

BRIDGES

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Mike Peters for the Dayton Daily News. Tribune Media Services.

TO OUR READERS:

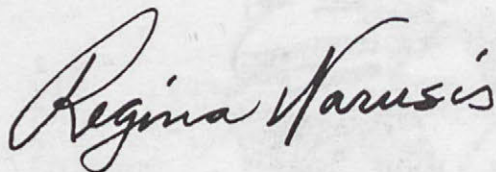
We wish you, our BRIDGES family, a Merry Christmas and a Good New Year! May the birth of the Christ Child bring you peace and fulfillment. Our New Year's Resolution is to bring you a better BRIDGES with timely delivery to keep you better informed during this critical election year both in Lithuania and in the United States.

We are proud to announce to you the new editor of BRIDGES, Ms. Diana Vidutis, of Takoma Park, MD and a member of the Washington, DC chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. Diana was born in Richmond, VA and grew up in Cincinnati, OH. She earned her B.A. in English from Xavier University in Cincinnati and went on to Indiana University at Bloomington where she earned a M.A. in Slavic Languages. Diana is married to Ricardas Vidutis who has a Ph.D. in Folklore from Indiana University at Bloomington. They have two wonderful children Mantas, age 6-1/2, and Nida, age 5 who attend the Karaliaus Mindaugo (King Mindaugas) Lithuanian School in Baltimore, MD.

Diana will assume her post as Editor with the January, 1996 issue of BRIDGES. I want to thank Asta Banionis, who is the LAC, Inc. Public Affairs Office director for filling in these past few months. I know you've enjoyed the issues she edited, and she will continue as a political editor in the months ahead.

Our prayers go out for our soldiers spending their Christmas in Bosnia. We hope that they are kept safe and they accomplish their noble and necessary mission of securing the peace for the children of Bosnia.

We hope you've enjoyed BRIDGES this past year enough to help us expand our readership in 1996 by buying an extra subscription for a friend. Once again, let me express our warmest and sincerest greetings to you and your loved ones during this holiday season.



Regina Narusis, J.D.
President
LAC, Inc.

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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

PEACE IN BOSNIA

The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. has pledged its support to President Clinton, along with 17 other organizations which belong to the Central and East European Coalition, for the deployment of United States troops to Bosnia. Although the public opinion polls indicate that most of our fellow Americans disagree with us, we believe that we have a moral obligation to help make the Dayton Peace Accords work. We also believe that it is within the national interest of the United States to help extend and secure the peace and stability of the trans-Atlantic community. War and genocide in Europe destabilizes the region of the world to which we are (like it or not) most closely linked—the European continent.

Many Americans reject their ethnic heritage and delight in being homogenized citizens of this great nation. But, we, as members of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., believe that our knowledge and our life experience rooted in two cultures enriches American society. Sharing a heritage with one of the small nations of the world, we have an appreciation and sensitivity for other minorities. We know how easily one can become a target of discrimination, marginalized, or even ostracized, if one is part of a minority.

We naturally seek out international news. It's not just because we're looking for news about Lithuania. Our life experience has taught us that the relative stability and prosperity of American life is not the norm in the world. Hostile forces in the international community can arise very quickly and threaten not only their neighbors, but the peace of the larger world community. Smaller nations can be snuffed out in a matter of days; even large nations can be brought to the point of collapse, when events, trends and warning signs are ignored.

Because we are "ethnic-Americans" we appreciate how unique the United States is. The vast majority of human beings born to this earth are defined by the geography of their birth. But the United States was created by people who had a purposeful vision of a new country. The United States is the first, the largest and the most successful experiment to date in building a society based on shared values. We bristle at the attempts of some politicians, commentators and "talking-heads" to define America and American interests by some narrow, material, bottom-line calculation cloaked in the terminology of "America's national interest". American values are at the

very core of our identity as a people; our values are an inseparable part of our national interest. And it is in our national interest to defend and to promote those values.

It must seem curious to many Americans why the "Europeans" who are our NATO allies (West European nations) couldn't "solve the Bosnia crisis by themselves". This failure of West Europeans to act on their own initiative comes as no surprise to Lithuanian-Americans. We know the history of Western European nations. We know how homogenous and intolerant their societies can be. We know how rigid their class structures can be. Social mobility is as rare as a moonwalk. And although the nations of Western Europe have become democracies, the United States was born a democracy. This may be the fundamental obstacle in their national psyche which prevents them from coming to the assistance of their neighbors.

The Western Europeans look to the United States for leadership. And if you aren't convinced by the psychological dynamics of the relationship, then one can't dismiss the physical factors: that the United States has over three times the population of the largest Western European country (Germany at 87 million), and the United States is equal in size to the entire European continent from the Atlantic to the Urals. It is the sheer size of the United States and the resources our government commands that makes us the proverbial "biggest kid on the block". And lucky for the Europeans that it's not in our nature to be a bully.

As Lithuanian-Americans we also pay attention to the lessons of history. And the tragic war against Bosnia confirms the axiom that, if aggression is unchecked, the aggressor grows bolder. There are larger countries than Serbia waiting to see if the United States and its NATO allies stop the aggression against Bosnia. And as much as certain advisers in the Clinton Administration want to ignore the growing threat, there is no denying that the Communist Party's apparent win in the Russian parliamentary elections has strengthened the imperialist wing of the Russian government.

The current deployment of US and NATO ally troops to Bosnia has implications for the expansion of NATO eastward. We are pleased to see a Hungarian city and its military base being used as a staging area by NATO for the Bosnia deployment. Bringing NATO command

centers to Hungary will inevitably lead to greater "interoperability" between Hungarian military forces and NATO. This will also help to break down the psychological barrier which prevents NATO expansion; i.e., is it worth it to risk Russian "wrath" for a group of "unknown" East Europeans. Regular contact with the Hungarian military will show NATO decision-makers that the East Europeans are worthwhile folks — people to be included in the defense alliance.

We urge our members to write and to call their Congressman and Senators, encouraging them to support the President's deployment of U.S. troops along with other NATO forces to Bosnia. There will even be a Lithuanian platoon serving under the Danish contingent based in the American zone at Tuzla in Bosnia. Our Christmas prayer is that the American men and women deployed to Bosnia be kept safe as they accomplish their mission of bringing peace to the children of Bosnia.

Here is the text of the Central and East European Coalition's statement released to Congress in support of the President's policy:

STATEMENT ON UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN BOSNIA AND EUROPEAN SECURITY

The Central and East European Coalition urges the United States Congress to support the President's deployment of U.S. military personnel to Bosnia as part of an international peacekeeping force and to provide funds for United States participation in the international effort to rebuild a sovereign Bosnia.

The Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), comprising 18 national organizations representing 22 million Americans of Armenian, Belarussian, Bulgarian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Ukrainian descent, strongly believes that the vital national security interests of the United States require a strong commitment to the establishment of peace, stability, democracy, and free markets throughout Europe.

