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april 2010

LITHUANIAN AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

Letter from the Editor

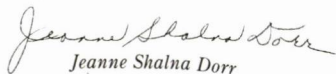
It's such a wonderful feeling to open the door and see the first flowers starting to poke their heads through the dirt. Everything seems lighter and brighter. At times during the difficult winter it seemed spring would never arrive.

In a recent conversation Gema reminded me that we have many unsung heroes at Bridges, and she is right. It is now time to thank and acknowledge them. I am not going to use names because I know I will inadvertently miss someone. As I do in most issues I thank the writers and photographers. But behind the scenes we have people both here and in Lithuania who are like our right arms. There are those who translate articles into English, turn heaven and earth to find answers to questions for us, those who explain things to us in articles that we "don't quite get" and the many sources who find the difficult photographs we need. We cannot forget our computer gurus who help us at the drop of a hat. So to all of you, even though we don't often tell you, you are always appreciated. This is a magazine that is published ten times year. When Gema turns over a disk to be printed on a Sunday we are already going full speed ahead on the next issue Monday morning. There is no way we could handle everything that comes our way on our own. So a very big- thank you !

You may have noticed an increased interest in genealogy articles or finding relatives in Lithuania. Since independence and openness many people are seeking their roots while others are searching for family members. It is not an easy task. I have enough family members but do have an interest in those who came before me. It can be frustrating, but the use of the computer makes it easier. How far back have I gone? Two great grandmothers and that's not very far. One simply because I have photos of her holding me with my mouth wide open screaming. The other is because my relatives in Lithuania remember her. It doesn't seem like much progress in about eighteen years. I have to admit I run hot and cold in my search and don't give it the time I should.

I don't usually print an article in three parts, but Mr. Kupcikevicius' article about the Lithuanian opera in Chicago is so informative and yet covers the subject with so much humor that I could not shorten it. I actually found myself laughing out loud with some of his escapades. I immediately sent him an email to thank him, and being the gentleman that he is, he responded that I made his day.

May you and yours have a blessed and a happy Easter and thank you for sharing your homes with us this month.


Jeanne Shalna Dorr

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National Executive Board

2715 E. Allegheny Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19134

Tel: 800- 625-1170

Fax: 856-428-6014

E-mail: LithuanianUSA@yahoo.com

BRIDGES Consultants

Jeanne Dorr Editor
Gema Kreivenas Art Director/Production
Rimas Gedeika Treasurer
Lithuanian American Community, Inc., &
Subscription Manager.

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Address all editorial correspondence to:

BRIDGES

Jeanne Dorr
4 Shrewsbury Yard
Riverton, NJ 08077-1038

E-Mail: Jeanneshalna@aol.com

For subscription & advertising information,
please contact:

LAC, Inc./BRIDGES,

Rimas Gedeika
78 Mark Twain Dr.
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* **COVER:** *A fragment of a painting from the book "LIETUVOS TAPYBA" XVI - XIX. By K. Ruseckas, a Lithuanian Girl with Palm Sunday Palms in her Hand. 1847, Canvas, oil.*

* **BACK COVER:** *The fair is traditionally held on the Sunday nearest to St. Casimir's Day, March 4, the day Saint Casimir died. In Lithuanian, Kaziukio mugė means "Little Casimir's" Fair (Kaziukas is a diminutive of Casimir). Today, Kaziukas fair also features music and dance; it attracts tens of thousands of visitors and many craftsmen from all over the country as well as from neighboring states such as Latvia, Russia, and Poland.*

* **PHOTO ALBUM** of Lithuania's Palm Sunday "**Verbos**" Traditional Vilnius palms ("verbos") made of colorful dried wild flowers and herbs, are the "Kaziuko Mugė" fair's trademark. Usually people take them to church on Palm Sunday.



Easter Sunday procession returning to the church in Pajevonys, Lithuania.

EASTER AT ANNUNCIATION

Helen Jasaitis, in the days we're talking about - 1930's, 1940's,- was just a little kid, maybe 5 to 10 years old, a pupil in the Annunciation parish's grammar school. She was born in Brooklyn, to parents who were both immigrants from Lithuania. In Lithuania, Helen would have been known as Jasaitytė, but the Americans didn't care for all those "funny" endings: - *tytės*, - *aitės*, - *ciutės*, - *ienės*, and they leveled off all the name endings, so Helen was Jasaitis, just like her father.

The family had been members of Annunciation parish since the parents, as new young immigrants, were married there twelve years before, and the parish was like another home for them all. Antanas, Helen's father, belonged to the *Šv. Vardo Draugija* (Holy Name Society); her mother, Marijona, to the *Gyvojo Rožančio Draugija* (Living Rosary Society); and both parents sang in the parish's fine choir. Helen, as a first-grader in the school, recently joined the children's choir, which sang the eight o'clock Mass daily, and evening devotions during May and October.

While the choir made plans and held rehearsals in preparation for the Easter holiday, the school's pupils and their parents were occupied in other ways. Many of the schoolchildren were preparing to march in the procession during Sunrise Mass. Lacy white dresses and white suits were readied; parents visited Laskas's Florist's Shop to order wreaths, calla lilies and boutonnières. Laskas was a neighborhood institution: A very large, fragrant florist's shop on Broadway, right under the Marcy Avenue "El" station. Little girls who had not yet received their First Communion would march in the procession wearing a green box wreath, while those who had, wore their Communion veils. The wreaths, and the calla lilies carried by each participant, were placed in Laskas's signature shiny white boxes. Everyone got their flowers at Laskas, and brought these boxes home on the Saturday before Easter.

Helen, her hair tied up in rags, stayed indoors feeling ugly all day on Saturday, until her mother bathed her and sent her to bed early. She had just fallen asleep, it seemed, when she felt her mother's

hand shaking her: "Atsikelk, vaikeli! Laikas ruoštis!" (Get up, my child! It's time to get ready!). It was the middle of the night for the little girl. The world drowned in silent mysterious darkness, and Helen sat limply as her mother brushed out her curls and helped her into her white dress, long white stockings and polished white MaryJanes. And when the wreath was pinned to Helen's hair, and she had been wrapped into a new, warm, white knitted shawl, they were about ready to leave for Sunrise Mass, which was to begin at 5:30. Helen would be in the procession with her classmates.



The author's sister, Phyllis.

The church began to fill quickly, with families and individuals arriving as the appointed time drew near, and the pews filled with people. Some years, it was so crowded that people stood, not only in the vestibule in the back, but in the aisles as well. The Dominican nuns who taught in the school, left their convent and crossed the street to the church's side entrance reserved just for them. They would leave their cloaks in the little vestibule, then climb a narrow stairway to take their seats at the hagioSCOPE (nuns' "squint"), a half-moon aperture made in the left-hand wall of the apse, where they could conveniently observe and participate. Only Sister Nicodema, with her assistants, Sisters Vianney and Rose Vera, was downstairs, waiting with the children who would walk in the procession.

The choir, numbering more than fifty, was ready; the choir loft was a busy beehive, perfumed and stylish. Many individual members had fine voices and performed solo parts with distinction. The choir director, Mr. Jankus, seated himself at the console and pushed a few buttons; the mighty organ took its first breath of the day.

Going to Sunrise Mass was somewhat like attending a concert. The world's classical composers during previous centuries wrote beautiful music for

the Mass, and a good selection of that was in this choir's repertoire. In those days, the Mass was said in Latin, with the celebrant facing the altar and his back to the congregation. Since the pastor, Father Norbert Pakalnis, was not fond of long Masses, the choir would often sing shortened versions of the Gloria and Credo on regular Sundays. But for the holiday Mass, the choir sang both Gloria and Credo in their complete meaningful text, while the congregation sat back to listen or follow along in their missals. Shubert's Mass in G, a beautiful, melodic piece, a great favorite with the choir members and most parishioners, was sung during Easter Sunrise Mass.

