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# bridges



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November 2014

# this month in history

## November Anniversaries

### 630 years ago

#### November 6, 1384

The Conquest of Marienverder. During a period when they were allied, Lithuanian rulers Vytautas and Jogaila destroyed the Teutonic Knights' castle at Marienverder (now northern Poland).



### 385 years ago

#### November 23, 1629

The Swedes came to Klaipėda (then Memel) and took control of most of the Curonian Spit. Sweden occupied Klaipėda over several periods from 1629 to 1635, during the Polish-Swedish War of 1625-1629 and the Thirty Years' War in Central Europe (1618-1648).

### 250 years ago

#### November 25, 1764

Stanislovas Augustas Poniatovskis (Stanisław II August) was crowned the last king of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. His election was backed by former lover Catherine the Great, but he lost Russian support when he attempted to institute progressive reforms. He abdicated under pressure in 1795.

### 185 years ago

#### November 9, 1829

Birth of Rev. Martynas Sederevičius (1829-1907), who encouraged education in the Lithuanian language and organized a center for book publishing and smuggling in Sudargas, Sakiai district, during the time when Lithuanian-language literature was forbidden. His tombstone reads "Knygnešių tėvas" (Father of the book carriers).



### 135 years ago

#### November 6, 1879

Birth of linguist Kazimieras Būga (1879-1924). Būga's research of Lithuanian personal and place names allowed him to determine that the homeland of the Lithuanians and other Baltic peoples up to the 6th to 9th centuries CE had been just north of Ukraine in the area around

the Pripyat River. His linguistic reconstruction of the names of the early princes of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania refuted the theories of their Slavic origin. Būga conceived of and began compiling the *Academic Dictionary of Lithuanian* (*Didysis Lietuvių Kalbos Žodynas*), which was completed in 2004 after six decades of work

by many prominent linguists. It comprises 20 volumes and a half million headwords, including those in use since the first Lithuanian language book was published in 1547.

### 115 years ago

#### November 16, 1899

Death of Vincas Kudirka (1858-1899), the physician, writer and poet who authored the Lithuanian national anthem, "Tautiška giesmė."



### 110 years ago

#### November 17, 1904

Birth of poet and teacher Salomėja Nėris (Salomėja Bačinskaitė-Bučienė, 1904-1945) in Kiršai, in Vilkaviškis district. Her first collection of poems, *Anksti rytą* (In the Early Morning), was published in 1927. Her 1938 book of verses, "I Will Turn into the Absinth

Flower," earned her the State Literature Prize. Neris remains controversial for her appointment to the so-called "People's Seimas" during the Soviet occupation in 1940 and participation at the delegation that went to the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union to appeal for adoption of occupied Lithuania into the Soviet Union.

### 105 years ago

#### November 21-22, 1919

Lithuanian troops, with Allied assistance, beat back the Bermon-tininkai-Bolshevick and German mercenary soldiers who stayed behind after WW I under the command of eccentric Russian leader, Prince Bermond, at the Battle of Radviliškis.

### 60 years ago

#### November 26, 1954

Partisan leader Jonas Žemaitis (1909-1954), code name Vytautas, was executed at Moscow's Butyrka prison. When the Red Army returned to Lithuania after World War II, Žemaitis joined the Lithuanian Freedom Army and the Lithuanian partisans, steadily rising to a position of leadership. In February 1949 he established the Union of Lithuanian Freedom



Fighters, working to continue partisan resistance to Soviet occupation and legitimize the actions of the partisans. In May 1953 his hiding place was discovered. He was arrested, taken to Moscow for interrogation and executed in 1954.

# bridges

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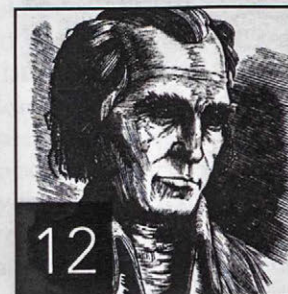
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**Front cover:** Boletus mushroom in a Lithuanian forest. Photo: © Vytas Sinkevičius | Dreamstime.com

**Back cover:** Independence, Lithuania's new liquified natural gas terminal, arrives in Klaipėda. Photo courtesy of the Office of the President of Lithuania, © R. Dačkus.

from the editor

## Borrowed Traditions



The aftermath of a recent Thanksgiving

As I was sorting through old family photos for inspiration for this month's column, I couldn't find anything from a Thanksgiving Day from my childhood. I found that odd, because my father always seemed to have camera in hand. There were pictures galore of birthdays, Christmas, New Year's Eve and family vacations, but not one from any of our turkey day celebrations.

