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october 2006

LITHUANIAN AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

*Letter from the Editor*

*I would like to start by thanking all the writers. Although I don't always say it each month, you know how grateful I am to you. In recent months more and more readers have been sending me articles from their local papers when they read something of interest about someone of Lithuanian descent. I always contact the papers to ask for permission to reprint the article. Again, thank you. Having your participation in BRIDGES is like having "eyes" all over the country.*

*St. George parishioners in Shenandoah, PA are moving full force ahead in trying to have their beloved church repaired and reopened. They are selling T-shirts and Christmas ornaments to help defray their costs. In the next issue of BRIDGES I will have an address for you to contact if you wish to purchase a shirt or an ornament.*

*I am sad to say that in this issue you will be reading about another Lithuanian parish that has been given a closing warning. This time it is Our Lady of Vilnius in New York. Again, the reasons given for closures are expensive repairs. I find it difficult to understand how these churches, when they send letters to the dioceses that desperate repairs are needed, do not get responses to their letters, often for several years. Imagine what would happen to our homes if we put off an urgent repair for several years. We will keep you posted on what is happening in both cases.*

*But on a happier note, the bell that called people to Mass for more than eighty years in St. Casimir's Church in Kansas City, Kansas now has a permanent home in the Wyandotte County Museum.*

*You will find as the fall season approaches many events are listed on the calendar. If you live in an area that has a Lithuanian organization, please try to attend. I try to create the calendar for a three month period and I am asking the organizations to please send me your dates as early as possible. Very often I receive a notice of an event one or two weeks before it happens. By that time BRIDGES has already been printed and mailed to people's homes.*

*I'm still helping you with your Christmas shopping and you can see more books listed as well as Christmas tree ornaments. Please keep in mind the different charities that never take a break from helping people.*

*Again, thank you for reading BRIDGES and I hope you enjoy this issue.*

  
Jeanne Shalna Dorr



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\*Cover: Front and back illustrations of the new "50 LITAS" commemorative coin.

## Congratulations



*Congratulations to Regina Narusis who was recently elected President of the World Lithuanian Community, Inc. by the XII World Lithuanian Congress in Lithuania. Her term is for three years. The Congress consisted of 144 members from 36 countries. Duties of the World Lithuanian Community are to support the independent nation of Lithuania and its democratically elected government, decide common matters and coordinate matters between the different country communities; search for ways to preserve our Lithuanian heritage; coordinate the cultural and educational efforts of the Communities. The World Lithuanian Community consists of a twelve member board including Mrs. Narusis.*

*Mrs. Narusis is a member of the newly elected LAC National Board of Directors and past two term Chairman of the LAC National Board of Directors. She is an attorney at law.*



*John A. Cloud  
Ambassador, Lithuania*

## New US Ambassador arrives in Lithuania

Vilnius (ELTA) - Former US Ambassador Stephen D. Mull will be replaced by John A. Cloud. The newly appointed ambassador arrived in Lithuania on Thursday.

On August 17, the new ambassador will present his credentials to President Valdas Adamkus.

Mull is taking another position at the US Department of State.

The US Senate appointed Cloud the ambassador to Lithuania on 26 May 2006. He took his oath of office before US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on July 18.

Cloud previously served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the United States Embassy in Berlin. He served as Charge d'Affaires ad interim at the embassy in Berlin from February 28, 2005 to September 2, 2005.

Cloud served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for International Economic Affairs on the National Security Council staff from 2001 to 2003.

The US diplomat was Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Mission to the European Union from 1999 to 2001. From 1996 to 1999, he served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the American Embassy in Warsaw, Poland.

From 1991 to 1995, Cloud was the Economic Counselor at the American Embassy in Bonn, Germany. He served at the State Department from 1988 to 1991 and had earlier assignments in Mexico City and Warsaw.

The official has received the State Department's Superior Honor Award three times.

Cloud received his B.A. from the University of Connecticut in 1975, and a Masters in International Affairs from George Washington University in 1977. He is married and has two children.

Delivered by Information Center for Homecoming Lithuanians.





BANK OF LITHUANIA

CASH DEPARTMENT

ON DECLARING LEGAL TENDER AND THE ISSUE OF THE 50 LITAS COMMEMORATIVE  
COIN MARKING THE UPRISING OF 1831 AND THE 200TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF  
EMILIJA PLIATERYTE, A HERO OF THE UPRISING

1 September 2006 No. 10.48.-1002-1704

Vilnius

We hereby inform you that, on the decision of the Board of the Bank of Lithuania, a new 50 litas commemorative coin of the Republic of Lithuania marking the Uprising of 1831 and the 200th Birth Anniversary of Emilija Pliateryte, a Hero of the Uprising will be launched on 12 September 2006.

The 50 litas coin is made of silver (Ag 925), quality proof, diameter 38.61 mm, weight 28.28 g. The coin has a mirror surface with mat relief. The mintage of the coin is 2,500 pieces.

The obverse of the coin bears the state emblem Vytis in a shield. A fragment of the uprising is incorporated in the background of the state emblem. The obverse is surrounded by the inscriptions LIETUVA and 50 LITU. The logo of UAB Lithuanian Mint is incorporated on the left of the state emblem and the year 2006 on the right.

A portrait of Emilija Pliateryte, a hero of the uprising, is shown on the reverse of the coin with the years 1806-1831 on the left of the portrait. At the top, the inscription EMILIJA PLIATERYTĀ is arranged in a semi-circle.

The edge of the coin bears the inscription 1831 \* SUKILIMAS (1831\*UPRISING).

The coin was designed by Giedrius Paulauskis.

The coins were minted at the Lithuanian Mint.

The price of the 50 litas coin is LTL 110 (EUR 31.86)

(in a display box) and

LTL 90 (EUR 26.07) (without a box), including VAT.

Please look at the illustrations of the coin.

For further information please see the website of the Bank of Lithuania at [www.lb.lt](http://www.lb.lt).

Yours faithfully,

Bronislovas Degutis

Deputy Director

Head of Currency Production Division

Contact person: Audronė Gruodytė,  
tel.: +370 5 2680 316, fax: +370 5 2680 314

*Editor's Note: In the September 2005 issue of BRIDGES we printed an article by Henry Gaidis entitled "Emily." Henry has sent an update about the new coin in Lithuania honoring EMILIJA PLIATERYTE.*

*The article was well received by the readers and I wish to thank him for the update.*



Excerpt from  
Death of a Colonel

*And our commander, though in soldier's uniform,  
Was she not the maid the fairest of face?  
The fairest of form? Ah, she was the fairest:  
Hero maiden, Lithuania's daughter,  
Leader of the Insurrection - Emilia Plater!  
Adam Mickiewicz*



## The Two Crowns....

The image of the Blessed Mother at the Gate of Dawn is an inspiration to all who struggle in the hardships of life. Her merciful love is expressed by the beautiful legend of her two crowns.

The legend tells the story that centuries ago a man, overwhelmed by life's miseries, came to the altar of "Aušros Vartai," knelt down and began to pray. His prayers for Mary's motherly help led to tears, then to anger. He began to blame Mary for his problems. He had lost his job and because he could not find work was unable to provide for the needs of his family. Falling into poverty he felt hopeless. In despair he cried out to Mary... "How could you let this happen to me? You are the Mother of Mercy and I feel abandoned and without any hope!"

The loving ears of Mary heard his sobs and her heart was moved to help the poor man in a most powerful way. She reached up and removed the crown from her head. She gave it to the man with the instruction to take it and sell it. This would provide him with the money he needed and change his predicament in a most miraculous way! The man did as Mary had requested and her promise was fulfilled. He got money from the sale of the crown, found employment, and everything in his life changed for the better!

His wife, however, was overwhelmed by the drastic changes that now fell into their miserable life. She first asked, then eventually began to hound her husband for an explanation... how could everything have changed so easily and quickly? Worn out by the nagging questions, he finally broke down and told his wife the whole story. How the Blessed Mother had given him the crown and promised her help. His wife became furious with her husband and asked how he could have possibly taken the crown off the head of the Mother of God! It would have been better had they lived and died in poverty than taken the crown

of Our Lady.

Filled with remorse the couple decided they would have another crown made by the best goldsmith in Vilnius to replace the crown the man had taken from the hands of Our Lady. After months of artistic workmanship, the crown was ready to be placed back on the head of the picture. With trembling hands the husband and wife climbed the steps to the chapel of Aušros Vartai carrying the beautiful new crown. Ready to ask Mary's forgiveness, they came before the picture and, gazing at the picture, were stunned to see the original crown given to the poor man was back on Mary's head! Recognizing the miracle, they now looked down to the crown they held in their hands and wondered what to do with it. Mary, gently tipped her head so that the crown they had brought to her could be easily placed on top of the original.

And so, as we look upon the picture of the Mother of Mercy at Aušros Vartai, we see the two crowns which show us that Mary is truly the Queen of heaven and earth. The original crown which miraculously reappeared symbolizes the Queen ship of Mary in Heaven and the crown which the angels brought back to her head. The other crown shows that Mary is also the Queen of earth by the crown placed on her head by her grateful children in this valley of tears.

Rev. Peter Burkauskas Pastor of  
St. Andrew's and St. Casimir's Parish, Philadelphia, PA  
\*Art by Sister M. Mercedes SSC



## Lady of Vilnius and 'Pretzels' and 'Provolone' may lose home

Volume 76, Number 14  
August 23-29, 2006

By Lincoln Anderson

Villager photo by  
Elissa Bogos

In the latest threatened Downtown church closing, the Catholic Archdiocese of New York is planning to shutter Our Lady of Vilnius, a Lithuanian church on Broome St. in Hudson Square.

