

# bridges

1

Often referred to as the  
"Iron Lady"



Dalia Grybauskaitė  
President-elect of  
Lithuania



june 2009

LITHUANIAN AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

*Letter from the Editor*

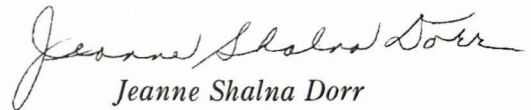
*June is such a beautiful month. It's the traditional month of graduations and beautiful brides. But for Lithuania it is a month that brings back memories of tragic events. Although we move forward with our lives, our history can never be forgotten. As the years pass, memories tend to get shorter. In the back of St. Andrew Lithuanian Church in Philadelphia there are two dramatic paintings. One commemorates the tragedy of January 13, 1991. The other painting is a set of railroad tracks. This painting speaks for itself. Therefore, we once again remind you and ask you to think about those who were deported; those who did not survive and those who returned with shattered lives.*

*Congratulations to Draugas which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. In a time when newspapers and magazines are closing their doors all over this country this is truly a remarkable fete. It says volumes about those early Lithuanians who came before us, those who are currently on the editorial staff, those who contribute to the newspaper and its readers.*

*Camp Neringa in Vermont is also celebrating an anniversary. Happy 40th birthday! Again, it took work and dedication to start the camp and to ensure its survival. Bridges wishes the staff and campers the very best for the coming season and the future seasons.*

*As I was writing these notes of congratulations I couldn't help thinking that all these milestone anniversaries are being celebrated in the same year that Lithuania celebrates 1000 years. We must be doing something right!*

*To all fathers, grandfathers, uncles and all gentlemen who are caregivers, happy Father's Day. You don't have to have children to be a good influence or to help those who need you.*

  
Jeanne Shalna Dorr

*Anonymous*

- 4 years: My Daddy can do anything!*
- 7 years: My Dad knows a lot... a whole lot.*
- 8 years: My father does not know quite everything.*
- 12 years: Oh well, naturally Father does not know that either.*
- 14 years: Oh, Father? He is hopelessly old-fashioned.*
- 21 years: Oh, that man-he is out of date!*
- 25 years: He knows a little bit about it, but not much.*
- 30 years: I must find out what Dad thinks about it.*
- 35 years: Before we decide, we will get Dad's idea first.*
- 50 years: What would Dad have thought about that?*
- 60 years: My Dad knew literally everything!*
- 65 years: I wish I could talk it over with Dad once more.*

*Thank you for sharing your homes with us this month.*

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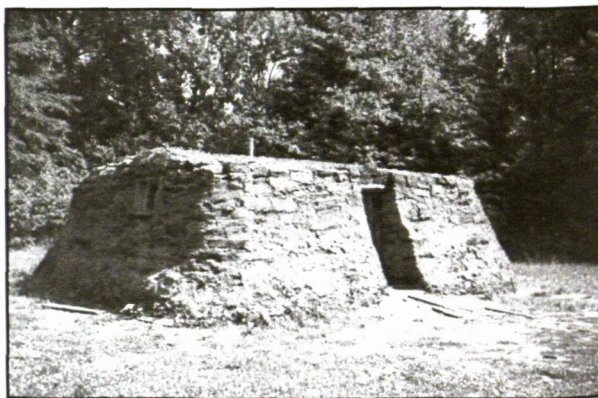
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*Photo by Gema M. Kreivėnas, Media, PA*

**Jurta**

(a type of a dwelling that was used by Lithuanians deported to Siberia. From Soviet GULAGS in Siberia) it is located in Rumšiškės ethnographic museum, Lithuania.

*Cover: The photo is by Rimas Gedeika of the reopening of the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, D.C. Lithuania's Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas had cut the opening ceremony ribbon. The article is on page 11.*

Excerpt from

## “Lithuanians In The Arctic”

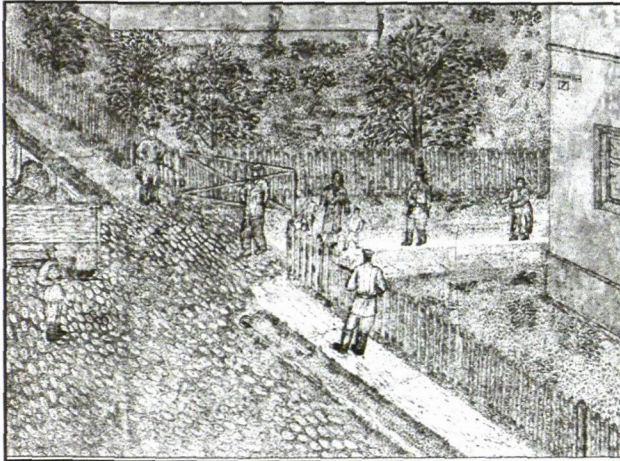
*This book is dedicated to Lithuanian and foreign schoolchildren who are interested about the history of the Lithuanian exiles.*

*Reminiscences and drawings of former exile Gintautas Martynaitis.*

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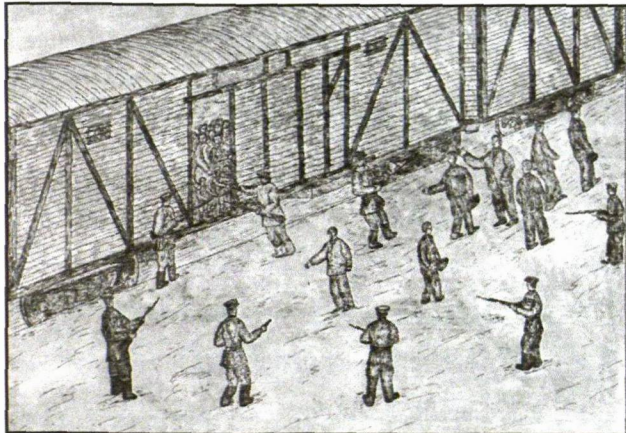
In July of 1941 Bolsheviks deported thirty thousand inhabitants from Lithuania. Five hundred were exiled to Trofimovsk, a desolate island at the mouth

of Lena River. It is a land of permafrost in the Arctic. Six year old Gintautas Martynaitis, his mother and brother along with other martyrs were interned there. After many years of exile he was allowed to return to Lithuania. Experiences of the distant past are engraved in his memory to this day. When drawing these pictures, the pencil in the gray haired Gintautas Martynaitis's hand was guided by the boy of days long gone, who had observed the world around him with keen eyes.

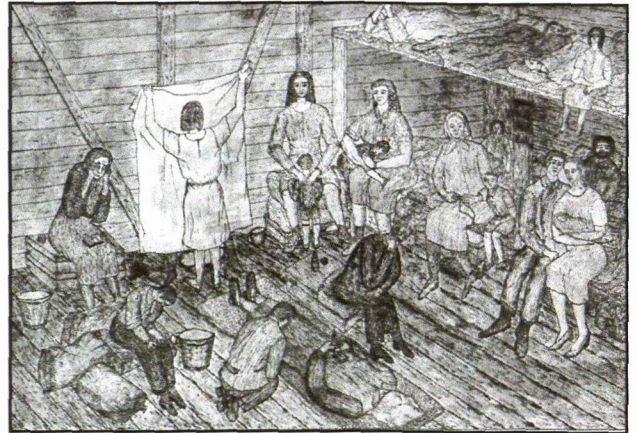


**1) - June 14, 1941.** On the eve of June 14, 1941 freight cars with built in plank beds were already waiting for them in railroad stations. A large number of trucks appeared in the city. Soviet functionaries milled among the people.

That night, soviet secret police started their searches for victims by knocking on doors and windows. Hurried deportations of entire families began.

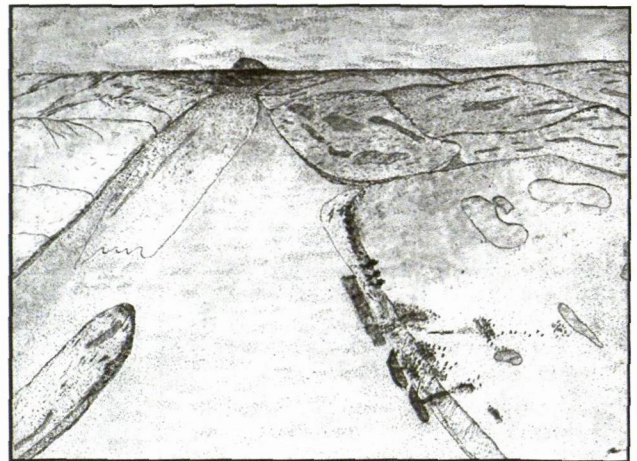


**2) - Separating men.** The majority of men were separated from their families in the Naujoji Vilnia railway station and taken to camps in the Krasnoyarsk region. Two years later out of several thousand men only a few dozen were still alive.



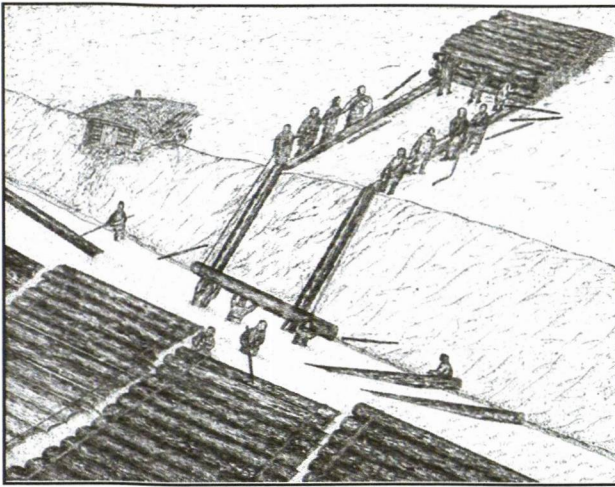
**3) - Inside the cattle car.** The deportees were forced into cattle cars with specially installed plank bunk beds with two small barred windows under the ceiling and a hole in the floor to be used as a toilet.

They crammed thirty to thirty five people with their belongings into the wagons.



**4) - Island of Trofimovsk, 1942.** On the August 18, 1942, about five hundred people from Lithuania were put ashore on the desolate island of Trofimovsk at the mouth of Lena River.