Determined, I dug back even further, into photos taken years before I was born. Bingo! Here were a handful of slides from Thanksgiving 1957—which also happened to be my parents' engagement party. Would there have been none of that Thanksgiving if it hadn't been for the other occasion? I mention this to my partner, who wonders if this "American" holiday just didn't seem as important to my Lithuanian elders. I reply that it certainly felt important, with tons of relatives crowded around a groaning table of (admittedly non-Lithuanian) dishes.

As I ponder the mystery of the missing Thanksgiving photos, I think back on those days of borrowed traditions. At most other holiday meals, it would be difficult to mistake our heritage as anything but Lithuanian. Not so with Thanksgiving, where my family threw itself wholeheartedly into this adopted American holiday with its roasted turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, candied yams, the requisite green bean casserole topped with onion rings, jellied cranberry sauce gently jiggled from the can and sliced into perfect circles, and a pumpkin pie.

Today, it's one of my greatest pleasures each year to host Thanksgiving for extended family and friends. It's one of the ways that I can say "thank you" to the people who mean the most to me. Those around the table may see each other every day or only once a year, but it doesn't matter. We're truly blessed that when we come together, from a few blocks away or many miles away, the conversation is easy and the spirit is harmonious.

We're also apt to blend our Lithuanian traditions back into our American holiday for the best of both worlds. A kugelis might sit next to the mashed potatoes, beets next to the green beans, and a šakotis (tree cake) next to the pumpkin pie. We toast with krupnikas and cabernet. And we take lots of pictures!

I can certainly say that I have many reasons to be thankful: my partner, family and friends, my work family, my *Bridges* family (that includes you, dear readers and contributors), my Lithuanian-American community, good neighbors, good health and so much more. I hope that all of you can count as many blessings.

In gratitude,

Teresė Vekteris, Editor

The holidays are upon us - give the gift of heritage!

*Bridges* makes a great gift or stocking stuffer, and will remind the recipient of you each time an issue lands in their mailbox. Visit us and order online at [lithuanian-american.org/bridges](http://lithuanian-american.org/bridges) or mail in the subscription form at the back of the magazine.

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Have you just returned from a trip to Lithuania? Made an exciting genealogical discovery? Participated in an event in your local Lithuanian community? Share your news and insights with the readers of *Bridges*! Send your original stories, photos, news, letters and upcoming events to the editor at [bridges.teres@gmail.com](mailto:bridges.teres@gmail.com).

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## Fragments of My Life

### The memoir of Jonas Zinkus, part 1

Translated from the original Lithuanian by Ramunė Zinkutė Cobb.

The main street of Krakės, Lithuania, where Jonas Zinkus grew up.

Today is the June 24, 2007. It's a lovely, sunny day in Sydney, but cool. It's winter here. My memories wander back to the village of Krakės in Lithuania, where I was born, grew up, and spent my younger days. Now, on my 85th birthday, those carefree days have come alive again in my memory.

I was born into a farming family, so in summer I too, had to help with the chores, although those chores were torture to me and I hated them. I was a sickly child, and when I was in third grade I became seriously ill. My pneumonia was being treated by the doctor in Krakės, Doctor Alperavičius, but each day my condition deteriorated. I remember my mother weeping, crying as she watched my life fade while she plied me with cold compresses. My worried parents eventually travelled with their sick child to Kėdainiai (25 km), to Dr. Jarasius. This experienced doctor determined that there was fluid buildup on my left side, which could be drained through surgery, or the old-fashioned method of sweating it out. Having brought me home, the treatment program changed. Hot compresses were applied instead of cold, each day I was immersed in a hot bath, and I was given medicine to make me sweat. I

improved slowly, opening my eyes more and more often. That's how I was saved from an early death. Even after I recovered, I wasn't robust, still disliked and felt tormented by the farm chores. I began to recover when my father took on the responsibilities of paymaster for the dairy. Each month he would pay the farmers for the milk they had supplied to the dairy. I would read from a list prepared by the bookkeeper, telling my father how much was owed to each farmer, and my father would pay the required amount. Other daily duties would arise, which I carried out effectively. In the summer, when everyone in my hardworking family was busy in the fields, I would stay home and take in payments from the townsfolk and issue receipts for purchases of butter and cream from the dairy.

