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# BRIDGES

• LITHUANIAN AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL •

Volume 28

Issue 6, July/August 2004



*Highlights from the Folk Dance Festival...The Year of the Language and the Book*

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

*Saying goodbye is very hard after all these years being editor of BRIDGES. So, I prefer to think of my moving on as just that...moving on but, looking forward to visiting with articles that I plan to write for your future editor, Jeanne Dorr.*

*I am very pleased to welcome and re-introduce Jeanne Dorr to you as the new editor. Her humanitarian articles have filled many issues and readers' hearts. I personally have learned more about the condition of Lithuania's children by reliving Jeanne's trips through her words.*

*To help her prepare future issues, Gema Kreivenas will be the graphics designer. She will make these issues reader-friendly and innovative with her talents and artistic eye.*

*Their initial issue will debut in September. They will continue to present to you news and articles that focus on the educational, cultural, political, organizational, social, religious, and youth aspects on which the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. bases their own work.*

*Welcome to you both, Jeanne and Gema!*



*Rasa Ardys-Juška*  
Editor

## BRIDGES

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## August 23 – Black Ribbon Day

How a game is played usually depends on the players. In this case, the cards were stacked by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov on August 23, 1939 when they signed a pact. Among the guaranteed prizes was Lithuania.

Specifically, the "Secret Additional Protocol" stated: Article I. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and U.S.S.R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilna [Vilnius] area is recognized by each party. This protocol shall be treated by both parties as strictly secret." Later that year, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was modified so that most of Lithuania was moved to the Soviet sphere.

Inevitably it took Lithuanians in Lithuania and the rest of the world struggle-filled years to undue a pact, which had been so simply put together.

### On the cover:

*The dance, Malūnas, is performed by dancers at the XII Folk Dance Festival in Chicago, IL on July 3, 2004. More on page 13.*

*Photo: Gintaras Apanavičius*

**Karl Altau**  
of The Joint Baltic-American National Committee, Inc.

## *JBANC Outlines Future Baltic-American Political Activity...*

# New Priorities Develop Following NATO Enlargement

**T**he Joint Baltic American National Committee, Inc. (JBANC) has released a paper outlining strategic goals for future political activity for the Baltic-American communities in the United States.

The initiatives, recently approved by the JBANC Board of Directors, were deemed necessary following the recent admission of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into NATO and the European Union. The NATO enlargement campaign was the main focus over the past decade for the one million strong Baltic-American constituencies.

Main future projects outlined include: bearing witness to the legacy of communism; exporting the "Baltic experience" beyond the Baltics; engaging Russia; and strengthening trans-Atlantic integration and regional cooperation. Coordinated action with other like-minded organizations also remains a vital element of JBANC's mission, especially during this presidential election year.

Two projects currently underway, as highlighted in the white paper, are the effort to build a memorial to the victims of communism and support for democratic processes in Belarus.

The National Capital Memorial Commission voted unanimously on July 29 to approve a site at the northeast corner of Maryland and Constitution Avenues NE for a memorial to the 100 million victims of communism. Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation Chairman Lee Edwards made a compelling case for the Foundation's preferred location. He argued the site was fitting because it is within sight of the Statue of Freedom perched atop the U.S. Capitol Dome and because of its proximity to the headquarters of the Veterans of Foreign

Wars.

Edwards was supported by representatives of ethnic groups victimized by Communism -- Marie Ciliberti from the Polish-American community, Anhthu Lu from the Vietnamese-American community, and Karl Altau from the Joint Baltic American National Committee. Marc Wheat from the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources, who was instrumental in collecting support from twenty-seven members of Congress for the memorial, also testified. The next step will be approval of the site at September meetings of the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission.

On July 22, 2004, House Baltic Caucus co-chairman Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL) introduced a resolution (H. Res. 752) supporting the effort to build the memorial. The resolution is currently co-sponsored by Congressmen Mark Souder (R-IN) and William Lipinski (D-IL), who besides being a member of the Baltic Caucus is also co-chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Central Europe.

With regards to Belarus, pending legislation in the U.S. Congress advocates for democratic processes in that country. The Belarus Democracy Act (H.R. 854 and S. 700) supports "the promotion of democracy, human rights, and rule of law" and "consolidation and strengthening of Belarus sovereignty and independence". JBANC is working for the passage of that legislation before the critical autumn elections there.

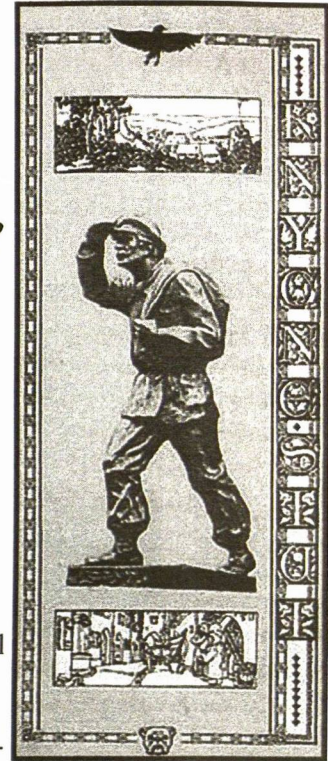
The strategy paper was published online on JBANC's website at: <http://jbanc.org>. ♦

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*KARL ALTAU is a contact person for JBANC, 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.*

Vygantas Vareikis  
from "Lithuania in the World"

# The Year of the Language and the Book



In an excellent article for *Lithuania in the World* (Vol. 12; No. 2; 2004) entitled "The Return to Europe with the Latin Script", Vygantas Vareikis presented the significance of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the lifting of the ban on publishing in the Latin alphabet in Lithuania.

It is important to note that this date was unknown to other European countries, but UNESCO included it in its list of commemorative dates for 2004 and 2005. "The Year of the Language and the Book" for Lithuanians signifies their struggle for their national identity.

Excerpts from Vareikis' article follow below...

In 1864 the Russian Empire forbade the publication of Lithuanian books in the Latin alphabet. The ban remained in force for 40 years, until it was revoked on [May 7, 1904]. The country therefore commemorated May 7th as the "Day of the Language, the Book, and the Regaining of the Press".

## Russification

After the partitioning of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the late 18th

century, the greater part of Lithuania fell to Russia. The newly incorporated lands caused considerable concern to the tsarist administration.

Two insurrections (1830–1831 and 1863–1864), which aimed to reestablish the borders of the former Polish-Lithuanian state, the strong Catholic traditions, and the Latin alphabet, hampered Russia's efforts to integrate the annexed territories into its empire and to assimilate them.

With the suppression of the 1863 insurrection, Russia adopted a radical program of russification, which was based on the concept that Russians had inhabited the country since ancient times. It was believed that a Russian political and cultural consciousness could be implanted into the young generation of Lithuanians in 20 years or so through the introduction of the Russian language into schools and state institutions and the use of Russian in publishing.