In this century, the United States was called upon to fight two world wars and a 45-year cold war conflict which emanated from the heart of Europe — in the furtherance of our vital geopolitical interests. The cessation of all hostilities and institutionalization of democracy and market economies in Central and East Europe are the best means of guaranteeing that there will be no future European conflicts which will entangle the United States. Those objectives require the continued engagement, support, and assistance of the United States and the West.

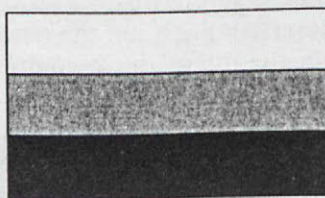
Conflicts in Central and East Europe have the potential of drawing in other nations of Europe, and

eventually, the United States. After four years of such conflict in Bosnia, the parties have agreed to a peaceful solution to their differences. The United States played and continues to play a critical role in that peace process. It was under United States auspices that the three parties agreed to meet and to find common ground for a solution to their conflict. The resultant peace agreement is contingent on the continued engagement of the United States.

The United States will not stand alone in Bosnia. The soldiers of twenty-six European nations will stand side-by-side with young American men and women assisting with the implementation of the agreements reached in Dayton and to be signed in Paris. It is significant that this international effort includes countries of the NATO alliance and the Central and East European nations which only recently emerged from Soviet domination. Both understand that the success of this peace process is critical to peace and security throughout Europe and its failure could jeopardize peace for the Euro-Atlantic community.

Today, the United States faces a critical choice similar to that faced at the conclusion of the two world wars. We can withdraw from Europe, as we did after World War I, with similar consequences or we can remain engaged in Europe and provide the leadership for building a lasting peace. The organizations of the Central and East European Coalition, therefore, urge Congress to support continued United States involvement in the Balkan peace process with both troops and funding. The assistance must not, however, come at the expense of existing U.S. programs aimed at building democratic and free market institutions in the other nations of the region.

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PEOPLE

Robert T. White

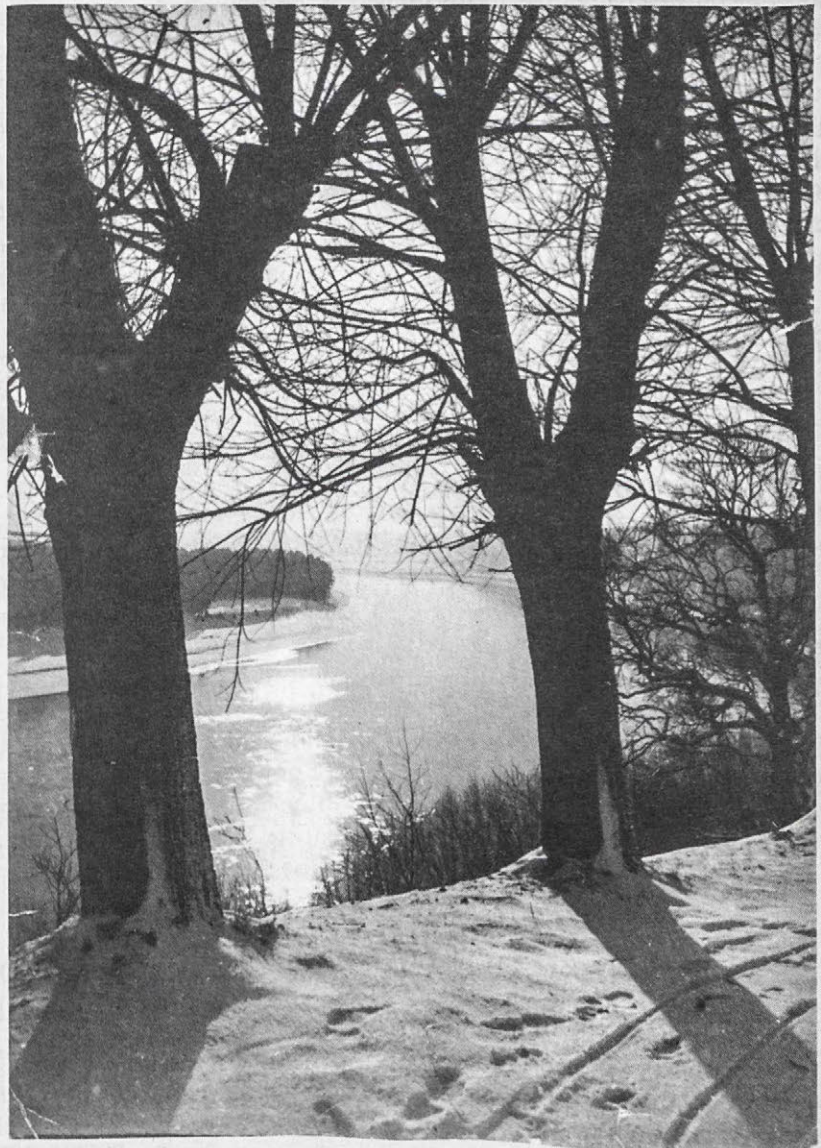
THE TUNESMITH AND THE TAILOR

Robert T. White sent us this story which is the White family's personal "Christmas Carol", or as Mr. White writes, "The enclosed is an account of the serendipitous encounter between my grandfather, a native of Lithuania, Tsarist Russia and the great songwriter, Irving Berlin, a native of Kirgizia, Tsarist Russia that resulted in the composition of the perennial Christmas classic, "White Christmas". It is recorded here as told to Robert T. White by his grandfather Thomas T. White:

The Greek word "Christ" and the Latin "mas" were first united not quite 1,700 years ago at the time of Constantine the Great. This is the tale of how the Anglo-Saxon word "White" first became attached to that venerable Greco-Roman hybrid word "Christmas".

It came to pass on a cold December night in the New York of 1939, when the dogs of the Second World War had just been unleashed and were wreaking havoc in Poland, that Irving Berlin had an emergency need for a tailor. He saw that the White Tailor Shop was still open and quickly entered. The alchemy that resulted from the blending of the tunesmith and the tailor, Thomas White, blossomed into an animated conversation about seasonal matters, and the new troubles overseas, when to their mutual surprise they discovered they each had emigrated from Tsarist Russia.

Berlin was intrigued that this man called "White" could be from Russia, as he knew well that "White" was a name alien to that culture. Consequently, Thomas White readily revealed that his name was originally Tomas Vaitukaitis and that he had altered it for his new life in America. Berlin then knowingly smiled and admitted that he too was born with a different name, Israel Baline, and that when he wrote his



The banks of the Nemunas River in winter. The Nemunas runs through the heart of Lithuania and is the inspiration of many a song itself.

continued p. 16

Algis Rimas

Business News

LITHUANIA'S CENTRAL BANK GIVES MIXED MARKS TO THE ECONOMY

Lithuania's central bank just released its semi-annual report on the nation's economy. The report, covering the first half of 1995, concludes that the economy's signals during the period were mixed.