It was the far North with eternal ice under their feet.



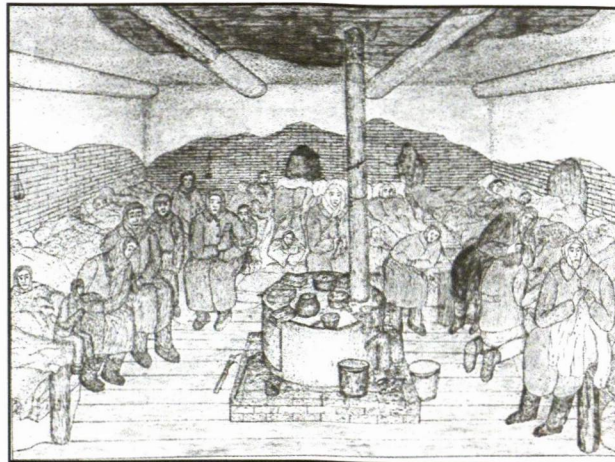
**5) - Slavery.** Barges had to be unloaded rapidly. Additionally, they had to pull to shore logs that had been floated down the river. People worked standing in icy water and lived under open sky.

*It was already snowing.*



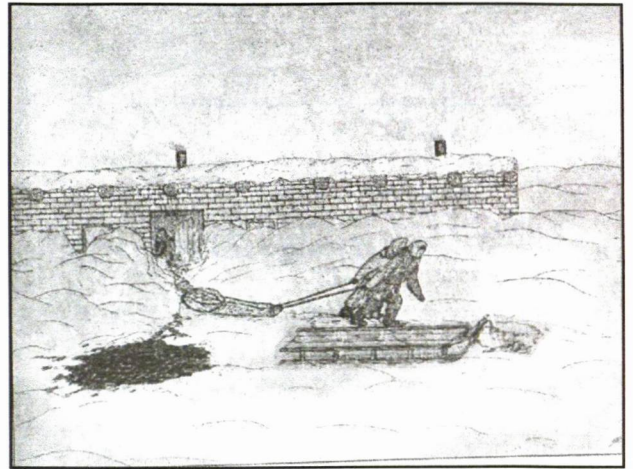
**6) - Building the stone barrack.** One barrack (100 m x 20 m) was built of bricks using women and children as laborers. They had to lay the bricks on a permafrost ground, filling gaps with moss. During the first blizzard snow was blown in through the door and cracks in the ceiling.

*During the winter of 1942 - 43 a large number of people died in this particular barrack.*



**7) - Inside the barrack.** The walls, ceilings and floors of the hurriedly built barracks froze right through.

*It was warm only next to the lighted stove, made from an iron barrel cut in half, in the middle of the room. The stove was rarely lighted because exhausted people did not have the strength to bring in firewood. Dirty, worn out, suffering from scurvy and typhus - many fell into eternal sleep. Snowdrifts blocked the doors of barracks, which caused the living, the half dead and dead to lie on their planks beside each other.*

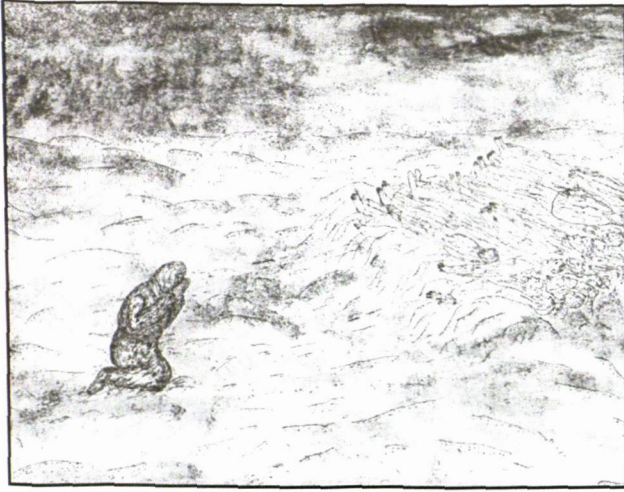


**8) - Funeral train.** During the winter of 1942-43 half of the Finns and a third of the Lithuanians deported to Trofimovsk died.

*Coffins were not made because the authorities did not allot boards for that purpose. There were teams organized to collect the bodies and drag them to a common pile.*

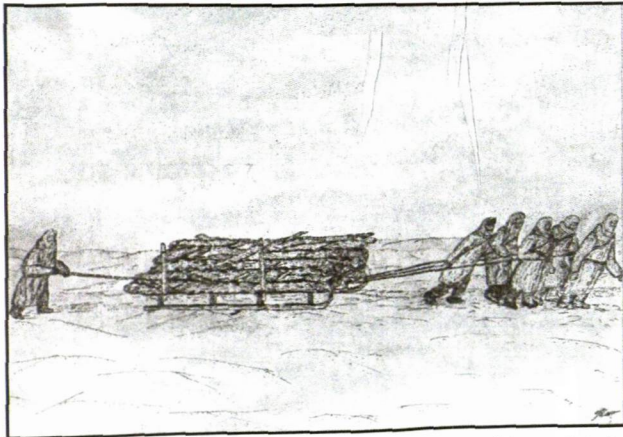


**9) - Brothers.** Two brothers fell ill of typhus and were taken to the hospital Twelve-year old Mindaugas lost consciousness, a nurse carried him out into the open and placed him among the dead The older brother staggered out, found his younger brother, brought him inside and laid beside him. Mindaugas regained consciousness. Now, both brothers are living in Lithuania.

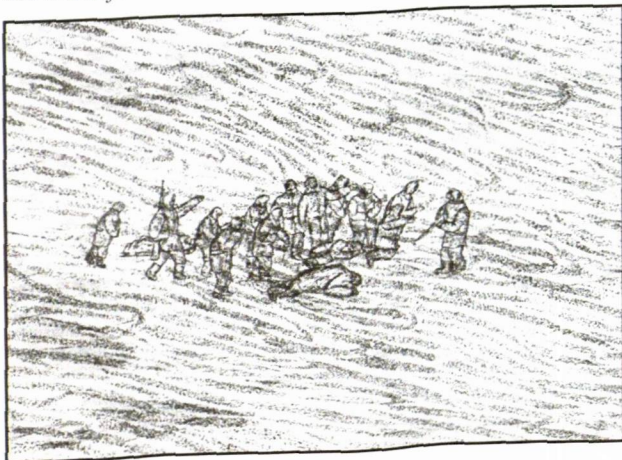


**10) - Graveyard.** People were so exhausted that they had no strength to bury the dead. They would lay the bodies into one heap and the snow would cover them.

In the spring of 1943 prisoners were forced to dig a large pit on the bank of a river and dump the bodies of dead Lithuanians and Finns.



**11) - Firewood is the life.** Women, harnessed into sleighs used to pull firewood to heat the offices and apartments of the wardens. For firewood they gathered driftwood washed ashore by chopping it out of the ice. Then they would drag the wood for seven to ten kilometers.

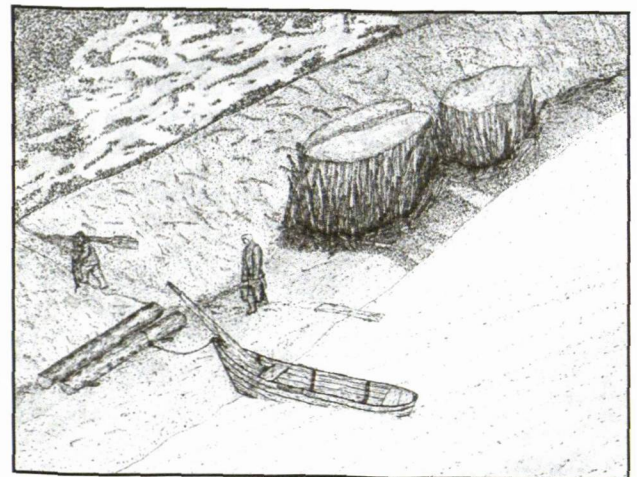


**12) - Only two men survived.** Guards marched condemned Lithuanians and Finns to prison. Some of them were convicted for stealing firewood, two were seized after they broke into the bakery and were gulping down bread. By the way to prison they were caught in the heavy snow.

Only two men out of 15 survived, but a frozen arm of one of them had to be amputated.

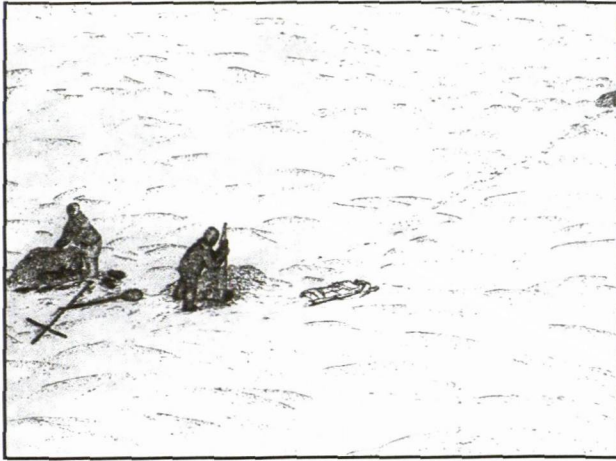


**13) - Lithuanian class.** Even during the most difficult times mother made every effort to assure we do not forget Lithuanian. She would sit us on the plank bed by a lit rag soaked in cod liver oil, for illumination and would teach us to write and read. We would read and write dictations from "Algimantas", a book written by V. Pietaris.



**14) - Summer view.** Summer at the mouth of the Lena river lasted for two months.

Air temperature never rose over ten degrees. In the mid-summer sleet fell down sometimes. Ice-blocks driven to the riversides by the ice-drift did not melt during the summer.



15) - *Winter fishery.* At the end of September channels in the mouth of the Lena river froze and the winter fishery started.

The fishers immer-sed nets, twenty five meters in length, under the ice. A couple of fishermen had to serve ten-fifteen nets. Every day they checked up the nets through holes made in the ice. They pulled ashore, untangled their nets, took fish out of them - everything was done with bare hands. In the second half of the winter thickness of ice in the channels reached height of a man.

