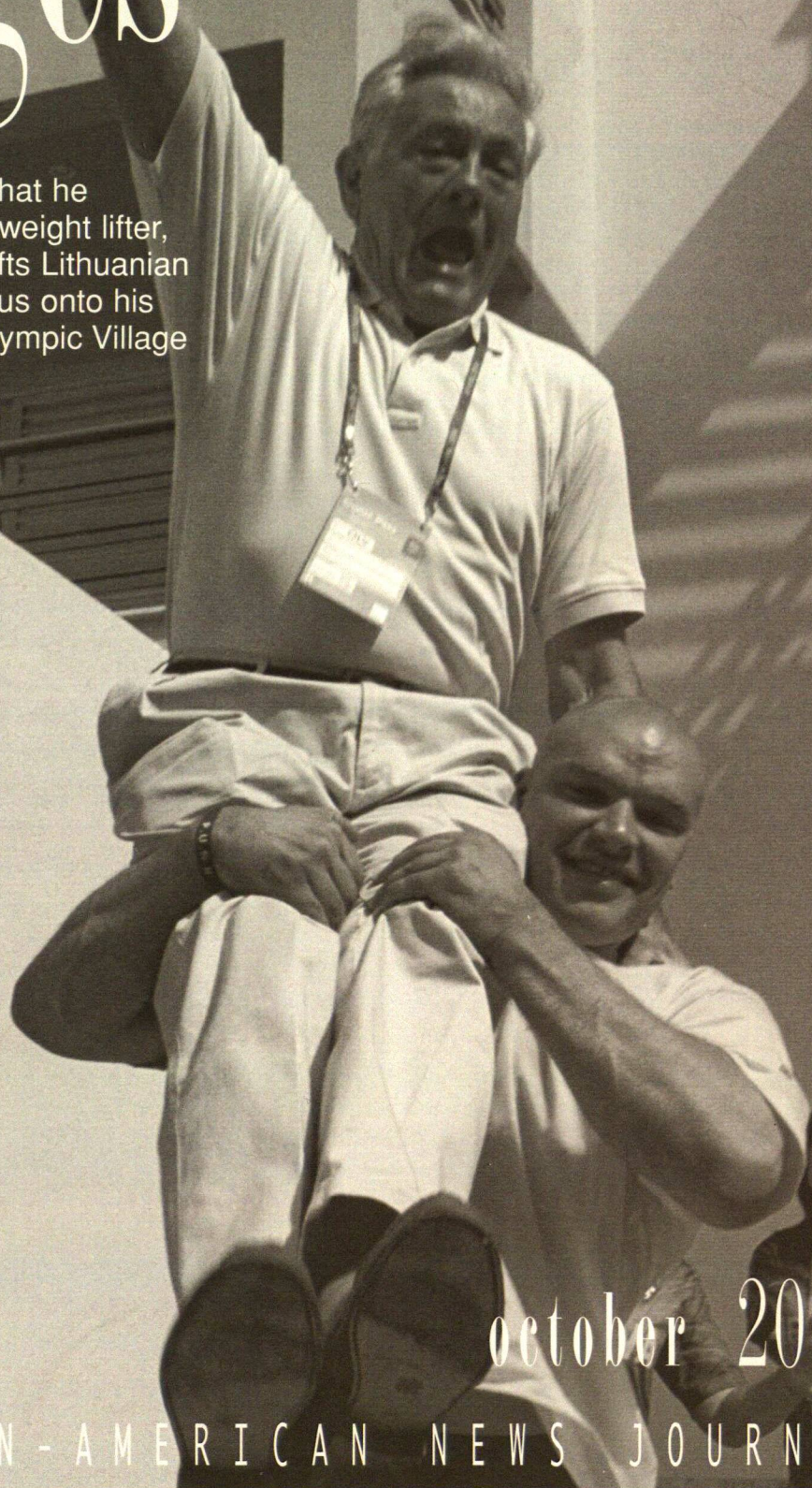


# bridges

Continuing the tradition that he started in Sydney, heavyweight lifter, Ramunas Vysniauskas lifts Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus onto his shoulders in the 2004 Olympic Village in Athens



october 2004

LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

*Letter from the Editor*

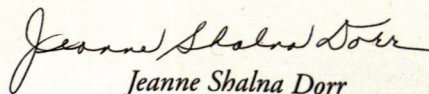
*Our first issue of Bridges was quite an experience. Both Gema and I experienced Murphy's Laws beyond our wildest imaginations. If it could break, it did. There was the keyboard that refused to print certain letters and the printer that wouldn't print any letters. We can't forget the emails that are still trying to find their way through cyberspace. Neither can I leave out the articles that totally disappeared from both our computers and must have joined the missing emails. I won't even go into the problems we encountered with some of the photographs. You name it and it went wrong; especially in the final two days before publication. But somehow we managed to land on our feet.*

*We received many good wishes and encouraging words from so many people. For that we are most grateful. A special debt of gratitude is owed to the writers and to all who contributed information or helped in any way to get Bridges to the readers.*

*We hope you enjoy the October issue. Rimas Gedeika wrote about Lithuania's long road in preparation for NATO. Sister Margaret teaches us to look into our inner selves while Ed Baranauskas shares with us a story about a revered painting in a small church in Lithuania. Our teenagers, Akvile and Benita, share their memories of people who have influenced their young lives. While on the subject of young people, I owe a debt of gratitude to college students for their help in aiding the children in Lithuania. I know you will be impressed with their work in "Hats Off". Although Berzelis was featured recently, they will receive a second round of applause in this issue. While we are on the subject of dancers, Vilma Cinciene expresses her family's emotions while participating in the Dance Festival in Chicago. This story is shared with us by Zita Petkus who is the editor of Tulpe Times. The newsletter is published by the Lithuanian - American Community, Inc., Washington State Chapter. Zita has graciously contributed other articles from the newsletter so that more of us can enjoy them. If you are thinking about plans for next year's vacation don't miss Terese Gecys' article. Regina Juska-Svoba sent us the highlights of the Knights of Lithuania Convention.*

*Once again, many people contributed many hours of work to the October issue. To all of you, a sincere thank you.*

*Wherever you live, enjoy the fall season. For those of us fortunate to live where nature is working overtime with her beauty, take a minute and truly look at your magnificent outdoor surroundings. It is something man has not learned to duplicate.*

  
Jeanne Shalna Dorr

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\*Cover photo is by Alfredas  
Pliadis from Vilnius, Lithuania

# 91 Years of Service to "God and Country"

## Highlights of the Knights of Lithuania's 91st Convention

August 5-8, 2004. Council 90 hosted the 91st convention in Secaucus, New Jersey. Nearly 100 delegates, clergy, guests and youth converged to participate in the four day long meetings, cultural activities and banquet celebrations. Prior to each day's sessions and meetings, Mass was celebrated at various sites.

### Pre-Convention Meeting

National President and Honorary Member Agnes Mickunas conducted the meeting. A prayer before the meeting was said by the spiritual advisor Rev. Msgr. Joseph Anderlonis, STD, HM.

Reports were given by Bernice Aviza - recording secretary, Elena Nakrosis-treasurer, Becky Pataki-second vice-president and John Mankus. Maryte Bizinkauskas, third vice-president in charge of the K of L junior members gave an overview of her planned program and activities for the youth. The children will conduct fund raisers by selling seeds, flower bulbs and garden tools. The profits will be sent to "Valanciaus vaiku draugija" at Mosiedos High School in Lithuania. The group beautifies the local ceme-

tery by planting flowers at grave sites. Also, as a symbolic gesture, the K of L juniors will plant annuals in planters and place them at the wayside cross when it will be rededicated at the closing Mass. The juniors will also sell greetings cards by a young girl in Lithuania, Simona. The profits will be forwarded to her.

Elena Nakrosis, treasurer, updated the members about the progress for the 2005 Scandinavian cruise that will be sponsored by the K of L organization as a social excursion. The 10 day cruise (commencing on 06-24-05) on the Princess Lines-Star Princess will include meals and entertainment. Copenhagen, Finland, Russia, Estonian and Poland will be visited. The cost ranges from \$2,1400.00-\$2,490.00p.p. based on double occupancy. Airfare is not included. The air add on from Newark-\$1,100.00; from Chicago-\$1,175.00. An optional "Lithuanian Heritage Extension Tour" is also offered from 07-04-07-10/05. The cities of Vilnius, Kaunas and Palanga will be visited. The cost of the add on optional tour is \$2,235.00 from Newark and \$2,475.00 from Chicago (inclusive of airfare). The single supplement is \$240.00. For specific details, E. Nakrosis may be reached at 201-998-9641 or 201-294-4250.

The second vice-president, Becky Pataki, reported that 132 members joined or rejoined the K of L organization.

Lithuanian Affairs committee chair, John Mankus informed the board that the panel presentation at the plenary session of the convention will cover aspects of modern Lithuania from an historical perspective. Loretta Stukas, HM and Foundation chair will present and discuss her activities at her alma mater Xavier University, Chicago, IL. The meeting concluded with a prayer.

*Continue on page 16*



91st National Convention delegates, clergy and friends after closing Mass of Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Kearney, NJ. Bishop emeritus Paulius Baltakis. (3rd clergy from left)



# From VERY CLOSE *And* FROM FAR AWAY

## *We Danced United On This Day!*

Vilma and her husband Virgis are Lietutis dancers. Their sons Andrius and Darius dance in Linas. This year for the first time in their lives the Cincys family participated in a Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival in America. From many countries, from various corners of the world, from the States, from Canada, Brazil, and even from as far away as Lithuania, on July 1 feisty Lithuanian folk dance groups began assembling in Chicago. For three days, the huge All State Arena became home to thousands of dancers. And then on Saturday, July 3, passengers looking out the windows of their low flying aircraft landing at O'Hare Airport surely must have been wondering what they were seeing below: a horde of people attired in beautiful, colorful costumes suddenly pouring out of the arena, yet lingering, reluctant to part. Talking, sharing impressions, exchanging addresses.

