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BRIDGES

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Our 25th Year!



Independence Day celebrated...Going back in time...LAC news

P E R S P E C T I V E S

It's our 25th year here at Bridges. We're really proud of the fact that for the last 25 years this journal has reached many Lithuanian and non-Lithuanian readers with news about culture, social affairs, education, and public affairs.

When the journal was first printed, its main intent was to inform those interested in reading about Lithuanian culture. The Lithuanian-American community had many newspapers, magazines, literary and political journals, and radio shows at their fingertips — all in the Lithuanian language. Those people who could not understand Lithuanian started to lose touch with the community. Bridges hoped that it would be the answer.

Bridges has seen many editors and contributors, has experienced many design changes, and has hit its highs and lows in subscription numbers over the years. It still continues to present soft and hard news to its readership — you.

I am very proud that I've been able to give back to the Lithuanian-American community as editor. It was this community that helped me define myself as a Lithuanian-American and enriched my life with many joyous and soulful experiences. It has also educated me about the great treasures Lithuania holds in its people and its land. These are beautifully expressed in the Lithuanian language, yet easily translated for all to enjoy.

Celebrate our 25th year along with us by writing to us about your memories as a Lithuanian-American or how you celebrated holidays in your family or what your impressions were when you first visited Lithuania. For those who have been vicarious Lithuanians through friendships or marriage, drop us a line also.

Oh...and let us know what you'd like to see in Bridges to help us connect with you.

Rasa Ardys-Juška

Editor

BRIDGES

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BRIDGES

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 "Symbolism of the Tree"
 by Zita Sodeikienė in
 Lithuanian Family Traditions
 (by Rev. Stasys Yla—Chicago, IL: Lithuanian
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 family." (p. 84)

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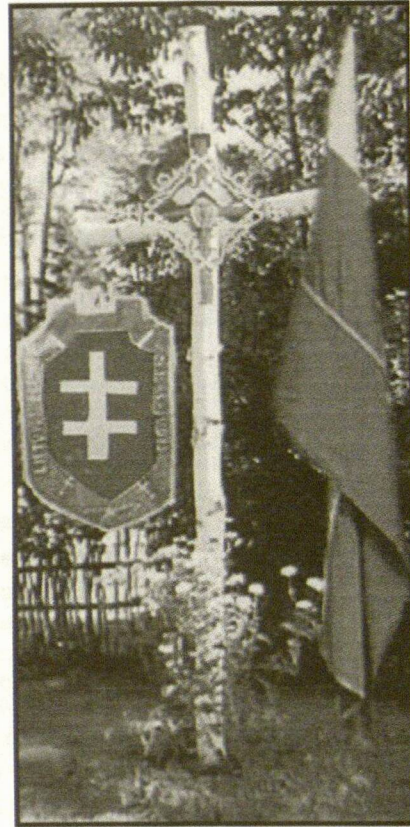
Celebrating Lithuanian Independence Day

This year's February 16th or Vasario 16 celebration of the Day of the Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania was uncommonly different in Lithuania, as reported by Lithuanian dailies.

According to the *Baltic Times*, Rokas Tracevskis "The commemorations in the first half of the day were traditional and similar to previous years. But as soon as darkness fell, pop stars whipped up a patriotic fervor among heaving crowds of flag-waving youngsters."

Tracevskis said that the Mayor of Vilnius, Artūras Zuokas, wanted to bring about a new type of celebration reflecting "a new generation who remember only the times of a free Lithuania, not an enslaved one... celebrating with joy rather than with tears."

The evening celebration featured such performers as the winners of the Lithuanian pre-Eurovision Contest group, "B'avarija"; pop veteran Stasys Povilaitis, nicknamed Lithuania's Frank Sinatra; Vytautas Kernagis, sometimes calling himself Vytautas the Great after another of Lithuania's grand dukes, sang songs by Danielius Dolskis, a pre-World War II crooner; Erica Jennings, Irish vocalist in the popular Lithuanian group Skamp, sur-



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prised the audience by singing in Lithuanian.

The day's festivities had begun with Mass celebrated in the Vilnius Cathedral by Cardinal Audrys Juozas Bačkis. Tracevskis reported that, "after Mass, 2,000 people gathered near the house on Pilies Street where the 1918 Independence Act was signed. The house has been turned into a museum, the House of Signatories."

Baltic News Service reported that the flags of the three Baltic states were hoisted in the Simonas Daukantas square at the Presidential Office. President Valdas Adamkus and Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas took part at the solemn flag raising ceremony. The Guard of Honor saluted the leaders of Lithuania.

The symbols of these three neighbors – Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – were flying as the sounds of the three national anthems filled the square.

At the Opera and Ballet Theater, H.E. Mr. Val-

*RASA ARDYS-JUŠKA is the editor of Bridges. Material used for this article came from [www. BalticTimes.org](http://www.BalticTimes.org)'s and Rokas Tracevskis's article on Lithuania's independence, the *Baltic News Service*, and from the Press Service of the President of Lithuania.*

das Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania delivered an address to the audience. The following is pres. Adamkus's thoughts from his speech.

Today [February 16, 2002], we mark the most important day in the life of our State – Day of the Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania. We celebrate this day as a free community of free people.

February 16th has always reminded us about the strength and the will power of our nation to lead [an] independent life and independently build our life and that of the State.

Lithuania's road to independence was never straight and smooth. Today, as we progress along it, we also encounter difficulties. But all obstacles on our way can be removed, if we pool our efforts, work consistently, and demonstrate civic solidarity and faithfulness to the values of the nation.

This road should lead us to a working Lithuania who is bold, dynamic, creative, and open to innovations. Only then will such a Lithuania secure its future in the modern world. Only then can Lithua-

nia ensure a secure future for our children and us.

I firmly believe that we have enough strength and wisdom to build prosperity in our Homeland. But we must not stop halfway or flounder on trivialities. We must learn to focus on the highest value of all – our children who need our care and love.

We should not abandon resolve or responsibility, or hope. We need to stand shoulder to shoulder in strengthening our State.

May our shared historical experience and the present day trials become the source of our strength. Let our daily work be marked by respect for man and love for Lithuania. These are my sincere wishes to each and every one of you on this festive Day of the Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania.

February 16th starts off the Independence Day celebrations; while the Re-Establishment of Lithuania's Independence celebrated on March 11th culminates them. Further reports will appear in the next issue. ♦

Lithuania's President in the U.S.

During President Valdas Adamkus's visit to the United States, on January 17 to the 21st, Pres. Adamkus appeared on John McLaughlin's "One on One" television show taped on Jan. 18.

During the interview, McLaughlin asked Adamkus about the state of Lithuania's NATO preparedness, Putin's relationship with NATO, and Mr. Bush's opinion concerning NATO and Lithuania. Regarding Bush's reactions toward Lithuania's pursuit of NATO admittance, Adamkus stated, "... He urged us to continue in the same dynamic [way]... He recognized – stating that he feels that Lithuania is a leader in the

Group of Ten countries, which are applying right now for the membership in NATO — ... [that] they asked me to convey the message that all the members will be selected, invited to join NATO not on some kind of sympathies or special privileges, but on accomplishments, the work each country's going to do..."

Regarding Putin's reaction to Lithuania's intentions toward NATO, Adamkus remarked that, "I would say continuously stating his position that, yes, he actually accepts the fact. I mean, that this is probably unavoidable... I don't believe that Russia can simply stop the process. And they are realistic enough, I mean, that it's better

ARVIDAS JARAŠIUS, President of Colorado LAC Chapter, and TONY MAŽEIKA, who keep us informed about anything and everything Lithuanian, supplied the transcript from which this article was written.

to accept and try to cooperate in this instead of lose face in front of the world community.”

McLaughlin posed the question concerning Putin and his desire to form a “Euro-Atlantic drift” which would include Russia as a partner with NATO in some form or another. Adamkus responded, “Let me positively respond to that, but on the basis that he is a realist. He doesn't see any other way, I mean, to stop the process in the world of democratization, the free movement and participation economically. Russia could not be excluded from progress the rest of the world is doing.”

McLaughlin and Pres. Adamkus talked about Belarus, Lithuania's neighbor to the south. McLaughlin wondered about Belarus's role in arms sales. Adamkus stated that Lithuania is concerned with how they are conducting themselves “contrary to the principles you and I believe.” As for Pres. Adamkus's reaction to Belarus's head of state, Mr. Lukashenko, the pres. stated, “... the gentleman who actually projects himself or would like to project himself as probably one of the greatest defenders of democracy, human rights, publicly, but at the same time, I would say that his deeds, the way he conducts his policy in his country – I mean, that's his decision, definitely – speaks contrary to what he's telling.”

Pres. Adamkus went on to say that the relationship between Kaliningrad and Lithuania was quite different from that between Belarus and Lithuania. “I personally, as an environmentalist, I definitely would like to see that protected better than it has been protected at the present time, because its beauty... which has to be protected, saved.” No real political disputes were noted.

McLaughlin asked about Lithuania's potential as a good investment for Americans. Pres. Adamkus responded positively and noted that the currency is stable, inflation is at two percent and steady, and that “Williams International, Philip Morris, Carlsberg, Coca-Cola, Kraft Foods -- which is part of Philip Morris – are all in Lithuania”. It was noted that the U.S.'s total direct investment in Lithuania stands about 250 million dollars.

As for computer-oriented workers, Pres. Adamkus replied, “We are definitely putting a lot of emphasis right now. We are introducing tests

in almost – in villages – primary schools. We are actually developing the electronics and at the same time, what we call the electronic – information science.”

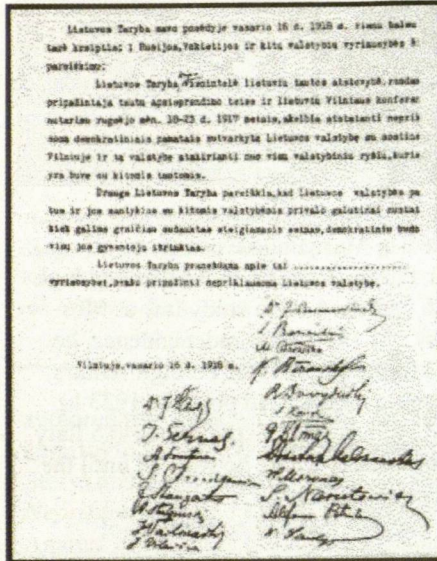
McLaughlin asked if the president still sees remains of Communism in the culture of the people. Pres. Adamkus responded, “Even through 50 years of occupation, the Lithuanian people survived probably because they had a strong position, a cultural identity, development of Lithuanian culture, the literature, the language, traditions.”

