

# BRIDGES

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## TO OUR READERS:

I recall one celebration of Vasario Šešiolikta (V-16) in particular. No one spoke Lithuanian, and there were no speeches by important people, no folk dances, no recitations of poetry by Saturday School children, no soloists or pianists performing. It was one of those unsanctioned things, thrown together by a few people who had nothing much more in common than that they were Lithuanian and felt a need to be together on February 16.

The place was Bloomington, Indiana. The time was graduate school in the mid-70s, and the event was a "Borscht and Tears" party hosted by a member of the folklore department (Eglė Žygas, where are you now?....). There was no Lithuanian spoken because the handful of us who made up the "Lithuanian community" all had non-Lithuanian "significant others" who nevertheless enthusiastically went along with this unusual February ritual. We didn't feel a need to have anyone lecture us or to be entertained by performers. It was important to mark this day in our own way and it was enough for us to get together, to affirm ourselves as a people. I had no problem understanding the Million-Man-March decades later. Affirmation is important, and it comes in many forms.

But memorable as that get-together was, it happened only once. There was no structure remaining after the good friends had gotten their degrees and gone their separate ways.

I was happy then to have been a part of something so spontaneous and genuinely fun. But I am glad today that, with young children of my own, I live in close proximity to two established Lithuanian communities (Washington, DC and Baltimore, Maryland) that have a structure I do not have to create but can just plug into.

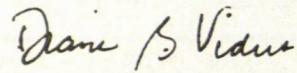
In order for these structures to exist, however, they, like public broadcasting, need our financial support. And they, like public broadcasting, reach a far larger audience than just those who donate to the cause.

So as February 16th stirs the consciousness of every Lithuanian, let it stir you to plug into the Lithuanian-American Community in any way you see fit. First (and most painless), get yourself a subscription to **BRIDGES**. Then get one for your brother and your sister and your niece and your nephew. Next, (slightly less painless) pay your dues to a Lithuanian Community Chapter near you. They don't bite (hard) and you might even enjoy some of their events. Finally, choose a cause — a school, a struggling newspaper, a charity — and commit yourself to supporting it.

A list of official events organized under the umbrella of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. (Bendruomenė) is published in this (and last month's) issue. We hope that readers will find the list useful, and that it helps them locate and participate in an event in or near their commu-

nity. Next year, we hope to be more complete and include a list of additional events sponsored by the Knights of Lithuania (Vyčiai), an integral part of our community. Also enclosed in this issue is a list of Saturday Schools and a list of publications (some in English, some in Lithuanian) that may be of interest to our readers.

Su viltim,



Diana Vidutis  
Editor

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Victor Nakas

# A PLACE AT THE TABLE

Since the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and the restoration of Lithuanian independence, the Lithuanian-American community has been confounded by uncertainty over its long-term and short-term goals, its relationship to Lithuania itself, and even its own *raison d'être*. Adding to the confusion has been the bewildering course of events in Lithuania, e.g., the explosive growth and brazen behavior of organized crime that has permeated Lithuanian society like so much toxic waste, and the remarkable resurgence of the former Communists at the polls.

While it is true that events in Lithuania between 1987 and 1991 moved at a more dizzying pace than they have in the last five years, they were at least predictable, confirming what the diaspora had told itself and anyone who would listen for five decades — that, given half a chance, the Lithuanian people would make a headlong dash to freedom. But who would have predicted in 1988 or 1989 that the singing revolution would produce the Lithuania of 1996?

The reality of post-Soviet Lithuania is in stark contrast to the vision of Lithuania that many Lithuanian-Americans share with friends and relatives in Lithuania. The question is what, if anything, the diaspora can or should do to change that reality, to revive the reform process that made Lithuania a leader among the nations of the former Soviet empire in 1987-1991, and to help counteract the vestiges of Soviet thinking that continue to cling to the minds of numerous Lithuanian citizens.

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“The real argument boils down to this: What right does the diaspora have to exert its influence on the political, economic, and social processes in Lithuania?”

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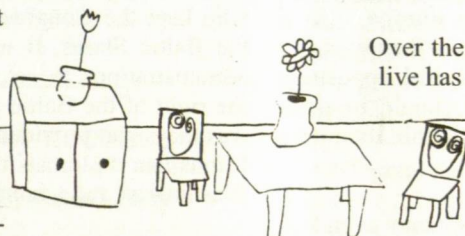
One member of Lithuania's Seimas stated publicly that the diaspora should limit itself to making charitable contributions. Those who see the diaspora as little more than cheerleaders for Lithuania and cash cows for its inhabitants say that Lithuanian-Americans have no moral right to impose their will on the inhabitants of Lithuania, and if they wish to attempt to do so, they should pack their belongings and move there to live.

Advocates of this position have constructed a convenient straw man for few, if any, actually favor imposing the diaspora's will on Lithuania. The opposite is closer to the truth. Not many in the diaspora are willing to make their true feelings known publicly, particularly if they are critical of the Lithuanian government's policies, the behavior of its leaders, or the general state of affairs in Lithuania. The real argument boils down to this: What right does the diaspora have to exert its influence on the political, economic, and social processes in Lithuania?

## THE HELSINKI LEGACY

Over the last two decades, the world in which we live has changed remarkably. Thanks to the emergence of human rights as an integral part of international relations, advances in technology, and largely peaceful political revolutions, the world has become more of a global village than ever before. The Helsinki Final Act, the policies of Presidents Carter and Reagan, and the activities of organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Freedom House legitimized the right of governments, non-governmental organizations, and private citizens to insist that the human and civil rights of all the inhabitants of the global village be respected. They made all governments — totalitarian, authoritarian, and democratic — equally accountable for the way they treated their citizens. Thus, under the Helsinki process, both the Soviet Union and the United States took their lumps for human rights violations though, for obvious reasons, the former had much more for which to answer. “Interference in our internal affairs” became one of the most popular political phrases of the 1970s and 1980s among those countries that found themselves besieged by human rights complaints emanating from without their borders.

Technology was one of the factors that facilitated the seismic changes in Europe in the late 1980s. The old Soviet





leaders found themselves unable to control the information explosion that brought the West to the peoples of the Soviet Union via office and video technology. Fax machines supplied to democratic forces such as Sajudis created vital linkages among reform-minded organizations within the empire and opened up critically important channels to the West. Within the last five years, amidst the rubble of the empire, the village square that is the world has become even more accessible through electronic listservs and Internet homepages. Today, Lithuanians in Australia, Italy, the United States and Lithuania itself are linked together through electronic mailing lists. Via keyboard and modem, they commiserate about the current state of affairs in Lithuania, discuss fine points of etymology, and engage in passionate discussions about capitalism and socialism from the comfort of their home or office computers.

## THE SCRUTINY OF THE SOAPBOX

Thus, in 1996 it has become both acceptable and feasible for the inhabitants of one country to make their opinions known in the global public square about events in a country on the other side of the world. Some argued that since Lithuania is a democracy, it should be immune from outside criticism. The Helsinki process of the 1970s, however, popularized the notion that no government, no matter what its form, is perfect and thereby exempt from critical examination by forces within and without the country. It is a concept that former Communists, now returned to power in some countries in Central and Eastern Europe, have a difficult time grasping: they think that since they won fair and free elections, ordinary citizens, political opposition forces, and the international community should be quiet and let them run their country as they see fit until their term of office expires.

This flawed understanding of democracy may even find some resonance within the diaspora and may be coupled with a siege mentality that gripped it during the five long decades of Soviet occupation. During that time, some Lithuanian-Americans exhorted each other not to speak or write critically about the flaws of Lithuania between the two World Wars lest these observations give comfort or support to the forces that were oppressing the nation. Thankfully, the siege has ended and democratic Lithuania can and should be treated like any other member of the family of nations, which is to say subject to close scrutiny and critical evaluation and open to outside influence.

As citizens of the world, Lithuanian-Americans have the right to make their views known and to influence in a variety of ways the course of events in any countries of their choosing, just as their fellow Americans can decide to become engaged or not engaged in events and processes in Lithuania. However, unlike the large majority of their fellow Americans, Lithuanian-Americans have a special moral claim to make themselves heard in Lithuania. It is a claim that, after considerable prodding from the diaspora,

the Lithuanian Seimas finally came around to acknowledging through legislation that enables members of the Lithuanian diaspora who resided in pre-Soviet Lithuania and their children to reclaim Lithuanian citizenship with no strings (such as renunciation of other citizenship or required residency in Lithuania) attached.

## LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

By definition, a diaspora considers itself to be geographically separate from yet somehow organically a part of the land of its forefathers. If Lithuanian-Americans had completely assimilated themselves into the larger American society, or had retained their cultural traditions but sat on the sidelines and kept silent during the Soviet occupation, then they would have no more moral claim to influencing the course of events than any other Americans.

But Lithuania is an independent country today in no small part because of the Lithuanian diaspora, especially Lithuanian-Americans. It was they who successfully lobbied the United States in 1940 to adopt its policy of refusing to recognize the forcible incorporation of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union, a policy footnoted on most official US maps published in the next half-century. It was they who kept up the pressure to sustain decades of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe broadcasts to Lithuania, thereby assuring that some modicum of outside information pierced a very real Iron Curtain. It was they who kept the Congress educated about the occupation of the Baltic States. It was they who pressured most U.S. administrations to acknowledge by official proclamation the right of the Baltic people to restore their statehood. It was they who provided the all-important political cover to Lithuanian diplomats trying to maintain their footholds in Washington and a handful of other world capitals.

