

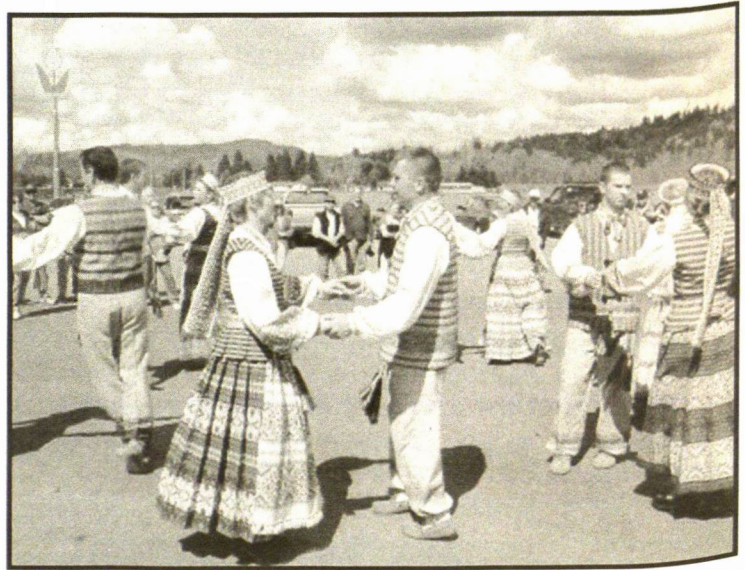
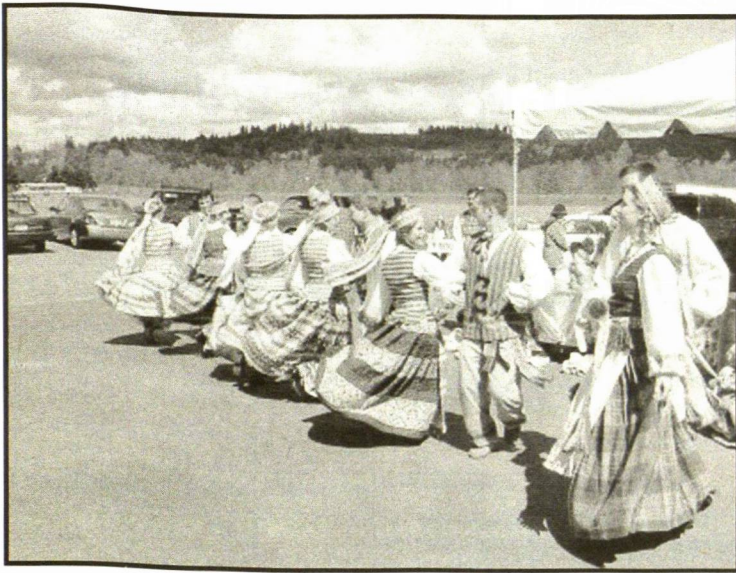
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# BRIDGES

• LITHUANIAN AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL •

Volume 27

Issue 3, April 2003



*Baltic radio programs...Mindaugas the King remembered...New books off the press*



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

*Call me tender hearted...but I truly enjoy listening to stories about families, heritage, and transcending moments that not only give insight into that person's life, but also into your own.*

*One such example of endearing and enduring families is found in Leona Shierant Gustaff's book *Singing the Tears: The Immigrant Journey*. As I read this book, moments described by both my parents and relatives came to mind most vividly. These stories enabled me to recognize and understand myself and my road on this earth.*

*One touching photo in Leona's book is that of her mother and father on their wedding day. Being barely 16, her delicate determination to enter adulthood clearly shines in her eyes. Leona writes describing the reactions from both sides of the newlyweds:*

*"You are young, still behind the ears wet," said Ona, Verna's mother. "Sixteen years old only two months already."*

*"Wally, you the horn play good but a mistake big you make already. Verna's mama and papa don't know no English. That means trouble big, and out the window love flies and dies the marriage," Ana, Wally's mother, said to him.*

*But this was America, and parents did not have the same influence here that they had in the old country."*  
(p. 117)

*Wally and Verna were married 50 years and "brought six children into the world." Their perseverance and dedication to each other proved the earlier admonitions false.*

*Other than the fact that this book became Leona's legacy to her children and grandchildren, it also reminded me that every person not only has a story but is living it.*

*Leona's dedication to her family and Lithuanians took her to Lithuania to learn about the country her mother had left long ago. She returned from her trip ready to give something of America to Lithuania — an education through books. In turn she also left a tender education of what family means by "singing the tears" for her loved ones. We will miss you, Leona.*

*Rasa Ardys-Juška*

Editor

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On the cover:  
Pictures of the Portland, Oregon  
Lithuanian Folk Dancers "Aitvaras"  
performing at the Tulip Festival.  
Photos: Vilius Zalpys

Happy Easter!



Linksmų Vėlykų!

# Efforts continue to restore funding for Baltic-oriented radio programs

**T**he House International Relations Committee scheduled a session on April 30, 2003 to debate the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (State Department Authorization); and the Millennium Challenge Account Act of 2003. The meeting was held at 10:15 AM in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building and was open to the public. Chairman Henry J. Hyde presided over the proceedings.

The Joint Baltic American National Committee, Inc. (JBANC) representing a million Americans of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian heritage, helped to promote a strong nationwide effort to have funding restored for Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty programming to the Baltic countries. Recently, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee proposed the authorization of \$8.9 million to ensure continuing International Broadcasting by VOA and RFE/RL language services to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The current proposal for the FY04 budget, which was submitted by the Administration for Congressional approval, does not allocate any funds for international broadcasting to the Baltic countries.