Lithuania's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1994 was \$4.1 billion. In the first half of 1995 GDP showed practically no change although the sharp decline measured over the first quarter was balanced by a rapid pick-up in activity over the second quarter. Prospects are good for net growth in GDP this year.

The annual rate of inflation during the first half dropped to 16.7 percent from the previous year's 23 percent figure. However, the bank estimates that inflation will accelerate and reach as high as 35 percent for the year. Unemployment numbers vary depending on the source. The country's statistics authorities, using polling data, list the unemployment rate at 11.8 percent. The official labor exchange registry shows the rate merely at 2.7 percent.

The government projects a \$5 million deficit in its \$450 million budget for calendar year 1995. The major spending categories are health, education and welfare (23%); public safety and law enforcement (14%); and general administration (8%). Defense spending amounts to less than 3% of the budget. The bulk of government revenues were collected from the country's value-added tax and excise taxes. Foreign borrowing by all entities reached \$1.1 billion at mid-year. About 80% of loans carry a government guarantee of repayment. Commercial bank lending rates averaged at 2.3 percent per month. The dollar-litas exchange rate has remained fixed at \$1 to 4 litai.

Official balance of payments information was reported only through the first quarter of 1995. The current account showed a \$70 million deficit for the quarter with the trade deficit reaching \$100 million. Some one-third of all goods and services consumed in Lithuania are imported. The current account was helped by foreign aid receipts and by transfer payments from individuals abroad. Russia remained Lithuania's major trading partner accounting for 22 percent of exports and 37 percent of imports. Next in importance were Germany, Latvia and

Belarus, Ukraine, and Poland. Trade with the United States was insignificant, amounting to less than one percent of the Lithuanian total. However, the United States is a major source of private foreign investment. Projected investment needs from 1995 through 1997 are estimated by the government to be approximately \$570 million. In the three year period 1993 through 1995, private foreign investment actually received has not exceeded \$35 million.

If any of our readers wish to obtain copies of the central bank reports, some of which are written both in Lithuanian and in English, please write to the Bank of Lithuania, Gedimino pr. 6, Vilnius, Lithuania 2001

TAX ON DIVIDENDS AND SAVINGS ACCOUNTS PROPOSED

Lithuania's parliament (Seimas) is debating a bill to tax personal earnings from dividends and interest payments on savings. These categories are currently exempted from income subject to the country's personal income tax. Opponents of the measure include the business community. Using arguments reminiscent of those heard in the United States Congress, the president of the Lithuanian Industrialists' Association, former Prime Minister Bronislavas Lubys, complained that as dividend income is already taxed once as corporate profits, taxing it again as personal income would cause investors to flee the fledgling Lithuanian stock market. Others pointed out the real risk of capital flight if measures were adopted to deter private savings creation in Lithuania. The outcome of the bill is uncertain but the government is under mounting pressure by the International Monetary Fund to close its budget deficit.

STILL NO OFF-SHORE OIL HANDLING TERMINAL

Plans to build an off-shore handling terminal at Butinge, Lithuania apparently continue to languish for lack of funding. The Lithuanian press reported another governmental delegation headed for Washington, DC in mid-November to firm up U.S. Export-Import Bank support for the project. At one time, the Ex-Im is said to have agreed in principle to lend up to \$80 million for the procurement of U.S. origin goods and services, covering about one-half of the total cost of the terminal. The Ex-Im reportedly has already committed \$5 million for project

design work. We could not reach the Ex-Im Bank for an independent confirmation of the above information. Lithuania's latest Minister of Energy, Arvydas Lescinskas, said that one of the remaining problems to be worked out with Ex-Im is the payment of the charges to cover the loan against risk of a default. Some of the terminal's backers have pointed out that for the project to be commercially viable, the terminal would have to be used not only to import oil from non-traditional sources but also to export oil from traditional ones such as Russia.

A group of experts from the London-based European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) visited Vilnius in November to discuss the Butinge project. However, they left without any commitments or offers of financing. The United States is a member of the multinational EBRD.

In another major project involving oil, the expansion of the existing oil products terminal at Klaipeda, the Dutch ABN Amro Bank N.V. loaned \$10 million to the Klaipeda oil handling company for the purchase of oil handling equipment. An estimated \$40 million will be required to complete the work. The Lithuanian government is expected to guarantee repayment of the loans.

WORLD BANK TO FUND A GEOTHERMAL DEMONSTRATION HEATING PLANT IN KLAIPEDA

A geothermal energy demonstration plant is to be constructed in the port city of Klaipeda with the aid of World Bank loans, reported the Lithuanian newspaper, "Diena". The \$18 million plant would provide geothermally heated hot water to the city's central heating system which serves close to 90 percent of Klaipeda's 206 thousand people and several industrial plants also. The plant is scheduled to come on line in 1998. Other sources of loans are expected to include the European Union's PHARE program, the World Environment Fund and the Lithuanian Government. A big question yet to be answered is whether geothermal heating can be provided economically.

SIAULIAI AIRPORT PROJECT TAXIING FOR TAKE-OFF

A team of airport development experts from the Philips company visited Siauliai in November and completed their initial work schedules for the project. Among the early tasks will be the construction of a control tower, access roads and an electricity distribution system. Installation of navigation aids, and the construction of access ramps and airport buildings would follow. A crucial step in the initial stage is the obligation by the Lithuanian government of \$5 million toward the project. Prime

Minister Slezevicius indicated that the funds have been budgeted by the government.

Another group of investors, interested in operating an aircraft overhaul and maintenance facility at Siauliai airport also visited there in November. Representatives of US Air, Baltic International USA, and other U.S. firms reportedly have proposed to install adequate repair facilities suitable to work on Boeing aircraft. The Mayor of the city of Siauliai, Alfredas Lankauskas, was quoted in the media as saying that agreement had been reached to implement the project early in 1996.

PRIENAI AVIATION GLIDERS READY

Prienai Aviation is a small company that produces popular glider aircraft. According to the management, an agreement has been reached with a U.S. company to manufacture 50 standard class gliders annually under the brand name, "Genesis". A British firm, Edgely Aeronautics Ltd., reportedly also offered a proposal to build its British line of gliders at the Prienai facility. Edgely would like to obtain about 30 gliders per year. Each one sells for approximately \$26,000.