Hard by the entrance to the Holland Tunnel, the small, yellow-brick, 101-year-old church is still



*Our Lady of Vilnius is a small church with a yellow-brick facade. Its sanctuary can seat about 175 people.*

used by Lithuanians from around the metropolitan area who gather there once or twice a month. A local chapter of the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic fraternal order, also meets there five days a week; old-timers with colorful nicknames like "Frankie Pretzels" and "Joe Provolone," they play gin rummy, drink coffee and shoot the breeze. Weekday lunchtime Masses draw a diverse crowd of office workers from the surrounding neighborhood. Local residents, including some Portuguese from across Varick St., attend Mass on weekends.

Four years ago, however, during a winter of extreme temperature fluctuations of freezing and thawing, some of the four trusses supporting the church's roof cracked. Engineers assessed the trusses and determined that, if not bolstered with steel cables, the roof was at risk of collapse. For the last three and a half years, the church sanctuary has been closed – wedged between the pews is a three-story scaffolding supporting the ceiling – and services and functions have been held in the basement.

Last Thursday, after conducting the noon Mass, Father Eugene Sawicki, the church's cigar-smoking pastor, told of how the week before he was summoned by Edward Cardinal Egan to the archdiocese's Midtown headquarters. The meeting came about after two lay trustees and the parish council chairperson wrote the cardinal in June asking why their letter to him from two years ago about the roof still had not been answered.

Sawicki said he had a hunch what he would hear when he entered the cardinal's office. Egan was there, along with his secretary and the head of the archdiocese's real estate division.

"He said, 'We're going to close the church,'" Sawicki said the cardinal told him. I said, "That's a mistake."

"He outlined why they wanted to do it. He said it's not imminent. He said he's not going to close it tomorrow. He said he has never sold any property."

Since the roof problem was discovered, Our Lady of Vilnius has asked for help but received little.

"Two and a half years ago, we reported it, and they've done nothing, other than put in a de-icer," Zawicki said of the roof problem. "Fifteen-twenty thousand (dollars), it's nothing to put in cables. Removing the ceiling would take the weight off the roof. A new slanted ceiling could be put in cheaply. This has to be done before the next snowfall, because the engineers say the roof can't handle a heavy snowfall."

Speaking last week, Joseph Zwilling, an archdiocese spokesperson, said he believed a final decision had been made to close Our Lady of Vilnius but that no date for the last Mass had been set.

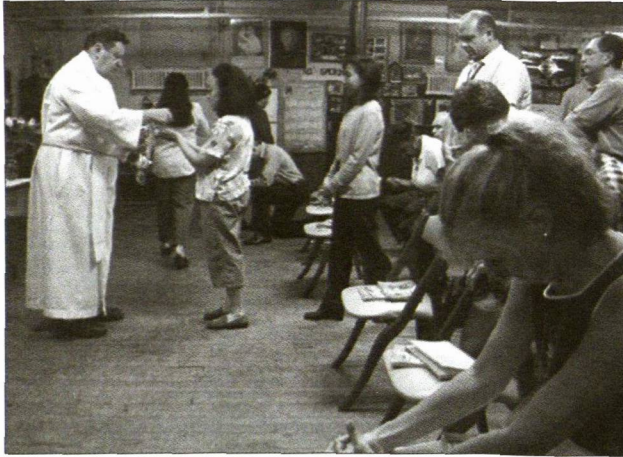
"The church has been in poor physical condition and needing a lot of repairs," Zwilling said. "There is a Lithuanian congregation in Brooklyn, I believe, that the people could attend. My understanding is that Mass is not celebrated there in Lithuanian and has not been for some time," he said of Our Lady of Vilnius.

Our Lady of Vilnius is a national – not a territorial – parish, Zwilling noted, meaning it was established to meet the language and cultural needs of immigrants.

"I was not aware there that there was a Knights of Columbus chapter there," he noted of the church. "I am sure there would be another church that would welcome them."

Hudson Square is currently one of the city's hottest areas for luxury residential development, with new glass-and-steel buildings sprouting up all over. Asked if the archdiocese plans to sell Our Lady of Vilnius, Zwilling said. "Nobody said anything about selling the church, so let's not get ahead of ourselves. Nothing has been ruled in or out at this point. Our first preference is always to find a Catholic use for it."





*Father Eugene Sawicki giving communion at Our Lady of Vilnius Church during a weekday Mass.*

"It's also not a very attractive location – right by the tunnel," he added.

It was construction of the tunnel, which opened in November 1927, that uprooted a Lithuanian community – no trace of which remains today – that was once near the church.

Joy McAleer, Our Lady of Vilnius's secretary, said an elderly Lithuanian man named Anton Dededinas who used to attend the church as a child told her a few months ago about the former community. He said when the tunnel was built, the west side of Varick St, where Lithuanians lived in one-family houses, was destroyed, while the east side of Varick, where there were Italians, was spared. One day shortly after telling her this, Dededinas appeared at the church and it was evident he'd succumbed to Alzheimer's. McAleer thinks he's now in a nursing home.

#### Waterfront roots

Our Lady of Vilnius's first pastor, who helped build the church, was Father Shistokasa, a longshoreman who worked the docks at night and ministered by day.

The current pastor, Father Zawicki, a former firefighter, dispenses down-to-earth wisdom at his Masses. Last Thursday, he counseled the worshippers to enjoy the summer weather and put off deep thinking for a while. Let go and have a whiskey if you want, he offered; share some quality time with a friend.

Yet, while he holds daily Masses in the church's basement, without use of the church proper, he's constrained from being able to do baptisms, weddings and funeral Masses. The basement isn't appropriate for any of these, not to mention the fact that a coffin can't fit through the basement door, he noted. Last Friday, Sawicki conducted a funeral Mass for

Mary Parvin, who ran the Fourth Estate magazine and coffee shop on Hudson St. in Tribeca – but he had to do it at St. Joseph's Church in the Village.

"Who wants to be mourned in a gym hall/dance floor?" Zawicki said of Our Lady of Vilnius's basement. Zawicki hears confession in closets, hallways, stairwells or on the street.

Despite Zwilling's statement to the contrary, Zawicki says he still does do Sunday Masses in Lithuanian.

The father and local Lithuanian leaders all say the church in Maspeth that the archdiocese is suggesting they use is so inconvenient the Lithuanians won't go there.

Laima Hood, chairperson of the New York chapter of the Lithuanian Union, a national organization, said Our Lady of Vilnius is the chapter's only Manhattan location. Events at the church used to see poetry readings and children's parties but fell off after the church was closed because of the roof problem. Having to hold Mass downstairs is cramping use of the space for other activities, she said. One hundred to 200 Lithuanians still use the church once to twice a month, she said.

"The organ was restored just before the roof collapse," Hood added. "We were planning to have organ concerts – and the church has very good acoustics. And because of the roof we couldn't celebrate the 100th anniversary in 2005.

"The Maspeth one is difficult to get to if you don't have a car. And it's a very restricted area, so there's not much parking," she said of the Transfiguration Church. Plus, she added, that church is used by other groups at night, as opposed to Our Lady of Vilnius.

Jovita Sleder, president of Council 12 of the Knights of Lithuania, said Maspeth is just too far for some members from New Jersey or Connecticut to travel.

"If we lose the church, I just don't know where we're going to go," said Sleder, who lives in Bushwick, where Lithuanians settled after World War II. Sleder said she'd also like to know what happened to the insurance money that church members paid, which could be used to repair the roof.

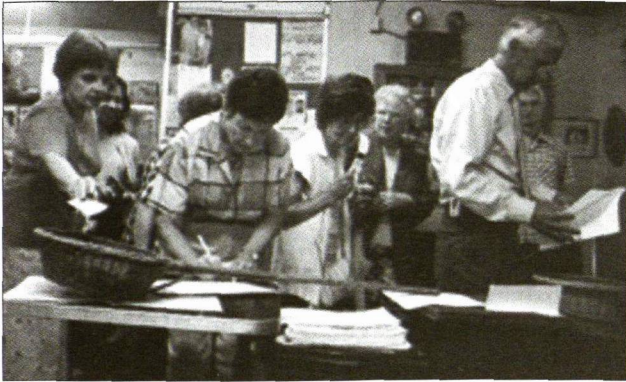
"Apparently, the money was given to the archdiocese and never released," she said.

Zwilling was out of the office until Thursday and couldn't be reached for comment regarding the whereabouts of the insurance money.

#### Broome St. knights

While Father Sawicki is the center of the church's spirituality, the Knights of Columbus are its color





*Church members offer contributions and sign a petition to prove that Our Lady of Vilnius is being actively used for Masses.*

and soul. Known as the Knickerbocker Council 221, one of the country's oldest Knights of Columbus chapters, they celebrated their centennial in 1997. They are – by their reckoning – the only active knights group in Lower Manhattan between 14th St. and the Battery. The clubhouse has moved around over the years, starting out in Hell's Kitchen.

Ranging in age from their 60s to 80s, these men all grew up in the area before the neighborhoods were dubbed Soho and Hudson Square. Many of them are war veterans. Many attended St. Alphonsus School on Thompson St., which was connected to St. Alphonsus Church, both of which were demolished in the 1980s and later replaced by the Soho Grand hotel.

All of the guys at Our Lady of Vilnius are third-degree knights, according to Francis Healy, the chapter's grand knight. He said he couldn't divulge the tests taken to reach higher levels, noting, "It's supposed to be a secret organization."

