

# BRIDGES

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*Algirdas Rimas, Chairman of the LAC Economic Affairs Council speaking at the Philadelphia Feb. 16th Annual Commemoration*

## To Our Readers:

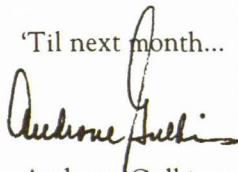
As we go to press, the House of Representatives is voting on HR7. If passed by Congress with the Torricelli amendment it could close the door for Baltic membership in NATO. Again, I urge our readers to stay informed and let your opinions be known to your representatives in Congress. Asta's article on HR7 informs readers about this bill and its possible impact on Lithuania, our Baltic neighbors and other former Soviet republics.

Plans for Spring and Summer are in full swing. Preparations are being made for a variety of conferences, seminars, courses, and sporting events scheduled for the coming months. Read all about them throughout this issue.

Jeanne brings us the final report in her series on Lithuania's Forgotten Children. The program she describes this month, perhaps the most beneficial option for orphan care, will touch many, as most of her articles have. Again, on behalf of all the children in these various programs, I thank BRIDGES readers for their generosity. Be assured, your donations are truly appreciated.

I hope all our readers had the opportunity to celebrate the 77th anniversary of Lithuania's independence in some fashion. I invite you to share those celebrations with other BRIDGES readers by sending in photos and/or articles about them. Please remember that our readers are our most important source of news.

'Til next month...



Audrone Gulbinas  
Editor, BRIDGES

### Coming next month:

- **Results of the North American Lithuanian Downhill skiing championships held in Canada**
- **Listing of Lithuanian-American cultural performers**
- **Update on computer technology in Lithuania**
- **News of upcoming events nationwide**

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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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Asta Banionis

# NATO Expansion: Round 1 and HR 7

The Republican "Contract with America" is starting to look like a Republican contract with Russia. Although this 1994 campaign document of House Republicans deals mainly with U.S. domestic issues, the contract did call for the strengthening of United States defense structures. Thus was born, H.R. 7, the legislative package that would define how defense should be strengthened.

We were pleasantly surprised to see the original draft of H.R. 7 calling for NATO expansion to the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, among them Lithuania. But as we go to print, the Committee on International Relations in the U.S. House of Representatives has effectively limited NATO membership to only Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, excluding the rest of Central and Eastern Europe. The bill also includes a policy directive to enshrine a "Russia-first" policy in United States NATO policy. How did this happen?

What will certainly go down in Baltic-American annals as the "infamous Torricelli amendment" (Cong. Robert Torricelli, D-NJ) was accepted within the Committee on International Relations (formerly known as the Committee on Foreign Affairs) late in the afternoon of January 30, 1995. And with that amendment the Baltic States, along with Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania were relegated to a security limbo waiting to be sucked up by a Greater Russian Empire.

The amendment also added the following language to the policy section of the bill, "that NATO and its member nations should cooperate closely with Russia on security issues and work to strengthen other structures of security cooperation in Europe, including the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe". What is striking about this language is that it could have been dictated by Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev himself. For the last year, whenever Russian officials have spoken out against NATO expansion they have argued for a strategic partnership with the U.S. and the use of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (formerly known as CSCE) as the institution which can most effectively enhance regional security. But this 53 nation deliberative body is not a military alliance. Its decisions are made through consensus and a single member can veto action. Although it has overseen "confidence-building" measures between the former adversarial blocs in Europe, it is best known for its defense of human

rights. Its forte is discussion, and more discussion. It is certainly not a substitute for NATO.

It is curious that Congressman Torricelli, the major sponsor of a law known as the Cuban Democracy Act which even today enforces an embargo against Cuba in the hopes of forcing Castro to give up his dictatorship, would sponsor amendments to weaken the security of many of the new democracies of East & Central Europe. We do know that White House officials asked the Congressman to introduce these destructive amendments. But there is plenty of blame to be shared by the House Republicans because they are the majority party today in the U.S. Congress and they could have rejected these amendments, but didn't.

This skirmish in the House Committee on International Relations demonstrates how critical it is for supporters of an independent Lithuania to stay in touch with their congressmen. We found many of the Members of the committee unaware of the impact of these amendments, while others had responded to the pressure of the White House. There were Members who were ready to fight, and did fight, for the Visegrad nations (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) right to join NATO, because they had heard from the supporters of these countries.

H.R. 7 will come to the House floor for consideration on February 16, 1995. Congressman Richard Durbin (D-IL) has sponsored two amendments to improve the bill and is hoping that they will be accepted. One amendment will delete the Russia-first policy statement about cooperating closely with Russia on security issues, while the second amendment will attempt to restore some balance to the NATO expansion policy by reinforcing the statement that other Central and East European nations are also expected to qualify for NATO expansion. Let's hope that the supporters of Lithuania will give Lithuania a fine gift for its Independence Day (V-16), by adopting the Durbin amendments.

Whether these amendments succeed or fail, the focus will shift to the Senate by early March where the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will take up the issue of NATO expansion and will begin writing its own bill. The struggle over the NATO issue is sure to intensify because the stakes are so high - the peace and security of hundreds of millions of people.

We can expect that the American supporters of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic will be front

and center for the NATO debate in the Senate. But, we'll be there too. And, of course, the Russian Embassy with its ability to sprinkle the Senate at critical moments with official visitors from the Russian Parliament will have an upper hand when it comes to access to a Senator. The Russian government is very adept at playing its "Zhirinovskiy card", i.e., that if the Russian people feel threatened or isolated by the West, madmen like Zhirinovskiy will take over—spelling the end of democracy in Russia. And they aren't above brandishing a few nuclear weapons around, or at least reminding the West that if Yeltsin is not in charge, nuclear weapons may fall into the hands of Mid-East radicals or worse elements.

We are sensitive to the claims of the Russian Federation that any expansion could isolate Russia. But we remind our readers that a nation of 160 million people, spanning 11 time zones, is hardly a nation which can be isolated. It is far more likely, as history has shown, for Russia to isolate herself from the West and Western traditions. Not a single country on Russia's European border, not even an alliance of these countries, is capable of being a military threat to Russia which still maintains over 1-1/2 million men under arms, 24,000 tanks and 35,000 nuclear weapons.

Rather than isolating itself these days, Russia is on the move. Not only is she fighting a war in Chechnya, but a document has recently surfaced in Washington, DC which outlines the Russian government's plan to create "buffer zones" in 1995. These buffer zones would enhance Russia's security and also extend Russian influence back into the territory formerly controlled by the Soviet Union. The Russian military is the chief instrument of this plan which calls for the establishment of two Russian military bases in Latvia, the occupation of the Narva region of Estonia, and controlling Lithuania through a military transit corridor. Other elements of the plan are already evident: for example, the four Russian military bases in Kazakhstan and bases in Georgia. These are but some of the reasons why we maintain that 1995 will be the decisive year for Lithuania's security.

Before our readers despair for Lithuania's fate, read the following testimony provided by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott before the Senate Foreign Operations Subcommittee on February 9, 1995. In answer to a question by Senator Shelby (R-AL) on the question of NATO membership for the Baltics, Mr. Talbott answered:

"My assessment of the Baltics is that all of those countries which were either part of the Soviet Union or the Warsaw Pact — and of course the Baltics are in a very special category; we never, as a government, acknowledged their forcible incorporation into the Soviet Union — all of those countries should be eligible to NATO.

Moreover, as the process of NATO (expansion) develops, we must keep a keen eye on the consequences and implications for all those states in the region who de-

serve our support and who require our continuing vigilance and support with regard to protecting their integrity and sovereignty. And the Baltics are very high up on the list. Those are brave people who have waited a long time for their freedom; they've got it now and they must keep it, and we must help them keep it."

Thank you, Mr. Talbott. We're determined to keep you true to your words. Mr. Torricelli should have been listening more closely to you two weeks ago.

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Dan Kaszeta

# Why Chechnya Matters

The current bloodshed in Chechnya not only represents a tragedy in pure human terms and a constitutional challenge to what passes for democracy in Russia, but, also has broader geopolitical significance that Balts and Baltic Americans should notice.