LITHUANIA'S DEVELOPMENT BANK OFF TO A MODEST START

The recently established state-operated Lithuanian Development Bank is ending the year with a modest, but solid record. Funded partly by the EBRD, the Lithuanian Development Bank declared that its loans to industry in 1995 will amount to approximately \$3.25 million. Borrowers enjoy annual interest rates of 12-15 percent compared to an average of 2.3 percent per month currently charged by commercial lending institutions. The Development Bank processed some 200 loan applications from industrial and commercial companies. Its largest loan, in the range of \$1 million, went to a wood processing plant. More typically, a grain miller in the town of Plunge, Lithuania recently obtained a \$340,000 loan for the purchase of milling equipment. The president of the Development Bank, Juozas Aliukonis, expressed pride in the strict business standards and no-nonsense management of his bank.

This year also marks the launching in Vilnius of the Baltic-American Enterprise Fund. Funded by the Congress, the organization has yet received only \$15 million of the \$50 million that was earmarked for lending and investment in all three Baltic states. Although the Vilnius office has been open for business since late summer, we have yet to issue it our report card.

MIXED BUSINESS CLIMATE

There are success stories being reported by a number of Lithuanian companies. Newly returned visitors

from Vilnius, Kaunas and other cities report traffic jams, new shops and thriving business. There are also some individual examples. Eliuda, a wood working and furniture manufacturer in Telsiai, has reported signing an export contract with an Australian company to ship down-under 4,000 wooden chairs per month. Eliuda has also found markets in Scandinavia. Its only complaint is that it is very busy and can not find enough skilled technicians to employ.

More good news comes from Panevezys where the Panevezys Soap Company is expanding its product line to include seven new brands to its existing 16. Most of the soap has found its way into lucrative export markets and the company is turning a clean profit. The management's main concern is where to find enough raw material for its environmentally safe soap.

On the down-side, a Lithuanian business newspaper recently printed more details taken from a World Bank sponsored public opinion survey of 200 foreign investors in Lithuania. The poll taken last summer (1995), reported that 80 percent of those questioned said they had been solicited for bribes by some government official and 50 percent felt they had been victims of discrimination in their business dealings. Over half of the respondents complained of excessive or unclear government regulation, slow pace of economic reform, and unclear rules concerning property ownership. There is clearly ample room for improvement.

RECYCLING COMPUTERS TO ASSIST LITHUANIAN LIBRARIES

A non-profit voluntary organization, Assist International, Inc., has set up shop in Arlington, VA, to provide development assistance in informatics, mainly to resource libraries in Central Europe. Its program for Lithuania consists in recycling used computers and peripherals and shipping them to Lithuanian university and technical libraries and information services. The computers serve mainly as workstations on networks development by Lithuanian institutions and are greatly appreciated by them. No governmental funding is available for the program.

Assist International Inc. seeks contributions of computer equipment (preferably 386s, but will take 286s) and peripherals. Cash and volunteers are also welcome. All contributions are tax deductible. Assist's address is 4141 North Henderson Road (Suite 1216), Arlington, VA 22203, tel (703) 525-9045, fax (703) 351-0782. The president of the organization is Dr. Lee G. Burchinal. The Lithuanian program is headed by Ms. Dale Lukas, 10622 Great Arbor Drive, Potomac, MD 20854, tel (301) 983-0763, fax (301) 340-0865, E-mail: Lukas@nes.nlm.nih.gov. Please get in touch with Ms. Lukas for any further information.

Despite the uncertainties of the economy, many Americans are blessed with abundant resources. If you've liked Bridges over the last year, and you approve of the work that the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. does, would you consider including us among your end-of-the-year donations? Since the LAC, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization under U.S. tax law, your contribution to LAC, Inc. is fully tax-deductible. Most corporations which have "Matching Grant" programs will include the LAC, Inc., so check with your personnel office to get the requisite forms and you can double your contribution by asking your employer to match your donation.

Make your checks payable to: Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. The donation should be sent to: Mr. Ramas Pliura, Treasurer, Lithuanian-American, Inc. 1927 West Blvd., Racine, WI, 53403.

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A.P.P.L.E.'s TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LITHUANIA'S TEACHERS

In 1995, about 1,100 teachers attended the A.P.P.L.E. Seminars (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education) which took place in the Lithuanian towns of: Salcininkai (Southeastern Lithuania), Silute, Marijampole, Anyksciai and the capital, Vilnius. Although most of the twenty courses taught by American instructors dealt with teaching methods and "new" areas of the curriculum such as civics, A.P.P.L.E. also offered some topics which had been especially requested by the Lithuanian teachers themselves.

One of these topics was the teaching of ethics and religion. In Lithuania, all children (in truth, their parents) must choose one of these two subjects. Teachers of both ethics and religion feel ill-equipped to handle the questions asked by children in a post-Soviet society struggling to redefine itself. A.P.P.L.E. felt privileged to act as a facilitator and provide a forum for such discussions because the teachers of these two subjects are sometimes regarded as adversaries. Within the A.P.P.L.E. seminars, the teaching of ethics and religion was viewed as a partnership, and the teachers clearly appreciated this approach.

Next year we hope to be back in Lithuania with more courses and topics to improve the skills of Lithuania's teachers and administrators. If you would like to participate in next year's Teacher Inservice Seminar to be held in various Lithuanian cities early July to early August, 1996, please call Shirley Sabo at (203) 758-4600 as early as possible. We ask you to call, even before you submit a program proposal or workshop plan to A.P.P.L.E., because we try to match specialists with similar interests for potential

team teaching, and to keep our Lithuanian colleagues abreast of what courses we might be able to offer in each city Summer, 1996.

Proposals in the areas of educational administration, early childhood and elementary education, teaching ethics, teaching civics, vocational and special education, school psychology, counseling, educational media, librarianship, educational reform and teaching methods in all subject specialties are welcome. At this time, one overriding concern for Lithuanian educators is the mainstreaming of disabled students as well as students formerly housed and taught in institutional settings. This coming year's A.P.P.L.E. program will reflect this concern. We are also interested in proposals that would create a two-step program: basic and advanced (or more narrowly



Participants and coaches in the English-Language Coaching Group. A.P.P.L.E. seminar in Silute, Lithuania. August, 1995.

focused) approaches in a particular field. Selected participants must be able to make a minimum two-week commitment to the seminar program.

Please send two copies of detailed proposals or complete papers as soon as possible to Seminar Registrar Shirley Sabo, 118 Cook Road, Prospect, CT 06712.

What follows is an article written by a Lithuanian participant in this past summer's A.P.P.L.E. seminar, Ms. Lina Braukyte, a teacher from Marijampole. It is translated from the original Lithuanian.

ABOUT RELIGION AND ETHICS AT THE A.P.P.L.E. SEMINAR

For two weeks serious work was in progress at the Marijampole Education Center and the Jonas Rygiskis High School. American pedagogues (ed.educators) shared their experience, knowledge and talent with their Lithuanian colleagues. This is the agenda of the A.P.P.L.E. courses we are already familiar with. We delved not only into knowledge of our specialty, but also English language practice. Socials, meetings and interesting films awaited the course attendees in the evenings.