As for residues of Communist-style corruption, Pres. Adamkus said, “I cannot deny we have a problem with corruption which is the remains, the last remains of the Soviet system, which I hope this is going to vanish in the very near future with a new generation coming in with a different approach.”

Pres. Adamkus went on to describe the new Lithuanian people, “... I believe that the new Lithuanian – new Lithuanian people definitely reject that kind of an old system, and they're looking forward [to] honest work, honest pay.”

The interview ended with the remark that Lithuania belongs to the World Trade Organization and hopes to be brought into the European Union. ♦

Vytautas Švagždys
Translated by Zita Petkus



What became of... The Signers of Lithuania's 1918 Declaration of Independence?

The signers of Lithuania's Declaration of Independence, February 16, 1918, were to fall victim to the Communist occupation. From 1918 to that point, Lithuania reached political heights never imagined – due to these loyal and dedicated patriots.

Stirred and inspired by the patriotic newspapers “Aušra” (The Dawn) and “Varpas” (The Bell), about 2,000 enlightened Lithuanians assembled at the Great Vilnius Congress of 1905 to discuss and call for Lithuanian autonomy (*Ed. note: at the time, Lithuania was occupied by Czarist Russia*). Among the prominent activists of the time were Dr. J. Basanavičius, A. Smetona, A. Stulginskis, M. Biržiška, J. Vileišis, and P. Klimas. Later, through the League of United Nations of Russia, these men were to author a memorandum addressed to U.S. President Wilson, putting forth the concept of Lithuanian independence. Similar communications were also conveyed to the governments of Russia and Germany. Then, during the Vilnius Conference of 1917, a resolution was adopted to reestablish Lithuanian Independence, with the Council of

Lithuania formed to pursue this goal.

After difficult negotiations with Germany, which had invaded and occupied Lithuania during WWI, the Council in its meeting of February 16, 1918, declared the establishment of Lithuanian independence and the founding of the democratic State of Lithuania with Vilnius as its capital. The Declaration was signed by all 20 members of the Council: Dr. J. Basanavičius, S. Banaitis, M. Biržiška, K. Bizauskas, P. Dovydaitis, A. Kairys, P. Klimas, D. Malinauskas, Vl. Mironas, S. Narutavičius, A. Petruči, A. Smetona, J. Smilgevičius, J. Staugaitis, A. Stulginskis, J. Šaulys, K. Šaulys, J. Šernas, J. Vailokaitis, and J. Vileišis. These men served their nation immeasurably: two later became presidents of Lithuania (Smetona and Stulginskis), and others served as ministers, educational leaders, and diplomats.

Communist Russia's occupation of Lithuania on June 15, 1940, put into motion the process of destroying Lithuania's statehood, economy, and culture. By then, some of the signers of the Declaration of Independence had already gone to their eter-

VYTAUTAS ŠVAGŽDYS is a former Siberian deportee. In writing his article, he relied on material that appeared in the public domain in Lithuania. Mr. Švagždys now lives with his daughter's family in Seattle, Washington. ZITA PETKUS translated this article for the February 2002 issue of "Tulpė Times," the newsletter of the Lithuanian-American Community of Washington State.

nal rest, and some had managed to escape to the West. Still others remained in Lithuania, among them: A. Stulginskis, P. Klimas, P. Dovydaitis, V. Mironas, D. Malinauskas, and K. Bizauskas. Here's what became of these six men.

Aleksandras Stulginskis

The twelfth child in a tenant farmer's family, Stulginskis was born in Tauragė County in 1885. Assisted financially by his brothers who were living in America, he graduated from high school in Latvia; then completed his higher education in Germany where he obtained a specialty in agronomy.

In 1920 he was elected to the Constituent Assembly where he presided as Speaker until 1922 and also served as Acting President of Lithuania at the time. Stulginskis was formally elected president of Lithuania in 1922 and served until 1926.

In 1941 upon the Bolshevik occupation of Lithuania, the NKGB (*Ed. note: precursor of KGB*) in Kretinga arrested Stulginskis on charges of owning land and, of course, being a former president of Lithuania. Forcibly separated from his wife who also was deported, Stulginskis was not given a trial, but transported to Siberian camps in the Krasnojarsk region of the USSR. Here he ran into the former Minister of Education, prof. Tonkūnas, and the former Minister of Justice, Šilingis, among others. All had been held without trial and compelled to do heavy labor injurious to their health.

In 1952, with the help of camp snitches, the NKGB concocted a case against Stulginskis and several other Lithuanians that was ruled on at a special hearing in Moscow -- the defendants being absent. The resulting sentence: 25 years in the Vladimir city special prison.

Upon Stalin's death in 1954, the Supreme Court of the USSR commuted Stulginskis' sentence releasing him from prison on June 23rd of that year. He left immediately to be with his wife, in the Komi Soviet Republic where she had been deported. In 1956 they received permission to return to Lithuania and settled in Kaunas, where Stulginskis got a job on a farm and avoided associating with others.

Nonetheless, the KGB assigned several agents to spy on him. It turns out that the information they gathered on him was for the most part common knowledge. Fired from his job in 1959, Stulginskis collected a monthly pension of 16 rubles and 18 kopecks. In 1962, he was widowed and pe-

tioned the Soviets for permission to live with his daughter Aldona Juozevičienė in America. Naturally, the request was denied.

In September 1965, Aldona and her daughter managed to visit Stulginskis and provided financial assistance to build a two-room apartment in Kaunas. However, it was bugged by the KGB who listened in on all his private conversations. In 1969, at age 84, Stulginskis died.

Petras Klimas

Born in 1891 in Marijampolė county to an educated farmer's family, Petras Klimas finished high school in 1910 and went on to study law at Moscow University. In 1919, after independence, he was appointed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in 1920 took over the head post. In 1923 he was appointed Ambassador Extraordinaire to Italy, and in 1925, to France, where he worked until the Nazi occupation of France.

During the second Russian occupation of Lithuania, using forged documents, Klimas lived in Kaunas under the assumed name of Antanas Korizna. In March 1946, he was tried in front of an NKVD (*Ed. note: another precursor to KGB*) military tribunal for having translated a memorandum addressed to the U.S. and Great Britain governments and authored by T. Petkevičius, Česnavičius and P. Lastienė. Among other charges, he was accused of having written to the French government after the Russian occupation of Lithuania asking France not to recognize Lithuania's Soviet government.

Klimas was sentenced to ten years and deported to the Siberian labor camps of Celiabinsk and Vorkuta. Here he was regularly spied on by various KGB agents, who reported that Klimas was strongly anti-Soviet.

Released in 1954, he returned to Kaunas a year later. In 1956, despite the intercession of the French Prime Minister, Klimas' petition that he be allowed to emigrate to France to be with his family was denied, ostensibly because his expertise as a historian was needed in Lithuania. This was mockery at its finest since Klimas was not allowed anywhere near that kind of research.

By 1967, even though Klimas was ailing and considerably debilitated, the KGB's secret agents kept detailed watch on his activities due to charges of Lithuanian nationalism dating back to 1962. After all, during that five-year interval Klimas had



The signers of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence: Front, from left: J. Vileišis, Dr. J. Šaulys, Rev. J. Staugaitis, St. Narutavičius, Dr. J. Basanavičius, A. Smetona, Rev. J. Šaulys, S. Kairys, J. Smilgevičius. Back, from left: K. Bizauskas, J. Vailokaitis, D. Malinauskas, Rev. V. Mironas, M. Biržiška, kun A. Petrulis, S. Banaitis, P. Klimas, A. Stulginskis, D. Šernas, P. Dovydaitis.

Photo: See **

authored two books deemed by the authorities to be harmful to society: *Iš mano istorijos* (From My Story) and *Kova su okupantais atstatant Lietuvos Nepriklausomybę 1915-1918 metais* (The Fight Against the Invader to Restore Lithuania's Independence 1915-1918).

Klimas died in Kaunas in January 1969. A KGB snitch reported the names of people attending the funeral, including that of Stulginskis. France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued formal condolences to Klimas' family in Paris and the larger French newspapers published detailed obituaries. Mass was celebrated in various churches in Paris. Meanwhile, in Lithuania, it took 'til mid June of that year for the KGB to close out their books on Klimas.

Pranas Dovydaitis

Dovydaitis was born in 1886 in Marijampolė county. Appointed Prime Minister of Lithuania in 1919, sadly, he did not stay long in this position, choosing instead to withdraw from political life and dedicating himself to teaching and Christian ideology. For 18 years he was a professor at Vytautas Magnus University and was the founder of the Lithuanian Catholic Studies Academy.

The Department of Theology and Philosophy having been closed down by the Soviets, Dovydaitis turned to farming. In 1941 he was taken into custody and deported without trial to a camp in the Ukraine, and within a month he was transported to a labor camp in the Sverdlovsk region. There he was forced to labor in the Siberian taiga, where the extreme cold and lack of food combined to wear

down his health. Friends who had ended up in the same labor camp no longer recognized him.

In 1942 he was again taken into custody in Sverdlovsk prison. After a month of interrogation, he was charged with being involved with Catholic organizations and the Christian Democratic Union, activities deemed harmful to the Communist Party and destructive to the USSR. A special hearing in Moscow on October 17, 1942, sentenced Dovydaitis in absentia to the death penalty. On November 4, 1942, Pranas Dovydaitis was executed (shot) in Sverdlovsk

Prison.

Vladas Mironas

Mironas was born in the county of Rokiškis in 1880. At age 24, upon graduating from the St. Petersburg Spiritual Academy he embarked on his priesthood ministry in Lithuania. When Lithuania became independent, Mironas joined the nationalists' union and became an honored member. In 1926 he was elected to the Seimas (*Ed. note: Lithuanian parliament*), and from 1929 to 1938 he was the senior chaplain for the Lithuanian Army. Later, he even served as Prime Minister.

The NKVD arrested Mironas in 1940, but the war intervened, and he was freed. At the onset of the second Russian occupation Mironas was rearrested and was ostensibly recruited by the NKGB commissar Gudaitis-Guzevičius to collaborate. Mironas "agreed" under the condition that he would not spy on anyone. The NKGB released him and planted secret agents around him to report on all his activities.

In 1947 Mironas once again was arrested and interrogated. The charges: keeping in contact with bishops, "nationalists", and other counter-revolutionaries; working in politics and the public domain during the period of independent Lithuania; and failure to carry out his NKGB assignments. In August 1947, a special hearing in Moscow sentenced Mironas in absentia to seven years. He died in 1953, in Vladimir prison.