**Who are the Chechens?** The Chechens number about 800,000. They are a North Caucasian ethnic group, related to the Ingush, Ossetians, various Dagestani peoples, Circassians, and other small, predominately Muslim ethnic groups of the region. The Chechen language is non-Indo-European and has been written in Arabic, Latin, and Cyrillic alphabets at various times in history. Chechnya itself is a relatively isolated mountainous region on the north slopes of the Caucasus mountains. The Chechens fiercely fought against incorporation into Tsarist Russia well into the 19th century. During WWII, Stalin tragically deported the Chechen people to northern Kazakhstan, accusing the Chechens of collaborating with the invading German armies, despite the fact that the Germans never made it to Chechen territory. The Chechens remained in exile until they were allowed to resettle their homeland in the late 1950's. Chechnya seceded from the USSR after the August 1991 coup, although few in Moscow or elsewhere took notice. Recently Chechnya has been wracked by internecine clan violence. The current crisis has been brewing for some time, since Moscow has allegedly funded and armed Chechen factions opposed to Chechnya's independence-minded president, Dzhokar Dudayev. Moscow's intrigues failed, however, forcing the Russians to launch an outright invasion of Chechnya. The crisis demonstrates several important facts:

1. **The Disintegration of the Russian Empire is Incomplete.** The Russian state, under various labels of Muscovy, Tsarist Empire, USSR, and Russian Federation, has held hegemony over much of Eurasia for centuries. This Russian state is disintegrating before our eyes. It is folly to think that the collapse of the USSR was the end of the collapse of the Russian State; it was only the beginning. The Russian Federation, to paraphrase Dr. Paul Goble of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, is neither - Russian nor a federation. Rather, the Russian Federation is a multi-ethnic conglomeration

not unlike the Soviet Union. Ethnic separatism such as the brushfire conflict in Chechnya promises to be the rule rather than the exception as the empire continues to collapse. Chechnya is a symbol of the collapse of Russia in much the same way as the Baltic states were symbolic of the collapse of the USSR. Because the imperial Russian state is crumbling, the Baltic states must use caution in their dealings with Moscow.

2. **An American Foreign Policy of Crass Indifference.** In its campaign to suppress the Chechens, the Russian government has committed crimes against humanity. The indiscriminate bombing and shelling of Grozny is not civilized behavior and should not be tolerated. The official American stance has been muddled at best. American policy has been to prop up the center at all costs, a policy which has changed very little since the days of Gorbachev. The State Department has advised that the Chechens are better off in a Russian Federation. This is as equally shortsighted as George Bush's advice to the Ukraine in 1991, in his infamous "Chicken Kiev" speech. America is ignoring the inevitable disintegration of Russia. Tacit support for the armed suppression of self-determination in order to support the thin veil of Russian democracy is at best inconsistent. At its worst, it is a betrayal of American democratic ideals. The US did not stand up for Baltic human rights and independence in 1990-1991 and is further embarrassing itself by failing to do so in the North Caucasus.

3. **Is Chechen Freedom Any Different than Baltic Freedom?** Chechens deserve independence no less than Lithuanians, Latvians, or Estonians. The Chechen quest for self-determination is no less morally valid than that of the Baltic states. The bombing of Grozny is not any less inhumane or barbaric than the 1991 massacre in Vilnius and must be viewed with the same indignation. It is unconscionable for Baltic Americans not to empathize with the Chechens, after we worked long and hard for the freedom of our ancestral homelands. The fact is, however, there are few Chechens outside of the former USSR and the streets in front of Russian embassies remain largely empty.

4. **Dzhokar Dudayev.** Chechnya's leader, Dzhokar Dudayev, has been vilified as a gangster and a despot. This is an unfair characterization rooted in Russian prejudice against Chechens. It is important that Baltic-Americans remember the surprising role played by

*Dan Kaszeta is a third generation Lithuanian-American living in Arlington, VA. He holds a M.A. in International Relations from George Washington University.*

Dudayev in the restoration of Baltic independence. In the critical hours following the August 1991 coup, Dudayev, then serving as Soviet Air Force commander in the Baltic region, closed down the airport in Tallinn, preventing Soviet airborne troops from cracking down on Estonian independence.

**5. The Paper Tiger.** Finally, it is important for the world to see that the Russian Army is virtually worthless against a determined and armed opponent. The highly visible bungling of the Chechnya operation is stark evidence of the decay of the Russian Army. As the empire crumbles, so does its legions. The Baltic states must get over their fears of the Russian Army and realize that Russia can hardly support police actions within its own borders, let alone invade a neighboring state. The Baltic states should not, therefore, fall prey to military intimidation by Russia.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to all our Lithuanian brothers and sisters in Lithuania and abroad on the eve of February 16th. The hope of freedom, which had been squelched for 50 years by occupying forces has remained alive in the hearts of our people. That hope became SAJUDIS, which joined the entire nation and through which Lithuania regained her Independence. We are proud of our nation's perseverance and faith in Lithuanian freedom.

Now, as we celebrate our regained independence, we recognize that Lithuania faces many challenges on the road to freedom. And thus, Lithuania requires hope and belief in itself and its future.

As we celebrate the the 77th anniversary of Lithuanian Independence, we Lithuanian-Americans must reignite our resolution to preserve our heritage here in the US, as well as help firmly establish the principles of democracy in Lithuania while strengthening unity.

Long live free, independent and unified Lithuania!

Regina Narusis  
President,  
Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

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Jeanne Dorr

# Lithuania's Forgotten Children - Part IV

This is the fourth and final part of a series about Lithuania's children. It was never meant to be this lengthy or to have four parts. Once I started writing and reliving my summer experiences, I couldn't stop until the story had been told in its entirety. The first two articles were about Countryside Children's Fund, the third focused on Mrs. Grazina Landsbergis' group, and this final article will tell about the work of Father Viktoras

I heard about Father Viktoras' work through Orphan Care in Chicago. He contacted me shortly after I arrived in Lithuania. After several telephone conversations, we just couldn't seem to connect. He would telephone me and I would be on my way to another city or I would return his calls but we could not agree on a time and place to meet. Father really wanted me to come to Vidukle to meet "his" children. Finally, after several weeks of bounc-

ing back and forth we set a time to meet. I would be returning from Klaipeda after a visit with the family of a young man who had heart surgery at Deborah Hospital in New Jersey. Accompanying me were my husband and a pediatrician whose young son died after his heart surgery, and her husband. We arrived in Vidukle at the appointed time and stood outside the church. There didn't seem to be a sign of life until a young man came flying down the road on a bicycle. He was dressed in working clothes and it appeared he already put in a full day's work. We figured he could probably tell us where to find the priest. He started to laugh and said he was the priest. Father apologized profusely for his appearance, but there was a problem at one of the group homes and he was working all day to repair it. He excused himself to change clothing and wash up.

During this time we walked around the beautiful garden that surrounds the church. When Father considered himself presentable he joined us. With a key ring that seemed to be holding a hundred keys he unlocked the doors to a beautiful old church. He took us through the church and explained its history. It seemed so peaceful inside, the kind of place you could easily lose yourself and forget everything around you, including the problems of Lithuania's children. But there was work to be done and the peacefulness and solitude were short-lived. Not far from the church was a small house and garden. Here we met a young woman who was raising twelve foster children. When she took them from the orphanage, she was told they were all healthy and that there were no problems. As she began to raise them, and more importantly love them, problem after problem began to surface, physical and mental alike. But not one child was returned to the orphanage, surely a test of someone who truly cares and loves her children. While we were there, the pediatrician examined several of the children and



*Mrs. Ubas with Fr. Viktor and the twelve foster children she cares for.*

Aukstakalnis. They all work to help the children of Lithuania and they do it in different ways, many times working against extraordinary odds. Because of this, I felt each deserved separate space, not only so that BRIDGES readers could be thoroughly acquainted with the different kinds of help Lithuania's children are receiving, but also to give each the credit they so richly deserve. I would like as many people as possible to know of the tireless efforts by the Lithuanian people to help themselves. At times we tend to get carried away by our own self importance and think we are shouldering the responsibility for all of Lithuania. Yes, we are helping to rebuild the country and that is certainly a wonderful feeling, but we must never underestimate the fortitude of the Lithuanian people. I met so many working in their own quiet ways to help one another. Some had very little but they were willing to help those who had even less. These people will never see their names in print, they will never receive any awards, they just go about their every day lives doing what is right.

offered advice to the foster mother. Some of the problems were not as serious as the foster mother was led to



*The Kasinskas "family", where a couple with three children of their own are raising 10 foster children as well.*

believe and Dr. Grigelioniene offered to help her if she would bring the children to Vilnius. When the youngsters saw Father Viktor they swarmed around him and were ready to play. It was evident that he is not a stranger to them and that he is a positive influence on their lives. He appeared to be more like an older brother rather than a young priest who is shouldering so much responsibility. We walked around the small house which was spotlessly clean but very crowded. How could it not be overcrowded? There were 14 people living in it! The house needs a lot of repairs and we all know repairs cost a lot of money.

Our second stop was to Sister Aldona Raizyte who is raising nine children. Her house was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Sinkis from California. There is a plaque on the house to remember these generous people. What a beautiful way to help others! Perhaps some of our organizations could give a project such as this some thought. When we arrived we were told that Sister was on her annual retreat but would be returning shortly. Some local women were caring for the children. It seemed that there were children all over the yard. Either my eyes were deceiving me or there were more than nine children. The minute a car dropped Sister Aldona off, they came tumbling out of every direction, running with open arms. Sister led her little "choir" in song and we were all impressed. We took a tour of the house and once again, we found a house needing work. They were hurrying to put in new pipes and a new heater before winter.