\*\*\*\*\*

Gintautas Martynaitis was born in 1935 in Marijampole. His parents were civil servants. After occupation, on 14 June 1941, his family was deported to Siberia. His father was isolated from the rest of the family and perished in Reshioty camp. His mother, with her young children, found herself near the Laptev Sea, in the island of Trofimovsk. Since 1950 G. Martynaitis lived in the boarding school and studied at the secondary school. In 1953 he moved to Yakutsk and studied at the technical school. He graduated from this school in 1956. Later he worked installing electricity in the Yakutia region. In 1955 in Yakutsk his brother died. In 1959 G. Martynaitis, with his mother, returned from deportation to Lithuania to Marijampolė. Unfortunately, here he had no possibilities for work, and in 1960 he moved to Leningrad (now St. Petersburg, Russia) to study at Polytechnic Institute. He graduated from this Institute in 1966 and was sent to Vilnius to work at the Radio Components' Factory. G. Martynaitis worked there at the constructing bureau until 1991 when he retired on a pension. He died in Vilnius in 1999.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Editor's Note: Very special thanks for permission to reprint parts of "Lithuanians in the Arctic".*

*This book is written in both English and Lithuanian. It is an accurate history of the many banished to Siberia.*

*It can be ordered online from Karyl Arnold at [radzievich@aol.com](mailto:radzievich@aol.com), at a cost of \$20.00 which includes shipping or by sending a check to:*

**Lithuanian National Foundation, Inc.**

c/o Rožė Šomkaitė  
386 Hillside Ave.  
South Orange, NJ 07079

## LITHUANIAN GRAVES IN SIBERIA

*Kazys Bradūnas  
1917 - 2009*

The taiga burns with northern flames.  
Graves grip crosses.  
Above them, winging slowly,  
Hawks glide black hawks.

A storm climbs the sky,  
Blows sound beneath the earth.  
The souls of the dead are quieted  
By the voices of their homeland.

There is enough dirt for bones.  
Even more for ashes.  
A bloody flower blooms  
In eternity's palm.

Northern flames die on the taiga.  
Graves won't let go of their crosses.  
Over them, beating their wings,  
Hawks settle, black hawks.

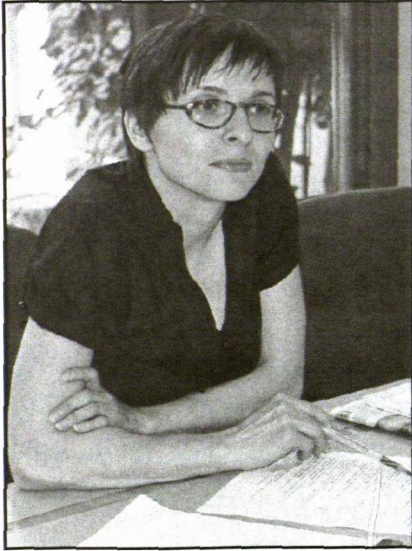
*Translated by Jurgis Bradūnas*

*Born in Vilkaviškis in southern Lithuania, Kazys Bradūnas was considered a living classic, both in Lithuania and in the Lithuanian émigré community. Bradūnas left Lithuania after the second Soviet occupation of Lithuania in 1944, interrupting his studies in Lithuanian Literature and Linguistics at Vilnius University. During the post-war period he lived in Displaced Persons camps in Germany, where he completed his studies. Later he immigrated to the United States, where he settled in Baltimore, Maryland. Bradūnas was the founder of the "Žemė" (Earth) literary movement – a movement advocating Lithuanian poetry with distinct roots in the earth, drawing its strength from Lithuania's agricultural heritage and folklore. During his time in exile Bradūnas published sixteen collections of poetry, edited substantial Lithuanian émigré literary journals, and was one of the major driving forces behind émigré intellectual life. He and his wife Kazimiera returned to Lithuania and lived in Vilnius.*

[www.efn.org/~valdas/poczija.html](http://www.efn.org/~valdas/poczija.html)

# DRAUGAS

## *Celebrates 100 Years!*



Dalia Cidzikaitė photo by Kavalianskienė

### ***An Interview with Dalia Cidzikaitė***

The Lithuanian language newspaper, *Draugas*, is celebrating 100 years since its first issue in 1909. It is the only Lithuanian daily newspaper published abroad. It is also the oldest continuously published Lithuanian language newspaper anywhere in the world. *Draugas* is read in the United States, Canada, South America, Australia, and Europe.

The following is an interview conducted with Dalia Cidzikaitė, Editor of *Draugas*.

*J.D. Draugas is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Can you tell us how the paper was started and who started it?*

D.C. The first issue came out on the 12th of July, 1909 in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. *Draugas* was started by Kunigu Vieniybė (Priests' Confederation), an American Lithuanian Catholic organization. In June, 1910, *Draugas* became the official organ of the American

Roman Catholic Federation. In 1912 *Draugas* moved to Chicago. Father Antanas Staniukynas, who is called the godfather of *Draugas*, tried to establish a local branch of the Capuchins in order to pass control of *Draugas* to it. When that plan failed, Father Staniukynas organized a Marianite branch in Chicago, which took over the administration of *Draugas* and, later, all aspects of publishing the newspaper.

From the beginning *Draugas* was the fruit of collective efforts. The first official editor of *Draugas* is considered to be Father Antanas Kaupas. However a letter sent on the occasion of *Draugas*' 50th anniversary by Father Vincentas Vizgirda to his brother tells a different story: that Father Vizgirda was the actual first editor of *Draugas*, notwithstanding that his title was "editor of manuscripts." According to this account, Father Kaupas only later began his term as editor, which became one of the longest in *Draugas*' history.

*J.D. What were the original goals of the newspaper and have they been met?*

D.C. In his letter, Father Vizgirda wrote that in the US Lithuanians are united by one idea: "to cherish religion, commit to science, [and] honor and nation's undertaking." Father Vizgirda affirmed that Lithuanians didn't spare strength and commitment. American Lithuanians of Father Vizgirdas day worked as hard as they could and relied on institutions, including parishes, schools, charities, social organiza-

tions, and the Lithuanian press to fulfill that dream. Over its first 100 years, *Draugas* has borne in mind the goals of its founders. Through wars, the occupation (of Lithuania), and waves of immigration, *Draugas* has continued to cherish religion, commit to science, and honor Lithuania's culture and traditions.

*J.D. I understand that you are the first native Lithuanian to become the editor of the paper. Where were you born and where did you study? Can you tell us about your family and your childhood?*

D.C. I was born in Vilnius, Lithuania. There I grew up, went to school, and graduated from Vilnius Pedagogical University, where I received a BA in Lithuanian Language and Literature and an MA in Literary Theory studies. In 1999 I came to Chicago to study at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). In 2005 I graduated with a Ph.D. in Slavic and Baltic Languages and Literatures.

Except for summers at my grandmother's house in Seirijai (southern part of Lithuania, also called Dzūkija or Dainava region), I spent my childhood and student years in Vilnius. I used to spend many hours in Vilnius' old town, visiting galleries, cinemas, theaters, and the A. Mickevičius or M. Mažvydas libraries, or sometimes just simply walking and getting acquainted with my city. While I was studying at the university, I joined the Theater Studio "Elementorius," led by actor and musician Gediminas Storpirstis. I performed in some shows with this theater studio,



even going on tour to Belarus, Poland and Ukraine.

My family, which still lives in Vilnius, is not big: Dad, Mom and brother Linas.

*J.D. Where did you work in Lithuania?*

D.C. For my first job, I worked (while a student) for Atviros Lietuvos fondas, or "Open Society Fund of Lithuania," in one of its programs, the Paramos vaikams centras, or "Children Support Center." The Center is now a non-profit organization that helps many children and parents to cope with and overcome psychological problems in school and at home. I was one of the first five volunteers in their very successful "Big Brothers/Big Sisters" program. Later I became the administrator of the Center. I also taught English at Gabija High School in Vilnius.

*J.D. In what direction do you intend to take Draugas?*

D.C. First, I would like Draugas to get beyond surviving and invest more in its people, expand the circle of its contributors, change the design of the paper, and improve its website, etc.

Second, from the day I came to Draugas, I have wanted the newspaper to reflect Lithuanian community life here, in the US. There are many active Lithuanian organizations, foundations, and people who do wonderful and interesting things either here or in Lithuania, or in some other place in the world. We have to hear more stories about them.

Third, I would like Draugas to help Lithuanians in the US to face the challenges of staying Lithuanian, including keeping our traditions, language, heritage, and organizations alive. All these challenges

should be and are addressed in our newspaper.

Fourth, given our strong ties to our homeland, Draugas commits to reporting on the events in Lithuania, and providing valuable feedback and comment on the political, social, and economic life of Lithuania.

One of Draugas' unique contributions is its cultural section, which appears every Saturday, and is dedicated to science, literature, and arts. It was introduced by prelate Juozas Prunskis in 1951. No Lithuanian language newspaper here has such a section — even people in Lithuania value it. This section has been edited for the past one and a half years by Aldona Žemaitytė, who lives in Vilnius.

*J.D. What do you see as the future of Draugas?*

D.C. The 100th anniversary of Draugas is a huge achievement for Draugas and all who have worked and are working at the newspaper.

Nowadays Draugas faces the same challenges as any other paper: sub-



*Romualdas Kriaučiūnas PhD. and Dalia Cidzikaitė PhD.  
photo by Rimas Gedėika*

scriptions are down, the average age of readers is up, publishing costs are up, and the internet is taking up more and more room in our daily lives. We have no choice but to acknowledge these challenges and see if we can still play an important part in the lives of American Lithuanians — by reporting news of particular interest to them, and by providing a unique forum for their ideas, comments, and views.

