

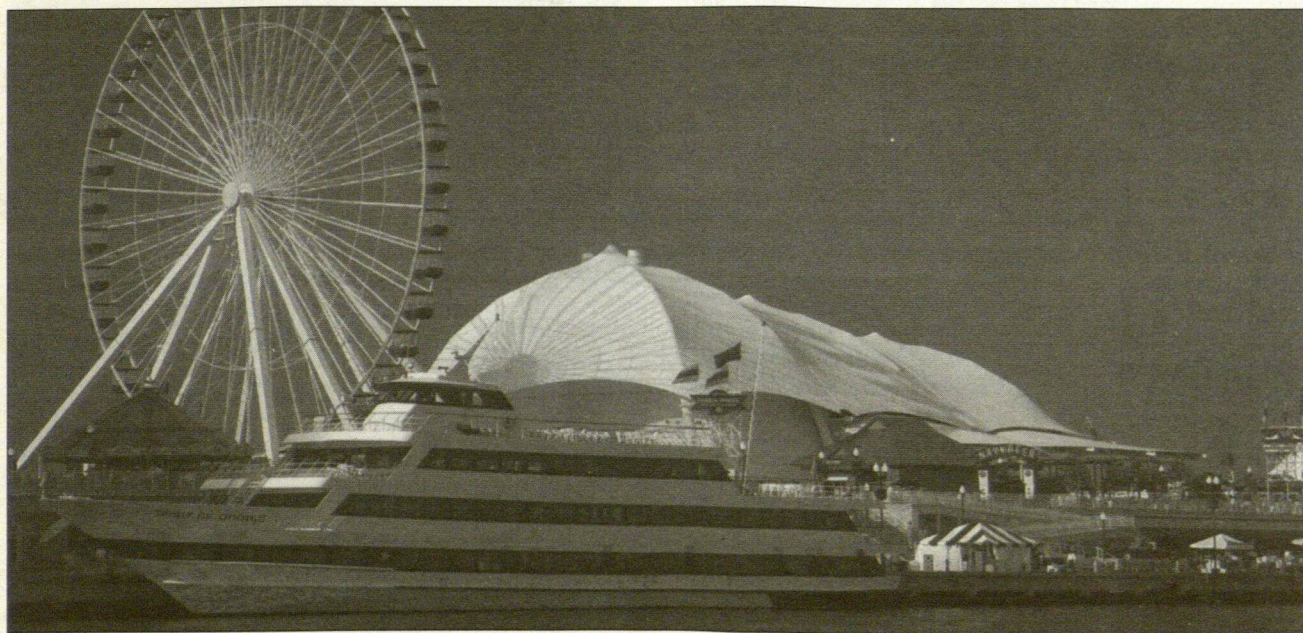
BRIDGES

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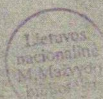
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Chicago's Navy Pier, site of the 10th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival's "get acquainted" evening.

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The Lithuanian-American news journal **BRIDGES** extends its warmest wishes and heartfelt congratulations to all participants in the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival — to the dancers as well as to their families, friends, instructors, and supporters. Let this event remind us how far-flung Lithuanians are around the globe, how closely they are tied to their own homeland and to that of their ancestors, and how traditions such as the dance bridge all generations, all language barriers, and all geographical distances.

To Our Readers:

If your household is anything like mine, the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival in Chicago over the Fourth of July weekend is the event around which our summer is being planned. My children are little (5 and 7) and our Washington/Baltimore contingent of children is so small that we don't even constitute a group of our own. This doesn't mean the preparations are any less involved. In fact, we will be commuting two hours in each direction to Philadelphia every weekend in June to practice with the Philadelphia groups.

Apart from its obvious cultural significance, this quadrennial event is the basis of a cross-generational reunion for family and friends. Anthropologists would probably describe this trek to the Lithuanian-American Mecca of Chicago as a distinct periodic ritual of far-flung tribes to gather for the purpose of displaying their achievements and offspring, exchanging goods and ideas, and laying the groundwork for the propagation of more Lithuanian families. I guess that's what I'm doing — showing off my children, renewing ties with relatives in the Chicago area, checking in on friends from faraway places, checking out what's new in Lithuanian arts & crafts, seeking out sources of supplementary Lithuanian language learning materials, you know, the usual stuff.

So, as we head into the whirlwind of events comprising the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival, I trust that it will be an experience we will all remember for the rest of our lives.

Iki Pasimatymo!

Diana P. Vidutis

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The State of the Free Press and Media

The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. believes that an independent press and media are essential for a true democracy. Only a strong and independent press and media will guarantee a democracy's continued existence. **BRIDGES** readers will recall that the Seimas (Lithuania's parliament) had last taken up consideration of a bill to both define the rights of the press/media as well as regulate the press/media during late January. Before the parliament broke off debate to deal with the leadership crisis in Lithuania, which ultimately removed Prime Minister Šleževičius and Interior Minister Vaitiekūnas from office, it had considered and voted on 8 of 39 articles of the proposed "Law on Public Information."

The history of the political struggles over this yet-draft law is a reflection of the larger political struggle between democratic reformers in Lithuania and the "old guard" made up of communists, "former communists," and members of the nomenklatura (the good old boy network, if you will). Freedom of the press and media are guaranteed by the country's Constitution, but various statutory and bureaucratic measures have been used by the ruling Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDLP) to weaken the independent press and media in Lithuania. The LDLP has also understood that economic tools can be very helpful in this effort. Although the draft law currently being debated and the political struggles over a free press apply to both print (newspapers, magazines, etc.) and electronic media, we will concentrate only on the situation in television today in Lithuania.

In addition to the constitutional guarantees for a free press and media found in articles 25 and 44 of Lithuania's Constitution adopted in October, 1992, the functioning of the print and electronic media is currently regulated by the 1991 Law on the Press and Other Mass Media. This law includes provisions on technical questions, legal issues such as libel and privacy, and the Statute of (State) Lithuanian Radio and TV. Under the law, all of Lithuania's media register with the Press Control Board which is attached to, but not subject to, the Ministry of Justice. Frequencies, however, are allocated by another institution: the Board of Radio and Television which reports to the Lithuanian Parliament directly. Until last fall, companies had to apply to the Board of Radio and Television (which would consult with the Ministry of Communications) for licenses to use a frequency. Under the chairmanship of Gediminas Ilgunas, appointed by the ruling LDLP, the Board had begun to challenge licenses issued under the

earlier reform administration. One of these broadcast license "reevaluations" led to a court case with Baltijos TV (Baltic TV) which was ultimately decided against the Board by the Constitutional Court of Lithuania. Because of the Court's decision in the Fall of 1995, the Board of Radio and Television has lost its right (self-assumed) to supervise private television. The new draft law, under consideration in the Seimas, calls for the creation of a Radio and Television Council which would license and regulate private electronic media.

The Board of Radio and Television has been left, for the short-term, to supervise only the Lithuanian Radio and Television Company (Lithuanian State TV and Radio) which has one TV station which broadcasts nation-wide, and three radio stations. As it was in Soviet times, Lithuanian State TV is funded directly from the government's budget, but it also is allowed to seek advertising income from the sale of commercial time.

The Chosen Channel

Because of its nation-wide penetration and its overwhelming market share for the long-running, popular news program "Panorama," Lithuanian State TV captures two-thirds of all private advertising dollars spent on electronic media in Lithuania. In an effort to put pressure on its competition, the private TV stations, Lithuanian State TV has been offering advertisers lower advertising rates on a case-by-case basis. The government subsidies it receives allow Lithuanian State TV to successfully undercut its competition. The new draft law attempts to remove this enormous competitive advantage of drawing on both government funds and the private market by phasing out State TV's right to sell advertising time by the year 2000.

Lithuanian State TV enjoys a second advantage, which the new draft law may minimize. In order to be on the air in Lithuania, television stations must use a series of transmitters and transmission towers owned and operated by the Lithuanian government. In the summer of 1994, the Lithuanian government raised the fees for access to these transmission facilities from \$15,000 per month to \$50,000 per month. Since that sudden 230% increase, Lithuania has seen one of its independent stations bankrupted, a second in serious financial turmoil and the third station looking for ways out of this government monopoly, while transmission rates continue to escalate. In 1995, there were further increases for radio links between cities which approached

270%. The transmitter fees for independent television in Lithuania are now \$100,000 per month. Lithuanian State TV, on the other hand, has never had to face these straggling costs. Although Lithuanian State TV directors have clashed with Ministry officials over internal bookkeeping issues, they have never had to face the prospect of being off the air.

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There have been debates over the last two years concerning a proposal to devolve Lithuanian State TV to a "public television station" which would to some degree insulate the programming from government political pressure. After the parliament is done considering the Law on Public Information, it has indicated that the law governing state TV and radio will be up for review, as well as a law regulating advertising in the country.

Independent Stations Try to Compete

Many visitors to Lithuania may be familiar with the independent TV station known as **Tele-3**. It was the first independent TV station founded in 1991 when it took over one of the frequencies formerly used by the State TV from Moscow during Soviet times. The station started out with limited, mostly educational programming and programs picked up from the satellites but evolved to include news, sports, movies and children's programming. But after transmission fees were raised, the station quickly ran into serious financial difficulties and sold 50 percent of its stock to a Vilnius real estate company called "Status." It has been widely reported that Status allegedly has links to both the Russian mafia and former Soviet intelligence services. By the summer of 1995, the station owners were

entangled in a management dispute which has undercut the quality of the station's programming. The employees of the station regularly go unpaid and the station's future is in doubt.

The second independent station is **Baltijos TV**, a Lithuanian-American joint venture which operates on the frequency which in Soviet times provided programming for national minorities and rebroadcast Polish TV to the Vilnius region. Baltijos TV was awarded its license in April 1993 and began to turn this regional station into a national station with a variety of programming such as sports, news, children's programming and locally produced TV series. With the change in government in November, 1992, Baltijos TV soon found its efforts to go nation-wide challenged by government officials. Unable to get permission to broadcast to a national audience on Lithuanian central government transmission towers, it went out to city-run stations in Klaipėda, Plungė, Šiauliai and Marijampolė and signed contracts to rebroadcast its signal into these regional stations. Mr. Ilgūnas and his Board of Radio and Television then went after Baltijos TV claiming that the station had no right to develop relations with these local stations and threatening to pull them off the Vilnius-based frequency. Baltijos TV took the dispute to court and won its claim.