A grand solemn procession was a feature of the celebration, including many of the children who studied in the parish's grade school; acolytes and priests, including the pastor and numerous visiting priests; and members of the parish's many religious societies. This solemn procession was an old, old custom that Lithuanian immigrants brought with them from the Old Country. In Lithuania, the procession usually wound its way outside, in the churchyard and around the church, circling it three times. Since this was not practical on Brooklyn's streets, Annunciation's procession wended its way three times around the aisles of the church. Leading was the senior acolyte, the crucifer, carrying the cross on a tall staff. Others swung thurifers, as clouds of incense rose and swirled around, leaving its sharp fragrance everywhere. Still others carried red lanterns, and some continuously twirled the Sanctus bells, all raising "a joyful noise unto the Lord". The pastor, swathed in gold vestments, carried the monstrance, which held the Blessed Sacrament, while the parish's other priests walked beside him lending assistance, and acolytes held the baldachin over them. All the visiting clergy followed, and members of church societies carrying their standards -- beautiful, impressive

embroidered banners depicting patron saints or religious scenes. Golden knotted fringe and long streamers of silken ribbons hung from the banners, swaying softly as they passed down the aisles. And above all, with the organ and choir in full volume, sounded the celebratory Easter hymn, "*Linksmā Diena*". *A joyful day for us has dawned; Long have we all thirsted for it. Christ is risen; Death has fallen. ALLELUJAH.*

Sister Nicodema moved quickly to marshal her troops: the schoolchildren were about to join the procession. Some lined up at the top of the aisles, waiting for the others to come up the side aisle. "Sister Nicky" picked a girl at random -- and my goodness, by chance it was our Helen -- and whispered her instructions. "Stand at the head of your group at the top of the middle aisle, and wait for the group being led by Eleanor, to approach from the side aisle. Eleanor's group will turn and march first, down the middle aisle, and you and your group will follow them."

Well, is there any reason to wonder at what happened instead? Perhaps our Helen, in her excitement, misunderstood those instructions..... or, who can say, perhaps she saw no reason why Eleanor should be first, and not she herself? But Helen, cool as a little cucumber, turned first down the middle aisle and walked straight down, intent on joining the rest of the procession. Sister's frantic gestures and hssstt!'s aimed her way had no effect and made no dent in her composure. But alas! -- soon Sister had stopped her progress and restored order. Helen's moment of prominence was short, but she appeared to be satisfied, having bested the older Eleanor even for just a moment. Everyone smiled tolerantly at the little girl's "mistake", and she herself never ever admitted that it had been deliberate. Of course not.

When the procession was over, the children were allowed to rest, seated on the steps at the Communion rail. Some of the older girls were grouped at one of the side altars, and no one noticed that they were too close to the heart-shaped candle stand, on which all the red votives were burning. Those were the days before electric votives. Anna

Balciunas's Communion veil caught fire. Midst a good deal of screaming, Sisters Vianney and Rose Vera pulled the veil away and beat out the flames with their cloaks and bare hands, and Anna was escorted outside to her waiting family.

The pastor was soon busy with concluding ceremonies at the altar: the Mass was drawing to a close. Soon was heard: *Ite, Missa est - Allelujah! Go, the Mass is ended - Allelujah!*

The groups of marchers re-formed for the recessional, the organ booming and the choir singing, "Kristus Prisikēle" (Christ has risen) and again over all, "Linksmā Diena". The congregation followed slowly, all exiting through the great main portal.

Sunrise Mass at Easter usually followed an established routine, despite all its significance and pomp. Just as the congregation spills out onto the street when Mass is finished every Sunday, they did the same at Easter. Outside the church, groups formed and changed, constantly intermingling, as friends and families wished each other "*Linksmā Velyku*", discussing plans for the rest of the day. Helen and her parents met some friends and accepted their suggestion to join them at a nearby restaurant for breakfast. Marijona's brother, Juozas, Helen's beloved Uncle Joe, a bachelor, would be one of their dinner guests, along with Jonas and Elzbieta Berusaitis, distant cousins and recent immigrants.

Dinner would be an amalgam of Lithuanian and American favorites - roast turkey, *skilandis*, *kugelis*, sweet potatoes, creamed corn, cranberry sauce, apple pie. This mixed menu was only one small hint of the ongoing and inescapable process of absorption that would eventually convert these Lithuanian families and their descendants to what is now known as Lithuanian-American.

This Šventos Velykos would be a long day, and most guests would eventually head for home soon after dark. Tomorrow was, after all, a working-day.

Gloria Kivytaite O'Brien

Gloria Kivytaite O'Brien is a frequent contributor to *Bridges*. She grew up in Brooklyn, Annunciation Parish. Gloria can be contacted at Senaboba@aol.com. © Gloria O'Brien February 2010

President Grybauskaitė and the World Leaders



A meeting of women world leaders in New York organized by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

The protection of state interests and ensuring Lithuania's independence and its international security are the main foreign policy objectives pursued by President Dalia Grybauskaitė in shaping Lithuania's foreign policy and its priorities.

The President supports active cooperation with Lithuania's strategic partners, strengthening of Lithuania's role in Euro-Atlantic organizations, promotion of strategic economic and energy ties with Scandinavian countries, and a constructive dialogue and good neighborly relations with Eastern neighbors.

In six months, the President paid working visits to eight foreign countries: Sweden, Latvia, Poland, France, Finland, Estonia, Belgium, and Ukraine as well as the most important European and global organizations. The President met with the leaders of the European Commission, the European Parliament and NATO in Brussels. In New York, she took part in the United Nations General Assembly debates, a meeting of women world leaders organized by the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, and had bilateral meetings with Ukrainian, Georgian and Serbian heads of state. The President attended the 20th anniversary celebrations of the fall of the Berlin Wall in Germany and took an active part in the efforts to resolve issues relevant to the European Union during European Council meetings in Brussels.

Lithuania entered into a new stage of cooperation with France, one of the most influential EU old-timers. The Lithuanian and French presidents signed the first strategic partnership agreement in the history of both countries.

Invited by President Dalia Grybauskaitė, the new

President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, paid a working visit to Lithuania. Lithuania was also visited by the new NATO Secretary General, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and the new President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy.

During her visits abroad, the President focused on energy independence of Lithuania and the Baltic States, the construction of a new nuclear power plant and power grids connecting Lithuania with Sweden and Poland, as well as on the creation of a common energy market of the Baltic and Nordic countries. "All three Baltic States are interested in having an independent energy market, creating a common market for electricity, and securing EU financing for energy projects. Therefore, we have decided to assign our governments with the task of producing a list of projects for which we would jointly seek funding in the new EU financial perspective for 2014," President Dalia Grybauskaitė said after meeting with Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Latvian President Valdis Zalters in Vilnius.

During the first six months of Dalia Grybauskaitė's presidency, strong assurances of support for energy projects were received not only from neighboring countries, but also from EU leaders. "European Commission President José Manuel Barroso has personally assured me that Lithuania's application for 175 million euros in EU support to build an electricity bridge is being examined and a decision can be expected shortly," President Dalia Grybauskaitė said.

In foreign policy, she places a focus on strengthening Lithuania's role in Euro-Atlantic organizations and ensuring Lithuania's international security.



President Grybauskaitė and NATO Secretary, Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

Speaking at the international conference “Transatlantic Agenda 2010 – A Baltic Vision” in Riga, the President said that the relationship between the European Union and the United States was of primary importance for the security of the Baltic region and the whole of Europe. Therefore, Lithuania was ready to be actively engaged in its formation.