*Jeanne Dorr*

*Editor's Note: Bridges sends congratulations to the editor, past editors, writers and subscribers of Draugas. They have certainly reached a milestone anniversary and may they celebrate many, many more. Special thanks to Dalia Cidzikaitė for taking time from her busy schedule for this interview.*



**Sunday, July 26 th**

The Immaculate Conception  
Convent Grounds

**PUTNAM, Connecticut**

**Lithuanian Friendship Day - Picnic**

**11:00 HOLY MASS** *concelebrated on the convent grounds*  
- Main celebrant: Rev. Arvydas Žygas, Convent chaplain

**12:00 LUNCH, Activities, Entertainment**

**3:00 PROGRAM** by Neringa campers  
- Flag Lowering ceremony

**4:30 DRAWING** of gifts

*Come, keep company and enjoy —  
invite your friends!*

## The Sisters of Saint Casimir ... Daughters of Mother Maria

*Knowing a Sister of Saint Casimir is the rare privilege of meeting the dream and vision of Mother Maria Kaupaitė, the foundress of this Congregation of Sisters. These dedicated women follow the Call of Christ and give witness to Mother Maria's vocation – even when it called for heroic suffering just to survive.*



*Sister Maria Felicita*

priest from Lithuania came to Scotland and told of Mother Maria's opening of a convent at Pažaislis (near Kaunas), her mother finally agreed. So, at the age of 19, Magdalen packed her belongings and headed to Lithuania in 1923 to become a pioneer in the Sisters of St. Casimir as they established themselves in Lithuania under the guidance of Mother Maria.

Having successfully taken root in the United States, Pope Benedict XV responded positively to the requests made by the Lithuanian clergy and stated that it was his wish that the Sisters of St. Casimir establish a branch in Lithuania. And so young Magdalen helped fulfill another dream of Mother Maria as the Sisters began their mission in Lithuania. Having received the habit she was given the name of Sister Maria Felicita. From 1925 until 1928 she was organist at their Pažaislis Monastery and taught private music lessons while studying at the Kaunas School of Music. She also taught English and Math to the students at the Pažaislis School. In 1932 she was named Superior of a new mission the Sisters opened in the city of Telšiai, Lithuania. Suddenly World War II brought heartache and destruction to the remarkable progress of the Sisters of Saint Casimir. The communist rule of Lithuania outlawed Religious Life and the Sisters were forced to disband and leave the joy of their convent life. Given only two weeks to pack, the Sisters of Saint Casimir were made to tearfully abandon their Pažaislis Monastery – all, except Sister Maria

*Below is an article about my friend, Sister Maria Felicita.*

Although Sister Maria Felicita has been dead for more than ten years, her life and vocation as a Sister of Saint Casimir continues to inspire me. Born in Bellskill, Scotland on May 22, 1904, she always felt the desire to enter the convent. But her mother tried to dissuade her calling to Religious Life. So youthful Magdalen Iškauskas ended up attending Skerry's College in Glasgow, Scotland. Finally, when a

Felicita. Forced to abandon her religious garb as a nun, she was allowed to stay on the grounds until 1949. Working as an organist in a nearby church, she secretly taught religion with heroic bravery, as did many of the other nuns who now worked in the Church's underground. I remember Sister telling me of the heartache she felt one day when she walked back into what had been the beautiful refectory (dining room) of the Sister's Monastery at Pažaislis. She burst into tears when she saw all the beautiful murals on the ceiling covered in black soot. The communists had turned it into a comb factory as part of their cruel destruction of anything religious. Certainly she experienced the wounds of Christ as she witnessed such persecution.

She emigrated back to her homeland, Scotland, to take care of her sister and arrived back into the warm embrace of the Sisters of Saint Casimir in Chicago in November of 1961. Memories of persecution and suffering were eased as she once again put on the religious habit and began her observance of convent life again. I met this remarkable Sister at St. Joseph Home for the Aging, in Holland, PA (not far from Philadelphia), where she devotedly spent 26 years as a Nurse's Aide and the Personal Care Supervisor in the nursing home founded by the Sisters of Saint Casimir. She died on March 2, 1995 and is buried in St. Casimir's Cemetery in Chicago, IL. Sister Felicita introduced me to the harsh realities of what the persecution of the Church was like in Lithuania. These I will share in my next article about Mother Maria's daughters.

*Rev. Peter Burkauskas*

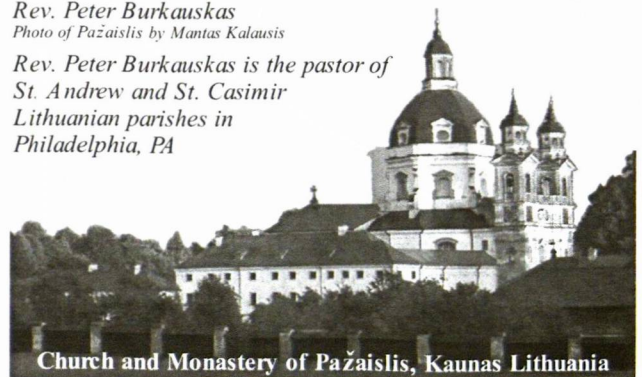
*Photo of Pažaislis by Mantas Kalausis*

*Rev. Peter Burkauskas is the pastor of*

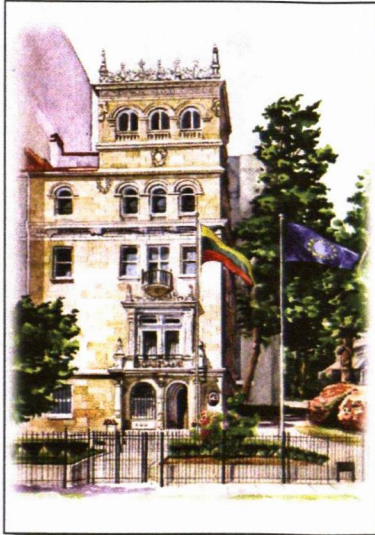
*St. Andrew and St. Casimir*

*Lithuanian parishes in*

*Philadelphia, PA*



**Church and Monastery of Pažaislis, Kaunas Lithuania**



Formal Invitation to the grand opening of the newly renovated Embassy, the art work by Gintaras Jocius

On the Occasion of  
the Lithuanian Independence Day  
the Grand Opening of the renovated  
Embassy of Lithuania  
and  
in honor of the Minister of Foreign Affairs  
His Excellency Vygaudas Ušackas  
The Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania  
His Excellency Audrius Brūzga  
and Mrs. Insrė Sabaliūnas Brūzgienė  
request the pleasure of the company of

at a Reception  
on Tuesday, March 10, 2009  
at six thirty o'clock in the evening

at the Embassy of Lithuania  
2622 16th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20009

RSVP by March 1, 2009  
Ph.: 202-234-5860 ext. 111  
E-mail: rsvp@ltembassyus.org

Business Attire  
Military Uniform  
Limited street parking available

## A DREAM FULFILLED

After more than two years of hammering, chiseling, nailing, the newly renovated Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, D.C. was reopened on March 10, 2009. And what a grand reopening it was !!!

More than 250 invited guests attended the ceremony. There were foreign diplomats, State Department employees, high ranking military officers from various countries, businessmen, twelve of Lithuania's Honorary Consuls, and members of the Lithuanian American Community. Among those attending were Lithuania's Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas, Lithuania's Ambassador to America and Mexico, Audrius Brūzga, U.S. Air Forces Chief of Staff, General Norton A. Schwartz, Congressman John

Shimkus (a proud Lithuanian and a Co-Chairman of the Baltic Caucus) and the former Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert.

Ambassador A. Brūzga opened the ceremonies with a short introductory speech and then invited the evening's guest of honor, Lithuania's Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas to say a few words. Minister Ušackas preceded Ambassador A. Brūzga as Ambassador to the United States. It was under his leadership that the expansion plans were designed and work begun. Now, several years later, he was back see his dream become a reality.

In his opening remarks Minister Ušackas stated, "This

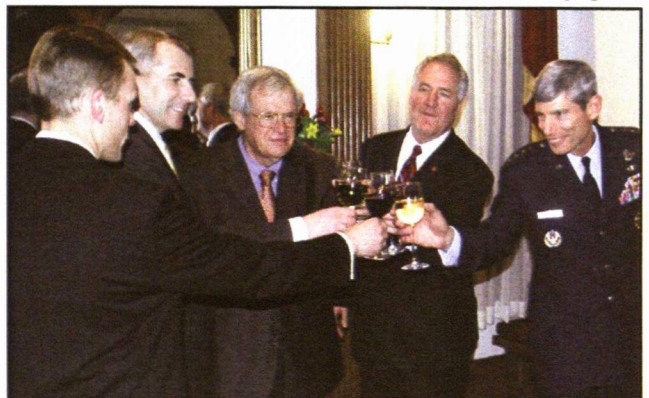
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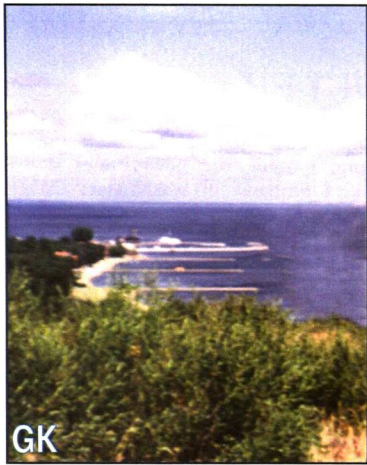
Lithuania's Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas cutting the opening ceremony ribbon.



Lithuania's Honorary Consuls



Ambassador A. Brūzga, Foreign Minister V. Ušackas, Former Speaker of the House, D. Hastert, Congressman J. Shimkus, U.S.A.F. Chief of Staff N. A. Schwartz.