The people of the Baltic states deserve full credit for their sublime courage and resolve in restoring their independence and leading the way out of the Soviet morass for all the peoples of the empire. However, the path was cleared for them and they were given a fighting chance for success only because of five decades of work by the Lithuanian diaspora.

There are those who mock the efforts of the diaspora, pointing to the fact that the United States was the 39th country to recognize Lithuania's restored statehood in 1991. What they fail to understand is that the decades-long efforts of the diaspora created a political situation in which Lithuania came to be one of the dominant issues on the U.S.-Soviet agenda in 1990 and 1991. Lithuania rocketed to the top of the agenda not because either U.S. or Soviet leaders wished it to, but because of U.S. domestic politics. The non-recognition policy put President George Bush in a box from which he would dearly have loved to, but could not, extricate himself. As the standard bearer of a party that

*cont'd on page 6*



Paul A. Goble

# IN LITHUANIA, THE PARTY ISN'T OVER

## OR CAN WE HAVE A LITTLE SACKCLOTH AND ASHES, PLEASE?

Like so many other post-communist countries, Lithuania is struggling with the fallout of having failed to pursue a policy of lustration—the banning of senior communist leaders from politics now that the communist system has been overthrown. Even though the communists have changed the names of their parties, lost many of the resources they enjoyed earlier, and no longer have a tight nomenklatura system in place, they and especially the old members of the nomenklatura have forgotten little and learned less. Their continuing oligarchic ties—if unchallenged—will strangle democracy and perhaps even independence.

The absence of lustration elsewhere appears to have doomed a number of the post-Soviet states, but there are three reasons that the situation in Lithuania is more hopeful, if we understand and act upon it.

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After 1991, the communist party disappeared, but the communist hierarchy—the intense network of longstanding personal ties and understandings of how things are done—did not. Tragically, and largely because Western countries opposed any serious policy of lustration like the ones we imposed on Germany after 1945, Lithuania like her neighbors, failed to ban the upper reaches of the old communist elite from political life. (Obviously it would

have been both impractical and wrong to ban all former communists, but perhaps we could agree than anyone who was in the Lithuanian SSR Communist Party Central Committee was sufficiently involved with what had been done to merit some restrictions on future political activity.) As a result, the senior communists remained very much on the scene and, having adopted a new vocabulary if not a new approach, continued to play a role.

The recent Lithuanian banking scandal and the inexcusable behaviour of both Prime Minister Šleževičius—who took his money out the night before the bank failed—and President Brazauskas—who failed to move immediately to dismiss him; the intense Lithuanian government pressure on the press, including statements that may have contributed to the explosions at *Lietuvos Rytas*; and the regular evasion of responsibility by the parliament even though the former communists have a working majority there—all testify to a pattern of behaviour that no Lithuanian can be proud of.

Analogous actions have been taken in other countries where the “former” communists have retained or retaken power, and if Lithuania did not have three big advantages, we would assume a future for Lithuania like that of Russia, Belarus or one of the Central Asian states. These advantages include:

- a population with a living memory of a genuinely democratic political system, a people who fought to recover their independence and who understand on the basis of bitter personal experience just what the communist system, however concealed, means;
- a vigorous if not always clever political opposition that led the revolution and that has kept up a drumbeat of attacks on the behaviour of the “former” communists in the government, pressure that has forced Brazauskas to sacrifice Šleževičius in an all too transparent effort to put all the blame on the former prime minister and thus position Brazauskas’ party to win the next round of the elections; and
- a large and activist diaspora, long experienced in democracy and long experiences in identifying what is democratic and what is not.



Five years ago, when Lithuania recovered its independence, many in Lithuania, and even more in the diaspora, concluded that the battle was over, the victory won, and no more needed to be done. Because so many believed that to be true, the “former” communists rushed in to fill the political vacuum. Now, it is obvious to ever more people that the battle for Lithuania is not over. The question is what should we do?

It seems to me that there are three obvious steps we in the West must take:

- First, we must keep the focus of public opinion and the media on what is going on in Lithuania and not allow any political figure in Vilnius to assume that he can get away with anything.

- Second, we must promote the free press in Lithuania, supporting those parts of the media that are still independent of the regime.
- And third, we must recognize that supporting Lithuania and supporting any particular Lithuanian government are not one and the same thing, and that some who have best loved Lithuania have fought most vigorously against those who acted in her name.

Five years ago, the Lithuanian people came to the defense of the Lithuanian parliament, the cradle of their democracy. They faced Soviet tanks. Are we, who do not have to face such a threat, unwilling to come to the defense of Lithuanian democracy by making sure that those who would exploit the trappings of democracy will not be able to undermine it?

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#### *A Place at the Table, cont'd from p. 4*

for decades had genuflected before the rights of the Baltic peoples to regain their stolen independence, he could not cynically renounce the policy at the moment of truth, particularly because a reenergized Lithuanian diaspora, with its numerous links in Congress and a national audience made suddenly available by a mass media enthralled with two fascinating stories — Lithuania’s David versus the USSR’s Goliath and the clash between American principles and pragmatism, would make the political cost prohibitive. Thus, while the Bush administration could satisfy itself with perfunctory condemnations when Gorbachev’s troops massacred innocents in Tbilisi and Baku, it had to work overtime to keep the ship of U.S.-Soviet relations steady in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday in Vilnius. While George Bush could warn the Ukrainians against “suicidal nationalism” and keep the self-determination of the non-Baltic nations of the Soviet empire on the back burner, he could not dare to make such remonstrations in public or in private with any of the Baltic leaders, nor could he ignore them or bury the Baltic issue in his meetings with Gorbachev. Without the engagement, however reluctant, of the superpower United States in protecting the Baltic revolution, the active combined support of the three dozen countries whose recognition of Lithuania preceded Washington’s would not have sufficed to stop the Soviets from arresting the leaders of the democratically elected Baltic governments and shutting down their parliaments. It was the Lithuanian diaspora that was the key to creating the conditions that prevented this scenario. This is poorly understood, if at all, by many in Lithuania and some in the diaspora.

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The non-recognition policy put President George Bush in a box from which he would dearly have loved to, but could not, extricate himself.”

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Thus, Lithuanian-Americans need feel no reticence about expressing their views and using all legal means at their disposal to influence the evolution of post-Soviet Lithuania. By the sweat of their brows, they have earned a place at the table and a right to be heard. Lithuanian-Americans have legitimate interests in Lithuania: to ensure the evolution of a Western-oriented Lithuania democratic and independent, with a market economy, an unfettered press, and a state ruled by law. This is the vision which sustained Lithuanian-Americans, imbued with the civic values of their two homelands, during the long Soviet night. There is no reason to apologize for it or to abandon it now in the clear light of day.



Asta Banionis

# LITHUANIA AND NATO: WILL THERE BE SECURITY GUARANTEES?

The heart of Europe is in danger. The recent Russian parliamentary elections have accelerated Russia's decline into imperial dogma. The parliament is now controlled by the communists and the Russian chauvinists. Yeltsin has appointed a new foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov, who was part of Gorbachev's team that decided to launch the attack against Lithuania's independence on "Bloody Sunday", January 12-13, 1991.

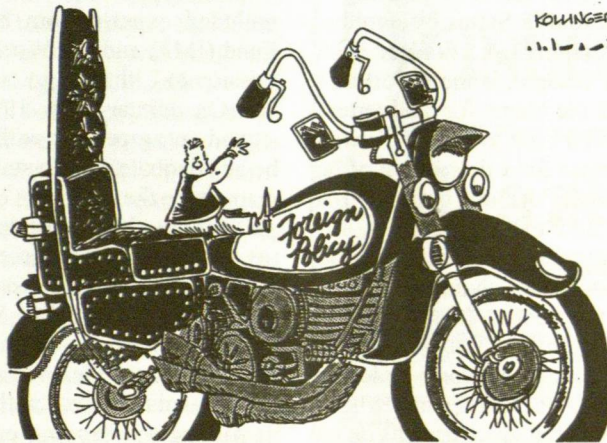
Five years later, as Russia escalates its murder of Chechens, thoughtful observers of Russia are wondering whether the Russians want to reclaim the lands of Chechnya without any Chechens present. Is Russia on the brink of launching a genocidal war against the small nation of Chechnya? As reported by *The Washington Post* on January 13, 1996, Primakov in his first weeks in office has already spoken of his goal to strengthen economic and political ties with the other former Soviet republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (a clever formula to allay fears that the Baltic states may be part of the new Russian imperial order for now.).

On NATO enlargement, Primakov continued, "I have a negative attitude on the possible expansion of NATO. I think it is counterproductive for the stabilization of the situation in Europe and would undoubtedly create a new geopolitical situation for Russia."

As we were going to press with **BRIDGES**, Russia's Deputy Defense Minister, Andrei Kokoschin, was in Munich, Germany warning that "NATO's embrace of Eastern Europe could spark a backlash against reforms in Russia." He claimed that, "The destruction of the belt of neutral countries created in the center of Europe as a result of the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact aggravates in Russia

the feeling of vulnerability with unpredictable implications," adding that "many spheres of arms limitation and reduction would be severely—and maybe mortally—affected by NATO expansion to the East. He accused the West of perpetrating "a historical injustice" by forcing Russia "further and further east."