The Board of Radio and Television and the Ministry of Communications have used questionable regulatory authority to try to restrict the growth and expansion of Baltijos TV in other ways as well. In 1994, they tried to force an early "relicensing" procedure by claiming that Baltijos TV had to rebroadcast Polish TV during its most profitable advertising hours. The Board and Ministry also tried to prevent Baltijos TV from acquiring the right to install its own transmitting equipment and to build its own transmission towers. In each case, the courts have supported Baltijos TV claim, but it has cost the station a great deal of time and financial resources to protect its right to do business in Lithuania.

In three years, the spunky management of the station has expanded its range from the Vilnius region through this combination of local stations and its own transmission facility, and now reaches 60 percent of Lithuania's territory including all major cities. This growth has made it more commercially viable than other independent stations and the most capable of competing with Lithuanian State TV in the long run.

The third independent station is **LNK**. It is also the newest, having captured the license to broadcast to a national audience originally issued to a Kaunas-based station named Litpolinter. Litpolinter is the station which bankrupted an entire conglomerate in late 1994 when its parent company attempted to keep the station on the air despite rising gov-

ernment transmission fees. According to the terms of its license, LNK must rebroadcast Moscow's daily news program "Vremia" and other Russian language television programs. Although LNK sells advertising time, it also relies on operating funds from its owners: EBSW, a holding company; and the Žemės Ūkio Bankas (State Agriculture Bank), a Lithuanian government-owned bank. The president of Žemės Ūkio Bankas admitted in a recent newspaper interview that his bank has provided a sizeable loan to the LNK station for 1996 operations. The significant government ownership in this station raises doubts if the station can become a truly commercially-viable, independent station. The president of EBSW, reportedly a friend and political ally of the former Prime Minister Šleževičius, was recently jailed by Lithuanian prosecutors.

There are smaller, city-based television stations in Lithuania. Some of them are privately owned, but none at the moment has the ability to broadcast more than a few hours during the day. There are also a number of commercial radio stations broadcasting nation-wide. Their programming consists of music, talk shows, call-in shows and news headlines. M-1 and Radiocentras are the two private stations which are the most successful and are likely to remain as the competition for scarce advertising dollars drags on.

Seimas Tries to Put on the Squeeze

While the Board of Radio and Television with the Ministry of Communications have been stalling the development of strong, independent media through regulatory means, the Lithuanian parliament's Commission on Education, Science and Culture (standing committee) has been attempting to pass a law which would restrict the development of independent media and weaken the free press. The parliamentary committee is headed by former LDLP member Bronius Genzelis, who was a professor of atheism at Vilnius University for most of his professional career. Since the summer of 1993, his committee has generated at least three drafts of legislation which would have crippled the development of an independent press and media in Lithuania. In March, 1996, Mr. Genzelis left the LDLP in a dispute surrounding the removal of Prime Minister Šleževičius. He is now a member of the Social Democratic Party of Lithuania. And, although, Mr. Genzelis had come under harsh criticism from members of the LDLP for his chairmanship of the Commission on Education, Science and Culture, he has been allowed to remain the chairman.

Each time an anti-reform draft law on the media surfaced within Mr. Genzelis' parliamentary committee, the supporters of the independent press and media in Lithuania were able to force, through public pressure, the committee to back down. It is the **Independent Radio and Television Association** in Lithuania which has mobilized supporters of the free press and media. They expanded their coalition to include some sympathetic members of parliament and,

in the summer of 1995, managed to get the LDLP leadership to allow a group of experts from the independent press and media sector to present their draft of a law on public information. That is the draft currently being debated by the parliament. Although American TV executives would find even this draft law confining, it should provide enough protection under the law for the independent press and media to develop in Lithuania, unless it is significantly amended.

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In early February, when the Seimas was debating article 8 of the proposed law on public information, the members of parliament did amend that section of the law to their own advantage. Article 8 deals with "Non-Publishable Information." It defines what journalists, publishers and broadcasters cannot print or broadcast, and yet tries to protect the public's right to information. Article 8 reads, "It is not allowed to publish untruthful information that libels, offends, humiliates human honor and dignity. Information about the personal life of an individual may be published only with the individual's consent, or in cases when publication of such information does not harm the individual, or when information concerns state officials and persons participating in public and political activities and the information is of importance to the public, or when information is provided in open court hearings."

On February 1, Chairman Genzelis and the parliament's Commission on Education, Science and Culture presented an amendment to strike that section of article 8 which deals with public officials. On a vote of 40 yeas, 19 nays and 17

abstentions (there are 139 members), members of Lithuania's parliament supported Mr. Genzelis and his effort to strike any reference to public officials from the law. As amended, article 8 reads, "Information about a private person's life can only be published with his consent or when the published material has been presented in open court proceedings, or when the information reveals violations of the law or criminal activity." Among the most vocal in support of the amendment to article 8 were the Lithuanian Christian Democrats who maintained that a public official has a right to privacy even in his public duties. Only one Christian Democrat, Mr. Giniotas, disagreed with his caucus (frakcija) voting against the amendment and in defense of the public's right to know about their elected and non-elected government officials. Having adopted this controversial change to the draft law, the Seimas tabled the bill for later consideration, and turned its attention to the charges against the Prime Minister and his Interior Minister.

Over the past two months, the authors of the draft bill scrambled to find a new compromise which would restore the public's right to information about its public officials. As the revelations against Prime Minister Šleževičius and his Interior Minister Vaitiekūnas grew, it became self-evident that the amended article 8, if allowed to stand, would have prevented the press from exposing the fact that Šleževičius and Vaitiekūnas were abusing the public trust by using privileged information to withdraw their deposits from one of the two banks closed down by the government in late December. It began to dawn on some members of parliament that government officials have enormous power in exercising their authority on behalf of the society. There is ample opportunity for mischief at the public's expense if government officials are insulated from public scrutiny. The job of a strong, independent press and media is to serve as the proverbial watchdogs and to help the public monitor what their public officials are doing in the name of the public. In a democracy, no one forces a person to run for public office, nor is anyone forced to take a high-ranking government job. In running for office, a politician asks for the public's trust — to exercise the tools and power of government on behalf of the people. Government officials are public servants in a democracy.

On April 4, the Seimas once again took up consideration of the draft Law on Public Information. The members of the parliament were asked to reconsider their previous vote which amended article 8. New compromise language was presented to amend the amendment. This time, 68 members of parliament voted to restore public scrutiny of public officials to the draft bill. Only 9 ventured to vote against the compromise language which reads, "Officials and decision-makers in government institutions, as well as persons active in public policy and the political process have a right to privacy, unless their private activities impact on public policy." Not the best formula, but one which protects the right of the public to monitor the performance of govern-

ment officials. Consideration of the other 31 sections of the bill will continue in the coming months. We will continue to keep BRIDGES readers informed on developments in this important area.

Congressional Update

The U.S. Congress returned from recess on April 14 to Washington, DC and began to consider proposals for the 1997 budget. Since the squabbles over the 1996 budget and appropriations bills have continued this spring, the 1997 budget process is considerably off schedule. With a fall presidential election campaign looming in the background, the appropriations committees are scrambling to hold hearings and draft appropriations bills even without an overall budget bill. It appears that the House will argue for lower numbers than the Senate on foreign assistance funding. Unless, you, as a supporter of Lithuania, contact your Congressman and Senators, Lithuania's technical assistance program will be: 1997 - \$6 million; 1998 - \$3 million; the assistance program to Lithuania ends in fiscal year 1999 (October, 1998).

NATO Update

NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana visited the Baltic States and Poland in mid-April. Many observers noted that the trip was to soothe the nerves of these governments by reassuring them that the door to NATO was still open. In Riga, on April 17, Solana said, "No one is ruled in and no one is ruled out (of NATO)". Solana also said that the Partnership for Peace Program would remain important after NATO began to accept new members, signaling that the Baltic States would not be among the first members to join the defense alliance.

Solana also attempted to reassure Moscow by saying that NATO had no intentions of creating any new dividing lines in Europe. As Reuters reported, Solana said, "They (Moscow) have an idea of NATO that is outdated. The NATO of today is not the NATO of the Cold War." But despite these attempts of good will, Moscow is not yet prepared to give up the fight against NATO enlargement.

During the month of April, the Russian Federation escalated its efforts to prevent NATO enlargement by mobilizing its diplomatic corps throughout Europe. As soon as a NATO member expressed any interest in NATO enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe, it seemed Russian officials were flying off to that particular capital "to bolster friendly relations" or the resident Russian Ambassador was giving interviews to the local press. For example, on April 23, the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland pledged her country's support for Latvia to join NATO and the other Western alliances. In an effort to "send" a message to the Nordic states, the Russian Ambassador to Finland, Yuri Deryabin, quickly gave an interview to a

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The Beginning of the End

A recent act of mindless cruelty marked the beginning of the end of a heroic chapter in the history of the Lithuanian people. Thousands had perished while other thousands had fled the monstrous brutality of Joseph Stalin in the years before and after WWII. The refugees came to be known as "Displaced Persons" (DP) accepting the hospitality of the civilized world, especially that of the United States.

With selfless devotion dedicated to the ideal of the eventual freedom of their occupied homeland, the displaced Lithuanians built cultural and religious centers wherever they settled. By doing so, they encouraged their enslaved brothers and sisters to retain their ethnic identity and work for the eventual liberation of Lithuania.

Never before had Lithuanians in such large numbers fled to escape the fury of a depraved demagogue. In comparative terms, the Lithuanian diaspora would have meant the displacement and death of millions of Americans.