What exactly went on in Chicago that day? I suspect most of you probably won't need an explanation. You already know very well, that practically everyone, big and small, had been preparing for the XII International Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival. But let me start from the beginning.

It's hard to describe the feeling which accompanies first time participants leading up to the Festival. You work hard even though you're not exactly sure what it is you're preparing for. In your heart you're hoping for something special, something unusual and very grand. All of us worked diligently: we ordered outfits, we rehearsed and improved our dances, practiced our entrances and exits..... Finally, the time was at hand, and after traveling to Chicago, our dancers found themselves regrouping at the All State Arena, hugging one another as if we were the closest of relations (and isn't that the case, after all?). To tell the truth, I was feeling a little apprehensive about the practices, which I had imagined to consist of lots of boring sitting around and waiting. Well, it wasn't that way at all!

First off, we all became fascinated by the creativity of t-shirts to be seen. Each dance group was attired in their own unique t-shirt. Right away we started scanning t-shirt emblems, trying to figure out where individual dance groups were from, what groups we were dancing alongside of, etc. The shirt with the "Polka arba mirtis" (Polka or Die) slogan, resonated particularly with the dancers. And then, when the younger dancers invaded the dance floor, we riveted our attention on them, watching, applauding, and taking lots of pictures. It was particularly interesting to observe the college students. Young, full of energy and pizzazz, merciless to their feet and giving no thought to the hard floor surface, they danced in a way that had the rest of us who have progressed beyond college age reminiscing nostalgically about our younger days. Time sped by incredibly fast on day one of general rehearsals.

The second day of practice was even better; by now, our dances were looking better and the various transitions were falling into place.

Finally, it was the day of the Festival. We arrived at the appointed gathering place much earlier than required. The color variety in ethnic outfits was a feast for the eyes. Red, green, and blue skirts were embellished in patterns of squares, circles, crosses, eyes, cloverleaves, oak leaves and decorated with fringe and works of crochet. Men's vests and sashes were the epitome of beautiful Lithuanian folk art. In particular, we were enthralled by the lovely costumes of "Kalnapuse," the group from Neringa, Lithuania.

Forty groups consisting of nearly 1,500 dancers participated in the Festival. As we lined up in the underground tunnel in preparation for making our entrance in the grand parade of dancers, it was impossible to see to the end. The parade got underway as, with their director leading the way, each

group proudly stepped forward. We Seattleites were truly lucky: the "Linās" teen-agers were assigned the second spot in the order of entrance, while "Lietutis" marched out third. This meant that after making our entrance and marching to our position along the sidelines, we were able to view, admire, and loudly applaud all the other dance groups as they made their appearance. Spectators were especially enthusiastic in their ovations for the two groups from Lithuania: "Kalnapuse" from Neringa and "Grandinėl" from Panevezys.

After the parade, the flags of participating nations were brought forward, national anthems were sung, and Arturas Paulauskas, the acting president of Lithuania, offered formal greetings. Festival organizers welcomed participants and audience members. And as for the dancers, we were so psyched that a spontaneous "wave" began its ripple at one end of the hall, and, sweeping across all the ranks of dancers, traveled all the way to the other end. For the dancers the wave also seemingly swept into our hearts, an effect which I'm sure was recognized by the spectators.

Finally, the arena was given over to the dancers. In the first half of the show, we were entertained by our younger participants, children's dances being interspersed with those of the teenagers and the college students. As the latter age group performed their increasingly faster dances, their high energy and liveliness became contagious and was received with thunderous ovations from the audience.

The "young veterans" and the oldest dancers showed their stuff during the second half of the show. Their numbers, too, were interspersed with the dances of those energetic college kids. In fact, the students' men's dance, "Pakeltkojis," became a show stopper, taking our breath away, and that of the audience, too, I'm sure! Twenty four dances were performed at the Festival.

From what I heard later from spectators, a joyful tear or two may have trickled down some viewers' cheeks. As participants, we truly felt we were an important, integral part of a gigantic dance ensemble. Pride flooded our hearts as we took our

places for our dances and as we responded to the interest and applause of the audience. The time elapsed incredibly quickly; all too soon, there we were, dancing the finale, "Suktinis." (My only regret is that the very youngest dancers—the children's groups—were not incorporated into the finale). And then—it's over...yet you feel like you could keep dancing and dancing, and your feet aren't even tired!

I am so pleased that we were able to dance in this Festival, and I'm even more thrilled that both our children were able to participate. It was also very heartwarming to see so many of our fans from Seattle come to Chicago to support us.

The Festival concluded, we all went our separate ways. Our family still had a major drive ahead of them, and many more impressions awaited us, but for so many of us, the deepest imprint left on our hearts was the one made by the actual Festival. It's fabulous that there are such enthusiasts as Rasa Poskocimas, the Festival's Art Director, who patiently, conscientiously, and selflessly worked with the dance groups for two non-stop days, molding the diverse elements of the Festival, unifying us into one. I rejoice that here in Seattle we have such great dance teachers who have the gift of attracting "big and little" dancers, thus nurturing the treasure of Lithuanian culture, important to adults, but even more so for the children. Thank you, Zita Petkus, Sandy Kuprenas, Neris Palunas: it is only through your hard work that we and our children were able to experience the elation of dance unifying Lithuanians from throughout the world.

Is arti ir is toli-sokame kartu visi! "From very close and from far away, we dance united on this day." Such was the slogan of the Festival.

A final post script: I'll just mention that a host of affiliated events was sponsored during the Festival weekend, including a folk art exhibit, an arts and crafts market, a Friendship Dance, the jazz concerts, and post-Festival banquets. Never was there a dull moment; no one ever lacked for something to do.

*Translated by  
Zita Petkus*

Courtesy of Tulpe Times

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
*Senpo Sugihara*

The true story of a courageous Japanese man who risked all to save thousands of Jews during the Holocaust.

Washington, DC - We are pleased to announce that Senpo Sugihara, a moving Japanese drama, will come to The Greenberg Theatre (4200 Wisconsin Avenue at American University) in Washington, DC for a limited engagement from October 29 to October 30, 2004. The play is performed in Japanese with English subtitles, making this production a unique theatrical experience. Senpo Sugihara has been a long-running hit in Tokyo and worldwide for the past twelve years.

Set in Lithuania during World War II, Senpo Sugihara tells the incredible true story of a gentle Japanese "Schindler." Risking his career, his family, and his life, Japanese consul Chiune Sugihara dared to go against the regime to distribute almost six-thousand hand-written visas to Jews bound for execution. The result saved thousands, but the journey proved nearly insurmountable, as illustrated beautifully in this powerful drama by award-winning playwright Koichi Hiraishi.

The play last traveled to the New York stage in 1998 to rave reviews, hailed by Newsday as "a real achievement." Given our current political climate, Senpo Sugihara carries a startlingly applicable social message. The play explores the senseless crucifixion created by war, the

attainable destruction of hatred, and the heroism inside anyone willing to take a risk. At the height of the second act, the play's profound message is humbly stated by Chiune Sugihara: "I merely did what I thought was right."

Senpo Sugihara is co-directed by Shoichi Yamada and Koichi Hiraishi. Prior to the run in Washington, DC the play will perform at The Kaye Playhouse in New York City from October 21 to October 24, 2004. This year marks the 150th Anniversary of relations between The United States and Japan.

THE GREENBERG THEATRE  
 WASHINGTON, DC

4200 Wisconsin Avenue at American University

LIMITED ENGAGEMENT:  
 October 29 – October 30, 2004 @ 8pm

Tickets: Adults (\$30).  
 Students, Children & Seniors (\$15).

For reservations call The Greenberg Theatre  
 box office  
 at 202-885-2587

Lithuanian – American Community Washington, DC  
 Chapter Chair Dr. Linas Orentas

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L I T H U A N I A N - A M E R I C A N N E W S J O U R N A L

# *cultural* (and other) *tidbits*

This summer we had the good fortune of revisiting the Lithuanian Franciscan Monastery in Kennebunkport, Maine and spending a week in its Franciscan Guest House. It had been almost 10 years since our last visit. When we called for a reservation, we found out that most visitors reserved their rooms one year in advance, coming back year after year. We were in luck because the efficient and very professional guest house administrator had a cancellation. Reservation was made with a credit card with an option of immediately sending a check. Cancellations of at least one week notice get a full refund.

On arrival we were given a key to a room on the second floor of the main guest house building (there are three other smaller houses with guest rooms). Ours, as every other room, had a private bathroom, chest of drawers, desk, small TV, and a window air conditioning unit. Our room had two twin beds, but rooms with double or queen beds with sleep sofas for larger families also are available. Cost of the room includes a hearty and bountiful breakfast buffet. Dinner at very reasonable extra charge is available most nights of the week. Those who do not want to go to the beach, may enjoy the salt water swimming pool.

Lithuanian Franciscans bought the 200 acre estate in 1947 from an American industrialist. In 1952 the main house was embellished with a shrine to St. Anthony. In 1953 the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes was constructed on the estate and in 1959 the graceful Chapel of the Stations of the Cross. Both these shrines, monuments of Lithuanian architectural art were designed by Jonas Mulokas. The statues for the Chapel of the Stations of the Cross were sculpted by Vytautas Kasuba. The new St. Anthony's Chapel, built in 1965-66 was designed by architect Alfred Kulpa of Toronto, Canada. The interior decorations are by Vytautas Jonynas who had decorated the Vatican Pavilion at the 1964 New York World's Fair with a very meaningful sculpture of the Militant, Suffering and Triumphant Church. This monument now graces the grounds of the Franciscan Monastery for enjoyment of all who visit.