The analysis put forward by Mr. Primakov and Mr. Kokoschin concerning NATO expansion and the sovereign states of Central and Eastern Europe is patently neo-imperialist; it is a rehash of outmoded 19th century concepts of



the international order. Why should the nations of Central and Eastern Europe be sacrificed as some kind of *cordon sanitaire* for a delusional Russian elite once again searching for enemies abroad to justify their own inability to bring peace and prosperity to their people? The nations now seeking to join NATO do so because they want to live freely as the other nations of Europe do. Yes, NATO

expansion would create a new geopolitical situation for Russia by protecting the new democracies at the heart of the European continent (including Lithuania) from a Russian sphere of influence or worse, reintegration as satellites in the Russian imperial orbit. NATO expansion is only a threat to Russia and Russian interests if Russia insists on controlling this "corridor" of countries.

The *Washington Post* reported that, "Sen. William S. Cohen, R-Maine, leader of the U.S. delegation [to the conference], denounced Kokoschin's 'rhetorical saber rattling' as 'riddled with not so veiled threats that dark genies will be unleashed. NATO is not pushing East. The East is rushing toward NATO.'" Senator Cohen's insightful comment should be reassuring to **BRIDGES** readers, but not when one remembers that Senator Cohen is retiring from the



Senate at the end of 1996. With certain advisors to President Clinton successfully delaying consideration of NATO membership for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Senator Cohen will not be in the Senate when it finally votes on NATO admission for any Central or East European country.

S. 602 is a bill entitled the "NATO Participation Act Amendments of 1995" and seeks to move the issue of NATO enlargement forward by encouraging President Clinton to designate at least one of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe as a candidate for NATO membership. The Clinton Administration has fought this worthwhile legislation for the last year and gives every indication of fighting it again. If the Clinton Administration were serious about the security of the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, it would welcome S. 602 as "legislative cover," i.e., advancing a policy by claiming that the Congress has demanded it be done. But the Administration prefers to play a dangerous game of keeping the issue of NATO membership for Lithuania, or Poland, or Hungary, or any of the Central and East European nations a vague, even murky question.

The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. has warned the Administration more than once that it is courting an "April Glaspie scenario" in the Baltic States by avoiding the decision on NATO membership. Former U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Ms. April Glaspie, is the unfortunate foreign service officer who took the blame for inadvertently giving Saddam Hussein a green light to invade Kuwait. When Hussein invited Ms. Glaspie for a discussion of her government's (U.S.) policy on the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait over oil drilling and export earnings, Ms. Glaspie did as she had been instructed to do. She responded that the U.S. believes that Arab states should solve their problems without outside interference. If the Clinton Administration is not prepared to bring Lithuania and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe under the protection of the nuclear umbrella of NATO, then what is the Administration doing to ensure that the Russians do not mistake this ill-advised delay in NATO enlargement as the signal that the Balts and other Central and East Europeans belong to Russia's sphere of influence, or more precisely, imperial territory?

## STATUS OF FOREIGN AID

The Congress took a three week "district work period" and will be in recess until February 26, 1996. When they return to work, the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. hopes that the Administration will allow some progress on the issue of NATO membership. Before they left, the House of Representatives and the Senate did pass the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for fiscal year 1996 and funded all of these programs (except for population programs) through September 30, 1996. The staff at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will

now begin to scramble to get technical assistance back into the countries which receive U.S. foreign aid. Lithuania's share of technical assistance under the SEED account (Support for East European Democracies program) will decline substantially, since the program was cut by 20 percent by the House of Representatives. The Commerce-State-Justice Appropriations bill, however, was not approved and the employees of these agencies are funded only through March 15, 1996 as part of the Continuing Resolution. So look for more government furloughs next month.

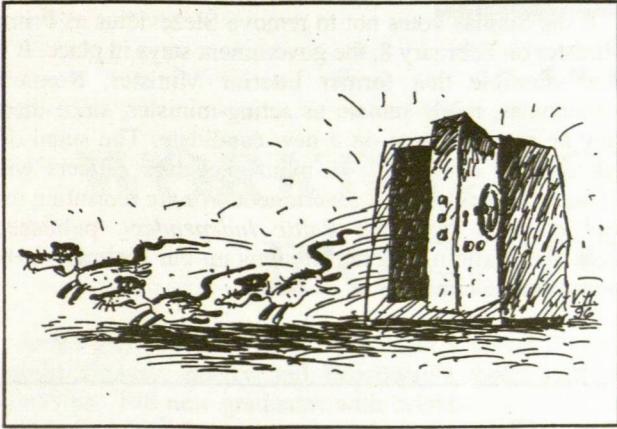
## UPDATE ON THE CRISES IN VILNIUS

**Free Press And Free Media:** There has been no progress in apprehending the criminals who master-minded and perpetrated the bombing of the independent daily newspaper, *Lietuvos Rytas*. However, the Seimas (parliament) has taken up the draft law which would guarantee the rights of a free press and media in Lithuania. As **BRIDGES** was going to press, the parliament had voted on 7 of 35 articles in the draft law. We'll have to wait until next month to see if the bill stays intact through final passage.

**Banking Crisis:** The four-man delegation, which included experts from both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), has concluded its mission to Lithuania to evaluate the country's banking crisis. On January 29, 1996, the Lithuanian government signed an agreement with the IMF and WB which would be an adequate plan to stabilize the country's economy and restructure the country's banking system—if different people were in charge of implementing the new requirements (as well as old requirements) for commercial bank supervision and state bank operations. The Šleževičius regime and its spin doctor, Mr. Vilius Kavaliauskas (the government's spokesperson), has done a good job of promoting Prime Minister Šleževičius as "the only person competent in Lithuania" to deal with the IMF and WB requirements in solving the banking crisis. Some foreign embassies in Vilnius have come to believe this claim, forgetting that it was under Prime Minister Šleževičius that the central bank of Lithuania seemed to fail consistently at exercising its regulatory muscle and political will to supervise the commercial and state banking sectors. Why should it be any different after the country's two largest private banks were forced to close on December 18-20, 1995?

Three of the four private banks recently closed will be nationalized. **Litimpeks, Lithuanian Joint-Stock Innovation Bank (LAIB) and Vakarų Bank** are to be merged into one state bank to be sold off to private investors in late 1997. The bad debt from these banks will be given to a separate government agency whose job it will be to attempt to collect all outstanding obligations. As reported by Reuters on January 31, 1996, "Some of the restructuring cost will come from converting part of the





Cartoon by Henrikas Vaigauskas

banks' bad loans into five-year state bonds, which will be sold on the domestic market." Prime Minister Šleževičius has publicly stated that the depositors of these three banks will be compensated up to 1,000 litai (\$250) and that limited withdrawals of these funds may begin as early as February 18, 1996, but it is not clear from public reports that the IMF/WB agreement allows for this action.

All other private banks (there's only a handful) will have to pass a review process by May 1, 1996, or they will also be closed. The acting central bank director, Mr. Jonas Niaura (one of the 14 governors of the central bank, the Bank of Lithuania), said that the agreement calls for the "capital adequacy requirement for banks [to] remain at 13 percent, but Niaura said the way it was calculated would be brought into line with international standards." No government monies may be used to help these few remaining private banks, although infusions of private capital will be allowed. The Lithuanian government will be rewarded with an infusion of loans and other capital by June-July, 1996, if it meets these and other unpublished requirements.

What is particularly troublesome at the moment is that the majority of the country's financial resources are tied up in state banks controlled by the government. Independent, foreign banking experts have been reporting major problems for some time at Lithuania's state banks as well. Despite these warnings, the government recently won the agreement of the Seimas (parliament) to "renationalize" the *Žemės Ūkio Bankas* (agriculture bank). The government, after "privatizing" 49 percent of the shares of this bank over the last two years, has increased its ownership in the bank again and now owns 91 percent of the bank. It is not clear what policy changes are being required of the state banks under this new agreement. It is also not clear how many advisors, independent auditors and other experts are being detailed to Lithuania by the IMF and the WB to measure compliance with this new agreement. The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. has called for transparency and accountability in the restructuring process. There has been little so far.

**Brazauskas-Šleževičius Showdown:** As BRIDGES was going to print, there was still no resolution to the unique Constitutional confrontation between Lithuania's President Algirdas Brazauskas and Prime Minister Šleževičius. As we reported last month, Prime Minister Šleževičius and his Interior Minister, Vaitiekunas, had withdrawn their privileged deposits from the LAIB hours before the government closed this bank. By late January, the controversy over the actions of Šleževičius and Vaitiekunas had grown into a major scandal. Public opinion polls were showing that only 16 percent of the public had confidence in the Prime Minister and his cabinet. 80 percent of the public agreed that the Prime Minister should resign.

Although first siding with the Prime Minister, President Brazauskas, in the face of such overwhelming public opinion, signed on January 29, 1996, a decree calling on the Prime Minister to resign or face a no-confidence vote in the Seimas on February 8. If that vote takes place, it is not a certainty that the President will win. The Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDLP) has elected a new presidium of the party, and the 110-man council of the party has already voted to support their embattled party leader as Prime Minister. The

*The Baltic*  
**INDEPENDENT**  
The weekly newspaper of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

PO Box 45, Pärnu maantee 67a, Tallinn EE0090, Estonia

## Sleaze-vicius

LITHUANIA WAS the first Baltic State to restore independence, the first to elect a former communist government (the Democratic Labour Party) and appears to be destined to be one of the first to run such a government out of office.