A former Teamster, Healy, 80, grew up on Renwick St. in a family of 10 kids. He now lives at Greenwich and Canal Sts.

"I didn't go far," he quipped.

Other regulars include Edmund De Pol, who used to work in a machine shop; Joe "Joe Provolone" Donnarumma, who used to work at World of Cheese on Chambers St., and his Maltese, Noel – "she watches me lose at cards," he joked – Joe Pantuliano, a former First Precinct cop; Jack "John" Cooke and "Frankie Pretzels."

"We all have nicknames," noted De Pol, 77. " 'Eddy Cake' they call me because I buy the cake."

"Love it," said Donnarumma, 68, of the knights' Broome St. church clubhouse. "We're brothers, brother knights. The last of a dying breed, the last of an old-time neighborhood."

In that old-time neighborhood, the waterfront loomed large. Cooke, 73, who lives in Independence Plaza in Tribeca, used to work the docks between Canal and 14th Sts. He was dock boss at Pier 45 – today known as the Christopher St. Pier – when the Norwegian-American Line operated there. Back then, the docks were rough, but it wasn't as bad as depicted in "On the Waterfront," he said.

"It wasn't all corruption," he said. "There were a million laughs and the work got done.... There were guys out there who'd eat you alive – I held my own."

Pier 40, the former Holland America Line pier at W. Houston St., was always a longshoremen's favorite because it meant free Heinekens – an extra 3 percent to 5 percent of beer was included in the shipments to account for breakage.

The knights are happy to be at the church, and the church is happy to have them. They help set up for the daily Mass and pitch in with repairs.

"They do a lot of work in the church – cleaning," said secretary McAleer. "The other day, Pretzels was cleaning everything up – the drains in the backyard."

" 'Pretzels,' they all have nicknames – It's like 'The Sopranos' over there," quipped Father Sawicki.

Both church and knights alike say they're seeing a lot of new residents in the area nowadays, including women pushing baby carriages. Former office space and commercial lofts are being converted to residences and the population is booming. All these new neighbors will need someplace to pray.

"Trump is coming," noted Sawicki.

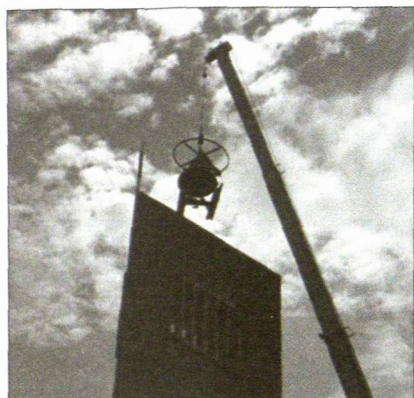
He was referring to the 45-story, condo-hotel planned by Donald Trump on Spring St. between Varick St. and Sixth Ave.

The Knights don't know where they'd go if Our Lady of Vilnius closes. St. Anthony's Church on Sullivan St. – whose pastor is a fourth-degree Knight of Columbus – seemed an option a few years ago, but now its basement is home to a daycare program.

Asked where he'd wind up if the church closed, Healy said, "Sitting in a bar somewhere... feeding the pigeons. If the church closes, we'd be out on the street... But it's not the club we're worried about. It's the church."

Reprinted with permission of "The Villager" with special thanks to Lincoln Anderson and Elissa Bogos.





*Bell being lifted by crane from Christ the King Church on August 3, 2006.*

Our story begins in the 1880's when a small group of Lithuanian citizens settled in the Kansas City, Kansas area and built a community. Our very small (only 150 families) community purchased an old Baptist church and converted it to serve the area Lithuanian families and built the altars, school, and rectory with their own hands. St. Casimir's Catholic Church, with its hand made wooden altar and bell as a centerpiece was named for the patron saint of Lithuania. St. Casimir's served the Lithuanian Community until it was closed in 1947. All of the church's artifacts and holy objects were either disposed of or relocated to other churches. Without a central meeting place for the community, the Lithuanian people dispersed and began to lose touch of their roots and heritage.

Surprisingly, our community did not die. The descendants of those original immigrants under the leadership of cousins Don and Chuck (Kazys) Zemaitis got together in the early 1980's and decided to re-build our community. We now have an active group of Lithuanian Americans who proudly spread the beautiful culture to others in our area.

## Historic Bell Finds a New Home



*The bell being transported to the Wyandotte County Museum, pictured with it are: Don Zemaitis, past president of KC Lithuanian Community with Al Purduski, both parishioners of the former St. Casimir's Church.*

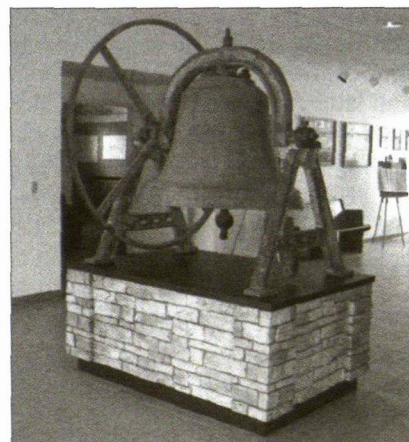
One of the few parts of St. Casimir's church to survive today is the bell. The names of the families who scrimped and saved to pay for it were inscribed on the bell. It currently resides at Christ the King church in Kansas City, Kansas. Much to our delight, the Archdiocese gracefully agreed to let our community have the bell back. We looked for a permanent home for the bell, a place where the descendants of the community who toiled to purchase and build the parish of St. Casimir's can see and appreciate it.

The day the bell was removed from Christ the King Church was a happy one for our community. Many of the descendants of the bell's donors were there and cheered. A few tears were shed as we thought of how proud our ancestors would be that we finally got our bell back.

The bell is now permanently relocated at the Wyandotte County Museum in Bonner Springs,

Kansas. It has been placed inside the front entrance to the museum on a custom built platform. The Museum agrees that the bell is an important part of Kansas City's area ethnic history. We plan a formal dedication of the bell on Sunday, November 19, 2006. On that day we'll remember our ancestors who worked so hard to build a community and celebrate the fact that we are still here, still together, and still very proud to be Lithuanian.

*Sally Zemaityte Dannov  
President, Lithuanian  
Community of Kansas City*



*The bell is on display at the Wyandotte County Museum.*

*Editor's note: The bell is inscribed in 3 languages, measures 4 ft. in diameter and weighs approximately a half ton. If you are unable to attend the dedication on November 19, please try to visit the bell at another time with your family. It is an opportunity for families to see and experience a part of their heritage.*



# KNIGHTS OF LITHUANIA 93rd ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

## "TEAM=

### Together Everyone Achieves More"

The Knights of Lithuania is a national Roman Catholic organization consisting of men and women of Lithuanian ancestry. Its motto is- "For God and Country." The Knights of Lithuania's primary focus is to foster, maintain and nurture an appreciation of the Lithuanian language, customs, traditions and culture among its members. It further stresses the importance of the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. The Knights are actively involved in programs to assist their less fortunate brothers and sisters

in Lithuania. There are four charity groups within the organization: Aid to Lithuania, Inc., K of L Foundation, St. Casimir's Guild, and Our Lady of Siluva Fund.

nearly 3,000 active members. A National Convention is held annually at different state sites. The Knights of Lithuania's Supreme Council hosted to the 2006 convention.



*Delegates of the 93rd National Convention after Mass at Mary, Queen of the Universe Shrine.*

August 03-06, 2006, the executive Board of the Knights of Lithuania, the Supreme Council, hosted the 93rd annual convention; this year's site was the magical city of

day's sessions and meetings, Mass was celebrated.

### Pre-Convention Trip - Wednesday, August 02, 2006

For the delegates who arrive early to the conventions, a pre-convention tour is held. This year, the participants traveled to see the "Holy Land Experience." It is a "living Biblical museum" that opened in 2001. It is a development of Zion's Hope, a non-

for-profit, non-denominational Christian ministry and educational organization in Orlando, FL. This unique 15 acre museum authentically recreates the city of Jerusalem during the time frame of 1450 BC and AD 66 (through the Old and New Testaments). We traveled through time as we entered the Holy Land Experience through the Roman arched City Gate (modeled after the city gates of ancient Jerusalem). We visited the Scriptorium: Center of Biblical Antiquities that showcases the priceless Van Kampen Collection of rare artifacts, some of which are 4,200 years old. The Calvary Garden Tomb is a peaceful, quiet place for meditation and reflection. We walked through the streets of Rome, interacted with the Roman soldiers, locals and colorful street vendors.

### August 03, 2006, Thursday

The opening 93rd National Convention Mass was at Our Lady, Queen of the Universe Shrine. Several interesting facts about Our Lady, Queen of the Universe Shrine: the shrine was built by donations received from tourists;



*2006-2007 K of L Supreme Council.*

The Knights of Lithuania organization was founded by Mykolas Norkunas in 1913, in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Currently there are 51 councils in the United States with

Orlando, Florida. Over 125 delegates, clergy, guests and youth converged to participate in the 4 day meetings, cultural activities and banquet celebration. Prior to each



# knights of lithuania

Pope John Paul II declared the Shrine as a "house of pilgrimage;" it was dedicated on August 22, 1993. It includes: a Rosary Garden, Blessed Sacrament Chapel, Outdoor Mother and Child Chapel, Chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The opening Mass was celebrated by the Knights of Lithuania's Supreme Council spiritual advisor Monsignor Rev. dr. Joseph Anderlonis, Rev. Anthony Markus of Chicago, IL, Rev. Tomas Karanaukas of Los Angeles, CA and deacon Vitas Paskauskas of Chicago, IL. The theme for this year's convention- "Together We Achieve More (TEAM)"

The first convention session was held at the hotel (as were all subsequent sessions). The Supreme Council Officers processed into the meeting room and



*Honorary members during the banquet. The new honorees are Theresa Stvalia and Walter Svekla (in center). Currently there are 37 honoree members living.*

The evening get-together was held at the Walt Disney World Polynesian Resort where we were entertained at the open air theater Spirit of Aloha dinner show. The audience could hardly sit still and many participated in the fun.