The program called for discrimination against Catholics in favor of Orthodox and for restrictions on the activities of the Catholic

VYGANTAS VAREIKIS wrote this article for *Lithuania in the World* (Vol. 12; No. 2; 2004). It is entitled "The Return to Europe with the Latin Script".

Church. It also encouraged the formation of a class of Russian landowners in Lithuania.

A wave of reprisals hit the Catholic Church. The regime pursued an anti-Catholic policy by closing churches, chapels, and monasteries, and forbidding the building of new churches or the renovation of old ones. Priests were placed under police surveillance. The ban on publishing in the Latin alphabet was part of the Russian Empire's campaign against the Catholic Church.

At the same time, the administration increased support for the Orthodox Church. It was during this period of russification that most of Vilnius' Orthodox churches were either built or rebuilt.

On June 5, 1864, Mikhail Muravyov, the governor general of the Vilnius province (he was known as the "Hangman" for his cruelty towards the Polish and Lithuanian insurgents), banned the printing of books in the "Polish-Latin" script.

Two years later, printers were given orders to destroy type used in printing in Latin letters. Some 100,000 books were confiscated in Vilnius in 1865 and 1866.

Although the prohibition of the press was never legally formulated and only confirmed by the word of the tsar, it remained in force for 40 years. The authorities ordered that the Latin alphabet be replaced by Cyrillic and started the publication of *grazhdankos*, Lithuanian books written in Cyrillic letters. These were not popular with people.

### *The Response*

The political repression and the ban provoked a response. Books in the Latin alphabet started being printed abroad in East Prussia, and then secretly carried across the Nemunas [River] into Lithuania. The second half of the 19th century saw the rise of the national revival movement, an ethno-linguistic movement that fought for the freedom to publish books in the Latin alphabet.

The first periodical, *Aušra* (The Dawn),

was printed in 1883. The newspaper was founded and edited by Jonas Basanavičius, the patriarch of the national revival.

Before the national movement in the mid-19th century, Lithuanians seemed to be on the brink of losing their national identity. Even the [country's] name was erased from the map. The country was called Severo-Zapadniy Kray (the Northwest Territory). Subjugated by the Russian Empire, it had neither a strong intelligentsia nor a wealthy elite.

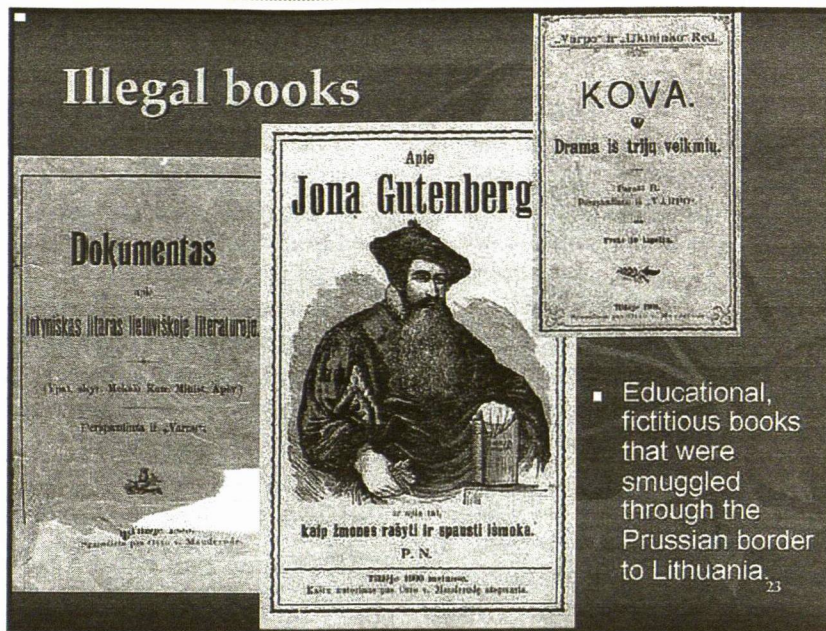
The British historian Norman Davies in *God's Playground* described the desperate situation in which Lithuania found itself under tsarist rule:

*"The Lithuanian language, like the Gaelic language of the Scots in Scotland, had only survived in the remoter rural areas, and in certain segments of the peasantry. It was not normally spoken by any significant group in the country's capital, Vilnius, whose Lithuanian population at the last Tsarist Census in 1897 reached only 2 per cent. It had no settled written form, and no literature of note. No one seriously imagined that they could become a serious political factor. But they did."*

The people seemed to be doomed to remain in the margins of history, but then a miracle occurred. The ban on the Latin-based alphabet awakened a group of intellectuals who spoke mostly Polish and had been ashamed of their native language, the language of the peasantry.

The poet Czesław Miłosz, a Nobel Prize winner for literature, has described Lithuanians as a people born from philology. The resistance to the policies against the Catholic faith, and the Lithuanian people themselves contributed to the formation of national aspirations and helped to create a sense of national identity among the peasantry which differed from the Polish identity.

Polish had been stronger as a cultural medium in Lithuania than in Poland since the 18th century. Unlike the Latinised Polish nobility, the Lithuanian nobility had used Polish to set



*Details of smuggled books from a presentation entitled, "40 years of Prohibition of Latin Letters in Lithuania 1864-1904" by Giedrius Subačius, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2004*

themselves apart from the peasantry.

During Russian imperial times, Polish became a general force for unity. It united the nobility with the peasantry, pushing them together towards a common cultural heritage. The Polish language became the essential touchstone of Polish nationality.

The Lithuanian peasantry associated Lithuanian not only with the homeland. For them, it was the essential touchstone of the newly formed national identity. In the second half of the 19th century, speaking the language meant identifying oneself as a Lithuanian, as opposed to a Pole.

At the end of the 19th century, definition as either a Pole or a Lithuanian became an essential choice in life. Vincas Kudirka had been among those who defined themselves as gente Lithuanus, natione polonus (Lithuanian by origin, Polish by nationality) before he became a pioneer of the national revival and a leader of its liberal wing.

He was not alone. Members of the intelligentsia soon realized the significance of writing in Lithuanian, fostering the language, and developing terminology. Their efforts encour-

aged many Polish-speaking people to turn towards Lithuanian identity.

The awakening of the national consciousness could be compared with the revival of the Icelandic national identity. In the early 19th century, Iceland was a remote corner of the kingdom of Denmark, without a national cultural elite, industry or well-known history. However, a priceless collection of medieval Icelandic manuscripts, compiled by Arni Magnusson, who was educated in Denmark, helped revive the legends of the Vikings and to restore the Icelandic national identity that appeared to have been lost forever.

In Lithuania, one such person was Bishop Motiejus Valančius, an ardent advocate of education and temperance, a publisher, writer, and preacher. He organized the illegal publication and distribution of books. He contributed greatly to the spreading of clandestine organizations, societies, and groups that supported the efforts to print material in Lithuanian abroad and smuggle it into the country.