A Monastery in Decline

One the night of March 25, 1996, a would-be burglar broke into the Franciscan monastery in the once-exclusive Cypress Hills section of Brooklyn. Finding nothing he could carry away, he indulged in a furious assault on the Monastery's rich art, smashing stained glass windows, hurling desks, lamps and picture frames, and severely injuring a 76 year-old friar, Francis Gedgaudas.

The friar's account of the frightening and senseless attack was carried in the *New York Times*. It encapsulated the rise and fall not only of the monastery but also of the once-thriving Lithuanian refugee community. According to the friar, the community in the 1950s and 60s numbered about 25,000. The monastery was served by 16 friars who published 20 magazines and newspapers and ran a Saturday school for the younger generation to ensure the preservation of Lithuanian culture.

But, like most ethnic endeavors, the success of the Cypress cultural and religious center carried with it the seeds of its own decline. As the younger generation matured, its members sought their own cultural and professional outlets in neighborhoods far from Cypress Hills, while the older generation either died off or sought the warmer climes of Florida. As a result, the Franciscan community shrunk drastically and now numbers only three friars publishing but one newspaper, *Darbininkas*.

Father Gedgaudas confessed to the *Times* reporter that he sees as inevitable the sale of the monastery itself. "The time is now," he mournfully acknowledged. Time to close the book on a heroic endeavor.

The story of decline to a greater or lesser extent is an observable phenomenon in other once-thriving Lithuanian centers in this country. The vaunted American melting pot is working as intended, but hopefully without further violence...

NATO Update, continued from page 6

Finnish paper saying that "Russia would be forced to take appropriate measures in response to any attempt of NATO to allow Baltic membership." Instead of applying for membership in NATO, the Ambassador suggested, that the Baltic nations could seek security guarantees from NATO or Russia. Russia's Ambassador to Budapest also gave an interview to the Hungarian news agency MTI mid-April and said that if Hungary joined NATO, Russia could be forced to take "measures of a military nature."

The Russians have also been publishing a steady stream of vitriol against the Baltic States, as well as NATO, from a number of Russian government-sponsored think tanks and Russian government officials. BRIDGES readers may find interesting (and appalling) the comments of Russian Member of Parliament (the Duma) Alexander Nevzorov

who gave an interview to the *Strazh Baltiki* newspaper published for Russia's Baltic Sea fleet. Mr. Nevzorov told the paper, "We will take back the Baltics. Russia has big strategic, financial, moral and other kinds of needs in those countries." Nevzorov made it clear that he had only disgust for the independence of these three countries." Their (the Baltics) leaving was a spit in the face of the she-giant Russia, who is not always benevolent and generous. But history has shown that we never wipe off such clots of spittle. Usually we have beaten them together with the teeth into the throat where the spittle came from. This is our national characteristic. And everything will be as it was before." Nevzorov added, "After all we have the experience to do it, only now it will claim more victims."

Nice neighbors those Russians.

Algis Rimas

Business and Investment News

U.S. - Lithuania Business Directory Publication Delayed

As readers of this column know, the Lithuanian-American Community Inc. is preparing a U.S.-Lithuania Business Directory aimed at introducing the U.S. market to Lithuanian business managers who wish to import, export or find investments in the United States. Our wish was to release this Lithuanian language publication in March or April. The good news is that we finally wrote the text. The bad news is that publication will be delayed until at least May or June. We simply underestimated how difficult it is to express in correct Lithuanian business concepts originally articulated in the English language. Our editors need more time to do a good job

The Lithuanian Economy and Politics

In the run-up to Lithuania's parliamentary elections, which are scheduled to take place this Fall, the economy is becoming a major campaign issue. The current Stankevičius government appears to be continuing the policies of its predecessor Šleževičius administration. They were, to a large extent, aimed at seeking greater economic integration with the west and attracting international investment, especially large loans for public sector development projects. (For recent developments on project loans, please see the following article.) The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the European Union and other international bodies appear to wield considerable influence over economic decision-making, and international loans are keeping the country solvent for now.

The political opposition, both to the right and left of the LDDP government, has been blasting the government and calling for change. Former Prime Minister Vagnorius, voicing the conservative line (which carries more weight than the platforms of groups to the left of the LDDP) attacked the government for its alleged inertia, inefficiency, toleration of corruption and mismanagement of the economy, and for discouraging the development of private enterprise. He placed heavy blame on the policy of tying the local currency to the dollar which encourages import-

ing and discourages exporting. The conservatives also dismissed the contention that a fixed exchange rate reduced inflation by charging that in the past two years the country's money supply had more than doubled and that existing monetary policies simply encouraged speculative international money flows. In the face of such criticism, the parliament has yet to pass the proposed bill backed by President Brazauskas that would guarantee the litas exchange rate until 1998.

Despite such criticism, the government can point to successes. The Minister of Industry and Commerce, Kazimieras Klimašauskas, has repeatedly claimed that Lithuania's industrial output had bottomed-out and is now rising. Minister Klimašauskas said that during the past 12 months output rose by an impressive one-third, although admittedly the base from which it was measured was very low. Growth was shown to be especially strong in the textile, electric and metal machinery industries. Most of the companies that have survived, have been downsized and are likely to avoid bankruptcy. However, the shadow economy also continues to thrive. Export of metals from Lithuania, a dubious measure of healthy economic activity, reportedly surged in the past year by a huge 180 percent.

Average real incomes rose somewhat, but income inequality increased as well. According to some experts, most of the income gains were taken by the top 20 percent of earners while the lower 80 percent saw no improvements or actually lost ground. During a recent visit with President Brazauskas, the World Bank's director for Europe and Central Asia, Basil Kavalsky, reportedly urged him to reform Lithuania's social security system in order to provide a more effective safety net for the poor. To be sure, the official also reportedly recommended extending the retirement age for workers and canceling benefits for working pensioners.

Inflation appears to have been dampened, but it is still a problem. Prices increased by over 2 percent in February alone. The phasing out of subsidies on food products and imported energy has hit low income households disproportionately hard. Unemployment continued to edge upward, reaching 8.3 percent in April. A sign of mounting discontent is a recent resurgence of trade union activism and demands to roll-back utility prices. That would be difficult to do, especially as the Russian exporters of natural gas and

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oil have been threatening to cut off supplies if their overdue bills are not paid by the thread-bare Lithuanian utilities.

Chronic problems also emerged with expanding deficits in the balance of payments and the government's budget. Despite higher tax rates, customs duties and a value added tax, revenues declined and tax avoidance and evasion became widespread. President Brazauskas admitted to the press that some 400,000 Lithuanians are not paying their income taxes. Another example is taken from what appears to be a favorite, but lamentable Lithuanian pastime — drinking. A commercial market researcher project has concluded that consumption of alcoholic beverages in Lithuania had increased to double the estimated domestic production levels in 1995. However, official (and taxed) imports of alcoholic beverages were registered at only one-tenth of domestic production levels. The rest supposedly were generated on the black market and therefore illegal. Ironically, the volume of smuggled imports appears to have increased after customs duties and fees on imported alcohol had been raised. This situation could be applied reasonably to other consumer goods and indicated that the black market continued to play a major role in the economy of Lithuania and deprived the government of revenues.

Unable to collect revenues, the government had to resort to international borrowing in order to pay for its spending. Having Lithuania's currency, the litas, tied to the dollar ruled out the option of simply inflating the local money at will by printing more of it. The cost of borrowing increased as interest rates were bid up, crowding out private sector borrowers in the process.

And then, there was last December's banking crises, which resulted in freezing deposits and bank accounts in a third of the banking system. For many, that event undermined decisively the confidence in the government's ability to run the economy and led to the downfall of former Prime Minister Šleževičius.

There may well be a happy ending for two of the closed banks, Litimpeks and the Joint-Stock Innovation Bank. The Central Bank announced in late April that the two banks would be allowed to resumé full operations by June subject to a further monitoring of their books by the Central Bank. An important element of the settlement appeared to be a devaluation of the share valuation of the two banks and an increase in the capitalization of the banks through further stock subscriptions.

New Legislation and Regulations

Foreign banking regulations are to be amended to harmonize Lithuania's commercial banking law with directives issued by the European Union. The change would permit the establishment of foreign owned banks in Lithuania and extend to them national treatment. They would be permit-

ted to accept deposits only if reciprocal rights were given to Lithuanian banks in the countries concerned.

A government directive adopted in April prescribes how foreign citizens who inherit land in Lithuania must dispose of it within a prescribed time. The procedures allow for land to be sold to designated recipients or at public auction, but sold it must be.

Prime Minister Stankevičius reportedly is considering amending the tax laws to remove the requirement for declaring and explaining the source of international money transfers into Lithuanian bank accounts. Under the proposal, such money transfers would be liable to a payment of a 15-20 percent tax and no further questions would be asked. The measure is billed as an incentive to repatriate funds held abroad by Lithuanian residents and legalize assets acquired through the black market. Opponents have dubbed the provision merely an incentive to money laundering. One such, economist Dr. Eugenijus Maldeikis, wrote that capital flows are fundamentally influenced by economic policies. Instead of easing measures aimed at holders of ill-gotten gains, the government should adopt policies that would improve the investment climate in general.

Loans Obtained, Investments Made

A number of new international loans and credits have been obtained recently by the Lithuanian Government. Some of the major ones are:

- World Bank credit line for \$30 million to support private sector development in the agricultural sector. The credit line is for 20 years at 7.5 percent annual interest. Eligible borrowers would be selected by the agricultural Bank and considered for loans not to exceed \$250,000. Users would include farmers, large and small, food processors, and agricultural services companies.
- European Investment Bank (EIB) recently granted a \$13 million loan to the Lithuanian natural gas utility for the construction of natural gas pipelines between Panevėžys and Šiauliai. Additional funds for the project reportedly were obtained from the Kuwaiti Fund and commercial loans. The EIB loan is repayable in 15 years at 8 percent annual interest.
- Chase Manhattan Bank reportedly is considering a major loan to Mažeikiai Oil Refinery for expansion projects. Neither the sum nor the terms have been disclosed.
- The Czech Government reportedly extended \$30 million in tied credits to finance Czech exports to Lithuania. During a recent visit to Lithuania by President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, the two countries agreed to a Free Trade Agreement and business deals that included the sale of \$4 million worth of Czech busses and a \$ 5 million dredging barge to use

on the Nemūnas River. The Czechs also sold some meteorological instruments and small hydroelectric plants.