The work was being done by Father Viktor and local people. As they had money they worked, when the money ran out they had to stop. Several thousand dollars were still needed. I suggested to Father that he make a cassette of Sister and the children singing. I know BRIDGES readers would purchase the cassettes and not be disappointed by the heavenly voices. Sister chided me not to give him any ideas because he was sure to follow through if it meant help for his children. As was the first house, this one was spotless but had no conveniences. There were no complaints, everyone was thankful for their good health and a roof over their heads. Sister insisted on excellence for those children who were of school age. There was no getting out of homework or work around the house. This was not a hotel and everyone down to the very youngest was expected to do their share. The little ones were taught to weed the garden which was kept out of necessity. I asked Sister how she managed to discipline nine children. She smiled and

said that was not a problem, all she had to do was hint that they might be sent back to the orphanage if they did not behave. She never had to speak to them a second time. One beautiful little girl would not let Sister out of her sight, she even clung to her leg when she walked. Sister explained that this child was left in the hospital at



*Sister Aldona gets a big hug from one of her "sons". Notice the little girl clinging to her.*

birth. Her mother simply walked out and never came back for her baby. The child was abandoned in the hospital for almost two years. She barely knew how to walk or behave in a social situation. Each child came with a different story, none very pretty. But now these



children were in a house filled with love and happiness. They didn't have expensive toys or their own bedrooms but they did have someone who cared about them. As young as they were, they all understood that these were more important than material goods, they had each other and that meant they had a family.

Our third stop that day was to a mother and father who had three children of their own and ten foster children. I couldn't tell the difference, everyone was busy around the house sharing in the work both inside and outside. The children all seemed well adjusted and happy. There were no complaints from the parents about any of the children.

After we visited the three families we went back to the rectory where Father lives with two Dobermans. There was a keyboard in the living room where the young people of the parish get together weekly to practice their music. He is an inspiration for the young of the parish.

The people who take these children are very special. Father Viktor is very careful about who gets these children and stays in close touch with the children and the parents. These are thirty-one children who would be growing up in orphanages if this young priest did not take an interest in them. He also has placed fifteen more children with a family in Kaunas. But there is always the never-ending worry about money. The children must be fed, clothed, and there are always emergencies. Houses need to be heated and some have to have major repairs. We're not talking about "magazine showplaces", we're talking about making them habitable. When Father receives funding it is usually used for the good of the house. This aspect of Orphan Care would make a wonderful project for a club or organization. I am proud to say that Father Viktor's fifteen children in Kaunas, the entire house, is being supported by people from Philadelphia and South Jersey under the auspices of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community. You certainly don't have to support an entire house but you can help with the repairs and upkeep of a group home. These children will leave their homes as family members, they know there will always be a place for them to return, someone to give them a hug, and most importantly, someone who loves them.

I keep writing about outside help, but what are the Lithuanians doing to help themselves? Looking after a stranger's children is a new concept for them. The state was always there to do it, now they have to stand on their

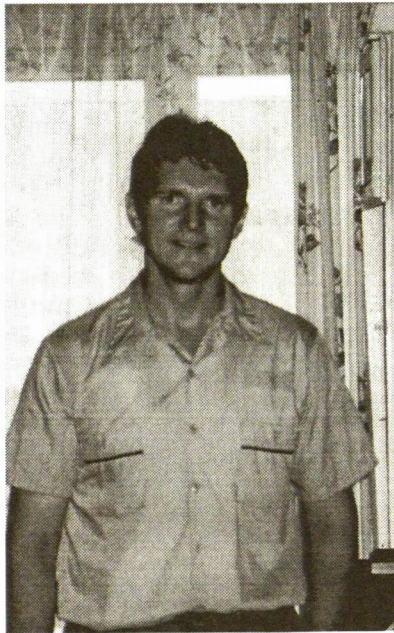
own two feet. Almost all Lithuanians are having problems making ends meet, but for the downtrodden it's virtually impossible. I have written about people doing outstanding, almost impossible work. As anywhere in the world those who have the most give the least. But there are the people who donate part of what little they have to help others; those people who receive pensions and give crumpled litas notes to help the children, the many that help with building materials and come after work to dig cellars or put on roofs. There was the widow who had only two cows but gave one to a group home so that the children would have fresh milk every day. Everywhere I went I heard about these good people, but I never knew their names. They will never read about themselves in magazines, they don't work for praise or glory, they help because it is the right thing to do.

To the couch critics who say we are building a welfare state, you are wrong. Orphan Care supports no one after their eighteenth birthday unless they are pursuing higher education and they maintain above average grades. Student stipends are a must, especially for the children in the country who are not always encouraged to continue their education. It is so easy to sit back, do nothing, and criticize those who do try to make a difference. Nobody has all the answers and no plan is perfect. But the problems won't evaporate, they have to be addressed. The children are not the alcoholics, the children did not abandon their parents, the children are not sitting in jails. But the children do have to eat, the children do need a roof over their heads so that they are not sleeping in such places as train stations, and the children have to be educated. We have no "throwaway" children.

Thank you Father Viktor for taking such a tremendous responsibility on your shoulders. May you have the strength and health to continue your work.

The responses from BRIDGES readers have been overwhelming. Please keep the support coming. As we drop one eighteen year old we add two more younger children who need your help. This is a continuous project. The cost to feed and clothe a child for a year is \$150, but anything you can give at anytime is appreciated. Once again BRIDGES readers, thank you for allowing me to share my experiences with you. But more importantly, thank you for caring about LITHUANIA'S FORGOTTEN CHILDREN.

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Fr. Viktor Aukstakalnis

Edward Baranauskas

# A New Supermarket in Vilnius

As summer approaches, many BRIDGES readers are making plans to visit Lithuania. One reader, Mr. Edward Baranauskas of Schenectady, NY, shared some of his travel experiences with us. We thought you would be interested in a few of the changes you can expect to encounter...

This past summer, after a two year absence, I had the pleasure of visiting my relatives and friends in Lithuania. I was very impressed with the changes, both good and bad, that have taken place since my last trip.

I stayed with relatives in one of the newer parts of



Shoppers in the Bakery department at "Pas Juozapa".

Vilnius called Pašilaičiai, which is very conveniently located. It is not far from the highway leading to Ukmerge and cities to the north. I was pleased with the mass transit system, as I could make connections to any part of Vilnius, either by bus or trolley-bus, and did not have to wait very long for either of them. The taxi drivers, however, did not seem to get much business because the fare was rather expensive, too much for the average person to afford.

Gone are the days of the "Dollar Store" where a person, usually a tourist, could purchase items only with American dollars, or other foreign currencies. Now, everything you want to buy must be paid for with Lithuanian money, the litas.

The most dramatic change I observed was the American style supermarket named "Pas Juozapa" (At Joseph's), which recently opened for business in Pašilaičiai. A

fairly sized parking lot was there for those who came by automobile, and among them were a variety of imports such as Mercedes-Benz, Audi, Toyota and German-made Fords. The Soviet-made compact cars were in the majority, and some of them unfortunately, had cracked windshields.

For the person who needs Lithuanian money, there is small store in the shopping center where foreign currency may be exchanged for the litas. Before I left home, I was advised by relatives to make sure that every dollar bill, regardless of its denomination, was not dated before 1988, and did not have any tears, ink spots, or any writing on them at all. In other words, as difficult as it may seem to believe, the bills had to be practically laundry clean, otherwise they would not be accepted for exchange.

During my visits to Lithuania in the years before she regained her independence, I remember seeing empty shelves in the state-owned food stores with long lines of people standing outside and trying to get inside, to buy what little there was. With the economic changes taking place in Lithuania today, I was taken by surprise at what I saw inside "Pas Juozapa".

The shelves were stocked with imported products, mostly from the West, and the store was crowded with people pushing their carts around the congested aisles. The long lines were no longer outside the store like in

the old days, but instead were at the checkout counters where shoppers patiently waited for their turn to pay for their purchases. Most of them brought their own shopping bags, for if they did not, a small charge for each bag used would be added to their bill. The cashiers were like robots, punching the prices on the cash registers as fast as they could. They were all sitting down, not standing like the cashiers here in the US. Business was brisk.

The bakery showcases were full of "tortes" and cookies. The meat counter had a long line waiting to buy fresh pork, beef or chicken. I bought some nice Lithuanian smoked sausage, and even though my relatives thought it was very expensive, it was delicious and we all loved it. For those who like seafood, fish was available.

The farm produce section carried many imported fruits such as apples, oranges, grapes, and bananas. Everywhere I went in Vilnius, practically every vendor

seemed to be selling bananas. For the first time in my life I had banana pancakes for breakfast in Lithuania, and they were delicious, thanks to my relatives.

During my visit, Lithuania was suffering through one



*"Pas Juozapa" in the Pašilaičiai section of Vilnius*

of the hottest summers in years, with temperatures in the 90's for weeks and no rain. Since the store had no air conditioning, one can imagine what it was like inside.

I browsed around the store to get an idea as to what was being sold, and at what price. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw cat and dog food from the US, and being sold at US prices. I began to wonder how many people could afford to come here, because everything was so expensive for the average Lithuanian. I put that question to a polite, friendly young lady who worked at the store. She told me that there are people who do have the money, and gave me one example. The wife of Arvydas Sabonis, the famous Lithuanian basketball star now playing professionally in Spain, was there one day and bought four shopping carts full of groceries.