Valančius also encouraged the establishment of small secret schools in villages, in which teachers taught peasant children to read

and write in Lithuanian. This raised the education level of the population.

The activity started with the smuggling of prayer books and other religious material from East Prussia (called Lithuania Minor because of the large population of ethnic Lithuanians living there; now it is the Russian enclave of the Kaliningrad region). Soon secular books and periodicals were published, creating the need to develop a system for the secret distribution of illegal material. The period of *knygnešiai* (book carriers or book smugglers) began, a unique phenomenon in Europe at the time.

Smuggling books into Lithuania was a dangerous activity. Men would carry up to 32 kilograms of printed matter across the heavily guarded border along the River Nemunas. The smugglers would use passwords to communicate with each other, and farmsteads and inns would serve as meeting places. Despite the great risk involved, a large number of people helped them by serving as messengers, carrying manuscripts across the border to East Prussia, and then bringing the printed books back into Lithuania.

The smugglers used carts with false bottoms to transport the material, or hid their goods in hay or in sacks with pigs. They would smuggle it under the guise of transporting an ill person, or a madman, functionary, priest, or even a coffin.

Some people saw book smuggling as a way to earn money, but many were motivated by national pride and duty. The distribution network stretched from the Russian-German border to Vilnius, Grodno, and Riga. Hidden under household goods or fruit and vegetables, illegal material was shipped to remote corners of the Russian Empire, to any place where Lithuanians lived.

If caught, the book smugglers faced heavy fines, the confiscation of their property, arrest, imprisonment, and/or exile. Nevertheless, their ranks grew steadily.

The people showed great resourcefulness. The authorities detained about 3,000 book

smugglers over a period of 40 years. From 1891 to 1902, customs officials seized approximately 200,000 books.

Lithuania may be the only country in the world to have a monument to a book smuggler. It was erected in the grounds of the Vytautas the Great War Museum in Kaunas, next to busts of prominent public figures.

The policies of russification aimed at suppressing the national revival through the prohibition of publications severely hampered the development of a national consciousness, but they failed to stop the process.

### *The Victory*

The administration admitted defeat on May 7, 1904, when Tsar Nicholas II issued a decree lifting the ban on publishing in the Latin alphabet. The decision was a victory for the people in their struggle to maintain the Latin-based alphabet, rather than evidence of the liberalization of tsarist policies towards the subjugated peoples.

The Latin script is synonymous with Europe, as Europe grew out of the Christian tradition and the Latin traditions of the Roman Empire. At the beginning of the 20th century, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's reforms led to the radical transformation of Turkey from the old Ottoman Empire with Islamic traditions to a modern, European-style nation. One of Atatürk's reforms was the replacement of the Arabic alphabet by Latin script.

When the Soviet Union took control of Moldova after the Second World War, it imposed Cyrillic on the Latin-based Romanian alphabet in an effort to sever the link between Romanian-speaking Moldovans and Romania. With Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika, the Latin alphabet was reintroduced in the official written language.

The peaceful struggle for the Latin-based alphabet and the book smuggling movement in the second half of the 19th century were decisive steps towards the self-determination of the Lithuanian people. ♦

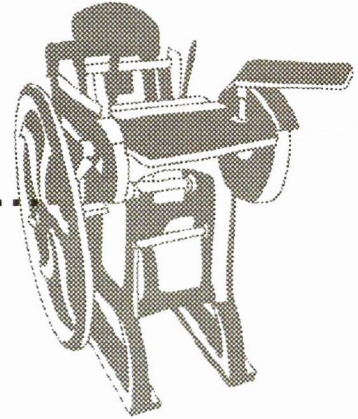


Bronius Raguotis

*Keeping Lithuanian language alive in America...*

# Mykolas Tvarauskas

*...founder of the Lithuanian press in America*



**M**ykolas Tvarauskas (1844—1921), a Lithuanian public figure in America, founded a Lithuanian print shop, and published the first Lithuanian book and periodicals in this country. Here lies the historical significance of his social activities and merit, for which he deserves to be remembered and honored today.

The biography of Mykolas Tvarauskas still contains the so-called 'white spots', particularly from the beginning of the 20th century; some things have yet to be defined more strictly. Information concerning his life and his activities is often disparate and contradictory.

Tvarauskas was born on December 16, 1844, on former Lithuanian territory, in the district of Kalvarija, the province of Augustavas. He left no precise data relating to his birth or social origin; he only noted that he had come to this world without a fortune. He is thought to have come from a small estate or a town.

Tvarauskas considered himself a Pole brought up among Lithuanians, who in his teens learned Lithuanian and later decided to work for the sake of Lithuania. Later, authors

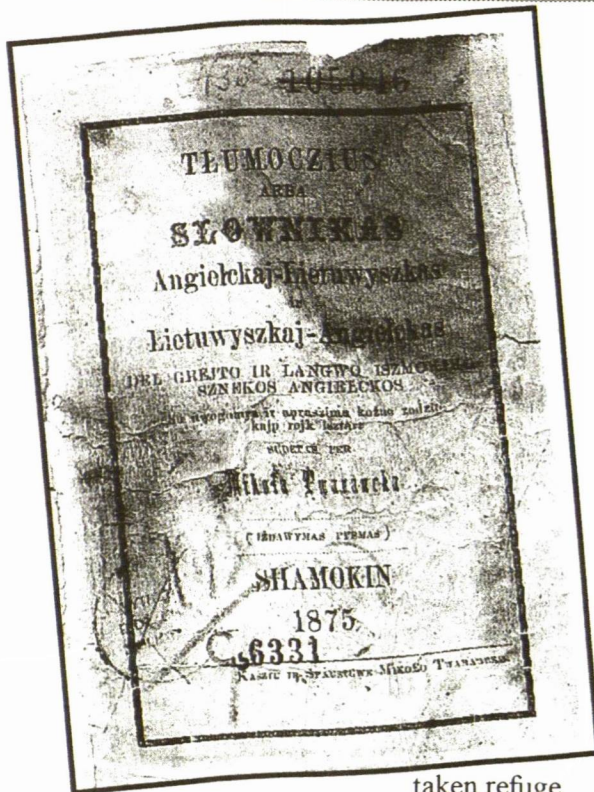
writing about him were more and more inclined to think that Tvarauskas must have been a polonized Lithuanian.

From his childhood, he lived in the surroundings of an impoverished polonized estate, a town or the Lithuanian countryside. Tvarauskas was brought up in the spirit of Lithuanian-Polish unity, based on one common state and Catholic ideals. The environment and education being democratic, the child could mix with the ordinary people and thus learn their language.

In his youth Tvarauskas seems to have worked as a teacher at an elementary school, though we have no precise information about his studies or education. It is known that he could play several musical instruments.