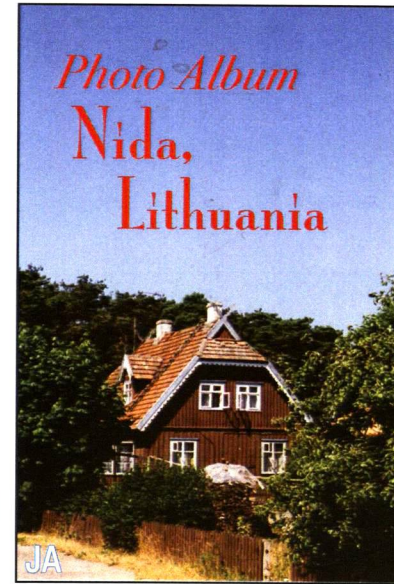


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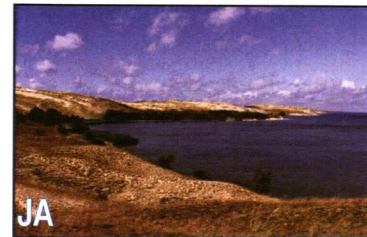
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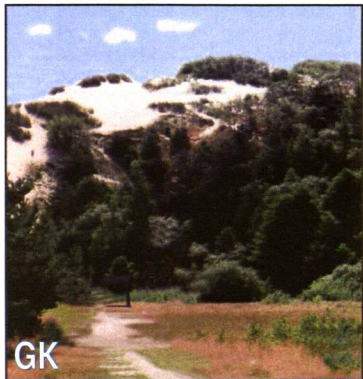
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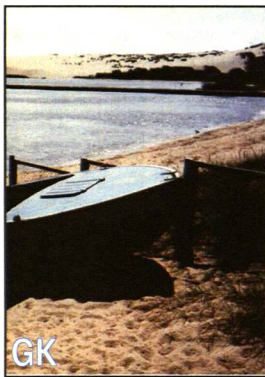
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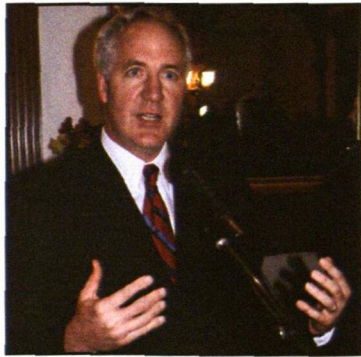


GK

Photos by:  
JA - Joanne Antanavage, Phila., PA  
GK - Gema Kreivėnas, Media, PA



*Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas presents a token of appreciation to one of the projects architects*



*Congressman John Shimkus addressing the guests*



*Atty. Paul Domalakes, Knights of Lithuania and treasurer of C-144 and Major J. Ferrara, PA National Guard.*

year our country is marking many important dates, that is, the millennium of Lithuania's name, Vilnius-European Capital of Culture 2009, also this building in Washington, which has been the premises of the Lithuanian legation and subsequently Embassy for 85 years is marking its one hundredth anniversary. This year we will also celebrate the fifth anniversary of Lithuania's membership in NATO and the European Union. For all this time Lithuania has been a responsible strategic U.S. partner. This renovated, one hundred year old, Embassy building symbolizes the continuity of Lithuania as a country, which has stood up to the Soviet tanks and continues its history towards future posterity."

After the greetings and speeches were finished the ceremony was concluded with Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas cutting the official ceremonial ribbon.

Then it was time for old friends to talk about old times, time to make new friends, time to enjoy the warm Lithuanian hospitality and its variety of culinary delights. It was time to explore the new, greatly expanded premises.

So, the next time you're in Washington, D.C. make sure you visit the new Embassy. You'll be pleasantly surprised!!!

*Rimas Gedeika*

*Photos by Rimas Gedeika*

*Rimas Gedeika lives in New Jersey. He is a member of the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community serving as Vice-President for Special Projects. He is also active in the Lithuanian Sports Community and is the administrator of Bridges.*

## *JURGIS AND IRENE PETKAITIS Honored*

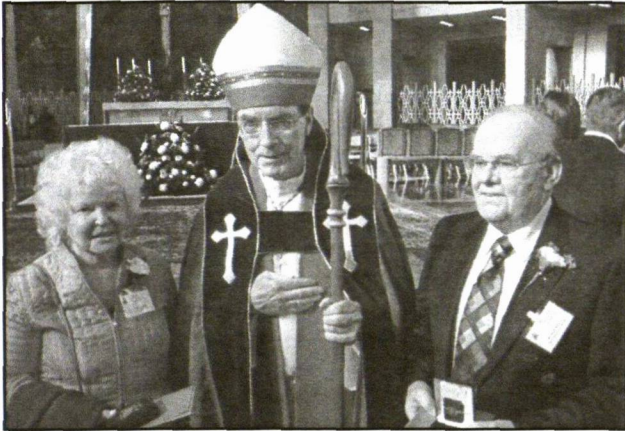
*Jurgis and Irene Petkaitis of Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, Hartford, CT received the St. Joseph's Medal of Appreciation from the Archdiocese of Hartford. CT*

Jurgis (George) Petkaitis has played an important part in the lives of the parishioners of Holy Trinity Church and the Lithuanian community in Hartford, CT.

The following is a brief account of the life of Jurgis Petkaitis. He was born January 8, 1926, in the village of Pajevonys in Suvalkija in the region of Vilkaviškis in Lithuania. He was the third child in the family of seven children. His love of music had an early start. His father enjoyed playing the concertina with Jurgis, an avid listener. The boy was noticed by Father Pijus Brazauskas, a priest of the local church. He invited him to serve at mass as an altar boy. This is when the priest noticed him looking back towards the organ loft watching and enjoying the choir singing. It was then that Fr. Brazauskas made arrangements with the organist of the church to give him music lessons. This opened the door for Jurgis to the world of music.

In October of 1944, the family left their homeland making their way through Prussia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and finally reaching Austria. After the war ended, Jurgis found shelter in the displaced persons camp in Glasenbach, not far from Salzburg. While living in the camp, Jurgis organized a men's octet and later a mixed chorus. They performed locally and sang for Lithuanian church services. He was also the organist for the American Catholic services in the military chapel at Camp Truscott near Salzburg. Jurgis continued his music studies; piano, organ, music theory and harmony at the Mazarteum Conservatory in Salzburg.

Jurgis immigrated to the United States in 1948 and initially lived with his uncle in Rockville, CT, moving to Hartford in 1949 when he became the organist at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church where he directed St. Cecelia's choir. In 1952, He became organist at St. Patrick's Church in Hartford



*Irene and Jurgis Petkaitis with Archbishop Henry J. Mansell*

where a new pipe organ was being installed. At that time it was very useful and handy for daily practice since he was preparing for his graduation organ recital in St. Joseph Cathedral. He was also organist at St. John Evangelist, Christ the King and St. Patrick's in Farmington, CT.

Working as the organist at Holy Trinity Church, Jurgis attended the Hartt College of Music at the University of Hartford. He also studied under Professor Vytautas Marijošius, who had been Music Director and Conductor of Lithuanian Opera in Lithuania. In 1955, Jurgis graduated from Hartt College of Music with a Bachelor of Music degree in Organ and later completed studies for the degree of Music Education at the University of Hartford.

He then taught music in the Colchester public school system in 1960. In 1968, he became Department Chairman of Music for the public schools in Colchester, including Bacon Academy. Jurgis was involved in instrumental, choral, music theory, music appreciation and harmony until his retirement in 1990. He was named Teacher of the Year in 1986-87 in Colchester and a finalist in the State Teacher of the Year Program.

For several years (in 1958), he was the Program Director of the Lithuanian Radio Hour, "Tėvynės Garsai", which presently is heard weekly on WWUH, 91.3 FM Sundays'. Jurgis is also a composer of Lithuanian hymns and masses. Many of those hymns can be heard at Christmas, Easter and other events.

In 1974, he organized a women's choir "Dainų Pynė." In 1993, he organized the men's trio which continues to perform to this day at various functions and churches.

From 1981 on, Jurgis has assisted the "Berželis" folk dance group by arranging and recording folk dances and directing the dancers in song. In 1981, he was the Musical Director at the Northeast Folk Dance Festival which was staged at Trinity College in Hartford, CT.

Jurgis married his wife, Irene, in 1954; they have three children and four grandchildren.

Both Jurgis and Irene are members of the Hartford Lithuanian Community. Irene has been a life time member of Holy Trinity Church, Hartford, CT, along with family members.

She has been, and is involved in the Lithuanian choir as a soloist and member. Irene has been a Eucharistic Minister, Reader and Cantor at all masses since 1999 through 2008.

Jurgis organized the Lithuanian Trio of women with Irene as a member who was featured in solo and duets with Dr. Izadore Alis. They performed throughout the New England communities of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Irene is a graduate of Holy Trinity Grammar School and High School. She had solo roles in school productions. Irene studied voice later under the renowned voice teacher, Rhea Massicotte, with voice recitals in the "Colonial Room" at the Bushnell Memorial in Hartford, CT.

She worked for the Hartford Fire Marshal and also for the American Heart Association.

Both Jurgis and Irene have been members of the Knights of Lithuania since 1949. Irene has been awarded the Third Degree in the Knights of Lithuania. She has been Recording Secretary and Cultural Chair of Council 6, Hartford. Jurgis has been in charge of music, and both he and Irene continue to be active and give a helping hand where needed.

*Submitted by Leona E. Sawka*

*Leona E. Sawka, Vytis Correspondent, Council 6, Knights of Lithuania, Hartford, CT.*

*Editor's Note:*

*Bridges congratulates Jurgis and Irene on their many accomplishments.*

## TRIVIA QUESTION

(No.29)

What is the structure in the photo called?

- (a) Bird Feeder      (b) Post Light  
(c) Roofed Pole (Chapel)

Answer to Trivia Quiz  
on page 20

*Crafted by  
Ed Shakalis*



**Lithuanian-American  
Community**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**WEBSITE**

**WWW.LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN.ORG**

**TELEPHONE**

**800-625-1170**

## What is Liepa Doing Now?

Two years ago I wrote about Liepa Gust, a recent college graduate and the daughter of Jim Gust and the late Vaiva Vebraitė.

I had earlier reported that Liepa was one of eleven American youth representatives at the World Lithuanian Youth Congress, which took place in Toronto during the summer of 2006. After that, Liepa left for Lithuania to work for a year. I was curious to find out how an American-born Lithuanian young woman felt working in Lithuania - what problems or situations did she have to handle? Here's a continuation of the earlier interview.

*You spent a year in Lithuania. Tell us what you took away from the experience?*

After I graduated with a Bachelor's in Psychology from Northwestern University in 2007, I moved to Lithuania to work. There I have many relatives and close friends (from my seventh and eighth grades at "Versmė" and "Užupis" middle schools and from the study abroad program at Vilnius University). Also my brother Aras lives and works in Klaipėda, and that summer we celebrated his wedding. I love and respect my family and friends - I was raised in a patriotic family. In Lithuania I learned that family, mentors, and friends are my support system when I have a bad day, and that happened frequently at my new job.