Donatas Malinauskas

Born in Latvia in 1869, Malinauskas attended schools in Vilnius, Minsk, Czechoslovakia, and

Galicia, where he completed his studies and obtained a specialty in agronomy. He returned to Lithuania to live on his land near Trakai as well as in Vilnius, where he became involved with Lithuanian national life.

In 1917 he participated in the Vilnius Conference; 1922-1923, he represented Lithuania's interests in Czechoslovakia. From 1923, he worked in the Lithuanian Foreign Affairs Ministry and then in 1931, became Lithuania's representative to Estonia. In 1928, for his many accomplishments, he was decorated with the Order of Gediminas 2nd Class. Malinauskas was deported by the Russians on June 14, 1941, to the Bijsk region, where he perished.

Kazys Bizauskas

Bizauskas was born in 1892 in Latvia. As a high school student, he already had a name for himself as editor of assorted student publications and an activist in various organizations. While studying law at Moscow University, Bizauskas founded the Society of Lithuanian Students. In 1917, Bizauskas was elected to the Council of Lithuania and became its general secretary. He was a member of the Lithuanian Constituent Assembly, served as a delegation member in negotiations between Soviet Russia and Lithuania, and in 1920 was appointed Minister of Education. From 1922-1931 he served as Ambassador Extraordinaire to the Vatican, the U.S, Great Britain, Holland, and Latvia. In 1931 he was appointed director of the Department of Justice within the Lithuanian Foreign Ministry. In 1939 he served as deputy Prime Minister.

In November of 1941, in Kaunas, he was incarcerated by the NKVD for interrogation, and eventually, nearly seven months later, was formally charged with promoting nationalism, working against the Communist regime, and being an enemy of the people and of the Soviet Union. As World War II had just started, Bizauskas was not tried, but together with the other political prisoners in Kaunas, was to be transported to the distant reaches of the Soviet Union. Who can guess the reason, but in accordance with NKVD-NKGB orders, Bizauskas and 13 other political prisoners were shot en route, near the Latvian-Belarus border, on June 26, 1941. Records show that the director of the Interrogation Department of the NKVD fabricated a document confirming that the "verdict" to execute the 14 prisoners had been car-

ried out. But as there was no trial, there couldn't have been a verdict. These documents are preserved in the Lithuanian Archives.

History in our Hearts

Such was the fate of six of the 20 signers of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence. Charged despite their innocence, they were convicted only because after February 16, 1918, they had devoted themselves to securing Lithuania's future and economy, the enlightenment of her people, and the nurturing of a generation of educated patriots. Consequently they became sacrifices on the altar of Lithuania's independence.

Lithuania's Archives are overflowing with statistics. During the first year of Occupation alone, the campaign of genocide resulted in nearly 5,000 prominent Lithuanians being deported or killed in Soviet jails. During the two-day period June 14-15, 1941, over 18,000 Lithuanians were deported to Siberia. Over the 50 years of Russian occupation, hundreds of thousands of Lithuania's people were repressed. About 30,000 freedom fighters and their supporters were killed.

Try as they might, the nation's executioners did not succeed in extinguishing the ideals of February 16th. During the 50 years of Occupation, Lithuania's patriots contrived means to remember and honor February 16th: by secretly raising the forbidden tri-colored flag, by commemorating the day in some fashion – sometimes flowers would appear on the graves of Basanavičius and Kudirka, and lit candles would be left at the gravesites of the partisans who had perished in the cause of freedom.

The nation's heroes have taught us the value and price of freedom and the meaning and torment of enslavement. Without people of this stature in our past, Lithuania would not be enjoying a "present." To fully appreciate this, we must embed Lithuania's history in our hearts and our very being! ♦

****Photo source:**

Jakštas, Juozas. *Nepriklausomos Lietuvos Istorija. (The History of Independent Lithuania)*. Chicago, IL: Vydūnas Youth Fund, 1992.

Jeanne Dorr

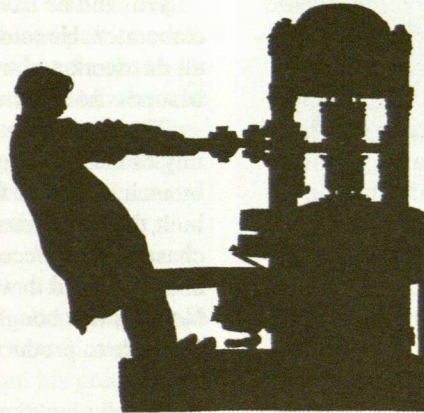
THE HIDDEN PRESS

In all the years since I've learned to read I never questioned that someone or some agency censored the material I was reading. In fact, I never even gave it a thought until I started to travel to Lithuania in the late 1970's. It was like a wake up call.

I really couldn't comprehend that a government had almost total control over what a person read or saw on the screen. If you noticed, I said ALMOST because there were courageous people in Lithuania who felt this was wrong. They didn't just talk about it; talking was dangerous. They took matters into their own hands at a great risk to themselves and their families. I had the privilege of meeting a gentleman and visiting his hidden press. It literally was an underground press.

I was visiting a friend from Philadelphia who relocated to Lithuania after independence was restored. As we sat in her living room catching up on old times she asked me if I would like to visit a hidden press. Of course, I jumped at the chance. We decided to wait until my husband arrived in Lithuania because he is so interested in history. She told me nothing about what we would see except to dress warmly and to wear comfortable shoes. That would turn out to be the understatement of the trip.

My time passed quickly as it always does when I am in Lithuania. My husband arrived, and we set the time and place to meet. My cousin, who lives in Kaunas, also joined us. She read the story of the hidden press in her local newspaper after independence was restored. However, as most people, she really never managed to see what was in her own



back yard.

My friend, Snieguolė, commandeered her friend Dominikas to drive us to Salių village in the Kaunas area. We followed the Neris River and reached our destination in about twenty minutes. The scenery was quite lovely along the way. I was beginning to see a part of Kaunas I had not seen before. It appeared to have high hills and rocky ground. Since I often stay in the city, it

all seemed rather new to me.

When we pulled into a long driveway, a very distinguished looking gentleman met us. This was my introduction to Vytautas Andžiulis. Mr. Andžiulis took us on a tour of his property. It seemed like part of the property was built into the side of high hill. There were steps carved into the hill that boasted a very large greenhouse at the top. The entire arrangement and placement of the greenhouse seemed a little strange since there seemed to be no shortage of land. I couldn't understand why he would want to build a large greenhouse on top of a hill and keep going up and down steps.

The land surrounding his house was magnificent. There were natural woods intermingled with plants that our host brought from different places. There were terraced gardens with every inch dug out by Mr. Andžiulis. Gardening is his hobby, and he told us he loves to see life grow. He gave us a lesson about the different trees and shrubs and told us he traveled to Latvia to purchase a special rhododendron. This he pointed to the bush with great pride and joy. You could actually see the love in his eyes for his plants. A little further away, some chickens walked around proudly behind a fence.

In 1968, Mr. Andžiulis started to build his

JEANNE DORR is a member of the Board of Directors of Lithuanian Orphan Care, a branch of the Human Services Council of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. She is also a Social Studies teacher in New Jersey.

house. He would attach a cart to the back of a motorcycle and go out looking for anything he could use to help him with the building.

Vytautas Andžiulis also raised bees, and it was at a bee association meeting that his life would change forever. He met a florist, and they became friendly. The florist knew that Mr. Andžiulis made his living as a printer. He introduced Vytautas to Juozas Bacevičius, and they asked him if he would consider helping them print some forbidden materials. Vytautas agreed only if the printing would be patriotic and religious material.

I asked him if he was ever scared during this period, and he told me that he never feared for himself; but he was frightened for his wife and children. This gentleman has a marvelous sense of humor as he laughed and told me he probably would have had a great funeral if he had been caught since the young have a lot more friends to attend the services. The consequences of these acts, if discovered, would be unspeakable. The one thing the men were sure of was that every minute detail had to be planned and worked out. There was no room for errors.

Mr. Andžiulis had a small greenhouse and decided to expand it. He expanded it, and expanded it, and expanded it some more. He had to be extra cautious, as many of his neighbors were diehard communists. Any movement out of the ordinary would attract attention and would most likely be reported to the authorities.

The year was 1978 and he started to get things ready. He had to dig the greenhouse by hand. He became like a man possessed. He dug every free moment he could find: after work and late into the night, every weekend and every holiday. Helicop-

ters began to circle overhead as the greenhouse became bigger. In the two years it took him to dig the greenhouse to its current size, the authorities came to inspect it thirty two times. The questions were always the same.

Why did he need such a large greenhouse? He answered that gardening was his hobby, and he wanted to grow rare plants.

Why did he have to make the greenhouse so elaborate? He told them if he was going through all this work and trouble that he should make it the best possible greenhouse.

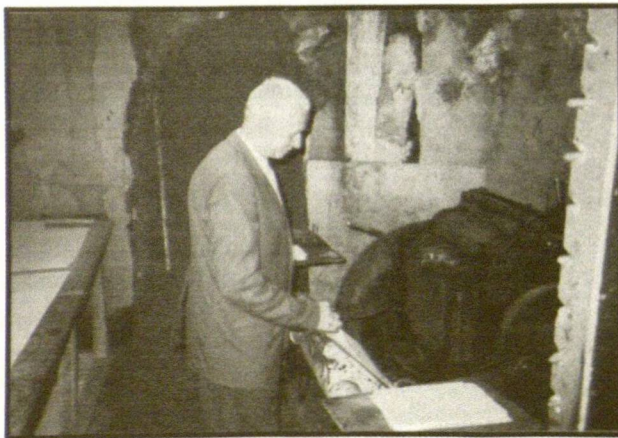
The questions went on and on, as did the scrutiny of the building itself. They inspected it inch by inch but could find nothing out of order. As he built the greenhouse, he made sure that he purchased every piece of wood, every pane of glass, and every nail that he used legally and officially. Nothing was bought on the "black market", and he was able to produce the official receipts upon demand.

We climbed the steep steps to the greenhouse. It was larger than any greenhouse I saw in Lithuania, but it really didn't seem like anything out of the ordinary. To my untrained eye, one greenhouse looks the same as the next one.

Once again we were treated to a lesson with the names of the many species of plants. Then Mr. Andžiulis showed us a very elaborate irrigation system. It was under this system that the printing press was hidden. He began to turn the system on and off, sliding and moving rows of plants, almost effortlessly and so quickly, that I honestly can't remember what happened because my untrained eye couldn't catch it. All I know was that it was all happening very fast.