Tvarauskas participated in the Lithuanian and Polish uprising of 1863 against tsarist Russia's rule, fighting for the emancipation of his land from Russian oppression. He was wounded in battle, spent some time in hiding before he finally crossed the Russian-Prussian border and found himself abroad. For nearly three years, (1863—1866) he lived in the countries of Western Europe. While in Paris, he became acquainted with Lithuanians who had

*BRONIUS RAGUOTIS* wrote the English translation of Mykolas Tvarauskas's biography in the book entitled *Pirmoji Amerikos lietuviška knyga*, edited by Romuolisa Brastavičienė (Vilnius: Leidykla Mintis, 1997).

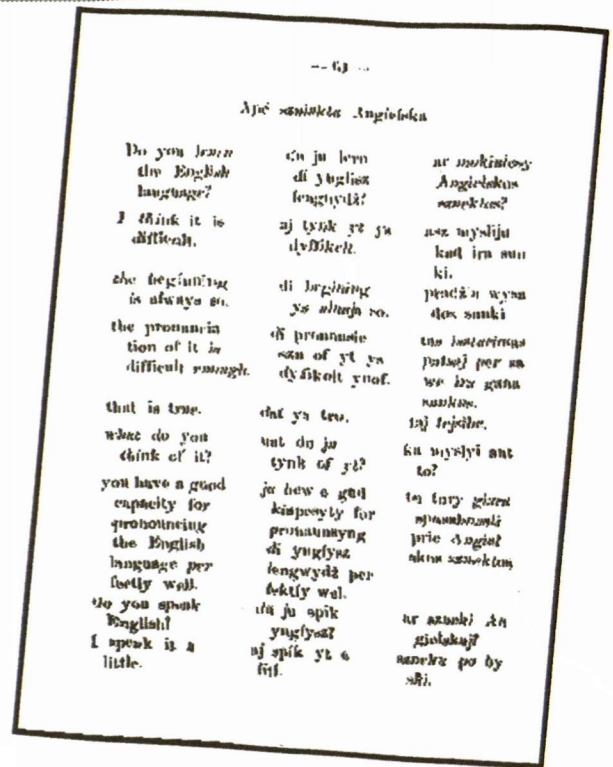


taken refuge there after the uprising of 1831 and that of 1863 in particular.

About 1866 Tvarauskas came to America. For almost two years he lived in New York, worked as a farmhand on suburban farms, earned his living by doing odd jobs. Around 1868 he moved to Pennsylvania, Shamokin, where he worked as a coal miner for seven years. Being single and thrifty, he managed to save enough money to buy a small print shop. Set up in 1873-1874, it was the first Lithuanian print shop in America. Tvarauskas had learned a printer's trade by himself, unaided. As he put it, he opened the print shop not for the sake of money but for the sake of Lithuanians.

One of the most important aims of Tvarauskas, printer and publisher, was through books to enhance the prestige of Lithuanians living in America and those in Lithuania in the eyes of the Americans and the people of Lithuania. He began to create Lithuanian culture in America inspired by the motives of national prestige.

In Shamokin, Tvarauskas intended to pub-



lish a Lithuanian newspaper as far back as 1874, later a bilingual English-Lithuanian and Lithuanian-English dictionary. The first printings, which also included the said dictionary, appeared in 1875. Immediately after, followed the publication of an appeal to Lithuanians, "Dear brothers".

For several decades, it was considered that a fire at Tvarauskas' print shop had destroyed the dictionary. Nevertheless, in 1930, one copy of the dictionary was accidentally found in Lithuania. So far, this is the only extant copy of the book, which is kept at the Vilnius university library.

The idea to save this unique specimen of the Lithuanian book and to make it accessible to readers who are interested in the history of the Lithuanians of America has been cherished for a long time already. Much has been written about it in the press of Lithuania.

One more publication by Tvarauskas deserves to be remembered, a publication that is closely related to the dictionary, his appeal to Lithuanians, "Dear brothers", a copy of which has reached our days. The "letter" addressed

not only the necessity of the dictionary, but also supporting the printing of a newspaper. He tried to motivate people to support a printing press, which would keep the Lithuanian language, culture, and traditions alive in America.

After the fire at the print shop in Shamokin, around 1875 — 1876, Tvarauskas returned to Brooklyn once again. For nearly a year and a half he worked hard at various hazardous places, at tin and copper workshops, was ill for a long time. With his own means, helped by several loan societies, in 1879 he set up a new Lithuanian print shop in Brooklyn, which at first printed various small things.

On August 16, 1879, Tvarauskas published the first Lithuanian newspaper in America, “Gazietą lietuviška”, the publication of which continued until January 8, 1880. Not a single copy of the newspaper has survived to this day, but a comprehensive description of this periodical was given in 1885 by the prominent Lithuanian public figure in America, Jonas Šliūpas. According to him, the newspaper, “Gazietą lietuviška” was the herald of Lithuanian-Polish unity and the fosterer of Catholic spirit. It focused on the history of the Lithuanian-Polish state and the Catholic church and practically did not reflect the urgent problems of the Lithuanians in America.

For financial and other reasons the publication of the newspaper lasted only half a year. Afterward Tvarauskas started translating and publishing books. By 1883-1884 at his print shop, he had published four volumes of the popular prophesies of Queen Michalda (Praractvos Michaldos...), a fairy tale from, “A thousand and one night” (Istorija Ali Babos...), a dreambook with various appendixes (Morfeušas, išguldytojas sapnų...), and a popular book of the 19th century, Pakalnė Juozapato, arba Sudas paskutinis, by the Polish religious writer F. Gondek.

Translating and publishing, however, did not guarantee Tvarauskas even minimal means of subsistence. The year 1884 was particularly hard; he had to share one small room with the

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## SĖLOWNIKAS arba TLUMOCZICUS

Angielėkaj-Lietuwyszėkas  
Ejle Abecelo suraszėtas.

## A.

Absolution	absoluszn	absolucyje
about	ebant	powiajk
academy	ekedemy	akademije
accurately	ekjuretly	akurotovej
account	eknaut	rokunda
acquaintance	ekuentens	pasypažynimas
acquainted	ekuonted	pažistamas
acre	ekier	margas (lauko)
across	ekros	perlom
action	ekszn	lycytacie
acorn	ekorn	gile
adoration	edoseszn	garbe
advice	edujš	roda
address	edres	adresas
advent	eduent	adventas
adversity	eduersity	ncszesztyš
after	efter	paskuj, po. potam
africa	afrika	afryka
agent	edžant	agjentas

printing tools, sometimes lacking even daily food.

His hopes were raised by the arrival of Jonas Šliūpas in America in the middle of 1884, the editor of the first Lithuanian magazine, “Aušra” devoted to Greater Lithuania. On October 25th, 1884, they started publishing a new Lithuanian newspaper, “Unija”, and continued this work till April 27, 1885.

