

# bridges

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*Žalgirio Mūšis*  
*600 years Anniversary*  
*By Antanas Beinaravičius*



january/february 2010

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

*Letter from the Editor*

*As you look at this month's contents please be assured that I have not taken leave of my senses. At times it only seems that way. Why so many Christmas articles? Because we want you to have the December issue early in December and because these articles are sent to us much later in the month it is necessary to print them after Christmas. The world is in an economic crisis and as you can read from President Grybauskaitė's greetings to the people of Lithuania she is doing everything to reassure them of a better future by reminding them of their difficult past. She is well aware of the problems from the places she visited right before Christmas.*

*We just ended a year of celebrating Lithuania's millennium and this year marks the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald (or 1st Battle of Tannenberg. In Lithuania it is known as the Battle of Žalgiris. You will read more about this event in a future issue.*

*Here at home the struggle continues to save St. George Church in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania from being torn down. Although a court order has been issued it seems the diocese is short of funds to continue the demolition of the church. Because of its historical value the parishioners are hopeful it can become a museum. You can help by writing a letter to the addresses in the article.*

*January and February mark two important dates. On February 16, 1918, Lithuania became a free nation. Although that freedom was short lived, the people now had a taste of that precious gift. It took them until 1990 to regain independence but they never forgot the freedom taken from them the first time. January 13, 1991, found the Lithuanian television tower and the Parliament building surrounded by Russian tanks. It was a peaceful gathering with the people praying and singing but the tanks kept moving forward. And when it was over, the blood of the unarmed people was shed for Lithuanian freedom. It's so easy to forget these events as we go about our lives, but we must never let these events be pushed into the past. PGA golfer and poet, Michael Lucas, has shared an original poem with us about the night of January 13. Many Lithuanian American Community chapters and churches are holding commemorative gatherings. If you are fortunate enough to be in an area where an event is taking place, do try to attend.*

*As always, thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue and to you, the readers, for sharing your homes with us.*



Jeanne Shalna Dorr

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\* **Cover:** *A fragment of oil painting of Žalgirio mūšis. Painted in 2006 by artist Antanas Beinaračius in Lithuania.*

*The size of the painting is 250 x 500 cm.*

**Žalgirio mūšis/The Battle of Grunwald** (or 1st Battle of Tannenberg) took place on July 15, 1410 with the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania ranged against the Knights of the Teutonic Order, led by the Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen. It was the decisive engagement in the Polish-Lithuanian-Teutonic War (1409-1411) and one of the greatest battles of medieval Europe.

The battle saw the Monastic State of the Teutonic Knights decisively defeated — their order never recovered its former power.

The few eyewitness accounts are contradictory. It took place near several smaller villages, and different names in various languages are attributed to it.

**Names and Locations**

The battle was fought in the plains between the villages of Grunwald (Lithuanian: Žalgiris), Stebark (German: Tannenberg), and Łódwigowo (German: Ludwigsdorf) in Prussia, which at that time was territory governed by the Teutonic Order, but which is now in Poland. The nearest city of any size was Gilgenberg (since 1945: Dabrówno). The names Žalgiris (from the Lithuanian žalia giria) and Grunwald (from the German grüner Wald) both translate as "Green Forest"; it was also called Zielone Pole ("Green Field") in Old Polish, and, in German, Grunenfede or Grunefeld ("Green field") in the oldest texts.

**The battle is called:**

- \* Schlacht bei Tannenberg (Battle of Tannenberg) by Germans
- \* Bitwa pod Grunwaldem (Battle of Grunwald) by Poles
- \* Žalgirio mūšis (Battle of Žalgiris) by Lithuanians

## Christmas Eve Greetings from President Dalia Grybauskaitė

*Dear Fellow People of Lithuania,*

*On this beautiful Christmas Eve, we have joined with those we love to share bread, the warmth of our hearts and all that we have. Together we grow stronger in spirit and faith. We are looking forward to tomorrow with hope and joy.*

*For many of us, this year has not been easy. The economic downturn brought about unexpected changes and unfulfilled expectations. But there were also moments of success and achievement. The vision is still there and the future is open wide.*

*We have found new ways to overcome difficulties. We have discovered paths of friendly support, mutual understanding, and more compassionate and responsive dialogue. We are now demanding not only of others, but also of ourselves. We are determined to learn, advance and aspire. It will help us endure and prevail. Let us remember our past: Lithuania has lived through more difficult times. And they would bring the nation even closer together.*

*Let us view today's challenges as lessons for tomorrow. Let us stand united in our support, trust and endurance. Let us join in resolve, ability and potential. Let us together build Lithuania, let us have faith in our homeland and let us work for its better future.*

*I wish you all strength and success, happiness and self-confidence. And miracles that we can create and share with each other.*

*Dear people of Lithuania, may the Christmas spirit fill your hearts with peace and love. May the coming year bring you joy and happiness.*

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

*Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania  
December 24, 2009, Vilnius*

*\* The first photo by Dzoja Barysaitė*

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## The President during Christmas Season

Joy and excitement permeated the Presidential Palace at the beginning of December when President Dalia Grybauskaitė, together with her staff, decorated a huge Christmas tree.

In the Advent season, President Dalia Grybauskaitė visited the Christmas soup kitchen organized by the Order of Malta, inviting us to remember those in need of support and compassion, particularly the elderly and the infirm. It is a traditional event held in Lithuania for the fourth year to openly acknowledge that there are many senior people around us who are lonely and live on low income and who want our continued care and attention.



"Charity and volunteer work should always be in our hearts. At a time when life is not easy in Lithuania, I invite us to share the best we have. In this way only will Lithuania get back on its feet more quickly. Now that our country is in economic and moral downturn, it is all the more important that the true spirit of charity and volunteering should stay with us," President Dalia Grybauskaitė said.

In the weeks before Christmas, the President visited those who are waiting for care and compassion the most: the Lithuanian Association of the Blind and Visually Handicapped, the Ivaškevičius Youth School in Vilnius, the Kaišiadorys Special School, and the Children's Department in Abromišakės Rehabilitation Hospital. "The challenges that fate places in the path of children ought to be the concern of all. We need strength to overcome hardships and we must inspire vigor and courage in each other. We must cherish every person, offering hope and confidence and helping them to discover and reveal their unique potential," President Dalia Grybauskaitė said.

After offering her Christmas greetings to children and her wishes for the fulfillment of their most secret dreams, the President said: "The upcoming most beautiful holidays of the year are dear to each and every one of us. It is the best time to be together in peace and silence and to give comfort to those around us. It is a time of miracles in our hearts and a time of believing that good will conquer evil. I know that difficult fate has befallen some of you, but do not despair. Learn to help each other and the future will become easier and brighter. Do not be afraid of working and persevering – it will bring a new meaning to your life and open new horizons."

Continuing to spread the spirit of Christmas, President Dalia Grybauskaitė visited the Christmas Fair "Children of Angels – with Love" held at the Teachers' Community Center where ceramics, woodwork and glassware created by children with special needs from all over Lithuania were put on display. The children presented their gifts to high-profile people of their own choice and the President was among them. President Grybauskaitė extended Christmas greetings to children from schools supported by the Alma Adamkienė Charity Fund, wishing them great holidays and fulfillment of all hopes:

"Christmas is a time of miracles, but miracles come

true only for those who believe in them. It is also a time for gifts, but do not forget to share them with those who care for you. There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." President Grybauskaitė said at a Christmas party held at the Presidential Palace for children supported by the Alma Adamkienė Fund.

President Dalia Grybauskaitė received Lithuanian Scouts and Guides who presented her with the Peace Light from Bethlehem:

"The Light of Bethlehem teaches us to think and care about each other. Let us remember those who will celebrate Christmas in sadness and solitude. I know that the Light of Bethlehem will bring warmth and comfort to their homes and that it will envelop them in love and peace. Let us extend a helping hand to our neighbors and let us bring goodwill and joy to our country."

For 14 years now the Peace Light, which originates in the church of Bethlehem, is passed on from candle to candle around Lithuania. On December 16–23, it is delivered as a token of hope to those who need it the most: to orphanages, elderly people homes, hospitals, and places of detention. The Light of Peace is also spread to schools, universities, local communities, and government institutions.

President Dalia Grybauskaitė gave interviews to the Lithuanian media, sharing her childhood reminiscences about Christmas and Christmas gifts from Santa Claus.

"I wish that the Spirit of Christmas would surround us with joy and grace, love and encouragement. I wish you to have peace and conform in your home, and strength in your heart and mind. May a star shine over your life, bringing hope and giving faith in the future," the President said in her interview.

Article and \*Photos provided by the President's Office Press Service

*Captions for photos on the left page:*

\*1-President Grybauskaitė sends Christmas greetings

\*2-Sharing a cup of soup at the Christmas Soup Kitchen

\*3-Visiting the school for the visually impaired

\*4-Beauty through the eyes of a child

\*5-Attending Christmas Fair -- "Children of Angels--with Love."