I was happy to see a variety of Campbell's condensed soups on one shelf, and since I enjoy "Cream of Celery", I picked up four cans. My relatives had never before seen a can of Campbell's soup, and since everything on the label was in English, they had no idea what it was, or how to make it. This was understandable. When I was at the checkout counter, a young lady was helping to put groceries in my shopping bag. She had a puzzled expression on her face as she looked over each can of soup before bagging it. She, too, probably didn't understand English and had no idea what I was buying. I think these foreign business people should familiarize the Lithuanian consumer with their products,

and by doing so, maybe will be able to sell more. Campbell's soup is just one example.

After we returned to the apartment, I noticed there was more than one price label, each one was put on top of the other, on each can of soup. Very carefully, I peeled off each layer until I came to the first one. Apparently, the owners of "Pas Juozapa" are beginning to learn the laws of supply and demand. The original asking price was 11.04 litai or \$2.76 US per can. Since no one was buying, the price was lowered in stages until eventually the last label read 1.90 litai, or 48 cents US. It was then that I realized I had a bargain, because the price back home for this can of soup was 89 cents.

The love affair with imported products has created an environmental problem for Lithuanian, in my opinion. I saw empty beverage containers, both aluminum cans and plastic bottles, scattered throughout the streets of Vilnius. This is not a very pleasant sight to see, especially when it is in the capital of the nation. Is it possible for the Lithuanian government to explore the possibility of organizing a recycling plan similar to the ones being implemented in the West? Metal cans, glass containers, and plastics should be separated from ordinary garbage. Not only would this take up less space in the dumps, but perhaps the metals, glass and plastics could be sold to a factory in another country that does this kind of work.



*Shelves stocked with imported products.*

From what I observed at "Pas Juozapa", the Lithuanian people have fallen in love with the free enterprise system and world trade. I don't think anybody will ever want to see the return of the "old system".

Algirdas Rimas

# Business News

## Baltic-American Enterprise Fund Up and Running

Brewster Campbell, the newly appointed president and chief executive officer of the fund (described in the previous issue), is now accepting proposals for financing business projects in Lithuania and the other Baltic states. Those interested should get in touch with Mr. Campbell directly. The address is: Baltic-American Enterprise Fund, 1625 K Street, N.W., Suite 903, Washington, D.C. 20006, phone - (202) 835-0900, FAX - (202) 835-0955.

Congress established the Fund under the Support for Eastern European Democracy Act of 1989 (the SEED Act) and capitalized it at \$50 million. The purpose of the Fund is to finance small and medium businesses in the three Baltic states. Both debt and equity financing may be considered. Representatives are being appointed in each of the Baltic capitals to handle project applications. There is currently no prescribed format for submitting proposals. Mr. Campbell plans to travel to Vilnius in February to open a branch office.

## Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) to Lead an Investment Mission to the Baltics in March

Ruth Harkin, president of OPIC, a federal government agency, announced at a White House sponsored conference on trade and investment in eastern and central Europe, that OPIC will lead an investment mission to the Baltics. The group will travel to Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn March 5-10. Meetings will be arranged with top government officials, local business leaders and successful US investors already in the region.

This will be the second such trip in the past three years. The first mission resulted in several successful projects in Lithuania alone. The key industrial sectors to be covered by this mission are: energy and power generation, heavy and light manufacturing, transportation infrastructure projects, telecommunications, financial services, and consumer goods.

If you are a business executive, this would be an excellent opportunity for you to go to Lithuania and explore the many exciting investment opportunities in that dynamic country. For additional details, please call Ms. Kris Hammargren, the mission recruiter at OPIC. Her phone number is (202) 336-8645, FAX - (20) 408-5145.

If you wish to write, the address is: Overseas Private

Investment Corporation, 1100 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20527. Besides providing investor services, such as arranging investment missions to foreign countries, OPIC provides project financing and political risk insurance to American investors.

## Lithuanians at the White House Conference on Trade and Investment in Eastern and Central Europe

An official delegation from Lithuania, as well as local American-Lithuanians attended the White House conference January 12-13 in Cleveland. President Clinton and Commerce Secretary Ron Brown gave speeches. Many of America's top government officials in charge of trade and investment policies attended. Over 250 American business executives, including many from Fortune 500 companies, were rubbing shoulders with delegates from 14 eastern European countries, including those from Lithuania.

The 12 person Lithuanian team was headed by Deputy Transport Minister Algirdas Sakalys. He was looking for funding to finance several transportation infrastructure projects. Sakalys spoke of Klaipeda port improvements, highway and rail upgrading, airport construction and aircraft procurement projects. Jurgis Ausra, the mayor of Klaipeda and Arvydas Salda, mayor of Siauliai, site of one of the longest airfields in the world, were on hand. So were the heads of the Lithuanian Investment Agency, Kestutis Baltramaitis, and the country's public sector development bank, Juozas Aliukonis. Lithuania's private business was represented by Mindaugas Cerniauskas, president of the Lithuanian Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Arturas Balkevicius, Board Chairman of the country's largest private bank, the Lithuanian Joint-Stock Innovation Bank, Gintautas Preidys, president of the private commercial bank, Litimpex, and Gintaras Petrikas, president of the diversified holding company, EBSW. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was represented by Audrius Navikas, Director of the Economic Relations Department.

Lithuania's Ambassador to the United States, Alfonsas Eidintas, took an active part in the conference. He was assisted by Embassy staff members Linas Orentas and Darius Pranckevicius. Local Lithuanian-Americans present included the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. representative, Algirdas Rimas, American

Lithuanian Council delegates, Dr. Jonas Genys and Vytautas Jokubaitis and business people, Ingrida Bublys, Saulius Anuzis, and Kazimieras Samulis. Also there were Annette Haralsted, looking for more members to join the U.S.-Baltic Chamber of Commerce (if interested, get in touch with her at 13902 Fiji Way, Ste. 324, Marina del Rey, CA 90292, phone and FAX (310) 827-9590 and Shahriar Ahy, managing partner of the privately



*Algirdas Rimas greeted by President Bill Clinton in Cleveland*

held Baltic Fund, which has plans to invest in the Baltic area. Algis Ruksenas, working with the Cleveland mayor's office, contributed to the conference arrangements. Cleveland's energetic Lithuanian-American Community also added to the success of the event by hosting a reception for the Lithuanian delegation.

Because of its blue-ribbon U.S. participants, this business conference may have been the best opportunity yet for Lithuanian government and business leaders to show-off their wares and attract American investment to Lithuania.

### Opinion Poll Names Lithuania's Top Business Performers

The Lithuanian weekly business magazine, "Naujasis Kapitalas" (New Capital), polled a selected group of Lithuanian business executives for their list of the most effective and productive Lithuanian business performers of 1994. As obtained from press reports, some of the winners and their presumably successful compa-

nies are listed below:

Romualdas Murenas, Director Joint-Stock Company "Fidus", Moniuskos 27, 2004 Vilnius, tel - (3702) 354 822 Wholesale trading.

Gintautas Kazlauskas, President, Group of Companies, "Sabina", 150 Veiveriu, 3010 Kaunas, tel - (3707) 225 181, FAX: (3707) 291 528. Wholesale trading.

Gintaras Petrikas, President EBSW, Savanoriu 349, 3042 Kaunas, tel- (3707) 718 991 FAX: (3707) 700 865. Wholesale, transportation, investments.

Arturas Balkevicius, President, Lithuanian Joint-Stock Innovation Bank, A. Jaksto 6, 2600 Vilnius, tel - (3702) 611 501 FAX: (3702) 622 608. Commercial bank.

Bronislovas Liubys, President, Chemical plant "Achema", Taurosto 26, 5000 Jonava, tel - (local code unavailable) 56621, FAX: (local) 52074. Fertilizer plant.

Jonas Karciauskas, President, "Audejas" textile company, Zarasu 24/1, 2600 Vilnius, tel - (3702) 627 477, FAX: (3702) 614 676.

While the above listing should not be taken as an endorsement, it may be a useful source for potential American business partners. For a full listing of Lithuanian companies, we recommend buy-

ing a business directory from the Lithuanian Information Institute, Kalvariju 3, 2659 Vilnius, Lithuania, tel - (3702) 752 284, FAX: (3702) 353 017. English language correspondence is acceptable.

#### ADVERTISEMENT

### LABAS

**The Lithuanian-American Bar Association is looking for you if you are a lawyer or a law student of Lithuanian background or interested or involved in Lithuanian legal matters here or in the Republic of Lithuania. Contact:**

**Algis Sirvaitis, Esquire  
Membership Secretary  
880 E. 185th Street  
Cleveland, Ohio 44119**

**PHONE: (216) 692-1222  
FAX: (216) 531-8687**

Aukse Trojanas

# The New York Scene

Juozas Ivanauskas, a theatre director from Klaipeda, recently participated in the Chicago Theatre Festival where he directed the "Vaidilute" Drama Company in two plays based on short stories by Chekov. He visited New York briefly on his way back to Lithuania. The following interview was made on January 9, 1995.