Every summer, the second week of August is the Cultural

Week at the Franciscan Monastery and Guest House hosted by Ateitininkai, a Lithuanian Catholic organization. Every evening there is a lecture and discussion on various topics. The beginning concert on Saturday evening and ending concert on Friday evening always are a cultural feast also attended by many townspeople. This year we had not arrived for the opening concert - a classical piano recital by Dr. Frances Covalesky. However, Friday August 13 the gala recital by mezzo-soprano Danute Grauslyte-Mileika and pianist Dr. Saulius Cibas with piano duo Ona and Emilija Rygelis was an unforgettable highlight of the week, and for me, of the entire summer.

During the days of our vacation we went to the beach a short walk or a shorter ride from the guest house, or rode along the scenic oceanside roads, stopping with other tourists to stare from a distance at the summer home of the elder President Bush, walked to the quaint Kennebunkport village, visited other colorful Maine oceanside towns and one day took a ride to Portland's excellent art museum, just an hour away.

If any BRIDGES readers are trying to decide where to spend next summer's vacation, I strongly advise to check out the Lithuanian Franciscan Monastery by visiting [www.framon.net](http://www.framon.net) and the Franciscan Guest House at [www.franciscanguesthouse.com](http://www.franciscanguesthouse.com) and be sure to send immediately your deposit on a room to avoid disappointment.

## *DAINAVA in Michigan!!!*

If a more rugged, yet packed with cultural or educational activities vacation is more to your liking, look up a tiny patch of Lithuania in Michigan. Did you even know about Camp Dainava in the state of Michigan?

In 1955 Lithuanian Catholic Federation purchased a 226 acre farm with beautiful rolling hills and a lake. Within a year an "army" of Lithuanian volunteers mostly from Detroit, but also from Cleveland and Chicago transformed the farm into a Lithuanian campsite with buildings for dormitories, a large meeting room, kitchen and dining hall to accommodate several hundred campers.



The main Damusis building, otherwise known as the "white house" has been built for year round use for retreats, conferences, and study weeks. The lake has been dredged and tons of sand brought in to make a safe beach. On the beach side of "Dainava" there are roomy pavilions with kitchen and comfort facilities for picnicking and more rugged camping.

In 1957, having satisfied all state of Michigan campsite requirements, "Dainava" opened its gates to the first group of campers. For almost 50 summers "Dainava" has hosted Lithuanian Catholic Association "Ateitis" campers of all age groups, Lithuanian Heritage camps for English speaking Lithuanian-American children, Lithuanian Scouts, Lithuanian Heritage School teachers' seminars, annual week long classes of intensive Lithuanian language instruction for adults, annual Folk Dance Institute instructional camps for folk dance group teachers, and many other Lithuanian organizations. Every year the facilities are improved or renovated and something new is added to the campsite. Starting with just one Lithuanian wayside shrine the first year, a hill of crosses has grown. A wood carver from Lithuania has added a life-size carving of Christ, the "Rupintojelis", near the "white house". A monument to Romas Kalanta, who in 1972 sacrificed his life by immolation to protest the Soviet occupation of Lithuania has been erected. There are many other folk art and historical markers throughout "Dainava". When recent immigrants from Lithuania come to "Dainava", they are emotionally overwhelmed by its natural beauty and vivid reminder of Lithuania.

To learn more about "Dainava", please visit: [www.lithuanian-american.org](http://www.lithuanian-american.org) and look for the link to "Dainava". In future articles we shall visit "Neringa" in Vermont, another tiny corner of the United States which feels like Lithuania.

**Correction:** In last month's issue we wrote about the LAC Cultural Council's "Lithuanian Oscars" Cultural Awards to be held this year in Detroit November 14. **The date of the awards has been changed to Sunday, October 31.**

**Update:** The XI Lithuanian Theater Festival sponsored by the LAC Cultural Council November 26, 27, 28 in

Chicago already has registered four definite participant theater groups: **Zaltvykste of Chicago, the Los Angeles Theater Group, Aitvaras of Toronto, and Baltic Theater of New York.** More groups are expected to participate. Check [www.lithuanian-american.org](http://www.lithuanian-american.org) for more updates about the Lithuanian Theater Festival.

### *And in Lithuania....*

**The University of Vilnius** started its 425th academic year with a colorful parade by faculty and students carrying placards through the streets of Vilnius. After the singing of the traditional and universal student hymn "Gaudeamus" in the university commons, rector Benediktas Juodka greeted the gathering. In his remarks rector Juodka reviewed the highs and lows in the 425 year history of one of the oldest universities in Eastern Europe. History of the university in many respects also reflects the triumphs and sorrows of the history of Lithuania.

At the present time the University has a student body of over 25,000, faculty and staff of over 5,000 of whom 200 are full professors, over 1,000 are associate professors and instructors, many with Ph.D.'s. Among them sixty are laureates of the highest academic awards and forty are members of the prestigious Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. University of Vilnius is the largest university in Lithuania with 14 academic schools, 100 academic chairs, clinics, the university church of Sts. John, and the oldest, largest and richest library in Lithuania. VU also boasts its botanical gardens, computer center and six university campuses. The university has established cooperative partnerships with 60 universities throughout the world and its six institutes participate in international scientific research. According to rector Juodka, every year about 300 VU students study in exchange programs abroad and this year 105 exchange students from many countries have come to Vilnius University. (*summarized from ELTA news service*)

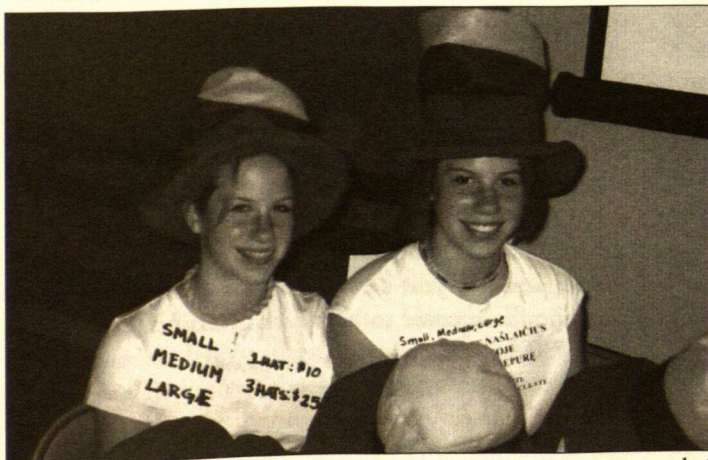
*Terese M. Gecys*

*Terese M. Gecys is Fourth term member of LAC Board of Directors, 2000-2003 secretary of LAC National Executive Committee and past as well as current president Philadelphia Chapter of LAC.*

# Hats Off!

We've all heard the adjectives describing today's young people. They are lazy, materialistic and self-centered, just to list a few of these negative images. In this month's article, I would like to do away with the myth that they only care about themselves. You will meet a group of young people who will completely dispel what you have read or heard in the past.

About a year ago I received an email from a young lady named Rita Bradunas who lives in Maryland. Rita is a student at Northwestern University. She and Lina Sestokas, a student at Harvard, are members of the Lithuanian Catholic Youth Organization's Central Committee for College Students. Along with other committee members; Zivile Bielskute, Simas Laniauskas, Kestutis Aukstuolis, Matas Laniauskas, and Lukas Laniauskas the young men and women of that committee were planning a fall weekend program during which they would have the opportunity to discuss their Lithuanian roots, current Lithuanian activities, and to learn more about their Lithuanian heritage. But they wanted to expand their activities. Rita wrote that as part of the program, she would like to present a challenge to the participants. She thought about dividing the students into groups according to the cities in which they resided. Each group would coordinate a project to help children in Lithuania. To introduce the project she wanted to present several concrete ways to the members as to how they could achieve their goals.



*Rima and Laura Sestokas modeling the try color hats.*

I was very flattered and very honored to be asked for advice. Rita had very specific questions that required very

specific answers. We began to communicate by computer and even by telephone. To tell the truth, I was as excited as the participants. But I had the best seat in the house-I could give the advice, but I didn't have to do any work. I could just sit back and watch the results. That's the kind of project I love- all advice and no work! Both Rita and I were afraid to leave out participants or schools. She told me there were more than fifty students from all over the country. Sometimes they worked more in regions rather than specific schools. She mentioned Massachusetts, Illinois, Ohio, California, and Michigan. Lina Sestokas would work in Boston and Vija Sidrys would coordinate Chicago's fund raising and collecting efforts. Laura Ruksenas would work with Cleveland, and Sigita Newsom would see to California. Lina Sirgedas helped Detroit to accomplish their goals. The students eagerly accepted the challenge and when they returned to their respective schools the work began in earnest. The Boston group got together to discuss how to raise funds and collect material goods. I couldn't believe the fantastic job they did making and selling tall hats Lina Sestokas sold the hats to the children and their families who attend the Lithuanian school in Boston, while her family walked the floor at the Lithuanian Festival in Philadelphia wearing hats, carrying hats, and above all, selling hats. I can vouch how well they sold. By the time I went to buy one, they were gone. There were so many proud, smiling children walking around the hall with tricolored hats. There were a lot of smiling parents as well. Now they had an easy time finding their children among the crowds.

The students from Detroit held a fund raising party before the Michigan- Ohio State football game. The Chicago people were busy raising money and collecting clothing before their annual Thanksgiving Dance. The east coast students also collected clothing from students in their dorms and kept thinking of more creative ways to raise money. I am sure these students are not rolling in money and that many are working while attending classes. Yet, they gave from their hearts to children they will never see or meet. This also shows the fantastic job the Lithuanian-American students did to promote their ideas because this was something they believed in with their hearts and souls. When the students went home for the holidays they attended every Lithuanian event they could find and also were successful in raising funds.