In an April 17 letter to Members of Con-



gress, JBANC chairman John Bolsteins stated that “International broadcasting has been an important tool in promoting U.S. interests abroad,” and that JBANC stands firmly “against the premature elimination of these radio services, at least until these countries are securely in NATO and the European Union. It is vital, especially today, that America’s voice be heard and heard clearly.”

Senate and House Appropriations committees will also soon begin considering legislation affecting the status of radio services to the Baltic countries and Central and Eastern Europe. ♦

*THE JOINT BALTIC AMERICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE, INC. (JBANC) represents the Estonian American National Council, Inc., the American Latvian Association, Inc. and the Lithuanian American Council, Inc. Contact person is Simonas Girdzijauskas, and JBANC can be found at [www.jbanc.org](http://www.jbanc.org).*



# Protocols of Accession amended to enlarge NATO

**T**he Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 30 voted unanimously in favor of amending the Protocols of Accession to enlarge NATO by admitting seven new members to the Alliance. Those countries are Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria. The committee voted 19-0, thus moving the decision now on to the full Senate.

The Senate will debate the enlargement of NATO beginning May 6, with a vote expected to occur soon thereafter. Foreign Ministers of the seven invited countries have been asked to come to Washington, DC next week in anticipation of a positive Senate vote.

The Joint Baltic American National Committee, Inc. (JBANC), representing a million Americans of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian heritage, circulated a letter to the entire Senate, asking for a positive vote on NATO enlargement. In the letter, JBANC chairman John Bolsteins noted advances made by the three Baltic countries, and their support and cooperation as partners with the U.S. and other Allies in joint military and peacekeeping operations. Bolsteins added that enlargement "will help cement the security and stability so long sought after in that region."

Testifying before the Senate Committee on April 29, Secretary of State Colin Powell gave final administration endorsement for the robust enlargement of NATO. Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN), Chairman of that Senate panel in a

statement prior to the hearing said that by acting to support enlargement, the Senate "will reaffirm the utility and necessity of our alliance relationships."

Democratic Ranking Member Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE) added "there is no doubt in my mind that the Alliance will be fortified by the admission of members whose passionate commitment to democracy – and to the transatlantic relationship – stems from the recent raw and painful memory of having suffered under totalitarian rule."

Each of the 19 NATO member nations must vote in favor of enlarging NATO to admit the new countries. Canada and Norway have already done so. It is expected that the seven will officially join the Alliance in May 2004.◆



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*Edvardas Baranauskas*

# The United States Marines celebrate their birthday in Vilnius

A detachment of six members of the United States Marine Corps was formally activated in Vilnius on March 22, 2002 to serve at the American Embassy. To those who may be wondering why they are here, a brief review in history would be in order.

Their mission is to safeguard the classified documents of the American Embassy, to protect its property, equipment, and to provide safety for its employees. Their arrival in Vilnius was planned years ago. A privately owned home next to the Embassy was purchased by the United States government, and it was completely remodeled to provide living quarters for them, now known as "The Marine House".

The Foreign Service Act of 1946 authorized the Secretary of the Navy, upon the request of the Secretary of State, to assign enlisted members of the Marine Corps to serve as protectors of Foreign Service posts throughout the world. The program has grown to the point, from the initial 300 Marines to, as of now, over 1200 officers and enlisted personnel located at approximately 131 State Department missions abroad, with Vilnius now being one of them.

On November 10, 1775, the date observed by Marines as their "birthday", the Continental Congress authorized its existence as an expeditionary force, and to serve aboard ships. The United States Marine Corps, as such, was established by law on July 11, 1798.

Wherever Marines are located, they will always celebrate their "birthday" in some fashion,

usually with a party, and the Marines in Vilnius are no different.

These newly arrived Marines organized a Birthday Ball that was held on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002 at a recently built hotel, the Le Meridien Villon Resort, located about 12 miles outside the city limits of Vilnius. This was a last minute switch, as it was originally scheduled to be held at Vilniaus Rotušė, also known as the Town Hall.

President George W. Bush was scheduled to arrive in Vilnius sometime during the third week in November, and it was decided that his meetings with Lithuanian political leaders and Baltic presidents should be held there. This change of venue of the Marine Ball was necessary to give the security people the time they needed to go over the premises of the Town Hall "with a fine tooth comb".

There is a strong comradeship between Marines, and this can be judged by the old adage, "Once a Marine. Always A Marine", for there is no such person as a "former Marine" or an "ex-Marine". In my case, even though I was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps fifty-seven years ago, the detachment in Vilnius still looks upon me "as one of them".

It is a Marine Corps tradition that the oldest Marine be honored at the birthday festivities. This was the first Birthday Ball with a detachment of Marines stationed in Vilnius, and my wife Genutė and I sat at the head table, along with some distinguished guests. Among them were the American Ambassador to Lithuania, John F. Tefft

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*EDVARDAS BARANAUSKAS is a regular contributor to BRIDGES now residing in Lithuania.*



and his wife; the Commander of the Armed Forces of Lithuania, Major General Jonas Kronkaitis (who was the Guest of Honor) and his wife; and the Defense Minister of Lithuania, and Linas Linkevičius ( whose position may be compared to that of the Secretary of Defense in the United States, Donald Rumsfeld) and his wife.