- Financed by a \$10 million loan from the Danish Government, the city of Vilnius has opened a new sewage treatment facility that for the first time will fully treat all the sewage discharged into the Neris River. The biological treatment facility replaces a mechanical plant that treated only one-half of the sewage and consequently contributed to water pollution.

Lithuanian officials were planning to make an additional pitch for foreign loans and investments in mid-April at a conference sponsored in Sofia, Bulgaria by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). Finance Minister Algimantas Križinauskas was scheduled to lead the Lithuanian team in making a day-long presentation on Lithuanian investment needs in telecommunications, transportation, and environmental infrastructure projects to assembled representatives from a variety of agencies and private financial groups. They were to include the Nordic Investment Bank, JP Morgan, Merrill Lynch, Solomon Bros., and the Japanese bank, Daiwa.

Gediminas Miškinis, Secretary of the Ministry of Economics, announced recently that in 1995, total investments amounted to \$675 million. Private sector business investment reached \$218 million, private residential housing expenditures were \$98 million and investments by state and foreign companies were almost \$74 million. Spending on government projects was 15 percent of the total, or slightly over \$101 million. This was only 29 percent of the \$350 million authorized. The slow pace in contract awards was blamed on red tape and consequent procedural delays in project implementation.

What is new on the Lithuanian business scene?

- Connection to the Internet is now offered by seven companies. The leader, with 1000 subscribers, is Omnitel, reportedly partly owned by the Lithuanian-American businessman, Joe Kazickas. About 50 new customers sign up each month. The next two firms, Elnet and AIWA System, each report having approximately 300 subscribers. Typical rates are \$37.50 for connection and \$53 monthly for 30 hours of usage.
- The most profitable banks in Lithuania in 1995 were the following: the top earner, Vilnius Bank reported over \$1.8 million in profits; the Lithuanian State Agricultural Bank earned net profits of \$1.15 million (the other state-owned banks all lost money); Hermis Bank came next with profits of over \$900,000; and finally the relatively small Šiauliai-based Snoras Bank reported profits of about \$400,000. It also paid out the largest dividends of 30 percent. Snoras is the only one on the list that operated without having any credit lines from foreign banks.
- The Lithuanian magazine, Business News (*Verslo*

žinios), polled its business subscribers for a subjective list of the most influential Lithuanian decision makers who determine, formally or informally, business policies in Lithuania. The results, in rank order, were as follows: former prime minister and businessman, Adolfas Šleževičius; former prime minister and president of the industrial association, Bronislavas Lubys; president of Tauras Bank, Genadijus Konopliovas; former prime minister and center-right politician, Gediminas Vagnorius; Central Bank president, Reinoldijus Šarkinas; banking entrepreneur, Romualdas Visokavičius; chief inspector of the State Revenue Service, Petras Navikas; chief of the Customs Service, Vitalijus Gerzonas; president of the business conglomerate EBSW, Gintaras Petrikas, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Kazimieras Klimašauskas.

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Jeanne Dorr

Mothers

The beautiful month of May is when mothers are honored in Lithuania and in the United States. I would like to share with you some of my photographs of Lithuanian mothers. Some are biological mothers while others are foster mothers. You will see grandmothers and older sisters who are struggling to keep their families together. There are mothers in charge of small group homes who give guidance and love to their children. And you will see two mothers who care for many, many children. They are Grazina Landsbergis and Regina Svoba, who spend endless hours trying to raise the funds which permit the families to remain intact. They know and love the children and their

families. These are not only the "forgotten children" of Lithuanian Orphan care but, through your generosity and compassion, you have made them YOUR children, the children of the **BRIDGES** readers. Please continue to support Lithuanian Orphan Care. You will never know the impact you are having on the lives of these children. Please send your tax deductible checks to:

Lithuanian Orphan Care
2711 W. 71st Street
Chicago, IL 60612



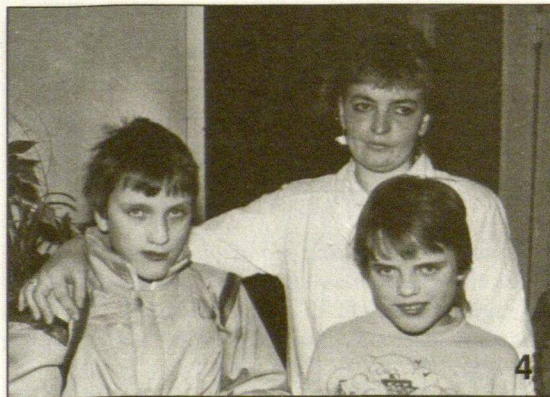
1. Mother holding child with cerebral palsy.

2. "Countryside Children" (Kaimo Vaikai). A 7-year-old being raised by two grandmothers. Jeanne Dorr in the center.



3. Regina Svoba with gifts from Kaimo Vaikai.

4. Children brought to a sanatorium through the efforts of Kaimo Vaikai and the Citizen's Newspaper (Valstiečio Laikraštis) of Marijampolė.





5. Mrs. Landsbergis visiting a young woman who is raising her children together with the children of her brothers and sisters.

6. Mrs. Landsbergis helping a young widow and her children.

7. Children from "Sodas."

8. Ten-year-old child burned in house fire pictured with his mother.

9. A woman who was living alone when she heard about the "Likimas" home in the Gobšiu region and donated a cow to the home has now become these children's "grandmother."

Ramunė Kubilius

Dance Festival Details

As the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival approaches, we wanted to provide **BRIDGES** readers with more specific information. For starters, the announcer at the Dance Festival is going to be Audrė Budrytė, whereas the head of the organizing committee is Juratė Budrienė (no relation). We are grateful to Jūratė for kindly providing us with the latest word on the Festival and related events.

Accommodations

The official hotel of the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival is the Hyatt Regency O'Hare, 9300 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Rosemont, Illinois. A special rate of \$65/night is available for festival participants and attendees. Up to four individuals can be accommodated in each room. For reservations, call the Hyatt directly (847-696-1234) or (800-233-1234) and mention the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival.

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased by mail by sending the following information: Name, address, telephone, number of tickets requested for which event and the total cost of the tickets, together with a check (made out and sent to the: *Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival, 2715 West 71st Street, Chicago, Illinois 60629*) for the required sum. Mail ticket purchases will be accepted until JUNE 25, 1996. Tickets may also be obtained for a surcharge from Ticketmaster (312-559-1212). Further information regarding the Festival and its events can be obtained by calling the Festival office at (312) 737-9504 or faxing your questions to them at (312) 436-6909.

Events

July 1-5

Jim Thompson (Illinois Center) Building, Chicago. A Cultural Exhibit will be on display from July 1-5. There will also be noontime dance performances on July 1st and 2nd at the Center's Food Court and Daley Plaza.

July 4-6

Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Rosemont. A folk art exhibit and sale will take place at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare. The hours are from 1:00 to 4:00 pm on Thursday, July 4th;

10:00 am to 4:00 pm on Friday, July 5th; 10:00 to noon and then 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Saturday, July 6th. Contact Albina Ramanauskienė at (708) 423-4095 for information on participating.

July 4

Lithuanian Youth Center. Antras Kaimas will perform Antanas Skėma's "Kalėdų Vaizdelis" at the Lithuanian Youth Center, 5620 S. Claremont Avenue, Chicago. Drama first act. Comedy second.

July 5

Navy Pier, Chicago. There will be a get-acquainted dance starting at 8:00 pm on Friday, July 5 at downtown Chicago's Navy Pier at which two Chicago bands, "Gintaras" and "Žiburyš" will perform. Tickets are \$20 each.

July 6

Rosemont Horizon. The Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival will take place at 1:00 pm. Tickets range in price from \$15 to \$25.

Rosemont Horizon. The festival will close with a banquet in the Grand Ballroom at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$50 each.

July 7

Nativity B.V.M. Church. Mass at 10:30 am. Address: 69th Street & Washtenaw Avenue, Chicago.

Lithuanian Evangelical-Lutheran "Tėviškė" Church. Services at 10:30 am. Address: 6621 S. Troy, Chicago.

Rosemont Horizon. The Lithuanian Olympic Basketball Team will play the Croatian Olympic Basketball Team at an exhibition game which will be held on Sunday, July 7th at 3:00 pm. The half-time performance will feature Lithuanian folk dances. This game will be telecast via PrimeSport. Tickets for this game can be purchased through TicketMaster by calling (312) 559-1212. at 10:30 am. Address: 6621 S. Troy, Chicago.

July 9

Lithuanian Youth Center. There will be a Post-Festival Concert at 7:00 pm. Address: 5620 S. Claremont Avenue, Chicago. Tickets are \$8 and \$10.

Transportation

The 10th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival Organizing Committee has arranged transportation to several Festival events. The Festival itself is scheduled to take place July 6, 1996 at the Rosemont Horizon in Rosemont, Illinois. Buses and vans are also planned to take passengers to the "Get Acquainted Dance" at Chicago's Navy Pier in addition to transporting people to the Festival and the banquet.

Trips will run:

TO: NAVY PIER, GET ACQUAINTED DANCE, JULY 5th

FROM: World Lithuanian Center, Lemont, IL
or
Marquette Park (69th Street & Washtenaw)
or
Hyatt Regency O'Hare Hotel, Rosemont, IL

TO: 10th LITHUANIAN FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL, JULY 6th

FROM: same 3 places as listed above
or
Brighton Park, IL (44th and California)

TO: BANQUET, JULY 6th evening

World Lithuanian Youth Center, Lemont, IL
or
Marquette Park (69th Street & Washtenaw)

Transportation costs range from \$3 to \$10, depending on the route. For further information, contact the Organizing Committee of the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival, 2715 West 71st Street, Chicago, IL 60629. Telephone: 312-737-9504. Fax: 312-436-6909.

Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

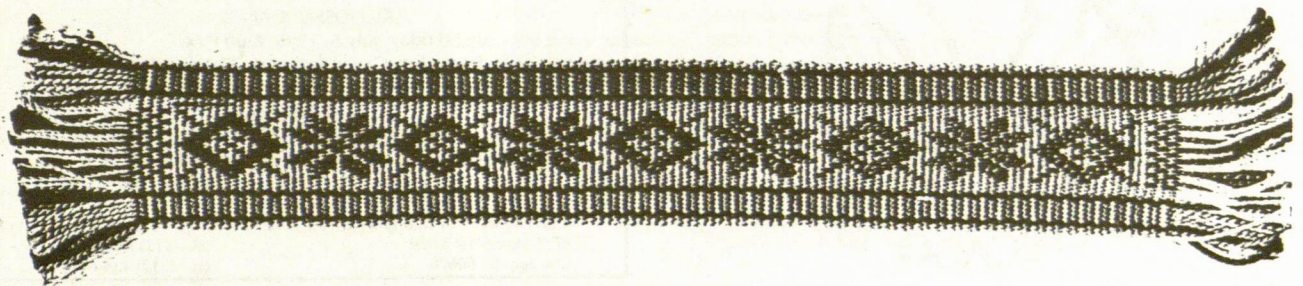
Participating Dance Groups

Argentina	"Inkaras" "Šaltinis"		"Spindulys" "Švyturys"
Brazil	"Nemūnas"		"Vėjas"
Canada	"Atžalynas" "Baltija" "Gintaras" "Gyvataras"	Indiana	"Vijūnas" "Viltis" "Žiogeliai"
Lithuania	"Grandinėlė" (Panevėžys) "Vėtrungė (Klaipėda)	Kansas	"Aidas"
U.S.A.		Maryland	"Karaliaus Mindaugo Lit Mokykla" "Malūnas" "Ratelis"
California	"Spindulys" "Vakarų Vaikai"	Massachusetts	"Sambūris"
Colorado	"Rūta"	Michigan	"Audinys" "Šaltinis" "Žiburio Lit Mokykla"
Connecticut	"Berželis" "Vėtra"	Nebraska	"Aušra"
Delaware	"Aušrinėlė" "Žilvinas"	New Jersey	"Liepsna"
District of Columbia	"Juosta" "Lazda"	New York	"Lazdynas" "Tryptinis"
Florida	"Audra" "Banga"	Ohio	"Grandinėlė" "Šv. Kazimiero Lit Mokykla"
Illinois	"Čikagos Lit Mokykla" "Gija" "Grandis" "Lētūnas" "Lietuvos Vyčiai" "Maironio Lit Mokykla" "Perkūnas"	Pennsylvania	"Aušrinėlė" "Neris" "Vakarinė"
		Washington	"Lietutis"
		Wisconsin	"Gilės Lit Mokykla" "Klumpė" "Žaibas"

Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

Soloists, Choral Groups and Ensembles

Barniškis, Algimantas .....tenor Chicago, IL	Valikonytė-Talandienė, Vita .....soprano Ithaca, NY
Biėnkauskaitė, Marytė .....soprano Brockton, MA	Voketaitis, Arnold .....bass baritone Chicago, IL
Bruožytė-Muliolienė, Virginija .....soprano Euclid, OH	Boston Men's Octet .....Daiva Matulionytė & Bronius Banaitis Boston, MA
Čiurlionis, Antanas .....“Pupų Dėdė” Chicago, IL	“Dainava” Ensemble .....Darius Polikaitis Downer's Grove, IL
Eidukaitė-Fanelli, Dalia .....soprano Chicago, IL	“Dainavos Aidai” Quartet .....Darius Udrys Jackson, MI
Gaižiūnienė, Audronė .....soprano Belvedere, IL	“Dainos” Choir .....Irena Manomaitienė Juno Beach, FL
Jonykaitė-Bertsch, Kristina .....soprano Omaha, NE	“Dievo Motinos” Choir .....Rita Kliorienė Cleveland, OH
Kežėnas, Bronius .....tenor Negley, OH	Lithuanian Folk Song Quartet .....Juozas Kasinskas & Bronius Krokys Philadelphia, PA
Kiaušaitė, Angelė .....singer Elizabeth, NJ	“Lietuvos Vyčių” Choir .....Frank Zapolis Chicago, IL
Kopūstaitė, Lijana .....soprano Cicero, IL	Los Angeles Men's Quartet .....Emmanuelis Jarašūnas & Raimonda Apeikytė Santa Monica, CA
Kučienienė, Dalia .....soprano Chicago, IL	New York Lithuanian Choir .....Gintarė Bukauskienė Brooklyn, NY
Momkus, Vacys & Margarita .....duets Chicago, IL	Rochester Lithuanian Choir .....Raimundas Obalis Rochester, NY
Pakštaitė-Smith, Rūta .....singer New York, NY	St. Petersburg Women's Quartet .....D. Mackialienė St. Petersburg, FL
Petkaitis, Jurgis .....organist West Hartford, IL	“Sietynas” Mixed Choir .....Antanas Skridulis Dayton Beach, FL
Polikaitytė Vilkienė .....soprano	“Sodautas” Folk Ensemble .....Gita Kupčinskienė Walpole, MA
Rakauskaitė-Štromienė .....singer Hillsdale, MI	“Šv. Kazimiero” Choir .....Viktoras Ralyas Los Angeles, CA
Ralys, Viktoras .....choirmaster Los Angeles, CA	“Šv. Kazimiero” Lithuanian School Choir .Rita Kliorienė & Eglė Laniauskienė Cleveland, OH
Sakadolskienė, Emilija .....choirmaster Silver Spring, MD	
Sokas, Ričardas .....organist Chicago, IL	
Stempulžienė, Aldona .....mezzo-soprano S. Euclid, OH	
Strolia, Faustas .....choirmaster Oak Forest, IL	



Tenth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

Instrumentalists, Directors, Orchestras, Composers & Critics

Aglinskas, Petras	.....Guitarist	Motekaitis, Manigirdas	.....Pianist
	Oak Lawn, IL		Chicago, IL
Bagdonienė, Natalija	.....Flutist	Padrėža, Lilija	.....Ballet
	Los Angeles		Los Angeles
Budginas, Rudolfas	.....Pianist	Padrėža, Valdas	.....Ballet
	Los Angeles		Los Angeles
Čepinskaitė, Gintė	.....Pianist	Polikaitis, Darius	.....Composer
	Cicero, IL		Downers Grove, IL
Juodišiuotė-Rubinski	.....Kanklininkė	Reklaitytė, Elena	.....Pianist
	Cleveland, OH		Chicago, IL
Kasinskas, Juozas	.....Composer	Smetona, Antanas	.....Pianist
	Philadelphia		Cleveland, OH
Kasinskienė, Brigita	.....Violinist	Sokas, Ričardas	.....Pianist
	Philadelphia		Chicago, IL
Kavaliauskaitė-Covelesky, Frances	.....Pianist	Stravinskas, Povilas	.....Pianist
	Randolph, NJ		Hollis Hills, NY
Kučienienė, Dalia	.....Critic	Vasaitis, Alvydas	.....Pianist
	Chicago, IL		Palos Park, IL
Kuprevičius, Andrius	.....Pianist	Venclauskienė, Loreta	.....Critic
	Cleveland Heights, OH		Chicago, IL
Liaubienė, Danutė	.....Pianist	Voketaitis, Arnold	.....Critic
	Medina, OH		Chicago, IL
Lapinskas, Darius	.....Composer	Zubovas, Rokas	.....Pianist
	Chicago, IL		Chicago, IL
Mickutė, IevaViolinist	Zubovienė, SonataPianist
	Los Angeles		Chicago, IL
Mockus, RobertPianist		
	Chicago, IL		



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Rosemont Horizon, Rosemont, IL

and the other Festival events

FRIENDSHIP DANCE

Friday, July 5, 1996, 8:00 P.M.
Navy Pier, Grand Ballroom, Chicago, IL

FESTIVAL BANQUET

Saturday, July 6, 1996, 7:00 P.M.
Hyatt Regency O'Hare, Grand Ballroom, Rosemont, IL

Information:

X LITHUANIAN FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL
2715 West 71st Street
Chicago, IL 60629

tel.: (312) 737-9504
fax.: (312) 436-6909

Ramunė Kubilius

Jūratė and Kastytis

On April 20 and 21, 1996, the Lithuanian Opera Company of Chicago celebrated its 40th anniversary with a performance of *Jūratė ir Kastytis*, an opera in two acts by Kazys Viktoras Banaitis. The production, which included numerous soloists and musicians from Lithuania, was the fruit of a joint collaboration with the Kaunas State Musical Theater.

The Lithuanian Opera Chorus of Chicago and several soloists have been invited by the Kaunas State Music Theater to sing in the production of *Jūratė and Kastytis* to be staged in Lithuania this summer. The opera will open the new season. Performances are scheduled for Kaunas, Vilnius, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys.

BRIDGES congratulates the Lithuanian Opera Company of Chicago on this occasion and wishes it many more decades of success!



KAUNO VALSTYBINIS MUZIKINIS TEATRAS

JŪRATĖ IR KASTYTIS

Teatro vadovas, režisierius	— Gintas Žilys
Dirigentas	— Julius Geniušas
Dailininkė	— Janina Malinauskaitė
Choreografas	— Jurijus Smoriginas
Chormeisteriai	— Ramūnas Tilvikas
	— Donatas Jakūbonis
Koncertmeisterės	— Rasa Janulevičiūtė
	— Vida Rekienė
	— Ligija Richterytė
Orkestro koncertmeisteris	— Arūnas Dirvanauskas
Režisieriaus asistentė	— Aina Paulauskaitė

Šis „Jūratės ir Kastyčio“ operos pastatymas Čikagoje paruoštas kartu su Kauno valstybiniu muzikiniu teatru.