This periodical focused attention on the daily life of Lithuanians living in the USA, revealing their troubles and needs. The articles published in it dealt with urgent issues and practical matters, which were important to people living in this country and to the newcomers. The “Unija” roused the national consciousness of Lithuanians in America, virtually expressing its disapproval of the unity of Lithuanian and Pole immigrants. For the first time, this paper had begun to speak out for Lithuania’s independence and statehood. It

propagated democratic social ideas.

Tvarauskas and Šliūpas did not always agree on the nature and objectives of the "Unija". Gradually they came into conflict, which even brought them to court. They parted company in the spring of 1885. Both got involved in bilious mutual attacks and insinuations, with Šliūpas and others calling Tvarauskas the polonizer of Lithuanians and accusing him of various indecencies. Tvarauskas' image thus created had a negative effect on his publishing business and his other activities.

Partly because of a continual shortage of money, Tvarauskas did not get married until he was in his fifties. In 1885, he married Adele Ličkovska who bore him four daughters and two sons. The ensuing family troubles worsened his situation even more. He was looking for different types of work, usually for a job in his favorite field, the printing business.

Starting from 1885, it was more and more difficult to get into the Lithuanian press market of America. Tvarauskas and his print shop was faced with strong competition. As a businessman, he lacked shrewdness and luck. Besides, Tvarauskas was dogged by abusive suspicions and insinuations. Despite this, in 1888, he decided to revive the Lithuanian periodical press in New York. It took him three years to raise funds for a Lithuanian newspaper, which finally came out at the end of 1891 and was continued until May 7, 1892 (25 issues).

"New Yorko gazieta lietuviška" propagated humanistic ideas. Tvarauskas expressed his concern and sympathy for Lithuanian immigrants, their fate, encouraged them to become American citizens, cherish their native land and the Lithuanian language. Quarrels and intrigues, particularly a shortage of money, caused Tvarauskas to discontinue the publication of this paper.

His failures can be accounted for by his inability to fully perceive the changes that had taken place. "New Yorko gazieta lietuviška" clearly lagged behind other major publications not only technically, but also in the standard of

Lithuanian and orthography, literary journalistic culture.

His situation was made harder by the fact that he, being already in his late fifties, could not start or learn another trade. Moreover, he hardly had any inclination to change his activities.

In 1896 Tvarauskas once again appeared on the publishing scene with the publication "Siberija arba kančios nekaltųjų..." This was a book in the form of a newspaper, published weekly (in 1896, 6 issues were published, in 1897 – 1). It was called "the cook's literature" as its readers were mainly cooks and coachmen who while away the time by reading cheerful stories about the tsar's court, its secrets, crimes and the horrors of Siberia.

Tvarauskas, who had up to then been translating from Polish into Lithuanian, appears to have known German as well. However, a German language project of his was also doomed to failure. The book was not finished.

At the beginning of the 20th century, in the period 1903 to 1910, Tvarauskas' print shop published several small publications prepared by other authors. It is known that for a short time, in 1905, he published the weekly "Emigrant Polski" in Polish. This was the last appearance of Tvarauskas as a publisher. His print shop closed down at the end of 1910. It is thought to have been sold by auction.

With the passing of time Tvarauskas' name faded into oblivion. He died on August 8, 1921. His funeral passed without an official announcement. He was buried in Long Island.

The books and other publications prepared and published by Mykolas Tvarauskas (almost 15) present an historically significant cultural heritage of the Lithuanian people, the Lithuanians of America in particular. The name of this man ranks high among the first publishers of works in Lithuanian in America. Although Tvarauskas did not create and publish any time transcending works, his name has gone down in the history of Lithuanian culture for all time. ◆

# Highlights from the XII Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

**T**he colorful program for the XII Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival said so well, “Over the course of history, both in Lithuania and among the Diaspora, the passing of national customs and traditions to the next generation is the expression of a conscious decision to retain and absorb Lithuanian identity. National or folk dances are an integral part of our folklore.”

The Festival held in Chicago on July 3, 2004 was the culmination of many long practice hours for over 1500 dancers who had come from all parts of the U.S., Canada, South America, and Lithuania.

Here are some of the sights that may have inspired future Lithuanian dancers and dazzled those who tapped and clapped with the music in the audience. ♦