There must have been about 100 people at the ball, who paid 75 litas (or about 20 U.S. dollars) to join in the partying, and I would say that this may have been the height of the social season in Vilnius. For those who wanted souvenirs to take home, there were several plastic bases that held both the American and Marine Corps flags at each table, plus fancy wine glasses for each person with the Marine Corps emblem on them.

The evening's program began with the presentation of the colors. The Commander of the Marine Detachment, Gunnery Sergeant Susan L. Tincher, Major General Jonas Kronkaitis (the guest of honor), myself (the oldest Marine in Lithuania), and Sergeant Hardy (the youngest Marine in Lithuania, and a member of the detachment), all took our places in front of the head table. A good-sized birthday cake, on a table, was wheeled up to us, and after the cake-cutting ceremony, each of us was given a piece of it.

There was dancing after dinner, with music furnished by one of the local bands. I was not sure if my 81 year-old bones could withstand the rigors of this modern "dancing". My Genutė was not willing to try it either, so we watched the younger crowd go through their gyrations. I did-

n't have much time for dancing, frankly, because more people came up to me and wanted to know how come I, an American and a World War II Marine, decided to live in Lithuania? I practically had to tell them, including the secretary to the American Ambassador, my life story.

Transportation to the party was no problem for people, like myself, who do not own an automobile, or to those who did not want to risk driving home after a few drinks. A chartered tourist bus took us partygoers from the American Embassy to the hotel. There were two return trips available towards the close of the evening to take us back to the Embassy, and so there was no problem.

This was an evening to remember, and I hope I will be around to participate in more of these Marine Birthday Balls as the years go by. ♦

#### *Footnote:*

The Marine Corps is rich in traditions. The Commandant's House, first occupied in 1806, is the oldest official residence in continuous use in Washington. The green color of the service uniform dates from the Continental Marines, the blue of the dress uniform from 1798. The motto of *Semper Fidelis* ("Always Faithful") was adopted immediately after the Civil War, as was the familiar eagle, globe, and anchor emblem. Also dating from about that time is The Marine Hymn ("The Halls of Montezuma"). The sword carried by Marine officers is of a pattern approved in 1826 and has a Mameluke hilt commemorating early service against the Barbary pirates.

*Sources of Information:*  
*Encyclopedia Americana.*  
*Edwin H. Simmons, Director of Marine Corps History and Museums.*



*Edvardas and Genutė Baranauskas flanked by the detachment of Marines in Vilnius.*  
*Photo: E. Baranauskas*



From *TULPÉ TIMES* and Regina Narušis

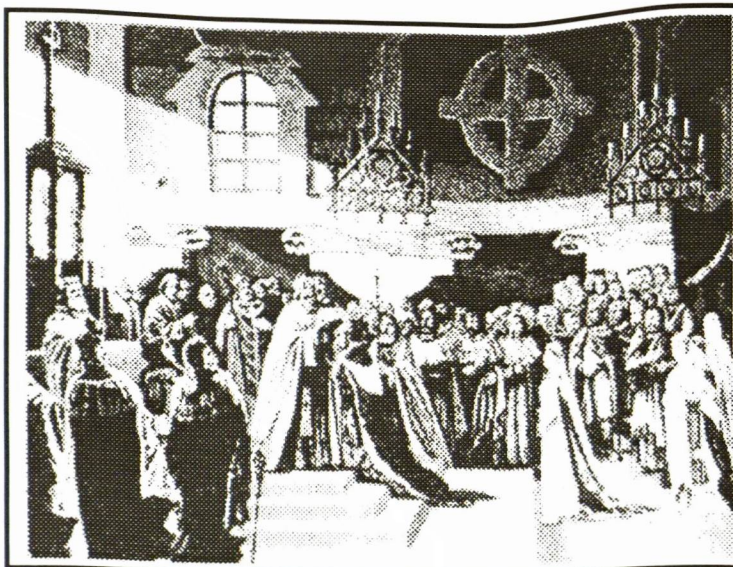
*Celebrations in honor of...*

# *Mindaugas the King*

**T**he Republic of Lithuania annually observes July 6<sup>th</sup> as a national holiday celebrating statehood and commemorating the Coronation of King Mindaugas. In 2003, to mark the 750<sup>th</sup> jubilee, numerous festivals, events, and exhibits are being planned. One of the most notable is the World Lithuanian Song Festival, scheduled June 30 to July 6. But first, let's take a quick look at King Mindaugas and his times.

Even though a more or less organized Lithuanian State existed prior to the rule of Mindaugas (1237-1263), he is often spoken of by historians as its founder. The unification of the various Lithuanian lands and tribes under his supreme authority enabled Mindaugas to strengthen Lithuania militarily in responding to the incursions of the ever encroaching Teutonic Order, out-of-work Crusaders, as it were, who used the propagation of Christianity in heathen Lithuania as an excuse to invade Baltic lands.

Mindaugas became the first and only King of Lithuania and was crowned in 1253, but only after agreeing to accept Christianity, which he did formally in 1251, when he, his



whole family, and a number of courtiers were baptized. It is speculated that it was politics and not necessarily a conversion of faith that dictated the action.

In accepting Christianity, Mindaugas, a cunning statesman, obtained the favor of Pope Innocent IV for his petition to be crowned King, thus strengthening Lithuanian interests which were in opposition to the expansionist aims of the Teutonic Order. Although Mindaugas was baptized in 1251, efforts in the organized conversion of the Lithuanian nation did not last beyond several years.