After the official opening, we worked in separate sections. Our group of 30 people expanded its knowledge of religion and ethics. Not only Marijampole residents attended, there were also those who came from Kretinga,

Rietavas, Panevezys, and other Lithuanian towns and rural districts. Three instructors worked with our group: Sister Janette Lucinio, a nun from Chicago, who excelled in the art of communication; Dr. Ellen Six, whose parents were born in Lithuania and who therefore was glad to speak their language (a translator's help was required for more serious academic questions), and Jim Simone who is of Irish descent, already slightly graying, but youthful and a quick-study, interested in Aristotle, mysticism, and the ethical problems of today. Thanks to them, our group worked from the heart, serious scientific information was intertwined with sincere stories from personal experience, hymns and readings from the Bible. From our guests we learned good task organization, inventiveness, the art of dealing with others, punctuality, and many other virtues.

Sister Janette truly radiated love and warmth. After watching the film she brought about the baptism of adults, more than a few of us had tears in our eyes... We need to return to the times the scriptures were propagated, to share in the idealism of the first Christians in order to make our faith alive and joyful. On slides we saw scenes from Janette's students life with God: balloons rising into the air with letters of Good Tidings on the Feast of the Ascension, the efforts of the students and their parents to build the most beautiful cross, the budding Tree of Life before Easter and many other fine moments...

Dr. Ellen, serious and solid from the initial
continued p. 16

CHANGE A LITHUANIAN TEACHER'S LIFE FOR ONLY \$25.00!!!

The objective of the A.P.P.L.E. Teacher Seminars has been to assist in the reform of Lithuania's education infrastructure, as the country takes its rightful place among the Western democracies. The major limiting factor for our programs in Lithuania has been the cost of lodging and transportation for the Lithuanian seminar participants.

In the past our members and supporters have been very generous helping to provide needed scholarships for Lithuania's teachers. In return, the American sponsors received personal letters from the scholarship recipients. These letters confirmed our hopes — and the promise of our headline. The A.P.P.L.E. seminars have changed the lives of the teachers and the lives of the children they have gone on to teach with new methods and new inspiration.

This year we turn to you again. A \$25 contribution will cover the costs for a Lithuanian teacher to attend the two-week seminar. For a mere \$25 you can change a teacher's life... and the lives of the children of Lithuania. What a way to make a difference! Please send your tax-deductible scholarship donations to: A.P.P.L.E. at Box 617, Durham, CT, 06422. Use the coupon below.

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Marija Stankus-Saulaitis

FORGOTTEN FACES OF WAR

The joyous holiday of Christmas for Christians is both a day of thanksgiving and spiritual renewal. Everything seems brighter and more possible on this day of the Christ Child's birth. We reprint this article by Marija Stankus-Saulaitis which first appeared in the journal "America", July 1, 1995 edition because it stirred a memory long repressed. The Cultural Council of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. has launched an oral history project to record the experiences of Lithuanian-Americans during World War II. We hope that Marija's recollection will encourage others to come forward and participate in the project. The article is reprinted with the author's permission.

WE FIT IN. We look like other people. Unless we're very tired, we sound like them. Many of us are highly educated, as were our parents, but we make no connection between education and wealth. We try to stock our cabinets for unexpected guests. We feel at home in many places, yet isolated from them all. Some of us suffer insomnia; some are agoraphobic, some claustrophobic. Loud noise upsets us; flashing lights startle us; we panic when we hear two-toned sirens. We are faithful friends. We are all in our 50's.

When we were children, we had no dental care and little medical attention. Few of us attended kindergarten or the early grades. We were often alone because our parents had to scavenge or, if lucky, to work. Sometimes we had food to eat; sometimes we had shoes that fit.

We would not be surprised if the world ended tomorrow, although we live, as many do, for the future. We do not really believe in the future, but we need it. We do not take sunrise and sunset for granted because we know that the sky can be completely black at three o'clock in the afternoon, as it was when the railroad station in Berlin was bombed during the Second World War.

Some of us once lived in Dresden. Our early childhood was spent hiding in ditches, running to bomb shelters day and night. In post offices and railroad stations we saw huge photographs of missing children, and we ourselves wore waterproof pouches with identification.

We saw dead bodies in the rubble and the mutilated

being returned on flatcars. Our parents did not know that we ventured into the bunkers and that we found unexploded bombs in the fields.

WE DO NOT TALK ABOUT OUR CHILDHOOD unless it is necessary to do so; among ourselves we rarely allude to it. No one has ever asked us about it. When we came to this country, we quickly learned the language and excelled in school. Not one teacher ever inquired about our past.

In the many commemorations of World War II featuring both victors and victims, one group is absent: the refugee children, the children of war. It is as though our sufferings were unimportant when compared with those of adults and nations.

Our people left Lithuania because of the onslaught of Communism. They wanted to raise their children in freedom. Before we were all gathered in displaced persons' camps in Germany, each family, if fortunate enough to be together, fended for itself. When our parents left Lithuania, my brother, Antanas, was 21 months old; I would be born three days later.

One of my early memories is of Frau Brandt's house in Brieg, where my brother and I sat by the window counting the horses galloping by. Each of us had chosen a particular color. But the swallows that flew into the room were our real delight. Even in the midst of war there is joy. One day a group of us found a dead hare, on which a few families feasted. Carrots we ate with the earth still on them and bread we chewed until it became sweet.

As children, we did not know that our parents listened to BBC - a crime. There was much we did not know. Risking death, our father refused to serve in the concentration camps. He was miraculously excused, but later the major who secretly granted such exemptions was himself executed.

The bombings were sudden and fierce. Once, in Haunstetten, when we were huddling with our mother in a ditch, we heard someone cry: "Jesu Kindlein, komm zu mir! Jesu Kinklein, komm zu mir!" ("Baby Jesus, come to me!") In my memory, it is a woman who screams those words; in my brother's, it is a little girl who is running and

shouting. Countless times have I repeated her prayer.

Our own family was usually quiet during the bombings. We would pray silently; our parents would make the sign of the cross on our foreheads. We knew that God loved us. We trusted God completely and unquestioningly. Our parents' prayers made no conditions, did not plead. Our mother's prayer before meals remained unchanged: "Thank you dear God, for all your graces."

In the shelters our parents shared whatever we had with others. I remember, one very cold night, asking my mother why someone else had to have our blanket. She explained that the other family needed it more than we did.

of his question, but of the answer that even I, six years old, knew, and knew I must not give—that his son would not return. We bear the picture of that father in our hearts.

We finally had a school in the D.P. camp (ed. Displaced Persons camp), but to get there, my brother and I had to pass the barracks in which the Americans lived. Their children would wait for us and run after us, jeering and throwing stones, as my brother, holding my hand tightly, pulled me through the streets. He held my hand throughout those years.