NATO’s Secretary General who visited Lithuania at the President’s invitation assured that NATO was determined to continue investing in the security of the Baltic States. The President and the NATO leader discussed the new NATO Strategic Concept currently in the make and Lithuania’s role in the process, NATO’s defense plans for the Baltics, and the application of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, which states that an attack on any one NATO member state shall be considered to be an attack on all NATO member states, in the face of new challenges just like in territorial defense.

Article and Photos courtesy of the President’s Press Office.



Lithuanian-American Community

CONTACT INFORMATION:

WEBSITE

WWW.LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN.ORG

TELEPHONE

800-625-1170

LITHUANIAN “ROOTS”... AND BRANCHES

This would be the last spring. She knew this would be her last year to gather the first violets (zibute) of spring for her mother. The winter had been bitterly cold and Antonet knew that the violets would bloom late this spring but she hoped she still had time. Even the storks had yet to return to Anyksciai to breed because the frogs, their favorite food, still lay dormant in the fields. Another bad sign. In all her 18 years living in Skiemonys, Antonet had always gathered the first violets of spring as a bouquet for her mother. And, time was running short. Soon they had to leave their farmstead in Alanta for BallinStadt www.ballinStadt.de in Hamburg. Antonet and her new husband, Gabriel, would leave Hamburg for New York City on the S.S. Pretoria traveling in steerage to meet Alexander, Gabriel’s brother, who already lived in Brooklyn.



Family reunion in Vilnius, Dr. Resk appears in center of photo

Life as a poor peasant farmer in Lithuania had been very hard for Gabriel working at different farmsteads for other landowners. He had loved being the stableman in charge of the horses and carriages at the Alanta palace of Duke Tadeusai Pac-Pamarneckui. Now it was 1905 and the Russian Czar was at war with Japan. The war was going badly for Russia. Gabriel was ordered into the Czar's army with the promise, should he survive the war, of being separated for decades from Antonet, his wife who was already pregnant with their first child. So, the decision was made. They would escape Czarist domination in Lithuania and leave for America. Arriving at Ellis Island with \$21 dollars to their name on May 9, 1905 after two weeks below deck in steerage, they lived in Brooklyn until their first child, Fabian, was born that September. Fabian Reskevicius was my father.

The Reskevicius family moved to Chicago with yet more children arriving: Bernice, Stella, Alphonse, Laverne and Leonard. By 1910 they already owned their own home on Chicago's south side. Gabriel worked as a carpenter while Antonet worked at the Pullman Palace Car Company. They also boarded other Lithuanian immigrant men at their spacious home in Roseland to make ends meet. An American immigrant success story. They are all gone now. Their legacy lives on, though, in their children and their children's children, both those who live in America and those who remained in Lithuania. That is where this story begins.

I was already 30 and a parent myself when I became curious about my family heritage, my "roots": the hardships endured, the choices made, the discrimination faced, as well as the joys that my grandparents found in America having left their families behind, forever. Collecting family stories and memories from my parents, my aunts and uncle revealed much about my grandparents' personalities but failed to provide critical information about which villages my grandparents were born, grew up in, or where they married. Although I accumulated box after



Dr. Thomas Resk, author of the article.

box of genealogical as well as cultural information on Lithuanian peasant life over more than three decades of sporadic research, it never revealed the critical information that I sought. United States Census data, Ellis Island immigration records, and Lithuanian genealogy sources all provided some data but never the exact data.

It was not until I spent a day researching in the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Salt Lake City) that I finally struck pay dirt. My grandmother had filed her Declaration of Intention to become an American citizen, her "first papers," in May of 1941. Her Declaration of Intention gave me the villages where both she and her husband,

Gabriel, were born; the village where they married; the name of the ship and date that they left Hamburg; and, other critical data.

Working with a professional genealogist in Lithuania who had on-site access to the Lithuanian State Historical Archives that maintains excellent genealogical records provided even further family information including the names of my great grandparents and their siblings plus additional village and farmstead locations where both my grandparents had lived. The ultimate jackpot was identifying cousins living in Lithuania with whom our American family shares common lineage. After a rapid exchange of letters and emails, we were all excited about



A visit to Azubaliai village



Stephania's grave on the hilltop.

a reunion of our family in Lithuania. We immediately planned visits to the villages and farmsteads important to our family: Azubaliai, Zibeciai, Ustrone, and Broniskiai. My two adult daughters, my son-in-law, my brother and I visited Lithuania in June of 2009. Our visit proved a spectacular success. Walking in the footsteps of my grandparents at the farmsteads where they grew up and sharing that experience with my own daughters was profoundly satisfying. Meeting our Lithuanian cousins and their families was an emotional experience for us all. Toasts, tears, and stories flowed faster and faster on each succeeding day of our visit. My four cousins; Alfredas Matulionis, Alvyra-Stase Petkeliene-Matulionyte, Rene Maulionyte-Sirgediene, and Virginija Matulionyte Liesiene, along with their families are totally warm, loving, and graciously good people who remained true to their family and religious values despite a lifetime of repression during the Soviet era prior to Lithuania regaining its independence in 1991. So many stories they shared. Their aunt, Stephania, was shot by the Soviets in 1945 in the kitchen of her home in front of

her parents because she supported the Lithuanian Partisans fighting Soviet domination. The Soviets refused her parents' permission to bury their daughter in the parish cemetery, forcing them to bury her body on a lonely forested hilltop in the dark of night. To this day, her family tenderly maintains her grave. An uncle was shot by the Soviets in the 1940s for refusing to serve in the Russian army. Virtually every Lithuanian that we talked to had had family members either shot by the Soviets or deported to Siberia, serving for decades as slave labor for the Russians. Our family reunion never would have happened during Soviet times because our letters would have just disappeared under the KGB without being delivered. All of us on the American side of our family departed Lithuania with a profound appreciation for the many freedoms that we so readily take for granted here in America. Our Lithuanian family, meanwhile, had persevered and fought Soviet oppression until freedom was once again theirs.

We discovered, too, that modern Lithuania is culturally rich extending from classical music and opera to jazz to contemporary poetic songs of their beloved Vytautas Kernagis, who recently died, too young, from cancer. As a forensic pathologist myself, I was delighted to discover that Lithuania possesses an enviable state-of-the-art, world-class, nationwide forensic medicine facility, the Institute of Forensic Medicine www.tmi.lt, adjoining the Mykolas Romeris University in Vilnius which incorporates complete forensic pathology, toxicology, DNA and crime laboratories. Second to none including the USA.

While persistent economic problems exist in Lithuania, grassroots efforts by organizations such as the US-based Aukscuiai Foundation www.aukfoundation.org spearheaded by Vytautas J. Sliupas P.E. are resurrecting family farms from the ashes of the Soviet era of collectivization bringing fundamental positive change to today's Lithuania.

This vignette of how we discovered our family "roots" is not much different, I suspect, from your own family story. Now, it is your turn to embark on your own "roots" adventure.

Dr. Thomas Resk

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

TRIVIA QUESTION

(No 35)

Who killed the Lithuanian King Mindaugas?