**August 04, 2006, Friday**

During the second plenary session, guest speaker Sister Margaret Petcavage of the

to be a housekeeper for her brother, Anthony, who was a priest. It was during her stay in the US that Casimira was exposed to Sisters for the first time and she was attracted to a religious life. She returned to Lithuania in 1902, but she longed to become a religious in order to help her fellow Lithuanians in the US concerning matters of faith. Casimira studied in Switzerland in preparation for the establishment of the American Congregation of women religious dedicated to teaching the children of Lithuanian immigrants. On August 27, 1907, the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Casimir was founded. Casimira received the name- Sister Maria. In 1913, she was elected the first Superior General and maintained the office until her death. In 1920, Mother Maria traveled to Lithuania where she and four Sisters established the Sisters of St. Casimir (which still exists today).

In addition to education, Mother Maria responded to the need to care for the sick in 1928. In 1937, Sisters were sent to New Mexico to staff schools. Mother Maria planned to send Sisters to Argentina, but this endeavor occurred only after her death. Mother Maria passed away on April 17, 1940 of cancer.

Mother Maria's compassion for the suffering and infirmed moved from hospital work to the care of the elderly. The Sisters rendered counseling, spiritual direction and social work services to neglected/abused children.

By the encouragement of the Cardinals in the Chicago area, the Beatification Cause of



*K of L National President Elena Nakrosis (center) with the organizations ancillary charities presidents. L from R: Regina Juska-Sroba, Aid to Lithuania, Ann Klizas-Wargo, HM-St. Casimir Guild, Elinor Sluzas, HM-Our lady of Siluva, Irene Ozalis K of L Foundation.*

introduced. The National, Lithuanian and K of L Anthems were sung. K of National President Agnes Mickunas, HM, opened the convention and gave a comprehensive state of the organization report. Greetings from organizations and individuals were read. Among the numerous (21) greetings received were those from President of the US George W. Bush, Cardinal Audrys J. Backis, Archbishop of Vilnius and the former US ambassador to Lithuania in Washington Vygaudas Usackas.

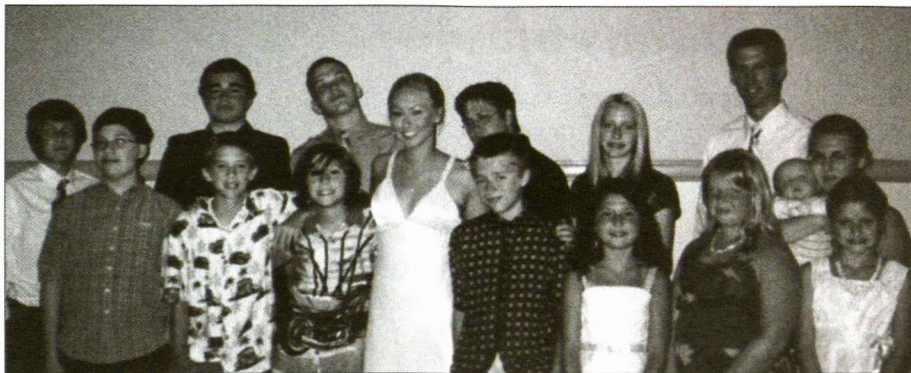
Sisters of St. Casimir in Chicago, IL, gave a biographical perspective about the legacy of Mother Maria Kaupas, Foundress of the Sister of St. Casimir. It should be noted that in 2007 the Sisters of St. Casimir will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of their order. Casimira Kaupas (the future Mother Maria was born in 1880, in the village of Gudeliai in Lithuania. She was born the fifth in a sibling group of 11 children. In 1897, she came to the US (Scranton, PA)



Mother Maria Kaupas began and is continued presently. Rome has declared Mother Maria as a "Servant of God" in 1986. In 1999, her holy remains were exhumed and transported to the Motherhouse chapel awaiting the declaration of her "beatification."

#### August 05, 2006, Saturday

The organization's ancillary groups- Aid to Lithuania, Inc., Foundation, St. Casimir's Guild and Our Lady of Siluva fund, presidents gave updates about the past fiscal year's activities and projects. Andreja Deksnis, the organization's third vice-president (working with the junior/youth members), gave a power



*Knights of Lithuania juniors during the closing banquet. In the center is 3rd Vice-President Andreja Deksnis.*

Council 90, Kearny, NJ, was unanimously elected as president to lead the K of L organization. The formal sessions were concluded.

#### Banquet

After every K of L National Convention completes the working sessions and elects a new Supreme Council for the next year, a celebratory banquet is held. So, too, the 93<sup>rd</sup> National Convention celebrated with a formal banquet. Approximately 130 delegates, guests and family participated. The best for the evening was Joseph Stiklius, Trustee and convention co-chair.

After a delicious dinner, Bernice Aviza, representing the K of L Scholarship committee, presented this year's scholarship monetary awards to: Meredith Domalakes, C-144, Anthracite, PA -\$2,000.00; Vilija Bizinkauskas, C-1, Brockton and Erin Petkus, C-96, Dayton, OH, each received \$1,750.00; Keith Westerling, C-136, Hudson-Mohawk, NY and James Ditsin, C-72, Binghamton, NY, were both awarded \$1,250.00 each; and repeat recipients of \$500 each was awarded to Ericka Fryburg, C-103, Providence, RI, and Adam Westerling, C-136, Hudson-Mohawk, NY.

Honorary Membership Chair, Elinor

Sluzas, HM, announced the 2006 honorary members- Teresa Strolia, C-157, Lemont, IL and Walter Svekla, C-3, Philadelphia, PA, both who have been active members in the organization for 30 + years.

The formal portion of the banquet closed with words from the outgoing K of L president Agnes Mickunas. The newly elected president Elena Nakrosis thanked the delegates for electing her. Musical entertainment for dancing livened the rest of the evening.

#### August 06, 2006, Sunday

The closing Mass was concelebrated at the Mary, Queen of the Universe Shrine by Msgr. dr. J. Anderlonis, Msgr. A. Bartkus, Rev. A. Markus and deacon Vitas Paskauskas.

Prior to the celebration of the Mass, the organization's members who earned their 4th degrees gave the oath and received their medals. The Supreme Council elect gave their oath of office.

The 2006, National Convention and sessions were productive and fruitful. It was good to see and nurture special friendships of members known for many years and establish new acquaintances and contacts. It was a special time of sharing and catching up.

The 94th National Convention will be hosted by the Council 1 from August 1- 5, 2007 in Brockton, MA. Hope to see everyone there!

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

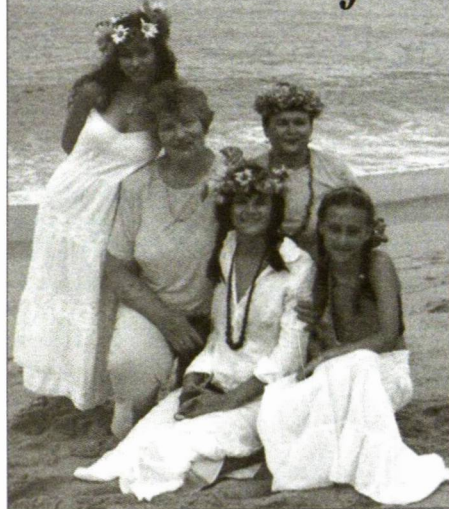


*K of L post presidents L to R: Ann Klizas-Wargo, HM, Elena Nakrosis, new and current president, Agnes Mickunas, HM, Fran Petkus HM, and Robert A Martin.*

point presentation about the junior K of L member's activities. The junior knights had an excursion to the Walt Disney Magic Kingdom This year 17 junior members participated in the National Convention. The youth were busy and active during the convention. They held a fund-raiser by selling raffle tickets for a beautifully dressed Lithuanian doll, hand crocheted Mickey Mouse afghan, some tee shirts and a day pass to an amusement park. The money received ( \$650) would be forwarded to the Lithuanian Children's Relief, Inc. for ongoing projects. Elections of the new 2006-07, Supreme Council were held. Elena Nakrosis,



## Lithuanians of Cape Cod Celebrate Mid-Summerfest



*Maidens and women on the beach Nida Janulaitytė (front) Deimantė Vilcinskaitė, Bronė Jaloveckienė, Angelė Danicevicienė and Kristina Ralkova.*

It is not at all surprising that Joninės (the feast of St. John) has become one of the major Lithuanian festivals. While the clover blooms white and the oak leaves are contrastingly dark green, songs echo in the night making it very memorable.

Various were the ways and means that made us scatter far from our homeland, Lithuania and its native pastures. Where ever we are and what ever is our daily reality, it is exceedingly pleasant to gather and enjoy that which bonds us – for we all are the same children of Lithuania.

Cape Cod Lithuanian Community is extremely pleased to have wonderful, active and never tired, young ladies, such as Jurgita Jonytytė, Kristina Ralkova, and Deimantė Vilcinskaitė. They generously gave of their time and put out much effort to gather together people and create a pleasant festival.