Kaune operos premjera įvyko 1996 m. kovo 16 d.

Jūratė ir Kastytis

[Synopsis from the Program]

ACT I

Scene I

In Lithuania, on the shores of the Baltic Sea, stands an ancient fishermen's village. Here men through the centuries inherited the skill for fishing as their very lives depended on it. The fishermen, preparing to sail, are singing lustily: "O sea of beauty why do you roar? Why do you sigh? Are you expecting guests?" They sing on, their silver nets spread wide: they will snare a mermaid, a water sprite of the green sea. For their sisters or their loved ones they will bring back pearls of amber and golden fish. Maidens and wives arrive to see them off, to wish them good fortune and a safe return. The fishermen pray to the God Perkūnas, asking his blessing on their trip and the forestalling of wicked wind. They bid farewell to their dear ones and leave.

Kastytis arrives late. He looks wistfully out to sea and sings a song of yearning. From the sea, the fishermen answer his song, awakening Kastytis from his reverie. In the distance, Jūratė rises from the sea intently listening to his song and comes toward Kastytis. Bewitched by her beauty, Kastytis is speechless. Jūratė sings "Kastyti, forget your earthly dreams, a beautiful new world awaits you." Recovering from his awe, he asks Jūratė: "Who are you? Where do you come from? Jūratė replies: "The winds bend at my command, and at my word turbulent becomes the sea. I rule the green sea — and I love you, Kastyti."

Kastytis tries to resist her charms. He loves Rūtelė. However, Jūratė continues her wiles. Mermaids (undinės) appear from the sea, singing to the rhythm of the waves: "When the moon rises, making a golden path in the skies, the sea will blossom with pearls." Slowly coming forward they continue, "We know no pain, nor death, nor suffering; we are young eternally!" The sorceresses sink into the sea.

Kastytis, as if awakened from a haunting dream, repeats the words of the mermaids and Jūratė. Dazed by these worldless words, and such beauty, he is exhilarated as by fiery wine. He is bewitched. Jūratė persists relentlessly: "Kastyti, when your boat kisses the waves, my sea maidens will meet and gently rock it, and strewing wreaths of roses in its pathway, they will guide you to where I will be lovingly awaiting you. My amber chambers will gleam with the brilliance of lightning." Kastytis is bewildered by Jūratė's expression of love. Is this real, or is it a dream? It seems the whole world is passionately aflame.

Enraptured by the singing and beauty of Jūratė and the mermaids, Kastytis hurries toward his boat. With a soaring song he sails away. The scene ends with Rūtelė rushing in and sorrowfully watching as Kastytis sails away.

Scene II

It's morning. Maidens mending fishing nets are singing: "The sea beckons to our loved ones, while we mend the nets." They do not notice the approach of Kastytis' mother who is searching for her son who did not return with the other fishermen. She muses: "The sea is so clear and quiet, the waves ripple so softly. Why hasn't Kastytis returned ... maybe the Gods are angered?" Mother notices Rūtelė who watches the sea and in deep sorrow waits for Kastytis. Both women have a short conversation. The mother tries to console the young Rūtelė, but to no avail. She leaves while Rūtelė sings her plaintive aria.

Finally Rūtelė cries out: "Kastyti, Kastyti! Where are you now!" and suddenly she sees a vision: It is Kastytis sailing at sea.

Here Kastytis sings a most impressive aria, a Barcarole, titled, "Laivyne" (A Boatman's Song) from the pen of a foremost Lithuanian poet, Balys Sruoga, which the composer, K.V. Banaitis, inserted into this opera.

As the vision disappears, the voices of Jūratė and the mermaids are heard in the distance.

ACT II

Scene: Jūratė's amber palace, at the bottom of the sea. After a short musical introduction the curtain rises on a scene of mermaids dancing and joyously singing of the wonders of life in the sea.

As Jūratė and Kastytis descend into the sea, they sing a duet expressing their rapture for life and love. The mermaids lead them to the throne, stewing their path with roses, then break into wild happy dancing, singing: "This is Jūratė's wedding festival." From the distance comes a clap of thunder. It rolls in closer and louder. The dancing subsides. The thunder increases. Jūratė commands the winds to raise the soaring waves to their highest, to greet Perkūnas, the god of Thunder, with the greatest of joy. The thunder becomes ominous. The Sea Winds warn Jūratė, Perkūnas is threatening a horrible revenge because she, a Sea Goddess, dared to love a mortal. Only a God should have been her choice. She can avert his wrath only if she renounces her love for Kastytis, and he returns to earth!

Jūratė rises from her throne, comes forward and proclaims: "Winds! My brothers! I do not fear the threats of the Gods! What can they do to me when my heart is filled with the fire of love? I rule the sea! Winds, my fleet ones! Tell the Gods: Jūratė loves a son of the earth." Kastytis to Jūratė: "If we are to die, we shall perish together." The Gods send down their wrath. The winds die down but the thunder

LITHUANIAN OPERA

JŪRATĖ IR KASTYTIS

Opera in Two Acts

By Kazys Viktoras Banaitis

Libretto — Bronė Buivydaite
Barcarole — Balys SruogaApril 20, 1996, 7:30 P.M.
April 21, 1996, 3:00 P.M.

Characters in order of appearance

Kastytis , A Fisherman	Virgilijus Noreika
Jūratė , Goddess of the Baltic Sea	Sabina Martinaitytė
Mother of Kastytis	Aldona Stempuzis
	Birutė Sodaitytė (April 21)
Rūtelė , A Fisherman's Daughter in love with Kastytis	Aušra Cicėnaitė
	Audronė Gaižiūnas (April 21)
Father of Kastytis	Gediminas Maciulevičius
	Vaclovas Momkus (April 21)

The Sea Winds, Fishermen, Maidens, Mermaids (undinės)

Dancers:

Ieva Dabašinskienė,	Daiva Raškauskienė,
Audronė Einienė,	Vaiva Sapiežinskaitė,
Rasa Malinauskienė,	Asta Žiliuvienė,
Ina Radionova,	Laimutė Žiupkienė

Conductor	— Julius Geniušas
Staged by	— Gintas Žilys
Sets and Costumes	— Janina Malinauskaitė
Chorus Master	— Ričardas Sokas
Lighting, Stage Technical	— Thomas Rusnak,
Supervision	— Laima Šulaitytė-Day
Make-Up	— Julius Balutis

roars. The amber palace darkens, lightning strikes. Kastytis and Jūratė stand ready to meet death. The mermaids, caught up in the tempest, dance wildly. The Sea Winds once more warn Jūratė that death is near. But Jūratė has no fear of dying with her beloved. With one last violent clap of thunder, lightning shatters the amber palace. Darkness. The storm subsides.

The ravages of the storm leave Kastytis deeply desolate and barely alive, chained to a rock on the shore. In retrospect he remembers Jūratė, his mother, his friendly fishermen, his home where the sun was always bright and where the wind softly murmured through the fir trees. He will never see them again. From far away, like the echo of a dream, he hears the song of the fishermen.

LIETUVIŲ OPEROS CHORAS
LITHUANIAN OPERA CHORUS

1996

Aukštuolienė, Natalija
Aukštuolis, Vytautas
Bičkienė, Alina
Bičiūnaitė, Gražina
Bobinienė, Jonė
Buntinaitė, Aldona
Burneikis, Romas
Čelkis, Petras
(Išdainavo 40 metų)
Dirmantienė, Raminta
Dobrovolskienė, Aurelija
Dumbrytė, Nijolė
Dunčia, Dalius
Endzinas, Adas
Jasionienė, Gražina
Jokūbauskas, Edvardas
Juškienė, Marija
Kairytė, Jolanta

Knopienė, Elena
Končienė, Giedrė
Korzonas, Raimundas
Kugauda, Dainius
Markvaldienė, Stefa
Mickevičienė, Birutė
Mieliulienė, Rūta
Mockaitis, Jonas
Momkus, Vaclovas
Nedveckienė, Giedrė
Olis, Pranas
Oželienė, Evelina
Paulauskaitė, Nelia
Perutis, Glenn
Prialgauskas, Vytautas
Putrius, Algirdas
Račkauskienė, Ramunė
Radzius, Vytautas

Rasutienė, Lidija
Rūkštelytė-Sundstrom, Eglė
Savrimas, Julius
Skaisgirys, Kazys
Skirpstūnienė, Nijolė
Smolinskas, Albinas
Smolinskienė, Regina
Stankaitienė, Dalia
Stauskaitė, Gražina
Šedienė, Jurgita
Valdukaitis, Rudolfas
Vidžiūnas, Jurgis
Zadojenko, Ilona
Žadeikienė, Valerija
Žukauskas, Bronius
Žukauskas, Vladas

DAINININKAI ARTISTAI IŠ LIETUVOS

Edvardas Gutauskas
Jonas Janulevičius
Juozas Janušaitis
Violeta Liugailienė
Juozas Malikonis

Mykolas Rekys
Danutė Tamulienė
Danielius Vėbra
Vaidas Vyšniauskas
Benjaminsas Želvys

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Povilas Grigas
Artūras Šlapikas
Violeta Vonžodaitė
Laima Aleknavičiūtė
Daiva Kraujutaitienė
Rasuolė-Vitalė Čiuladienė

II smuikai / Second Violins

Aldona Budginaitė
Elena Šimkienė
Nijolė-Janina Baršauskienė
Virginija Padleckienė
Vida Bliūdžiuvienė

Violos / Violas

Dalia Šlapikienė
Vida-Joana Engelmanaite
Nomedą Jozeliūnienė
Liucija Baltrušaitienė

Violončelės / Violoncellos

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Rūta-Kristina Čiapienė
Henrikas-Vytautas Kunickas
Algirdas Janonis

Kontrabasai / Bases

Ramūnas-Bonifacas Reklaitis
Antanas Dzevaltauskas

Arfa / Harp

Valerija Baranauskienė

Fleitos / Flutes

Valdas Kijauskas
Irenėjus Urbonavičius

Obojus / Oboe

Stasys Kraujelis

Klarnetai / Clarinets

Romas Kraujutaitis
Gediminas Briauka

Fagotas / Bassoon

Arvydas Padvaiskas

Valtornos / French Horns

Antanas Čiuladis
Albinas Tamulis

Trompetė / Trumpet

Arvydas Dilius

Mušamieji / Percussion

Benjaminsas-Juozas Kazlauskas
Vidas Karnatka

Ramunė Kubilius

Excerpts from Lithuanian Sources in the US

First Catechism

In 1997, Lithuania will celebrate the 450th anniversary of the publication of its first Lithuanian language book. Published in Karaliaučius by Martynas Mažvydas, this book, commonly referred to as a catechism, should more accurately be called a textbook. The Lutheran catechism portion takes up about one fourth of book, while the rest consists of a dedication, a hymn book, a poem...