- (a)Trenoit of Samogitia (b)Prince Daumont (c)Teutonic Knights

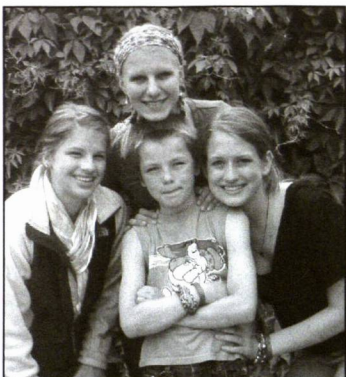
Answer to Trivia Quiz on page 18

Child's Gate to Learning: Eleven Centers, Eleven Years

Volunteers, donations, and continuing work for Lithuania's children

"Child's Gate to Learning" (Vaiko vartai į mokslą) officers and directors are pleased but humbled that the organization was honored Feb. 7, 2010 at the Knights of Lithuania Mid-America District's annual "Memories of Lithuania" Banquet which commemorates and celebrates Lithuania's independence. The 2010 annual banquet was special as it was the district's 50th annual banquet. In conjunction with the banquet each year, the Knights of Lithuania Mid-America District also honors an organization or individual "whose work for Lithuania and/or the Lithuanian cause is a shining example for others". During the 2010 banquet, which was held at the Oak Lawn (Illinois) Hilton, "Child's Gate to Learning" was honored with the Mid-America District's 2010 Award of Distinction in recognition of the organization's "tireless work for the underprivileged youth of Lithuania". "Child's Gate to Learning" has many supporters and benefactors to thank for its work, successes, accomplishments... The recognition is noted and appreciated, but the work continues into 2010...

Although the organization has not attempted to add a center each year of its existence, by an interesting coincidence, in 2009, the Chicago area-based Lithuanian-American humanitarian organization, "Child's Gate to Learning" completed its 11th year of activity, having taken on the support of an 11th after school center, based at the St. Jacob Parish in Jonava (not far from Kaunas). The most recently added center joins 10 other organization-supported after school centers and temporary shelters in Lithuania, attended by children and youths from at-risk families in- Vilnius (2



Lithuanian American volunteers (from left), Emilija, Vija and Andrėja with one of the participants of the "Vilties vėrinėliai" center's summer activities.

centers), Kaunas, Marijampolė, Druskininkai, Kazlų Rūda, Naujoji Akmenė, Žemaičių Kalvarija, Užpaliai, and Rumbonyšs.

The work of "Child's Gate to Learning" has been ongoing since the organization was founded in 1998, but each year is marked by its own milestones. Throughout 2009, several of the organization's officers had the opportunity to visit supported centers in Lithuania, see the children and youths do homework, eat meals, work and play, and learn life skills often not taught in their homes.

The officers conferred with centers' directors, employees, and volunteers, and saw the work some of the centers do with the children's and youths' mothers, who often have challenges exacerbated by substance abuse, poverty and joblessness. The organization's coordinator in Lithuania, social worker Žydrūnė Liobikaitė, shared her insights and knowledge about social work with at-risk families in Lithuania, and the important role of after school centers, during her Spring 2009 U.S. visits to Chicago and Ann Arbor, MI. A variety of fundraising events and projects- bazaars, fund-raising luncheons, information kiosks, and so on, were organized by the organization's officers in the Chicago area, as well as coordinators in Sunny Hills (Florida), Detroit, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. Then there were the supporters who donated homemade knit items, arts and craft supplies, knapsacks, clothing, shoes...

Four young Lithuanian language speaking high schoolers from the Chicagoland area, Vaiva Lagūnavičius, Vija Lietuvnickas, Andrėja Siliūnas

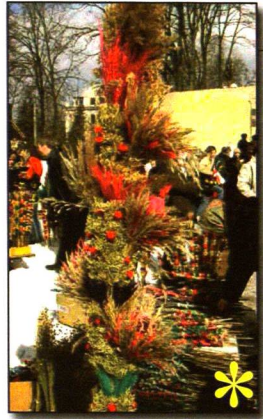
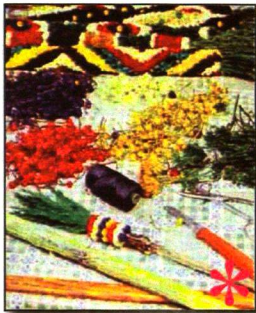
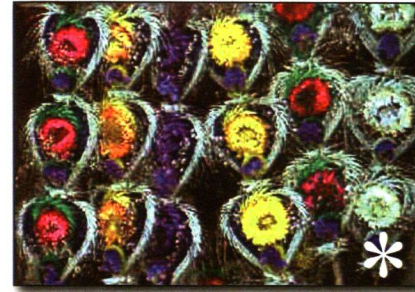
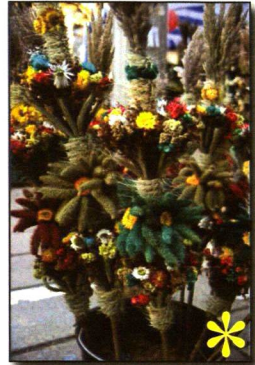
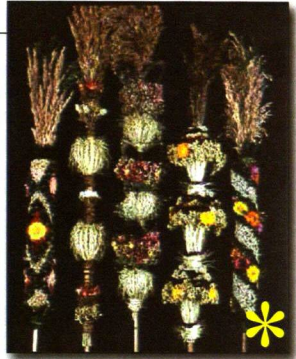


Photo Album of
Lithuania's
Palm Sunday
"Verbos"

Photos by AK = Algirdas Kazla, Kaunas, Lithuania
* = Internet



In Lithuania you can find various crafts traditionally made of amber, wood, flax, ceramics, glass, wool, even dried flowers (verbos).

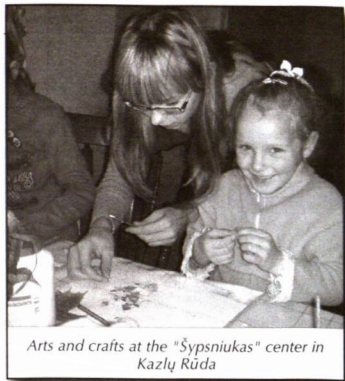
and Emilija Pranckevičius, travelled to Lithuania with the financial and moral support of their families. They spent almost one month in Lithuania during the summer of 2009. Vaiva volunteered at the "Vilties angelas" center in Vilnius, while the other three volunteered at the "Vilties vėrinėliai" center in Žemaičių Kalvarija. The three volunteers who chose to work in the northwest corner of Lithuania, away from the big cities that they had seen during previous visits, expressed the desire to experience life in the "real Lithuania".

Gratifying confirmations and appreciation for the young volunteers' enthusiastic and sincere work with the centers' youths came from text posted under the heading "Guests from America" on the "Vilties vėrinėliai" website (comments were translated and paraphrased): *"We waited, we waited, and they are finally here... Three volunteers / counselors have joined our group for a time... Great young ladies! They almost immediately became part of our (center's) life. And into our life came new people, new games, new things to do, something unusual, not experienced before, but at the same time, very pleasant. It seems that we became acquainted, not very bravely, just a few minutes ago, and now we are playing, working, participating in sports, eating together..."* Later, the center's program director, psychologist Jolanta Virbickienė (who supervised the work of the young volunteers), in an e-mail message wrote: *"Inspired by our young visitors from Chicago, having had their practical help, and having seen, that young people, if properly prepared, can help a great deal, I have organized a group of older youths from (the local) school and have invited them to a 'mini course' for volunteers in October. I will teach them, prepare them, and hope that they will provide us in the center with some level of assistance (that we so urgently need)..."* (Two Lithuanian-American high schoolers from the Rocky Mountain region have already volunteered to go to Lithuania during the summer of 2010 and have already exchanged many an e-mail with "Child's Gate to Learning" officers as they begin the planning and preparations...)



Marijampolė Žydrūnė et al: "Child's Gate to Learning" coordinator in Lithuania, Žydrūnė Liobikaitė and some friends during a visit to the "Šaltinėlis" center in Marijampolė.