The next thing I saw was a dark cellar and a long ladder. The climb down was very steep. I can't imagine how they ever got a printing press and all their materials down this ladder. I was holding on for dear life going down with someone in front of me and someone in back.

As we got to the bottom, I understood the need for comfortable shoes and warm clothing. It was very cold and damp in the cellar. There was a huge old-fashioned press in the room. It was put together piece by piece. Mr. Andžiulis



*Vytautas Andžiulis in the basement with his printing press.
Photo: Jeanne Dorr*

had to be extremely careful. He knew the authorities had their eye on him. It was a very long process until he could actually get started printing. He began by stealing a few letters from work. Taking too many at one time would arouse suspicion.

He bought a little paper from many different places, but never an amount that would make someone suspect him of doing something illegally.

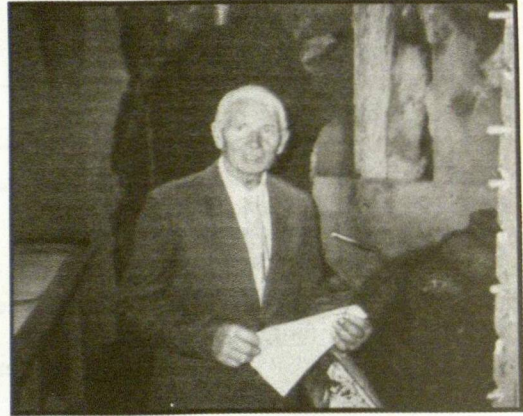
Vytautas was determined to stay with his original plan of printing only religious and patriotic material. When he first started, he worked eight hours to print eight pages. He reached the point where he was able to print a thousand papers an hour. Eventually he became braver. He was really working in very tight quarters and literally did not have room to turn around. Then he took another big step. With his newly gained confidence, he began his digging frenzy again. When he was finished he had a second room in his hidden cellar. But he still had to be very careful. He made sure his neighbors saw him working in his garden and his greenhouse.

One day a priest brought him a prayer book that had been written by hand and asked him to print copies of it. Mr. Andžiulis agreed to do this as long as the prayer book had an Imprimatur. Sure enough, after looking closely, he found it and set to work. He refused to print anything that was not absolutely officially sanctified by the Church.

Although he printed some religious pictures, most of his printing was patriotic. He was extremely careful that nothing ever appeared with his name on it or to become involved in the distribution of the materials. This was the job of Mr. Bacevičius.

Vytautas told us a funny story as were talking about their activities. Although both men had taken upon themselves very dangerous roles, it was Juozas Bacevičius who delivered the clandestine materials. This gentleman dressed in his oldest clothes and tried to depict himself as a type of "poor lost soul" while he wandered the streets, mumbling to himself, and carrying his bundles. The bundles were actually the forbidden printed material.

One day one of the feared and dreaded policemen stepped in front of him as he was struggling to cross a busy street with his huge bag. The policeman must have had a soft spot for the man as he asked him if he needed help with his bag. Mr. Bacevičius thanked him and handed the bag to the policeman. Both men made their way across the



Vytautas Andžiulis shows how copies were printed.

Photo: Jeanne Dorr

street, and the bag was handed back to Juozas. But what would have happened if the policeman had opened the bag? What would that policeman think if he knew he actually carried forbidden literature across the street for a person breaking the law? The possibilities of what could have happened and the consequences for these acts are endless.

In the meantime, Vytautas continued to print old Lithuanian history books. He also printed copies of the Non-Aggression Pact of 1939. In just one night he printed the Pact as well as photographs. He also printed poetry that was written by priests and political prisoners. The more he printed, the more conscious and the more obsessed he became about security. He started to dig curving tunnels in his cellar and installed a steel door.

But who is Vytautas Andžiulis, and what was driving him to put himself and his family in so much danger? His father was a teacher, and his mother spoke many languages. The family lived in a big house before the Communists took over Lithuania. As the purge began, the Communists burned his father's books. From the few books the family was able to hide began Vytautas' love of the printed word. It was from these hidden books that he printed some of his material. His father told him of the many armies who marched through Lithuania and the destruction they left in their paths.

As I was walking through the cold cellar and looking at all the pieces of the printing press, I could almost "see" Vytautas printing night after night. There had to be nights that he was exhausted from his regular job, but he kept on printing. There had to be times he was scared, but he kept on print-

ing. There had to be times he was low on money, but he kept on printing.

I could picture Juozas putting the printed materials into bags, often heavy bags, but he went out and delivered the forbidden material. I could see him trying to drag those bags up the steep ladder, tired and exhausted, but he kept on delivering. I could feel his fear as the policeman stopped him, but he kept on delivering. What a team these two men made; how well they complimented each other and worked together for ten years. How grateful we should be to them that they believed in freedom of the press: a freedom that so many of us never think about.

The climb up the ladder wasn't as bad as going down, but I have to admit I felt better when I saw the sunshine coming through the greenhouse windows. From the hidden press, our next stop was a small museum attached to the house. The museum was heart wrenching. The pictures, books, and letters concentrate on partisans, political prisoners, and their families.

There is a very moving picture of a crucified Lithuanian with the Lithuanian flag draped around his body. Another picture from 1965 is entitled "Partisan Mothers". It doesn't need any more words; the looks of anguish on their faces speak a thousand words. Another section focuses on Mother's Day greetings which partisan sons and those in concentration camps sent to their mothers.

The picture that brought tears to my eyes featured our mothers who gave us life. The mother of all mothers – Lithuania. Another shows a mother walking past the body of her dead partisan son on the street. To protect her other children she had to pretend not to recognize the body. How much pain could a woman endure?

There were copies of partisan papers from 1949. There were also illegal notes they passed to one another.

A marvelous display of items from 1864 to 1904 when the press was again closed down and had to print underground was very interesting.

In a corner was a display how psychiatry was used to put people in jail.

Prominently displayed were Chronicles of the Catholic Church in Lithuania as well as copies of original books. It was incredible that so many pieces of interest could be contained in one room. I didn't know where to look next. Every side of the room was screaming out for my attention.

Mr. Andžiulis is currently in the process of remodeling a second room for the museum. This will contain items from 1977 to 1985 and feature religious pictures and prayer cards.

For some reason greeting cards with candles were unacceptable to the government. Perhaps candles were religious symbols. Vytautas managed to print 250,000 of these greeting cards.

One of the things that kept the men going was that they knew the government was frightened of the underground press and the power of the words that the press produced. They did everything in their power to close down these presses and punish the people who used them. Vytautas told me a horrifying story of a brother and sister in Nazi Germany who in 1943 were found with a printing press. Both were beheaded. Surely, this would have had to cross his mind more than once.

The number of people discovering this treasure trove of history has been increasing. In 1999 approximately 1500 visitors came to see the press and museum. In 2000 that number increased to about 2000 visitors. Mr. Andžiulis welcomes visitors, and he is a very gracious host and tour guide. As I sat in his house reading the guest book, I was overwhelmed by the comments. Many were in Lithuanian and in English, while others from countries all over the world. I felt privileged, humbled, and honored to be asked to write a comment.

There are no adequate words to thank Vytautas Andžiulis for the risks he took to preserve Lithuania's history. I know that his partner, Juozas Bacevičius is smiling down from heaven at a job well done. I would like to thank Snieguolė and Dominiukas for guiding me to this wonderful hidden press and museum.

If you are an adventurous person and you really want to see something different, by all means visit the press and museum; you won't regret it. Don't be afraid to put the tour books away and go off the beaten path. There are so many things to see and do in Lithuania that are still the best kept secrets.

The museum is located in Salių Kaimas in the Kaunas area.

Apparently there was one lesson the Communists never learned. "You have not converted a man because you have silenced him." (John Morely). Mr. Andžiulis and Mr. Bacevičius proved you cannot silence men when the truth must be told. ♦

Edward Baranauskas

100 Years for a British Lithuanian Parish

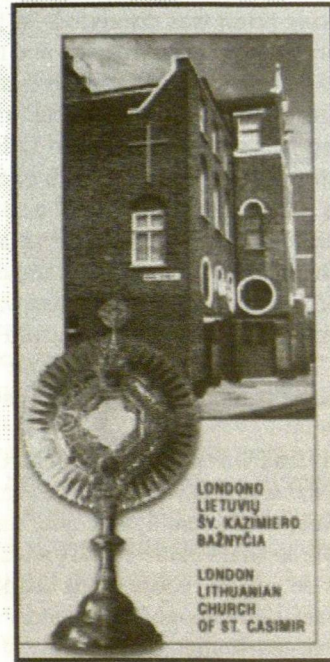
Many Lithuanians left their homeland during the harsh reign of the Czars of Russia to seek a better life in other countries.

This is the story of those Lithuanians who decided to settle in London, England. They were no different than their brothers and sisters who emigrated to other lands. They wanted to have their own church with a priest who spoke their language. There were times of frustration, but their determination and perseverance eventually succeeded.

In 1894, a combined Lithuanian-Polish church and parish was jointly shared at the Globe Road part of London, with the Polish Jesuits celebrating the masses in Polish. Cardinal H. Vaughan wrote to a local bishop that he completely supported the plan to establish either a church, or mission, common to Poles and Lithuanians. Their sorrowful condition, he went on, raised many concerns to him. Their numbers had increased to the point where something had to be done to take care of their religious needs. He suggested that the Lithuanians and Poles organize collections to enable them to build either a church or chapel. He asked for God's blessings. This church, however, was closed a year later because of its debts.

For two years, the parishioners gathered at a two-room apartment at Mile End for services. Rev. Lechert, of French origin, was their pastor.

In 1896, Rev. Lechert decided to buy a horse barn on Cambridge Road. The Poles and Lithuanians agreed that the church deed would be in the priest's name. A year later, Rev. Vaitis was named



its pastor, but he was removed the following year.

The Lithuanians were so upset at this turn of events that they loudly protested after mass because only Rev. Vaitis spoke Lithuanian. Shortly after that, Rev. Juozas Bakanauskas, newly arrival in London, was appointed.

In 1899, Rev. Bakanauskas received permission from the Cardinal to have the Lithuanians separated from the Poles and to have their own church and parish, with a priest who spoke their language.

After a few weeks went by, Rev. Lechert relieved Rev. Bakanauskas and took over the duties of this Polish-Lithuanian parish. The Lithuanians were stunned by the news, and a number of them decided to express their feelings in no uncertain

*EDWARD BARANAUSKAS has written for **Bridges** for several years from his home in Schenectady, New York. He has recently relocated to Lithuania.*

terms. With clubs and canes, they stood by the entrance to the church and would not allow any of their fellow Lithuanians to go inside. Those who attempted to do so, were hit by the protesters.