Lithuanians were not able to properly celebrate the 400th anniversary (in 1947) because the portraits of Lenin and Stalin decorated our book halls at that time...

A special committee has been established to commemorate over a period of two years (1996-97) this important event — the first time that the Lithuanian language appeared in printed format. 1997 has been declared "Lithuanian BookYear"...UNESCO has helped finance a brochure entitled "The First Lithuanian Book and its Cultural Context" which is also available via the Internet...

On June 12-17, 1996 an international conference will be held in Luebeck, Germany on the topic of "German-Lithuanian Book Ties Over the Past 450 years." Twenty Lithuanians will be presenters. The program will also include a performance by "Aukuras" from Klaipėda, and a field trip to the birthplace of Martin Luther. The Berlin State Library invited Lithuania to bring its old Lithuanian book exhibit.

(DRAUGAS, 4/13/96, from a longer article by Domas Kaunas, Vilnius University professor and secretary of the 450th anniversary commission)

Lithuanian Composer Lauded

Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of composer of Kazimieras Viktoras Banaitis began on March 3, 1996 in his birthplace, Sintautai, Lithuania. The event continues with other celebrations including one at the Philharmonic in Vilnius. Two Banaitis relatives from America joined the celebration.

[On April 20-21, 1996 at Morton High School, Cicero, IL, the Lithuanian Opera Company marked its 40th anniversary performance by staging Banaitis' opera "Juratė ir Kastytis," featuring longtime choir members from the

Chicagoland area, and guest soloists and musicians from Lithuania.-rk]

(DARBININKAS, 4/12/96)

Lithuanian Artists Exhibit in Manhattan

Art and kugelis were on the menu at the Our Lady Gate of Dawn Parish in Manhattan on March 29th, 1996. Thanks to the initiative of art exhibit organizer, Auksė Trojans, the artwork of Celestinas Gerutis, Laima Sprangauskas and Indrė Beleris was viewed by an enthusiastic audience which later consumed kugelis prepared by Laima Michailovich and Birutė Palčiauskas — who hand-grated 70 pounds of potatoes! New York has many art galleries, but it is spiritually uplifting to visit an art exhibit and witness the creativity of artists whose beginnings are rooted in Lithuania.

(DARBININKAS, 4/12/96)

Huevos Rancheros, Anyone?

A Tex-Mex bar has opened in Vilnius. The owner of "Armadillo" is S. Plinkus, also owner of the "Langas" gallery. The four-room bar, which is open until 5 am, features strongly-spiced Mexican food. Mexican beer and tequila are not yet offered at the bar but should be available soon. Visitors can play billiards, darts or roll the dice. The only things visitors will not be able to do is fight, or make their way into the bar through the signature swinging wooden doors of a Hollywood western.

(DARBININKAS, 4/12/96, from an article originally featured in LIETUVIŲ BALSAS)

Thomas Venclova in English

Northwestern University Press will be publishing the poems of Tomas Venclova in English. That is the first instance that a Lithuanian poet's work is published by a mainstream publisher through no particular intervention of Lithuanians.

(DARBININKAS, 4/5/96)

Land of Castles

Lithuania has thirteen Gothic and Renaissance castles, six of which house museums. During the period of Soviet occupation, the castles at Trakai and Biržai were renovated. Now, efforts are underway to renovate the castle in Vilnius (Gediminas Hill). Studies are being conducted on the castle at the foot of the hill. Work is also underway in Kaunas and Medininkai. Lithuania is also home to 700 mounds ("piliakalniai").

(DARBININKAS, 4/5/96)

Restoring Old Town

The old town of Vilnius has been listed as one of the world's heritage cities. The World Bank has committed funds to assist in its regeneration. A commission has been appointed to plan how to adapt the old town to the modern world.

The current situation is sad. There are many unoccupied and neglected buildings but the Vilnius city government will rent them out with leases up to 99 years. The rental process is public, and private citizens and groups may apply to be renters. The cost for one square meter is 9-20 litai.

Rental agreements include provisions requiring that any renovation work be done in accordance with the old town regeneration project, and that the renovation project not last longer than two-four years. After renovation, renters may apply to be owners.

We invite American Lithuanians to think about being investors and renters in the renovation of the old town of Vilnius. A mayor's term is only two years in Lithuania. Two years is a short time in which to accomplish anything, and I plan to be a candidate to be mayor again.

(DARBININKAS, 4/5/96, from an interview by Kęstutis K. Miklas with Vilnius mayor Alis Vidūnas)

Lithuanian Textile Artist Honored

In Kingston, Ontario, revered Lithuanian folk art scholar, Antanas Tamošaitis, celebrated his 90th birthday and prepared for his trip to Vilnius, where he will take his work and that of his late wife to the new gallery "Židinys-Romuva." About forty well-wishers gathered at the home of his sister-in-law, weaver Aldona Veselka, to sign his guest book and honor him for his life and work.

Antanas Tamošaitis was born late on the night of February 15th, 1906 (or maybe early on the 16th, he likes to joke). From his youth, Antanas liked to study the traditional

woven fabrics of his mother and sisters. He began to collect and categorize Lithuanian folk art from his grade school days. Tamošaitis worked as an art instructor, organized folk art exhibits, taught textile art at the Vilnius Art Academy, Lithuanian Agricultural Institute and elsewhere. In the post-war years, he worked and studied at the Salzburg, Austria Meisterschule, at the Freiburg, Germany Ecole des Arts et Metiers. In Montreal, Canada Tamošaitis founded an Academy of Art and Crafts. He and his wife Anastazija, a weaver, eventually moved to Kingston, Ontario, where their folk museum and studio drew students and admirers from near and far. (Mr. and Mrs. Tamošaitis were the co-authors of the colorful books *LITHUANIAN NATIONAL COSTUME*, 1979, and *LITHUANIAN SASHES*, 1983, both published by the Lithuanian Folk Art Institute of Toronto, ONT, and numerous other studies.-rk)

The birthday celebration was organized by Aldona Veselka, her son Linas and his wife Rasa (also a weaver-rk). We wish Antanas many more years of work. May he happily celebrate his 100th birthday, and may the treasures of his life's work find a good home in the wonderfully renovated museum in the old town section of Vilnius.

(DRAUGAS, 4/5/96, from an article by Elena Ozelis)

Folk Dance Festival Update

Arrangements for the 10th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival are well underway. The festival will take place at the Rosemont Horizon in Rosemont, IL July 6, 1996. Tickets may be obtained from Ticketmaster (312-559-1212) and other venues in Chicago, Lemont and Canada. For information, contact the organizing committee at 312-737-9504 or fax your request to them at 312-436-6909.

Forty-seven groups are scheduled to participate, including "Grandinelé" from Panevėžys, Lithuania, "Inkaras" and "Šaltinis" from Argentina, and "Nemūnas" from Brazil. One thousand, seven hundred and fifty (that's 1750!) dancers are expected.

About 120 persons from overseas will seek housing with Chicagoland families in order to save expenses. Please contact the organizing committee if you can help out.

The groups will dance to recorded music — cassettes recorded in Lithuania have already been sent out. The opening hymns of the festival will be sung by soloists and local Chicagoland choirs. Ten tones of a bell will mark the 10th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival. Chicagoland actress Audrė Budrys will serve as announcer.

The festival will be preceded by one and a half days of rehearsals. There will be a get-acquainted dance at downtown Chicago's Navy Pier at which two Chicago bands, "Gintaras" and "Žiburys" will perform. A folk art exhibit

and sale will take place at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare from July 4-6th (see below for information on participating). The festival will close with a banquet in the Grand Ballroom.

Five thousand copies of the bilingual program booklet will be published, featuring write-ups and photographs from the history of the festival, of participating groups, and featuring photographs honoring the 120 member voluntary organizing committee members. The Executive Chair is Juratė Budrys and the Artistic Director is Violeta Fabianovich. The festival is sponsored by the Canadian and American Lithuanian Communities, and the program is the responsibility of the Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute.

(DRAUGAS, 4/2/96, from an article by Rita Likander)

Calling All Artists, Artisans and Craftspeople

There is still an opportunity to exhibit and/or sell your wares at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare's ballroom during the Tenth Lithuanian Folk Festival. Please contact Albina Ramanauskienė of Oak Lawn, IL at 708-423-4095.

Antras Kaimas Performs July 4th

For those of you looking to avoid the fireworks on the Fourth of July, Antras Kaimas will be performing at Jaunimo Centras. The show is Antanas Skėma's "Kalėdu Vaizdelis." Drama first act. Comedy second. Be sure to spread the word.

[Karolis Zukauskas, a member of Kaimas]

The Hearth is Extinguished

The Lithuanian Cultural Center in Brooklyn, NY known as Židinys (the Hearth) was broken into on March 24th, 1996. The burglar entered through a window and, finding nothing to steal, broke a stained glass window and destroyed various pictures. The culprit assaulted and injured Rev. Pranciškus Gedgaudas, OFM, but the injured priest was still able to call police for help.