Chicago collected over \$100 and sent three boxes of clothing to the Sereika family. This family has raised many foster children since Lithuania regained independence.

Sigita Newsom reported that California students raised \$100 for the orphans by selling ice cream. High school students played a big role in selling the ice cream after their Saturday Lithuanian School classes. Boston sent a 40 foot container of clothing and used items to the Sisters in Rumbonys. The students are very grateful to Sister Helen Ivanauskas, Sisters of Jesus Crucified, who runs Lithuanian Children's Relief. Sister collects items for Lithuania all year. The students sent their boxes to her and she supplemented their donations with her own. The entire 40 foot container was bound for Rumbonys. The Sisters in Rumbonys who take care of children and the elderly shared the contents with 130 families in their parish. According to Sister Danute there were tears of joy when families came to the parish hall. They not only found things they needed, but found items that actually fit them. The money they collected was used for the children's medical and dental bills as well as school supplies.

The students are grateful to their families and friends who supported their fund raisers, dinners and tailgate parties. These young people did this in addition to attending rigorous classes, studying, and working.

I am so proud of their work and grateful that they gave me the opportunity to "watch" while they did these incredible tasks. Their families deserve our gratitude for instilling in them such love and devotion for those who are less for-

unate as well as a love for their Lithuanian heritage. And to all those who helped them achieve their goals-a sincere thank you.

Money is still being raised to help the Sisters in Rumbonys. You can help by purchasing a hat. The hats are tri colored-yellow, green and red. They come in Small, Medium, and Large and sell for \$10 a hat or \$25 for three hats. Checks for the hats should be made to Sisters of the Immaculate Conception with "for the Rumbonys children" written in the memo space. Shipping will cost \$1 per purchased hat. A separate check for shipping should be made to Onile Sestokas with "Shipping" written in the memo space. If you would like to help the Sisters with their work but do not want to purchase a hat, please feel free to send a donation. Write the check to Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. Mark the memo space with "donation" and mail it to Onile. All orders and donations will be gratefully appreciated.

Orders can be mailed, or emailed to:

**Onile Sestokas**  
15 Christine Lane  
Media, Pa. 19063

**Plunksna@aol.com**

"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have". Margaret Mead

*Jeanne Dorr*

*Jeanne Dorr is the Editor of Bridges and is a member of the Board of Directors of Lithuanian Orphan Care, a branch of the Human Services Council of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.*

## Bridges Passages

**October 1979**

**Coalition**

Tomas Venclova, a founding member of the Lithuanian Helsinki Monitoring Group, testified at the International Sakharov Hearings in Washington, DC on September 29, 1979 on behalf of Viktoras Petkus and Balys Gajauskas, Lithuanian prisoners of conscience and fellow members of the Lithuanian Helsinki Monitoring Group. Venclova's testimony indicated that Gajauskas was in an extremely poor state of health and probably would not survive his imprisonment. He pointed out that while Petkus was tried at the same time as Russian dissidents Anatoly Scharansky and Alexandr Ginzburg, and on similar charges, Petkus, the least known in the West, received by far the harshest penalty.

**October 1981**

**The Underground Periodicals in Soviet Occupied Lithuania.**

Lithuania has the largest underground press per capita of all the nations behind the Iron Curtain. Some sixteen underground periodicals appear in Lithuania today, despite a relentless KGB warfare against them and draconic sentences meted out to the publishers, writers, printers and distributors.

An impetus for the revival of the Lithuanian underground periodicals came with the new wave of repression in the late 1960's, which triggered a nation wide resistance in Lithuania. The rise of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union was also a contributing factor.

# A Revered Painting of Our Blessed Mother

An interesting monument of art, a painting of Our Blessed Mother, can be seen at one of the side altars in the church of Troskunai, and it is as revered as the Madonnas at Ausros Vartai and Siluva. The people of Troskunai, like their forefathers, believe that this is no ordinary painting, for two fires, one in 1743, and the other in 1770 destroyed both wooden churches, and in both disasters, Our Blessed Mother survived undamaged. Father Saulius Flipavicius, the present pastor of the church, had the history of the painting researched and made the arrangements to have it restored and returned to its original place.

It is believed that the Bernardines, who settled in Troskunai, brought the painting with them. The first wooden church, built by them in 1698, had the painting, and in 1789, an altar was built especially for it. The artist who painted the Madonna with Child is unknown. The restorers found the date 1557 on the back of the portrait. On the same painting, at the bottom, there is another date, (166?) with the last number illegible. Some feel that it was restored during that year, and the Mysteries of the Rosary were also painted around its edges.

Years later the picture disappeared and no one had any idea of what became of it. One day in 1988, Father Kazenas, pastor of the parish at the time, was putting Mary's altar in order, and removed the painting of her. There he found a dusty cloth hanging which was probably used as a covering. He had it removed and much to everyone's amazement, a painting of Our Blessed Mother with Child was exposed.

Art experts think it may have been put there by the Bernardines during the 1864 uprising against the Czarist government when the monastery was closed. The monks fled, and either had no time, or could not take the painting with them, and so they hid it to keep it out of harm's way.

There is a Latin inscription on the bottom of the picture: *Monstra Te Esse Matrem*, meaning, "Show that you are a Mother".



*Photo by Edward Baranauskas*

Father Kazenas was transferred to another parish, and Father Flipavicius, his successor, became concerned about the painting's future. He invited Balys Pakstas, a renowned restorer, to examine it. When he did, he said he never saw anything like it anywhere in Lithuania.

The people of Troskunai agreed to raise the money to pay for the expense of restoration, and it was taken to Vilnius where it was done by Tauras Jurkunas under the supervision of Balys Pakstas. After the work was finished, the painting was returned in the fall of 1994, and on November 6, was installed in its original location.

Today worshippers feel that by praying at the altar of Our Blessed Mother, their prayers will be answered. To show their gratitude for the favors granted, artifacts and rosaries are

placed at the base of the portrait.

It is amazing that no matter where a person stands while looking at the picture, whether from the left or the right side, it appears that the eyes of Our Blessed Mother are gazing straight at you.

Unlike its predecessors, the present day church in Troskunai is made of brick. Called Holy Trinity (Svc. Trejybės baznyčia), construction was started around 1774 and completed in 1787. The bell tower, also of brick, was built in 1800. This church has a special place in my heart, for it was here that my father was baptized in 1893 and attended mass before leaving for the United States in 1911.

The town of Troskunai is located about 35 km. southeast of Panevezys, or about an hour and a half drive from Vilnius. Anyone desiring to see the painting or to learn about the church's history should contact Father Flipavicius by telephone first, as almost all churches in Lithuania are closed during the day except when religious services are held.

*Edward Baranauskas*

*Edward Baranauskas lives in Vilnius and is a frequent contributor to Bridges.*

Benita Astrauskaite



## Through the Looking Glass

My name is Benita Astrauskaite and I live in Lithuania. This is the first time I am writing for Bridges. I am a student at a secondary school and it is my last year at school. This year I will have to choose what I am going to do in the future. When I start thinking about my future career I remember precious things from my past. Dear readers, I would like to share with you the importance of fairy tales.

Once upon a time, not very long ago, there was a Father and a Mother. At the end of autumn, on an early foul morning, a baby girl was born to them. Her green eyes were brightly looking around trying to understand something. Her round cheeks and open mouth were always trying to say something. Her hands and tiny fingers were trying to catch something in the air. From the day of her birth this little child was trying to understand everything around her and to feel her surrounding world. This is how my life story started. I don't remember much of my childhood. My mother told me I was independent: I tried to do everything myself. Years passed very quickly. And here I am, a seventeen year old girl writing this article.

I was constantly changing. My attitude towards many things changed. But my wish to live never changed. I feel so good in this world. Every morning when I get up I smile at the world and feel happy. I guess fairy tales which I read in my childhood influenced this attitude. Every child should begin his life reading them.

My favorite book is "Water Alive", a Lithuanian book of fairy tales. My grandmother gave it to me as a present for my third birthday. I have to admit that I had forgotten the book for some time. But one winter evening, it was raining heavily outside. Big snowdrifts were disappearing. I was sitting cozily on my bed watching how the huge drops of rain were wriggling down my window. It seemed so cold outside. I always liked rain. It made me smile, but this time was different. My head was full of all kinds of thoughts. And suddenly, I remembered my fairy tale book, such an important thing for me. I opened my shelf and carefully held the book which was thumbed and read so many

times. Yes, it was exactly the same. Its thick black cover was still shiny. I saw a strange girl who was looking at me with the same sad smile. My grandmother used to read this book to me before I went to sleep, when I was sad or when she could find a little extra time. To tell the truth, I learned a lot of things from fairy tales. For example, I understood what the real things we have to treasure in our lives are and how to achieve our aims.

From time to time I started to read my fairy tale book again. Now my attitude toward them is different. Of course, if I am tired, fairy tales still help me to calm down and relax. After all, nitty-gritty is a monotonous routine while fairy tales lead us to the magic world of dreams where everything is so perfect, beautiful and magical. When I read fairy tales I can create my own world. They make me feel optimistic. Every time I open the book I find something new, something interesting. I begin to treasure new things.

I don't know what the fairy tale of my life will be. Seventeen is only the beginning. I am very grateful to my grandmother who introduced me to this magnificent world of tales. These beautiful masterpieces of art helped to create my personality, to know the surrounding world and to recognize the treasures of the world.

Let us all sometimes stop and find time to remember things which were so important in our past and find them once again, though in a different way.

Best regards from beautiful Lithuania,

*Benita Astrauskaite*

*Benita Astrauskaite lives in Panevezys, Lithuania. She is in her senior year of high school. Benita enjoys writing and is a talented artist.*

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# One more Look at Lithuanian Olympians



Sarunas Jasikevicius drives past a USA defender.