The Poles charged that the Lithuanians, with their malicious behavior, wanted to do bodily harm to those who wanted to go to church. The police arrived and surrounded the entire area. After a few days, calm was finally restored.

A large delegation of Lithuanians went before the Cardinal and wanted to know why a Lithuanian-speaking priest was dismissed. A few months later, Father V. Varnagiris arrived, and before the year ended, he left to be replaced by Father Šlamas.

On January 13, 1901 at 10 o'clock in the morning, the first mass was celebrated in Lithuanian as a parish family at the German Church of St. Boniface. This arrangement lasted until a site was located at the corner of Cable and Christian Streets to establish their own separate parish and church.

On March 13, 1902, the first mass was celebrated at their own church, which was a store at one time. Two weeks later, St. Casimir's Parish was organized with Father B. Šlamas as its first pastor.

In 1911, land was purchased at The Oval, Hackney Road, to build a new church. A year later the church, which could seat 250 people, was solemnly opened. Three altars made by a Tyrolean firm in 1851 were dedicated. Close to the chapel, a plaque was later installed to honor the memory of Father Joseph Montvila, a young visiting priest who helped set up the church. He left London a month after the opening ceremony, and together with two other Catholic priests, boarded the ship, Titanic, on its ill-fated maiden voyage to the United States. All went down with the vessel.

Blessed Archbishop George Matulaitis visited the parish in 1926, and was greeted by Cardinal Houme. It was decided that the Marian Fathers would serve the parish, and years later, the cardinal approved their having accommodations for the rector, his curate, and an occasional visitor. It could, in no sense, be called a monastery.

Father John Sakevičius, a priest for 67 years, served the parish as pastor from 1946 to 1951, and then returned after an absence, to serve again from 1969 until 1999, when he was forced to retire because he could no longer continue his stewardship. When the Marian Fathers declined to further serve the needs of London's Lithuanian parish, the Parish

Committee appealed to the Bishops of Lithuania for help in obtaining another pastor. Bishop Antanas Vaičius of Telšiai assigned Father Petras Tverijonas, and he arrived on June 20, 1999.

Parishioners of St. Casimir's in London celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of their parish family on April 22, 2001. Several diplomats and church dignitaries, including Bishop Paul Baltakis from the United States, attended the solemn mass, which was offered both in Lithuanian and English.

Postscript:

St. Casimir's is the only Lithuanian Catholic Church in England. It is located at 21 The Oval, Hackney Road, London E2 9DT Great Britain.

In 1969, St. Patrick's Cemetery allocated a plot of land to serve the needs of St. Casimir's parish.

At the start of the First World War, Lithuanians were not obligated to serve in the British military at that time. The English people thought they were Germans, and attacked them in church while they were praying. For six months, the men did not go to church. The police became involved to maintain order.

In 1923, Lithuanian societies gathered for meetings at "Priority Hall", which later became known as the "Lithuanian Club".

According to the head of the Parish Committee, about 150 to 200 people attend Sunday services, but at Easter and Christmas, the church cannot accommodate all those who come. Father Petras discourages the possibility of having another Lithuanian parish in Britain. Since the church is overcrowded only during Easter and Christmas, it is not practical to have another church because of that.

After Sunday services, parishioners gather at "St. Casimir's Club Rooms", an annex built next to the church in 1974, which can accommodate 40 people. Classes in Lithuanian for children are always held there on Sundays.

From all appearances, it seems that St. Casimir's is a vibrant parish, and should continue to serve the needs of the Lithuanian Catholics in Britain for decades to come.



Sources of information:

- *The Lithuanian newspaper in Great Britain, "Londono Žinios". June 17, 2001 issue.*
- *Internet: <http://www.londonas.co.uk> (Šv. Kazimiero bažnyčia).*
- *Mr. Stasys Kasparas, of St. Casimir's Parish Committee, London, England.*

Teresė Gečys

The 19th Annual LAC Cultural Awards

Every year, the Cultural Council of Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. honors distinguished persons in various cultural fields. The 2001 awardees for outstanding cultural contributions in their respective fields were:

- *Emą Dovyđaitienė*, Los Angeles, in the field of theater;
- *Ignas Medžiukas*, Los Angeles, for journalism
- *Jadvyga Paukštienė*, Chicago, in the field of fine arts;
- *Viktoras Ralys*, Los Angeles, in the field of music;
- *Anatolijus Šlutas*, Chicago, for Lithuanian radio broadcasting; and
- *Irena Smieliauskienė*, Chicago, in the field of folk dancing and choreography.

Each award category was represented by a jury committee of experts who evaluated all nominees and voted to select the awardees. The distinguished writer Alė Rūta was honored with the 2001 Lithuanian Writers Association Award in Literature. The Lithuanian Foundation, Inc granted all monetary prizes.

The nineteenth annual award presentation took place January 5, 2002 in Los Angeles, CA. Mrs. Angelė Nelsienė, president of the Western Region of Lithuanian-American Community, Inc, opened the ceremony. Mrs. Marija Remienė, chairperson of the Cultural Council, was the first to greet the award winners:

“The awards are not a reward, but an encouragement and a sign of the good that shines in the works of those who are honored here. Everything that they produce will be their legacy for the coming generations. The purpose of these awards is to recognize outstanding persons in various fields of art, education and communication and to acknowledge and appreciate their dedication in the presence of our Lithuanian Community”.

LAC Cultural Affairs Council Award recipients and program participants, from: Marytė Newsom – Mistress of Ceremonies, Alė Rūta – Literature Award, Ignas Medžiukas – Journalism Award, Emą Dovyđaitienė – Theater Award, Viktoras Ralys – Music Award, Anatolijus Šlutas – Radio Broadcasting Award, Marija Remienė – chair of the Cultural Awards Council, Violeta Gedgaudienė – representing the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc., and Tadas Dapšys – Master of Ceremonies.



TERESĖ GEČYS is the Lithuanian-American Community's Information Services Director and Secretary. Mrs. Gečys sent in all photos.

Vytautas Čekanauskas, Lithuania's Honorary Consul General in Los Angeles, expressed his best wishes to those honored that evening. He praised their vision and their dedication to put that vision in concrete art forms through splendid imagination for the service and admiration of many in this country.

The organizing committee for the awards evening was headed by Algimantas Žemaitaitis. Masters of Ceremonies were Marytė Newsom and Tadas Dabšys. Violeta Gedgaudienė participated in the award ceremonies as the Los Angeles regional representative of the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc. ♦



Writer Alė Rūta receives her Lithuanian Foundation, Inc. check from Bernardas Brazdžionis, Lithuania's Poet Laureate, who celebrated his 95th birthday February 2, 2002.



At the Cultural Council Awards ceremony Marija Remienė—chair of the Cultural Council, Algimantas Žemaitaitis—chair of the Awards Ceremony Committee, and Angelė Nelšienė—chair of the Western District of the LAC.

While Visiting the LAC Washington Office...

Recently I had an opportunity to visit the office of Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. in the suburban Washington area of Reston, VA. The attractive office building is in a very convenient, easily accessible location. The office actually is one large room with a closet. It is tastefully furnished with two desks, two computers, filing cabinets and shelves. There is a small informational library with the Lithuanian Encyclopedia and many directories in both English and Lithuanian for speedy accessing of public affairs information.

The office displays LAC publications and other Lithuanian periodicals published in both Lithuanian and English languages. Against one wall, there is a bookcase with photographs of both President Bush and President Adamkus, as well as both the Ameri-

can and the Lithuanian flags. On another wall are maps of Lithuania and of the United States with colorful pins all over it indicating locations of LAC chapters.

The office is administered by Algirdas J. Rimas, chairman of the Public Affairs Council of LAC. A youthful U.S. Diplomatic corps retiree, A. Rimas has served in many different countries including Europe, Africa and South America. When Lithuania regained its independence, he was assigned to Vilnius to ready the opening of the American Embassy. For several years he served as second in command to the first American ambassador to Lithuania. As all officers of Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., Mr. Rimas serves without any monetary compensation.

However, he does have help from Public Affairs

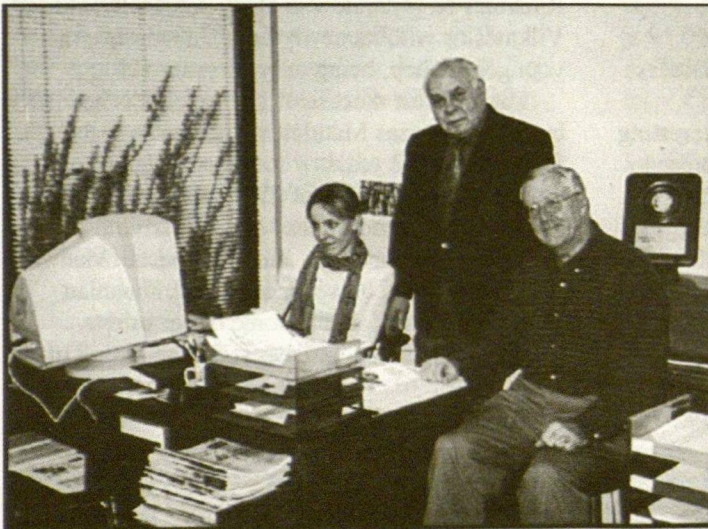
Council members Saulius Anužis, Rimas Domanskis, Esq., Algimantas Gureckas, Angelė Nelsas, Arvidas Remėza, Donatas Skučas, Dr. Viktoras Stankus, Darius Sužiedelis, and Dr. Elona Vaišnys. Day to day operations of the office are run by Jūratė Mikšėnienė, an LAC intern on a stipend from the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc., and a number of volunteers under the watchful guidance of Mr. Rimas.

Mrs. Mikšėnienė came to the internship with an impressive resume. She has two degrees from Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas - Bachelor's in Business Administration and a Master's in Marketing and International Commerce. She is fluent in Lithuanian, English, Russian and Polish and is proficient in conversational German. Most importantly for her duties in the LAC office, she has computer literacy and is familiar with most computer programs. She came to the United States with her husband Andrius Mikšėnas, who won the only international scholarship offered by the University of Maryland for its MBA program.