\*6-President Grybauskaitė and her staff decorating the Lithuanian Christmas Tree

## A Note of Thanks

Early in December, the students from Vinco Krėvė's Lithuanian School in Philadelphia, PA, together with St. Andrew's parishioners sent, Christmas packages to the Lithuanian soldiers serving in Afghanistan. The packages contained Christmas gifts for the soldiers, toys for the children of Afghanistan, and many Christmas cards wishing all of them a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Other Lithuanian schools (Los Angeles) and organizations (scouts) also sent letters. All packages and letters arrived just in time for Christmas.

We received the following letter from their Commanding Officer, Col. Gediminas Macijauskas.

*Rimas Gedeika*



*Philadelphia's Vinco Krėvė's School children and their teachers preparing to send packages to Afghanistan*

### **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

*Our Christmas was a truly joyous celebration. On Christmas Eve, all of us sat at a huge table and partook in Kūčios (traditional Lithuanian Christmas dinner). Prior to the start of the Kūčios dinner our Chaplain distributed plotkelias (Lithuanian wafers) to all of us. We then proceeded to share them with each other and with our invited non Lithuanian guests.*

*After the Kūčios most of us attended Mass. Mass was also said on Christmas Day.*

*After Christmas Mass, all of us stood in formation and received various medals. Afterwards we read all the cards and letters received from America, opened all your packages (from Philadelphia) and proceeded to distribute the gifts.*

*Respectfully yours,  
Colonel Gediminas Macijauskas*

*\* Photos from Afghanistan by Sgt. Lina Ambrozėvičiūtė*



*Col. G. Macijauskas (commanding officer) opening the packages received from Philadelphia*



*What a great gift!*



*Christmas cards bringing joy to the soldiers*

# MEET OUR YOUNG WRITERS...

## Philadelphia Lithuanian Scouts Kučios Celebrate

On Sunday, Dec. 13, 2009 I attended the Lithuanian Scouts Kučios at St. Andrew's parish in Philadelphia, PA. Kučios is a special supper that is held on Christmas Eve. In Lithuania on the day before Christmas, believers do not eat meat and dairy products. In the evening, everybody sits down to a holiday decorated table to eat special foods. More than 12 different types of food are to be served that evening.

When I heard that my family was going to attend the Lithuanian Scouts Kučios, I didn't want to go because it sounded like it would be really boring. I do not enjoy cold fish dishes, etc. However, I was quite pleasantly surprised. And as a matter of fact, it was really fun. After Fr. Peter Burkauskas blessed the meal, we broke a blessed wafer with one another which was made similar to a communion host and we wished each other a merry Christmas. Then we started to eat. I was able to try different

foods I've never tried before. All of the food was cold, but it tasted good. There were three types of fish dishes: salmon, whiting, and I believe, halibut. Even though the fish was cold, it tasted smoked and delicious. There were also other dishes to feast on: salads, several different types of herring

dishes, small sweet croutons called "kučiukai" which are to be eaten drenched in poppy seed milk, and much more. For entertainment there was a folk ensemble with an accordion player, a violinist, and others who performed Lithuanian Christmas music. The audience also joined in singing Lithuanian Christmas carols and patriotic folk songs like "Lietuva Brangi" ("Precious Lithuania"). There was also a program during which they awarded the women who created the first Philadelphia Lithuanian Scouts Kučios 40 years ago: Danutė Surdėnas, Daria Dragūnas, Ona Pliuškonis, Dalia Jakas, Aušra Zerr, Aniliora Mašalaitis. During the program, on behalf of the Vincas Krėvė Lithuanian School, I, together with some of my classmates, thanked the scouts for making this Kučios possible. We students also had to recite a really fancy Lithuanian poem that said in a very poetic way "Merry Christmas to all who hear". All in all, I enjoyed the Scouts Kučios very much and I wasn't the only one. Almost all of the grownups and kids enjoyed it as well. If next year you will receive an invitation to Kučios, make sure you go. You will not be sorry, but very happy that you did.

*Andrius Duncia  
Andrius is a 6th grader in Philadelphia's  
Vincas Krėvė Lithuanian School.*

*Photos: Jonas Duncia*



*Scout leader  
Laima Bagdonavicius*



*A scene from Kučios*



*Children from Vincas Krėvė Lithuanian School*



*Everyone joins in to sing Lietuva Brangi*

## STASYS LOZORAITIS:

### *The Man and the Symbol*

#### **Editor's Note:**

On November 21, 2009 the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, DC held a commemoration in honor of the late Stasys Lozoraitis. Mr. Lozoraitis was born in 1924 in Germany. His father was also a diplomat.

Mr. Lozoraitis served as Lithuania's Ambassador to the United States from 1991 to 1993. In 1993 he was an unsuccessful candidate in the Presidential election in Lithuania. From 1993-1994 he served as

Lithuania's ambassador to Italy. He died in 1994.

Ambassador Lozoraitis was greatly respected by his contemporaries. He was married to the former Daniela D'Erocle.

We are privileged to share with you the memories of Victor Nakas which were presented at the commemoration.

May Ambassador Lozoraitis' courage and dedication never be forgotten.



Portrait of Ambassador Stasys Lozoraitis, Jr



Victor Nakas

#### **STASYS LOZORAITIS:**

##### *The Man and the Symbol*

I had the privilege to personally know three long-time Lithuanian diplomats – Stasys Backis, Aniceta Simutis and Stasys Lozoraitis. Although they were people with different personalities, they had one thing in common – their persistence. With the firmness and solidity of oak trees,

for decades each of them defended the ideal of Lithuanian statehood, sacrificing their professional lives to that cause. They did so under extremely unfavorable conditions, ignoring the indifference and outright hostility of others. Their idealism is worthy of our utmost respect. They demonstrated how sometimes it is fitting to be stubborn, to swim against the current, to suffer the disapproval and even scorn of others, if you are convinced that the values and goals for which you fighting are correct and moral.

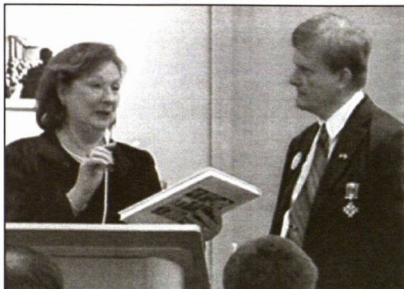
Of the three diplomats, I knew Stasys Lozoraitis best. For me, he is the one who most personifies the ideal of Lithuanian independence and the fulfillment of that ideal. Though 16 years have passed since I left the service of this embassy, every time I walk through the entrance to this building I think about Mr. Lozoraitis and our common struggle on behalf of Lithuania.

I am basing my remarks about Ambassador Lozoraitis on my personal archives as well as the reminiscences of people with whom I worked alongside as fellow employees of the Embassy of Lithuania in Washington.

When Stasys Lozoraitis took over as charge of the Lithuanian Legation in Washington in 1987, he ushered in a spirit of openness. Previously Embassy functions had been restricted to a select list of people, usually from the older generation. Mr. Lozoraitis made the Independence Day commemoration an open house for the Lithuanian American community, with special attention to the younger generation. If before the Lithuanian flag was hoisted outside only on special occasions, now it flew every day.

The context for understanding what Ambassador Lozoraitis and the embassy he led achieved can be found in Mr. Lozoraitis's personality. Staff members who worked for him recall him as generous, humble, genuine and sensitive to others. He was recalled by one staffer as someone with the highest ethical and moral standards. Another recounted that the two characteristics of Mr. Lozoraitis that impressed her most were his endless tactfulness and his total devotion to Lithuania. A third recalled the ambassador's ability to think things through logically and calmly, as well as his subtle sense of humor. A fourth recalled his patience and tolerance for others' viewpoints. A fifth individual, who was a student intern at the embassy, was struck by the way in which the ambassador treated him as an





*Dale Lukas presents "LITHUANIAN CULTURAL LEGACY IN AMERICA" album to Andrew Silski, who, as member of U.S. Department of State, worked closely with Ambassador Lozoraitis during the very critical time for Lithuania's road to freedom.*

equal and provided positive reinforcement for even simple tasks that he performed.

These qualities of openness, tolerance, deep intelligence, sensitivity, optimism, concern for young people were the characteristics of a person who had great success in unifying and leading others. It's worth noting that the staff members who sang his praises represented two different sets of life experiences – some grew up in the United States, others in the Soviet Union. Despite these differences, they were exceptionally loyal to Mr. Lozoraitis, a person for whom they worked only a couple of years. Why? Because he was an authentic person and someone who was committed to noble values. It was hard for people of good will to miss that.

Mr. Lozoraitis was not a person who cared much for material goods or a posh lifestyle. After a reception he would send the staff home, insisting on cleaning up himself. He didn't own a car and preferred to jump into a taxi or to walk. He ordered a limousine to transport him only when it was a matter of symbolic importance for Lithuania. He disliked and avoided pomp.

One of his former employees recalled that Ambassador Lozoraitis was a very energetic person. Thanks to his energy, drive and ability to command the respect and loyalty of his team, the Lithuanian embassy achieved a great deal in a couple of years after the collapse of the USSR. Ambassador Lozoraitis took the initiative to recruit a staff that could maximize the opportunities that existed at that time. The workload was very substantial

because interest in Lithuania, even among ordinary Americans, was very high. Many people understood and appreciated Lithuania's unique historical role in the struggle against the evil empire and for independence and democratization. From 1991 to 1993 the size of the staff at the embassy grew and probably reached its peak in early 1993, when 13 people were working full-time or part-time for the ambassador.