Austra Skujyte first Lithuanian to ever win an Olympic medal in the Heptathlon. She won a silver medal.



Andrejus Zadneprovskis – first Lithuanian to win a silver medal in the Modern Pentathlon.



Lithuanian president Valdas Adamkus and Gold medalist Virgilijus Alekna.



Zivile Balciunaite placed 17 among the world's 53 best women marathon runners.



Jeroslavas Jaksto took fourth place in the Heavy weight division – narrowly missing the bronze medal.



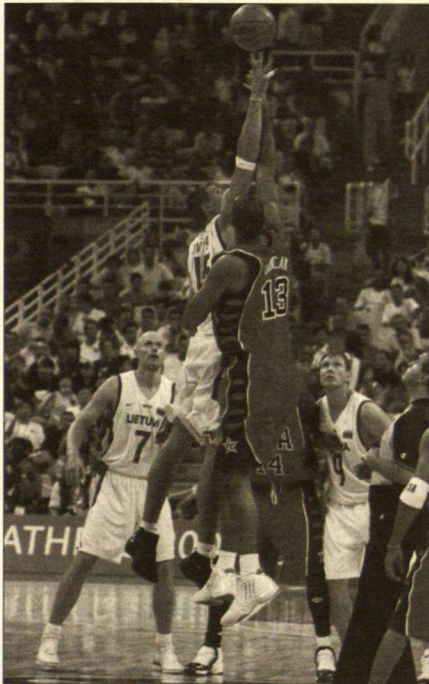
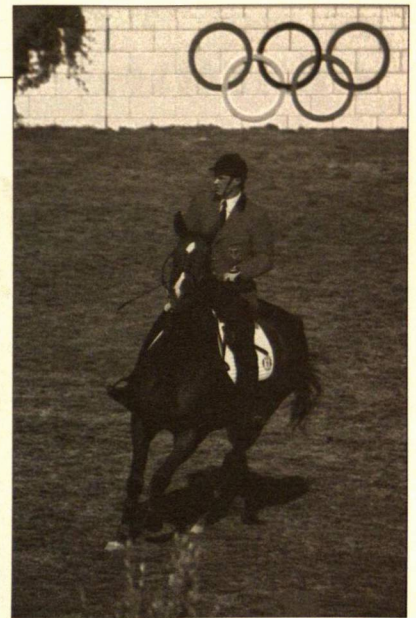
Robertas Javtokas ready to lay one in from underneath the basket – against USA.



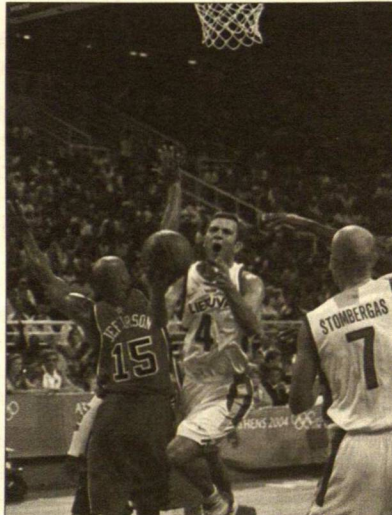
Arvydas Macijauskas driving to the basket past two USA defenders.



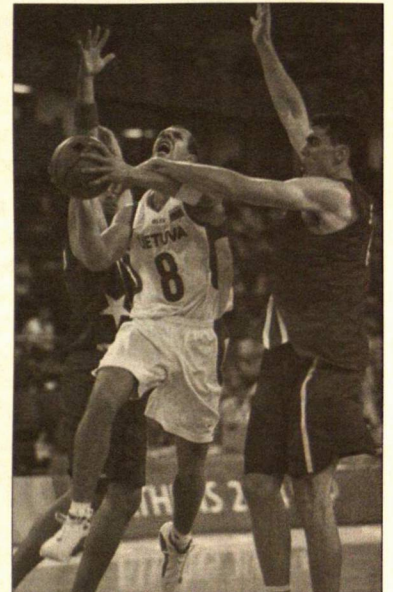
Virgilijus Alekna became the first Lithuanian to win two Olympic Gold Medals in the discuss. His first was in Sydney 2000



Robertas Javtokas out jumps USA's Duncan.



Vytyis Ginevicius drives past two USA defenders for a two point lay up.



Ramunas Siskauskas drives past two Puerto Rican defenders.



Three Medals !!!! One Gold !!! Two Silver !!!

This is the fourth Olympic Games that Free Lithuania has partaken in. This year was the largest contingent with 64 athletes participating in 13 different sport venues.

# Christian Morality

Christian morality is based on the belief that each one of us is created in God's image. Therefore, each person deserves respect and reverence. Each one of us is important and our lives have dignity.

What is opposed to life itself, such as murder, abortion, euthanasia, slavery or self destruction, violates the integrity of the human person. Christian morality recognizes God as the center and purpose of our lives. How we respond or refuse to respond to God affects our own characters and personalities and also affects the lives of others. Also, as we become more able to respond in gratitude and trust, we also become aware that our response to God is authentic only if we are responsive to the needs of others. As St. Paul pointed out in Galatians (5:22) "we will know when because our lives will be characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, chastity, goodness, and self control".

In St. Paul's letter to the Philippians (2:5) he tells us: "Let your bearing towards one another arise out of your life in Jesus Christ". Christian morality states that as humans we are not solitary, but social beings. We do need each other and each of us must work towards the good of all people.

As Christians we have a responsibility to build a

better world based on values of truth, goodness and honesty. Christians involved in politics should be honest and responsible to those they serve and to ensure the rights of all people. Christian morality also concerns itself with the avoidance of war and striving for peace. St. Paul reminds us in his various letters that it is not always as easy matter to be a good Christian. "Seek after integrity, piety, faith, love, and a gentle spirit.....Take firm hold on the everlasting life to which you were called" (Timothy 6:11-12).

According to Michael Novak, "Moral action is not achieved primarily through the operation of spontaneous feelings, or through the occurrence of one's understanding, but through the fairness and creativity of one's decisions." Evil in our society is often portrayed as exciting and goodness as boring. However, to be good is to be creative to do more than conventions insist and to exert oneself. Without exertion nothing would be accomplished.

We should ask not, "What should I do now, but rather, five years from now what sort of person would I like to have become?" Moral growth requires time and effort. To be a more fully Christian personality one must begin to prepare oneself today.

Sister Margarita Bareikaite

*Sister Margarita Bareikaite belongs to the order of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Lithuanian order in Putnam, CT. and is a regular contributor to Bridges*

91 Years of Service, continue from page 4

## Post Convention meeting

On Sunday, the newly elected Supreme Council met at the Lithuanian Community Center in Kearny, NJ. Re-elected president Agnes Mickunas, HM invited spiritual advisor Rev. Msgr. J. Anderlonis, STD, HM, to say the morning prayer. New officers and committee chairs were introduced.

The 2006 National Convention will be held August 3-6, 2006, in Orlando, FL. The Supreme council will host it. Trustees Mary Beth Slakis and Joseph Stiklius agreed to serve as convention co-chairs. The Grosvenor Resort Hotel will be the official site of the convention (the same site that was used in the 2002 convention).

The Supreme Council approved the appointment of the following: Saulis Kuprys, Esq.-the organization's legal advisor; Sister M. Janine Golubickis-VYTIS magazine editor; Sister Johanna Shainauskas-VYTIS business manager.

The ALT- ( American Lithuanian Council ) representatives are Sister Johanna Shainauskas, John Mankus and Evelyn Ozelis. The Supreme Council ratified the organization's ancillary charities (Aid to Lithuania, Inc., St. Casimir's Guild and the K of L Foundation) Board of Directors and Officers. The Our Lady of Siluva Fund's Board and Officers will be ratified upon incorporation as a non- profit charity of the organization.

The next Supreme Council meeting will be conducted on October 16, 2004, at St. George's Church Hall in Philadelphia, Pa. The hosts will be Rev. Msgr. J. Anderlonis STD, HM and Council 3, Philadelphia.

The 92nd National Convention will be hosted August 11-14, 2005, by Council 19, Pittsburgh, Pa.

The meeting concluded with a prayer.

*Regina Juska-Svoba  
K of L Public Relations Chair*



# The Road to NATO

## You never know!

But being Lithuanian is lots of fun! Being Lithuanian you can always expect the unexpected to occur. Take me, for example. I live in Hamilton Square, New Jersey (you need a magnifying glass to find it on a map). I'm standing in a line in a Chinese Buffet Restaurant, filling my plate with delicacies, when I see a middle aged, athletic looking guy approaching me with a Cheshire cat's smile on his face. He steps in front of me and asks, "When was the last time you were in Lithuania?"

Before I could fully recover from my amazement I tell him it was 1998. It took me a moment but it finally dawned on me how he knew I was Lithuanian – I was wearing a Lithuanian T-shirt. (Slow, slow my man!) He replies that he was there in 1995.

"What were you doing there?" I ask. He answered that he is in the Special Forces and that he and nine other Green Berets were the first USA soldiers to be sent to Lithuania. Their primary mission was to prepare Lithuania's soldiers to such a high level that Lithuania would be admitted into NATO.

"Well, I'll be darned," I say with this look of amazement on my face. Since both of us had to fulfill our original obligations; he to bring his children to soccer practice and me to satisfy my growling stomach, we agreed to meet in the very near future to continue our conversation.

A week later we met. What follows are SFC Myles Cappiello's experiences in Lithuania in his own words.

In August 1995, a Special Forces Operational Detachment "A" from the 10th Special Forces Group, FT. Carson, CO conducted a Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) with Lithuania's Iron Wolf Brigade in Rukla (outside of Kaunas). Mission focus was training the Lithuanian "Iron Wolf" Infantry Brigade in Peacekeeping Operations preparing them for future deployments into UN / NATO operations in Bosnia. The name of the exercise was "Amber Valley 95."