**Q. How do you think about yourself and the theatre?**

A. There are two aspects to man's existence: everyday life, reality, how you conceive of yourself in the world, your relationship with others. Secondly, there is the creativity of man which can be expressed in many ways, in work, in art. For me it is in the theatre. Life does not require less work than art. How you relate to man, nature and your environment requires as much work and effort as sustaining yourself spiritually or artistically. Life is not just domestic existence, it is also a sense of self within a spiritual wilderness. I put my personal and spiritual life into my art in an attempt to contact the audience on a deeper level. The exigencies of daily life too often obscure man's relationship to his own soul. Each person is a world in himself. Even a glance can be an incredible and unique opportunity for communication. Too often we speak to one another from a banal, habitual flatness rather than from the heights of personal awareness and openness which is possible for all of us. I want to challenge, to stretch the viewer.

**Q. How often do you think you succeed?**

A. It is hard to say. Much is not foreseen. I do what feels right. I hope that some members of the audience respond to my work in such way that they can see and understand like a child would, as if for the first time. I would like to arouse their sixth sense, to expand their vision and to have them see what they have always known but have forgotten. Our manner of thinking changes. I want my audience to become aware of where

they are at that moment.

**Q. How has your experience in America affected your life and art?**

A. I have visited the United States four times since 1990. I feel very fortunate. I have seen here what I would never see in Lithuania. There is more color, more nuance, more ideas, more possibilities. But among the great variety of impressions one also sees incredible good fortune as well as despair and destruction. People lives and spirits can be broken here in ways that are rare in Lithuania despite all our difficulties. But then, one can

see arising from that destruction the literal regeneration of man's spirit. In New York's East Village, for example, people of the lowest fortune, winos and addicts, cheerfully hawk an amazing array of odds and ends, among them the occasional treasure: a charming toy, a book on the Japanese tea ceremony for a buck... If one contrasts Greenwich Village and the Lithuanian countryside, one understands that the whole planet is our home and everything comes to one point: we are all children of the earth.

For an artist the vitality of America is extraordinarily stimulating. The process of creating a play, of directing during a rehearsal is like the flowing of water through yourself. Your mood, the play, your materials, the actors are all vital elements of the process. In 1994 I directed a play based on "Waiting

for the Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint Exupery at the LaMaMa Theatre in New York. Many of the nine performers were not American, yet the group dynamics was uniquely American: eclectic and intense. This play would be performed very differently in Lithuania largely because of a different dynamic among the actors who are more homogeneous in background. The play would be just as valid and interesting, but perhaps more serious and introspective. This would be entirely appropriate as the audience would respond from a different kingdom of dreams.



Juozas Ivanauskas

Len Barcoucky

# “From the Nemunas to the Monongahela”

A bus full of visitors to Southwestern Pennsylvania traveled back in time recently, taking a trip “From the Nemunas to the Monongahela.”

The Knights of Lithuania, Pittsburgh Council 19, and the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania co-sponsored the first-ever tour to a half-dozen sites of cultural and religious significance. More than a century of Lithuanian-American history was viewed and reviewed during the 6-hour bus ride on Dec. 3, 1994.

Guides on the tour included Rob Medonis, Len Barcoucky, William Kolicus, Jr. and Margie Turner, all members of Council 19. Other speakers included Sisters Virginia and Kathleen, both members of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, a Lithuanian order, and Veronica Gorney.

Lithuanians were among the smaller ethnic groups to have been thrown into the Western Pennsylvania melting pot. While the first immigrants arrived in Pittsburgh in the 1870's, Lithuanians did not come in significant numbers until the last decade of the 19th century. They arrived not only on the banks of Pittsburgh's Monongahela River but scattered throughout the region in places like Bridgeville, Homestead, Braddock, Apollo and Du Bois.

Their cultural centers in Allegheny County include two Lithuanian cemeteries, a convent that serves as the motherhouse for a Lithuanian-American religious order and a busy social hall, where language classes are still held and where several fraternal organizations meet regularly.

Tour highlights included the following:

- St. Casimir's Church, the religious center of immigrant life. Built in 1901 on Pittsburgh's South Side, it served as both an ethnic and community parish until 1991. The high-domed, baroque-style church is famous for its hand-carved wooden Stations of the Cross and other statuary. While tour visitors could not go into the closed church, they saw slides of the interior.

- St. Casimir's Cemetery, located in nearby Whitehall, is the burial site for many of the Lithuanian priests who served the Pittsburgh diocese. There is also

a large area set aside for the gravesites of nuns belonging to the Lithuanian Sisters of St. Francis, whose motherhouse is nearby. At the entrance to the cemetery stands a Marian shrine put up by the late Rev. Magnus Kazenas, the most influential of the region's Lithuanian priests.

- Sisters of St. Francis convent. Most of the buildings are being renovated, but visitors were able to enter and tour the chapel. Its stained glass windows tell the story of the life of St. Francis.

- The original St. Casimir Church. Built as a protestant church on Ninth and Carson streets in Pittsburgh, it was used by Lithuanian Catholics for about five years at the turn of the century.

- The 19th Street site of St. George's Lithuanian National Catholic Church is nearby. Founded by Lithuanian religious dissidents, it was used as a worship site for more than a decade.

- The Lithuanian Hall on Pittsburgh's Jane Street. Lithuanian language classes are conducted there, a dance troupe practices there and many ethnic organizations still meet there.

- Moultrie Street in Pittsburgh's Soho, at one time the city's most Lithuanian neighborhood. Around the corner on Orr Street was the Lithuanian Literary Society (now the Squakers Club) and home of a Carpatho-Russian family named Warhola. The Pop artist Andy Warhol had his first 15 minutes of fame when he lived in a house on this street.

- Esplen, the site of both a Lithuanian Communist Club and both old and new St. Vincent DePaul Church. Both began as ethnic Lithuanian parishes.

Rob Medonis, vice president of the K of L Council 19, was tour chairman and organizer. Copies of the guides' commentary were presented to both the council and to the historical society.

The historical society runs several ethnic tours each year in the Pittsburgh area. This year was the first time that a Lithuanian trip was offered.

While most tour participants were from Pennsylvania, visitors on the bus trip came from as far as Ohio, Massachusetts, and California.

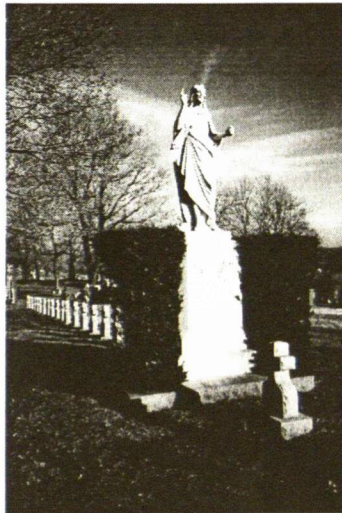


Foto: Len Barcoucky

*Area of St. Casimir's Cemetery where Sisters from the Lithuanian order of St. Francis are buried head to head.*

Ramune Kubilius

## From the Lithuanian Press...

Selected excerpt from the Lithuanian Press in America.

*Correction: Our alert Canadian BRIDGES readers spotted an error in a translated news item which appeared in the Dec. '94 issue of BRIDGES (page 10). In an article about a Toronto Catholic parish's support for soup kitchens for the poor in Lithuania, the parish's name was incorrectly translated. Prisikelimo Parish should be translated as Resurrection Parish, not Ascension. Our apologies to the pastor and parishioners.*

*In the Nov. '94 issue of BRIDGES (page 11), BALFas (Bendras Amerikos Lietuvių Šalpos Fondas) known to all by this familiar name was incorrectly translated. In English the organization should be referred to as United Lithuanian Relief Fund of America. Our apologies.*

R. Kubilius

### Lithuanian Days in LA

Lithuanian Days in Los Angeles were begun in 1954 by Rev. Jonas Kucingis, then pastor of the St. Casimir Parish Church there. The festival began as a one day parish spring event but later became a two day fall event drawing Lithuanian-Americans from throughout California. The 1994 Lithuanian Days were organized and sponsored in October by the Lithuanian-American Community's Los Angeles Chapter and Wester Region officers, the Lithuanian folk dance ensemble "Spindulys", and the Los Angeles chapter of the Lithuanian American Youth Association. The festival included food, folk art and other exhibits and booths. Guests of honor for cultural programs were the "Spindulys" ensemble and the "Gyvaratas" ensemble from Hamilton, ONT, Canada. Liuda Avizonis was the chair and pastor emeritus, Rev. Kucingis, was the honorary chair.