I learned a lot about the Lithuanian way of thinking, relationships, and friendships from my friends with whom I spent a very happy year. We spent the weekends together - traveled around Lithuania: sat by lakes and fished, spent a day at the aquarium in Druskininkai and at the Kaunas Zoo, went to concerts, or just went bowling in Vilnius. We made up our own adventures.

I also learned that Lithuania is not only a storybook country, but also a country with real people and problems whose past and future is and will be very important to me.

*What did you like and dislike while working in Lithuania?*

I worked at the Special Education and Psychology Center in Vilnius, and became the Olweus program's coordinating groups' representative on Feb. 15, 2008. The Educational Ministry signed a cooperative agreement with the Olweus International Group, which is responsible for guaranteeing that the Olweus Bully Prevention Program (OPPP) is effectively implemented.

It is very apparent that bullying is an unfortunate, sometimes hidden, and prevalent problem in many Lithuanian schools. Presently, during the 2008 to 2010 school years, a pilot program from Olweus (already proven to work successfully in other countries) was initiated in certain Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda schools. I really enjoyed

working with this project because I like children. It's painful when they are hurt or when they hurt others. It was easy to maintain contact with the Norwegians who coordinate this project because we communicated in the English language. I learned a great deal about bullying prevention from the "Child's Line" initiator and leader Robert Povilaitis, who participated in our group and has real world experience, and from the Olweus American practical methodology, which I and my colleagues had the opportunity to adapt to the Lithuanian educational system. It was a very difficult assignment - much more difficult than we had imagined when we first started planning the OPPP.

I didn't like it when our work was halted, in my opinion, because of illogical bureaucratic and technical reasons - we had to wait a long time before receiving financing and our "paperwork" was in order, even though all of this had been discussed and agreed upon several months back. The psychology department's chair, Renata Mazurienė, always believed that we would "make it because we had to make it", and we would organize everything together. I would have lost all hope if I hadn't had such a determined supervisor.

*During your free time, were you homesick for your American friends?*

In the fall, I met the folk group's, "Vilniaus Pynimėlio", director Laurynas Krasauskas and started to go to dance practices. We practiced every week, and I enjoyed it. It reminded me of my childhood because folk dancing was a part of my Lithuanian upbringing in America. I had danced with "Vėtra", and later with "Berželis". In Lithuania during the folk dance festival, I danced with Boston's "Sambūris" folk dance group. With "Vilniaus Pynimėlis" I had the opportunity to fly to South America, visit Lithuanian communities in Argentina and Uruguay, and perform in concerts. I had many experiences - ate empanadas, danced, and sang with South American Lithuanians. With the folk dancers we went to the mountains and holy places, and visited the ocean during our tourist trips. I even learned how to dance the salsa during evening events. It was too bad that most of the South American Lithuanians don't speak Lithuanian, but it was really fun to meet new friends and visit old ones, which I had made during the World Lithuanian Youth Congress. After this trip, I really understood how important it is to maintain the Lithuanian language.

*What are you doing now? Are you continuing your studies? Where and What?*

Now I'm living in Clemson, South Carolina and am studying for my doctorate in the International Family and Community Studies program at Clemson University. It has

a wide field of study incorporating psychology, sociology, political studies, law, health, and research methodology. This fall I'm studying about the global influence on the family and communities, community growth, and sociological research. I am working also with HRSA – a bullying prevention program called "Stop Bullying Now!". I became aware of this program while working in Lithuania with the Olweus program, which was adapted to the American educational system by Clem University professor Susan Limber, my academic advisor.

*You spent your summers in Camp Neringa. How did this camp help you become who you are today?*

That is where the Lithuanian spirit grew within me. We practiced the traditions, celebrated Lithuanian holidays, and felt right at home. I deeply appreciate my Neringa friendships and the camps as a way to strengthen Lithuanian community and nurture Lithuanian families. I enjoyed my work with the children when I worked as a counselor and art instructor. I would be happy if my children would attend these camps and also grow up with these same strong friendships and connections to Lithuania.

*Could you name some people with whom you could "climb every mountain"?*

My brothers are remarkable people, and I have three: an older one, a twin, and a younger brother. They are very different, but they are all very intelligent, and I think they will learn to live according to their gifts. Growing up with three brothers, I always felt at home with men – it's too bad that at the Clemson University program I work with only women.

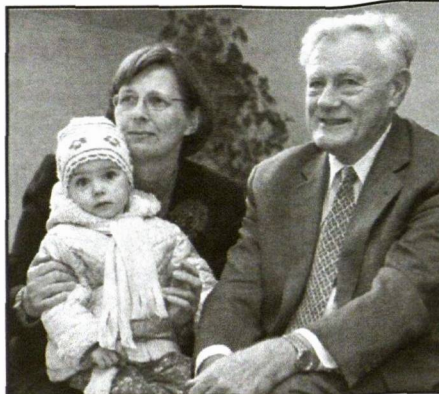
I have a very good friend who is on his second tour of duty in Iraq – when he returns next summer, he will have completed five years in the American army. He always believed that one must live according to his beliefs, work hard and that will make you happy. With him I could climb any mountain.

Yet my first and primary thought rests with my mother, Vaiva Vėbraitė, who worked with ambition, creativity, and a vision through many adversities to further the Lithuanian heritage in America until the reestablishment of independence and later to strengthen the Lithuanian spirit in independent Lithuania.

She was one of the creators of the A.P.P.L.E. organization, which helped to provide the latest pedagogical and educa-



*The final time the entire family was together was the occasion of Aras' marriage to Renata, in Vilnius, Lithuania.*



*Vaiva meets with President Adamkus, with her granddaughter, Adrija, on her lap.*

tional leadership research to over one-third of Lithuania's teachers and administrators. Courses provided an opportunity to share and discuss in an open setting during the summer. Vaiva was instrumental in Lithuanian educational reform – during the transition period from a Soviet system to a free, democratic system – urging others to accept high standards and new outlooks. She was that person who aided many educators to work for a new system and follow their instincts. Vaiva was flexible, especially during those times when her family responsibilities, health problems, and the desire to work both in America and Lithuania caused her to make hard choices. She came up with ways to continue working and continue with her vision by working for the Lithuanian presidency and the Lithuanian-American Community at the same time. What amazed me most was that my mother never gave in. Her unbelievable versatility was a part of her charisma, which aided those organizations for whom she worked. This in itself urged others, those who knew her, to immerse themselves in those same bold visions and to either be a part or lead the way. I have no doubt that I could climb any mountain with that person. I thank fate that I had such a mother. I would love to be like her – and dedicate my life to Lithuania and its future endeavors.

*Sigita Šimkuvienė-Rosen*

*Sigita Šimkuvienė-Rosen emigrated from Lithuania to the United States in 2001. She works at Yale University and is active in the Lithuanian American Community.*



# The Spirit of Neringa

Just west of Brattleboro, Vermont, in the modest hamlet of Marlboro, lays Camp Neringa. Neringa is a Lithuanian heritage camp, based on religion and Lithuanian culture. The camp is naturally secluded, up a winding dirt road from Route 9, a route bustling with motorists racing by to their destinations, likely too preoccupied to notice the turnoff. While the location seems distant, it is ideal for campers who are excited to spend their summers away from all distractions.

Cabins and several larger buildings ring an open field that serves as the center of the camp. To the south, six cabins stretch across the top of the field, and, to the west, a row of six cabins runs the length of the clearing. This configuration separates the boys and girls during the summer youth camps. While a majority of cabins have been updated to include a front veranda and more spacious sleeping quarters, three cabins predate Neringa's founding in 1969. Among those older cabins sits a shower house, also built prior to the camp's beginning. The "dušo namelis" has been showing its age as long as I've ever known the camp, which amounts to almost thirty years. It was recently decided that this shower house needed replacement, and the board that governs the camp considered a series of designs of varying shapes and sizes. These designs were on display last summer in the camp cafeteria. I found myself there, one hot afternoon, considering what the camp would look like with a new and different element amongst the old buildings.

My dreaming was interrupted by the musings of the grounds keeper of the camp. The staffer, who hails from generations of Vermonters, is steeped in the history of the place. He explained to me that a decision had been made on the new shower house, and he was very pleased with the choice. Of the various designs,

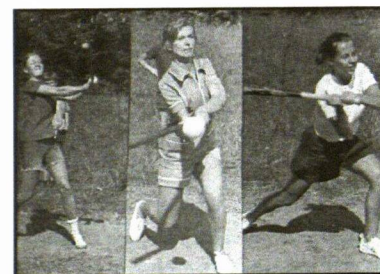
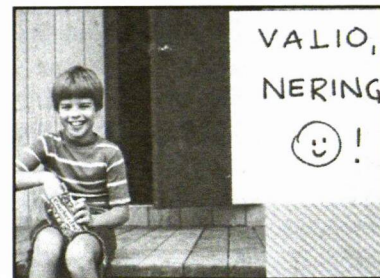
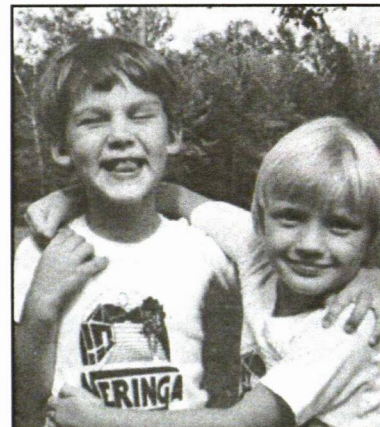
the decision was made to build a shower house that is practically identical to the original structure, but with a few improvements to aid in snow removal, and other necessary updates. I learned from him that countless Neringa alumni drive up the road in the off-season, seeking the camp they knew many years ago; and every one of them is pleased to find the camp just as they remember it. Throughout its years on that slope in Marlboro, the camp has modernized slowly and only as necessary: the main lodge was updated in 1982, cabins are upgraded as needed, and a new chapel was built in 1989; but the overall appearance of the camp and its spirit has remained purposely consistent. The new shower house will help preserve that continuity.