"Child's Gate to Learning" does not support the entire operation of the 11 centers with which it works, but its support, moral and financial, is ongoing. The organization's moral support (through letters, e-mails, phone calls, visits and occasional packages), is felt by the centers, their directors and employees. Financial support helps the centers provide the children and youths with school and craft supplies, toiletries purchased in Lithuania, as well as meals and sometimes even medical supplies. During the first months of each year, when Lithuanian government allotted funds have not yet been dispersed, a number of centers' heat and meal bills are paid for out of the organization's support funds. Donations to "Child's Gate to Learning" come from organizations and foundations, but the largest "piece of the pie" comes from the donations of individuals, families, and groups who send contributions in lieu of birthday and wedding anniversary gifts, or in remembrance of a beloved deceased friend or family member. One donation check came with a letter - *"Because of the economic conditions in Lithuania and the unfortunate exchange rate, we are sending an additional check, to use where you have the greatest need next year..."* This same benefactor expressed his understanding of the organization's targeted efforts when he recalled a visit to one of the organization's supported centers in Lithuania and wrote: *"These were little guys with street smarts, but they were cute, full of energy and obviously had loads of potential which only needed to be pointed in the right direction..."* The goal of Child's Gate to Learning is to improve the education of at risk children by providing financial



Arts and crafts at the "Šypsniukas" center in Kazlų Rūda

aid, educational materials, and trained professional volunteers in the after-school centers and temporary shelters that it supports. One center's program director wrote- "I feel as if I have seventy children. All of the center's children are mine. They fill me with joy and I am proud of them. Each person's road (in life) is different. Apparently, mine is just that- to be a mother to a large group of children hungry for love. I don't stop thanking God for this opportunity. That is a gift..." Indeed, it can be said that the approximately 400 children and youths, who attend the 11 "Child's Gate to Learning" supported after school centers and temporary shelters in Lithuania are all of our children, for whom we want to ensure an education, and a gateway to a secure, productive adulthood...

More information about Child's Gate to Learning: <http://www.childgate.org>

More information about the Knights of Lithuania:

<http://www.knightsoflithuania.com>

Ramunė Kubilius

Ramunė Kubilius is an academic medical librarian by profession. She has served in the Lithuanian-American Community's Executive Committee in the past, is currently active in several other Lithuanian organizations and she dances with the Lithuanian folk dance ensemble, "Grandis". She writes for the Lithuanian language press in North America and has contributed to "Bridges" over the years.

Part II LIKE A SHOT EAGLE

Chicago Lithuanian Opera - revisited

By Vytautas Kupcikevičius

Editor's note: In Part I Mr. Vytautas Kupcikevičius wrote about his early days in a displaced persons' camp in Germany and how the people, despite the hardships, still had the desire to sing. He wrote of how the Chicago Lithuanians organized the Lithuanian Chicago Opera. Mr. Kupcikevičius covered the rigors of learning the operas as well as some of the humorous incidents. He knew one opera would be successful after his father deemed it "passable" in his journal.

Opera Part II

We were on a positive track, the next opera was to be Faust, but we had a problem. Faust required a women's chorus and we only had men. We drafted our wives and girlfriends and a women's chorus was born. We repeated Rigoletto in Toronto, Canada and started learning Faust. In the spring of 1958 we gave three performances in Chicago and one in Cleveland, OH. We were on a roll and getting ready to stage more difficult operas. During one of the performances in Chicago I had a disaster on the stage. When the devil tossed gold coins to the peasants, I jumped for them and split my pants. I backed off the stage and knocked down the water well. It was embarrassing, but accidents do happen, even on the stage. A few years later I witnessed the mother of all the stage accidents. We attended an Opera Pagliacci, performed by a semi professional group of Chicago artists. We knew the soloist singing the lead Pagliacci role. We were there to support him. The opera started and progressed normally until the glorious entry of the Pagliacci. For the entry a cart pulled by a live donkey was used. It looked impressive, but with live animals you never know what will happen. While the artist was singing his aria the donkey decided to urinate swinging his male organ. Spectators started to laugh. The poor artist could not see what was going on and started to inspect himself, maybe he had forgotten his pants. The conductor seeing it all was motioning for somebody to get the animal off the stage. The donkey handlers started to pull it off the stage. The donkey got irritated and on its way out took half of the scenery with him. Needless to say, that performance was destroyed.

When our Faust performances ended and the excitement faded, a chorus meeting was held and a decision was made to stage Carmen next. This opera was to be staged with a full compliment of Lithuanian soloists. S. Baras was back in Chicago, A. Brazis and J. Vaznelis completed the men's roster. Aldona Stempuzis and Dana Stankaityte were the strong women soloists. The Chorus was nicely developing

Conclusion on page 18

Part II
In Search of Words

Jacquelyn Vincenta McShulsks

In Part I of In Search of Words the author wrote about her reasons for seeking out the beginning Lithuanian language course at Vilnius University in the summer of 2009, some of the logistics of getting there and starting up, and admits concerns about returning to a classroom after 30 years. The University welcomes its students warmly, treats them well, and fellow classmates of varying ages come from 24 countries. Even just walking the grounds of the 400+-year-old institution is captivating.

Once we were sorted and settled into our classrooms on the first full day of Lithuanian language instruction at Vilnius University, a workbook created by VU linguistic instructors was passed out to each beginner and we broke into it immediately. The words and phrases I had grasped in my home studies were rapidly covered and left behind, replaced by more relevant versions, or they never even came up. I felt exhilarated by the teachers, the setting, and the other students -- but also alarmed at the black hole of ignorance I carried into the classroom every day.

As I had secretly feared, most of the in-class work was actual speech, either answering questions put to us by our instructor -- a strict, young Lithuanian woman named Austra-- or working with a partner. Of course this is as it had to be, and nothing forces concentration like having to actually use the information presented. We started with greetings: "Labas rytas!" "Kaip gyveni?" "Sveikas!" But on that first day we also "talked" about our countries and cities of origin, other languages we know (my classmates all knew several), and Austra began to feed us infinitives, nouns, and sample sentences that employed them.

Immediately, we learned the verbs "gyventi", to live; "dirbti", to work; "studijuoti", to study; "kalbėti", to speak; and "suprasti", to understand, along with the third tenses of their present and past forms (these are the three pieces of information used to introduce and identify all verbs). We put those to use with our peers in conversation that was as slow and painful as extracting splinters. Austra insisted. She efficiently explained concepts, set out the task, expected our responses, and then we did what we could. That is how we learned. The wash of words and concepts felt overwhelming sometimes and

evidence of progress non-existent. But, in fact, it was working. I began to break through barriers I hadn't even been able to clearly identify on my own.

Without pausing over sections that were denser or more difficult than others, we crashed through that entire 94-page workbook and a dozen additional worksheets in four weeks. Class started at 8:30 am and we worked until 10, when we took a half-hour coffee break. Often that's just what I did, sat down in one of the beautiful cafes or courtyards for a cup of coffee alone or with classmates. Sometimes I walked the streets of the "senamiestas" (Old Town), and once in a while I studied in one of the University's courtyards or frescoed halls. We returned to class at 10:30 and worked until noon. Lunch break came then and at 1:30, if we did not have a third language workshop, we were invited to attend scheduled lectures (about the university, Lithuanian environment, literature, culture, and history), tours or other events. On three of the four Saturdays, VU buses took those of us who wanted to go to Trakai, Rumsiskes, a monastery and Kaunas, and on those trips two guides attended -- one speaking English, the other Lithuanian.

If I had spent the four weeks of that class engaged in nothing but those activities provided by the University summer course, I would have felt enriched beyond description. But in Old Town, the many inviting walks, exhibits, cafes, movies, concerts, and other opportunities are so easy to take advantage of that it was only a desire to rest that kept me in my apartment at all. Additionally, 2009 was Lithuania's Millennium celebration, and for over a week, concerts, dance pageants, folk art shows and other events abounded. My expectations when I'd submitted my application and fee several months before were dust compared to the experience those weeks actually held.