(TEVISKES ZIBURIAI, 12/20/94)

### Language Professors Meet

The Philology Department of Vilnius University sponsored a gathering of Lithuanian language professors at the end of September. Invitations to the first-time weeklong seminar on "Lituanistika" (the teaching of Lithuanian) at the world's universities were sent out to 40 universities where Lithuanian is or has been taught. Dean Kestutis Urba indicated that there was a desire to establish ties with university professors where Lithuanian is taught. Sometimes the reasons for interest in Lithuanian language and literature are unknown. Replies to the invitation were received from 24 universities. Professors

travelled from Poland, Germany, Switzerland, Latvia, Sweden, Slovakia, the United States and Norway. After Lithuania re-established independence, interest in the teaching of Lithuanian was noticed in Norway and Hungary where Lithuanian language centers were established and to which Vilnius University professors were invited. The Open Society Fund of Lithuania supported the costs of the seminar, while attendees paid their own fees. Among the well-known attendees were linguists Prof. J.P. Locher from University of Berne in Switzerland, Prof. T. Mathiassen from University of Oslo and Prof. W. Smoczynski from the University of Warsaw.

(TEVISKES ZIBURIAI, 12/20/94)

### Lithuanian Language Schools Receive Support

The Lithuanian-American Community's Educational Council met January 4th to make decisions about the distribution of funds to Lithuanian language schools in the United States (based on the schools' enrollment, financial burdens of building rental and other factors-rk). The Educational Council dispersed \$30,000 awarded by the Lithuanian Foundation and \$14,000 donated by generous Lithuanian-Americans during the Council's annual fall fund-raising efforts.

In memory of the 50th anniversary of partisan activity in Lithuania, Educational Council members decided to distribute the book "Partizanai" to the Lithuanian language schools so that young Lithuanian-American students would gain an appreciation for that difficult period in Lithuania's freedom fighting era.

(DRAUGAS, 1/10/95)

### Last Lithuanian Language Mass at Holy Cross

The last Lithuanian language Mass will be held at the Sv. Kryziaus (Holy Cross) Parish Church in Chicago on January 15, 1995. The dwindling number of Lithuanian language-speaking parishioners gathered on December 11, 1994 to make the difficult decision. The 90 year old parish church now serves a new group of parishioners, largely English and Spanish-speaking. It was decided that the days of Holy Cross Parish Church as a center of Lithuanian-American life in the "Back of the Yards" neighborhood represents a bygone era. Lithuanian-Americans in Chicago over the years had chosen to move to other areas of Chicagoland and are worshipping



at parishes nearer their new homes.  
(DRAUGAS, 1/10/95, from an article by IR)

## Lithuanian Librarian in the US

Edita Vorobjova, a librarian at the Lithuanian National Library, visited the United States for three months in early 1995. Before beginning a cataloging internship at the Library of Congress, Edita visited libraries in Chicago and other cities, attended mini-courses, and read professional literature. Her tours to various college, public and special libraries in Chicago and other cities were arranged by members of the Lithuanian Library Association of America. LLAA co-chairs Felicia Kolp (of the Congressional Research Service Library at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.) and Kristina Mengeling (of the McHenry County College Library in Illinois) helped coordinate Edita's visits and tours. Funding to support Edita's visit was sought from the Open Society Fund of Lithuania (the Soros Library Committee), and she was a guest of Rosary College's Graduate School of Library and Information Science during part of her Chicago visit. What is one of Edita's major projects at work in Lithuania? Reducing the uncataloged, unprocessed backlog at the Lithuanian National Library using international library cataloging standards. (Without records- catalog cards or better yet- computer records, including proper access points, researchers and library users cannot access materials sitting in the back rooms of any library.-rk) In recent years, that has been a concern of book and journal donors of shipments to Lithuania. The sooner backlogs can be reduced, the sooner library users at the National Library of Lithuania and other Lithuanian libraries will have access to the materials which have so generously been donated to them from abroad. (Edita is one of many of Lithuania's professionals who are visiting the United States these days. Some only come for short visits, but they come well-prepared to absorb as much as they can and learn of advancements in their fields. Many of them have learned or improved their knowledge of English largely on their own, in preparation for their visits.-rk)

(January 1995, from correspondences and personal knowledge about Edita's visit to the United States-rk)

## Lithuanian Courses Offered

The University of Illinois at Chicago will be offering these Lithuanian language and culture courses this spring:

- 1) Lithuanian Language for Beginners
- 2) Lithuanian Language for Advanced Students
- 3) Lithuanian Literature - Part II
- 4) The Poetry of the Zemininkai (poets Bradunas, Brazdionis et al-rk)
- 5) Lithuanian Prose, the Transformation of Texts: The Value System

Information may be obtained by calling 312-996-9539; 312-728-2377. The University address is 1610

University Hall, 601 S. Morgan St., Chicago. The courses will be taught by Teaching Assistant Karile Vaitkus, Prof. Giedrius Subacius, Prof. Violeta Kelertas and Fulbright Professor Albertas Zalatorius from Vilnius.

(DRAUGAS, 1/17/95)

## College of DuPage Studies The Baltics

The College of DuPage (22nd Street and Lambert Road, Glen Ellyn, IL) will feature a field study tour of The Baltics. "Until recently, a field study tour to the Baltics was unthinkable. Following World War II, few tourists ventured into the Soviet-ruled republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In Summer 1995, you can join College of DuPage in a unique travel-study experience in these long-neglected countries...A trip to the Baltics offers students a chance to see lands rich in history, culturally diverse and eerily familiar, with links to our Western heritage. Few people know that contemporary Estonians are descendants of tribes that migrated to that geographical region 8,000 years ago. It has been all but forgotten that Lithuania was once a proud Grand Duchy that, in the 15th century, had expanded its might from the shores of the Baltic to the Black Seas...Participants enroll in Humanities 188, Baltic Studies, for five credits. Trip dates are June 12 to July 5, 1995...For more information, contact Tiina Ruus, at (708) 858-2800, ext. 2047, 2048, or Helen Feng, at (708) 858-2800, ext. 2476, or stop by the College of DuPage Instructional Alternatives Office, Instructional Center (IC), Room 3010, 22nd Street and Lambert Road, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137-6599.

(from a DuPage College brochure called "The Baltics, Summer 1995")

## Baltic Studies Summer Institute

The University of Washington announces the second annual Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI), to be held during the 1995 Summer Quarter (June 20 - August 18) at the University of Washington, Seattle. The following courses will be offered:

- BALT 150: Intensive First-Year Lithuanian (15 credits)
- BALT 230: Nordic and Baltic Folklore (5 credits)
- SCAND 326: Scandinavia in World Affairs (5 credits)
- HSTEU 454: Baltic History (5 credits)

(Funding is pending for three additional courses Intensive Latvian, Intensive Estonian, and Baltic Culture.)

For further information about the BALSSI 1995 program, and about possible financial aid for students enrolled in intensive language courses, please contact:

Guntis Smidchens  
Scandinavian Dept. DL-20  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA 98195  
Tel: (206) 543-0645 FAX: (206) 685-9173  
Internet: GuntisS@u.washington.edu

From Balt-L Internet

## An Interview with the rector of Vytautas Magnus University

*What were your exile years like?*

In July 1944, I was in Northern Lithuania visiting relatives when the Soviets took over Lithuania. I ran with a friend to Kretinga...later through Seda-Dancigas-Denmark-Germany-Canada. I received a master's degree in Russian Literature from University of Toronto, and my doctorate in Lithuanian Studies and Baltic Studies from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1964, I defended my thesis on J. Baltrusaitis' poetry. For 15 years I taught at Lafayette University in the Foreign Languages Department, for 8 years I was the Professor of the Endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies (founded with \$600,000 collected by emigre Lithuanian Americans) at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Later, I came to Vytautas Magnus University, and as you can see, I've stayed here...

*What cultural traditions survived the 50 years of exile?*

The Lithuanian emigre population contributed to the survival of the Lithuanian nation. For one thing, the emigre population guarantees that Western nations consider the Soviet occupation of Lithuania as illegal...About 100 Lithuanian writers joined together to form the Lithuanian Writers' Society. Former professors of higher education formed a Professors Society...Today, many young people educated in the Lithuanian language Saturday schools are coming to Lithuania to work and study—they are students of pre-war Vytautas Magnus University alumni.

*Compared to Western, American universities-what is Vytautas Magnus U like?* In the beginning, when Vytautas Magnus University was just founded, Western, American academic traditions were clearly followed. Now a unique face has evolved with individual features—the academic traditions of Denmark, Scandinavia, the United States and even Lithuania are merged. Vytautas Magnus University continues Western traditions, but we cannot blindly follow these traditions without adapting them appropriately to our situation.

*What are the possibilities for the University to invite professors, to expand ties with foreign countries?*

Many educators come to Lithuania to help in research and education. These people are idealists, because the salaries being paid to them are equivalent to those paid to Lithuanian lecturers, which, compared to Western standards, are very small. Many visiting professors pay for their own travel expenses. The Soros Foundation Open Society Fund just this year paid travel expenses for 12 professors. This semester, at the University, there are 29 professors from overseas. Ties are expanding. Presently, there are five

Fordham University students (of New York) studying at the University, and our students are studying at New York University. Last year, ten of our students studied at New England College. This year, there are about 60

Vytautas Magnus University students studying abroad.