Meanwhile, having received an assurance of peace from the Crusaders, Mindaugas consoli-

*TULPÉ TIMES* published the first part of this article in its February 2003 (Vol. 23, No. 1) issue. **REGINA NARUŠIS** is the Lithuanian-American Community's President of the National Board of Directors and sent along the schedule for the King Mindaugas Coronation events. The graphic illustration (undated) depicts the coronation of King Mindaugas.



dated the state internally and expanded Lithuania's power to the south and east, including into what is present day Belarus and Russia. By the end of the decade, he had renewed open war on the Livonian Order, joining with allies in a campaign to resist the Crusaders.

Political strife coupled with rivalries for the throne eventually led to Mindaugas' assassination in 1263. However, the strong nucleus of the Lithuanian state formed by Mindaugas survived intact throughout the ensuing internal

discord and power struggles. The next great ruler of renown was Grand Duke Gediminas, who came to power in 1295, and whose heirs included Kęstutis, Algirdas, and Vytautas the Great. Lithuania remained a pagan nation for two more centuries, with the distinction of being the last nation in Europe to be converted to Christianity. Under Vytautas the Great, it also became the medieval superpower of Europe, but that is another story. ♦

### *Here is a schedule of events in celebration of the 750 year anniversary of King Mindaugas' Coronation:*

- ♦ June 30, 2003 (Monday) – 18.00 hr. Presentation of the Lithuanian folk costume collection at the National Drama Theatre.
- ♦ July 1, 2003 (Tuesday) – 20.00 hr. Youth night- rock, folk, and classical music at Vingis park.
- ♦ July 2, 2003 (Wednesday) – 21.00 hr. Professional academic music night with Vidmantas Bartulis's "Ode to the Lithuanian Nation".
- ♦ July 3, 2003 (Thursday) – 13.00 hr. The announcement of the opening of the World Lithuanian Song Festival at Daukantas Place.  
13.30 hr. The opening of the new bridge across the Neris River at the site.  
14.00 hr. Folklore Day – at Seveikiškis Park and Vilnius Old Town.  
16.00 hr. Opening of the folk art exhibit.  
18.00 hr. Final competition of choruses at the National Philharmonic.
- ♦ July 4, 2003 (Friday) – 17.00 hr. "The Sound of Kanklės" at the P. Skargos courtyard.  
21.30 hr. Ensemble evening called "Transforming colors" at Kalnas Park.
- ♦ July 5, 2003 (Saturday) – 12 noon. Unveiling of Lithuania's King Mindaugas monument.  
12:30 hr. "Coronation Mass" at the Archcathedral Basilica in Vilnius. Music by W.A. Mozart, performed by the Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra directed by S. Sondeckis with choruses and soloists from all over Europe. (It is hoped this Mass will be on European TV channels.)
- 18:00 hr. Wind instrument parade "Varying Storm" at Vilnius Old Town.  
20:30 hr. Dance Festival called "The Living Green Tree" at Žalgiris Stadium.  
23:00 hr. Musical fireworks by the Sports Palace.
- ♦ July 6, 2003 (Sunday) – 12:30 hr. Mass at the Archcathedral  
15:00 hr. Parade of the Song Festival participants from the Cathedral Square to Vingis Park.  
19:00hr. Song Festival called "The Bells of the Homeland" at Vingis park. For information on the festival visit <http://www.lfcc.lt/ds/index.html>.

### *Other Projects*

1. Festival at Kernavė – "Living archeology", July 4, 5, 6.
2. "Inhabitants of the Castle" – opera by V. Klovas at Trakų Pilis (Castle).
3. "Ignis et Fides" by B. Kutavičius, performed at the Opera and Ballet Theatre.
4. Youth jazz concerts on July 3 to 5 at the Cathedral square.
5. Classical music concerts and performances by Veronika Povilionis and her friends throughout Lithuania's towns and villages commemorating the 750 year anniversary.
6. Opening of exhibits at the Lithuanian National Art Museum. ♦

# BALSSI 2003

## *comes to Seattle*

**B**ALSSI 2003 or The Baltic Studies Summer Institute is an intensive 9-week program offering introductory courses in Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian language, history, and culture courses in English, surveying the history and culture of the Baltic States. Language classes meet from 9:30 to 12:30 five days a week for the full nine-week term.

History and folklore classes are taught in English to serve students from all three languages and meet from 1:10 to 3:20 five days a week for 4 ½ weeks.

### **Who sponsors BALSSI?**

BALSSI is sponsored by a consortium of nine American universities. The first BALSSI was held at the University of Washington, Seattle, in 1994, and has since traveled to the University of Illinois in Chicago, Indiana University in Bloomington, the University of Iowa in Iowa City, University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana, and now returns to the University of Washington for 2003 – 2004.

### **Who attends BALSSI?**

The language courses at BALSSI are intended for beginning or very low intermediate

students who want to start to acquire one of the Baltic languages.

All of the courses at BALSSI are offered for university credit; therefore, many of the participants have been undergraduate and graduate students whose academic interests include a Baltic connection

This group includes a geographer studying the Gauja National Park in Latvia, a linguist specializing in the Proto-Indo-European language, an economist studying the successes and failures of privatization in the former Soviet Union, and a retired professor of Germanic Philology, who has traveled to all the cities of the Hanseatic League but fell in love with Riga.