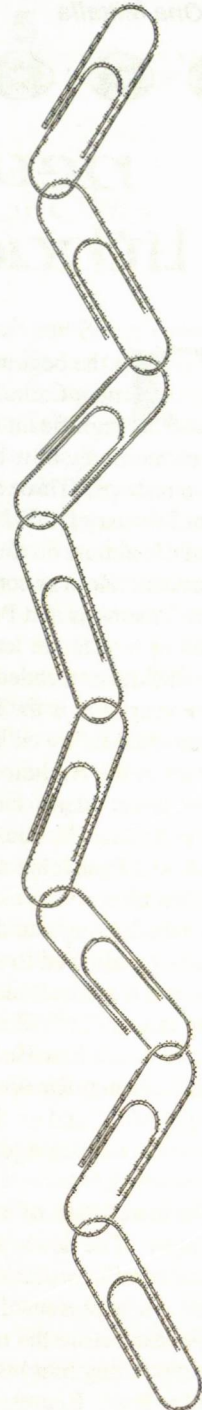
Jūratė's days at the office are filled with responses to many phone, mail and e-mail inquiries from individuals, organizations, the media. She diverts the inquiries to appropriate Councils and officers of LAC. She maintains contact with all LAC chapters, assists the Public Affairs Council to expedite information on Lithuania's progress to join NATO and writes articles for Lithuanian press.

All well organized ethnic groups maintain offices in the nation's capital. Lithuanian-Americans also must have visibility and representation especially at this very critical time for Lithuania. Even if Lithuania is invited to join NATO at the Prague NATO Summit in the fall of 2002, it will take at least another year or two for the NATO expansion treaty to be ratified by 2/3 majority of the U.S. Senate. It will be the LAC Public Affairs Office that will guide us to action on the NATO and other issues relevant to Lithuania and our own concerns in the United States.

The exact address is Lithuanian American Community, Inc., Public Affairs Office, 11876 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 200, Reston, VA 20191. Tel.: (571) 203-0324; Fax.: 571) 203-0325. e-mail: lacin@erols.com. ♦



At the LAC Public Affairs Office, from left: Jūratė Mikšėnienė — LAC intern, S. Algimantas Gečys — Pres. LAC National Executive Committee, and Algirdas J. Rimas — Chairman LAC Public Affairs Council.



Sr. Ona Mikaila



new Leadership for the Lithuanian Catholic Church

At the beginning of this year, the Lithuanian Catholic Church experienced a significant change in leadership. The Church hierarchy now consists of one cardinal and twelve bishops. Three active bishops have retired.

On February 1, 2002, Cardinal Audrys Bačkis turned 65, almost on the eve of his first anniversary as cardinal. He was congratulated by President Valdas Adamkus and Prime Minister Brazauskas, as well as by Church leaders and the faithful. Cardinal Bačkis has headed the Archdiocese of Vilnius for ten years and is the highest-ranking ecclesiastic in Lithuania, followed by Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevičius of the Archdiocese of Kaunas.

The three older bishops who have retired are Bishop Antanas Vaičius of Telšiai, Bishop Juozas Preikšas of Panevėžys and Bishop Juozas Žemaitis of Vilkaviškis all have celebrated their 75th birthdays, which bring mandatory retirement. Retired bishops are allowed to choose their place of residence and may continue their priestly ministry.

On January 20th, Bishop Jonas Boruta, SJ was installed as the new Bishop of Telšiai. On February 10th, Bishop Rimantas Norvila became Bishop of Vilkaviškis, and on the 17th Bishop Jonas Kauneckas took charge as Shepherd of the Diocese of Panevėžys.

The installation of a new bishop is an interesting ceremony. The newly designated bishop comes to his cathedral in procession and is greeted at the entrance. He is presented to the priests and people of his diocese before the main altar where the Papal Bull appointing him bishop of the diocese is read for all to hear. Representatives of the priests, religious, and faithful come up to the bishop's throne to express their obedience and loyalty by kissing the Episcopal ring. All this takes place during the

bishop's first Mass in his cathedral where he gives a homily and a blessing for all.

Lithuania has 690 Catholic parishes served by 655 priests. Four seminaries are training 230 future priests. There are seven religious orders for men with 101 members and 37 religious orders for women with 915 members.

In 2001, most of the dioceses celebrated their 75th or diamond jubilees, having been founded in 1926. On Easter Sunday of that year, Pope Pius XI, having approved the project presented by Archbishop Jurgis Matulaitis, created the Lithuanian ecclesiastical province with its five dioceses.

The oldest Lithuanian diocese is that of Kaunas, formerly known as the Diocese of Žemaitija, founded in 1417. During the time of Bishop Valančius, who ruled it in the 19th century, it included half of Lithuania, but was broken up into three smaller dioceses in 1926. The youngest diocese, founded in 1997 is that of Šiauliai, headed by Bishop Eugenijus Bartulis who was consecrated bishop that year. He is the second youngest of the Lithuanian bishops and turns 53 this year. Bishop Rimantas Norvila, now in charge of the Diocese of Vilkaviškis with its newly built cathedral, is the youngest bishop, being only 45 years old.

The smallest diocese of Kaišiadorys is headed by Bishop Juozas Matulaitis who has been its Shepherd for 12 years.

The largest number of Catholics outside Lithuania is in the United States. Here we have five bishops of Lithuanian origin and 283 priests. Many of these are elderly, however, and the Lithuanian Church has been lending some of her priests to staff the Lithuanian parishes still functioning in the USA. ♦

*SR. ONA MIKAILA is a writer and editor of **Bendradarbis** and belongs to the order of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Lithuanian order in Putnam, Connecticut.*

R E F L E C T I O N S

Bernadeta Miliauskaitė-Harris

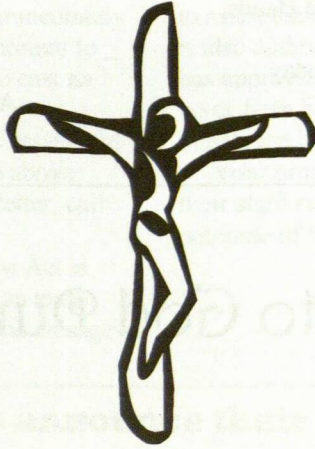
Discover the Power of the Cross

During Lent, our thoughts turn to Jesus' suffering on the cross. A new book which can help us understand the importance of suffering and better carry the many crosses Jesus sends us is *Miracles of the Cross* by Bob and Penny Lord, with a forward by Mother Angelica.

What makes *Miracles of the Cross* interesting to Lithuanians is the nine-page chapter entitled "The Living Miracle of the Hill of Crosses", in which Bob and Penny give a brief history of Lithuania and the famous hill near Šauliai. They describe the Lithuanian people as "a...marvelous people, stronger and more faithful to the Church than most ethnic groups we have ever met." (p. 87).

They write about the Communists' attempts to destroy the crosses: "One plan to kill the spirit of the people [was] by taking away the crosses from the Mount, after the other failed. The Soviets tried everything, but the results were always the same. The hearts of the faithful would not be silenced; their country and Church were under siege, but their oppressors could not conquer their wills." (p. 95-96). Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevičius of Kaunas is mentioned as an example.

The chapter concludes with the following question: "What is there in the Cross that gives people, like the faithful of Lithuania, the courage to not only be willing to die for the Faith but to live it?" (p. 96). Reading the other 36 chapters helps to better understand the power of the Cross as manifested in miraculous experiences of various Saints, miracles which changed the course of history – the origin of the cross and the history of the true cross and the Way of the Cross.



This is Bob and Penny's twenty-second book. Earlier books cover topics such as, Mary, miracles of the Eucharist, Saints and Martyrs. The Lords also produce videos, give lectures, take Pilgrimages to the shrines of Europe and Mexico, and publish the "Good Newsletter". In 2001, they received the Franciscan University of Steubenville's highest award, the Poverello Medal in recognition of their media apostolate. All of their books and videos are faithful to the teachings of

the Catholic Church.

Miracles of the Cross (316 pages) is \$15.95. The Lords also have two videos available about Lithuania. One is "Five Years in Siberia, Interview with the Bishop of Kaunas, Lithuania", in which now Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevičius talks about his experiences. The other is "Lithuania, Land of Martyrs". It visits the Hill of Crosses, the Gates of Dawn Chapel, the Hill of the Three Crosses, and Our Lady of Šiluva Church. Each video is 30 minutes long and costs \$19.95. Shipping and handling is \$5.00.

This Lent, instead of watching TV, visit your local Catholic bookstore or contact Bob and Penny's media apostolate called "Journeys of Faith" at 1-800-633-2484 or www.bobandpennylord.com. The address: Journeys of Faith, P0 Box 845, 65 Holy Family Mission Drive, Morrilton, AR 72110-0845. There are many good spiritual books waiting to be read and shared with your family.

In conclusion, here is a short prayer, which Bob and Penny pray after Mass. May we make it our own, especially during Lent.

O Sacrament Most Holy,

BERNADETA MILLIAUSKAITĖ-HARRIS is a member of the Council of Religious Affairs in the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.

O Sacrament Divine,
All praise and thanksgiving
Be every moment Thine.

We adore the Wounds in Thy Sacred Head,
With sorrow deep and true.
May every thought of ours today
Be an act of love for You.

We adore the Wounds in Thy Sacred Hands,
With sorrow deep and true.
May every work of our hands today
Be an act of love for You.

We adore the Wounds in Thy Sacred Feet,
With sorrow deep and true.
May every step we take today
Be an act of love for You.

We adore the Wounds in Thy Sacred Heart,
With sorrow deep and true.
May every beat of our hearts today
Be an act of love for You.

O Sacrament Most Holy,
O Sacrament Divine,
All praise and all thanksgiving
Be every moment Thine.
(p. 197-198) ◆

Sr. Margarita Bareikaitė

Journey to God During Lent

*"Even now, says the Lord
return to me with your
whole heart." (Joel 2:12-18)*

We live in exciting times – even the world's economic problems weigh heavily upon us on both national and international levels. The technological revolution continues to offer new possibilities. Sometimes we need to ask ourselves, "Where am I really going?" We need to know what our goal is: not only for this day, or for tomorrow, but our whole life and for eternity. That is the most important goal of all, and all other goals should depend on it. "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Pslm 119:105).

Nearly a year ago we celebrated a Lenten season, and now we are experiencing a new Lent of 2002. It is the Church's sacred springtime. On Ash Wednesday, Lent began, the ashes were placed on our foreheads again this year. They are reminders of death, a time of purification and cleansing, a time of fresh growth, joy.

True even after baptism, our conversion is not yet complete and a large part of our existence goes on at a pre-Christian level. Those who are aware of the grace of baptism find themselves continually

"on the path of conversion."