Under Mr. Lozoraitis, the work of the embassy was multi-faceted. One of the most important areas of activity was in commercial and economic relations. The ambassador had two staffers working on this. One of their main areas of activity was to cut all the bilateral arrangements with the U.S. to which Lithuania was obligated as part of the former Soviet Union and which were prejudicial to it. The embassy's economic section was also active in serving as the liaison for the Food for Peace program, under which thousands of metric tons of animal feed were shipped to Lithuania from the United States.

Another important area of endeavor for the economic/commercial section was in fostering private commercial ties between interested parties in the United States and Lithuania. For example in the space of less than a year, the embassy received more than 700 letters, of which about 30 percent sought general information about trade and investment opportunities and 70 percent contained specific business queries. The embassy tried to connect the authors of these letters with the appropriate companies, associations and entrepreneurs in Lithuania.

No less active was the consular section at the Lithuanian embassy. Between August 1991 and August 1992, it issued more than 3,900 visas. Most were for tourists but a substantial number also went to businessmen, U.S. government and international agencies like the IMF and World Bank, for educational and cultural exchange initiatives, and for humanitarian groups.

Ambassador Lozoraitis also engaged in the political and diplomatic functions typical of an ambassador. During the two years between the collapse of the USSR and his transfer to Italy, he played host to no fewer than three visits by Lithuanian prime ministers to Washington – a different prime minister each time. In addition, there were multiple visits to the United States by various other Lithuanian ministers and officials for which the embassy served as liaison.

Other areas of endeavor included academic and cultural ties and humanitarian activity. Sometimes the embassy was visited by scores of students who would receive presentations on Lithuania. In the humanitarian aid area, the embassy served as liaison for sending medicines to Lithuania and for enabling American couples to adopt scores of Lithuanian orphans.

All of this work required money. After the reestablishment of independence Lithuania was impoverished. Having depended on the generosity of the Estonian and Latvian diplomatic representations to keep the Lithuanian missions afloat during the later years of the Soviet occupation, the Lithuanian embassy was also resource poor. Cognizant of these difficult financial circumstances, Ambassador Lozoraitis resolved to lessen the burden on the Lithuanian state by turning to the Lithuanian American community and asking it to support the embassy's work financially. He initiated a fundraising drive and secured the public endorsement of it by Lithuania's head of state Vytautas Landsbergis. Given the high esteem in which the Lithuanian American community held both Mr. Lozoraitis and Mr. Landsbergis, it is not surprising that in approximately two years the fundraising drive grossed nearly \$325,000. Oddly enough, approximately one year after fundraising ads appeared in the diaspora press, a newly elected Lithuanian government used the occasion of the fundraising as one of the pretexts to remove Mr. Lozoraitis from his position in Washington. The success of the fundraising was used as evidence that the embassy was serving the interests of the donors, i.e. diaspora Lithuanians, not the interests of the Lithuanian state.

It would be possible to say a great deal about the removal of Ambassador Lozoraitis from



*Organizers and speakers of the Tribute to Ambassador Stasys Lozoraitis, Jr., held at the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania, on November 21, 2009. From left: Danele Vidutis LAC Washington Chapter chair, Viktor Nakas, Asta Banionis, Algimantas Gecys, Dale Lukas Chair of the LAC Cultural Affairs Council, Dr. Vytautas Bieliauskas (speaker, Ambassador Audrius Bruzga, Andrew Silski State Department, Vytaas Maciunas LAC Executive Committee President.*

Washington and the pretexts that were used to justify it. Suffice it to say that they reveal more about his accusers than about Mr. Lozoraitis himself. The accusations against him were crude and reminiscent of Soviet propaganda. They backfired on his accusers but not enough to reverse the decision to recall from Washington.

Perhaps in part because the accusations against Ambassador Lozoraitis were without foundation, news about his transfer to Italy saddened Mr. Lozoraitis and his staff. But it did not break his spirit nor diminish in the least his commitment to serve Lithuania. After news of the Lithuanian government's decision to transfer him became



*Attendees of the Tribute to Ambassador Stasys Lozoraitis, Jr., held at the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania, on November 21, 2009.*

public knowledge, he told a Lithuanian newspaper interviewer that he would continue in his grandfather and father's footsteps and eventually return to Lithuania. Privately he told his staff that he did not intend to stay in his diplomatic post in Italy long. I think he had decided that he could best serve Lithuania not in its diplomatic service but by fully participating in the political and civic life of Lithuania. Though it's only speculation on my part, I think he would have focused a great deal of his attention in Lithuania on the political and civic education of its youth. Keeping in mind his fondness for and rapport with young people and his habit of pursuing long-term goals, this would have been a very appropriate fit for him.

It's difficult to say what the long-term significance of Stasys Lozoraitis will be in Lithuanian history. It was clear to the people who worked for him that he was an exceptional person, the prototype of a wise ambassador and a leader dedicated to Lithuania. To me, he was the symbol of the ideal Lithuanian, undeformed, unsovietized and unamericanized. In every period of history, individuals emerge who come to represent its prominent heroes or villains. Many worthy individuals emerged during the rebirth of Lithuania at the end of the 20th century. But for me, the two giants of the age were and remain Vytautas Landsbergis and Stasys Lozoraitis. I don't know if historians will agree with my assessment. Ambassador Lozoraitis himself would not have cared too much about gaining their approval. According to one of my former colleagues, the ambassador never displayed a sense of pride. "He always said, it's not important what or how much a person has, it's important what he does with what he has."

I hope we don't ever forget all that Stasys Lozoraitis accomplished.

Victor Nakas

From 1991-1993 Victor Nakas was a consultant to Ambassador Lozoraitis. Currently he is Vice President of Public Affairs at Catholic University.

## TRIVIA QUESTION

(No. 35)

Loanword 2

The Lithuanian word "LAIVAS" is a loanword from what language?

- (a) Greek (b) Yiddish(c) Finnish

Answer to Trivia Quiz on page 22

## CSI Lithuania: the Tuskulėnai Mass Grave

Neither murder nor grief has a statute of limitations. When natural disasters such as tsunamis or hurricanes strike unexpectedly; or, when terrorist acts such as the 9-11 World Trade Center attack suddenly confront us, the scientific expertise of forensic anthropologists are quickly called upon. Whenever the remains of our fallen military are discovered whether in the Middle East, Viet Nam, or anywhere in the world, forensic anthropologists face the daunting task of recovering the remains for repatriation for an honorable burial by their family. Along with other investigators, those same forensic anthropologists have to painstakingly piece together minute bits of evidence preserved in the archaeological record as well as any evidence of trauma to the skeletal remains to determine what actually happened to the victims.



Dr. R. Jankauskas at the excavation sight.

In 1994 when the newly independent Republic of Lithuania discovered a Soviet era KGB "killing field" dating from the 1940s at Tuskulėnai, a park-like setting right in Vilnius, a call was immediately put out to find the best and the brightest of Lithuania's forensic anthropology talent to conduct the excavation and perform the forensic examination of this mass gravesite. An early member of this forensic "A"-team was forensic anthropologist Rimantas Jankauskas, PhD who holds dual faculty appointments at both the Faculty of Medicine, Vilnius University and Lithuania's national Institute of Forensic Medicine attached to the Mykolas Romeris

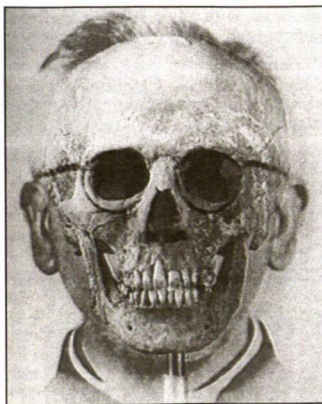


*Skeletal remains of some of the 724 recovered bodies at the mass grave.*

University also in Vilnius. Additional forensic scientists from Vilnius University were Antanas Garmus and Arunas Barkus. Lithuania's Centre for Investigation of Castles, "Lietuvės pilys," produced Vytautas Urbanavičius to round out a few of the key forensic scientists. Many other institutions and agencies became involved. Very close collaboration using the diverse skills of legal, forensic medical, and archaeological professionals throughout every stage of the mass grave excavation and forensic investigation resulted in the identification of over forty individuals among the victims executed by the Communist regime from 1944 through 1947 as well as how and when the executions were conducted.