The banking problem in Lithuania is limited to two of its banks. The government and central bank at least kept the Innovation-Litimpeks crisis from turning into a crisis of confidence in the country's healthy, honest banks; within days of its moratorium, the financial market had largely stabilised.

Unfortunately, Labour was unable to handle a major political and moral crisis, centred on the blatant disregard of ethics by Prime Minister Adolfas Šleževičius and the inept crisis management leadership by Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas.

In the crucial two days after Šleževičius' misdealings were revealed, President Brazauskas

chose to do nothing in response to the financial behaviour of the premier. Brazauskas let down Lithuania when he inexplicably chose not to respond to bipartisan calls for the premier's resignation, screaming headlines in the press and deepening public disgust with Šleževičius's actions.

Brazauskas' indecision, while allowing the prime minister to gather his forces and stay in power, has boosted the chances that the opposition will win this year's parliamentary elections.

The decaying LDDP faction in the Seimas is offset by an increasingly more organised, vocal, and unified opposition headed by the Conservatives and the Centrist Union.

The opposition parties are showing both a willingness and ability to lead, which may be the only good news to come out of this political crisis.

Lithuania has certainly learned its lesson about former communists.



leaders of the LDLP's parliamentary fraction (caucus) have been issuing public statements throughout the month urging President Brazauskas to not be "too hasty" in removing the Prime Minister while insisting that they understand the President's desire "to take on this responsibility." In a conciliatory gesture, the Interior Minister handed in his resignation to the President on January 29, but a new minister has not been nominated due to the stand-off between Brazauskas and Šleževičius. Earlier in the month, on January 23, the LDLP removed the central bank director, Kazys Ratkevičius, after they received President Brazauskas' decree accepting his resignation letter dated January 8.

If the Seimas votes not to remove Šleževičius as Prime Minister on February 8, the government stays in place. It is even possible that former Interior Minister, Romasis Vaitiekunas, might remain as acting-minister, since there may be no consensus on a new candidate. The stand-off between the country's two main executive officers will continue to paralyze the government. We are reprinting the lead editorial from the *Baltic Independent*, published weekly in Tallinn, Estonia. It sums up our feelings about the matter succinctly.

## Check It Out

We at **BRIDGES** are very interested in supporting expressions of Lithuanian culture. In each issue we hope to provide lists of radio programs, cassettes, videos, newspapers, and more journals. We strongly encourage you to subscribe to the publications of your choice, be they in English or Lithuanian. Please keep in mind that the limited audience for many of these publications and programs makes your support crucial to their continued existence.

**Eglutė** *Lithuanian-language monthly magazine for children*

Regina Kučienė, Editor  
13648 Kickapoo Trail  
Lockport, IL 60441  
Tel & Fax: 708-301-6410

**Lithuania in the World** *English-language bi-monthly pictorial magazine*

DU KA Ltd  
T. Vrublevskio 6  
2600 Vilnius  
Lithuania  
Tel: 37-02-613-521  
Fax: 37-02-614-432

**The Baltic Independent** *English-language weekly newspaper covering the Baltic States*

PO Box 45  
Parnu mnt 67a  
Tallinn EE 0090  
Estonia  
Tel: 37-22-683-073

**Vytis** *English-language monthly magazine published by the Knights of Lithuania*

Maryte Abbott  
Vytis  
P.O. Box 1934  
Grant Central Station, NY 10163-1934  
Tel: 718-937-3352  
Fax: 718-764-3996

**Bridges** *English-language news magazine published 10x/year by the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.*

Asta Banionis  
LAC, Inc.  
Suite 217  
2060 North 14th Street  
Arlington, VA 22201  
(703) 524-0698  
F: (703) 524-0947

**Laiskai Lietuviams** *Lithuanian-language monthly magazine published by the Jesuits*

Juozas Vaisnys, S.J.  
2345 W. 56th Street  
Chicago, IL 60636-1098  
Tel: 312-737-8400  
Fax: 312-737-0486

**Pasaulio Lietuvis** *Lithuanian-language monthly publication of the World Lithuanian Community, Inc*

Bronius Nainys  
7 Glenview Lane  
Lemont, IL 60439  
Tel: 708-257-8714  
Fax: 708-257-9010

**Akiračiai** *Lithuanian-language publication of Santara-Sviesa, 10x/year*

Horizons Foundation, Inc.  
9425 So. Pleasant Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60620-5647



S.H. Bačkaitis

# WORKING FOR LITHUANIA'S BRIGHTER FUTURE

In the glare of stage lights at the Kaunas Music Theater, amidst flowers, poetry and Broadway's finest musical selections, 148 new graduates with bright smiles and joyful eyes received in June 1995 their hard-earned baccalaureates in business management. As the graduates stepped off the stage, they left not only with diplomas in their hands, but also prepared to enter solid and relatively well-paying professions, at least by Lithuania's current standards.

This spectacular event could not have contrasted more sharply with the rainy, drab day in May 1991, on which I first met a youngish man, Virginijus Kundrotas, the vice-dean of the Faculty of Administration (AF), in the main administration building of the Kaunas University of Technology (KTU). He told me that the Faculty, having been voted into existence just a few months ago by the university senate, had a huge challenge before it - to prepare itself and its students for success in a country undergoing a massive socio-economic and political transformation.

At that time, the newly reborn Lithuania government saw enormous problems looming in the nation's future. The collapse of the Soviet system left Lithuania's economy in virtual chaos and essentially without an infrastructure. A new market economy would have to be developed bringing about considerable social upheaval, unprecedented disruptions, and challenges to every segment of life from personal to business, academics, and all others. It became clear that the emerging system would need new and different organizers and leaders.

## TAPPING THE TALENT

In this conversation, I also learned that the all pervasive Soviet educational system, which had dominated and dictated all facets of people's lives, was structured to discourage women from pursuing university education and professional careers in certain technical sciences, engineering,

*Stasys H. Bačkaitis is Chairman of the U.S.-based Advisory Council to the Kaunas University of Technology.*

and business administration. This was in spite of the fact that females graduating from Lithuania's secondary schools greatly outnumbered and scholastically out-achieved their male counterparts — in other words, less-qualified males were given preference in admissions. To make use of this untapped talent, the Lithuanian government asked the Kaunas University of Technology to initiate programs that would encourage secondary school female graduates to enter its system.



As the first class of female freshman was admitted for studies at the Faculty of Administration, it was discovered that the average female student was better academically prepared at the secondary school level, had a more positive attitude and greater willingness to meet the challenges of the university educational system than her male counterparts.

Upon returning to the U.S., I discussed the new Faculty with some knowledgeable people in the fields of administration and business management. We all thought that KTU had made a wise decision in providing the young secondary school female graduates an opportunity to obtain university level education and professional skills in these fields. However, we were concerned that the concept of preparing the graduates for skills at the submanagement level was flawed and not fully comprehended, and that stifling the development of a highly intelligent segment of the population would be a waste of superb talent and a loss of their potential contribution to Lithuania's economic, cultural and political development.

## STRETCHING FOR MORE

I wrote a letter to Dr. Viktorija Barsauskienė, the Dean of the Administration Faculty, suggesting that, while the aims and the proposals of the Faculty were commendable, they were not quite commensurate with what the university should be offering. It was suggested that the Faculty reach considerably beyond its current goals and toward the establishment of a genuine school of business administration in order to provide Lithuania with well-skilled and educated people who could run its businesses and manage



the economy. Furthermore, if the dean desired, we in the west could assist with advice formulated by a group of knowledgeable people who could comment, for example, on the current AF program, acquaint the faculty with methods, procedures and business practices used in the west, and help to obtain pertinent teaching literature and supporting materials.

Dean Barsauskienė, upon receiving this message, replied immediately, thanking for the comments and asking the author to form an Advisory Council (AC). The initial AC roster was made up of 18 members from the American and Canadian Lithuanian Communities. The membership included seven university professors, five business owners and six business consultants and/or administrators. Upon presentation of the AC roster, the rector of the KTU announced AC's official information into the KTUAF structure and empowered it to act on behalf of the Faculty within the North American continent.

## TASKING THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The first correspondence from the AC suggested that the Faculty formulate a mission statement and publish an information booklet that would describe the nature and purpose of the Faculty, its current structure and composition, how it functions as a teaching entity, and what it plans for the future. The AC also suggested that the Faculty should aim for the development of managers and leaders in commerce and industry rather than training management, administrative or service assistants, and be open to all qualified applicants. Furthermore, it was hinted that courses dealing with home economics and secretarial services be dropped and that the curriculum be expanded by at least 12 new courses related to business management and administration, communications with heavy emphasis in English language skills, statistics, finances, business computing, planning of business operations, etc.

After several exchanges of correspondence, the Faculty identified its short and intermediate range goals and asked the AC to take on the following tasks:

- to help prepare curriculum for a Baccalaureate of Business Administration (BBA) and to review and comment on the program currently offered by the Faculty
- to facilitate the establishment of ties with U.S.-based business schools
- to facilitate securing humanitarian aid in the form of text books, teaching manuals, instructional aids, computers, etc.
- to help organize cooperative study programs
- to provide advice on the management and operation of the Faculty
- to conceptualize a masters degree program in business administration (MBA)
- to obtain information on how business and management topics are being taught in the U.S. at the secondary school level.