Then we started receiving CARE packages. My brother saved up enough money for postage to thank the boy in the States who had sent him a toothbrush, toothpaste and other gifts.

On May 8, 1949, we were on the Marina Marlin, heading for the United States. During the 10-day journey our mother, who spoke nine languages, continued her job as interpreter for the Americans. There was more food in the dining room than we knew existed in the world, but we could not eat it. The seas were rough. We landed in New York. My brother was not yet 10; I was eight, and we already had a whole war behind us. We were met kindly, given two dollars and train fare to Waterbury, Connecticut, and began our lives anew.



A winter's night in a Lithuanian village. Drawing by Paulius Jurkus.

At one point our family was homeless, and we two children had to stay with other families. Although we were with friends, the separation was devastating. It was then, at the age of four, that, once on awaking, I saw an angel and knew that, wherever I might be, I was surrounded by goodness.

The most painful memory of the war concerns neither our family nor refugees, but a German. In Augsburg, where we lived for two years after the war, an impeccably dressed gentleman carrying a cane regularly stood on a street corner. Every day he would ask each passerby the same question: "Have you seen my son? Will he be back soon?" Of this man I was afraid. Not so much

IT IS AS THOUGH NOTHING HAD HAPPENED. Occasionally, when my students complain about the cold because I keep the windows open, I mention the war and tell them that fresh air is precious. In the official world, it seems, nothing did happen to us. It is as if we had never had those wartime experiences.

Since then there have been many other wars. We have thought especially of the children in those countries. We have wondered what their memories would be like. Would they be as fortunate as we were and survive not only the bombs and the nightmares but also be blessed by their parents, as we were, with a sign of God that would mark their lives?

Jeanne Dorr

Lithuanian Orphan Care

On behalf of the "Forgotten Children" of Lithuania and "Lithuanian Orphan Care" we wish you a joyous holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year. There are no words to express our thanks for your overwhelming support of Lithuania's forgotten children. If the children could step from this page they would tell you themselves of their gratitude. You provided not only their food, clothing and shelter, but you gave them your love and the gift of hope. Please continue to keep Lithuania's "Forgotten Children" in your lives in 1996. They need the support of each and every one of you.

Throughout the coming year, REMEMBER the FORGOTTEN CHILDREN! The cost of supporting a child for one year is \$150. You will receive the child's name, address, and date of birth. Any and all donations in any amount are appreciated. Please send your tax deductible gifts to:

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Arnold Voketaitis

ONE MAN'S VIEWPOINT: CAN WE SAVE OUR LITHUANIAN AUDIENCES?

Springtime in Chicago usually means a trip to Cicero, IL to many culturally minded Lithuanians and others not so musically oriented because "their" opera company "The Lithuanian Opera Company of Chicago" is about to perform their annual operatic adventure. In April, 1996, the company together with visiting soloists, musicians and scenery from the Kaunas Opera (Kaunas, Lithuania) will present a performance of Banaitis' "Jurate and Kastytis".

How joyous and proud we will be of such an event to hear a major Lithuanian operatic composition sung in Lithuanian (or one translated and performed in earlier seasons) by the only perennial ethnic opera company in the United States.

Yet, last Spring as I looked around Morton High School at the multitude of proud, middle-aged Lithuanians awaiting the opening phrases of the presentation of Bizet's "The Pearl Fishers", I was saddened by the knowledge that the young, for the most part (25 and under) were absent. Unfortunate, yes! Surprising, no!

You may ask "Why, no?" The reasons are many. The obvious one is that for most the performance is an "event", not a cultural experience which it should be. Who's at fault? The middle and older-aged persons sitting in the audience rarely attend traditional concerts with their children outside the community. Yes, there is a small core of disciplined and knowledgeable Lithuanian musical enthusiasts who retain the interest in classical music instilled in them by their parents and an educational system that until recent years helped create the interest. But most have not nurtured the next generation of listeners and audiences. More attention must be given to the question of audience development and the growth of its artistic appreciation.

Where tomorrow's audiences are to come from is not just our problem, but one that exists world-wide. Is classical music becoming a cultural dinosaur? Many say,

yes. Yet, there are more concert halls, more orchestras, more CDs and recordings than ever before. But who's listening? Do they care? Their temperament is definitely not like those who came to these shores following WWII. Yes behind these positive statistics is the nagging problem that our Lithuanian audience for classical music is aging and waning and not only here in America. In Vilnius, Lithuania and other European capitals going to live concerts is still a normal part of cultural behavior. In the major Western cultural cities like New York it is reputed that only 20,000 to 30,000 people out of 10 million, and mainly middle-aged or elderly people participate in the classical scene. London, regarded as the musical capital of Europe, showed in 1994 that the majority of audiences for classical music were over 55 years of age, or 47 percent, compared with only 15 percent for the ages 16 to 34 group. The figure reversed itself for contemporary music like jazz and rock.

The present feeling, regretfully, is the feeling that classical music has no long term viability — and is doomed. How sad for us and the civilized world. Can this also be the proverbial writing on the wall for any type of Lithuanian language production, unless changes are made to stimulate new production values and attract younger audiences? We must see to it that productions, concert ideas, open-mindedness are brought up to date in style, presentation and vision. It's happening in most opera houses and in symphonic programming, as well as recitals; all to generate that "new" audience while holding the old. Those arts companies, organizations and individuals who refuse to change will wither away. Change has been with us since we were divinely put here on earth, and is expected of us in every other facet of life. So we must practice it in the arts as well. Remember, with positive change comes growth. Regional and major opera companies, symphonies, arts organizations just don't think of next year's production, but plan for two and three years ahead. Naturally, this is difficult within our ethnic community, but the spirit of "creative difference" should always be fostered.

As finances put limits on our personal lives, they also have controlled the ambitions of arts organizations. But, with quality new productions, an ear and eye on musical and arts changes, new interest and a growing audience can emerge, and generate the needed funding through individuals and corporations. It's worth the effort by all proud Lithuanian-Americans including this writer.

School systems (both the English-language schools and the Lithuanian-language Saturday schools) have eliminated most of their art and music courses, so where does that leave our young audiences of tomorrow? Parents, grandparents and other interested adults bear the responsibility to introduce all artforms to their children. Arts education must be the tool to lead our children back to enjoy Lithuanian performances of vocal and instrumental artists like our own Lithuanian Opera Company. We must remember that no childhood exposure to fine music or art can get to children unless their parents make this possible. And parents owe this to their children, even if they themselves aren't interested. Two generations of good music and arts education have already been lost due to cost-cutting, disinterest of radio/TV bottomliners and a deluge of distortive sounds that emanate from the popular airwaves captivating our youth who have never had the chance to be hear the classics and make their own comparisons of quality.