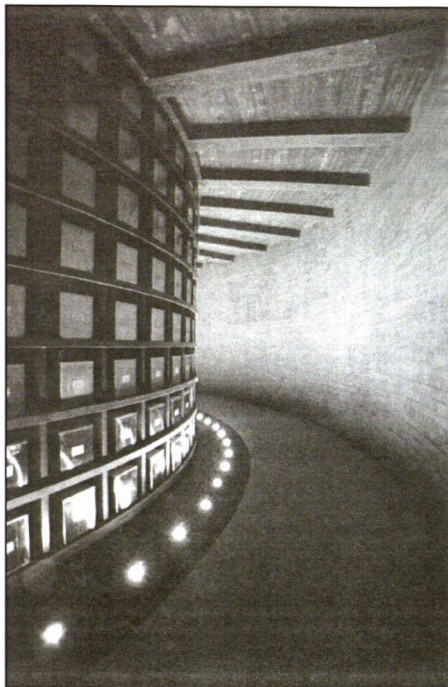
Using traditional archaeological principles and techniques, the goals of the team included the recovery of all remains present, the identification of individuals if possible, and the reconstruction of the history of the site, i.e. what happened and when. Initial reconnaissance of the site established a perimeter to the excavation. Archaeologists can employ geophysical detection methods looking for ground disturbances, ground penetrating radar, magnetometers, and even cadaver dogs to thoroughly survey an excavation site. Excavation began in the summer of 1994. Over the course of several seasons of digging, the skeletal remains of 724 bodies were recovered: all but four were men and almost all of them

showed one or more bullet holes to the back of the head. Over 100 bodies also showed sharp force stab wounds consistent with bayonet or pick axe wounds. Some showed bone fractures resulting from blunt force trauma. A total of 45 pits, some of which showed shoring with timbers, were ultimately uncovered. Most of the pits had been dug into the floor of a former garage used by the occupying Soviets. The selected garage site had offered the Soviets an enclosed site protected from discovery by surrounding Lithuanian partisan activity. The garage's earthen floor was also soft enough to dig up during Lithuania's freezing cold winter months. Piecing together all the evidence, the Lithuanian forensic team meticulously documented what happened and when. Beginning in 1944 after the Russian reoccupation of Lithuania, the Soviets arrested hundreds upon hundreds of Lithuanians. Many were sentenced to death by the Soviets for "treason" or "betrayal of the motherland." Their execution would be performed in the execution chamber at the KGB prison in Vilnius by frequently drunken guards. The bodies of those Lithuanians executed each night would be dumped into a truck with a tarp covering their bodies. The truck would then be driven several miles to the Tusklėnai garage site where the bodies would be unceremoniously thrown into a common pit until that pit became filled with bodies. This murderous activity by the Soviet KGB continued until 1947 when Stalin declared that instead of death sentences, such prisoners should be sentenced to 25 years of prison labor.



*Superimposition of Bishop Vincentas Borisičius' skull*

More than forty murdered individuals have been identified so far. The identification methods included photographic and skull superimposition, dental and DNA identification, as well as looking for individual known traits such as healed bone lesions. Data provided by surviving family members was helpful in identification as were secret KGB documents, which were scoured for information on arrested Lithuanians in KGB custody. Who were these Lithuanian resisters arrested and executed by the Communist Soviet regime? Some we know. Some we will never know. Murdered Christmas Eve, Kūčios, 1945 was Povilas Vitkevičius, a pharmacist accused of supplying medicine to partisans. Bishop Vincentas Borisičius, a Catholic bishop from northern Lithuania, was 62-years old when he

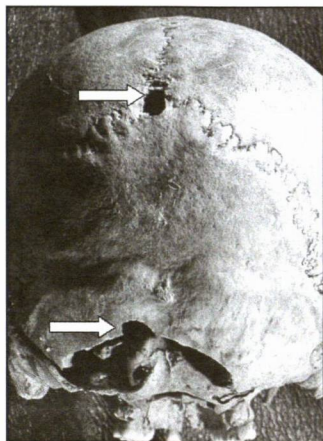


*A specially built columbarium -- part of a memorial complex -- containing recovered skeletons placed in separate numbered caskets.*

for their shared support and belief in a free and independent Lithuania. They all lie at rest now, honorably entombed, within a special memorial created by a free Lithuania at the site where their remains were first discovered, discarded like so much trash by their KGB killers. As the ongoing work of these Lithuanian forensic scientists continues, we can only wish them Godspeed.

*Dr. Thomas Resk*

*Dr. Thomas Resk is a forensic pathologist who practices as a Medical Examiner in Northern California.*



*Example of bullet entrances*

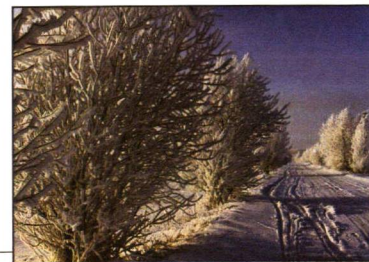
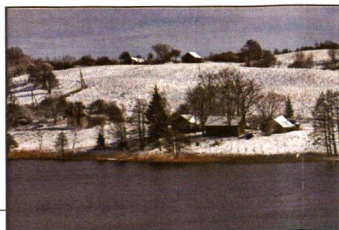
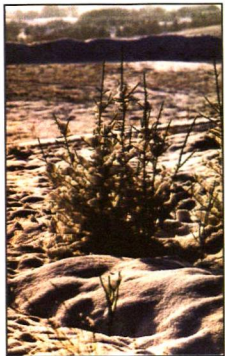
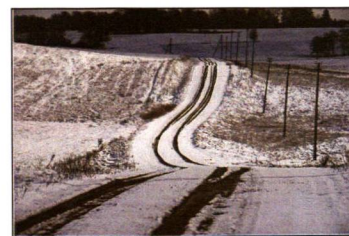
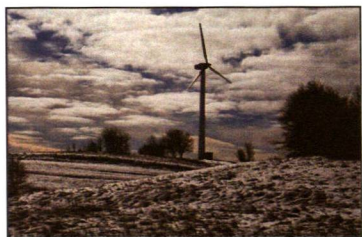
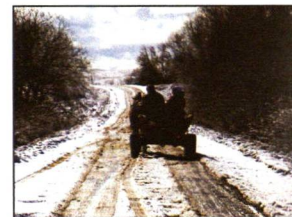
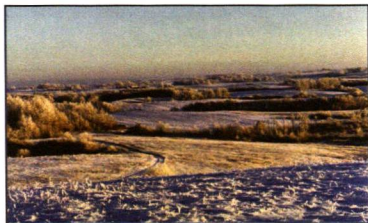
was executed on the night of November 18, 1946. Executed that same night was 36-year old Pastor Pranas Gustaitis. The partisans Jona Semaška and Leonas Taunys: executed the night of January 21, 1947. Suffering the same fate the following month was 28-year old Elena Vidugirytė. Nineteen-year old gymnasium students Alfonsas Žukauskas, Vincas Baronas, Jurgis Bekampis, and Algimantas Gustaitis: all killed because they attempted to organize an underground resistance. The victims ranged in age from 19 to 66 years old. All of these Lithuanians were freedom fighters in their own right. Some were partisans who fought with a gun. Some fought only with their spirit. However, they were all resisters of the Soviet Communist regime occupying their native country – Lithuania. They all shared the same fate at the hands of their Russian oppressors paying the same price



*The Mound*



14  
 Photo Album  
 of Lithuanian  
 Countryside  
 in the  
 Winter  
 Photos by  
 Jozas Lukoševičius, Lithuania



## Genealogy Has No Boundaries



CW2 David Pukas, Pennsylvania National Guard.

Military and Genealogy, two terms normally not connected and rarely mentioned in the same breath. However, after twenty-five years in the military, the two have come together in ways that I never dreamed of. In June of 2008 I was notified that I was selected as a member of the Pennsylvania National Guard to assist the Lithuanian Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), located in Chaghcharan, Afghanistan, as a Logistical Advisor. It seemed like a very interesting duty but at the same time I knew that being separated from my wife and four children would be a challenging hardship for all of us.

The Army National Guard is involved in an endeavor called the "State Partnership Program." Each National Guard State or Territory is assigned to either a former soviet country or a third world country and the two, states/countries, exchange ideas and provide mutual assistance. For instance, Illinois and Poland have a partnership due to the large Polish American population in the Chicago Area; Georgia and former Soviet Georgia have a partnership, I guess, mainly because it sounds cool. Pennsylvania is matched up with Lithuania because of the large population that settled in the coal mines of Pennsylvania prior to WWI. More Lithuanians immigrated to Pennsylvania than any other state. I am a descendent of one of those immigrants as my great-grandfather Nikolas (Michael) Pukas left his home in the village

Žemaitkiemis, Prienai District, Lithuania in 1911 and settled in Minersville, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania.

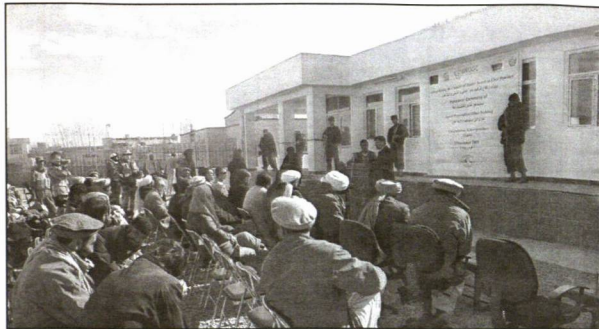
I was deployed on August 22nd 2009 and after a series of pit stops, I made my way into the Lithuanian PRT at Chaghcharan on September 3rd. Flying into Chaghcharan (pronounced Chech iran) I noticed that the base is surrounded on two sides by the Ghor Province capital and by mountains on all sides. This is Northern Afghanistan, at the base of the Hindu Kush, where the terrain is similar to that surrounding the base.