Upon several further rounds of correspondence, the AC notified the Faculty on July 19, 1992, of its agreement to take on the following tasks:

- to draft a model BBA curriculum
- to conceptualize an exemplary MBA program
- to provide at least one text book for each of the subjects being taught in the BBA program
- to provide catalogs and other promotional materials from US business schools
- to obtain audio and possibly video cassettes of business courses
- to contact area universities for purposes of establishing working ties with the Faculty
- to seek financial support, computing equipment, and teaching aides
- to publicize the work of the Faculty in the US and Canadian Lithuanian communities
- to establish educational stipends for support of high caliber students in financial distress

Recognizing the need for rapid reformation of the Faculty's business curriculum, the AC immediately undertook the task of conceptualizing a model BBA curriculum. In a letter of November 11, 1992, the AC submitted to the AF a model BBA program that was based on the curricula of six leading U.S. Business schools offering BBA degrees. The proposal recommended extensive modification of the Faculty's current curriculum by including a heavy schedule of English and business communication, mandating the mastery of one other major European language, courses in business computing, management, marketing, organizational and human behavior, international trade, environmental issues, etc. The proposed BBA curriculum recommended a program based on at least 144 credit hours and without any particular specialization. However, students should be allowed to select a major in the general areas of administration, management, finance, marketing, computers and data processing, communications, and services, and be allowed to earn limited credit for pertinent work experience in the area of specialization.

In the interim, the AC began to collect appropriate text books and transmit them to the Faculty. Several hundred textbooks and dozens of computer programs as well as audio training cassettes were sent to the Faculty between 1992 and 1995. Of particular significance were some 100+ textbooks donated by the Houghton Mifflin Co. In 1993. They covered nearly every subject that could be offered by the Faculty at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Seeing that the Faculty was having difficulty with the English language, the AC undertook the structuring and composition of an English language information booklet based on information received from the Faculty. The first edition was completed in February 1993 and 100 copies were provided for the Faculty's own use. The second updated edition of the booklet was published by the Faculty itself in 1994.



As desired by the Faculty, a number of AC members from the U.S. and Canada began active participation as visiting lecturers on subjects such as human resources, marketing, transitional economics, strategic management, communications, etc. In 1993, the AC also started contacts with business schools of several U.S. universities seeking to establish academic and working ties with the Faculty. Such contacts, while not an overwhelming success, resulted in several U.S. lecturers delivering seminars and also teaching regular classes at the Faculty in business management, marketing, and public administration.

In line with AC objectives, a scholarship fund was established to provide support for students who excel in their scholastic achievement but otherwise would not be able to continue their studies because of financial difficulties. Students whose parents were deported from Lithuania during the Soviet years and/or imprisoned or destroyed as enemies of the communist regime were to be given preference. In 1993, the AC awarded from its members contributions for the first five \$100 scholarships. Seven scholarships were awarded each in 1994 and 1995. In addition, the chairman of the AC established in 1993 an annual \$150 prize for the best term paper or thesis written by senior BBA or MBA students. **[Tax deductible financial contributions may be made out to the World Lithuanian Community Fund - KTUAF account (please designate whether for needy students, professional aid, or equipment fund) and sent to P.O. Box 558, Great Falls, VA 22066.]**

## ADDING THE MBA PROGRAM

Having established the BBA curriculum, the AC undertook the task of reviewing the general profile of MBA programs in the US and their accreditation requirements. It also tried to forecast Lithuania's needs in its transition from a command to a market economy. Various teaching methods were examined and weighed for their suitability to convey the required knowledge. In this process, the AC considered courses that would prepare future leaders to guide Lithuania toward economic stability, foster the development of individuals with creative ideas, and develop managers capable of providing direction to aimlessly drifting enterprises, and confront change and new challenges with creative vision. A draft outline of an MBA program addressing such overall objectives was submitted to the Faculty for review on August 9, 1993. Shortly thereafter, on October 15, 1993, the AC proposed, in corroboration with the U.S.-Baltic Foundation (USBF), a master's degree program in Public Administration (MPA).

In a letter of November 8, 1993, the AC was advised that the KTU senate approved the establishment of the MBA, MP and Educology master's degree programs. The letter also noted that a survey conducted by the Faculty indicated a foreseeable need for MBA graduates specializing in finance, accounting, marketing, business manage-

ment and business law. One of the biggest concerns, the dean noted, is an acute shortage of qualified instructors, particularly for the MBA program. The dean agreed with the AC suggestion that the best and most sensible approach to remedy the situation in the near future is to attempt to upgrade the Faculty's own younger teaching staff members through studies of specific subjects at the graduate level in either North America or Europe. Their training, in the long run, would be less expensive and more effective than obtaining teaching services from transient professors, a process fraught with a great degree of uncertainty and course work not necessarily of consistent quantity and quality.

Approaches were made to the American Lithuanian Foundation and the Lithuanian National Foundation to obtain financial support, but to no avail. Fortunately, in 1994, two of the Faculty instructors were provided an opportunity for training in the US through the assistance of the U.S.-Baltic Foundation (USBF) and one under the sponsorship of USAID. Three other Faculty professors came to the US in 1995 for extended studies under the Fulbright scholarship program. A similar number of the Faculty teaching staff were engaged in short-term upgrade studies at a number of universities in Europe.

One of the more pleasurable highlights of AC - Faculty cooperation was the visit by Dean Barsauskienė to the US in April 1994. The AC arranged a month-long study tour of universities and business enterprises in geographical areas in which its members reside. The itinerary included visits of local universities, in-depth discussions with deans and administrators of business schools, attendance of university classroom lectures, meetings with business and community organizations, etc.

On March 25, 1994, the AC presented its concept, curriculum and course description of an ideal two-year MBA program specifically tailored to meet Lithuania's needs. This concept reflected a year-long study and secession with the AC on what Lithuania might require in management as it emerges from a guided economic system into an economy free of restraints and as a member of the European Community.

## A MODEL OF COOPERATION

Cooperation between the Faculty and the AC is continuously expanding in scope and in a variety of activities. For example, in order to increase public interest and to build support in the American-Lithuanian community, several members of the AC published articles about the Faculty in the American-Lithuanian press. Similarly, the AC arranged for the publication of several articles written by the Faculty staff. As activities of the Faculty expand into other academic areas, the AC is being asked to provide preliminary assessments of various initiatives and to establish appropriate contacts with other academic communities



or common interest groups. For example, the Faculty's Business Education Center was lined with a certain state Chamber of Commerce for the conduct of seminars on the formation and operation of small business enterprises. In another instance, the AC was asked to help formulate seminars and find instructors on international law and valuation sciences.

Cooperation between the Faculty and the AC could be considered exemplary. The working relationship is built on trust, openness, and sincere attempts to understand each other's views. Nearly 200 letters, memos, faxes and telephone messages were exchanged over the four year span. Communications from the start have been sincere, prompt and to the point. Several AC members visit the Faculty each year. They attend the university senate sessions and the Faculty's staff meetings, participate in the proceedings in which graduating students defend their diplomas, conduct lectures, assist in the English language student summer camp<sup>1</sup>, and also partake in commencement exercises and other university functions.

Although it is difficult to quantify the AC contribution toward the development of the Faculty, be it in the form of teaching materials, providing guidance or rendering moral support on certain issues, members of the AC are very proud and happy to have been invited to participate in this process. The AC enjoys this unique opportunity of helping to structure and develop an academic institution which we are convinced will in time play a significant part in shaping Lithuania's economic future.

It is well known by now that the Faculty has become a significant player in Lithuania's academic world. Within four years it has become one of the largest faculties within the Kaunas University of Technology. Its 1995 enrollment exceeds 1200 students. It has over 700 full time students in the BBA program, 150 graduate students seeking professional degrees in the MBA, MPA and Educology programs, and nearly 500 part-time students in women's studies. In 1994, 890 applicants competed for admission to 125 available slots in the BBA program. Of the secondary school applicants, 173 were national top scholastic competition winners (equivalent to National Merit Scholars) out of a total of 476 in all of Lithuania.

## KUDOS FROM GREECE

The faculty has come a long way since its creation in 1990. The Athens LBA (Laboratory of Business Administration) committee of the European Community regional ACE program for European Communities for Centers of Excellence was sent to Lithuania in 1994 to review, search and select from among the existing universities a possible candidate for the development of a center of excellence in business education. The following excerpts highlight the committee's findings:

1. The Kaunas University of Technology academic and administrative leadership are open to new ideas. The intellectual and business environment enhances the free market culture and mentality. The thinking is broad and innovative, allowing for educational development and experimentation.
2. The leadership of the university has an understanding for market economy and real business needs and has been active in addressing business problems through education and research ... , the university shows an understanding of the mechanisms operating in the market economy. This conceptual understanding can possibly be used as an example to other higher education institutions when they develop their management and business education programs.
3. Both related faculties, i.e., Faculty of Business Administration and Faculty of Management, have a broad field of competencies and interests, suitable for a European MBA program. Thus, it is sensible to build a program on existing educational, research and human resources. This saves both time and money, and possibilities for success are enhanced.