The mid summer evening of July 15<sup>th</sup> at Marconi Beach with clear skies and



*"Vaidelutes" maidens on the beach.*

refreshing ocean waves lapping the shore, was ideal for pagan rituals. Arriving guests were greeted by young maidens dressed in white with colorful flower wreaths on their heads. The young men and others carried wood logs for the bonfire. Groups of people chatted gathering around the fire. Jurgita reminded us that St John's feast is full of miracles. Some proclaim that the flames of the bonfire keep evil spirits and bad luck at bay. Water also has magical powers. It was thought that those who bathed on that eve would become younger and wiser. Many believed that the dew drops of that eve were symbols of beauty and good health. There was much singing and lots of group dancing in circles. The young whitely clad maidens strung blueberries on long reeds, while the young menfolk seriously competed in playing volleyball. There were Johns in attendance, and they with help of others, executed interesting sand sculptures. Castles sprung from the sand, one creation was a lovely lady, and then another work of art, an octopus with a cherry smile.

Since the feast of St. Anne was also approaching, Ona ( Anne) Kuprienė, a visitor from Lithuania was also honored with the Johns. Kristina and Deimantė placed wreaths from oak leaves on John Bielkevicius and Sean (Shawn-Irish John) Cabral and Ona.

Little Johnny Braunfeld was given an amber whistle. Lithuanian songs engulfed Marconi Beach and the sand was kicked up by exuberant dancers. Young girls screamed gleefully, trying to throw their wreaths on a pole. It is believed that by how many times the wreath gets on the pole in so many years the young maiden will wed. Even the young men were affected and joined in by catching wreaths and attempting to help the girls. Games of tug of war with a strong rope followed. There was a lottery and some leaped over the bonfire as more cautious spectators applauded. The luckiest participant was Max (Mindaugas Maksimavicius) who went home not only in a good mood, but also with the coveted fern blossom. They say that the one who finds the fern blossom becomes clairvoyant.... that remains to be seen.

No one felt tired going home and walking on the now cool sand, all were full of joy for it was as if they had waded through childhood meadows and felt the refreshing dew blending with the song of the night and the blessings of St. John's feast. This pleasant memory will be cherished as we submerge into our daily routines for the echoes of Lithuanian songs and the vision of flying sparks from the bonfire will not fade

*Written in Lithuanian by Neria Kupryte-Hopkins  
Translated by Aurelia Nijole Borges*





## Basketball without Borders in Lithuania

NBA All-Star and Cleveland “Cavaliers” center Žydrūnas Ilgauskas, New Orleans/Oklahoma

Marčiulionis Basketball Academy on Saturday, July 1 and focused on encouraging the children to lead active, healthy and drug-free life.

City “Hornets” guard Arvydas Macijauskas and former Chicago “Bulls”, now Washington “Wizards” forward Darius Songaila as well as his colleague by his position in Denver “Nuggets” Linas Kleiza, all natives of Lithuania, have lead a group of 7 NBA players and 4 of this American professional basketball league’s coaches as camp tutors for “Basketball Without Borders – Europe”. The program, started by the National Basketball Association in 2001, is an international instructional camp for young people that also promotes friendship, healthy living and education with an emphasis on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, features current and former NBA players and team personnel as camp coaches. The young players (ages 18 and under) from 27 countries across Europe were selected by FIBA and the NBA, in conjunction with participating basketball federations, based on their game skills, leadership abilities and dedication to the sport. Held for the first time in the Baltics, Basketball without Borders — Europe this year took place at the first NBA player’s from Lithuania Šarūnas Marčiulionis Basketball Academy in the country’s capital Vilnius on June 30-July 2, 2006. The All-Star Game that was organized July 3rd in the neighboring city of Kaunas, Lithuania’s basketball “cradle” Kauno Sporto Halė (four of Lithuania’s players were selected to participate). In addition to daily seminars for campers and in partnership with the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania as well as the Lithuanian AIDS center, the NBA representatives conducted a “Healthy Lifestyle Clinic” for a few hundred children from several community organizations throughout Lithuania. The clinic was held at the Šarūnas



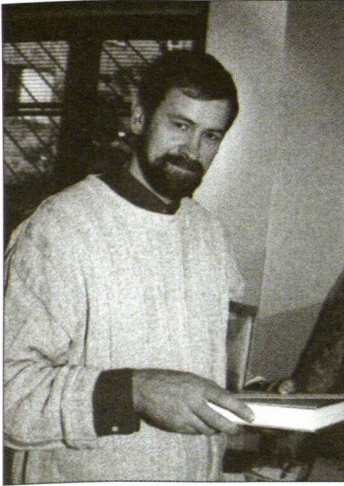
Basketball without Borders Europe tipped off Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> as 50 young participants from 26 countries across Europe arrived in Vilnius, Lithuania. The young players all headed to the Šarūnas Marčiulionis Basketball Academy which happened to be their home for the next four days.

Day two of “Basketball without Borders – Europe” opened with the first of the daily Life Skills Seminars. Philadelphia “76ers” center Samuel Dalembert, who comes from Haiti, was on hand to talk to the campers as well as Russian born Viktor Chriapa from Portland “Trail Blazers” talked about how to make the most of the camp; the professional basketball players also warned them that hard work was the name of the game for the coming few days.

Continued on page 22







## The Jungle Revisited

As required reading in high schools or colleges or simply reading for pleasure many Americans have read Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*. For those of Lithuanian ancestry it was a special book. This book was about us. It didn't matter if we never set foot in Chicago or that we were born years after the book was written. Sinclair chose to write about Jurgis Rudkus, a Lithuanian immigrant who worked in the Chicago stockyards. But why a Lithuanian? Certainly there were other ethnic groups he could have selected.

Did he really attend a Lithuanian wedding and if he did, why did it have such a profound impact on him? Why does a book printed one hundred years ago still resonate with such interest? These and many more questions will be answered by Professor Giedrius Subacius.

Professor Subacius is a linguist by profession and teaches Lithuanian Culture and Lithuanian Linguistics classes at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is the author of *Upton Sinclair: The Lithuanian Jungle*.

I had the privilege of interviewing Professor Subacius and my only regret after the interview is that I live in New Jersey and cannot experience the joy of his classes.

JD: How did you become interested in *The Jungle* and writing a book about it?

GS: I read the book about six or seven years ago because everyone else had read it. Because I am a linguist my general interest was how Sinclair communicated with the Lithuanians in Chicago as very few of the workers spoke English. That led me to think about where he met them to talk about their living and working conditions. Where did he hear the Lithuanian last names? One question led to another. I found that he met the writer, Ernest Poole, who wrote extensively about the Chicago stockyard strike in 1904. Poole wrote a story ostensibly told by fictitious Antanas Kaztauskis about Lithuanian life in Lithuania and Chicago. In fact, Sinclair used some of Poole's data.

JD: What was the biggest challenge you faced in researching the book?

GS: I think the main challenge was to find the saloon where the real-life Lithuanian wedding feast took place. That wedding party had such an emotional impact on Sinclair that two years later he confessed crying when he heard the melody of "In the Old Good Summer Time" that had been extensively played in the wedding feast. The room hosting the wedding feast was described to the smallest detail. I used Sinclair's description as well as old photographs. I also met people who remembered it and described it in the same way. First I had it narrowed down to two buildings. The wedding took place in a room that was thirty feet square, according to Sinclair's description in "The Jungle". The area had almost no lots that were wide enough to have

such a room, except for the saloon (tavern) of Joseph Kuszlejko's at 4558 S. Paulina. I believe I found it.

JD: Is the book "The Jungle" well known in Lithuania and have many translations of it been done into Lithuanian?

GS: The last edition of the book in Lithuania appeared in 1948. In the United States "The Jungle" was published three times in Lithuanian translation. We wanted to read other American books during the occupation and this book was considered to be anti-American propaganda about socialism in America.

JD: What types of students take your Lithuanian Culture class at UIC? What reasons do they give for taking this class? Have they read "The Jungle"?

GS: Approximately 60 students are taking my class. Some of them are Lithuanian Americans. The rest are of many different backgrounds of many different ethnic groups. A cultural diversity course is a requirement of the university and they have many courses to choose from. I always ask them why they selected the Lithuanian course and they often tell me it was recommended to them by their friends and others who had previously taken the course.

I would say that approximately 10% to 20% have read "The Jungle".

JD: Where will your further research take you?

GS: You never know too far in advance because one topic leads to so many new questions. My area of interest is linguistics and I have researched old Lithuanian, history of old Lithuanian grammars and dictionaries, history of orthography, and why the Russians insisted on the use of the Cyrillic alphabet and forbade the use of writing with the Latin



# Transformations in Lithuanian Song: A NEW LITUANUS CD RELEASE

In 1936, the organizers of the first North American Lithuanian Song Festival in Massachusetts, probably never envisioned that seventy years later, a tradition they initiated, would continue into the next millennium. On July 2, 2006, Chicago was the site of the eight Lithuanian Song Festival featuring 52 choirs with 1200 singers from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Lithuania. To commemorate this occasion and to provide a background on the traditions of the Lithuanian song, the editors of the Lithuanian journal *Lituanus* ([www.lituanus.org](http://www.lituanus.org)) published a special issue along with a compact disc entitled *Transformations in Lithuanian Song*. The editor of both of these works is Zita Kelmickaite, a renowned ethnographer with the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theater and head of the folklore ensemble *Ratilio*.

This collection of almost thirty folk songs is representative of various dialects and regions in Lithuania. It includes examples of *sutartinės*, a distinctive and archaic form of Lithuanian singing best described as a polyphonic chant. The lyrics celebrate joyous occasions such as weddings and harvests and immortalize tragic events such as war and repression. Performed by choirs in Lithuania and throughout its diaspora, the musical arrangements range from a traditional classical style to more contemporary experimental adaptations. Several recordings even date back to the 1930s.

alphabet. I also research history of European standard languages.