My initial reaction, once I entered inside the walls of the base, was one of surprise at seeing soldiers in so many different uniforms. The vast majority of uniforms were Lithuanian but there were others --- Italians, who were here due to the Afghanistan elections, Croatians, Ukrainians, Danish and a sprinkling of others.

It turns out that Chaghcharan is quite the busy place. Over the last few years some of the projects completed by the Lithuanian PRT were building 30 micro-hydro projects that provide electricity to villages that otherwise wouldn't have any, building dozens of wells providing fresh drinking water replacing the need to use streams and rivers that are often polluted. They also contributed to building the first paved road in the Ghor Province.



Americans and Lithuanians share an office space.



*Dedication of the Prosecutor's and Appeals Court Building. The Lithuanian soldiers helped build this complex.*

It wasn't too long before I settled into the cozy confines of the Lithuanian Logistics Office. My partner, the hard working, conscientious SFC Donald Lottig, another Pennsylvania Guardsman, and I occupy a little cubicle and share a computer which is our lifeline to making things happen. There are generally eight Lithuanians sharing our office, each varying in their mastery of the English language; but all of them speak better English than I speak Lithuanian. I know "Good Morning/Afternoon and Thank You."

Despite the normal language difficulty at times, we all get along very well. SFC Lottig watched too many cartoons as a kid and keeps us all loose with his animation. He teams up with 1LT Marius Eigmanas who never misses an opportunity to stir up some laughter (in both languages). The



*First public park constructed by Lithuanians and people of Afghanistan.*

man who normally holds it all together is MAJ Valdas Finozonokas, who is one of the most competitive persons I have ever met. Whether it's darts, Russian Billiards, or table tennis, he brings that fire into his work. MAJ "V" can multitask with the best of them. One of my favorites in the office is MAJ Vidas Andrijauskas. He is a quiet gentleman and he is the only person older than me in our office (which is another reason I like being around him). We seem to hit it off because of his appreciation of heritage and history.

One day, completely on his own, MAJ "A" contacted a woman in Lithuania whom he had found over the internet who happened to be on the Zemaitkiemis village council. He told her about me and my genealogy interest. She informed him that there are many Pukas families in the area and it may be difficult to identify the right one; nevertheless, having only the barest information, she would ask around. Lo and behold --- two days later she responded with a match. I verified what she had found with other information I had in my trusty binder (did you really think I'd leave my genealogy binder at home) and in so doing was able to ascertain that the elderly lady matching the information happened to be my relative!

Unfortunately, the family homestead was destroyed by Soviets, probably in the post-war period because the inhabitants (my relatives) supported the Lithuanian partisans! I felt anger, disappointment, and pride upon hearing what had happened. Who would have ever thought that a wealth of Lithuanian knowledge and pride would be discovered in a remote desolate corner of Afghanistan?

I've found that life altering events are merely effects of forged relationships. Whether it's two countries acting as one, two cultures finding peace, a diverse office forming a solid bond, or generations bridging the gap of time, the players may vary. Here in Afghanistan there is an endless assortment of people and cultures with limitless potential to form positive bonds.

*David Pukas*



## The Singing Revolution

### 1.

*The Chaser rose to ride Lithuanian winds,  
though outward hope for future things was rare.*

*Baltic hands formed a living chain,  
and Tautiška Giesmė filled the air.*

### 2.

*A tower sent a prayer to God one day,  
as 'black berets' came knocking at its door.*

*The street below tasted Lithuanian blood:  
two handfuls plus fell from weaponry,  
and rolling tanks took the lives of two.*

*A purpled head bleated stoically:  
Only fourteen killed and all that fuss.  
A Lenin stone waved a last goodbye  
dangling from the finger of a crane.*

### 3.

*The smile of Juozas Lukša rides the wind:  
and Kanapinskas, Vaitkus, Maciulevičius,  
Šimulionis, Druskis, Povilaitis,  
Koncevičius, Juknevičius, Masiulis,  
Gerbutavičius, Kavoliukas, Jankauskas,  
Matulka, Asanavičiūtė sing a silent song.*

*Note: Juozas Lukša—Lithuanian Activist Front  
member and prominent post-World War II  
resistance leader.*

Michael Lucas

Michael Lucas is a PGA Professional & member of the Poetry Society of South Carolina. His grandparents on his father's side emigrated from Kaunas & Alytus in Lithuania.



(1952–1991)

**Alydas Kanapinskas**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1937–1991)

**Apolinaras Povilaitis**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1973–1991)

**Darius Gerbutavičius**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1943–1991)

**Vyntas Vaitkus**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1941–1991)

**Vytautas Koncevičius**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1969–1991)

**Rolandas Jankauskas**  
Dead from  
explosives.



(1966–1991)

**Vidas Maciulevičius**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1966–1991)

**Rimantas Juknevičius**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1960–1991)

**Alydas Matulka**  
Heart attack



(1973–1991)

**Ignas Šimulionis**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1962–1991)

**Titas Masiulis**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1939–1991)

**Algimantas Kavoliukas**  
Shot with a rubber  
bullet two days  
earlier and hit by  
a tank on  
Bloody Sunday;  
reported to have  
been the first  
to die.



(1969–1991)

**Virginijus Druskis**  
Dead from gunshot  
wounds.



(1967–1991)

**Loreta Asanavičiūtė**  
Run over by a tank;  
the only female to die  
on Bloody Sunday.

## From Hollywood to Pittsburgh

The past two months has brought Hollywood to Pittsburgh as three movies are being filmed simultaneously in the city. The director of one of those movies, "Love and Other Drugs" chose the Lithuanian Hall to film several scenes. This is not the first time that Pittsburgh's Lithuanian Hall has been featured in a major movie. In 1986, it served as the union meeting hall for the film "Gung Ho" starring Michael Keaton.

"Love and Other Drugs" is directed by Edward Zwick and reunites actors Anne Hathaway and Jake Gyllenhaal, who costarred in the 2005 film "Brokeback Mountain." It is a drama about a salesman competing in the cutthroat world of pharmaceuticals to hawk a male performance-enhancement drug. It is based on author Jamie Reidy's memoir "Hard Sell: The Evolution of a Viagra Salesman."

In an odd twist, Zwick and the film's producer, Pieter Jan Brugge, last worked together on the movie "Defiance", which was filmed in and around Vilnius in 2008. While they had positive comments about their experience in Lithuania, they were not necessarily looking for another Lithuanian connection in filming their movie in Pittsburgh. It just happened that the Lithuanian Hall was a good fit for some of the movie's scenes which were set in 1997.

Gyllenhaal and Hathaway played an unhappily married couple in "Brokeback Mountain" but their relationship here is charged with attraction and passion. In "Love and Other Drugs" Gyllenhaal starts a romantic relationship with Hathaway, who plays an artist in the early stages of young onset Parkinson's disease.

Preparations for filming at the Lithuanian Hall began ten days in advance with decorating, painting and construction of sets. Numerous cables were run into the building to support lighting and cameras. The entire building was used for filming of four different scenes focusing on a pharmaceutical convention and a comedy routine. During the day of the filming, the building was alive from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m. with a support crew of over 100 people plus another 200 extras.

Additional locations around Pittsburgh were used for filming of the movie with Pittsburgh playing both itself and Chicago. The movie, from



Actor Jake Gyllenhaal (left) and director Edward Zwick (right) along with others discuss an upcoming scene during filming at the Lithuanian Hall.

Fox 2000 Pictures and New Regency Productions, is scheduled for release some time in 2010.

The movie will probably be the final major event to occur in the hall under ownership of the Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western Pennsylvania. Once a major contributor to many Lithuanian charities both in the U.S. and Lithuania, the Society has fallen upon hard times due to the economy and aging membership. Because of stiff competition from newly opened casinos, the Society was forced to discontinue its once profitable bingo in early July.

Currently the Society is offering some of its properties for sale with the hope of holding on to only those facilities that can be managed by its present membership. The Society also owns approximately 50 acres of wooded land and picnic grounds with another building in the suburbs of Pittsburgh. Because of a lack of parking and constant maintenance, the Society has decided to sell its building in the city and also part of the acreage in the Pittsburgh's South Hills. Hopefully the proceeds will be invested to improve the remaining facilities and keep a physical presence for the Lithuanian community in the Pittsburgh area.

John Baltrus

John Baltrus is the President of the Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western PA.



Outside the Lithuanian Hall during filming.

## ST. GEORGE PARISH CHURCH

Shenandoah, PA 17976

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS, Dec 23, 2009

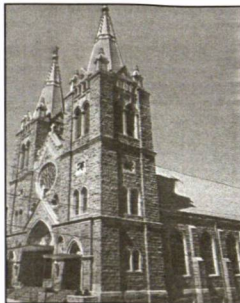
St. George Church is the home of the First Lithuanian Parish in the USA--built by Lithuanian immigrants in 1891. The congregation was formed in 1872 and led by the nation's First Lithuanian Catholic Priest, Rev. Andrew Strupinskas. It served as a center of Lithuanian consecration, culture and heritage.