The Faculty of Administration is worth being selected and supported to develop a center of excellence for the following reasons:

1. The Faculty of Administration is an enthusiastic supporter of the proposal and is committed in using its full potential in human resources and infrastructure for the success of the Center.
2. Its faculty has made proof of its international orientation through the formation of an international advisory board comprised of 17 persons, mainly American academics and businessmen, and the establishment of contacts with numerous European business schools and universities, including the Norwegian School of Management, Lund University, Zurich University, the International Management Institute, etc.
3. The Faculty of Administration has already developed two areas of strength that are core to the MBA program, namely Organizational Behavior and Strategic Planning, and is working on a number of research projects in these areas.
4. The Faculty is maintaining close links with local companies, which constitutes a major resource that can be used for applied research projects and case-studies development. In particular, 300 contacts were shown between local SME's and faculty's 3rd and 4th years students in the BBA program concerning internships and small research projects.
5. The Faculty of Business Administration being established in only 1991, there is not evidence of institution inertia similar to what can be observed in more traditional faculties. Up to now, the faculty has been very active in teacher re-training, recruitment of young academics and introduction of new programs.

The conclusions drawn by this impartial European Communities body reflect the strong and determined spirit the AC has experienced throughout its work with the KTU Faculty of Administration and its students — an earnest desire to learn to grow and to excel in their accomplishments towards a promising future. The AC is proud to have had the opportunity to contribute and be included in this development process.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO?

Readers are invited to participate in our activities through financial contributions and/or contributions of talent and services to KTUAF by those qualified to teach college-level business-related courses. There are three categories of financial support.

*cont'd on page 20*



Algis Rimas

# BUSINESS & INVESTMENT NEWS

## CANADIAN-U.S. TRADE MISSION TO THE BALTICS

The Toronto-based Baltic Business Council is organizing its inaugural trade mission to the Baltics to take place March 3-17, 1996. The mission's theme will be the home renovation and construction industries. Interested companies from the United States and Canada are welcome to participate. The Lithuanian portion of the program (March 6-8) will include attendance at the regional construction industry trade fair to be held at the Vilnius LITEXPO pavilion and individually arranged meetings with potential partners, buyers and government officials.

The cost per person is Canadian \$4,500 (approximately U.S. \$3,400 at current exchange rates). It includes round-trip travel from Toronto via Frankfurt to Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn, all hotel costs, information materials, briefings, individual appointments, site visits and more. For details please get in touch with Ms. Regina Pearce, Executive Director, Baltic Business Council, 940 Lansdowne Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M6H 4G9, Canada, tel: (416) 534-9916, fax: (416) 534-2739.

## LITHUANIAN BANKING CRISIS: THE FALL-OUT

In the previous issue of **BRIDGES**, we reported how the Bank of Lithuania, the country's central bank, had shut down two of the country's largest commercial banks, the Joint-Stock Innovation Bank and LITIMPEKS Bank. Their top officers were arrested on charges of making improper loans. The December closures were soon followed by a banking crisis as the two affected banks accounted for a hefty fifth of all deposits held in the Lithuanian banking system. Angry customers, including some of Lithuania's top industrial firms, clamored to withdraw their frozen assets. Politicians felt the heat. Questions were raised in the Lithuanian media about possible improprieties surrounding the bank closures as well as the damage done to the Lithuanian economy. In parliament, demands were heard for the resignations of the head of the central bank and Prime Minister Slezevicius. At this writing, both the Lithuanian government and the central bank look as if they will survive. The Lithuanian economy, however, may pay a stiff price.

*Algis Rimas served as Economic Attache at the Lithuanian Embassy in Vilnius from 1991-1995. He lives in Reston, Virginia.*

Eduardas Vilkas, a prominent economics professor at Vilnius University, commented to the daily newspaper, *Lietuvos Rytas*, that an earlier banking crash in Latvia had cost that country the equivalent of five percent of its yearly national income. Dr. Vilkas indicated that Lithuania now would pay a similar price. For example, the cost of obtaining foreign commercial loans will surely go up, he said.

Another Lithuanian economist, Kęstutis Glaveckas, sounded the alarm that capital flight could increase. Dr. Glaveckas estimated that Lithuanian residents already hold at least two billion dollars abroad. The Minister of Finance, Reinoldijus Šarkinas, appeared to share such fears when he told the same *Lietuvos Rytas* how he would encourage repatriating deposits from abroad. Mr. Šarkinas said that if such funds were transferred to Lithuania, he would recommend waiving the legal requirement that owners explain how they earned the funds in the first place. The Minister was also inclined to exempt from taxation foreign transfers of money to Lithuania.

Despite the troubles with banking, new sales of Lithuanian government bonds appeared to be going well. A January 15 issue of 38 million litas (4lts to one US dollar) short-term bonds was fully subscribed. The interest rate averaged 27.5 percent. Further short-term bond issues for 100 million litas are planned for later in January.

As for the banks themselves, government spokespersons have announced that a rescue plan should be completed shortly. The parliament voted in December to mandate that the two banks continue their activities after corrective measures had been taken. The Joint-Stock Innovation and Litimpeks banks are being audited by the international accounting firm, Ernst & Young. They have been permitted, in the meantime, to conduct foreign currency exchange and carry out certain limited transactions. Prime Minister Šleževičius told the media that his administration is working on a proposal to compensate depositors. He said the return of deposits will be linked to the overall strategy for reviving not only the two banks mentioned above but also the Western Bank in Klaipeda and Aurabank in Vilnius.

A joint International Monetary Fund and World Bank mission also descended upon Vilnius on January 12 to look into the banking crises. They met with Prime Minister Šleževičius, Chairman of the Central Bank Kazys Ratkevicius, and Finance Minister Reinoldijus Šarkinas. The mission is advising the Lithuanian authorities on its



bank rescue package but the mission has yet to make any public announcements.

The central bank is also in for some scrutiny. Parliament has requested the international accounting firm, Arthur Andersen, to examine the bank's accounts for 1995 and to report how the Bank of Lithuania compares with other central banks in its effectiveness.

## **ANOTHER MAJOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROJECT LAUNCHED**

Lithuania's relatively new Administrative Reforms and Municipal Affairs Ministry was named recently to install and run a new governmental administrative information system called VADIS. The ministry's Secretary, Dr. Julius Novickas, will coordinate this project. It resembles an earlier proposal to establish a government-wide electronic informational system, Lithuania 2000.

VADIS is intended to become a computer network through which government departments and the parliament may access each other's documents and coordinate their information systems. Preparatory studies were done under the supervision of the Minister of Communications. The Swedish consulting firm, Sevenko, played a leading role. The project is valued at approximately \$73.5 million.

## **NEW REGULATIONS PASSED BY SEIMAS, LITHUANIA'S PARLIAMENT**

The Seimas has established a new Consumers Rights Protection Council. It is to consist of seven independent members (yet unknown to us) who will take stock of existing consumer protection legislation and recommend changes. In addition to drafting new proposed legislation, they will also be charged with introducing consumer awareness and education programs. Lithuania has in the past received technical assistance on consumer issues from the U.S. Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission.

On January 16, 1995, Seimas passed a comprehensive law on securities trading. It describes procedures for registering and trading financial securities instruments and authorizes the work of the country's securities commission. For details, please contact the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, DC or a Lithuanian Consulate near you.

## **LITHUANIA'S TRADE EXHIBITION CENTER, LITEXPO, EXPECTS MORE BUSINESS**

The Vilnius-based LITEXPO hosted a record 291,000 visitors at its 25 trade fairs held in 1995. The fairs showcased almost 1900 firms, almost 900 of which were foreign. LITEXPO expects even more business this year.

LITEXPO started its activities thirty-five years ago under the former Communist regime. It conducted industrial fairs limited to local production. In the past few years, LITEXPO has become an important regional exhibition center attracting companies not only from Lithuania and the neighboring countries, but from western Europe and the United States. A schedule of its activities was published in last month's issue of **BRIDGES**.

## **LITHUANIA'S BOOMING REAL ESTATE MARKET**

In the wake of the banking crisis, people are shifting their savings from bank deposits into real estate, Gediminas Bareika, president of the Lithuanian Realtors Association, told the newspaper, *Respublika*, recently. As a result, the market for apartments has become extremely tight. Mr. Bareika said that during the past six months, purchase prices for one-room city dwelling shot up by 40 percent and for two-bedroom apartments it rose by 25 percent. A buyer in Vilnius should expect to pay up to \$35,000 for a three-bedroom apartment in the city's center. Similar accommodations may be had for only \$15-18,000 on the outskirts. Prices in Kaunas average some \$2,000 less than in the capital city.

Mr. Bareika ranked Vilnius as the third most expensive city for real estate in the territories controlled by the former Soviet Union. It lagged only behind Moscow and St. Petersburg in Russia. In conclusion, prospects for real estate developers and industries catering to the housing market in Lithuania appear excellent.

## **PHILLIP MORRIS NOT JUST BLOWING SMOKE IN LITHUANIA**

Phillip Morris, the U.S. multinational tobacco manufacturer, counts itself as the largest single private foreign investor in Lithuania. According to an article appearing in *Lietuvos Rytas*, Phillip Morris has invested \$55 million to upgrade its cigarette plant in Klaipeda and the Kraft Jacobs Suchard confections plant in Kaunas. The company plans to spend another \$25 million to build a new cigarette manufacturing facility in the port city. Michael Parson, a director of Phillip Morris International, reportedly explained that the Lithuanian investments were part of the company's strategy to expand into Eastern Europe. Phillip Morris is estimated to be investing over one billion dollars in the region.