JD: What is your connection with the Newberry Library in Chicago and what did you find there?

GS: In 1995 I saw there was a rich collection of Lithuanian books and I catalogued them together with Giedra Subaciene (*Newberry Lituanica*, 1998).

Giedrius Subacius is an associate Professor in the Department of Slavic and Baltic Languages and Literatures at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His primary scholarly interests are historical sociolinguistics, development of

standard languages, history of Lithuanian, development of alphabets. He is an editor of annual historical sociolinguistic journal *Archivum Lithuanicum* (since 1999; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag). He has received prizes for his scholarly achievements from various Lithuanian and American organizations (1995, 1999, 2005). Along with the monographs on the history of the nineteenth century Lithuanian (1998, 2001) he has published several critical editions of the nineteenth century Lithuanian linguistic manuscripts.

Editor's note: The book "Upton

## Transformations in Lithuanian Song



Articles in the accompanying issue further explain the development of Lithuanian song. One article focuses just on the *sutartinės* and their place in Lithuanian music. Another one examines the role songs played in the World War II Lithuanian resistance movements especially during the post-war partisan period. Also reviewed is the history of Lithuanian American singing traditions and their major choral events and song festivals during the last century.

*Lituanus*, a quarterly English language journal, published since 1954, covers a wide range of viewpoints and promotes lively discourse about Lithuanian and Baltic history, politics, literature and art. The editor is Violeta Kelertas, head of the endowed Chair of Lithuanian Studies at the University of Illinois Chicago. Detailed information and a freely accessible archive to earlier issues can be found at its website at [www.lituanus.org](http://www.lituanus.org). Subscriptions cost only \$20 per year. As a special introductory offer, new subscribers will also receive the special Lithuanian song issue and accompanying CD while they last. To subscribe, send your name address and check addressed to *Lituanus* at:

### LITUANUS

47 W. Polk St. Suite 100-300  
Chicago IL 60605

*For additional information, as well as the archive of previous issues visit the website at [www.lituanus.org](http://www.lituanus.org)*

Snclair": The Lithuanian Jungle, Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2006 is approximately 120 pages and can be purchased primarily through the Internet at such places as Amazon.com. It would be of special interest to those interested in sociology or the history of Lithuanian immigration to America.

*Jeanne Dorr in interview with  
Prof. Giedrius Subacius*

*I would like to thank Ramune Kubilius for "acquainting" me with the author. A very special thank you to Dr. Subacius for the very long telephone conversation, the many emails and the hours he spent in helping me with this interview.*



# THE RED CUSHION

My father's cousin Teodora (1899-1987) and her elder brother Tadas Girvickas came to America in 1912, forced out by the harsh and hopeless conditions on farms in Lithuania. Teodora (Aunt Dorothy, as we called her) started her new life in a glue factory in Idaho. She was thirteen years old, tiny for her age, so to get work, she had to pass for much older. As she told the story, her brother dressed her in outlandish clothes, applied some garish make-up, and apparently "fooled" the foreman into believing that she was 16! She slaved like an adult, 12 hours a day, usually seven days a week, sleeping in her brother's bed at night while he worked the night shift – a widespread custom at that time. But she survived. Eventually, Tadas married, and they all moved to Seattle. Aunt Dorothy, the vivacious, petite, funny, good-hearted, and very Lithuanian woman (to the end she retained her flawless Lithuanian), never was able to rise beyond hard, menial jobs. In time she married Fred Halam and they bought a house "way out" on Beacon Hill. Her brother and his family, however, returned to Lithuania in the 1930s where he developed a model farm and prospered.

When my parents landed in Los Angeles in 1950, Aunt Dorothy's initial reaction to us could be described as almost hostile. As she explained some years later, she could not understand why we had left the "workers' paradise." My own family settled in Seattle in 1968 and over time we did develop an affectionate relationship with her.

In Aunt Dorothy's Beacon Hill home, on her couch she proudly displayed a Lithuanian cushion – colorful, unique, hand-woven in Lithuanian designs. As she told us with a smile, it had been a gift from relatives when she visited her home country in 1958. She delighted in telling the story of that extraordinary return, years before it became much more routine to get a Soviet visa and penetrate the Iron Curtain. She would regale us with how she "lectured" her Lithuanian relatives on the ludicrous bureaucratic practices, the shabbiness of the surroundings outside their living quarters, the absurd system in their stores, their lack of a work ethic and in general on the evils of their Communist ways, and so much more.

For a woman with limited education, her perceptions surprised us, as did her apparent lack of fear of being so openly critical. For a tourist at that time, that openness could have been a "deadly sin." In the course of her reminiscing, she admitted that this trip to Lithuania had turned out to be far more than a sentimental journey to her past. It had opened her eyes wide to the true impact of Communism. After her trip to Lithuania, my parents indeed noticed a marked shift in her attitude toward us.

Years went by, Aunt Dorothy aged and her health deteriorated. The time arrived when I had to break up her meager household. And there on the couch, in its habitual spot, lay the

Lithuanian cushion, by now faded, a little frayed, abused by cats and who knows what else, but still an icon of the "Old Country", created by Lithuanian hands and of Lithuania's strands. Emotions tugged at my heart and I wanted to preserve it. Carefully I unraveled the thread and pulled out the inner part.

Nothing could have prepared me for what I discovered: this almost quintessentially ethnic and at that time clandestinely patriotic design, for a generation had served as a covering over a poppy-flower-red satin cushion, gold-embroidered with a huge Hammer and Sickle!!

Did Aunt Dorothy create this ironic juxtaposition intentionally? Did she want to convey to me the message that in this cushion symbolically were combined the two forces that had shaped her life? Or did she simply use one cushion that she had at hand, to convert into a new one?

Whatever her answer might have been, the paradox of the "Red Cushion" represented the reality of that generation of the early 20th century. Those were the same "Red" immigrants who collected over a million dollars for the development of the emerging independent Lithuania and who laid the foundation in the United States on which political immigrants in years to come, constructed the framework for our Lithuanian activities.

We know from reading Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle" (1906) under what horrific conditions Lithuanians worked in Chicago slaughterhouses. That book eventually led to far-reaching labor-protection legislation. But it took decades for conditions for the blue-collar worker's lot to improve, and people, including Aunt Dorothy, continued to suffer.

It was not coincidental that in the early 20th century, the American labor union movement and the Communist party frequently worked in tandem. And today, if we were to check over the Communist membership lists of long ago, we should not be surprised at the number of Lithuanian names. Here in America it had been a matter of perceived protection and survival, rather than ideology.

For us, the political immigrants, the refugees from the USSR, such belief and affiliation on the part of our relatives had been very hard to accept. At times, this led to deep chasms in relationships. My family was no exception. But Aunt Dorothy's "Red Cushion" had received a new face, a new Lithuanian face, in the same way that an understanding slowly had been forged between those two earlier waves of very disparate immigrants.

*Ina Bertulyte Bray*

*Ina Bertulyte Bray is a past president of the Washington State Chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community and a former member of the National Council of the Lithuanian American Community.*

Reprinted with permission of the Tulpe Times newsletter of the Washington State Chapter of the Lithuanian American Community. Special thanks to Ina Bray and Zita Petkus.



# A Positive Influence

SLA (Special Libraries Association) Member Profile

The lesson George Bailey learned in the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life" is that our lives are intertwined whether we are fully aware of it or not, and that the positive influences and support we extend toward others can harvest growth within an individual or a community. Building-and-loan manager George Bailey was in a position to affect the residents of Bedford Falls, but he gave them more than money- he gave them encouragement as a neighbor and friend. He had no ulterior motive; his actions were unselfish. He sacrificed a dream, and the residents of Bedford Falls were unwittingly beneficiaries of that sacrifice: their good lives would not have been possible without his kindness, investment, and devotion. To wish himself away was not possible without unraveling the strong and beautiful tapestry woven in that wonderful life.

For many, there's a George Bailey among the SLA membership. His name is Tony Stankus.

For more than 30 years Stankus has made an influential and positive impact upon those in the special librarian profession. Ask any of them - past and current - and the theme of their response is praise: "He encourages excellence with excellence, confidence with confidence," said Ian Wells, working for his GSLIS at URI and an SLA student member. "He has helped to shape the future of my library career by being a living example of everything an informational professional should be."

## On Young Information Professionals

Stankus's Bedford Falls encompasses the College of the Holy Cross, the University of Rhode Island (URI), and Harvard University. He serves as the science librarian at Holy Cross, as an adjunct professor for special libraries at URI and—proctor's partner at Harvard. His community is filled with students and professors.

The odds were against him in his youth to reach a position in the special librarian industry, but fortune and opportunity presented the chance to use his natural gifts fully. Stankus was a child living on welfare and raised in foster homes. Through the talent-spotting of the nuns at Hudson Catholic High School, this five-foot-three man of Lithuanian descent showed up at Holy Cross as an undergraduate with cardboard boxes for his suitcases. He left with a diploma, graduating summa cum laude. Holy Cross—despite being one of America's elite liberal arts colleges and the oldest Catholic college in New England—has always extended admissions to those who are underprivileged. His intelligence and acuteness to information gathering were encouraged by those nuns and recognized by Holy Cross.