Many people who are not interested in academic credentials also find what they need at BALSSI. Some of them hope to get in touch with their ancestral roots by studying the language, culture, and history. Others want to get the feel for the ethnic background of their partners in life.

There have been entrepreneurs trying to establish business connections in the Baltic region, missionaries preparing to bring the teachings of their church to the area, even potential diplomats planning on careers in government or NGA posts in the Baltic States.

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*RIMAS ŽILINSKAS, of the University of Washington, provided this article originally for Tulpė Times, February 2003. He is the instructor for the Lithuanian language portion of these studies. He may be contacted at rimas@u.washington.edu.*





### **Who is the instructor for Lithuanian language?**

Rimas Zilinskas is a doctoral student in Comparative Literature at the University of Washington in Seattle, where he has been teaching Lithuanian for two years. He has an MA in Lithuanian Literature from Vilnius University.

### **How are the languages taught?**

The language courses are intensive, providing a minimum of 20 hours of contact time per week. They are not phrase-book survival oriented cram classes. Although a maximum use of the target language in the classroom is always the goal, neither are these immersion courses in which no English is ever used, even for explanations. Rather, they are regular academic language classes that explain all of the basic grammatical structures and provide practice in all of the language skill areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Students learn a vocabulary of about 1000 words and idioms, grouped thematically around practical everyday topics like food, clothing, weather, shopping, vacations, trans-

portation, etc. The contexts of the lessons provide information on non-verbal communication and social norms as well.

The goals of the courses are two-fold: first, to enable a student to communicate at a very basic level in a target-language situation, and second, to enable a student to continue independent language acquisition from non-professional native speakers, fitting new information into the paradigm already established at BALSSI.

### **When and where to apply?**

BALSSI 2003 will run from June 23 to August 22 for the language courses, June 23 to July 23 for Baltic History, and July 24 to August 22 for Introduction to Folklore Studies/Baltic Folklore. The application deadline for BALSSI classes is June 1, 2003. Send inquiries to: University of Washington, Baltic Studies Summer Institute, Department of Scandinavian Studies, Box 353420, Seattle, WA 98195-3420, tel. 206-543-0645, fax. 206-685-9173, or e-mail: [uwscand@u.washington.edu](mailto:uwscand@u.washington.edu). Be sure to visit their website at <http://depts.washington.edu/baltic/balssi>. ♦



Vytautas J. Sliupas

*A book delivers...*

## The Immigrant as Diplomat

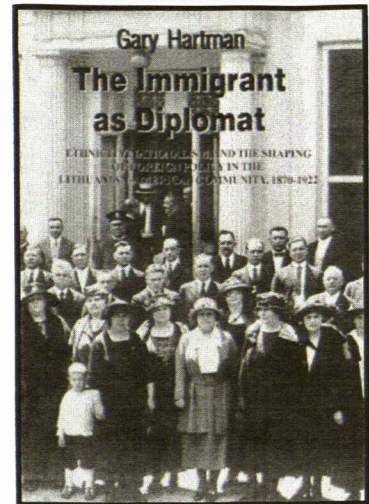
**T**his 258-page English language scholarly work, entitled *The Immigrant as Diplomat: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Shaping of Foreign Policy in the Lithuanian-American Community, 1870-1922*, written by Gary Hartman, Ph.D. of Southwest Texas State University, with 40 historical photographs, deals with the Lithuanian-American life from 1870 to 1922. It was recently published by the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, Chicago, IL., under a grant from the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc.

Gary Hartman's latest book should be of very great interest to persons of Lithuanian descent and to scholars studying various ethnic groups in America.

The book is divided into seven chapters:

- ◆ Chapter 1: The Lithuanian Migration to America,
- ◆ Chapter 2: The Early Lithuanian-American Nationalist Movement, 1870-1918;
- ◆ Chapter 3: Image Building: Reconciling Lithuanianism with 100 Percent Americanism,
- ◆ Chapter 4: Background to U.S.-Lithuanian Relations
- ◆ Chapter 5: U.S. Policymakers and the Question of Lithuanian Independence,
- ◆ Chapter 6: From Factionalism to Unity: The Clerical-Nationalist Alliance,
- ◆ Chapter 7: Toward Recognition.

The author, Gary Hartman, who is not of Lithuanian descent, earned his Ph.D. in History in 1996 from the University of Texas at Austin with a specialization in immigration, ethnic community history, and diplomatic history. Currently he is an Assistant Professor of History at Southwest Texas



State University in San Marcos, Texas, where he is also director of the Center for Texas Music History.

Gary Hartman's other Lithuanian-American related publications include:

- "Dr. Jonas Sliupas and the Lithuanian Nationalist Movement in America", in *Lietuviu Tauta*, Vilnius, Lithuania, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, 1999.
- "Building the Ideal Immigrant: Reconciling Lithuanianism and 100 Percent Americanism to Create a Respectable Nationalist Movement, 1870-1922", in *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Volume 18, Number 1, Fall 1998.
- "Dollars, Diplomacy and Dignity: United States Economic Involvement in Lithuania, 1914-1940", in *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Volume XXVIII, Number 2, Summer 1997.
- "The Origins and Growth of Baltic Nationalism as a Force for Independence", in *Lituanus: The Lithuanian Quarterly*, Volume 38, Number 3, Fall 1992.