The break-in was reported in the press and Rev. Gedgaudas is quoted in the *NEW YORK TIMES* as saying that he feels pain not so much from his head injury as from the thought of the P. Jonikas stained glass window that has graced the monastery for 38 years. Its repair would cost \$10,000. The *NEW YORK TIMES* reporter also mentioned that the religious order's car had been broken into twice in the last three months and that the neighborhood was not what it used to be.

The Lithuanian Cultural Center had been built in Brooklyn in the post-World II years when about 25,000 Lithuanian immigrants moved to New York, largely to the Brooklyn area. At the time, sixteen Franciscan fathers and brothers lived at the monastery. They founded the Franciscan Fathers Press which published ten journals and various newspapers.

Now, only three Franciscans remain at the monastery in Brooklyn. Many have died, others moved to Florida upon retirement, and the younger generation moved to other cities in America. Only about 2500 Lithuanian-Americans live in New York. The printing press produces only one publication — the weekly newspaper *DARBININKAS*.

Taking all of that into consideration, the Franciscans consider that their mission in New York is completed. They are planning on selling the Lithuanian Cultural Center property (asking price is \$4,000,000). Rev. Gedgaudas plans on moving to the Lithuanian Franciscan monastery in Kennebunkport, Maine.

(DRAUGAS, 4/11/96, from an article by P. Palys)

If it's Tuesday, This Must be Orlando...

On March 22nd, twenty-two business people from Lithuania arrived in New York for a tour organized by the G.T. International Travel Agency. The group, led by a Lithuanian vice-president and a guide from Lithuania, toured New York for four days, visited the sites of Washington, D.C. for three days, and spent five days of rest in Orlando, Florida. In Florida, the group had the difficult decision of choosing between Disney World or resting and swimming. By April 3rd, the whirlwind tour was over, and the group returned to Lithuania.

(DRAUGAS, 4/11/96)

Lithuanians in London

The new Lithuanian Embassy was opened March 13th at 84 Gloucester Place in the City of Westminster in the heart of London. The new Embassy was formally dedicated by Lithuania's Ambassador to Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Raimundas Rajeckas.

The facility is available for use by other Lithuanian groups now that the Lithuanian Center facility has closed. The Maironis Lithuanian Saturday School was scheduled to begin classes on March 16th. St. Casimir Lithuanian Parish pastor Rev. Jonas Sakevičius, MIC, blessed the facility. The many attendees also honored previous Lithuanian Ambassadors to Great Britain with a moment of silence.

(TĖVIŠKĖS ŽIBURIAI, 4/9/96)

Lithuanian Language School in Gardinas

A small Lithuanian Sunday school has been organized in Gardinas, Belarus. The Lithuanian group "Tėvynė," under the leadership of Algimantas Dirginčius, has organized the school which now has nineteen young children of Lithuanian descent. Three teachers come each week from Druskininkai, Lithuania to teach the children Lithuanian language basics.

It is hoped that by next year, the school will also be able to begin teaching Lithuanian history as well, and form a class to be taught entirely in Lithuanian. Textbooks have been promised from the "Atgimimas" middle school in Druskininkai.

The Lithuanians in Gardinas also plan to transmit a half-hour program in Lithuanian on Belarus television. The "Tėvynė" group has 69 registered members, although it is known there are more Lithuanians living in the city. The Foreign Ministry of Lithuania has given the "Tėvynė" organization the right to issue visas for travel into Lithuania.

(TĖVIŠKĖS ŽIBURIAI, 4/9/96)

Čepinskas Solos at Juilliard

On April 2, 1996 Vilhelmas Čepinskas played a solo violin concert in New York's Juilliard Music School's Morse Concert Hall. The Kaunas native is a second year continuing student of Professor Dorothy DeLay's violin class. He played Beethoven, Brahms, Debussy, Dvorak..as well as the "Recitatyvas ir Scherzo" of Lithuanian composer, Balsys. The concert was very well received by Juilliard professors and students alike. It was called the "Recital of the Year."

(DARBININKAS, 4/19/96, from an article by dr. Giedrė Krumpikas)

Check Out the Credits

Cicero, IL native Vytas Ruginis has landed a supporting role in the new movie "Broken Arrow" starring John Travolta, Christian Slater, and Samantha Mathis. "Broken Arrow" marks the 14th movie in the actor's career.

Vytas Ruginis began acting on Broadway 11 years ago, and later won roles in theater and films, most recently moving into action films. Vytas Ruginis grew up in Cicero, IL where he attended St. Anthony Lithuanian Parish school. His father Ignas, still lives there, and his two brothers live in the Chicago area.

(DARBININKAS, 4/19/96, from an article by E. Sulaitis)

Ethics in the Media

Lithuanian journalists and publishers representing the press, radio and television industries passed an ethics code March 25th in Vilnius. The code, based on the Lithuanian Republic's Constitution, the European Human Rights Convention and other guidelines, was prepared after examining 200 suggestions. Baltic Media Centre representative S.D. Holmberg of Denmark congratulated the journalists. Lithuania's Open Society Fund (Soros Foundation) Journalism Center initiated the project, which was published in Lithuania's major newspapers. The meeting also voted on a mechanism to inform the public and a self-regulation project for journalists.

(DARBININKAS, 4/19/96)

New Lithuanian Language Learning Publication

A small quantity of a workbook/tutorial entitled *Mokomės Kalbėti Lietuviškai/Learning to Speak Lithuanian* is available for \$15 from the Lithuanian Educational Council in Chicago. The book, written by Janina Janavičienė and Bonnie J. Straight in 1994, was sponsored by the Lithuania Christian College, Valstybinė Klaipėdos Naftos Eksperto Įmonė (the Klaipėda State Oil Terminal) and VI Spaustuvė "Rytas" (the "Rytas" State Publishing House). The book features 30 lessons covering everyday life situations with a short presentation of essential points of grammar.

For information about Educational Council-produced or distributed materials, please contact the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. Educational Council, 13648 Kickapoo Trail, Lockport, IL 60441, tel & fax: 708-301-6410.

Lithuanian Language Teachers' Week at Camp Dainava

The annual Lithuanian language teachers' week and concurrent Lithuanian language classes (see below) will take place at Camp Dainava in Michigan August 4-11, 1996. For further information contact: Regina Kučas, President, the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. Educational Council, 13648 Kickapoo Trail, Lockport, IL 60441, tel & FAX: 708-301-6410.

12th Annual Lithuanian Language Course at Camp Dainava

This language-learning program operating from August 4 - 11, 1996 under the auspices of the Lithuanian Educational Council of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., is designed for beginners, intermediate and advanced stu-

dents or those just wishing to refresh their Lithuanian language. Learn from experienced instructors in the vacation-like surroundings and nurturing atmosphere of Manchester, Michigan.

For information and application, call or write:

Mr. Vytautas Jonaitis
1546 Quarry N.W.*
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616-458-6378)*

[Please note corrections to address and telephone number printed incorrectly in the March issue of **BRIDGES**.]

Please send news items of interest to:
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Scene from the Ninth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival held in 1992 at the Rosemont Horizon.
(Photo by Zigmas Degutis, Chicago)

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Studying in Seattle

The Department of Scandinavian Languages & Literatures at the University of Washington in Seattle may become the site of a permanently endowed program of Baltic Studies if a capital campaign to obtain funding from the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian communities is successful. This program would assure the teaching of all three Baltic languages at the University as well as provide the opportunity for scholars to specialize in Baltic Studies.

This Department teaches the languages of the Nordic nations, along with courses covering the culture, folklore, history and politics of the region. The Department is one of the largest in the U.S. The Program in Baltic Studies is also closely associated with the prestigious Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University.

Echoing the post-Soviet expansion of political, economic and cultural relations between the Nordic countries and the Baltic States (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are cases in point, partnering the Baltic countries with their Scandinavian rather than their East European neighbors), the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literatures at the University of Washington recognizes the Baltic States as part of a larger region encompassing the entire Scandinavian Region. It has, therefore, given the opportunity for a Baltic Studies Program to be established there.

In 1993, the University of Washington recognized a national need for more university courses in Baltic languages and area studies, and founded an intercollegiate consortium to sponsor the Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI). Currently funded by five universities (the University of Illinois at Chicago, Indiana University, the University of Michigan, the University of Washington, and the University of Wisconsin), the BALSSI travels to a different host university every two years. For example, the third annual Baltic Studies Summer Institute will hold this summer, from May 28 to July 19, on the campus of the University of Illinois at Chicago. UIC has an Endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies.

The goal is to establish a permanent presence for all three Baltic countries at the University of Washington, and the goal of the Program in Baltic Studies Endowment Fund is to raise \$775,000 by the autumn of 1998 in order to accomplish this. Utilizing only the income produced by such an endowment, the Program would be able to function in perpetuity.

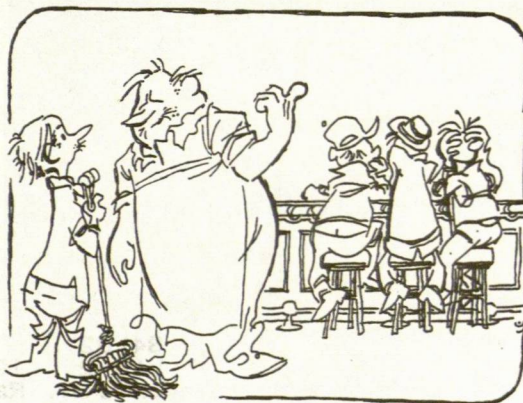
Apart from the involvement of the three Baltic communities, the leadership of Professors Daniel Waugh, (Director of the Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies), Professor DuBois and Professor Guntis Smidchens of the University has been crucial to the success of the Program so far. Their continued commitment to this endeavor provides the Baltic communities with a professional basis on which to build a viable permanent program of academic excellence.

For more information about the Program in Baltic Studies, please write or call:

Program in Baltic Studies
Scandinavian Department
Box 353420
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195-3420
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BIG JOHN..... by Vidutis



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