For some, learning Lithuanian seemed to be far easier than for others. In addition to myself, my beginners' group of ten consisted of a young Finnish man learning the language for his Lithuanian fiancé, a Polish boy just out of high school, two 20-something Japanese women between careers, an Italian customs agent, an Icelandic businessman, two Russian linguistics students and a Russian professor. The Russians had the least trouble working through the daily exercises. This was in part because of language similarities between Lithuanian and Russian, in part because they had already had some exposure to the language, and also because they



Fresco in the V. University philology building

were quite intelligent and competitive. I could feel my classmates' comprehension clicking off along with mine sometimes when the Russians spoke rapidly and accurately as some of us were still trying to figure out what page we were on. But I wasn't there to win a grade or anyone's admiration, and as long as I remembered that, even the times of confusion were fun.

Academically speaking, during the course of those four weeks I learned more than I had during any four-week period for 30 years. Everything about the language class experience was both familiar and as shocking to my system as cold water. At one point every few days in class my mind would completely stop working. I couldn't for the life of me remember even the phrase of dismissal, "neseprantu" ("I don't understand"), couldn't even think to shrug. But Austra -- an excellent instructor -- was kind and had a good sense of humor, and she insisted that we were learning more than we realized. It turned out that she was right, but for a while I suspected that I would prove to be the one exception to her experience.

It was difficult to return to my apartment and study after being in class for several hours, but I often tried to for at least few minutes over dinner because I felt compelled to grasp all I could. I'd come 10,000+ miles, invested money in this effort, had experts at arm's reach, and somehow I value all of that more than I did when I was 20.

Sure enough, little Lithuanian mysteries were gradually solved. I began to distinguish nouns from verbs in billboards, to pick out key concepts so that I knew if I held a coupon or a ticket in my hand, to understand if I was reading an address or a date. After the three or four weeks of the class, I was able to ask the woman



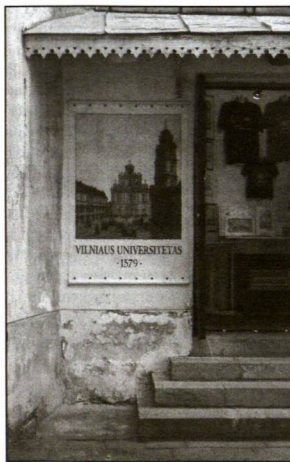
Fresco in the V. University philology building

selling flowers on Vokietiu gatve if the flowers were from her garden, a sentence that won me a beautiful smile. Mastering that phrase, I used it again later in the coastal town of Nida to converse with a woman about the raspberries and gooseberries I purchased from her stand. Naturally, a sentence in Lithuanian invited many more in return, and while it was usually incomprehensible to me, I began to catch things now and then. Either way, it was beautiful to listen to.

Though many Lithuanians in Vilnius do not speak English, it is fairly easy to make oneself understood on the street, to order food in restaurants, to direct a taxi, and to acquire such necessities as maps and money. However, to begin to be able to interpret Vilnius in its oldest mother tongue was far more exciting than just stumbling around as a rube tourist. My concerns about the uselessness of Lithuanian to my daily life

in Michigan evaporated in the richness of romantic, melancholy Lietuva. After all, we don't study beauty in order to achieve something worldly -- we do so to expand our spirits and minds, and there was no question that new windows of possibility were already opening for me in Lithuania.

There will never be any fooling the children of the Zemaitijos courtyard about my origins far away in a culture less ancient, less embattled, perhaps less patient and deep. They assessed my Americanism accurately right away, and continued to seem to be amused by it, wanting "to take care of" me, as one woman put it. Near the end of my stay they set up jewelry "stands" in the courtyard, displaying necklaces, bracelets, and earrings they had made themselves from plastic colored beads, wrapped in teeny plastic bags and set out with price stickers on them. In imitation of their professional, grownup counterparts on Pilies gatve, they held different ones



Steps up to the V. University souvenir shop. Poster depicting V. University in 1579



One of many arches between V. University buildings

up, declaring them "beautiful," and pointing out their low prices. On my last day in Vilnius, I stopped and took some time looking through their wares. Here was an easy conversation to have -- smiles, nods, and litas delivered with a simple "aciui!" I couldn't quite remember how to put together useful phrases I had learned, in order to tell them: I am leaving tomorrow! Take care of each other! I will be back and see you again someday! So I bought extra jewelry, studied their faces a little more closely than usual, then made my way up the four stories of concrete stairs to pack and try to locate -- on the phone, using Lithuanian, which I did successfully -- a taxi to the airport and my flight home. I have now at least begun my conversation with Lithuania and its people.

For information about Vilnius University courses:

www.vu.lt/en/studies/summer_courses

andrius.apinis@ff.vu.lt

For questions please contact the writer at
JVMT@Yahoo.com.

Jacquelyn Vincenta McShulskis

Jacquelyn Vincenta McShulskis is a free-lance writer and novelist living in Kalamazoo, Michigan, with American-Lithuanian roots in Kearny, New Jersey. When she is not traveling or writing, she is focused on family, friends, and non-profit work in the areas of civil liberties, community, and the environment.

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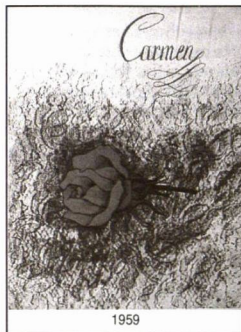
Conclusion from page 15

LIKE A SHOT EAGLE

and we were ready to try a more complex opera. We were making progress, gaining more experience and confidence. Carmen was well received by our growing fan base and after staging *Il Trovatore* we were ready for the big challenge: *Aida*. *Aida* is a grand opera requiring capable soloists and chorus. It needs ballet and extras to act as army of soldiers, spectators. Somehow it all came together and the small Maria High school stage was full of singers, dancers and actors. The production was a huge success. It was our first milestone. We were elated and rumors started circulating that the opera would be invited to Lithuania to do *Aida* at the Vilnius Opera. In 1963 our contacts with Lithuania were minimal, since it was under Soviet Russia occupation. Arguments started between those who wanted to go and those who did not want any contact with Soviets. All the arguments ended when the rumor remained a rumor and we all remained in Chicago.

In 1963 we did *Cavaleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, and in 1964 *Tosca*. For the 1965 season we made bigger plans. Since 1965 was the twentieth anniversary of the Soviet Union's reoccupation of Lithuania, a memorial concert was planned. Verdi's *Requiem* was chosen along with a cantata the *Bells of Vilnius*, written for this occasion by a Jesuit priest B. Markaitis. The concert was to be staged with the Chicago Symphony orchestra at the McCormick convention center in downtown Chicago. I have sung many difficult operas but Verdi's *Requiem* was in a different ball park. During rehearsals, when we were trying to put it together it appeared unreachable, especially with *Sanctus* which is written for 8 voices. But determination and hard work helped us overcome the difficulties and we were ready. The concert day came and we stood on the stage. The Chicago Symphony and 5000+ spectators were before us. A shiver went through my back but there was nowhere to hide and the concert started. When the *Requiem* ended there was complete silence. We were stunned that we finished without missing a note. The audience was quiet and then gave us a standing ovation. This was our second milestone.