*What is your vision for the future?*

I think our University should not increase in size - the number of students accepted should be no more than 3000 students. We are attempting to develop departments which previously were neglected or didn't exist in Lithuania. We will attempt to avoid the duplication of specialist programs.

*(From an interview with Vytautas Magnus University Rector Prof. B. Vaskelis conducted by V. Lanauskas in DRAUGAS, 1/17/95)*

## Bloody Sunday Commemorated

The fourth anniversary of the tragic events of January 13th in Vilnius were commemorated in a variety of ways. Civilians had been killed defending the Lithuanian Parliament Building. All of those who died in Lithuania's 50 year fight for freedom were remembered.

Mass was said in the Vilnius Basilica on Friday. Bishop Tunaitis reminded attendees that those who died gave their lives so that the others may live in freedom. The sermon also reminded attendees that other nations are still fighting for freedom, including those in Chechnya. Lithuania's Parliament dedicated January 13th as a Freedom Fighter's Remembrance Day. President Algirdas Brazauskas, Minister Adolfas Slezevicius and the European Union Parliamentary president Miguel Angel Martinez were among attendees at the commemoration. M. Martinez reminded attendees that Europe is open to Lithuania. Through combined efforts, a new Europe is being built. He expressed hopes that the days of xenophobia, antisemitism, concentration camps, and the resolution of problems through war will be in the distant past. On January 13th, about 1000 runners participated in a race from the Antakalnis Cemetery in Vilnius to the Television and Radio Studio Tower, the route of most of the trouble in 1991. The fastest time was made by Raimundas Juodeska from Jonava, Edgaras Voveris from Vilnius, and Algis Balciunas from Alytus. Among the runners were some of the witnesses of those horrible January 13th events. A program was published to commemorate the day, and those who ran the entire race received medals and small commemorative flags.

*(DRAUGAS, 1/14/95)*

## Pope John Paul Speaks of Lithuania

Lithuania and Lithuanians are mentioned in the newest book by Pope John Paul II- *CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE*. The book has become a bestseller, crossing the one million purchases mark. The book came about when Italian television correspondent Vittorio Messorio contacted the Pope, wanting to obtain an interview with him. The Pope agreed to accept written interview questions. He answered them so gener-

*Continued on p. 22*

Vaiva Vebra

# Rekindling Democracy

The American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education (A.P.P.L.E.) was founded in 1990 at the invitation of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education to provide Lithuanian teachers access to American resources as they build a new educational system. Members include students, teachers, administrators, and others outside the education establishment, all of whom want to help make a difference in Lithuania. Each year A.P.P.L.E. organizes in-service seminars for Lithuanian teachers. A new topic, "Teaching Democracy", was presented in Summer 1994. Mr. Michael Davis, one of A.P.P.L.E.'s instructors, received this letter (unedited) from one of the Seminar participants.

Dear Michael,

Great thanks for your letter, the photos, the pamphlet "What is Democracy" and the map of the world. I didn't have a map like that. I'll use the map with pleasure during my lessons in 12th forms, when I'll talk politics with my students.

I remember our democracy classes Klaipeda with pleasure too. It was, indeed, a wonderful time!

I agree with you about the terrible heat in last summer. But today in Lithuania is a very cool day and it's raining. Today I would like to return to summer's hot days. True, I made two requests to turn down the heat next summer. I've written the letters. One letter to the president of Lithuania, Another to the center of meteorological service of Lithuania. Both answers were: next summer will be cool and raining. Come to Lithuania next summer bravely. All will be OK!

I'm thankful for your desire to come back to Lithuania next summer. I'm hoping you'll come to our school to work as our English teacher. It's a pity, but there aren't good conditions for living and working. I would say straight-an average teacher's salary in Lithuania is only 240 Litas, about \$60. True, our school pays for one room in a flat, for heating, electricity, water, gas for every foreign teacher. Alan Marton from Great Britain works at our school as an English language teacher. He will work only one academic year. The lack of English language teachers is a great problem at our school. We need a foreign English teacher for next year again.

True, by the way, three teachers from our school are students of English at the Siauliai Pedagogical Institute by correspondence. I'm among them too. Writing the letter to you I'm preparing for my studies. In addition I'm reading English books and I'm listening to the radio in English, especially BBC World Service coverage. The English learning program at the Siauliai Pedagogical Institute will continue for two years.



Among older Lithuanian folk singers at a concert for A.P.P.L.E. at Smilgiai village near Panevėžys. Seated in the center A.P.P.L.E. director Vaiva Vebra and lecturer Lilija Kulbis.

Our school had 870 students. There are 42 forms at our school. In September students of our school democratically elected their president, vice president, treasurer and secretary. The preelection campaign was wonderful! Our school began an experiment of school democracy. In October all the teachers and all the parents will elect their presidents too. It will be done in a democratic way, with preelection campaigns too. The highest power at our school will belong to the principal (it's me) and to the three "presidents" (there aren't teachers unions at Lithuanian schools). We think we will also form a school council from elected members. Some teachers of our school are hesitating about the idea of a school council. What is your opinion about our school project? How do you form your school council? What effect does it have?

Kind regards,

Edvardas Janavicius

Director, Kelme, Secondary school #3

## POSTSCRIPT from A.P.P.L.E.

Due to the extraordinary outpouring of generosity from A.P.P.L.E. members and supporters, we were able to grant modest "stipends" to most of the Summer Seminar attendees. This was 80 litai in local currency. The money covered two week's dormitory room and board. More important was the message conveyed - that personal connections are essential to learning and to teaching, that each of our teachers is important to our donors. Personal connections were indeed drawn, through the letters that each teacher wrote to his or her individual donor, letters like the one above from Mr. Janavicius describing his school and his hopes.

A.P.P.L.E. again seeks program proposals from educators for presentation at the Fifth A.P.P.L.E. Teachers' In-service Seminar in Lithuania, to be held in various

tors in each city. All those wishing to participate in any capacity are asked to send us their proposals and application form as soon as possible. You may call Seminar Registrar Shirley Sabo at (203) 758-4600 for forms and details of the 1995 Summer Seminar as they become available. She can also help develop teaching proposals to best fit A.P.P.L.E.'s 1995 Seminar framework. A.P.P.L.E. cannot fund airfare, but we do provide room and board (dormitory style). It's fun as a shared experience. A.P.P.L.E. welcomes any input from BRIDGES readers regarding all aspects of the program and your assistance in obtaining teaching materials to be left in Lithuania.

An American teacher, just returned from an extended A.P.P.L.E. "tour of duty" in Lithuania, has written to tell us of the pluses and minuses of her experience, and that the scales are tipped unmistakably to the plus side. She ends with this thought: "P.S. I might add that coming back is an adjustment. Upon my return, I went to the supermarket and Wal-mart store and cried. It's overwhelming the abundance we have in the United States!..." What will we do with the resources granted us?

All of us have just spent some time preparing for the secrets of our holidays, poring over old cookbooks and stained note cards, reminding ourselves of traditional Lithuanian Christmas Eve recipes. This is one of many ways to plunge out of ourselves, into a group of people moving on together. For all of our self-confidence (Lithuanian teachers often exclaim that Americans seem to be born with "supreme self-confidence") we all need to belong. We need to help each other and be certain to help ourselves.

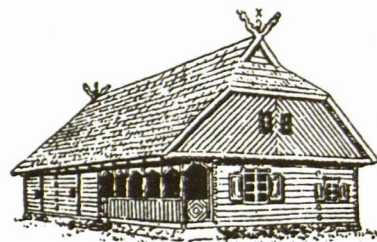
Please support the A.P.P.L.E. Summer Seminar by spreading the word - by joining A.P.P.L.E. as a member, by helping us find teacher volunteers, by donating "scholarships" for our Lithuanian teachers.



*Teacher Resource Center study group during the Summer Seminar - 1994.*

Lithuanian cities during the period July 10 - August 6, 1995. Dates are July 10-21 for Session One and July 24-August 4 for Session Two. We expect to organize a pre-session conference to discuss educational problems as well as opportunities in the region of southeastern Lithuania, a rural area of great natural beauty-but also abject poverty and some discord among national minorities. Also, a closing conference - a celebration of our first five years in Lithuania! - will be held in a retreat-resort location August 7-10. Proposals in all subject specialties are welcome. In fact, the Summer Seminar always defines itself through the proposals of our volunteers.

In addition to teacher educators, the A.P.P.L.E. team will need one or two administrators and several transla-



### A Christmas Gift

Frank Zapolis is known to many as the director of the Knights of Lithuania Folk Dance Ensemble. Along with the group, Frank has participated in all of the free world's Lithuanian Folk Dance Festivals. In addition, the group has participated in Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry's "Christmas Around the World" program for over 40 years (see BRIDGES, Dec., 1994). Mr. Zapolis is the owner of a State Farm Insurance Agency.

On December 10, 1994, accompanied by "Eglute" magazine administrator Viktoras Kucas, Mr. Zapolis visited the Maironis Lithuanian Saturday School in Lemont, IL with a gift for the students of the school; 10 annual subscriptions to "Eglute" to be used by students during class.