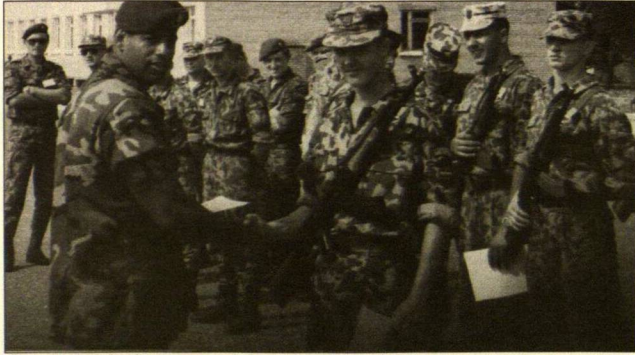
When the detachment of ten Green Berets arrived in Lithuania we were greeted by members of the Lithuanian press corps who were excited by the



The Green Beret aboard a Lithuanian battleship, with Lithuanian Sailors

arrival of US forces for the first time in a training capacity. We were then transported to an old Soviet Union airborne unit base in Rukla where we were billeted in old barracks once used by the Soviets. The housing area outside the base housed former families of the Soviet paratroopers who were left behind. These people lived in extremely poor conditions. The Soviet soldiers destroyed the barracks when they left Lithuania a few years earlier by breaking anything they could with sledgehammers. The walls, floors, windows and toilets were shattered. However, we were all excited to be there training alongside soldiers who several years earlier we were preparing to fight against when they were part of the Soviet Union.

On the first evening there was a formal dinner to introduce senior military officers to our team. There was a long wooden table outside a building which was used as the quarters for the most senior officers. The table was covered with cheeses, breads, sausages and some "spirits." During the dinner, which started out diplomatically, with the normal formal introductions and speeches, things eased up as the night progressed. I was trained in the Special Forces Qualification Course many years ago that when you arrive in a foreign land you must fit in with the people by doing what they do. Apparently the Lithuanian food and "spirits" move differently through their bodies than mine. We ended the evening with a competition using all the gymnastic equipment in



Congratulation — you've passed the test.

the field. Not an easy task when you have a stomach as I had. Nothing in the Special Forces training prepared me for such Lithuanian hospitality.

The next day I was awakened by the team sergeant for a joint physical training session early in the morning. My head felt like a jack hammer at work.

We trained the Lithuanian field soldiers in subjects such as checkpoint operations, weapons training, defensive positions and tactical communications. I was the primary instructor for teaching the English phonetic alphabet and tactical communications and assisted in teaching the IV class. This was the first time I instructed in a foreign land with female interpreters. Lesson learned. You cannot teach young warriors utilizing good looking females as interpreters. They distract from the class! They also distract the instructors! However, they were professionals and very good at their job.

In the middle of the training the Lithuanians held an "Olympic Competition Day." It was an organized sporting competition between the US and the Lithuanians. Along with basketball they had track and field, soccer and tug of war. I learned that the Lithuanians are very serious about their sports. At the end of the day they put on a show of traditional dances.

On another day we were brought to an old Soviet officers' spa. We entered a room where we were offered sausages and more "spirits". Even though I remembered what happened to me at the welcoming dinner, I couldn't resist. Hopefully, there would not be another headache or upset stomach. After the meal we went into another room where elderly women sprayed us down with fire hoses. It was hilarious! Can you picture grown men without clothes standing in front of two elderly women shooting them with fire hoses? We then proceeded to another room with an indoor pool which was green from algae and was as cold as ice. We dove in and out as fast as we could. Later we went into a sauna for "dechilling". The

Lithuanians then had us repeat the process again and again. What fun that was! However, when we returned to our living quarters, my fellow soldier, "Sergeant Preston" became as violently ill as I had been after the welcoming dinner. This Lithuanian hospitality was just too much for us.

During our time there we had a tour of the Lithuanian Navy. We arrived at a port whose name I can't remember. We met the commander of the base. He took us on a tour and showed us the ships, all of which were Soviet throwaways. I was very impressed with the Lithuanian soldiers, but at that point I would have been worried if the Lithuanian sailors ever had to fight on the water using those old ships.

On our final night a Lithuanian captain invited us to dinner at his house. I can remember his home was nothing more than a large room that had four small beds for him and his wife and their three children. The same room had a small kitchen and a bathroom that was hidden behind a curtain. I couldn't imagine how these soldiers who were as motivated and dedicated could remain that way on such little pay. And this was a captain!

How did the NCO's or enlisted men do it? The captain's wife made us coffee by putting a hot iron into a pot of water and letting it boil. However, the warmth and hospitality of this family made the evening one that I will never forget.

Before we left for home we gave all our ammunition, weapons and field communications systems to the Lithuanian troops. We also gave the young captain everything we had that was expendable. As we were preparing to leave, his wife arrived in tears because she was so grateful that we had given them our Mr. Coffee maker. She said she had to thank us personally.

We arrived in Lithuania filled to capacity with things we felt were necessary. We left only with our backpacks and our memories.

My memories of Lithuania are that Lithuanians have the most pride in their country, more than any country I have trained in. Even though it is a very poor country the people are proud of being Lithuanian. They truly love their country. I left with the feeling that they are "super" people and I would go back and fight along side them anytime.

Rimas Gedeika as told to him by  
SFC Myles Cappiello

Rimas Gedeika lives in New Jersey and is active in the Lithuanian Sports Community.

## Alfredas Pliadis

The photos of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens are those of Alfredas Pliadis, one of the leading sports photo journalists in Lithuania. Some of his many accomplishments are: Commissioned by the Lithuanian Olympic Committee to cover the 2004 games Photo correspondent for the magazine "Olympine Panorama" Editor of Lengvoji Atletika - a track and field magazine Works for Interior Defense Ministry as a PR person Is a TV sports producer in Lithuania. Has written about sports in many Lithuanian newspapers "sports" sections His photos appear regularly in the monthly Karys, Trimitas, Kardas (all are military publications) and newspapers Lietuvos Rytas and Kauno Diena.



## Berzelis

The Berzelis Lithuanian Folk Dance Group was organized in Hartford, Connecticut in the fall of 1972. The group has seen more than 150 dancers come and go, learned over 120 dances and performed more than 275 times.

The Berzelis dancers have participated in six Lithuanian Folk Dance Festivals. The group was the host for the

Northeast Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival held in Hartford in 1981. In the summer of 1994, Berzelis traveled to Lithuania to take part in Lithuania's Song and Dance Festival. The group's organizer and director is Mrs. Dalia Dzikas. Mrs. Dzikas was the artistic director of the IX Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival. Jonas Kodis, who has been dancing from Berzelis' first days, is the co-director. Raminta Nenortiene also teaches Berzelis'. Some of the music is specially arranged and recorded for Berzelis by Mr. Petkaitis.

# News and Views

## 1904 - 2004

Friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish celebrated the 100th Jubilee of the Parish with a celebratory mass on Sunday, September 12, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. at St. Peter Lithuanian Parish. The Anniversary celebration continued with a luncheon following the Mass at Anthony's Pier 4 Restaurant on the waterfront in Boston.

Parishioners and friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish have organized to keep their parish from being closed. For more details please visit the website of St. Peter's parishioners at [www.savestpeter.org](http://www.savestpeter.org)

### Speaker of Lithuanian parliament sends plea to Boston's archbishop

Vilnius, (ELTA) - Arturas Paulauskas, the speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas, has sent a letter to Archbishop Sean O'Malley of Boston. The top legislator in the Baltic country expressed his concerns about reports that the Lithuanian St. Peter's Church and Cultural Center in the parish of Boston may be closed.

On September 12, the church and cultural centre celebrates its one hundredth anniversary. Paulauskas wrote that he considered the news unpleasant and sad both for the Lithuanian community of Boston and all Lithuanian people who "greatly appreciate the fostering of national traditions and spirit even while living overseas". This cultural centre and church, according to Paulauskas, contributes to the cultural and ethnic development of the parishioners.

"Today it is a place attracting an increasing number of Lithuanians going to live and study in the U.S.A., easing their adaptation to the new living conditions and culture in a foreign country during their first years there," Paulauskas said in the letter.

The US Lithuanian community is protesting against an intended sale of the church and cultural centre because they were built with donations from the community. The archdiocese of Boston announced it would sell the buildings in order to pay sexual abuse claims brought against

some clergymen. News provided by Information Center for Homecoming Lithuanians

### US congressmen admit that entry visas constrain exchange of expertise

Vilnius, (ELTA) - A visiting US congressional delegation has acknowledged that entry visas, which Lithuanian nationals travelling to the United States have to obtain, hinder the exchange of expertise and specialists, particularly in the important sphere of information technology.

Eight American lawmakers met Arturas Paulauskas, the head of the Lithuanian Seimas, Gediminas Kirkilas, the chairman of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, and Andrius Kubilius, who heads the inter-parliamentary group for the U.S.A. today in Vilnius.

In dealing with the potential lifting of the requirement for entry visas, it is important that as many American lawmakers as possible come to Lithuania to see the progress of the nation, the US congressmen said.

Paulauskas said he was happy the state and direction of US-Lithuanian inter-parliamentary ties. He thanked Congress for supporting Lithuania's bid for NATO membership.

"This year Lithuania has witnessed a great many significant events. We have joined NATO and the European Union and are committed to make the most of membership in these organizations," Paulauskas said.

The head of the Lithuanian parliament stated that Lithuania counted largely on US assistance for the development of infrastructure projects and the project to build an energy bridge to the West.

The American delegation, in turn, asked for the help of Lithuania in searching for new economic partners in the European Union.