Much of what I've written may be common knowledge to some, but it was written out of deep concern hoping to awaken the responsibility that faces us all - now! We must understand what lies ahead regarding development of tomorrow's Lithuanian cultural audiences. If we don't address this cultural problem, that anticipated Spring journey to Cicero will never come. The Lithuanian Opera Company and any other cultural event will only be captured on the pages of the history books, if at all. If I may suggest a call to arms:

"LONG LIVE THE ARTS IN ALL THEIR GLORY AND OUR LITHUANIAN MUSICAL HERITAGE AND TRADITIONS".

Arnold Voketaitis is a gifted operatic singer who made his professional operatic debut at the New York City Opera in 1957 in a performance of Strauss' The Silent Women. He has had extensive major seasons at the New York City Opera (12), Lyric Opera of Chicago (16), San Francisco (5), Bellas Artes in Mexico City (10) as well as the opera companies of Miami, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Boston, San Diego, Milwaukee, Los Angeles, Dayton, Toledo, Charlotte, Orlando, Minneapolis, Hartford and Colorado Springs. During the academic years of 1990-93 he was the Artist-in-Residence for Opera and Voice,

Director of Opera Theater at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. Although he was born in East Haven, Connecticut he now lives in Chicago, IL. He has found the time despite his busy professional schedule, to dedicate his talent and his passion for the arts to the well-being of his fellow Lithuanian-Americans.

At this time of reflection and renewal during the Christmas season and the imminent arrival of a new year, we urge our readers to take up the challenge of Mr. Voketaitis.



A scene from the Lithuanian Opera Company's production of Jurate and Kastytis. Chicago, IL. April, 1972.



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impression, knew how to present her selected material comprehensibly and clearly, and based it with examples from her own experience. She lectures at the Catholic University in San Francisco which has, one should note, only 30% Catholic and about 50% churchgoing students. Having herself found the faith without the help of her parents (her mother returned to the Church only at age 85, thanks to the daughter), she fully understands young peoples' search for the meaning of life and for happiness. Dr. Ellen spoke with motherly love about her family, in which she raised 3 daughters. She truly understood our concerns and was able to look towards the future calmly and optimistically. Thanks to her we understood the origin and history of religion better. We learned tolerance toward those who believe differently. We could more soberly and without bias look at our own efforts to understand our faith and the meaning of life.

Jim devoted much attention to the problems of ethics and morality. He showed great interest in Lithuania and tried to remember Lithuanian names, to which he was unaccustomed. The history of Ireland, the danger of occupation, the defense of religion and national identity reminded us of our own nation's history, therefore we understood each other very well. Jim was a true gentleman in our almost totally female classroom, so the association was extremely pleasant. Our work was enlivened by small events: name days, interesting acquaintances, programs...

We would expect that work proceeded as successfully in the other A.P.P.L.E. strands (ed. subject areas). We are grateful to all the organizers and supporters of these courses. We would wish this lovely tradition to continue, for we really need the assistance of these fine people.

continued from p. 5

first song in 1907 he too changed it to the by now well-known Irving Berlin. Thomas White excitedly said that by a remarkable coincidence his first child was born when Baline was "reborn" as Berlin. They immediately chanted in unison: "old names for the Old World! new names for the New World!"

Berlin was so exhilarated by this chance fruitful meeting that he took the first opportunity when the new year of 1940 arrived to copyright what first had been stitched together in his mind at that tailor shop, the newly minted seamless title, "White Christmas", for a new song; with the expectation of creating a song worthy of that lofty title. Over the next two years he amply fulfilled that wish and in 1942 he renewed the copyrighted title, this time accompanying it with the freshly composed words and music that he had Bing Crosby introduce that same year in the film "Holiday Inn" and the rest is music history.

Of the countless kaleidoscopic possibilities, the legacy that was produced by that serendipitous encounter became preserved as if in amber by this perennial Christmas classic capturing the essence of that moment forever, and launched that fateful night on a poignant journey through the ages.

Now, whenever you hear or sing "White Christmas", you should experience a keen and intimate awareness that the White family's name is not only a part of the title of this Christmas treasure, but also the catalyst for the carol's very creation. And now you share with us the knowledge that it is always a "White Christmas" in the heart of the White family.

Editor's note: Watching the movie musical, "Holiday Inn" is one of my favorite Christmas traditions. And after learning of the origins of its most popular song "White Christmas", it will be hard not to chuckle when the scene replays of Bing Crosby playing the piano and singing this sweet and sentimental ballad. I'll have visions of Mr. White and Mr. Berlin matching wits in the tailor shop. We never did find out what the emergency was that led Mr. Berlin into Mr. White's Tailor Shop. The White family has produced more than one generation of wordsmiths with a bountiful sense of humor. Mr. Robert T. White's address is boldly printed as "The White House", Hollis, N.Y.

I just wonder what song would have resulted if this chance meeting would have occurred back in Vilnius or Kaunas — a "Vaitukaitis Velykos" maybe? Then again, maybe not. We thank the White (Vaitukaitis) family for sharing this happy Christmas memory with us.

CHAPTER EVENTS

Edward Shakalis

CAPE COD, MA CHAPTER HOSTS "1995 LITHUANIAN OPEN"



Lithuanian Open 1995. The golf tournament's winning foursome standing left to right: Ignas Vileniskis, Bill Bracken, Nick Mancini, and Tom Kuhn. Squirrel Run Country Club, West Plymouth, MA.

Our annual LITHUANIAN OPEN golf tournament was held on September 30th at the Squirrel Run Country Club in West Plymouth, MA. This year we had 64 players including the winning foursome of Ignas Vileniskis, Bill Bracken, Nick Mancini and Tom Kuhn. Their names have been added to the trophy which they will hold for one year until the next Lithuanian Open in 1996.

At this year's Open we raised \$2,100 which was donated to Lithuanian Children's Relief, Inc. (Lietuvos Vaiku Globa). The money is earmarked for the purchase of anti-tuberculin medicine which will be sent to Lithuania. According to Dr. Slapkauskaite, Head of Lithuania's Department of Infectious Pulmonary Diseases, tuberculosis or T.B. has reached epidemic proportions in Lithuania, particularly in poverty stricken rural areas; over 10,000 cases were diagnosed last year (Ed. in a country of 3.7 million people).

The 1995 LITHUANIAN OPEN organizing committee of Dr. Richard Shakalis, Dr. M. John Pautienis and Ed Shakalis thanks all the players and hole sponsors

for their participation thus making the event a big success.

Sponsors for this noble event donated at least \$50 each. They included: the Boston Lithuanian Credit Union; Baltic Tours: Algis, Birute, Kristina Mitkus; Lithuanian-American Community of Boston; Lithuanian-American Community of Cape Cod, Trans-Atlantic Auto Dealership: Aldona Adamoniene; Dr. M.J. Pautienis; Dr. R. Shakalis; and other generous individuals.