## Happy in Libraries

"In order to get into Holy Cross in Worcester you had to name three choices for possible careers and librarian was not one of them," recalled Stankus. "At the end of the freshmen year I was hauled into the guidance counseling office and my No.1 one choice was to be a lawyer because Holy Cross produces two kinds of people: people who heal wounds and people who rip them open (doctors and trial attorneys). I'm sitting across from the pre-law advisor and he

says, 'Mr. Stankus - what do you think would make a successful attorney?' And I said, 'Oh, someone who gathers all the facts, researched the law, prepared the briefing, argued it in court if necessary and then follow-up the appeals process.'

"He replied, 'Mr. Stankus, you're an idiot. The process in being a successful attorney is this: a lot of people who are themselves or their business in trouble and need a large amount of legal services and can pay for it. That's the definition of a successful attorney. You can be a great backroom researcher, Mr. Stankus, for an attorney - but everyone else gets the credit. Tell me where you are the happiest in the world during the day?'

"I said, 'I suppose studying the library. He said, 'Mr. Stankus, be a librarian. If you're really happy there-be it, because there are more attorneys than fleas and there's not enough librarians in the world: Simply, I wasn't connected enough to be a highly successful attorney.'

Now determined to be a librarian—and the best in the profession—Stankus later entered URI to earn a master's in library science. It was at URI that he was introduced to special librarianship and immediately saw its benefits.

"The beauty of librarianship is that you can be an academic specialized librarian and run a science library or a music library or a law library or business school library," he said. "I got into it because it fitted both ways: I was intrigued by the idea of becoming deeply immersed in a subject and becoming an expert at it. Instead of trying to understand what 242 Holy Cross professors want—which is what any librarian in the main library has to do—I have to figure out as a special librarian what 60 of them want and whether they're going to want something expansive or complicated.

Stankus has become a professor where he went to graduate school and a science librarian where he went to undergraduate school. At Holy Cross he has a working collection of 80,000 print volumes with access to well over 1,000 print and electronic journals in the sciences, serving an audience of about 400 science majors and pre-meds. "These kids will inordinately go on to medical school or get Ph.Ds. These kids are very smart," he said. "I'm an alum of the school and I did very well, but these kids are scary-smart."

At URI, Stankus succeeded his old professor, who retired in 1982. Now the longest serving faculty member, Stankus teaches two courses related to special libraries: Survey of Special Libraries and Survey of Scientific and Technical Information. His class size ranges from six to 16.

"The world of special libraries is unfamiliar to most educated people," Stankus said. "There are tons of specialized subject libraries; and people do not understand that there are libraries for the law school, science department, music department, the art museum, the school of business. Most of those librarians are focused on a clientele in a very narrow field and immerse themselves in that field along with their customers. Probably 80 percent of SLA members are corporately or militarily or governmentally employed. SLA is realistic, hard-nosed—where very smart people realize that information is a valued commodity and they're part of enormous commodity exchange and their own weapon is managing it and make sense of it is more information. not less."



SLA and its mission are discussed thoroughly in his classes. He delineates and defines the organization and its membership to his students—that special librarians play a critical role in serving the clientele with fewer people and sometimes fewer resources available. and its mission are discussed thoroughly in his classes. He delineates and defines the organization and its membership to his students—that special librarians play a critical role in serving the clientele with fewer people and sometimes fewer resources available.

"It's a goal of mine to make these kids great handlers," added Stankus. "It is very hard to rationally teach a single set of skills that are implacable to these hyper-specialize libraries. What I do is survey the types of libraries and outline in great detail what SLA is all about, especially focusing on its divisional structure." Stankus has been a member of SLA since 2001. He is a member of SLA's Boston and Rhode Island Chapters, and the Science-Technology Division. He is a prolific writer about the profession, 10 books and more than 100 papers.

### *In the 'Real' World*

Stankus and DRI are advocates for hands-on, real-world interaction. For example, DRI links students with field experience, helping them explore a type of library where a fulltime faculty member serves as the sponsor and provides oversight. The student works as a paraprofessional and builds his or her skills. "I want my kids to show up at these very large, very well-endowed research universities and to know more than kids who are already there from their undergraduate program and to be use, to a standard of assistance, and service that is top notch," Stankus said, proudly.

Rebecca Armitage of Pfizer says what Stankus demonstrates best is the means to be a consummate professional. "He enthusiastically encourages new colleagues in the profession and supports those who are now his colleagues in the profession," she said. "He cares deeply about the library profession and making sure each student knows that she/he has so much to offer and that they too can be successful."

The approach is part of the themes in Stankus's life: making complicated issues understandable, building competence and confidence in others through explaining how things work, being willing to take criticism, letting experience speak clearly, and talking to people in the industry. Interaction and networking are essential to a special librarian's success.

"My deal is," Stankus said, "you're going to be dealing with people who work with investment bank libraries, or law libraries; you're going to be dealing with people from large medical practices, you've got to get used to having a standard of professional appearance, develop the ability to network with people who serve scientists or lawyers or military officers, etc. You need to get used to this concept of networking and how you dress yourself, handle yourself confidently in these settings because you're going on the job market and the people who are going to be hiring you have more gravitas or business-appropriate style."

One of his outlets for networking is through the SLA Rhode Island Chapter, which hosts an annual awards dinner each October that brings students and SLA members together to network. This event - attended by 60 people on average - includes guest speakers and award ceremonies, and has had continuing support from publishers

Elsevier and Mary Ann Liebert Inc.

"It's a big deal because the kids get to see their future colleagues," Stankus said. "Both sides come away in learning something and being impressed. These dinners get financial support or support in kind from publishers and distributors because it's good business for them. It's also good for my students because they're going to be buying from these people; they're going to have judged critically the products being sold."

His belief is that information is not for free for all but a valuable commodity that needs to be gathered and managed by professionals, such as special librarians.

Special librarians will continue to be vital as long as they study their users as much as anything else, studying the needs of their most demanding customers and building the generation of students, in particular, to build loyalty," Stankus predicts. "The most demanding people in the industry do the least amount of hands-on work in terms of actually gathering information. They're not lazy, but if you do a job for them, better than they can do themselves: that's key. SLA serves a very good force because they enable law firms, medical practices, manufacturing and knowledge industries.

The special librarian has to prove their effectiveness in those particular industries or they're going to be out on their ass."

And for more than 30 years this has been what Stankus brought to his community and those of SLA: That one can learn something new every day and cannot be scared in making a mistake; that one must be willing to risk mistakes, which, Stankus believes, will over time build confidence and competence.

Stankus is fortunate to be sharing this community with his partner, Christine Soutter, a proctor at Harvard University, where they reside in a tiny suite. He commutes 75 miles one-way daily between his home and his work. He doesn't mind. He travels for his kids.

"My life is spent around some very smart kids and professors," Stankus said. "I have Holy Cross kids all day in the science library; I have my URI graduate students and, of course, there are the Harvard students. What we owe to these kids is to give them extraordinary support to build their confidence, make them navigators and takers from the literature and to the point they become contributors to the literature and knowledge in that field grows. Listen-I'm poor as a church mouse but happy as I can be. I don't have much of a life except for what I do, but it's a good enough life for me."

Forrest Glenn Spencer is a Virginia-based independent development researcher and freelance writer. He specializes in developing potential donor prospects for non-profit organizations, such as America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth, the National coalition for Cancer Survivorship, and the American Red Cross. He was a 14-year broadcast news associate and has written for numerous print and Internet publications for the last several years. He can be reached at [spencer@chemsoft.net](mailto:spencer@chemsoft.net).

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Information Outlook. All rights reserved.  
For more information, see  
[www.sla.org](http://www.sla.org). Submitted by: Ramune Kubilius*



Thank you!

The following was a note received by Danutė Krivickienė from a child she supported through Lithuanian Orphan Care. Mrs. Krivickienė now supports a young boy in Lithuania.

Dear Danute,

I am indebted to you.  
I want tell you very big  
Thank's for your help.  
When you help for me a  
very hard time. Thank  
you for your kind atten-  
tion. You help me alot.  
Thank you!  
You are a very good  
person. I wish you good  
luck ...

DAINA JAUDŽENYTĖ.  
21.04.2006.

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*Navy hero Zenin Lukosius dies at 87*  
**SOUTH HOLLAND Family,**  
*friends remember South Holland man as active person*

BY COLLEEN KUJAWA

*Northwest Indiana Times Correspondent*

SOUTH HOLLAND | Al Dunlop had no idea his friend was a bona fide hero.

But then Dunlop saw Zenin Lukosius' name about 50 years ago attached to a Museum of Science and Industry exhibit. "He was a hero, and he never said a word about his exploits," said Dunlop, a Crete resident and former South Holland resident. "He was kind of shy. He wasn't a braggart."

As Dunlop soon learned, Lukosius received the Silver Star for stopping a German submarine from sinking after the U.S. Navy captured it in 1944 during World War II.

Lukosius, a motor machinist mate who worked with engines in the Navy, quickly volunteered to be a part of the task force that boarded the U-505 submarine, said his son, Paul Lukosius.

Onboard, he discovered a sea strainer the Germans had removed to flood the U-boat and, despite the danger of booby traps, picked up the cover and put it back in place. "None of those guys thought they were signing up to be heroes," Paul Lukosius said.

A father of four children and a resident of South Holland since 1959, Zenin Lukosius died of a lung ailment Saturday at Ingalls Memorial Hospital in Harvey - two weeks shy of his 88th birthday.

Born in Chicago's Roseland neighborhood, the son of Lithuanian immigrants, Lukosius was a Chicagoan all of his life, said his daughter, Diane Siadak. He married Dorothy Lebus, of Chicago, on April 30, 1944, two months before saving the U-505. Lebus died in 1995.