The congressmen admitted that since regaining the independence, Lithuania has achieved amazing progress. They congratulated the Baltic country on achieving membership in the two international organizations and praised its efforts to fight corruption and its role in international peacekeeping missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Asked by the US delegation what challenges are in store for Lithuania in the near future, the foreign committee's head Kirkilas joked: "to defeat the US in the Olympic basketball match in Athens on Saturday".

On Thursday, the Lithuanian men's team beat Greece 98:76. Lithuania and Spain are the only two unbeaten teams in the games.

### USA won't bring its troops to Baltics

Tallinn, (LETA-ELTA) - In response to questions of Russian journalists whether USA plans to bring its bases to the Baltic states in the course of the planned relocating of troops, high U.S. officials said it isn't the interests of their strategy, Postimees writes.

At a press conference, where an anonymous high foreign ministry and defense ministry official responded to questions of the press of the world, they confirmed that the relocation of troops isn't directed against Russia.

"Certain Russian circles have asked questions about the cooperation of the U.S. army and Caucasian, Central Asian and East European countries, but facts confirm the reality that these activities (relocation of troops - ed.) are a response to the terrorism danger from the South and present no danger to Russia," foreign ministry representative said.

"Baltic states are naturally NATO members and normal ally activities take place there," the U.S. foreign ministry representative said. "But from the point of view of location of US permanent troops and infrastructure we believe that these plans calm down our Russian friends."

### Salaries in Lithuania

The largest salaries are paid to legislators, senior officials, and specialists with a higher education, a new survey by Statistics Lithuania showed. In 2002, the average monthly gross wage paid to legislators and seniors officials amounted to 2,048 litas (594 euros). The wage for specialists was 1,470 litas (426 euros), that for specialists and technical personnel was 1,117 litas (324 euros), and that for skilled workers and craftsmen was 956 litas (277 euros). The lowest monthly gross wage was recorded for unskilled labour--607 litas (176 euros)--47.1 percent below the country's average of 1,147 litas (332 euros). Kauno Diena

*News information provided by Information Center for Homecoming Lithuanians.*

### Vilnius named Baltic city of the future

Vilnius (ELTA) - The September issue of the magazine Foreign Direct Investment, which is controlled by the Financial Times group, named Vilnius the Baltic city of the future and the dual city of Vilnius and Kaunas the Baltic region of the future.

The acknowledgement was given to the country's capital and the dual city after winning the magazine's contest "The Future Cities and Regions of Europe 2004-2005".

In the first round of the competition, participants were selected from 19 regions in Europe and evaluated in terms of 33 criteria such as economic potential, human resources, transportation, IT, security, culture, and heritage.

The winners of the first round can move on to the second round of the contest and battle for the title of the future city or region in four areas of Europe -- north, south, east, or west. Those winning the second round will compete for best city or region in Europe in the third round of the contest.

"The win is the result of long, purposeful work to increase the international competitiveness of Vilnius and the dual city of Vilnius and Kaunas. That was one of the main aims in the strategic plan for the city of Vilnius in 2002-2011," said Arturas Zuokas, mayor of Vilnius.

According to Remigijaus Kabeciaus, the head of the Lithuanian economic expansion agency, the awards will increase the interest of foreign investors in Lithuania.

*News information provided by Information Center for Homecoming Lithuanians.*

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L I T H U A N I A N - A M E R I C A N N E W S J O U R N A L



# The Bear Who Married a Peasant's Daughter

Once upon a time there lived an old peasant whose wife had died leaving him alone save for their only child, a daughter.

All of the peasant's family lived far away from him, and one day, making up his mind to pay them a visit, he left his daughter at home by herself and drove away.

On and on he drove and he got lost many times, as the roads led through dense forests. The forests were larger in those days and there were no highways, but finally he got there. His family were all in good health and prosperous, and the peasant spent some time with them and then started off for home again.

Night caught him as he was passing through a large forest, and the peasant lost his way. Round and round he circled and at last found himself in so dense a thicket that he feared he would never get out of it. Then he saw a light ahead. Thinking that there might be a house there, he drove toward it. But as he drove closer, he found it was not an ordinary house but a beautiful palace. He wasn't sure he should enter it, for he was afraid that he, a simple peasant, might not be welcome. But remembering that there was nowhere else to go, he ran to the door.

He went inside and looked in every nook and corner, but there was not a soul to be seen anywhere.

All of a sudden, as if out of thin air, a large bear came lumbering toward him.

"What do you want here?" asked the bear.

The peasant was frightened, thinking that the bear would tear him to pieces, but the bear never touched him.

"What do you want here?" he asked again. "I will help you if I can."

The peasant said, "I was coming back home from a visit with my family and I lost my way in the forest. I'll never be able to find it again in the dark. Could you please tell me where I could spend the night?"

"You can stay in the palace", the bear replied. "There is no one here but me.

Seeing that he had nothing to fear from the bear, the peasant thanked him and said he would stay.

The bear brought him some food and ate with him, and the peasant marveled to see him do

everything just as if he were a man and not a bear.

After supper they decided that it was time to sleep, and the bear, like the peasant, slept in a bed.

This was a strange bear, indeed, to be living in a huge palace all by himself and to be doing everything just like a man.

In the morning the bear gave the peasant some breakfast.

"What are you going to do now?" he asked.

"I'd like to go home," the peasant replied.

"Go, then."

Off the peasant went on his way. He drove through the forest for a long time, but no matter where he went he found himself back at the palace gate again.

Evening was setting in and he could do nothing about it.

So in he went to see the bear again and asked him to let him spend the night in the palace.

The bear let him in as he had the night before, gave him food and drink, put him to bed and looked after his horse, too.

Morning came and the peasant said, "Do show me the way home."

"That I will," replied the bear, "but you must give me your daughter in marriage in return."

Now, this the peasant did not like to do. Not that his daughter would not be well off in the palace, only how could she marry a bear!

There would be nothing he could do but find his way out of the forest without the bear's help.

All day the peasant circled the forest but when evening came he found himself at the palace gate again.

What was there to do but ask the bear to let him in again! This he did and the bear gave him food and drink, put him to bed and looked after his horse.

Morning came, and the peasant said to the bear:

"Do show me the way home."

"That I will," the bear replied, "but you must give your daughter in marriage in return."

The peasant was about to agree, but thinking that his daughter wouldn't like it, resolved to try just once more to find the way home by himself.

He circled the forest all day, round and round he drove, but when evening came found himself at the palace again. He now knew that, like it or not, there was no way out for him but to promise his daughter in marriage to the bear.

The bear received him with all the politeness due to a future father-in-law and tried to please him in every way he could. He gave him food and drink, put him to bed, and looked after his horse, too.

There as nothing the peasant needed to do for himself.

In the morning the bear went with the peasant and showed him the way home.

The peasant returned home with a heavy heart, and his daughter at once knew that something was wrong.

"Is anyone in our family dead or gravely ill?" she asked.

Loath as the peasant was to tell her about the bear, he knew that he had to do it. So he told her all about everything, even the promise he had made to give her to him in marriage. Of course, the bear lived in a rich palace and behaved just like a man but that still didn't make him one.

The daughter heard him out but was not in the least angry.

"The bear did you no harm, he even helped you to get back home. That means he'll do me no harm, either," she said.

So they set out from home together and drove to the bear's palace, and no welcome could have been better than the one the bear gave them.

The peasant stayed in the palace for a few days and then went home, but his daughter remained with the bear. They were very happy together, and being there with him under one roof day and night she noticed that the bear had a man's body under his skin. So she decided to watch him.

One night she did not go to bed herself but crept up to the bear's room and peeked in at the door. And what did she see but the bear take off his bearskin and turn into a man with only his head remaining a bear's head. She thought to herself it would be a good thing if she could free him of the bearskin altogether.

When the bear was fast asleep, she tiptoed in, took the skin that was lying at his feet, and threw it in the stove.

The skin was burned to ashes, and the bear fell gravely ill. The girl knew why this happened and she was very sorry for the bear, but there was nothing she could do to help him. The bear lay there for a day and he grew worse. He lay there for a second day, and he was worse still and looked as if he was close to death. She sat beside him and wept bitterly, but all her wails and sobs did not help. The third day came, and the girl told herself he was going to die and she nearly died of grief herself.

But the third day passed and the third night, too, and in the morning the bear turned into a prince so handsome that one could not take one's eyes off him. The girl was as happy as could be. She threw her arms around the prince's neck and begged him to forgive her for having made him suffer. But the prince, far from being angry, did not know how to thank her enough. For, he said, the devil himself had turned him into a bear and his skin had to be burned before he could become a man again. No one had known about it until she had come and done it and so broken the spell.

The prince and the peasant's daughter then held a wedding feast and invited everyone. There was food and drink and the guests ate and drank to their hearts' content.



Akville Dudonyte



## For My Special Teacher

Only two months have passed and everybody has a lot of work. Children study, learn, read books and look for information. Teachers help their students to succeed and to be the best of all. They check students' work and want everything to be clear and perfect.

A teacher's job is probably the hardest in the whole world. It takes a lot of patience and nerves. There are always some students who are difficult children: it's hard to understand them, and even harder to help them because they will always say that they don't need any help. These words are like a knife, cutting through a teacher's heart. People should never ever say that to anybody because this saying hurts not even your friend, grandparents, but even your teacher, too. A teacher is like your second mother. She's a very special person, and I will always remember my very first teacher, and the first teachers' day in my life...