All that goes to prove that for a noble cause, Lithuanians open not only their hearts, but also their pocketbooks.

Editor's note: Although the bone-chilling cold of winter has engulfed us, this photo of the golfers in the Cape Cod chapter, reminds us of what we have to look forward to next summer. Golf has become a popular sport among our members across the country. Maybe it's time to have some cross-country challenges? Detroit, are you up for it?

Mr. Edward Shakalis is a long serving board member of the Cape Cod chapter and the organizer of the golf tournament. He is an engineer by training, but a HAM radio operator by avocation and a serious golfer.

EVENTS

Ramune Kubilius



Left: Lithuanian folk tale, "Egle, Queen of the Serpents". Children's art from Lithuania displayed at the annual Holiday Folk Fair, Milwaukee, WI. November, 1995. Photo by R. Kubilius.

Below: Lithuanian folk tale, "Jurate and Kastytis". Lithuanian children's artwork at the annual Holiday Folk Fair, Milwaukee, WI. November, 1995. Photo by R. Kubilius.

HOLIDAY FOLK

FAIR IN MILWAUKEE, WI

The 52nd Annual Holiday Folk Fair took place at Milwaukee, Wisconsin's Mecca November 17th-19th, 1995. The fair, traditionally held the weekend before Thanksgiving, now attracts over 60,000 people during the Friday through Sunday festivities which feature cultural programs, bazaars and exhibits. The international cafe is a popular destination as are the international coffee house, the Beer Garden, and other hospitable nooks.

The 50th Anniversary Cookbook included a history of the fair. It lists the beginnings of the fair as the following: "In the dark days of World War II, a small group of volunteers in Milwaukee met at the International Institute to prove that people of different ethnic backgrounds, religions, and political persuasions could work together in harmony. Out of these discussions emerged the concept of the Holiday Folk Fair — an island of intercultural friendship and unity in a world at war, a place where people could share their heritage with others."

Although Wisconsin's Lithuanian-Americans live about an hour away from Milwaukee, in the Racine-Kenosha area and in the capital, Madison, they have been able over the years to play an active role in the Holiday Folk Fair, even garnering the title of Honored Ethnic Group in 1987 and having a Lithuanian-American, Mr. Stanley Milasius of Lake Geneva, WI serve as General Chair of the

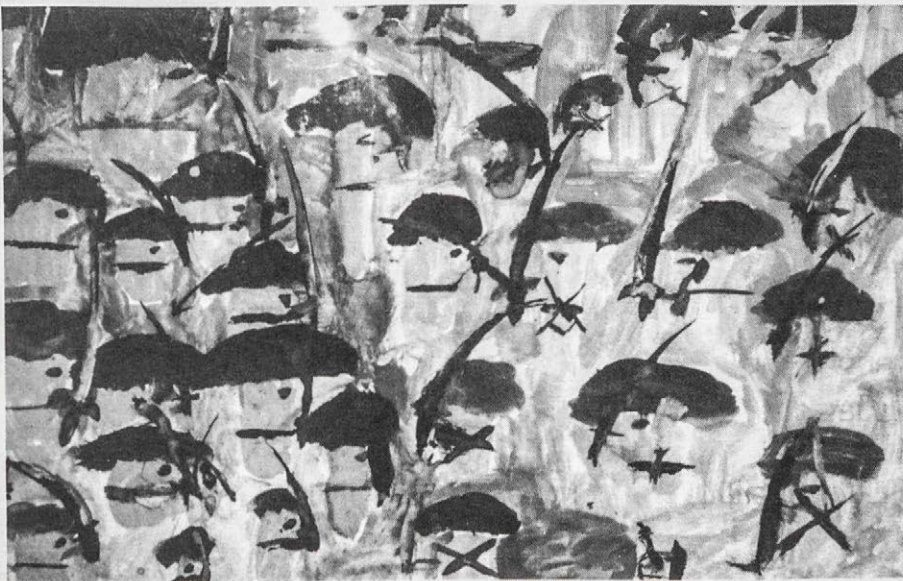


International Institute of Wisconsin's 1993 Holiday Folk Fair.

In 1995, nearly 50 ethnic groups were represented and 5,000 volunteers worked to make the fair a success. This year's theme was "Children - Our Future". The honored folk dance group was Lithuania's "Linelis", a very talented group of children, ages 9-12, from Panevezys, Lithuania. The children performed several times during the weekend and participated in a conference on "International Organization Festivals" which took place before the Holiday Folk Fair. The 16-member group went on to participate in an international festival on the East Coast.

Besides the children's group from Lithuania, Lithuanian-American children from the Chicago and Lemont, IL Saturday schools came to perform at the Milwaukee festival. The Lithuanian folk dance groups "Grandis" (Chicago, IL) and "Spinduly" (Lemont, IL) and "Klumpe" (Wisconsin and Northern Illinois) also danced at the Young People's Matinee, the Folk Spectacle, and the Beer Garden. The colorful and rousing programs included groups representing other nationalities, too: African-American, American Indian, Bavarian, Czech, Croatian, Filipino, Latvian...

The Holiday Folk Fair draws families, scout troops, school classes, and many others to the exhibits, demonstrations and eateries. In 1995, the tremendously



Lithuanian children's poem, "War of the Mushrooms". Art from Lithuania exhibited in the International Children's Art Exhibit. Holiday Folk Fair, Milwaukee, WI. November, 1995. Photo by Ramune Kubilius.

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successful fair also added an "International Children's Art Exhibit" which included art work by Sarunas Sirvinskas, Milda Valavicius, and Rolandas Stanevicius of Lithuania. There was an international travel area, an ethnic doll exhibit & silent auction, a family genealogy center, a photo exhibit, cultural exhibits (the Lithuanians exhibited children's books at their booth), crafts, cooking demonstrations, an Ethnic Dress-Up Day, and Kinderland (an educational area designed for children). There was something to see, do and buy (food and crafts) for everyone.

As the 50th Anniversary book summarized, "It is not enough to preserve and occasionally savor our cultural heritage. We have a responsibility to pass on our traditions to future generations ..." The International Institute of Wisconsin carries on these activities throughout the year, as well as sponsoring citizenship classes and many other events. Its Holiday Folk Fair is the first CIOFF National Festival (Congress of International Organizations, Festivals and Traditional Arts) recognized in the United States. It's a distinct honor that the children's folk dance ensemble from Panevezys, Lithuania was invited to participate in this year's Congress. The address of the International Institute of Wisconsin is: 1110 North Old World Third Street, Suite 420, Milwaukee, WI 53203.

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*Lithuanian folk tale, "Tom Cat and the Cock".
International Children's Art Exhibit, from the
theme, "Tales of Enchantment: Fairy Tales,
Myths & Legends". Holiday Folk Fair,
Milwaukee, WI. November, 1995. Photo by
R. Kubilius.*

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