The Lithuanian-American Educational Council is grateful to Mr. Zapolis for his meaningful gift which recognizes the value of the written Lithuanian word for our younger generation. This is a wonderful example of how the Lithuanian Saturday Schools (of which there are 22) can be supported. "Eglute" is the only children's magazine published in the US in Lithuanian. Over 100 Lithuanian-Americans have provided gift subscriptions of the magazine to relatives in Lithuania.



From left to right: E. Novak, director of Maironis School, F. Zapolis, and V. Kucas, "Eglute" administrator.

### Knights of Lithuania Mid-Atlantic District Convention to be held on March 26, 1995 at the Transfiguration Church Parish Hall Queens, NY

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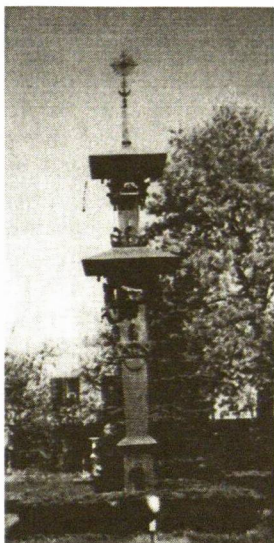
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Lithuanian Cross at the  
Transfiguration Church,  
Maspeth, Queens, NY

The Knights of Lithuania Mid-Atlantic District, consisting of 16 councils will hold their winter convention on Sunday, March 26, 1995. The convention is being hosted by K of L Maspeth Council 110. Invited guests include; Judge Fred Schmidt and Mr. Peter Anusas, the Lithuanian Consulate General. The convention will begin with 11:15 Lithuanian Mass, followed by a hot buffet. Topics for discussion will include: Aid to Lithuania, membership drives, the upcoming National Convention and reports of activities by Bernice Aviza, president of the K of L Mid-Atlantic District.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Lithuanian Human Services Council of the USA, Inc. invites all Lithuanian-American U.S. organizations, groups and individuals that provide humanitarian assistance to residents of the Republic of Lithuania to the

Conference on  
**Humanitarian Aid To Lithuania**  
 to be held in  
**Chicago, Illinois**  
 on  
**May 13-14, 1995**

The major purpose of this Conference is to acquaint participants with currently active providers of humanitarian assistance to Lithuanian and more importantly to seek and find various methods and means for inter-organizational cooperation and efficiencies.

The Conference program will consist of plenary sessions during which, using lecture and symposium formats, topics of general interest will be presented; as well as break-out sessions where specific applications of presented ideas will be discussed.

The publication of a special directory listing all of the Lithuanian-American organizations providing humanitarian aid to Lithuania is planned.

The Conference Organizing Committee requests that all organizations and groups providing humanitarian aid to Lithuania provide the following information for the directory:

- 1) official name/title of the organization
- 2) name of the organization's president, contact or representative
- 3) organization's official address, telephone and FAX number

Upon receipt of this information, organizations will be provided with further information regarding the conference (details will also be available in the press).

The Conference Organizing Committee consists of members: Jurate Budrys, Birute Jasaitis, Saulius Kuprys, Jurgis Lendraitis, Dr. Vytautas Narutis, Ausra Perry, Dr. Linas Sidrys and Apolonija Steponavicius. The Committee can be reached at:

Conference on Humanitarian Aid to Lithuania  
 2711 West 71st Street  
 Chicago, IL 60629  
 TEL: (312) 476-0664, (312) 476-2655,  
 or (312) 436-0197  
 FAX: (312) 436-6909

**LITHUANIAN PRESS...***Continued from p. 18*

ously that a 229 page book resulted. The book consists of the Pope's private theologic thoughts and remembrances. It is a pleasure to see that he mentions his trip to Lithuania, speaks of the difficult road of religious persecution and occupation undergone by Lithuania, and even remembers the distant past when it was protested that Christianity was being forced upon Lithuania during the Crusades.

(DRAUGAS, 1/11/95)

**LCRA helps religious life**

Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid puts much effort in helping Church and religious life revive in Lithuania. Financial assistance has been received from the Oak Tree Philanthropic Foundation, Loyola Foundation, Kock Foundation as well as other religious and lay organizations. Funds support scholarships given to religious educators, schools, youth organizations, libraries, teaching tools, seminaries, monasteries, and goodwill groups.

(DRAUGAS, 1/14/95)

**Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival Directors Confirmed**

The new Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. National Executive Committee met for the first time Dec. 3-4, 1994. The Committee confirmed the list of proposed members to the Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival Corporation's Board of Directors. The next Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival is scheduled to take place July 1996 in Chicago, IL. The Directors oversee the treasury of the Corporation, which grows from the proceeds of one Festival in order to pay expenses of organizing the next Festival. The 1996 Festival will have a special committee of organizers, and an artistic director who will oversee the make-up of the program. According to the Corporation's constitution, the Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute provides four candidates to the Corporation's Board of Directors, while the LAC National Executive Committee-six. The LAC representatives to the Board of Directors will be: Birute Jasaitis, Bronius Juodelis (chair), Rita Kezelis (secretary), Reda Pliura (treasurer), and directors Regina Kucas, Linas Norusis, and Reda Pliura. Directors selected to represent the Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute are Stasys Milasius, Rasa Poskocimas, Nijole Pupius and Lidija Ringus. (Some of the LAC representatives on the Council perform other duties in the LAC, some are folk dancers, some are folk dancing teachers. All of the Institute representatives are folk dancing group instructors.-rk)

(DARBININKAS, 1/6/95 and DRAUGAS 1/12/95)

Vytautas Grybauskas

# Sports

## Preparation for the 5th World Lithuanian Games Intensifies

Preparation for the World Lithuanian Games which will take place in Kaunas and Vilnius this summer has intensified. As outlined in the December issue of BRIDGES, the Games will include 25 branches of athletic competition. Baseball, which was included in the program for the 4th Games in 1991 has been eliminated and replaced by some sports not so familiar to Americans; rugby, hiking, and sports fishing.

Participating delegations to the 5th Lithuanian World Games are expected to finance their own travel expenses. The Organizing Committee in Lithuania will provide room and board and transportation to and from competitions for athletes beginning two days prior to the



The American delegation enters Kaunas Stadium during Opening Ceremonies. Pictured in the first row behind the US flag, US Organizing Committee members from left; A. Tamosiunas, R. Zilionis, V. Grybauskas, and V. Adamkus.

Games and ending two days after the closing of the Games.

The president of the Lithuanian World Games Organizing Committee is Lithuania's Prime Minister A. Slezevicius, who has pledged full financial support for the Games. In addition, the Committee consists of A. Poviliunas, president of Lithuania's National Olympic Committee, V. Nenišius, director of Physical Education and Sports Department and V. Jasiulaitis, mayor of Vilnius. Among other Committee members are the Republic of Lithuania's Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Education, and the Minister of Finance, the mayor of Kaunas and the presidents of both the North American and Australian Lithuanian Sports Federations. Organiza-

tional responsibility for the Games has been assumed by Rimas Girskis, who estimates that 4,500 athletes will compete in the Games. Among them, 1,000 are expected to be from countries other than Lithuania.

Members of North American athletic clubs are hoping that a large number of athletes from the US and Canada will compete in the Games. During the 4th Lithuanian World Games held in 1991, over 300 participated from the US and Canada. The Fifth Lithuanian World Games have separate Organizing Committees in Canada and the US. Algis Rugienius, long-time president of Detroit's Kovas Sports Club and experienced athletic director heads up the American Lithuanian World Game Committee, while efforts in Canada are being co-ordinated by Canadian Committee president Mindaugas Leknickas, equally experienced in athletic event organization. Both gentlemen have put in countless hours of work encouraging strong participation in the Games. A preliminary count of participants, along with three photographs of each participant is required by March 31, 1995. Final registration of participants must be completed and presented to the Committee in Lithuania by May 31, 1995.

If you or your athletic club are interested in participating or for more information contact Algis Rugienius at 3620 Burning Tree Dr., Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302-1511 as soon as possible.

## The Games Begin

The unofficial opening of the Fifth Lithuanian World Games is taking place at the Blue Mountain Ski Resort in Ontario, Canada on February 23-24. The downhill skiing competition is being held here as part of the Games. Participants are expected to include skiers from Australia, about 30 from Lithuania as well as many competitors from Canada and the United States.

Winners of the first competition of the Fifth Lithuanian World Games will be awarded official Fifth Lithuanian World Games medals brought to Canada from Lithuania.

The downhill skiing competition of the Lithuanian World Games has always taken place at a different time and place than the rest of the competitions for obvious reasons; mountains and snow are necessary elements, while the other branches of sports generally require warm temperatures. During the Fourth Games, the downhill skiing competition took place in the Caucasus Mountains. We wish all the competitors good luck and especially those representing the US!

## ADVERTISEMENT

**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 began 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:

Dr. Kenneth M. Leavitt\*  
11 Middlesex Avenue  
Wilmington, MA 01887 or  
Phone: (508) 658-9774  
FAX: (508) 658-2919

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