- Aug 18, 2009 - Photos are taken of those inspecting St. George Church without hard hats.
- Aug 24, 2009 - Demolition companies begin to inspect St. George and give estimates
- Sept 23, 2009 - Parishioners filed for an Injunction to stop the planned Demolition
- Sept 24, 2009 - A Demolition Permit was requested by the Diocese and letters were sent to Parishioners before the 6 pm meeting to announce the Demolition of St. George ASAP.
- Sept 25, 2009 - Empire Demolition began to erect scaffolding at the front of St. George.
- Oct 7, 2009 - Judge will not issue an injunction to stop the planned Demolition.
- Oct 12, 2009 - Diocese begins to remove interior contents of St. George Church
- Nov 9, 2009 - Diocese begins to remove small spires at base of the large spires.
- Dec 1, 2009 - Judge will not stop the ongoing Demolition of St. George Church
- Dec 15, 2009 - North tower main spire removed (and 10 bells weighing 12,000 lbs)
- Dec 22, 2009 - South tower main spire removed.

*(The Diocese plan to demolish church by Dec 22 is far behind schedule. St. George is structurally sound with a foundation over 36 inches wide that is on solid ground and towers that have not moved since 1891. The Belgian granite block is the cladding over the solid brick structure)*

On September 23, 2009: In the Court of Common Pleas of Schuylkill County, the Plaintiffs, James Setcavage, Dorothy Setcavage, Cindy Tancredi, and Diane Drogalis on behalf

of all the Parishioners of St. George Lithuanian Roman Catholic Parish, Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, filed a complaint requesting the court to issue a Preliminary and Permanent Injunction to stop the planned demolition of St. George Church



The Plaintiffs claimed that under Canon Law and under the law of Pennsylvania and the United States of America, the Defendants (Bishop, Pastor, and Diocese) act as trustees of the Church property for the benefit of the Parishioners. (The seven bankrupt Diocese's in the USA claimed the Bishop held the Title in Trust for all of the Churches for the benefit of the Parishioners and the Churches cannot be sold by the Bishop or by the Diocese)

The Defendant Diocese claimed in court that Parishioners have NO STANDING (NO RIGHT) to stop the demolition of St. George Church and they have no right to stop their funds from being used for the demolition or for other purposes.

Judge Cyrus Palmer Dolbin, ruled that "This Court does not have jurisdiction over the subject matter of the dispute inasmuch as the Plaintiffs lack standing to sue, the preliminary objections of the Defendants are granted and the complaint is dismissed. The Petition for Injunction is likewise denied and dismissed."

Before the decision was handed down two hours of testimony was heard from St. George workers who explained millions of dollars that were used for renovations. In 2004 there was over \$300,000 in savings plus bequests of over \$300,000 for renovations that was not used for renovations.

Funds continue to be collected for renovations but are being used for the demolition of St. George Church.

Judge Dolbin stated that: "State law gives the diocese and its bishop, not parishioners, ownership of all churches within its borders, and courts should not meddle in internal church affairs. For him to interfere in those affairs would violate the US Constitution." "This court is a civil court, and not an ecclesiastical court," "This court would become an overseer, a real-estate manager. We are constitutionally forbidden to do this."

"My heart is broken. It's not fair. It's not right. They should leave the building as a museum"

Currently, there are Canon Law Petitions/Appeals to the Vatican to inspect St. George by our Structural Engineers and Specialty Contractors. A Third copy of an "Invitation



to receive an Offer" and other offers have gone unanswered by the new Bishop John Barres. Negotiations are possible with the Diocese of Allentown but have gone unanswered.

The landmark Gothic Church is being dismantled piece by piece and the history of the valiant miners who built the church is being tossed aside like refuse. How much sacrificing went into the building of the church by families of coal miners who had virtually nothing, how many people sacrificed over the decades to maintain a church that resembled a cathedral inside, and how many sacrificed since May 14, 2006 (Mother's day) to reopen the church for Mass, as a Shrine or as a Museum.

The supporters of St. George fought valiantly and still continue to do so. They are the descendants of earlier generations who had no fear of hard work, disappointments or set-backs. They are the descendants of people who crossed an ocean, most knowing they would never see their families again. Just like the Lithuanians who came before them, they are survivors.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

St. George has a rich Historical Background and has received state, national and international recognition. Having Historical recognition is a great honor. This beautiful Cathedral-like Church was always described by many as a "Jewel" among churches including Priests of the Diocese of Allentown.

The loss of the Heritage of St. George Church and the Lithuanian Community across the USA and Lithuania is distressing. It is a breach of trust to the Country of Lithuania who has an Agreement with the United States Government to Preserve St. George. The NTHP (National Trust for Historic Preservation) claims St. George matters and must be preserved. Our longtime WJP Structural Engineers know how it can be preserved.

Many are watching the unnecessary destruction of this Magnificent Landmark. They see how difficult it has been for the Demolition Crews to remove the Granite and the Steeples. (The Diocese told us it is falling down and is a public danger--No one living in the area considers it to be a public danger) The Diocese is taking St. George Church apart for \$55--and it is up to us to Preserve what we have left at this time. The Demolition by the Diocese must be stopped.

Please go to website: [www.LithAZ.Org](http://www.LithAZ.Org)

*The most important thing you can do to save St. George Parish Church is to express yourself in writing to each of the following addresses:*

#### **Most Reverend John O. Barres**

Bishop of Allentown  
PO Box F  
Allentown, PA 18105

#### **Apostolic Nuncio**

3339 Massachusetts Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20008

#### **H.E. Cardinal Justin Rigali, JCD**

Archbishop of Philadelphia  
222 North 17th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

#### **Embassy of Lithuania**

2622 Sixteenth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20009

## ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION

Trivia Quiz on page 11

Source: *The Lithuanian Language, A Characterization*, by Alfred Senn

"During the Primitive Indo-European period the ancestors of the Balts lived on the northern border of the Indo-European language area. They touched on the east on the Mordvines, (a Finno-Ugrian tribe), in the south of the Pre-Slavs, (but only at the earliest stage) on the Pre-Teutons. Later the Balts became separated from the other

Indo-Europeans by a large lake (which is now dried up) and a large impenetrable marshy country, the present-day bogs of White Russia. The Baltic people settled to the northeast and north of that lake, between Vilnius (Vilna) and Moscow, while the Slavs had their homes between the lake and the Carpathian Mountains. The only direct neighbors of the Balts were now Mordvines and Finns.

A great number of very old Baltic loanwords in Finnish, taken over between 1000 B. C. and 500 B. C., testify to a very lively intercourse. On the other hand, it is astonishing to find only a few Finnish loanwords in Lithuanian, e.g., LAIVAS "boat". This suggests that most of the Baltic loanwords in Finnish are due exclusively to normal neighborly relations, but rather that many Balts, perhaps a whole tribe, must have settled among the Finns and were assimilated. In the meantime the Slavs had expanded eastward and then came northward around the lake; and about 300-200 B.C. Balts and Slavs became neighbors once more.

Submitted by Ed Shakalis

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

Aruna LT

24h 7d.



**AUTOMOBILIŲ NUOMA - CAR RENTAL**

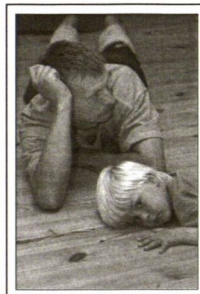
REZERVACIJOS TEL. PHONE FOR RESERVATION  
+370 640 22 916

[www.aruna.lt](http://www.aruna.lt)

## PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



Photographers are: Petras Vaškys, John Duncĳia, Antanas Krušinskas, Danutė Surdenienė, Joyce Lukas, Vilma Balnytė, Kestutis Lukas, and Rimas Gedeika. Missing: Joanne Antanavage and Jurgita Cenkutė



A PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION took place October 18th and 25th at Saint Andrew's parish hall in Philadelphia. Organizers Vilma Balnyte and John Duncĳia invited photographers to bring their pictures and share with the Lithuanian community their most memorable summertime moments captured on film. Viewers of the exhibit were invited to vote for their favorite photos.

Joanne Antanavage  
Vilma Balnytė  
Jurgita Cenkutė  
John Duncĳia  
Rimas Gedeika

Antanas Krušinskas  
Kestutis & Joyce Lukas  
Kestutis Lukosevišius  
Danutė Surdenienė  
Petras Vaškys

Participating area photographer included all of whom brought their best pictures to display.

There were 55 photos that were chosen by the viewing public as being their favorites. Thus the votes were highly "scattered."