## The youngest dance...

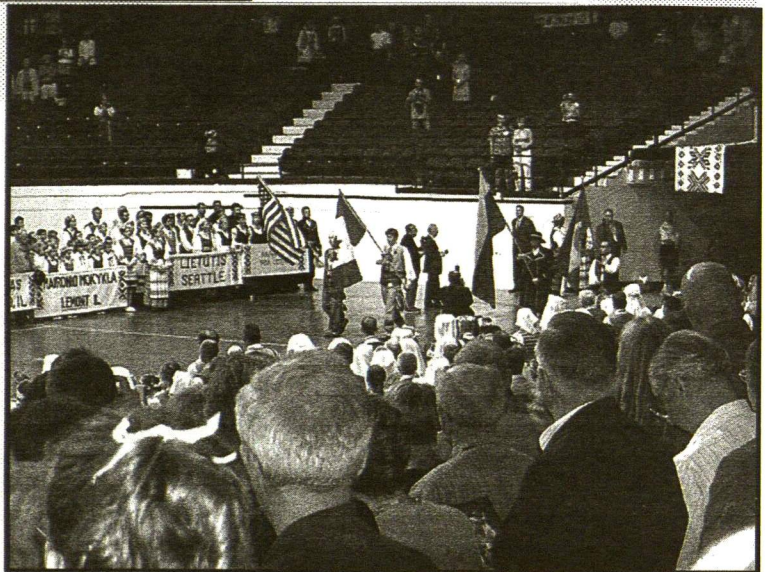


*PHOTOS by Gintaras Apanavičius and Juozas Juška.*



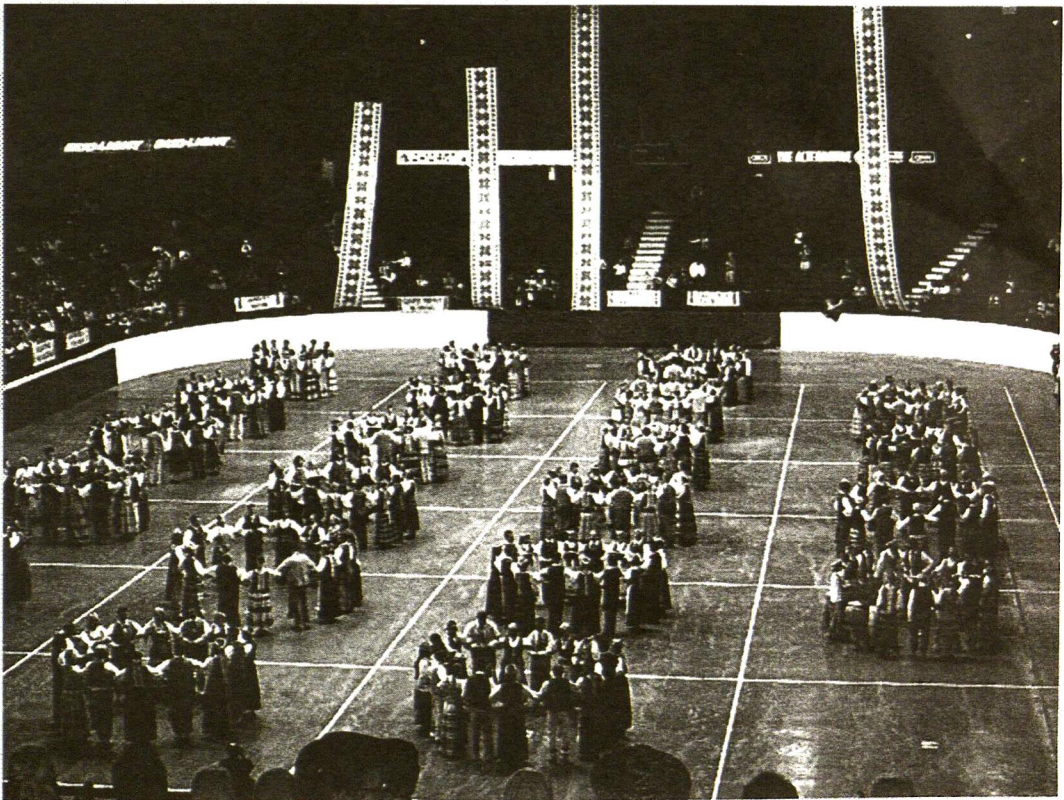
...the students show their moves!

The grand entrance...



...the young veterans perform

...a sea of smiling faces!



The groups from afar!

*Linus Balsys*

## A closer look at a folk dance group...

# BERZELIS!

**T**he “Berželis” (Little Birch Tree) Lithuanian folk dance group was established thirty-two years ago. During all those years, over 150 youth were introduced to Lithuanian dance, more than 120 dances were learned, and over 275 programs performed.

In “Berželis”, young people not only learn Lithuanian dance, but also become acquainted with Lithuanian traditions and customs.

The first “Berželis” dancers were from the Hartford area. For the last twenty years, dancers come from all over Connecticut. The group has dancers from the first, second, and third generations of Lithuanians. Newcomers from Lithuania, who join the group, have an opportunity to socialize with members of Lithuanian ancestry raised here in America. To the dancers of “Berželis”, Lithuanian folk dance is an important part of their lives, since many began to dance while still children.

The “Berželis” children’s group is comprised of young Hartford-area Lithuanian scouts and students of the Connecticut Lithuanian school “Atgimimo Mokykla”. Some of the other members are former “Berželis” dancers’ children.

Dancers of “Berželis” have participated in six Lithuanian Folk Dance Festivals: four in Chicago, one a piece in Hamilton and Cleveland. They also participated in the East Coast Folk Dance Festival in 1981, which took place in Hartford. The most memorable festival is the one from 1992, because for the first time a group from Lithuania participated, that being the Klaipėda Music Academy’s Choreography School’s group “Vėtrungė”. The “Berželis” dancers met them at the airport, hosted them for several days while they were in Connecticut, and closely socialized with them while in Chicago.

In 1994, “Berželis” participated in the World Lithuanian Song Festival in Lithuania. This participation was especially meaningful and emotional for all.

Over the course of thirty-two years, “Berželis” has visited many Connecticut cities and towns, participated in various municipal and university festivals and events. “Berželis” has and continues to perform for Connecticut Lithuanian groups on various occasions as well as organizing its own concerts. As far as outside of Connecticut, “Berželis” has visited all of our neighbors: New Hampshire, New York,

*LINAS BALSYS is a Berželis dance group member and Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.’s Information Services director.*





Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.

“Berželis” founder and long time director is Dalia Minkūnaitė Dzikienė. She danced with Jadvyga Matulaitienė's group in New York; then, having moved to the Hartford area, she began to teach at the “Švyturys” Lithuanian school. She formed a dance group from her own students, which grew into “Berželis”. In 1992, Mrs. Dzikas was the artistic director for the ninth Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival; she was responsible for the entire program and the preparation of all the groups participating. She also organized the program for the East Coast Folk Dance Festival in 1981.

John Kodis, having danced in “Berželis” all thirty-two years, now too directs and teaches. Raminta Nenortas, using her experience from her years in the ensemble “Šviesa”, also teaches dances in “Berželis”.

For over twenty years, “Berželis” calls Holy Trinity parish its home. Here on Sunday evenings “Berželis” gathers to improve on the old dances and to learn new ones.

The dance music “Berželis” uses is taken from various sources and is arranged for performances by Alfonsas Dzikas. Many special musical recordings and arrangements for

“Berželis” have been recorded and prepared by Maestro Jurgis Petkaitis.

The dancers of “Berželis” prepared for the 12-th Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival, which took place in Chicago on July 3rd, 2004. In total, seventeen senior dancers performed dances in the student category, and ten children dancers participated. Since the children’s number did not make up a complete group, they were combined with the children’s group “Lankas” from Seattle, Washington.

All of the dancers at the festival, along with “Berželis” wore their own costumes. Some of the costumes were woven here in America, others in Lithuania. For rehearsals, the groups adorned themselves with T-shirts unique to each group. In rehearsal, the dance ensembles have their own unique identities; however, dressed for the festival performance itself in our folk costumes, we all become united into one common circle of dance. ◆

compiled by Rasa Ardys-Juška

# THE ATHENS 2004 OLYMPICS SWIFTLY APPROACHES

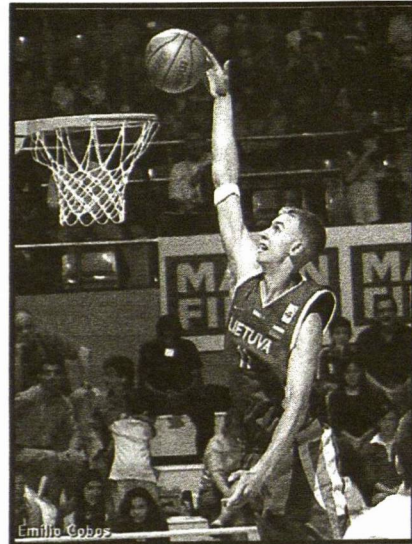
**T**he ATHENS 2004 Men's Basketball Schedule has already been released. The Basketball tournament in the ATHENS 2004 Olympic Games will last 15 days – from August 14 to 28.