## The Beginning

In 1943 seven girls spent the summer at the residence of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Villa Maria, in Thompson, Connecticut. The next year the Sisters organized a summer camp, which they called Immaculata, for girls of Lithuanian descent at the convent in Putnam, CT. The camp moved to Vermont in 1969, and Camp Neringa was born. 2009 marks the 40th anniversary of Neringa.

In those first years, Sister Paulė Savickaitė of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception was the head of the camp, leading it through its transition from Connecticut to Vermont. The Sisters purchased land that had been used as a riding camp. Sister Paulė likes to recall how early Neringa campers found themselves jumping over construction-related ditches in the midst of Neringa's transformation into a cultural, religious, and educational facility.

In the early 1970s, the role of camp leader was passed on to Sister Ignė Marijosiūtė. Sister Ignė acted as Director of Neringa for 25 years, and many would agree that her spirit, creativity and passion for Neringa made the camp what it is today.



Two years ago I saw Sister Ignè in Lithuania, where she now lives and works. While there, she introduced me to someone she knew, and affectionately referred to me as one of “her children”; it seemed a fitting description. Sister Ignè put her soul into Camp Neringa, and every one of the children who grew up attending the camp truly felt like Sister Ignè was there for them. Those who had the opportunity to work with Sister Ignè have spoken of being in awe of her dedication to the place.

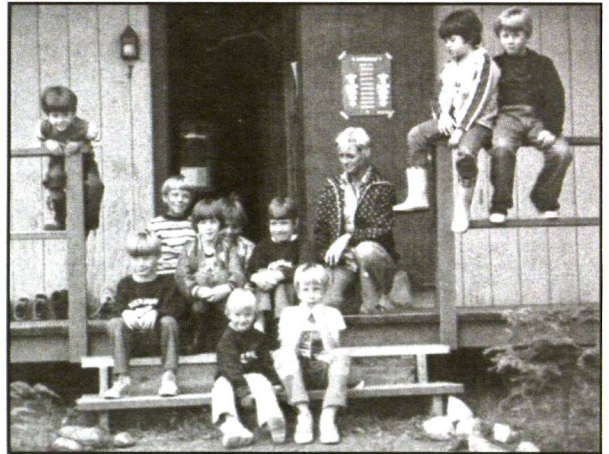
Last summer, while working as a Neringa program director, I spoke from time to time with Dainora Kupčinskaitė, the current Assistant Director of the camp. Dainora spends summers in the same house Sister Ignè used to occupy, and there is a photo of Sister Ignè hanging on the wall. When problems arose we would gaze up at the photo, as if to seek inspiration from Sister Ignè. Her dedication still drives and inspires Camp Neringa, and her motivating slogan can still be heard throughout the camp: Einam, darom! Or, “Let’s go, let’s do!”

### Today

In 1996, Sister Ignè moved to Lithuania (eventually assuming the position of Superior General of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary for a considerable amount of time), and Camp Neringa was incorporated as a non-profit organization. A Board of Directors and a full time Executive Director were appointed to oversee the camp. Dana Grajauskaitė was appointed Director after Sister Ignè’s departure, and she thereby assumed responsibility to turn Neringa into a non-profit organization that could sustain itself. This was no easy task, as it has always remained one of the primary goals of Neringa to keep the camp affordable for all children who would like to attend. In 2003, Dana was succeeded by Vida Strazdienė, and Dainora Kupčinskaitė was appointed Assistant Director. Together, Vida and Dainora have embraced new possibilities for Neringa. Not only are there more camps held at Neringa during the summer, but there are more retreats, alumni events, and opportunities to reconnect with friends; today Neringa has become a place that is home to people of all ages, all year-round.

Neringa is certainly made special by the people that surround it, but there is something more, something almost inexplicable, about the camp. The setting is one of serene and natural beauty. Its location, so far away from the distractions of everyday life, allows anyone who spends time there to reconsider the simpler things in life, and to fall under the spell of the place. The camp, to me, has a life force of its own. Free from cell phones and Internet and television, a person is forced to simply be a part of the surrounding natural world. After several days at Neringa, it is perfectly natural for all negative energy to seep away, and for one to be filled with peace. It is inspiring to think of what it must have been like 40 years ago; to visit this place for the first time and sense the possibility of the landscape. It is understandable why Neringa has touched the lives of so many people for so many years.

Neringa was created for children of Lithuanian heritage. Neringa



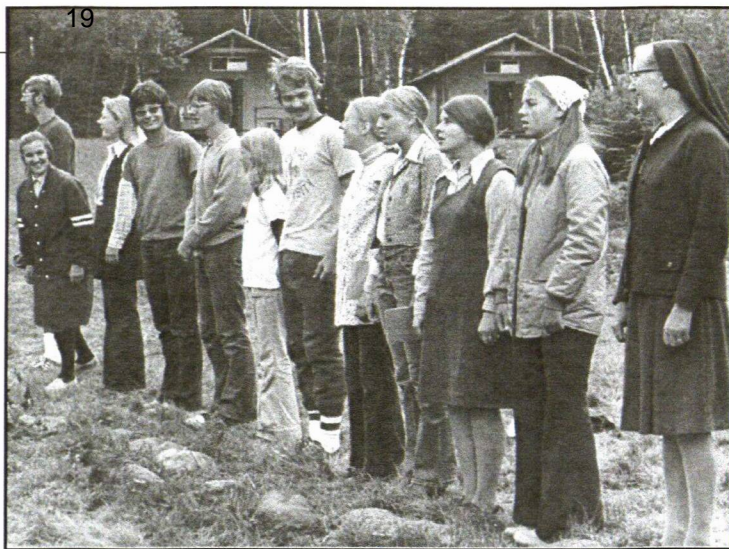


campers are surrounded by enthusiastic counselors and administrators who are eager to impart their knowledge of Lithuanian language, history, culture and religion. The camp remains a universe unto itself for generations of children: helping to build cultural identity, develop personal wellness, and create life-long friendships. It is reassuring to believe that Neringa will be there for at least 40 more.

*Rytas Stankunas*

*The photos were selected and compiled for Bridges by Antanina Žmuidzinas from the Neringa archives in honor of Neringa's 40th anniversary.*

**Editor's Note: Congratulations to Neringa. May they continue their successes and celebrate many more anniversaries.**



*Camp leaders in 1973*

### ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION

Trivia Quiz on page 15

*Answer: Source: Marija Gimbutas book, THE BALTS*

"A peculiar cosmogonical tree of the Baltic peoples was the wooden, roofed pole topped with symbols of sky deities-suns, moons, stars-and guarded by stallions and snakes. Right up to the present century, roofed poles as well as crosses with a sun symbol around the cross/arms could be encountered in Lithuania in front of homesteads, in fields, beside sacred springs, or in the forests. They were erected on the occasion of someone's marriage or illness, during epidemics, or for the purpose of ensuring good crops. Though none of these perishable monuments are more than two hundred years old, their presence in pre-Christian times is attested by historic documents describing them as relics of the old religion. Christian bishops instructed the clergy to destroy the poles and crosses before which the peasants made offerings and observed other pagan rites. The Lithuanian roofed poles and crosses managed to escape destruction because the people fixed some Christian symbols to them, and gradually they came under protection of the Catholic Church. They are, nevertheless, monuments stemming from pre-Christian faith, as well as illustrious examples of Lithuanian folk art, their symbolic and decorative elements manifesting direct ties with the art of the Iron Age."

*Edward Shakalis*

*Edward Shakalis is a retired Electrical Engineer and a ham radio operator. He and his son Rick run "The Lithuanian Open" golf tournament.*

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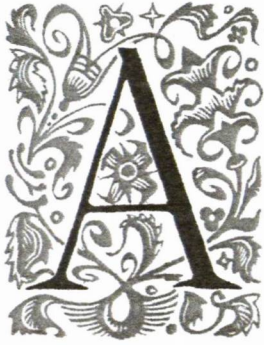


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Gloria Kivytaitė O'Brien



## *The Rowan Staff* “ŠERMUKŠNIO LAŽDA”

*“Prie vieno pelkyno stovėjo didelės,  
apleistas dvaras.....”*

large, neglected estate stood close by a marshland. No one had lived there for many years, as everyone knew it had been taken over by a group of devils. After driving out the owners, they held their devilish parties there nightly, so that no honest person could lift a foot into the rooms. The owner and his family were forced to live in the granary, because they feared the devils and didn't know how to get rid of them. Anyone who accidentally ventured into the rooms was heaved about by these devils until barely alive.

One night, a mendicant traveler, leaning heavily on a stout rowan staff, knocked on the estate's entrance gates, asking for lodging for the night. He noted, that the rooms were very big, and he wouldn't take up much space.

The gatekeeper answered, “Yes, my man, the manse is very big, but it's better not to go there. It has been completely taken over by devils, and none of us dare to even stick a nose in there. So don't look for lodging there, as you may never leave in health.”

“Ah, what will be, will be”, responded the beggar. “I am old, and it's about time for me to die anyway. I think I will manage to deal with those devils, and if not – well, the Lord's will be done everywhere. Please unlock the manse, and I will go to stay there overnight.”

“Very well,” said the gatekeeper with a shrug. “I have warned you. You don't want to listen, so don't blame me later on.” He unlocked the manse and allowed the beggar to enter.

Walking through the rooms, the traveler was impressed by their beauty, but he also noted that there was filth everywhere, and the entire house carried the stink of old goats. He built a fire in the hearth in one of the nicest rooms, and stretched out on the carpet nearby, waiting for whatever would happen next.

And slumst, down the chimney plopped an ugly black goat, glaring at the beggar with eyes bulging. The old man, no fool, grabbed his stout staff and gave the creature such a whack across his shoulders, that the devil turned into a puddle of blackest pitch!

“Well, that's it for him”, thought the old fellow, and lay down once more, with his rowan staff at his side.

A short while later, devils by the dozen invaded the doors and windows of the house, causing the whole place to clang and vibrate. A large group of them were reaching, grabbing at the man's clothing.