A major temptation for contemporary people is to seek salvation anywhere other than in God. It's true that following the way of salvation is not an easy task: it means walking with Christ on the road through mountains, deserts...

The Gospel for Ash Wednesday's liturgy sets the tone for this entire Lenten season. In the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament, Jesus teaches us the necessity of helping those in need. "I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me." (Mt. 25:40).

Nothing in the gospel reveals more convincingly the necessity of prayer. Jesus prayed at His baptism (Lk 3:21) at the transfiguration (9:20) teaching us the "Our Father" (17:1), on the cross (23:34). The liturgy of Ash Wednesday reminds us of the importance of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

May our closing prayer of Lent be: "Lord, increase my gratitude, deepen my compassion, inflame my love to You." ◆

SR. MARGARITA BAREIKAITĖ belongs to the order of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Lithuanian order in Putnam, CT. She is also the Chairperson of the Religious Affairs Council for the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.

C U R R E N T E V E N T S

Freedom Consolidation Act is debated in Senate

JBANC has learned that the Senate is now expected to debate the Freedom Consolidation Act (S.1572) and vote on it as early as the last week of March. Please let your Senators know immediately that the passage of this legislation is important to you and that you are counting on them to cast an affirmative vote.

If at all possible, collect a few fellow voters and visit your Senator's local office with the above message. If that is not feasible, write a letter, call or fax.

Passage of the Freedom Consolidation Act is vital to all Americans of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian heritage. The Act endorses the enlarge-

ment of NATO in 2002 to include all three Baltic countries in addition to other qualified European democracies that have applied. Financial support to assist them in preparing for NATO membership is also authorized. The House of Representatives has approved this legislation by a large margin of votes from both parties. However, prospects in the Senate are less certain.

Your prompt representation to your Senators or their staffers may make a huge difference in the outcome of the Senate vote. Please act now. ♦

— *The Joint Baltic American National Committee, Inc.*

Ethnic communities announce their solidarity for NATO

JBANC released a joint statement of the representatives of ethnic communities on the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on March 16th, 2002. Below is the statement in full.

1. We, the Representatives of the American ethnic communities of the Albanian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Slovenian descent, have gathered in Washington, D.C. to endorse the vision of a Europe whole and free as presented by President George W. Bush on June 15, 2001 and by former President William J. Clinton on October 22, 1996.

2. We believe that NATO is the backbone of the transatlantic community and has been an effective bulwark in the defense of freedom, democracy and human rights. We further believe that a strong involvement of the United States in Europe serves the vital interest of the United States.

3. We thank the United States House of Representatives for overwhelmingly passing the Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001 and we urge its expeditious passage by the United States Senate.

4. We believe that the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to NATO has contributed to transatlantic security and strengthened and expanded the zone of peace, stability, democracy and cooperation in Europe.

5. We share President Bush's belief that "All of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom --and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe -- as Europe's old democracies have." Furthermore, we believe that the almost 55 million people who live in Europe's aspirant nations should contribute to and share in the benefits of the family of European nations.

6. We commend Europe's new democracies for their progress in solidifying democracy, establishing market economies and building strong and just civil societies. We believe that the invitation to join NATO will be a major achievement in the struggle for freedom. In this regard, we honor all who have suffered in this cause and we thank the United States for its abiding support.

Continued

7. We recognize the significant progress that has been made by Europe's new democracies in their preparation to shoulder the responsibilities that membership in NATO requires.

8. We commend Europe's new democracies for their solidarity with the American people after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and for their willingness to act as de facto allies of the United States and NATO. We recognize the contributions of Europe's new democracies for opening their air and land facilities to the United States and NATO and for sharing their resources in promoting global security and in the fight against terrorism.

9. We applaud Europe's new democracies for their commitment to cooperation which was initiated in Vilnius, Lithuania in May, 2000.

10. We urge Europe's new democracies to accelerate needed reforms to enable their invitations to

join NATO at the Prague Summit. We also understand that this continued commitment to shared values is an essential component of such membership.

11. We express our thanks to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland for their support of the Vilnius process, to Denmark and Norway for their work in the security of the Baltics and to Greece and Turkey for their support of their closest neighbor nations.

12. We commit ourselves to support and promote the fulfillment of the vision of a Europe whole and free and respectfully urge the President of the United States and the United States Senate to support invitations to all aspirant nations who have demonstrated their preparedness for admission to NATO. ♦

— *The Joint Baltic American National Committee, Inc.*

*Representing:
Estonian American National Council, Inc.
American Latvian Association, Inc.
Lithuanian American Council, Inc.*

Michigan adopted resolution advocating Baltics in NATO

Michigan state's Congress adopted a resolution on March 19 containing an appeal to U. S. president Bush and the Congress to back membership of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in NATO.

Michigan Congressman Andrew E. Raczkowski handed the text of this resolution to Lithuanian Ambassador to Washington Vygaudas Ušackas during a meeting with the Lithuanian-American community in Detroit.

The document states that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia maintain NATO principles. These three countries, devoted to peace and known for their dedicated struggle against (Soviet) occupation, can contribute largely to the Alliance.

Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania were examples of fighters for freedom ideals. Admission of these countries to NATO would strengthen peace and democracy ties, the resolution reads. ♦

— *Baltic News Service*

Lithuanian troops take part in "Enduring Peace"

Lithuania's parliament, Seimas, made a decision on March 19 to send a group of Lithuanian military forces to take part in the international operation "Enduring Peace" against terrorism in Kyrgyzstan. Fifteen Lithuanians are to join the operation for the period from April to December.

"Enduring Peace" started in October of 2001 as a reply to the September 11 terror acts in the USA.

Lithuanian troops are to join Danish, Norwegian and Dutch detachments dealing with servicing transport aircrafts. Estonians and Latvians are also to be in this team.

Estonia and Latvia had already earlier passed the corresponding parliamentary decisions on participation of their militaries in the operation "Enduring Peace" in Kyrgyzstan. ♦

— *Baltic News Service*

A survey of Lithuanian-American libraries

Bridges readers are asked for their assistance in identifying Lithuanian-American organizational libraries for a study.

The organizations can be parishes, schools, organizations, and religious orders. All must have some roots or ties with the Lithuanian-American community in the United States. At this time, the study is not seeking to identify university or public libraries with holdings of materials on Lithuanian themes. The survey seeks to identify the libraries, provide them with questionnaires, and collect data needed to analyze the current status of such libraries in the United States at the beginning of the 21st century. The extent and scope of the holdings is of interest, with particular emphasis on the book collections.

This study is the second part of a study first conducted in 2001 on Lithuanian-American personal libraries in the United States, running parallel to a similar study being done in Lithuania by Prof. Domas Kaunas and colleagues at Vilnius University. Dale Lukas and Ramunė Kubilius, both working librarians, conducted the survey and analyzed the data, together with Antanas Dundzila. The results of that first study were presented at a Bibliophiles' Conference in Vilnius Lithuania, in September 2001. The findings were summarized in an article to be published in the Vilnius University journal,

"Knygotyra", and an English translation of the study will be published in the journal (SEEIR) "Slavic and Eastern European Information Resources" in 2002, in the U.S.

The data from the current survey of Lithuanian-American Organizational Libraries, together with a summary of data results of the Lithuanian-American Private Libraries Study will be presented at the AABS (Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies) conference, to be held at Johns Hopkins University June 5-9, 2002 in Baltimore, MD.

If someone coordinates an organizational library and would like to receive and complete the questionnaire, please request a copy. All questions in the questionnaire are in English. Survey forms would need to be returned to Dale Lukas, at the address provided by April 5, 2002. Should anyone need clarification about the study or a particular survey question, please feel free to contact either one of the authors:

Dale Lukas, 10622 Great Arbor Dr., Potomac, MD. 20854; Tel: (301) 983-0763;

Fax: 301-765-9534; e-mail: lukasinc@aol.com;

Ramunė Kubilius, 808 Judson 3B, Evanston, IL; Tel/Fax: (847) 869-9686;

e-mail: r-kubilius@northwestern.edu ♦

— *Ramunė Kubilius*

Baltic Studies Conference

The 18th Conference on Baltic Studies will take place at Johns Hopkins University (Homewood campus), Baltimore, MD, June 6-8, 2002. The theme of the conference is "The Baltic States in the Era of Globalization". Subject sections include: Business and Economics; Aesthetics, Communication & Culture; Democratic Reform; Education; History; Literature; Psychology; Geography and Earth Sciences; Linguistics. The official language of AABS is English.

Conference presenters include professors, graduate students, and independent scholars from North America, Europe (including the three Baltic countries), and sometimes from countries as far

away as Japan and Australia. Participants are invited to come for one or all of the conference days. The conference includes a banquet, cultural programs, and recently has featured speakers from the Embassies of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in Washington, D.C.

For more information about AABS and its upcoming conference, go to the web site. The conference website (www.aabsconference.org) has information on the preliminary program, housing, and registration. ♦

— *Ramunė Kubilius*

Statistics from Lithuania show a changing country

As an American now living in Vilnius, I have read several interesting stories that appeared in various newspapers, and a few of them caught my eye. I would like to share them with you. Some are facts given by the Lithuanian Bureau of Statistics for the year 2000, while others appeared in the press.

After Lithuania regained her independence, her population began to decrease, mostly because of emigration. About 50,000 people of Russian origin returned to the east, while 7,000 of the Jewish faith, and, officially, some 2,000 Lithuanians went to the west. But, how many Lithuanians left illegally? No one knows. From 1994 on, because of the high death rate and the low birth rate, the population situation has become a serious problem for Lithuania. The death rate, in comparison, is even higher in Latvia and Estonia.

In the opinion of one writer, if this trend continues, then in another 300 years there will be, perhaps, only 100 thousand people in Lithuania, approximately the number of those now living in the city of Panevėžys.

If there could be 2.5 births to every mother, the nation may survive. However, at the moment, there are only 1.3 to 1.2 children born to each mother. Will the nation be doomed if this trend continues? Latvia, as a point of information, has the smallest birth rate in the world – 1.1 births.

Could one of the reasons for this be because life styles are changing? In 1990, there were 26,000 marriages registered, while in 2000, only 7,000. Why don't people marry? Perhaps younger people wish to seek a better education and want to stand on their own two feet before considering marriage. Who knows?

With the advent of democracy, the influence of Western culture may have even spread to Lithuania, such as couples living together without taking the marriage vows. More young people are now living together: in Lithuania, 16 % of women between the ages of 25 to 29 cohabit; in Latvia the figure is 42 %, and in Estonia it is 63 %.