*The Immigrant as Diplomat* book can be purchased, at a price of \$39.95, from the: Lithuanian Research and Studies Center  
5600 S. Claremont Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60636-1039  
Tel. 773/434-4545  
E-mail: lithuanianresearch@ameritech.net. ◆

VYTAUTAS J. SLIUPAS submitted this article to BRIDGES.



*Rasa Ardys-Juška*  
 With words from *Albert Gustaff*

*A limited  
 edition of...*

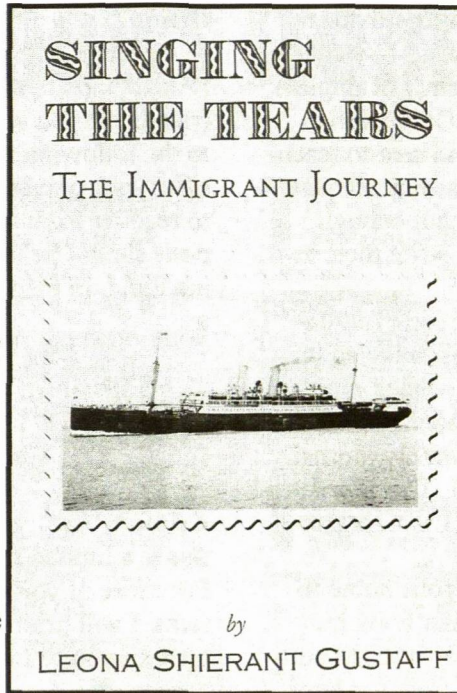
**W**hen Mrs. Leona Gustaff e-mailed me to ask if I would read her new book's manuscript and review it, I was not only honored by her trust but also taken with the book itself. It captured the lives of immigrants who came from Lithuania and Austria Hungary in the late 1800s and the early 1900s.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Gustaff's grandson broke the sad news that Mrs. Gustaff had passed away — before she saw her book published.

Mrs. Gustaff's intentions for this book was, "to leave our children a legacy, a family heritage, that I hope will be treasured and shared with their offspring and with generations yet to come." She follows the family histories of the Guzevicius/Gustaff, Kubilius, Matusevicius, and Sierant/Shierant families — her grandparents, parents, and her husband's parents.

Mrs. Gustaff not only documented family histories, but also the tender moments, conversations, adventures, momentous events, and heartaches that all families experience and can relate to. Wonderful photos, poems, and recipes round up the totally heartwarming book.

When Mr. Gustaff sent me a copy of this



book, he also included an insightful letter about Leona Shierant Gustaff and her dedication to Lithuanians and Lithuania. He said,

"When Leona graduated from Marywood College in 1939, she had promised her pastor earlier that she would travel to Lithuania to teach young people about America. Unfortunately that

country was invaded by the Soviet Union, and the doors were closed for over fifty years.

In 1992, just a few months after Lithuania won its freedom from the Soviet Union, Leona remembered her promise, and together we traveled there to teach young people to be teachers of English. We secured a grant from the Soros Foundation and traveled to teach at the Šiauliai Pedagogical Institute.

During the ten months that we taught there, we noticed drastic changes taking place in the school system. Lithuanian replaced Russian as the primary language, and English became the most popular foreign language taught in grades one through twelve. Teachers did remarkably well, despite the lack of English books and training.

The few remaining churches that were open were crowded with very old people and young children. The youth and middle class people

*RASA ARDYS-JUŠKA* is the editor of *BRIDGES*. *ALBERT GUSTAFF* is the late author's husband.

were conspicuously absent. Religious books and bibles were unavailable, having been banned for over fifty years.

Upon returning to Maryland, we began a "Books for Lithuania" program to provide English books at least for teachers. We collected and sent them a wide variety of English grammars and reading books. Over twelve tons of books were collected and sent to teachers throughout Lithuania. It was not adequate for their one thousand schools, but enough were available to help teachers write their own books.

A few years later, an enterprising Lithuanian Canadian, Vincas Kolyčius, traveled to Lithuania to introduce a much-needed monthly religious journal. It was translated into Lithuanian with permission from a monthly journal published in Maryland, entitled, *The Word Among Us*, (*Žodis Tarp Mūsų*), is now published in Kaunas.

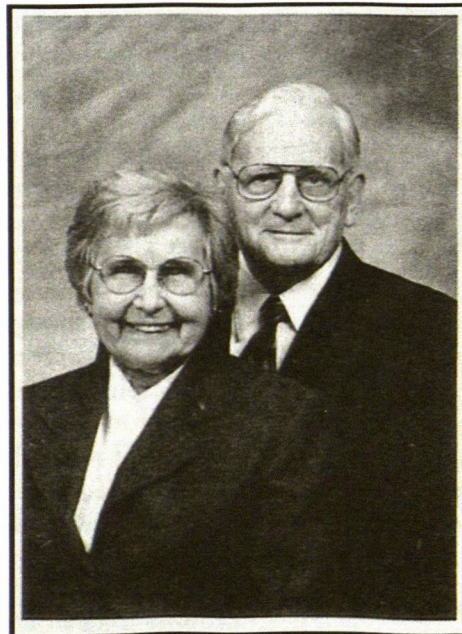
Since my beloved wife has gone home to the Lord, even before she saw her book published, it is only right to dedicate it to the people of Lithuania. All proceeds from her book

will be used to provide assistance to the youth and elders there, to get subscriptions to the Lithuanian translated version of *The Word Among Us*, accompanied by an Ecumenical Bible.