“Oh, you good-for-nothings!”, the man shouted, as he laid about him with his trusty staff, striking backs, shoulders, sides, knees, and noses. Whichever one he hit, that one was unable to raise arms or legs, and howling, ran away. “Brothers, let's get away from here!” They all began screeching. “He has a heavy rowan staff, and we can do nothing against him!”

They all ran to the windows, and turning into black bats, flew away.

And the old beggar lay down by the fireplace and slept peacefully the remaining night. He knew, you see, that a staff cut from the rowan tree has the power to drive away all devils, and so he feared nothing.

The estate owner was overjoyed that the beggar had dispersed those devils. He invited the old fellow to make his home with them in the manse, and if ever devils should show themselves, to roust them with his staff.

But the devils never came back.

*A Lithuanian Tale, told by Pranas Sasnauskas in “Lietuvių Sakmės”. English translation by Gloria Kivytaitė O'Brien.*

*Gloria Kivytaitė O'Brien is a frequent contributor to Bridges. She grew up in Brooklyn, Annunciation Parish. Gloria can be contacted at Senaboba@aol.com.*



# Dalia Grybauskaitė Lithuania's "Iron Lady"

## President-elect of Lithuania

Inauguration Day July 12, 2009

*Ms Grybauskaitė cites  
Margaret Thatcher  
(The first "Iron Lady")  
as an inspiration*

The President - elect of Lithuania is EU budget commissioner Dalia Grybauskaitė. The 53 year old Grybauskaitė is not a member of a political party and stood for election as a non-partisan candidate. She was backed by the ruling Conservative party. Last year she accused the Social Democrats who led the government of squandering the gains of the economic boom and not preparing for or foreseeing what is now a deep economic crisis.

The president- elect was born on March 1, 1956 in Vilnius. She studied in St. Petersburg.. After returning to Lithuania she taught economics in Vilnius.


After the reestablishment of Lithuanian independence Grybauskaitė became a senior civil servant and political aide responsible for

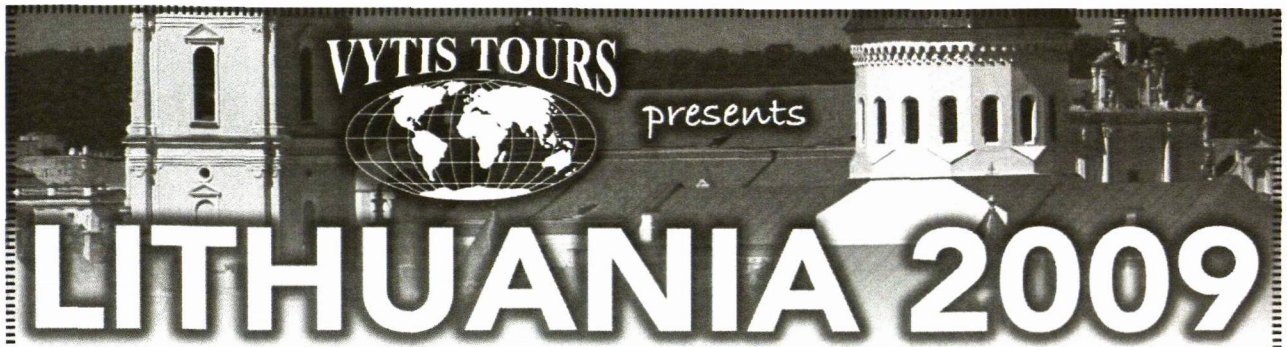
building Lithuania's economic relations and negotiating with the European Union.

From 1999 to 2000 she was named deputy finance minister and in 2000 deputy foreign minister. From 2001 to 2004 she served as finance minister. She was nominated to the EU's Brussels based executive body, the European Commission, when Lithuania joined the bloc in 2004.

Dalia Grybauskaitė is a martial arts black belt. She is single. In addition to Lithuanian she speaks English, Russian, Polish, and French. She is the second woman to become President of a Baltic country, sharing the honor with Latvia's Vaira Vike - Freiberga who served from 1999 to 2007.

*\*Ramunė Kalvaitytė's photo of Dalia Grybauskaitė*

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# bridges

VOLUME 33 ISSUE 5

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Rimas Gedeika  
78 Mark Twain Dr., Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690

## Calendar of Events for June, July/August, 2009

Please verify all events as places & times are subject to change.

### JUNE

**June 5-7, 2009 - ANNUAL TALKA WORK WEEKEND**  
roll up your sleeves & help get Neringa in shape for the coming camp season. Please inform [vida@neringa.org](mailto:vida@neringa.org) if you will be able to attend.

**June 6, 2009 - SPRING FLING, 8 am - 2 pm**  
**Indoor & outdoor Flea Market** - Crafts 3 Vendors, Food, Raffles, Children's Activities & more  
3603 McRoberts Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234  
Sponsor: Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God  
[www.osfprov.org](http://www.osfprov.org) 412-885-7232

**June 7, 2009 - 1 pm -3 pm - ANNUAL MEETING** -  
The LAC Cape Cod - Chapter will hold elections for the current year's chapter board. All members are urged to attend. Please allow time to eat lunch before the meeting. Old Country Buffet, Festival Mall, Route 132, Hyannis, MA 02601  
Sponsor: Cape Cod Chapter of the LAC

**June 7, 2009 - 12:30 pm - ANNUAL "INDOOR PICNIC"**  
Maironis Park, 52 So. Quinsigamond Ave., Shrewsbury, MA  
Lithuanian dinner. Free admission. Everyone is welcome. Knights of Lithuania, Council 26 Contact: [mociuteviv@aol.com](mailto:mociuteviv@aol.com)

**June 12, 13, 14, 2009** - Knights of Lithuania, New England District, **Annual Retreat** at the Franciscan Monastery, 28 Beach Ave., Kennebunkport, MA  
With Rev. Msgr. Albert Contons as Retreat Master. Reserve early. [info:mociuteviv@aol.com](mailto:info:mociuteviv@aol.com)

**June 13, 2009 - ROSLYN LITHUANIAN CEMETERY MONUMENT DEDICATION.** All day event in the City of Roslyn WA. The program will start with the Reenacting of an actual 1906 Lithuanian Coal Miner's funeral. Placing of wreaths at the two new Lithuanian Monuments, Blessing by the Clergy, Dedication speech with short introduction of descendants who are present, Folk dancing, tours of the Coal mine & Lithuanian life. Banquet with Lithuanian folk songs, Power point show and introductions to the Local Lithuanian History from 1900's who arrived in Washington State. Ending the evening will be a Dance Lithuanian style. Lithuanian/English language Mass is also being planned. Over night accommodations at local Hotels will be reserved & announce in the near future. The entire event will be filmed by one if not more different groups. Prior to this event will be a Talka (Barn

raising) actually it will be a fence raising for the Lithuanian Cemetery in Roslyn, to prepare the Lithuanian Cemetery for the June 13th Dedication. Volunteers from the Portland and Seattle Lithuanian communities will be joined by descendants of the Lithuanian Cemetery. Work, food & song will be allowed! [www.portlandlithuanians.com](http://www.portlandlithuanians.com)

**June 14, 2009 - Holy Mass 10:30 am - Day Of Hope & Sorrow** - Our Lady of the Assumption church, 76 Wianno Avenue, Osterville, MA 02655.

Let us come & pray for those Lithuanians who have died in the Soviet Gulags. Sponsor: Cape Cod Chapter of the LAC & Commemoration of the Deportations

**June 14, 2009 - Sunday, COMMEMORATION OF THE DEPORTATIONS.** After the 9:00 am Mass Holy Trinity parish hall, Hartford, CT. Sponsor: Hartford LAC Chapter  
Info: Viktoras Kogelis, Chair

**June 16, 2009 - 7 to 9 pm - Lithuanian Amber Roots**  
Heritage Club - Lithuanian Music Hall, Culture Center 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Phila., PA - Please use left side door.  
Info: Millie Helt 610-497-5469 [milliemarks@aol.com](mailto:milliemarks@aol.com)

**June 20-27, 2009 - LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE COURSES**  
Camp Dainava, Manchester, MI - One week intensive courses under the auspices of the Lithuanian Educational Council of the USA. Designed for beginners, intermediate & advanced students or those wishing to refresh their language skills. Taught by experienced instructors in vacation like surroundings. No limitations regarding age or formal education.  
Info: Ausrele Sakalaite, 1388 Overton Dr., Lemont, IL. 60439  
630-243-6302 E-mail [Ausreles@comcast.net](mailto:Ausreles@comcast.net)

### JULY

**July 3 - 4, 2009 - NERINGA TURNS 40** - Neringa's on-site birthday celebration (aside from celebrating at every camp). See the 40th birthday party information at [www.neringa.org](http://www.neringa.org) for a registration form and details on the program as they become available. If you can't make it to Vermont, be sure to join in the celebration at Putnam during the annual picnic. [www.neringa.org](http://www.neringa.org)

**June 14, 2009 - DAY OF SORROW AND HOPE.**  
The traditional commemoration of the mass deportations, the Day of Sorrow and Hope, will be held at Parish Annunciation. There will be ceremonies, a program featuring the New York Lithuanian Chorus, under the direction of Gintare Bukauskas, and refreshments. Annunciation Parish, 259 N. 5th St., Brooklyn, NY 11211  
[WWW.ANNUNCIATION-NY.COM](http://WWW.ANNUNCIATION-NY.COM)

**July 26, 2009 - PUTNAM PICNIC**  
**Lithuanian Friendship Day Picnic**  
Immaculate Conception Convent Grounds  
600 Liberty Highway, Putnam, CT 06260

### AUGUST

**August 6 - 9, 2009**  
**96th National Convention Knights of Lithuania,**  
Oak Brook, IL - Hosted by Council 16, Chicago, IL  
[www.knightsoflithuania.com](http://www.knightsoflithuania.com)

**August 15 - 16, 2009 - 95th LITHUANIAN DAYS**  
Food, vendors & fun for all. Lithuanian Textiles will be featured this year - Schuylkill Mall, Frackville, PA  
Sponsor: Knights of Lithuania Council 144

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JUNE 21- FATHER'S DAY

JUNE 24- JONINIS (ST. JOHN'S DAY)

JUNE 13-14, 1941-  
COMMEMORATION OF DEPORTATIONS