He participated as an oral historian for the U-505 exhibit, which became a fixture of the Museum of Science and Industry in 1954. He later helped the fundraising efforts to encase the submarine in an enclosed exhibit hall.

Lukosius, or "Zen," as his friends liked to call him, was always on the go.

Siadak said her father walked 5 miles a day, and was a tremendous gardener who had 100-some tomato plants in his garden last year.

"He was full of life and full of excitement and would do anything and go anywhere for anybody," said neighbor John Sullivan, pastor of Spirit of the God Fellowship Church in South Holland where Lukosius attended services.

Zenin Lukosius is survived by his children, Diane, Paul and Catherine Postma, and seven grandchildren.

*Reprinted with permission of the Northwest Indiana Times. A special thank you to BRIDGES reader Gene for emailing the article to me.*

*Basketball without Borders in Lithuania*  
 Continued from page 15

as well as Russian born Viktor Chriapa from Portland "Trail Blazers" talked about how to make the most of the camp; the professional basketball players also warned them that hard work was the name of the game for the coming few days.


While the campers were getting top class basketball instruction from the group of NBA players and coaches, they were also being coached "off-the-court" during the camp to help them develop their personalities and become even greater basketball players. On day three, campers learned about the "Character and Quality Leaders" from a Washington "Wizards" forward Darius Songaila and Zaza Pachulia of the Atlanta "Hawks", who is from Georgia. Both had wise words for the children at Pagnès Children's Home.

During the last day of the event, the campers started the day with a Life Skills Seminar, led by UNICEF to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS education and prevention. The NBA players were gathered to dedicate a "NBA Cares Live" Learn and Play Center at the Pagnès Children's home.

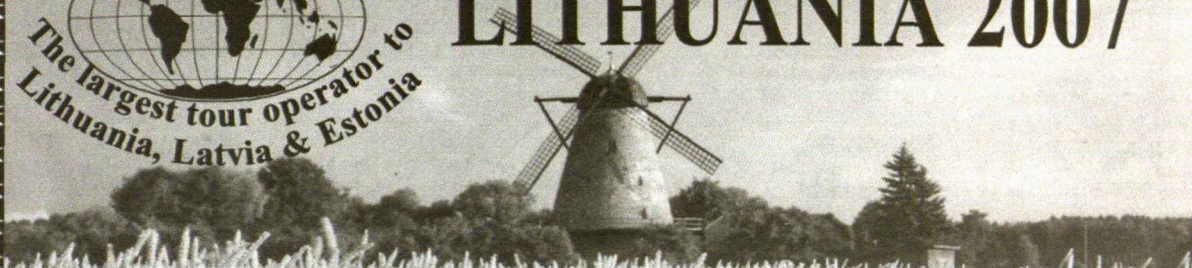
*Prepared by Laurynas (Larry) R. Misevicius for Bridges from Kaunas*

*Laurynas (Larry) R. Misevicius is a Financial Analyst at the Union Bank of Switzerland (its Securities division) and an active member of the Lithuanian-American community. He was the first president elect of the re-established Lithuanian Sports Club of CT. and from early 2003 a chair of the Bridgeport (CT) Chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community, and a vice-chairman for sports in the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community. Additionally, he is an editor for the Lithuanian-American weekly newspaper "Amerikos Lietuvis" north-east edition "Rytų Pakrantėje" and frequently writes to other Lithuanian and English language media.*



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# Calendar of Events for October November and Dec

Please verify all events as places and times are subject to ch

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## OCTOBER

**October 6 - 8, 2006**

### **CAMP NERINGA**

Third annual walk-a-thon Come & enjoy good company, Vermont fall foliage, and the rocking Small Farm Animals while helping Neringa continue its mission.

**October 8, 2006 - 2pm**

Commemoration of the **40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY** of the dedication of the Chapel of Our Lady of Siluva. Mass in the main Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Washington, DC.

Info: [www.knightsoflithuania.com](http://www.knightsoflithuania.com)

**October 8, 2006 - 12-4pm**

### **Community Picnic**

Main dish & Lithuanian beer provided. Bring a side dish. Wyandotte County Lake Park, Shelter #2. Info: [www.kclith.org](http://www.kclith.org)

**October 8, 2006 - 1:00 pm**

### **Lithuanian Heritage Festival 2006**

Lithuanian Mass, Rivier College Chapel, South Main St., Nashua, NH 2:30 pm Concert, Rivier College Dion Center, by mezzo soprano Judita Leitaitė from Vilnius, Lithuania Dion Center Clement St., Nashua, NH Reception following concert No admission fee.

**October 8, 2006**

### **Pilgrimage**

by St. Andrew's Parish, Phila. PA to Washington, DC to celebrate **40<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of Siluva Chapel in Basilica of Immaculate Conception. Bus reservations: 215-969-2117

**October 15, 2006 - 10am**

Centennial Mass with Msgr. Putrimas  
CELEBRATING

### **THE 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

of the St. George Church, 443 PARK AVE., BRIDGEPORT, CT Reception following Mass. Sponsored by: K of L - C141 Bridgeport, CT

**October 17, 2006 - 7pm**

### **Sing-a-Long**

Lithuanian Music Hall 2715 E. Allegheny Ave. Phila., PA 19134 Info: 610-497-5469 Sponsored by: Amber Roots Lithuanian Heritage Club of Philadelphia, PA

**October 29, 2006**

### **WORLD PREMIERE OF NEW WORKS**

by Baltic Composers. Seattle Chamber Players have commissioned new works from Baltic composers, including Onute Narbutaitė. The composers plan to be present for their respective premieres. Benaroya Hall <http://javlb.org/seattle/>

**OCTOBER 29, 2006 - 1:00pm**

### **FALL PICNIC**

in Phoenix Yavapai Pavilion in North Mountain Park 7<sup>th</sup> Street at Peoria Ave., Phoenix Lithuanian music, hearty Lithuanian food, cold refreshments, & friendly people. This is a great opportunity for folks with Lithuanian roots & interests to get together & socialize. Info: contact Martin Karsas at 480-661-3957 or e-mail [mgkarsas@netscape.com](mailto:mgkarsas@netscape.com). Hosted by the Lithuanian American Community of North Mountain Park in Phoenix

## NOVEMBER

**November 1, 2006 - 4pm**

### **ALL SOULS DAY**

It is an old Lithuanian tradition to honor and remember our dead on the eve of All Souls Day. We will

gather at St. Francis Xavier Cemetery to celebrate this solemn occasion, followed by 5:30 pm Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption Church, 76 Wianno Ave., Osterville, MA 02655 Sponsors: Cape Cod Chapter of the Lithuanian American Community Info: [alisdapkus@aol.com](mailto:alisdapkus@aol.com)

**November 4 - 5, 2006**

### **LMHA - MUGE**

LITHUANIAN FESTIVAL Saturday 12-8pm - Sunday 12-6pm Lithuanian food, music, vendors & much more 2715 E. Allegheny Ave. Phila., PA 19134 Info: 215-739-4831

**November 5, 2006 - 1 to 5pm**

### **INTERNATIONAL DAY DINNER**

Cape Codder Resort Hotel, Hyannis, MA Hosted by Portuguese - American Association, Cape Cod Chapter of the Lithuanian American Community will participate. Info: [alisdapkus@aol.com](mailto:alisdapkus@aol.com)

**November 11, 2006 - 10am - 5pm**

### **Margarita's Muge**

Featuring Fine Arts & Crafts, Lithuanian Kitchen, Folk Dancing, Live Music, Father Frost Lenexa Community Center, 13420 Oak St., Lenexa, KS. Info: [www.kclith.org](http://www.kclith.org)

**November 19, 2006 - 2pm - 4pm**

### **Dedication & reception for the**

### **St. Casimir's Bell:**

Wyandotte County Museum 631 North 126th St., Bonner Springs, KS. Refreshments provided.

**November 19, 2006 - 12 NOON**

### **Lithuanian Mass**

followed by luncheon & meeting St. George Church 443 Park Ave., Bridgeport, CT. Sponsored by: K of L - C141 Bridgeport, CT

## DECEMBER

**December 2, 2006 - 5:00 pm**

San Diego, performs at December Nights Balboa Park., San Diego, CA Info: [www.lithsd.org](http://www.lithsd.org)

**December 3, 2006 - 12:30-3:00pm**

### **Kucios Table**

Kansas City Lithuanian Community Christmas Party. Main Dish & drinks provided. Bring a side dish. Visit from Father Frost. Lake of the Forest Lodge, Bonner Springs, Kansas Info: [www.kclith.org](http://www.kclith.org)

**December 9, 2006**

### **Kucios**

Lithuanian Christmas Eve Supper Following 5 pm Mass St. George Parish Hall Salmon & Venango Sts., Phila., PA Info: 215-426-6762 Sponsored by: Kof L C3

**December 10, 2006 - 12 Noon**

### **Kucios**

St. Andrew's Parish Hall 1913 Wallace St. Phila., PA **Advance reservations required** Info: 215-969-2117 or 609-268-8045

Sponsored by: Lithuanian Scouts

**December 12, 2006 - 7pm**

### **Kucios**

LMHA, Cultural Center 2715 E. Allegheny Ave. Phila., PA 19134 Info: 610-497-5469 Sponsored by: Lithuanian Heritage Club

**December 17, 2006 - 12 NOON**

Lithuanian Mass St. George Church 443 Park Ave., Bridgeport, CT Followed by KUCIOS Celebration at 1:00 pm **Reservations needed.** Contact: [pbschmidt@optonline.net](mailto:pbschmidt@optonline.net) Sponsored by: K of L - C141 Bridgeport, CT

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