Three hundred copies of the journal were printed and are being offered to family and friends. If you wish you can make a donation to the following non-profit organization or just offer your prayers to help a country struggling to recover from a long imprisonment. Donations should be made to the Books for Lithuania Fund, in memory of Leona Gustaff. Send it to:

Mrs. Birutė Jasaitis, Dir.  
Lithuanian Human Services Counsel  
2711 West 71st Street  
Chicago, IL 60629"

*Editor's Note:* It is very important to note that this is a limited publication of only 300 copies. For those of you who are enticed with the contents, I will print excerpts from the book to introduce you to Leona's wonderful reminiscences. ♦



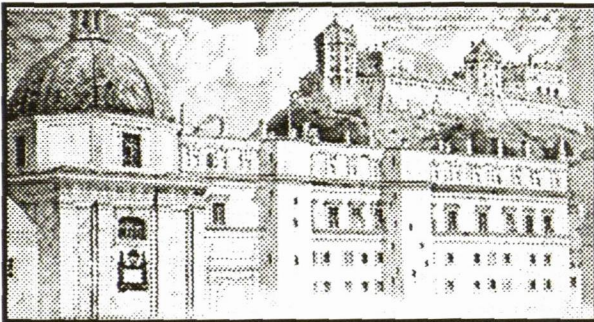
*Leona and Albert Gustaff*



# Recent news from the LAC



**C**ommittee to support the Restoration of “Valdovų Rūmai” (Lower Castle of Lithuania’s Rulers). In 2000, at the Xth Lithuanian World Community Congress, a resolution was passed to support the restoration of “Valdovų Rūmai”. Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of several Lithuanian-American activists, in the States the support of this project has not realistically moved forward. Therefore, Regina Narušis, the current President of the National Board of Directors, was invited to assume the chairmanship of a fund-raising committee for the “Restoration of the



“Valdovų Rūmai”. Regina Narušis has accepted the invitation. A wide-range committee, not formally part of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., will be organized to aggressively raise funds for this important project already underway in Vilnius. Regina Narušis is facilitating the visit to LAC chapters by historical and archeological experts overseeing the restoration of the “Valdovų Rūmai”.



**T**he XII U.S. and Canada Folk Dance Festival will take place July 3, 2004 in Chicago. The organizational committee is chaired by Mrs. Audronė Tamulienė and the program committee by Mrs. Rasa Pasko-čimienė. The Lithuanian Folk Dance Institute is headed by Mrs. Nijolė Pupienė.



**T**he LAC National Executive Committee and North American Lithuanian Music Association (Faustas Strolia, pres.) have taken steps to revive the tradition of the Folk Song Festivals and organize the VIII Folk Song Festival in Chicago in 2005. Mrs. Rita Čyvaitė-Kliorienė accepted the invitation to be the program director of the Song Festival. In the near future, LAC Inc. will select the chairperson of the organizational committee.

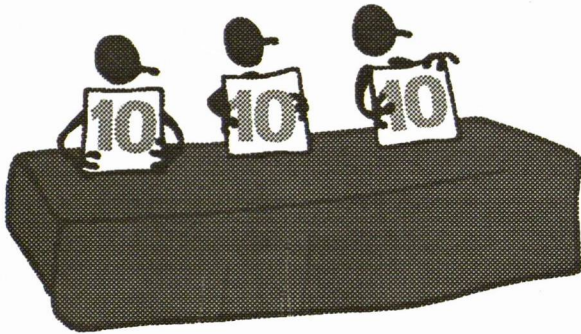


**O**ver 30 Lithuanian Heritage School teachers from Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington met in Philadelphia on April 27, 2003 for a one-day workshop. Mrs. Dalilė Polikaitienė, chair of the LAC Educational Council, flew in from California to participate in the workshop, which was organized by Violeta Razgaitienė, the representative of the Educational Council for the eastern part of the United States with the help of Philadelphia’s Vincas Krėvė School teachers and parents.





**U**.S. Eastern area sports competition will take place June 7-8, 2003 in Waterbury, CT. The sports competition organizer is Laurynas Misevičius, president of the Connecticut Lithuanian Sports Club. He is assisted by Rimas Gedeika, the LAC vice-president for sports.



**L**aurynas Misevičius has re-established the Bridgeport Chapter of LAC, Inc. The chapter's reorganizing general meeting has elected the new chapter officers: L. Misevičius, pres.; Giedrė Stankūnienė and Gintarė Ivaškienė, vice-presidents; Monika Karnusevičiūtė (secr.); and Juozas Janiūnas (treas.). Congratulations!



**W**e are saddened by the closing of the formerly very active Melrose Park, IL LAC chapter. Dwindling numbers and the burden of age have forced the closure. Over the years this chapter has been exemplary in responding to all the calls to action by the LAC's National Executive Committee. Through the chapter's retiring president, Mr. Jonas Rugelis, we express our most sincere thanks to the officers and membership of the Melrose Park LAC for their many years of support.



**T**he Sunny Hills, FL LAC Chapter once again was the first to send in to the National Executive Committee donations collected at the February 16 celebration. Our thanks to Chapter president Jurgis Savaitis and treasurer Judita Mamaitytė. Mr. Savaitis takes advantage of his former employer's "Matching Gift" program to double his \$100 donation to \$200 to LA, Inc.