This concert was the epitome of my choral singing career. I could now brag that I had sung Verdi's *Requiem*. The Lithuanian Opera men's chorus was invited to sing in the Lyric Opera's production of Wagner's opera, the *Flying Dutchman*. It was an interesting experience to sing with the Lyric Opera's professional chorus. We were the guests. We attended choral rehearsals, stage rehearsals and three performances. It was a very educational experience, we found out how much we had to learn. We did our part well and



were paid for it. We had to join the union and received the union rate. After the last performance I received \$250 and the bragging rights that I was a professional singer.

Our work continued and in 1966 we staged La Traviata. The tenor role was sung by a Polish soloist S.Vichik, who became a new member of the Opera. In 1967 we produced our first Lithuanian Opera Grazina. There is an interesting story about the Grazina production. From the beginning we were criticized for not paying attention to Lithuanian operas, but you cannot stage an opera if you do not have the musical score, and no one in the United States had it. One day our chorus



president found a package at his door. In it he found the complete musical score of the opera. To this day we do not know who delivered the package, we had secret admirers. The opera was staged in Chicago's Lyric Opera hall. We gave two performances. A new soprano Lilia Sukyte appeared in our opera, a Canadian-Lithuanian who was also singing in the Metropolitan Opera of NY. She sang Violeta in Traviata and Grazina in one of the Grazina opera performances. In September we took the Opera Grazina on the road. We traveled to New York and sang the opera in concert form. We traveled in style, chartered an airplane and flew from Midway to La Guardia, checked into a Manhattan hotel. In the afternoon we had a rehearsal with the orchestra. That night while sleeping in our room, I was robbed. My wallet with money and all my documents was stolen. In NYC it is best to sleep with your money inside your pajamas. You live, you learn. The concert went well and after it we were invited to a cocktail party. After partying we boarded a bus and went to La Guardia. At the airport we gave an impromptu concert walking from the bus to the airplane. We were happy and singing was our life. We landed in Chicago still singing. I am sure that United Air Lines never had such a happy flight again.

Conclusion next month.....

Vytautas Kupcikevičius

Vytautas Kupcikevičius was born in Kaunas, Lithuania. He is the holder of 51 US Patents in the food packaging field. His hobbies are art water colors and drift wood sculptures.



ANSWER TO TRIVIA QUESTION

Trivia Quiz on page 10

Source: Samogitia by Chas.L.Thourot Pichel

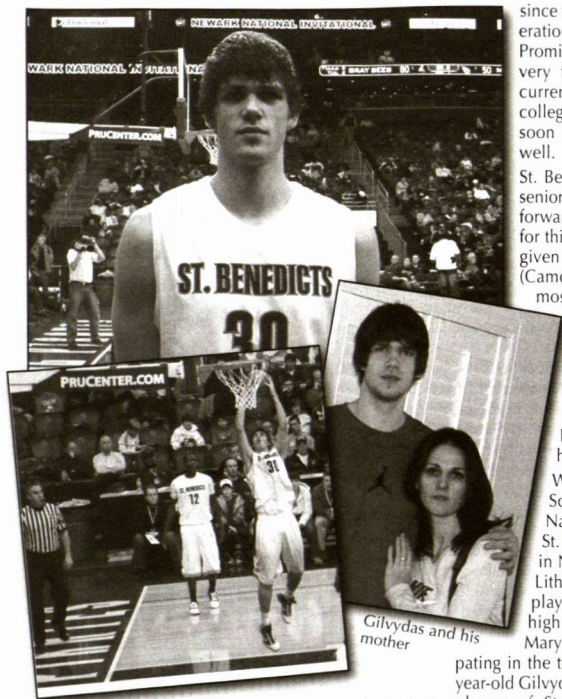
"Trenoit became acquainted with more facts pertaining to the mysterious death of his father (Ryngold) and he was inclined to believe that Mindaugas was directly responsible for this act, as well as the murder of other relatives. It was for those reasons, it was rumored among Trenoit's kinsmen, the revenge on Mindaugas was inevitable. But, as fate would have it, Samogitian Prince Daumont denied Trenoit this opportunity by personally killing Mindaugas in an act of retribution.

Mindaugas was inevitable. But, as fate would have it, Samogitian Prince Daumont denied Trenoit this opportunity by personally killing Mindaugas in an act of retribution.

The covetous Mindaugas in 1263 dispatched Prince Daumont with his army against Bryansk, deep in Russia, after refusing to help Prussians. This move was interpreted at home as the Catholic King's neglect of national interests; but Mindaugas was motivated by a desire to steal Prince Daumont's young wife and marry her, which he succeeded in doing. On Prince Daumont's return to Lithuania, he awaited Mindaugas on the road and assassinated him. The episode of the murder is documented in Alfred Rambaud's History of Russia, but most other historians blame Trenoit for the murder of Mindaugas, without any explanation."

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

Gilvydas Biruta – *Lithuanian to be Michael Jordan*



Gilvydas and his mother

Everyone knows that basketball in Lithuania is a second religion. We are always happy to hear about the achievements of our countrymen, especially in the sports world. It was a great pleasure to find out that Šarūnas Marčiulionis was nominated for the Basketball Hall of Fame. Šarūnas happened to be the first basketball player from Lithuania to play in the NBA. But it was not the only reason for this honour. He was nominated for helping put together the Lithuanian Olympic "dream-team" 18 years ago in a tumultuous time for the entire country, his work of quick fundraising and organization that culminated in the bronze medal in the Barcelona Olympiad in 1992. It instantly shifted the landscape of international basketball. Marčiulionis, who

is 45, now lives in Lithuania as a businessman who still works to promote basketball. More Lithuanians played in this prestigious league since then. But let's talk about the younger generation who are still working their way to the Promised Land, i.e. NBA. There are quite a few very talented Lithuanian basketball players currently studying and playing in American colleges and high schools. Who knows, maybe soon some of them will play in the NBA as well.

St. Benedict's Prep High School (Newark, NJ) senior Gilvydas Biruta, is a 6 foot 8 inch power forward from Lithuania who has been playing for this school for the last two seasons and has given a commitment to Rutgers University (Camden, NJ). "He's one of the two or three most athletic guys that I've coached – in terms of his ability to play above the rim and run and jump," St. Benedict's coach Dan Hurley said. Gilvydas has received interest from prestigious schools such as University of Pennsylvania, Davidson College (NC), University of Kentucky and Harvard University (MA), but he decided to stay in New Jersey.

We were fortunate to attend the High School Basketball 2-nd Annual Newark National Invitational tournament hosted by St. Benedict's Prep at the Prudential Center in Newark, NJ, where Gilvydas and another Lithuanian player, Domykys Milka, were playing for their schools. Twelve different high schools from New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Illinois and Tennessee were participating in the tournament. I already mentioned that 18 year-old Gilvydas Biruta is one of the most distinguished players of St. Benedict's, whereas his counterpart, Domykys Milka, represents New York's Christ the King High. We were very proud of the fact that the both teams our Lithuanian fellows were playing for won their respective games.

G. Biruta was born in Jonava (Lithuania) where he began his early education, but later he and his mother, poet Jolanta Toločkaitė, moved to Kaunas, so that Gilvydas would be able to play in one of the best basketball schools in the country - Arvydas Sabonis' own. Gilvydas fell in love with this game since he learned how to walk. One day his mother bought a toy basketball hoop and that's how it all began. The young man was growing up thinking only about the game of basketball. He was sure

that one day basketball would be a great part of his life. When Gilvydas was 15 years old, he was invited to play for the Lithuanian National Youth Team (U16). The year was 2007. The team brought home bronze medals from Greece where the European championship was held. The next summer Gilvydas was playing for another national team (U18 this time) and won silver. Last year the same age team was playing in France and won the fourth place in Europe's championship.

Before coming to the United States in 2008, Gilvydas was playing basketball in Sweden and Spain, but came here to pursue his studies. Upon graduation from the university, Gilvydas hopes to build his career here in America, but he'll go back to Europe if he is needed.