Philip Atkinson, resident director of the Phillip Morris operation in Lithuania, reportedly said that his company is turning a profit in Lithuania and that investing there makes good business sense. He spoke of numerous regulatory and other obstacles but indicated that a company such as Phillip Morris could overcome them. For example, Mr. Atkinson told how modern management methods applied by Phillip Morris helped to transform a formerly lackluster

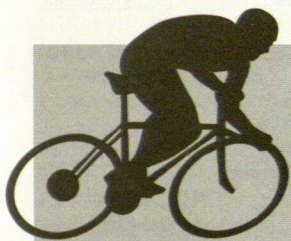


workforce into one that became motivated and effective. He concluded that foreign investors play an important role not only in creating jobs but also in teaching private sector skills and developing the economy.

### PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO THE LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY FEBRUARY 16 FUND DRIVE

February 16 marks Lithuania's Independence Day. LAC chapters throughout the United States will organize commemoration events. At these events, the LAC will launch its nationwide campaign to fund its many programs aimed at Lithuanian-Americans. Assisting in the development of private enterprise in Lithuania and fostering business ties between the United States and Lithuania are just a few of LAC's many programs. If you care about your Lithuanian-American heritage, we urge that you make your tax-deductible contribution.

If you cannot attend a February 16 commemoration, please mail your check to The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., c/o Mr. R. Pliura (the national treasurer), 1927 West Boulevard, Racine, WI 53403. Thank you.



## SUMMER BICYCLE TRIP TO LITHUANIA

Join us for a two-week bicycle tour of Lithuania, departing the US around June 20. The planned itinerary is to originate in Vilnius and visit the main regions of Lithuania, stopping at sights and cities along the way. The pace will be casual, 30-45 miles a day, with some days off, seeking the less traveled by-ways. Lodging will be in youth hostels, simple hotels, and sports dormitories. There may be the opportunity to travel with local bike tourers, as well as to meet members of the Lithuanian national cycling team. This trip is open to all who want to see Lithuania in a different way. I have led several cycling trips both in the US and Europe. Please call or write as soon as possible for further information, and any questions. I'd like to fit the trip to the group's interests.

Ed Vaitones  
Box 850  
Wilton, NH 03086  
(603) 654-2362

## BALTIC STUDIES SUMMER INSTITUTE IN CHICAGO

The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) announces the third annual Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI) to be held May 28 to July 19, 1996 on the campus of UIC. The summer institute is offered under the auspices of the BALSSI consortium (the University of Illinois at Chicago, Indiana University, the University of Michigan, the University of Washington, and the University of Wisconsin at Madison). Faculty will include Professors Saulius Suziedelis and Tiina Kirss. Complementing the academic program will be a series of guest lectures, exhibits, and an opportunity to attend the Lithuanian Dance Festival.

The following courses will be offered:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| LITH 101 | Intensive First-Year Lithuanian  |
| LITH 102 | (8 credits) May 28 - July 19   |
| SLAV 433 | Baltic History (3 credits)<br>May 28 - June 3                              |
| SLAV 433 | Lithuania & Poland:<br>Designing Dialogue (3 credits)<br>June 24 - July 19 |
| LITH 115 | Baltic Culture (3 credits)<br>June 24 - July 19                            |

For further information on these courses, contact:

The Endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies  
UIC Department of Slavic and Baltic  
Languages & Literatures (M/C 306)  
601 S. Morgan Street  
Room 1628 University Hall  
Chicago, IL 60607-7116  
Tel: (312) 996-4412 or -7856  
E-mail: Kelertas@uicvm.uic.edu

For further information about BALSSI, contact:

Daniel Waugh, Director  
Center for Russian, East European, and  
Central Asian Studies DP-20  
University of Washington  
Seattle, WA 98195



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## LAC, INC. CHAPTERS

### CELEBRATIONS OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Sunday, February 4, 1996**

**BRIGHTON PARK, IL**  
10:00 am Mass  
11:00 am Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: prof. Vitkus  
Immaculate Conception Church  
44th & S. California  
Chicago, IL

**DETROIT, MI**  
12:00 pm Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: A. Vidunas  
Mayor of Vilnius  
Divine Providence Church  
25335 West Nine Mile Road  
Southfield, MI  
Saturday, February 10, 1996

**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
5:30 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Paul Goble, Ph.D.  
Latvian Hall  
11710 Third Avenue, NE  
Seattle, WA  
Sunday, February 11, 1996

**PHOENIX, AZ**  
2:30 pm Convocation  
9728 Palmeros Drive  
Sun City, AZ

**BOSTON, MA**  
12:30 pm Convocation  
Lithuanian Church  
369 West Broadway  
South Boston, MA

**LOS ANGELES, CA**  
10:30 am Mass  
12:30 pm Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: A. Vidunas  
Mayor of Vilnius  
St. Casimir's Church  
2718 St. George Street  
Los Angeles, CA

**NEW BRITAIN, CT**  
11:00 am Mass  
2:00 pm Convocation & Concert  
St. Andrew's Church  
396 Church Street  
New Britain, CT

**PORTLAND, OR**  
2:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mrs. Laima Andrikiene  
Member of Parliament  
Latvian Hall  
5500 S.W. Dosch Road  
Portland, OR  
for more info: (503) 635-2078

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA**  
11:00 am Mass  
Convocation  
Speaker: Paul Goble, Ph.D.  
Old Cathedral of St. Mary  
660 California Street  
San Francisco, CA

**WAUKEGAN, IL**  
1:30 pm Mass  
2:30 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mr. Vacys Saulys  
St. Bartholomew's Church  
501 South Utica Street  
Waukegan, IL  
Wednesday, February 14, 1996

**SUNNY HILLS, FL**  
Mass & Convocation  
Speaker: Gediminas Vagnorius  
Member of Parliament  
St. Theresa's Church  
384 Sunny Hills Blvd  
Sunny Hills, FL  
Friday, February 16, 1996

**CAPE COD, MA**  
1:00 pm Convocation & Reception  
Speaker: Dr. Evaldas Nekrasas  
Prof., Vilnius University  
Manor (next to Lodge)  
Craigville Conference Center  
Cape Cod, MA  
Note: Mass to be held February 18 Noon  
Our Lady of Victory Church  
Centerville, MA  
info: (508) 775-3987

**GOLD COAST, FL**  
12:30 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Gediminas Vagnorius  
Member of Parliament  
Lighthouse Point  
4060 North Federal Highway  
Pompano Beach, FL

**SIOUX CITY, IA**  
for info: Mrs. Christopherson  
(605) 232-4600  
Saturday, February 17, 1996

**ST. PETERSBURG, FL**  
2:00 pm Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: Ms. Vaiva Vebraitė-Gust  
St. Petersburg Lithuanian Club  
4880 46th Avenue, North  
St. Petersburg, FL  
Note: Mass on Sunday, Feb. 18, 1996  
1:00 pm Holy Name Parish  
Gulfport, FL

**Sunday, February 18, 1996**

**ATLANTA, GA**  
2:00 pm Convocation  
4905 Roswell Road  
Marietta, GA

**BRIDGEPORT, CT**  
11:00 am Mass  
12:30 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Sr. Igne Marijosiute  
St. George's Church  
Park Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT

**BROCKTON, MA**  
3:00 pm Convocation  
St. Casimir's Church  
Ames & Sawtell Avenues  
Brockton, MA

**CICERO, IL**  
12:00 pm Mass  
1:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mrs. Balcaitiene  
St. Anthony's Church  
1510 South 49th Court  
Cicero, IL

**CLEVELAND, OH**  
4:00 pm Convocation  
Mother of God Church  
Neff Road  
Cleveland, OH

**EAST CHICAGO, IN**  
10:00 am Mass  
12:00 pm Convocation  
St. Casimir's Church  
1390 West 15th Avenue  
Gary, IN

**HOT SPRINGS, AK**  
11:00 am Mass  
12:00 pm Convocation  
Speakers: Prof. S. Vanagunas  
and Prof. Krupavicius  
Sisters Convent  
Milvern Street  
Hot Springs, AK



LEMONT, IL  
11:00 am Mass  
12:30 pm Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: Mrs. Regina Narusis  
Lithuanian World Center  
14911 127th Street  
Lemont, IL

NEW YORK, NY (New York Region)  
3:30 pm Convocation  
Speaker: A. Vidunas  
Mayor of Vilnius  
Zidinys (Lithuanian Center)  
341 Highland Blvd.  
Brooklyn, NY

OMAHA, NE  
11:00 am Convocation  
Speaker: Mrs. Audrone Pakstys  
St. Anthony's Church  
32nd & T Streets  
Omaha, NE

PALM BEACH, FL  
3:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Gediminas Vagnorius  
Member of Parliament  
Oceanview United Methodist Church  
701 Ocean Drive  
Juno Beach, FL

PHILADELPHIA, PA  
2:00 pm Convocation  
Lithuanian Music Hall  
2715 East Allegheny Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA

PROVIDENCE, RI  
10:00 am Mass  
11:30 am Convocation  
St. Casimir's Church Hall  
350 Smith Street  
Providence, RI

ROCHESTER, NY  
12:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: prof. Antanas Klimas  
545 Hudson Street  
Rochester, NY

WASHINGTON, DC  
10:00 am Mass  
St. Matthew's Cathedral  
1725 Rhode Island Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC  
2:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mrs. Grazina Liautaud  
Adult Education Center  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD

WATERBURY, CT  
3:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mr. Kestutis Miklas  
St. Joseph's Church  
8 John Street  
Waterbury, CT

WORCESTER, MA  
10:00 am Mass  
Gates of Dawn Church (Ausros Vartu)  
3:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mr. V. Mantautas  
Maironis Park Hall  
Worcester, MA

**Sunday, February 25, 1996**

DAYTON, OH  
9:30 am Mass  
10:30 am Convocation  
Holy Cross Church  
1924 Leo Street  
Dayton, OH

DENVER, CO  
12:30 pm Dinner, Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: Petras Kazlas  
Dinner reservations call: 427-3394  
St. Anthony Church  
3055 West 72nd Avenue  
Westminster, CO

EAST ST. LOUIS, IL  
10:30 am Mass  
12:00 pm Convocation  
Immaculate Conception Church  
15th & Baugh Avenues  
East St. Louis, IL

GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
12:00 pm Mass  
1:30 pm Convocation  
St. Peter and Paul Church  
1433 Hamilton Avenue, NW  
Grand Rapids, MI

HARTFORD, CT  
9:00 am Mass  
10:00 am Convocation & Concert  
Speaker: Mrs. Regina Narusis  
Holy Trinity Church  
53 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT

MICHIANA SHORES, IN  
12:00 pm Mass  
1:00 pm Convocation  
Speaker: Mr. P. Vaiciakauskas  
St. Anne's Church  
US 12 & Broadway  
Beverly Shores, IN

## *In Search Of...*

...a few good doodlers, photographers, caricaturists, political cartoonists. I would like to enlist the talents of you hidden artists out there to send **BRIDGES** some artwork. It's all on a pro-bono basis, of course, but you do get exposure. I need column filler like you see in the *New Yorker* magazine. I would also like a serious political cartoonist with a thorough understanding of Lithuanian and US politics. If that's asking too much, how about a serious political cartoonist who can take orders?

**BRIDGES** also welcomes articles from occasional writers on the topic of your choice. Please send them to: Diana Vidutis, 7416 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park, MD 20912 or fax them (to my attention) to (202) 371-5922. I look forward to hearing from you.

P.S. Those two little boys on the front cover are Sigitas Rimkus and Mantas Vidutis, both of the Karaliaus Mindaugo Lithuanian School in Baltimore. If you have photographs you think capture the Lithuanian spirit, please send them in.



*Working for Lithuania's Future, cont'd from page 14*

1. **Professorial Aid Fund.** University professorial wages are barely above minimum subsistence levels.
2. **Equipment Fund.**
3. **Needy Student Fund.**

Student fees and government allocation of funds barely cover 10% of the expenses incurred by the university. Additional funds cannot be raised through tuition because Lithuania's constitution guarantees everyone a free education. The university faces the loss of better educators because their skills and knowledge of English command considerably higher wages in business and industry.

Most of the universities operate with either outdated or badly dated donated equipment. Yet their task is to prepare students for leading the country out of deep financial crisis into a modern age.

This is a very difficult task that deserves all of our support and encouragement. Anyone who can possibly help is encouraged to do so. All financial contributions, without exception, will be transmitted to the university for purposes designated by the donor. Tax deductible financial contributions should be made out to the:

World Lithuanian Community Fund  
KTUAF Account  
PO Box 558  
Great Falls, VA 22066

Those desiring to donate their teaching skills should contact the author, Stasys Bačkaitis, at the above address or by telephone at 703-759-2905.

The English language summer camp is a two-week course of intensive study for incoming Lithuanian freshman. Set in Palanga in early June, the summer camp relies upon English-speaking volunteers to provide a language-immersion experience. American-Lithuanians, particularly students, interested in teaching during such a "working vacation" should contact the author to inquire about terms.

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# DIRECTORY OF LITHUANIAN SATURDAY SCHOOLS IN THE US

Saturday School is a routine for many Lithuanian-American children. In many cases, schools rent space just for those few hours on Saturday. For this reason, the addresses listed below are those of the school's principal and may differ from where the classes actually meet. For further information about enrolling your child or to inquire about how to make a donation, contact the principal directly or Regina Kučiene, 13648 Kickapoo Trail, Lockport, IL 60441, Tel & Fax: 708-301-6410.

## California

**Šv. Kazimiero Lithuanian School, Los Angeles**  
Marytė Newsom  
1278 Hillgreen Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90035  
(310) 553-2836

## Colorado

**Colorado Lithuanian School**  
Albertas Vaitaitis  
2965 E. Peakview Avenue  
Littleton, CO 80121  
(303) 795-6933  
F: (303) 773-6069

## Connecticut

**"Atgimimo" Lithuanian School**  
Erina Balsienė  
25 Locus Street  
Naugatuck, CT 06670  
(203) 729-8815

## District of Columbia

**Kristijono Donelaičio Lithuanian School**  
Angelė Bailey  
2567 Five Oaks Road  
Vienna, VA 22181  
(703) 255-1433

## Florida

**"Saulės" Lithuanian School**  
Aurelija Robertson  
5301 10th Avenue N  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710-6531  
(813) 321-4128

## Illinois

**Chicago Lithuanian School**  
Jūratė Dovilienė  
1 S 455 Wainwright  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
(708) 832-6331

**Kriaučeliūnų vardu Lithuanian Montessori Children's Home**  
Jolanta Andrejeviene  
3306 W. 83rd Place  
Chicago, IL 60652  
(312) 436-3709

**Maironio Lithuanian School, Lemont**  
Eglė Novak  
620 Kruk Street  
Lemont, IL 60439  
(708) 257-5918

**Lithuanian Pedagogical Institute, Chicago**  
Jonas Račkauskas  
10425 S. Kenton Avenue  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453  
(708) 425-4266

**"Žiburelio" Montessori School, Lemont**  
Danute Dirvoniene  
12749 Cedar Lane  
Palos Heights, IL 60463  
(708) 923-0676

## Indiana

**Šv. Kazimiero Lithuanian School, Gary**  
Ses. Janina Golubickaitė  
7515 Nantucket #301  
Darien, IL 60561  
(708) 654-4212

## Maryland

**Karaliaus Mindaugo Lithuanian School, Baltimore**  
Regina Sajauskienė  
9184 Windflower Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
(410) 418-8344

**Lithuanian Language & Culture Club of Baltimore**  
Jaunutis Burbulis  
2131 Colonel Way  
Odenton, MD 21113  
(410) 799-8777

## Massachusetts

**Boston Lithuanian School**  
Daiva de Sa Pereira  
69 Covell  
New Bedford, MA 02745  
(508) 998-9351

## Michigan

**"Žiburio" Lithuanian School, Detroit**  
Alma Butkūnienė  
15876 Marsha  
Livonia, MI 48154  
(313) 464-9171

## Nebraska

**Omaha Lithuanian School**  
Ausrele Sakalaite  
1218 S. 169th Street  
Omaha, NE 68127  
(402) 334-7326

## New York

**Maironio Lithuanian School, New York**  
Audre Lukoševičiūtė  
87-38 95th Street  
Woodhaven, NY 11421  
(718) 849-6083

## Ohio

**Šv. Kazimiero Lithuanian School, Cleveland**  
Kestutis Civinskas  
6508 Crabtree Lane  
Brecksville, OH 44141  
(216) 838-0652

## Pennsylvania

**Vinco Krėvės Lithuanian School**  
Vytautas Maciūnas  
405 Holly Glen Drive  
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034  
(609) 795-9202

**Philadelphia Adult Lithuanian Language Courses**  
Bronius Krokys  
1124 Hedgerow Lane  
Philadelphia, PA 19115  
(215) 671-0397

**Pittsburgh Lithuanian Language Classes**  
Margaret Turner  
59 Fordham Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15229  
(412) 761-1326

## Washington

**Seattle, WA Lithuanian School**  
Irena Blekytė-Johnson  
3854 Cascada Avenue S  
Seattle, WA 98118  
(206) 721-0745

## Wisconsin

**"Gilės" Lithuanian School**  
Reda Plūrienė  
1927 West Boulevard  
Racine, WI 53403  
H: (414) 637-3585  
O: (414) 634-7108  
F: (414) 634-5069



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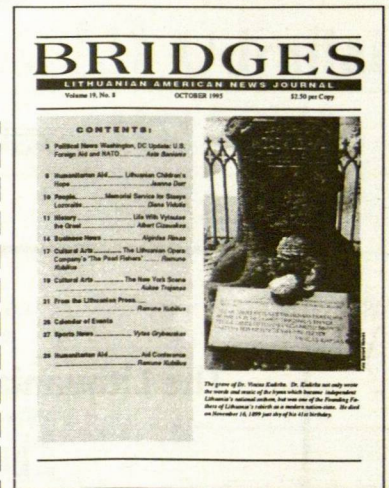
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If you have any questions, our phone number is: (703) 524-0698  
and our fax number is: (703) 524-0947.

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