**A**t the beginning of the year the Connecticut LAC region elected new officers: Vytautas Alksninis, pres.; Algirdas Geležauskas, vice-pres.; Danutė Grajauskienė, vice-pres. and secr.; Angelė Jonynienė, treas. Other vice-presidents: Jonas Karosas, Juozas Liūdžius, and Albertas Melninkas. We thank former CT Region president Laima Karosienė for her work on behalf of LAC, Inc.



**K**ing Mindaugas Coronation 750 anniversary programs organized by the LAC Cultural Council were a huge success. Egidijus Stančikas and Raigardas Tautkus gave over 30 performances of the special Mindaugas Jubilee program in 20 LAC Chapters.





## Lithuania's Prime Minister Brazauskas stresses fast economic growth

**I**n the opinion of the United Nations Economy Committee, Lithuania would remain in 2003, as in the previous year, among the fastest growing economies of the world, Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas said in the Seimas when presenting the report on the government's activities in 2002.

"We can see improving business conditions, declining crime, unemployment, and boosting income of the population. Macroeconomic indicators support our optimism," the premier said.

Last year, pensions hiked five percent. The government approved the provision on boosting small pension sums for nearly 300,000 old age and invalid pensioners.

"We stick to the Social Democratic policy principles requesting for gradually eliminating the differences between the richest and the poorest population groups," Brazauskas spoke.

According to the Cabinet head, the differentiation between the rich and poor diminished from thirteen to nine times in Lithuania.

Speaking about education and science problems, the premier noted the new personal identification cards for children over 16 would help to learn the exact number of out-of-school children.

The premier sounded happy about the increasing number of Lithuanian high school graduates who enter universities. Soon it will reach 80 percent, he said.

The premier pinpointed in his report to Lithuania's competitiveness as being high in the Baltic region.

"We are to work out the first European budget, prepare our financial and customs system for the membership in the EU, and get ready with the general income declaration," Brazauskas stressed.

"We have encountered an entirely new thing – all the state-owned companies are operating profitably and the dividends from their profit will add significantly to an envisaged seven percent budget boost," the premier underlined.

Remembering the agricultural sector, Brazauskas told the lawmakers that direct support to farmers was twice the amount or 190 million litas (55.1 million euros) last year if compared to 2001.

Crime decreased eight percent, but remains high.

The premier mentioned a high corruption level, an unequal development of separate regions, a low purchasing power, and comparatively high poverty and unemployment rates as the major problems.

The Seimas Statute provides for the government to submit its annual report by March 31 every year. ♦

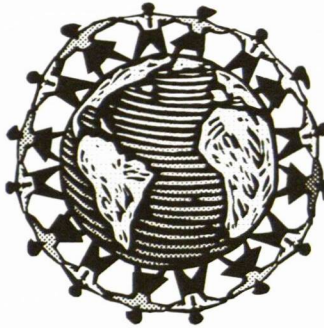


## Lithuanian Language Course for the summer

**T**he 18th annual Lithuanian language course at Camp Dainava, Manchester, Michigan will take place August 17 - 24, 2003. This one-week intensive course, operating under the auspices of the Lithuanian Educational Council of the USA, is designed for beginners, intermediate, and advanced students, or those just wishing to refresh their Lithuanian.

The course is taught by experienced instructors in vacation-like surroundings and atmosphere. There are no limitations regarding age or formal education.

For more information, please log onto: <http://www.javlb.org/dainava-langcourses.html>, or contact Mr. Vytautas Jonaitis, 1546 Quarry N.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504; phone 616 - 458 - 6378; E-mail: [vjonaitis@juno.com](mailto:vjonaitis@juno.com). ♦



## Valdas Adamkus — a Goodwill Ambassador

**F**ormer President Valdas Adamkus accepted an offer from Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO's secretary-general, to become the goodwill ambassador for knowledge economy.

As many as 36 world figures are holding the title of UNESCO's goodwill ambassador.

Among these goodwill ambassadors is opera star Montserrat Caballe, actress Catherine Deneuve, and former soccer player Edson Pele.

As knowledge economy is a priority field for UNESCO, Lithuania's having its goodwill ambassador is believed to help draw UNESCO member states' attention to the Baltic state. ♦

## Three NATO officials decorated

**L**ithuanian Ambassador at NATO, Gintė Damušytė, on March 31<sup>st</sup>, decorated three officials of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in appreciation of their tribute to Lithuania's Trans-Atlantic ties and on the occasion of inviting the Baltic states to the bloc.

The awards were granted to Klaus Kleffner, Lise Rasmussen and Paul Savereux, NATO officials for defense planning and operations. The awarded officials said the inclusion of Lithuania in the Alliance was the best reward for their efforts.

The Lithuanian Defense Ministry's Secretary Povilas Malakauskas, who attended the award ceremony in Brussels, thanked both the Alliance officials and their home countries – Germany, Denmark and Canada – for a long-year support to Lithuania's NATO bid. ♦

## Extradition agreement signed

**T**he extradition agreement between Lithuania and US came into effect on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The agreement came into force immediately after Lithuania's Ambassador in Washington Vygaudas Ušackas and Heather Conley, Deputy Undersecretary for Europe and Eurasia under the U.S. State Department, signed protocols on the extradition agreement and exchanged the ratification papers. ♦



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DETROIT	27	11
LOS ANGELES	28	11
NEWARK	28	13

CITY	DEPARTURE JUNE	RETURN JULY
NEW YORK	29	14
PHILADELPHIA	26	11
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TAMPA	29	12
TORONTO	29	14
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