 seconds behind A. Papov from Russia (22.17 ) and Gerry Hall from USA (22.44 ).

**Tennis**

Prize money in the international tennis tournament held in Vilnius was 12,000 lt. In the men finals the Estonian R. Bush defeated 16 years old Bielorussian D. Kurilovich 6:2, 3:6, and 6:2. In the semifinals R. Bush defeated G. Vazelis 6:1 and 6:2, and D. Kurilovich defeated G. Mazonas 7:5 and 6:2. The top Lithuanian R. Muraska was not able to play because of previous commitments. In the woman singles the Bielorussian U. Busheva defeated the 17 years old R. Daduraite 6:2 and 6:3.

**Track and Field**

**Gintaras Staskevicius wins the bronze medal.** World championships of the modern pentathlon

were held in Darmstadt, Germany. Dmitri Svatkovsky from Russia won the gold medal with 5365 points, the silver - by Viaceslav Duchanov with 5347 points, and the bronze - by Gintaras Staskevicius with 5323 points.

**Handball**

The woman's handball team "Egle" from Vilnius started serious preparations for the season. In the nine team international handball tournament in France they shared the bronze medal with Stada Francais team from Paris with a tie 13:13, after losing 13:20 to the eventual winner Podravka team from Croatia. Egle's team came first in the six team, the Nestle Cup, tournament in Berlin.

## International Opportunity – Physicians...Nurses

The Baltic-American Medical & Surgical Clinic, a private medical clinic owned by a joint venture of American and Lithuanian physicians, opened in Vilnius in September. The clinic, which has its facilities in rented space within an existing hospital, is the first of its kind and has been renovated, furnished, equipped American medical standards. It operates on a fee-for-services basis, but the mission of the clinic includes a significant effort to assist in promoting better health care throughout the region. Beginning next year, in conjunction with International Medassist, Inc. (a non-profit corporation), the clinic hopes to be able to provide certain amounts of free care to people who could not otherwise afford it. There will also be assistance in training physicians and nurses from public hospitals. One of the objectives for the clinic is to have at least one American physician and nurse available to the clinic, on a rotating basis, during the first two years of its operations. An American nurse from New Jersey and an American physician's assistant from Washington each began a six-month stay at the clinic on October 1. A board certified general surgeon from Ohio will begin a 3 1/2 month stay on November 7, and a surgeon from Massachusetts will join him for the month of January. The clinic is seeking other physicians and nurses interested in being part of this exciting and pioneering effort.

- Minimum commitment of two months preferred, but shorter stay will be considered. Clinic will seek to obtain a Lithuanian medical license for physician participants.
- No need for participants to speak or understand Lithuanian. Lithuanian staff is experienced and multi-lingual. Charting and recordkeeping in English.
- Only 30-35 hours required each week.
- Clinic will provide roundtrip air travel for participant and spouse and free use of a furnished apartment in Vilnius (utilities included).
- Clinic will pay modest living stipend. Additional fee income for physicians.

Persons interested in further information should contact:

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11 Middlesex Avenue  
Wilmington, MA 01887  
Phone: (508) 658-9774  
FAX: (508) 658-2919

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