It was my first school year in my first school. I was always happy little girl. Even then, when I got a bad mark, I had my own saying, "A bad mark is not the end of the world". Teacher Edith was very happy that her little pupil was learning to be optimistic. And then I told her why that was. I said, "When I first saw you, you were with other people talking, I heard how you talk and how you think. I found you

very smart and wise". She was very happy. The next day, one of my classmates said that tomorrow will be a teachers' day. I didn't understand what that meant, but I knew that it would be her day and I wanted to give her something special from me. I wanted to be the first who would congratulate her. I came home that day and asked my mommy to buy a lot of white lilies for my teacher because they were her favorite flowers. My mommy went out to get flowers, and I started painting a post-card. I wrote on the card these words "For my special teacher..." The next day came. I was very happy and I wanted to go to school like I never wanted before. My daddy took me there. I was the first who came to our classroom. I was holding white lilies and a beautiful card in my hands when she came in. Teacher Edith was very surprised that I came so early only for her. She was very happy. All day she was talking only about her little student who made her a big surprise. I wanted her to be so happy every day. All my classmates brought her flowers. I can remember that picture, how happy she was. We were her first class that she was teaching... and finally, at the end of the day, we all said in a chorus, "We love you, Teacher Edith!"

Akville Dudonyte

Akville Dudonyte lives in Philadelphia and attends a local high school. She is also a member of St. Andrew's Lithuanian choir, *Laisves*.

Tale continued from page 24

The peasant came to see his daughter and could hardly believe his eyes, for it was something to be wondered at that the bear could have changed into this handsome prince.

The peasant's daughter and her husband begged him to live with them in the palace, and this he did and never left them again.



# Lithuanian Kitchen

## Koldunai

### Dough:

2 c. flour  
1 egg  
1 tbs oil  
1/2 c water  
Mix ingredients and knead into dough.

### Filling:

1 lb ground beef  
1 pk. Lipton Beefy Onion Soup Mix  
1 egg  
1/2 c water  
1 tsp margarine  
Mix ingredients.

Roll out dough with rolling pin. Place teaspoon scoops on dough half inch apart and one half inch from edge. Fold over and press out with a glass. Pinch edges to close.

Following package directions bring a chicken bullion cube to a boil. Lower heat to medium-low. Drop koldunai into the water for approximately 8 minutes. Drain.

May be garnished with butter, sour cream or bacon bits. Uncooked koldunai may be frozen.

Recipe for 4 people.

*V. Buinys*

## Lithuanian Garlic Bread

1 loaf of sliced rye bread  
3/4 cup oil  
4 or 5 cloves of fresh garlic  
salt to taste

Heat oil on medium heat in large frying pan. Put whole slices of bread into pan. Sprinkle with salt. Fry until light brown. Turn bread over. Watch carefully as bread burns easily. Drain on paper towel. Grate garlic on top of bread while bread is still hot. Garlic will melt into bread. Cut bread into small pieces. There should be 5 or 6 pieces per slice.

*J. Marmokas*

Dear Readers,

I wish I could give you a calorie count and fat content. However, these recipes are given to me by word of mouth. I can vouch for them both and they are delicious. The koldunai recipe was given to me by a woman who came to America many years ago and the garlic bread by a newcomer. Enjoy!

## History of Lithuanian FOOD

Until the Neolithic period (ca 3500-1800 B.C.) the inhabitants of what is today Lithuania had a non-sedentary way of life and depended largely on hunting, fishing, and the gathering of berries, wild fruit, nuts, and mushrooms. From 2500 B.C. on there was an expansion of farming cultures. People living in villages grew barley, wheat, and millet, and possessed domesticated animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. At the beginning of the Iron Age (ca 700-500 B.C.), new crops, namely rye and peas, made their appearance in the western areas of Lithuania, whereas people continued to cultivate just barley and wheat in eastern Lithuania, where animal husbandry was more important than agriculture (see Archaeology, Agriculture).

Animal husbandry and agriculture, which began in the prehistoric period and subsequently developed further, yielded the principal food products for Lithuanians. Meat came mostly from cattle, sheep, goats and pigs, less frequently from fowl. The Anglo-Saxon traveler Wulfstan (ca 887-901) remarked that whereas the Prussian nobility drank mare's milk or kumiss, the common people drank mead. He also noticed that honey and fish were in abundance. While forests still covered an extensive part of Lithuania (until approximately the 18th century), consumption of game, including elks, bears, wild boars, and hares, was heavy (see Hunting). Among cereals, rye, barley and wheat were the most popular. From oats came the familiar oatmeal-jelly called kisielius, consumed during periods of fasting and on Christmas Eve. In eastern Lithuania, where land was less fertile, buckwheat was grown and made into flour and groats. Also the ancient practice of food gathering persisted there until recent times. The Lithuanian names for vegetables such as carrots, beets and onions indicate that these must have been known since long ago. 16th century documents mention that on estates turnips, cucumbers, radishes, parsnips, leeks, celery, lentils, cabbage, and other vegetables were cultivated. Potatoes were introduced in the 17th century and were cultivated more readily in the villages than on estates.

Food, as an essential means of life support, was held in great respect since early times, just as the act of eating was considered holy. Until the beginning of the present century it was not proper in Lithuanian households for anyone to make small talk or for children to frolic at the dining table. Every member of the family had his own customary place. The head of the family or the eldest member took the seat of honor at one end of the table; the others, including the help, sat along the sides and at the remaining end. The family head himself partitioned the bread and the meat, whereas other dishes were under the supervision of the housewife. Before proceeding with their meal, the whole family recited a short prayer or at least crossed themselves. No matter what it was, food was considered a "gift from God."

\* This information is from "Encyclopedia Lituanica."

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# Calendar of Events for October - N

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Please check the addresses or appropriate websites to be sure the events are s

## October 2-3, 2004

Lithuanian Days  
Los Angeles, CA  
For more information:  
www.lithsd.org

## October 9, 2004

Walk-a-thon and bike-a-thon  
Pig roast, evening program  
Camp Neringa  
West Brattleboro, VT  
www.neringa.org

## October 10, 2004

Knights of Lithuania  
Amber District Meeting  
Easton, PA  
Hosted by Council 63  
Lehigh Valley, PA  
Dolores.Herbert@IBX.com

## October 10, 2004

Daughters of Lithuania  
Luncheon 1 PM  
See Seattle website  
www.javlb.org/seattle/events

## October 15, 2004

Amber Roots Club  
Lithuanian Sing-A-Long  
Evening - 7 PM  
Refreshments will be served.  
Lithuanian Music Hall  
2715 E. Allegheny Ave  
Philadelphia, PA 19134  
Downstairs in the Cultural Center  
Please use side door to enter  
Milliemarks@aol.com

## October 16, 2004

Krupnikas Lesson  
Latvian Hall (Colorado)  
For time refer to:  
www.coloradolithuanians.org

## October 16, 2004

Traditional Fall Ball 6:30 PM  
Crown Plaza North Shore

Mundelein, IL  
skalisius @connect.net

## October 16, 2004

Knights of Lithuania  
Supreme Council Meeting  
Philadelphia, PA  
Hosted by Msgr. Dr. Joseph  
Anderlonis STD, HM & Council 3  
www.knightsoflithuania.com

## October 17, 2004

Knights of Lithuania  
New England District  
Cultural Festival  
Food, Exhibits, Entertainment  
Maironis Park  
52 S. Quinsigamond Ave.  
Shrewsbury, MA  
www.knightsoflithuania.com

## October 17 and 31, 2004

Roman Catholic Mass in  
Lithuanian, 12:30 PM  
Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel  
55th Ave (one block south of  
Glendale Ave) Glendale, AZ  
Mass will be followed by  
refreshments and fellowship.  
kvedaras@earthlink.net or  
www.lithaz.org

## October 23-24

Knights of Lithuania  
Mid-America District  
Annual Pilgrimage Weekend  
Miraculous Medal Shrine near  
St. Louis, MO  
www.knightsoflithuania.com

## October 24, 2004

Picnic 1PM  
Yavapai pavilion of North  
Phoenix Mountain Park  
7th St and Peoria Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ  
Recorded Lithuanian music, hearty

Lithuanian food, cold refreshments  
and friendly people  
Hosted by Lithuanian- American  
Community of Arizona  
www.lithaz.org

## October 30, 2004

Fall Ball and Dinner Dance, 6PM  
Miramar Naval Base  
San Diego, CA  
www.lithsd.org

## October 30, 2004

Costume Ball  
For details:  
www.coloradolithuanians.org

## November

## November 6-7, 2004

Muge-Lithuanian Festival  
Saturday 12-8 PM  
Sunday 12-6 PM  
Lithuanian and American Food  
Lithuanian dancers and musical  
entertainment, Lithuanian Crafts  
Do your Christmas shopping early!  
Lithuanian Music Hall  
2715 E. Allegheny Ave.  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19134  
More Information:  
215- 739 - 4831  
or www.phillylac.org

## November 13, 2004

Mid America District  
Annual Mass for  
Deceased Members  
Chapel of Holy Family Villa  
Lemont, IL  
Council 157  
will be host council  
www.knightsof lithuania.com

## Nov. 14 & Nov. 28, 2004

Roman Catholic Mass in Lithuanian  
12:30 PM  
Our Lady of Guadalupe Chapel

55th Ave (one block south of  
Glendale Ave), Glendale, AZ  
Mass will be followed by  
refreshments and fellowship.  
kvedaras@earthlink.net or  
www.lithaz.org

## November 16, 2004

Amber Roots Club at 7 PM  
Jeopardy  
Test your knowledge of Lithuania  
All meetings are conducted in  
English  
Lithuanian Music Hall  
2715 E. Allegheny Ave.  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19134  
For information contact  
Milliemarks@aol.com

## November 20 - 21, 2004

Annual Christmas Bazaar  
Saturday - Noon to 7 PM  
Sunday - 8:30 AM to 1 PM  
St. George Church  
3580 Salmon St  
Philadelphia, PA 19134  
For information:  
215- 739- 3102

## November 26- 28, 2004

Lithuanian Theater Festival  
Lithuanian Youth Center  
5620 S. Claremont  
Chicago, IL 60565  
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