The preliminary rounds and the classification games for places 9 & 10 and 11 & 12 will take up eleven game days (August 14-24). They will be held in the Indoor Arena of the Helliniko Olympic Complex, which has a total capacity of 15,000 seats.

The quarterfinals, semi-finals, and finals will be held on the four final game days (August 25-28) at the Olympic Indoor Hall, within the Athens Olympic Sports Complex (OAKA), where the total capacity is 18,000 seats.

Individual matches or game excerpts will be televised by NBC, the official television network covering the Olympics. The NBC website contains much of the background material on all the countries and sports team signed up to compete. In the Basketball section, coverage has already begun with a spin on Lithuania's 2000 games.

Looking back on the 2000 games, J. Douglas Foster, NBCOlympics.com, commented, "Indeed, the Lithuanians perhaps helped make the Olympics an actual tournament rather than



an exhibition." He also stated, "The question now is, which country could possibly upset the U.S. in Athens? Could it be Lithuania again? Led by guard Šarūnas Jasikevičius – who Dallas Mavericks president of basketball operations Donn Nelson said 'is good enough to be in an NBA uniform if he wanted to be' – the team certainly won't be overlooked."

According to Lithuanian Federation spokesman, a well known international basketball referee Romualdas Brazauskas, "We have won bronze at the last three Olympics but we are looking for more in Athens." Lithuania plans to build on their European Championship success in Sweden last year, with that team forming the nucleus of the Olympic squad.

In an interview with [www.fibaeurope.com](http://www.fibaeurope.com), Antanas Sireika is keen to emphasize the team concept that has made Lithuania one of the best in the world and is reluctant to single out players. But he can't hide his admiration for star point guard Šarūnas Jasikevičius, one of the heroes of the Baltic country's triumphant Eurobasket-2003 last summer in Sweden.

"Šarūnas has many outstanding qualities," Sireika said. "He is a leader in his nature, not

*THIS ARTICLE* was compiled from news articles received from Teresė Gečys, The Lithuanian Olympics website, NBCOlympics.com, [www.fibaeurope.com](http://www.fibaeurope.com), The Lithuanian-American Community, Inc., and Larry Misevičius by editor RASA ARDYS-JUŠKA. MARTYNAS ANDRIUSKEVIČIUS is pictured taking a shot for the Lithuanian Basketball team.



only on the basketball court but in life as well. This helps him manage the team very well. For the last two years, I think, he has been hitting the peak of his basketball career.”

Below are the dates on which Lithuania will be competing, and the teams they will be challenging.

- **Sunday, August 15** – Group B - Match 07  
ANGOLA vs. LITHUANIA
- **Tuesday, August 17** – Group B - Match 21  
LITHUANIA vs. PUERTO RICO
- **Thursday, August 19** – Group B - Match 36  
GREECE vs. LITHUANIA
- **Saturday, August 21** – Group B - Match 47  
LITHUANIA vs. USA
- **Monday, August 23** – Group B - Match 56  
LITHUANIA vs. AUSTRALIA
- **Tuesday, August 24** – Men's Classification  
11-12 – Match 63, and Men's Classification 9-  
10 – Match 64
- **Thursday, August 26** – Men's Quarterfinal –  
Match 69, 70, 71, and 72
- **Friday, August 27** – Men's Semifinal – Match  
77 and 78
- **Saturday, August 28** – Men's Classification 7-  
8 – Match 79, 5-6 – Match 80, Men's Bronze  
Medal Match – Match 83, Men's Medal Cere-  
mony, Men's Gold Medal Match – Match 84.

Other sports in which Lithuanians will be competing include canoeing, rowing, boxing, sailing, cycling, judo, wrestling, swimming, track, weightlifting, shooting, and pentathlon.

In addition to the excitement of the approaching games, it is well worth remembering the last games' TV coverage. All Lithuanian-Americans were disappointed when they could not see the Lithuanian team during the opening ceremonies' broadcasts of the last two Olympics because of commercial breaks.

To ensure that history will not repeat itself this year, and the Lithuanian team is seen on August 13 during the Olympics opening ceremony, it would be great if **BRIDGES** readers would send a letter to the sports director of

NBC at [sports@msnbc.com](mailto:sports@msnbc.com). To make it really powerful, forward your e-mail to your friends so that they may also express their concerns for this year's games.

Here is an example of such a letter written by Ina Bertulytė Bray, formerly the president of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc., Seattle Chapter.

*Dear Sports Director,*

*Again, with pounding hearts, we will watch the opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games, and those of us who have ties to other countries, for that country's flag to appear.*

*At least twice in previous Games, when Lithuania was about to come before the cameras, you cut for commercials. TWICE!! With supreme effort, Lithuania as well as other formerly behind the Iron Curtain countries, have produced extraordinary athletes without the previously ubiquitous use of steroids, and NBC arbitrarily zaps their moment - our moment - at the Olympics. At least for me it took months before I would turn on your channel, and I was not alone (there are well over 1 million American Lithuanians).*

*I feel it is an insult to the American public to presume that their interest is confined to your selections of countries to be honored. It also borders on arrogance, of which America is so frequently accused, to disregard the politically less significant players.*

*I respectfully request that you not only show the Lithuanian delegation, but also not interrupt the entrance procession at any point! America is also my country, and your past actions did not speak well for us.*

Stay tuned to the ATHENS 2004 Olympics this summer! ♦

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

## Lithuania's President Adamkus is sworn in

**V**aldas Adamkus, President-elect of Lithuania, at a special parliamentary session on July 12, took the oath of president to begin his second term as head of state. The oath was administered by Egidijus Kuris, head of the Lithuanian Constitutional Court.

Adamkus has become the fourth president of Lithuania after the restoration of independence in 1990 and the eighth president in the history of the country.

The solemn function in the national legislature included deputies of the Lithuanian Supreme Council-Restitution Seimas, acting President Arturas Paulauskas, Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas, Cabinet members, Church leaders, and foreign diplomats.

After the oath, Adamkus delivered an inaugural speech in which he pledged to be an active president and evaluate the performance of state institutions from a moral standpoint.

"I will strictly observe the Constitution. This does not mean however that I will be just a symbol of the state. I will be an active president and will assess the actions of state authorities from a moral perspective," Adamkus told the parliament.

The incoming head of the state said the Lithuanian people are mostly craving what he described as a "moral government".

The speech of the newly elected Lithuanian leader also included a pledge to demand in a principled way "the personal responsibility of every state official," which, he said, is a prerequisite for eradicating corruption and curbing the arbitrary actions of public officials.

Adamkus affirmed that a modern concept of public administration must finally prevail in all state institutions of Lithuania.

"The Seimas must adopt just and appropri-



ate laws which, nonetheless, will remain paper declarations if we fail to implement them; therefore, courts and other law enforcement bodies must become the bastions of justice," Adamkus said.