The family, as a unit, appears to be disappearing. In 1990, 7% of children were born out of wedlock. In 2000, this figure has jumped to 20%, or every fifth child; in Latvia, it is 39%; and in Estonia it is 63%.

In 2000, there were 23,683 abortions; 4,770 more people died than were born; and 156 children were adopted – 40 by foreigners, which was three times less than 1997.

Since 1960, life expectancy among men is decreasing, while among women it is increasing. Why are men dying at an early age? More men die in auto accidents, suicides, killings, and alcohol abuse. There are 25,000 more women than men in Lithuania.

Lithuania's official unemployment rate reached 12.2 % in November, with Panevėžys at 16.2%, Šiauliai 14%, Klaipėda 9.4%, Vilnius 8.7%, and Kaunas 8.5%. The average unemployment level is forecast to fall to 11.3% in 2002. The minimum monthly wages remained at 430 litas (\$107.50 US dollars). Perhaps these statistics may shed some light on why 800 Lithuanians emigrate, legally, every year.

The smallest monthly salary of 430 litas is about what most teachers and farmers earn. If the birth-rate continues its downward spiral, teachers may have to look for a new line of work. From 1986 until 2000, the Lithuanian birthrate has dropped from around 60,000 live births annually to just 34,000. If the projected low forecasts for student enrollment over the coming years are correct, the present work force for primary school teachers may have to be reduced by up to 3,500.

Inflation appears to be under control. In 1995, it was 35.7%; while in 2000, it dropped to 1.4%.

As for health care, for every 10,000 people there are 38 doctors. Most of them earn about 600 litas a month (\$150 US dollars). Most all doctors work in hospitals operated by the government, and they cannot afford to have their own practice as physicians do in the United States – for the simple reason the average person does not have the money.

The terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11 resulted in higher insurance premiums and declining passenger traffic to Western Europe for Lithuania's national airline, Lithuanian Airlines (LAL). To offset these financial losses, according to press reports, restructuring is being planned. To keep some of their pilots, an agreement was recently signed with a Tunisian airline to hire five Lithuanian crews, or ten people, for a period of two years to operate Boeing 737 aircraft on

flights between Tunisia and Western Europe.

The Lithuanian family, just like their American counterparts, has fallen in love with the automobile. For every 100 families, there are 45 of them. In all of Lithuania, there are 1,097,797 registered. The most popular models are the Volkswagen, Audi, VAZ, Opel, and Ford. Accidents, comparing the years 2000 to 1998, dropped from 6,445 to 5,087.

There are 644,600 pensioners, with the average monthly pension being 312 litas (\$78 US dollars), and the most being 400 litas (\$100 US dollars).

Death benefits are paid to Lithuanian citizens

residing in Lithuania, to foreigners who have permission to live in Lithuania, and to refugees. These benefits are paid to the person paying for the funeral expenses, usually family members. When a non-pensioner dies, the death benefit is 750 litas (\$ 187.50, US dollars). These benefits are payable no later than three months following death. For the deceased pensioner, if the monthly pension was not already paid before the time of death, then this pension plus two more months of pension, and 750 litas is also payable. ♦

— *Edward Baranauskas*

"Child's Gate to Learning" web site

We invite you to visit the new "Child's Gate to Learning" web pages. The site describes the activities of the group, which was founded to support after school centers in Lithuania. The group, first founded in Chicago, now has chapters and supporters in Cleveland, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere.

The web site address is <http://www.childgate.org>. ♦

— *Ramuné Kubilius*

Vilnius named "City of Peace"

In appreciation of Vilnius's city efforts to build a good neighborhood and civil society, UNESCO has awarded the Lithuanian capital with the prize of "City for Peace".

Vilnius turned out to be the winner among 21 European and North American cities. UNESCO Secretary General Koichiro Matsuura awarded the prize at a formal ceremony in Morocco during the 107th session of the inter-parliamentary conference on March 18. ♦

— *Baltic News Service*

Vilnius and Kaunas aim to become a European center

The mayors of two Lithuanian rival cities, capital Vilnius and the second major city Kaunas, signed a letter of intent on March 8th to cooperate in jointly promoting development of both largest cities.

Vilnius Mayor Artūras Zuokas and Kaunas leader Erikas Tamašauskas signed the document in the Kaunas town hall.

The letter of intent provides that the two cities are obliged to promote partnership of business, higher education, and authorities; to make efforts to attract foreign investments to joint projects; to effectively use the current infrastructure and create a new one; and also build a modern transport system integrated into the European network.

Kaunas Mayor Tamašauskas expressed his belief that signing this cooperation document "finally would end the eternal confrontation between Vil-

nius and Kaunas". His colleague from Vilnius, Zuokas, stressed that the time had come to combine the efforts of the two largest cities.

"Vilnius and Kaunas are cities that have to represent the country. Therefore, it is necessary to mobilize forces so that we could compete with similar centers in the European Union," Zuokas continued. "We have to undertake measures to remain influential in the Baltic Sea region," he said.

Both mayors signed two additional documents, an address to Transport Minister Zigmantas Balčytis asking to raise the speed limit to 110 km/h on the Vilnius-Kaunas highway during the summer season and an address to the government to widen borrowing possibilities for three major cities (Klaipėda seaport included). ♦

— *Baltic News Service*

New TV show — stars Lithuanian-American

A new FOX television show, “American Embassy”, airing Friday nights at 9:00 pm EST (8:00 pm central) is starring Arija Bareikis as Emma Brody.

According to the Fox press release, this is a “modern coming-of-age story with the personal and professional travails of a young vice-consul in London’s U.S. Embassy. By day, Emmy Brody, a Midwest gal thrust into the non-stop pulse of London, serves as a life raft for American travelers in need of help. By night, her personal adventures include a complicated love triangle between a CIA courier and a Royal!” ♦



The beat goes on for one rock & roller

The Lithuanian-American daily’s, *DRAUGAS*, correspondent Linas Johansonas has been entered in a Cleveland Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum publication.

It was announced on March 4th that Deanna Adams included Johansonas (otherwise known as “Johan” in the rock and roll business) in her 624-page book, *Rock & Roll and the Cleveland Connection*. The book was printed by Kent State University Press.

In the book, Johansonas talks of his 1991 trip to Lithuania and his meetings with the Jackson family, including famous brother Michael.

Johansonas worked as a marketing director for Cleveland’s rock club “Agora” for 15 years and as a DJ for the “Inner Sanctum” radio program on WENZ 107.9 FM for three years. In 1994, The Cleveland magazine, Northern Ohio Live, awarded Johansonas the “Achievement Award in Pop Music for his radio program direction.” ♦

Hamlet in Lithuanian

Hamlet comes to Toronto in the Lithuanian language. Director Eimuntas Nekrošius with the theater company “Meno Fortas” will be appearing in the production of *Hamlet* at the Premier Dance Theater at the Harbourfront Theatre on April 16 to the 19th.

Playing Hamlet will be Andrius Mamontovas, formerly of the rock group “Foje”. The Theater’s press release quotes the *Tribune de Genève*, “Nekrošius’ Hamlet transforms Elsinore Castle into a land of fire and ice...revealing a perfect understanding of Shakespeare and a gift for dramatic tableaux.”

The press release goes on, “A multi-award-winning production from the internationally celebrated “Meno Fortas” theatre company. Continuing its acclaimed world tour, Hamlet is full of startling images and stunning physicality, evoking both the Dark Ages and science fiction.”

The performance is in Lithuanian with English

surtitles.

All performance begin at 7:00 pm and cost \$35.00 or \$45.00 Canadian. More information can be found at www.harbourfront.on.ca. ♦



From the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.

A Survey to Understand Your Needs...

This survey has been prepared to better understand the needs and interests of the Lithuanian Community in the United States.

This is a diverse community with different goals and interests, unified by a common Lithuanian heritage. Many changes took place in the 1990s and the Lithuanian-American Community (LAC) Inc. is organizing a conference in June 2002 to formulate action steps to better meet the needs of this community.

The conference seeks to understand the needs of Lithuanians born in the U.S. and those

having arrived since 1990 as well as how to meet those needs.

Your responses will provide input to this conference and the results will be distributed to the press as well. All answers will be held confidentially and only summary information will be distributed.

Please mail the completed survey to: Aldas Kriaučiūnas; 2287 Stone Rd.; Ann Arbor, MI 48105. If you have any questions, Aldas can be reached at (734) 647-0255 or by email: aldas@umich.edu. **Please mail your responses by April 30, 2002.**

Background Information:

Age: _____ Sex - Female: _____ Male: _____

Country of Birth: _____ U.S. State of Residence: _____

Are you a member of a Lithuanian-American Community, Inc? _____ Yes _____ No

Areas of Interest. Please mark your level of interest in the following activities (ratings range from 1 = low interest to 7 = high interest). If an activity is not applicable, please circle N/A.

	Low	High						
Lithuanian sports clubs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian camps	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Concerts of pop groups from Lithuania	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Other Lithuanian cultural events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian youth organizations (Scouts, Ateitininkai, etc)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian political activities (NATO, EU, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian folk dance groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian church events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian social events	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A

Continued

Getting a better job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Helping family members in Lithuania	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian charity work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Dealing with immigration issues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Getting into a college/university	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
English language improvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Lithuanian language improvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Other: please specify:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A

Barriers to Involvement. Please evaluate each of the following possible barriers to **your** involvement in Lithuanian activities and events (ratings range from 1 = low barrier to 7 = high barrier). If an item is not applicable, please circle N/A.

	Disagree		Agree					
I feel a gap between the second wave of Lithuanian immigrants (1945-1955) and the third wave of Lithuanian immigrants (post-1990).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
Relations between the second wave of Lithuanian immigrants (1945-1955) and the third wave of Lithuanian immigrants (post-1990) have improved over the past five years.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A
By addressing the right issues, the Lithuanian American Community, Inc. can achieve its goal of meeting the needs of a diverse set of members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	N/A

Additional Ideas: Please use the space below to provide any additional information as to how the Lithuanian American Community, Inc. can better meet the needs of the Lithuanian American Community. For example, what could the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. do better and what would you consider its proper role in the daily Lithuanian-American life?

Thank you very much for your participation in the survey. Please return the survey to the address indicated at the start of the survey.

Please mail the completed survey to: Aldas Kriauciūnas; 2287 Stone Rd.; Ann Arbor, MI 48105. If you have any questions, Aldas can be reached at (734) 647-0255 or by email: aldas@umich.edu. **Please mail your responses by April 30, 2002.** ♦

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