Whenever Gilvydas has an opportunity, he plays amateur basketball with fellow Lithuanians, participating in various tournaments organized by Lithuanian sports organizations such as LAUNA (Lithuanian Athletic Union of North America) and others. Even though Gilvydas does not have a lot of leisure time, he likes to listen to music, read biographies of famous people and philosophy books. Just like his mother, Jolanta, who came to the United States with her son to help him settle down in the new country - she loves philosophy and has always had an artistic soul. One day Jolanta started to write poems and soon enough published her first book "Kada sunku tau bus Sirdy..." Before coming to America, she worked as an educational development teacher and also was involved in numerous voluntary projects. Even though Jolanta is quite young, she loves to organize religious evenings (which is not common for people of her age), where they meet and talk about life and its meaning. Jolanta enjoys meeting with Lithuanians in the United States and sharing her poetry with them. In March she returned to Lithuania and Gilvydas remained here to pursue his dream to maybe one day become a basketball player of the stature of his ideal - legendary Michael Jordan.

Eugenija Misevičius

Eugenija Misevičius is a graduate of the University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT. She serves as the secretary of the Lithuanian Journalist Association. Eugenija freelances as a court interpreter. She belongs to the Lithuanian Sports Club of Connecticut and enjoys participating in amateur sports such as martial arts. She and her husband, Laurynas, participate in many Lithuanian events.

Calendar of Events for April, May and June 2010

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

APRIL

APRIL 11, 2010

KAZIUKO MUGE-
"ST. Casimir's Fair"
WORCESTER
LITHUANIAN SCOUTS
ANNUAL FUND RAISER
Opening: NOON
Dinner: 12:30 pm
MAIRONIS PARK,
52 SO. Quinsigamond Ave
SHREWSBURY, MA
Homemade Baked Goods
& Raffle Donations
Would Be Greatly
Appreciated.
ADMISSION FREE -
EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

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

April 17, 2010

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

April 22-24, 2010

AABS Conference
(Association for the
Advancement of Baltic
Studies) Held at the
University of Washington
in conjunction with
the Society for the
Advancement of
Scandinavian Studies.
Info.: <http://seattle.lietuviu-bendruomene.org>

April 24, 2010 - 2pm

BENEFIT CONCERT
for Neringa
Sisters' Concert
600 Liberty Hwy,
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This year's performers
are the highly regarded
members of the Toronto
Lithuanian choir VOLUNGE
www.neringa.org

MAY

May 1, 2010

Kosciusko Foundation's

600th Anniversary
commemoration of the
Battle of Zalgiris
(Tannenber) NY Lithuanian
Choir & Annunciation
Parish Choir & others will
provide Lithuanian music
under the direction of
Gintare Bukauskas. United
States Military Academy
West Point, NY.
Mass at West Point is
at 9:45 am. Other
activities will follow.
American Legion
Lithuanian Post 154,
Baltimore, MD
WILL BE PART OF THE
HONOR GUARD.

May 8, 2010 - US- Baltic Foundation Gala

Mayflower Hotel
Washington, DC
Keynote Address
H.E. Andrius Kubilius
Prime Minister,
Republic of Lithuania
Weekend Events include:
Baltic Business Program,
VIP Reception, Silent
Auction & Dinner. All
proceeds from the events
will benefit USBF
programs.
For tickets please visit
www.usbaltic.org
Trevor Dane at
202-785-5056
TREVOR@USBALTIC.ORG

MAY 9, 2010, - 2:00 pm

Mother's Day Celebration
featuring a puppet play by
a Lithuanian artist
Ona Puckoriute-Zalenska
from Cleveland followed by
a pancake supper.
Admission: \$15 for dues
paying members;
\$20 - for everyone else.
Discount for seniors &
children under 16.
Fraternal Order of
Eagles Hall
1151 S Galena Street
(just west of Mississippi & Havana)
Denver, CO 80247
Contact: For further.
Info.: [www.
coloradolithuanians.org](http://www.coloradolithuanians.org)

May 16, 2010

Annual LAC, Inc. SD
Chapter Picnic
"Gegužinë"
Sunday - 12:00 pm
San Diego Park
1628 Lomas Santa Fe Drive
Del Mar, CA 92014
Info.: <http://www.lihths.org>
Sponsor: San Diego
Chapter of the LAC

May 22-23, 2010 -

11am-6pm

**38th Annual
Lithuanian Festival**
Cantonsville Armory
130 Mellor Ave,
Cantonsville, MD.
Voted "Best Little Ethnic
Festival in Maryland",
this year's theme is
"A Lithuanian Celebration
of Spring." Lithuanian folk
dancers, exhibits, vendors
& Lithuanian food.
Admission- \$4 per person.
Children age 10 &
under are free.
Info: Maria Pattaba at
410- 646- 0261.

JUNE

June 2010: Jonines in the Rocky Mountains

Time: (more info. once the
campground reservation
has been confirmed)
Location: Fraser area
Contact: For further info.,
contact Romas Zableckas
or Gintautas Sutkus
970-531-2536. Sponsor:
[www.
coloradolithuanians.org](http://www.coloradolithuanians.org)
June 5, 2010 - 8am-2pm
Spring Fling
Featuring indoor & outdoor
activities, crafts, vendors,
flea market, food, raffles,
children's activities,
bake sale, book sale &
much more!
3603 Mc Roberts Road
Pittsburgh, PA.
For info. or to register
for space please visit
[www. Ostprov.org](http://www.Ostprov.org)
call 412- 885- 7232.
Sponsor: Sisters of
St Francis of the
Providence of God.



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CHICAGO REPRESENTATIVES
RITA PENCYLA (708) 923-0280 - pencylar@comcast.net
BRONE BARAKAUSKAS (708) 403-5717 - mamabar3@ad.com

LITHUANIAN MARKET PLACE - Order from BRIDGES



1 - Style A hat - \$ 20.00



20 - Amber necklace & bracelet - \$ 30



27 - CD by Exultate / Rita Klorys, director - \$ 15



22 - Marijampole Coffee Mug - \$ 10



5 - CD by Jurga "Instrukcija" - \$ 20



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



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



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



23 - Exploring Lithuania & Exploring Vilnius (2 set DVD with 3 hour total viewing time) - \$ 45.



25 - The First Lithuanians in Texas, 116 p. - \$ 25.



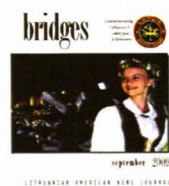
12 - "LIETUVA" scarf (4" x 52" long) - \$ 25



13 - DVD or 13th Folk Dance Festival at Galen Center of USC \$20.00



14 - Cultural Legacy Book (hardcover, 224 pages) \$45



15 - Bridges subscription \$20 for 10 issues



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

Use included Order Form and make check payable to Lithuanian-American Community

send order form to:
78 Mark Twain Drive,
Trenton, NJ 08690

bridges

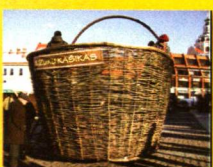
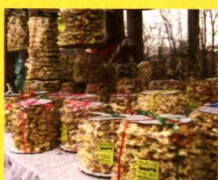
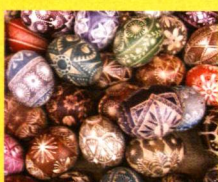
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SUBSCRIPTIONS: Rimas Gedeika
78 Mark Twain Dr., Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690



"Little Casimir's" Fair
*Kaziuko Mugė,
Vilnius*

Photos by
Dr. Banga Grigaliunaitė
Vilnius, Lithuania



April 4 - Happy Easter! Linksmų Šv. Velyku!