The president vowed to protect the independence of Lithuanian courts and ensure that they remain aloof from political developments. "This is

equally dangerous for democracy, like a political dictate for law enforcement authorities," Adamkus said.

The new president believes that although Lithuania is a member of the European Union and NATO, the Baltic country "does not have enough presence in Europe".

"The time has come to restore our international prestige, he said, and play a larger role in the region, Europe, and the global scene."

On the forefront of foreign policy, Lithuania must demonstrate an active and creative approach, according to Adamkus. The new president of the country therefore pledged to pay special heed to "the quality of EU membership and to the development of multilateral and bilateral relations with EU members".

"Lithuania is greatly interested in expanding its security and stability space eastward and encouraging the dissemination of democratic values. The democratic development of Russia is very important for us," Adamkus said.

As for ties between Russian and Western countries, he said this partnership would mean new opportunities for Lithuania both at regional and European levels. ♦

—News from *The Information Center for Homecoming Lithuanians.*

## Bonding memories for adoptees and adoptive parents

**N**ew Jersey families with children adopted from Lithuania met at their annual picnic for the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row on July 11. This year, eleven families with thirteen children and other siblings met at the home of Tom and Marie, parents of eleven year-old Chelsea. Ten years ago, the idea of the annual picnic was planned by two of the mothers, Christine and MaryAnna, and it has been organized by them ever since.

The women first met in Lithuania when they were going through the adoption process together. During that special event, their families forged a strong friendship, and they thought it would be beneficial for them, their children, and other adoptive families to share their friendship and experiences at annual parties.

Like any gathering of families, these families are all different, but they all share a special love for their children. They are also all very thankful to the Republic of Lithuania for allowing them to adopt their children. As a group of parents, we are proud of all the children.

The children vary in age from nine to fourteen years of age. Here are some of their responses to what they like to do most:

**John, 9** – “I like to read and do sports. I also like to eat.”

**Alexa, 10** – “Horse back ride and take care of animals”

**Joe, 12** – “dirt bike ride; play video games”

**Chelsea, 11** – “school, sports, and hanging out with my friends”

**Joey, 14** – “I like fish and skate boards”

**Daiva, 14** – “I like to beat up my brother and soccer.”

**Rommy, 13** – “I like to play basketball”

**Maria, 12** – “swimming”

**Joe, 12** - “diving and mowing the lawn”

**Rita, 13** – “I enjoy doing Irish step dancing and reading mystery novels.”

**Katie, 11** – “play soccer; ride my bike”

**Andy, 13** – “ski, swim, play soccer and tennis”

**Daniel, 10** – “play soccer”

These answers sound typical of any young Lithuanian or American kid. In the future, if you would like an invitation to join us, feel free to call MaryAnna at 732-367-3537 or Christine at 908-704-8309. ♦

— **Emilia Sadonis and Dr. Mike Yudd**



## Lithuanian partisan re-enactors' group formed

**E**xactly 60 years ago, the Russians again reoccupied Lithuania. Having already experienced the murders, rapes, deportations, and plunders of the first Russian communist occupation 1940-1941, the Lithuanian resistance movement, begun in 1940 and continuing throughout the Nazi occupation, intensified. Men took up arms to fight native and foreign communists in the firm belief that Americans would honor their often proclaimed ideals of freedom and national self-determination and get rid of Stalin once they were finished with Hitler.

Little did anyone know that at Yalta, to reward Stalin for the Russian blood spilt in defeating the Nazis in the east, Roosevelt gave the Baltics to the Russians and carte blanche influence in the eastern half of Europe – for a specific period of time!

Regardless, masses of partisans organized themselves in the forests as a continuation of the pre-war Lithuanian Army. For every partisan in the forests, there were at least ten Lithuanians remaining in civilian life who supported them. Only by totally impoverishing the entire nation, were the Russians able to stop our freedom fighters. But Lithuanians continued to resist economically and

culturally.

With the terms of the Yalta agreement expiring in the 1980's, Lithuanians continued their half-century of resistance by reasserting national independence. Partisan leaders were posthumously promoted to ranks of general and colonel and awarded medals for their valor.

To honor these, our national heroes, Lithuanian Numismatic Association (LNA) director Aleksandras Radžius organized Lithuanian Partisan (1944-1954) Re-enactors in the spring of 2004 as an educational group. With the help of LNA member and re-enactor Henry Gaidis and LNA supporter and re-enactor Jaunutis Burbulis, a partisan exhibit had been prepared for the annual Baltimore Lithuanian Festival this past May. Other functions planned are presentations in Philadelphia, Connecticut, and at the annual Reading Pennsylvania Air Show. ♦

—*From The Knight (Vol. 26, No. 5, Issue #141, May-June 2004)*

(It is the official publication of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association. For more information, please contact Aleksandras Radžius (director), Lithuanian Numismatic Association, P.O. Box 22696, Baltimore, MD 21203. E-mail: Lithnumis@hotmail.com.)

## 2004 Lithuanian Days in Pennsylvania

**A** Gala 90th Anniversary celebration of Lithuanian Days will be held Saturday, Aug 14 from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm and Sunday, August 15 noon to 4:00 pm at Schuylkill Mall, Frackville, PA located at the intersection of I 81 and Rt. 61.

The original celebration was held August 14, 1914 at Lakeside Park, Barnesville, PA, and "is an annual celebration of Lithuanian ethnic pride... which draws Lithuanian Americans from throughout the local area and from afar," as described in the May/June issue of *Lithuanian Heritage Magazine*.

A special parade will open the festivities Saturday at 11:00 am at the mall's center court. Entertainment scheduled for the event are the Aušrinė, Žilvinas, and Gintaras Folk Dance Groups; Joseph Kasinskas (concert guitarist) and Brigita Kasinskas (concert violinist) from New Jersey with a delightful program of Lithuanian music and comedy; Lynn Cox – roving accordionist with her singing troupe; a Lithuanian Quiz Show; and the Sensations Music Group playing dance music.

A Mass will also commemorate the event at 9:00 am Sunday at St. George's Church, Shenandoah, PA, the oldest Lithuanian Catholic parish. A tour of this beautiful gothic church will take place following the Mass.

Foods such as kugelis (potato pudding), bulvinės and mėsinės dešros (potato and meat sausages), bandukės (pork patties), cold beet soup, lapienė (spinach soup) and more will be served.

Lithuanian imported foods and artifacts, amber jewelry, woodcarvings, linens, candle houses, sashes, artwork, etc. will be available. A mini museum will display Lithuanian traditional arts and crafts. Demonstrations of margučiai (etched eggs), straw décor, and mushroom art will be scheduled during the festival. Lithuanians attending who were born August 14 or August 15 will be honored.

Knights of Lithuania, Council 144, are sponsors of the event, which benefits the Lithuanian Pontifical College in Rome and the Council's Humanitarian Aid. ♦

—*Bernice Mikatavage*

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