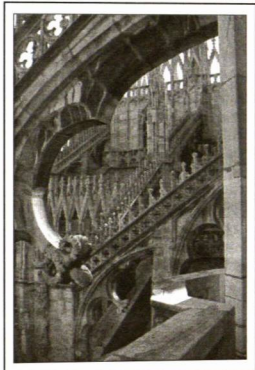
Here are the most popular photos:

**1st place: Antanas Krušinskas for "Shugago Lake".**

**2nd place: Petras Vaškys for "Milan Cathedral Roof Fragment" and for "Father and Son".**

*Dr. John Vytautas Duncĳia*

*Dr. John Vytautas Duncĳia works as a research scientist at a major pharmaceutical company in New Jersey. He is a member of the organizing committee of Balticum Organicum Synthetico (www.BOS06.ttu.ee) which hosts biennial international organic chemistry conferences in the three Baltic states. Dr. Duncĳia and his family are members of St. Andrew's Lithuanian Roman Catholic Church in Philadelphia, PA.*



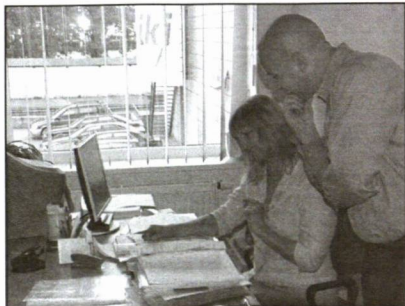
Aistis Juska

## A Priceless Opportunity

Through the LISS (Lietuvos Iseivijos Studentu Stazuote-Lithuanian Internship Program), Lithuanian students born and raised within the borders of North America are able to travel to Lithuania to work and live in their ancestral homeland. The LISS program assigns each individual student an internship depending on their field of study. This provides students with the experience and knowledge that can help build their personal resumes. This also gives each student the ability to strengthen their Lithuanian language skills and, more importantly, their technical vocabulary in Lithuanian will expand. Each student has the opportunity to live and work with Lithuanian locals. The Program is directed by Mrs. Birutė Bublys, vice president of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. and is under its auspices.

Being a Lithuanian-American or Canadian living in the United States or Canada, you are not exposed to the everyday life in Lithuania while visiting the country as part of a vacation or while participating in a song or dance festival. Often you have a hectic schedule of tours and rehearsals, while chaperones or family take care of your meals and transportation. During the LISS program, these tasks become your responsibility. Grocery shopping, doing laundry, going to work, and taking the bus are just a few things for which you are responsible. Through the LISS program we as students or recent grads are exposed to these aspects of daily life as well as others, that otherwise would not be part of a visit to Lithuania.

As soon as I got to my apartment where all the boys of the program were staying, I was thrown into the mix. I met up with a good friend of mine, Dovas Bukauskas, who had taken his lunch hour to come meet me and

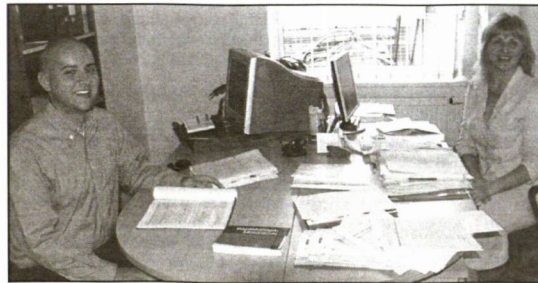


*The hunt for fifty-two Litai*

introduce me to the program's director, Mrs. Birutė Bublys. We had lunch together and talked about what was going to happen during my internship. In my case, as a recent graduate in business with the concentration in accounting, Mrs. Bublys had arranged an accounting position in one of the largest Antiques stores in the Old Town section of Vilnius. As soon as we finished our lunch, I was off to see the owner of the establishment where I was going to be interning. After meeting the owner of the Vilnius Antiques Center, I was ready to get back to the apartment and relax and shower for that night.

My first night in Lithuania was an amazing one. I was able to meet everyone that was here already and was able to hear about their experiences with the program so far. That night was spent stuffing our faces with fried black bread strips with cheese sauce and sharing stories. I let this feeling of excitement overcome me and calm my previous anticipations. I now knew that this experience would be positive and would stay with me for the rest of my life. After we had all left for our respective apartments, I was able to reflect upon all of the day's events.

The next day was quite eventful for me, just as the first day had been. I made my way to the Antique Center and began working for the head accountant. As soon as I got to work, I was offered some fresh bread, cheese, and sausage. This shows the typical Lithuanian hospitality. Whenever you are offered food, you cannot refuse it or else the individual will be offended.



*Aistis Juska and colleague at work*



*A group of friends at the Dainu Sventė in Vingio Parkas, Vilnius, Lithuania*

This morning I could not complain about the food being offered. It was a great start to the day for me. After that I was instructed to look over the Antique Center's year-end inventory for 2008 and match that to the monthly purchase inventory. Amongst their voluminous inventory, I had to find 52 Litai (Lithuanian currency). This hunt for fifty-two Litai remained my job for the next four weeks.

After I had gone through the entire 2008 inventory, I was unable to find the lost 52 litai. So after much discussion with the manager and the head accountant, we decided that the mistake could possibly be within the year-end inventories in 2007. Then I proceeded to look over a total of ten thousand items that were within that year's inventory. Unfortunately, I was also unsuccessful after looking through the 2007 inventory.

I was frustrated that I was unable to find the mistake. Still I realized that I was very green under the gills when it came down to accounting work. This experience had shown me that even though I had graduated university and was ready to take on the world, I still needed a lot to learn. My time at the Vilnius Antiques Center has shown me that I am still learning and will always continue to learn. I believe that is how life will be for me and should be for most people: always learning, always growing as individuals.

When I arrived in Vilnius on the 9th of June 2009, I had this feeling that this would be the time of my life. A thesis of how I had lived at school, studied, and also socialized. This would be a summation of how I had lived my life up until this point in time, because I knew every step of the way I would be tested by my strange yet deeply

familiar environment. Despite my initial hesitancy of embarking on such a monumental excursion, I had this overwhelming joy and happiness wash over me the instant I saw a familiar face. I knew from that instant that this test of my life would be an invigorating one, something that my mind, body and spirit needed overall at this point in time.

When I write that Lithuania is a deeply familiar environment, I mean that our Lithuanian roots are something that can be very difficult to explain. However, if an individual has love and passion about one's own ethnic background, this

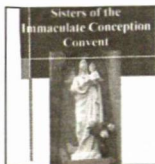
familiarity can be easily felt. I am positive that we are not the only ethnic group that has this passion for their homeland, but I feel that we are some of the proudest people. What our small nation has accomplished in the past one thousand years of technical existence (some would debate that Lithuania has been around longer than one thousand years) is astounding. For example, Lithuania was the very first country to sing its national anthem at the same time throughout the entire world. On July 5th 2009 at 9 pm local time, Lithuanians gathered all over the world to sing the national anthem. This same day in Klaipeda, thousands of Lithuanians joined together to greet the Amber-sail yacht, which travelled to various Lithuanian communities across the world.

Since this is the first year of this program and there were 30 individuals, I can only imagine how large the numbers will be in the future. This is a wonderful opportunity for those who are able to understand that this program is for mature, well-rounded, and work driven individuals who understand that play must never interfere with work, and a good time only comes when your responsibilities are fulfilled. It is also a priceless opportunity to be and feel part of Lithuania and her people. This is what I believe the LISS program is all about, even though you are in a wonderful place during a beautiful time of the year, you must always keep in mind your duties and responsibilities as a LISS program participant.

*Aistis Juska*

*Aistis Juska is the son of Rasa and Juozas Juska. Rasa is a former editor of Bridges.*

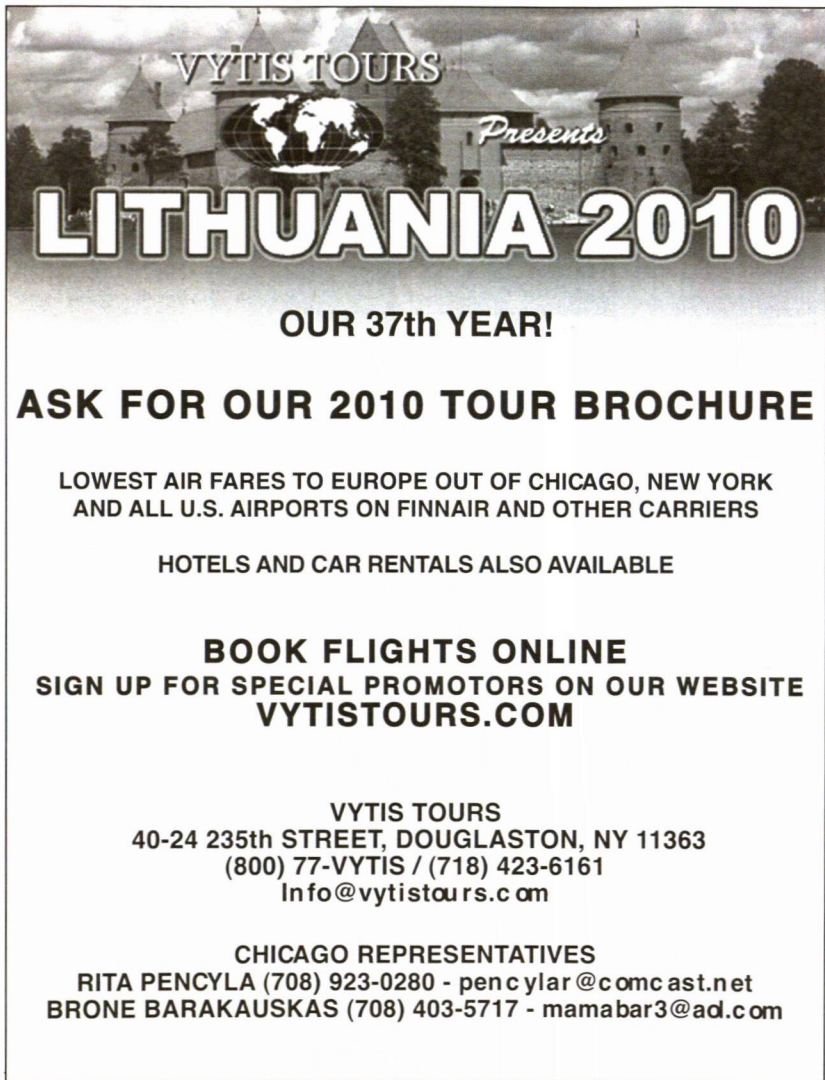
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# Calendar of Events for February, March, April, 2010

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

## FEBRUARY

### February 6, 2010 - 4:30 pm

Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration. Light on speeches, heavy on entertainment, dining & dancing. Potluck event. Please bring a generous dish to share to the kitchen by 4 pm. Latvia Hall, 10710 3rd Ave NE, Seattle. Sponsor: Seattle Chapter of the LAC

### February 14, 2010 - Mass-10:30 am

Lithuanian Independence Day St. Andrew Lithuanian Church 19th and Wallace Sts., Phila., PA Program at Lithuanian Music Hall with a totally new program by local talent & special artist guests from Lithuania. Lithuanian Music Hall 2715 East Allegheny Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19134-5914 Info: www.phillylac.org Sponsor: Phila. Chapter of the LAC

### February 17, 2010 (Ash Wednesday)

Pick up - 4 pm - 6 pm Cabbage & noodles - \$5 for one quart of cabbage & noodles & 2 hard rolls Place order by February 12 To order: 412-885-7232 Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God 3603 McRoberts Rd., Pittsburgh, PA www.osprov.org

### February 17, 2010 - 7:30 pm

"The Celebration of Lithuanian Culture" at Boston University, MA is a non-profit educational event that commemorates the millennium of Lithuania in the world. The Gala concert of "The Celebration of Lithuanian Culture" will take place at Boston University - Tsai Performance Center. We will appreciate enormously all contributions, help with organizing this event. Artistic Director / Honorary Cultural Attache of Lithuania

Martynas Svegzda von Bekker Info: <http://boston.lietuviu-bendruomene.org/index.html>

### February 20, 2010 - 9 am until dark

Užgavėnės or a Lithuanian Mardi Gras Happy Trails Horse Adventure Park (west of Snoqualmie Pass on I-90) Bring songs, games, masks & anything else you need for a day in the snow. Admission: \$20 per adult and \$10 per child (children under 2 are free) Info: laume@msn.com Sponsor: Seattle Chapter of the LAC

### February 21, 2010 - 2-5 pm

Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration, Wyandotte County Museum in Wyandotte County Park 631 N. 126th St., Bonner Springs, KS. Sponsor: Kansas City Chapter of the LAC

### February 21, 2010 - 11:30 am Mass

Lithuanian Independence Day Transfiguration Church in Maspeth, 64-14 Clinton Avenue, Maspeth, NY. Lunch will follow in the Church Hall. At 2 pm the official program will begin with Amb. Jonas Paslauskas, the Republic of Lithuania's Consul General in NY. For info: contact Ramute Zukaitė, president of the NY LAC District Council, the lead organization for this year's celebration at [ramutezukas@hotmail.com](mailto:ramutezukas@hotmail.com).

### February 21, 2010 - Noon Mass

Lithuanian Independence Day St. George's Church, Bridgeport, CT. For info: Contact Chapter President Gedre Stankunas at [gedrestankunas@hotmail.com](mailto:gedrestankunas@hotmail.com) Sponsor: Bridgeport Chapter of the LAC

### February 21, 2010 - Mass 12 noon

Lithuanian Independence Day Our Lady of the Assumption, 76 Wianno Avenue, Osterville

The meeting is in the church hall right after the Mass. Sponsor: Cape Cod Chapter of the LAC

### February 21, 2010 - 1 pm

Lithuanian Independence Day Conaton Boardroom of Xavier University, 3800 Victory Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45207 The Lithuanian ambassador to the US H.E. Audrius Briuzga will be a special guest at the event. Info: [www.cinciolituvai.com](http://www.cinciolituvai.com) Sponsor: Cincinnati Chapter of the LAC

### February 28, 2010 - 11 am Mass

Lithuanian Independence Day STs. Peter & Paul Church followed by a special program & lunch in the church hall. 216 Ripley Pl., Elizabeth, NJ 07206 Sponsor: Elizabeth Chapter of the LAC

## MARCH

### March 7, 2010

Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration St. Elizabeth Seton Parish, 9728 W. Palmeras Drive, Sun City Sponsor: Arizona Chapter of the LAC <http://www.litaz.org/>

### March 7, 2010 - 2:00 pm

Commemoration of Lithuanian Independence, Lithuanian Hall 851 Hollins Street Baltimore, MD 21201-1003 Sponsor: Baltimore Chapter of the LAC

### March 7, 2010 - 2:00 pm

Independence Celebration We will be showing Lithuanian films with English subtitles, serving dinner consisting of Kugelis prepared by the board members, and topping it off with dancing with music provided by Kolorado Vabalai. Admission: \$10 for dues paying members, \$15 - for

everyone else. Discount for seniors & children under 16. Location: Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall 1151 S Galena Street (just west of Mississippi and Havana) Denver, CO 80247 Info: [www.coloradolithuanians.org](http://www.coloradolithuanians.org) Sponsor: Colorado Chapter of the LAC

### March 24, 2010 - 3 pm

Dr. Dariusz Wajcek performs & lectures - "The Beethoven Piano Sonatas Cycles" Brechmin Auditorium, School of Music, University of Washington, Seattle

### March 28, 2010

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast with the Latvian Community. Please join us for Palm Sunday Church services followed by a Latvian & Lithuanian Easter cultural exchange. Enjoy traditional Latvian & Lithuanian foods and workshops featuring Latvian & Lithuanian Easter crafts. Please bring traditional Lithuanian Easter food to share. Time: 9:30 am English Language Church Services, Pancake Breakfast following church - approximately, 10:30 am. Admission: Donation Latvian Community Center 10705 W Virginia Ave., Lakewood, CO [www.coloradolithuanians.org](http://www.coloradolithuanians.org)

## APRIL

### April 9-11, 2010

WOMEN'S WEEKEND Join Dr. Kristina Maciunas & Kerry Secret for a weekend of renewal, introspection, & companionship. For info on this lovely Neringa tradition as well as to register- please see [www.neringa.org](http://www.neringa.org)

### April 17, 2010

Baltic Folk Festival Lithuanian Hall Baltimore, MD Details to follow. <http://lietuvis.net>

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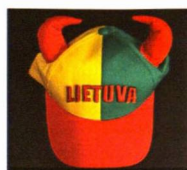
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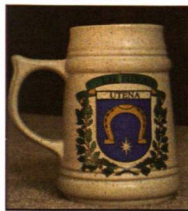
6 - CD by Jurga "Aukso  
Pieva" - \$ 20



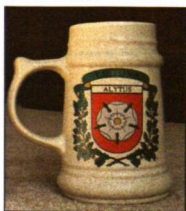
7 - CD by Vaivora (ethno-  
cultural music) - \$ 20



8 - Ytis decal approx (3"  
x 3") - \$ 3



9 - mug w city of Utena  
coat of arms - \$ 13



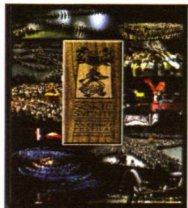
10 - mug w city of Alytus  
coat of arms - \$ 13



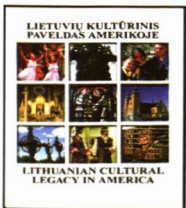
11 - mug w city of  
Panevezys insignia - \$ 13



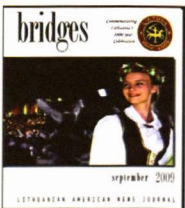
12 - "LIETUVA" scarf (4" x  
52" long) - \$ 25



13 - DVD or 13th Folk  
Dance Festival at Galen  
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14 - Cultural Legacy Book  
(hardcover, 224 pages) \$45



15 - Bridges subscription  
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16 - Set of 6 DVD's of XII  
Theatre festival (in  
Lithuanian) - \$ 45



17 - Car license plate  
holder \$12



18 - LT sticker (4" x 9"  
approx) - \$ 4.



19 - LIETUVA decal (1" x  
2.5") - \$ 3



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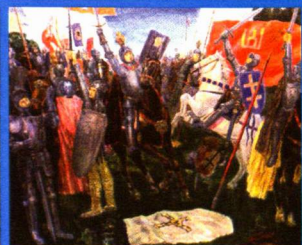
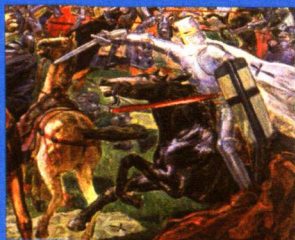
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600 years Anniversary  
Painting  
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*January 1- New Year's Day\* January 13- Defenders of Freedom Day  
January 18- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday (Observed)\* February 14- Valentine's Day  
February 15- Presidents' Day (Observed)\* February 16- Lithuanian Independence Day*