During my childhood, I also had other, shorter illnesses.

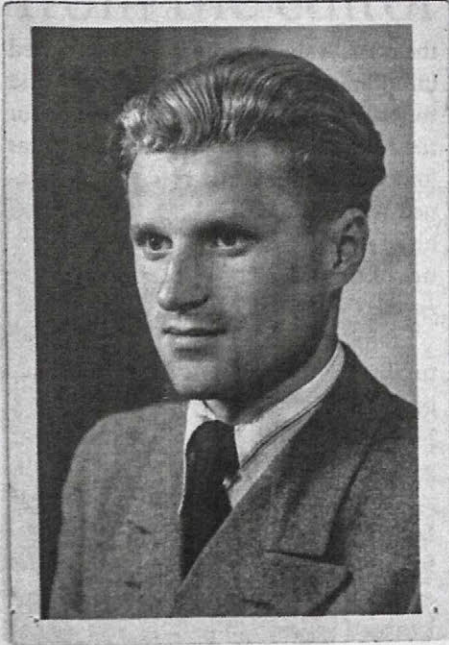
I remember that in fifth grade in the school at Krakės we were given a homework assignment, an essay on the theme "Bend the tree while it's young." I understood this was a metaphor for raising children. Along with my classmates, I wrote an essay. The teacher, Mr. Jankauskas, after reading all the essays, praised my effort and read the essay aloud to

the class. A short while later I was talked into joining a Young Farmers group and to write about the group's activities for the *Farmers' Advisor*. I was paid a few litas (money) for my first article. So I continued with the Young Farmers, earning a bit of money by writing about the activities of the Krakės Young Farmers for the *Farmers' Advisor* magazine.

I ran into a problem when an agriculturalist came in the summer to check up on my supposed tomato-growing project. I didn't even know where the tomatoes were supposed to be growing. I think the agriculturalist understood my lack of farming ambition, and recorded his tactful project evaluation in my young farmer's book, without undue praise. Before I turned seven, I joined the Krakės cub scouts, later the scouts and even became a pack leader's deputy.

My parents could see that I was never going to be a good farmer. After I finished primary school in 1937, they sent me for further education at the state high school in Kėdainiai. I wasn't a good student, as I was more interested in various other activities. I got on well with other students and had lots of friends. The physical fitness teacher appointed me class monitor (the teacher was a lieutenant in the army reserve). I was good at sports. I was class champion in 60- and 100-meter sprint, and in long jump. I played basketball and volleyball. I noticed that the highest grades in physical fitness were given only to the more disobedient students. I was more responsible and had to be satisfied with "fours." [*In Lithuania, school achievement grades were one through five, with a three considered acceptable and five very good.* - RMC] I asked our teacher to relieve me of the class monitor responsibility. When this hadn't happened after a long time, I made the same request to the director of the high school. Finally success. After a period, I too was getting assessments of "five" in physical fitness.

At the end of my third year of high school I was put up into fourth class; however, with a "two" in French language. This meant that I had to improve



Jonas Zinkus as a young man in Lithuania.

to get a satisfactory grade in the following year.

At the end of the school year in 1940, some of my friends who belonged to the Ateitininkai organization were getting ready for a three-day camp. They invited me, too (I suspect at the chaplain's instigation) promising they wouldn't pressure me to join the organization, which was forbidden for high schoolers. The camp took place near Josvainiai. I went and listened to the various talks prepared by students from senior classes. I was surprised that no one invited me to join either the religious group at the high school, or the unofficially active Ateitininkai group. The following day, a couple of the campers rode bicycles into Josvainiai to pick up mail. When they returned, they announced that the Soviet Union had given Lithuania an ultimatum, and that the Russian army was marching toward Lithuania. The camp closed down immediately. We understood that Lithuania's independence was under threat, about to be occupied by the Russian army. Russian tanks were rolling unopposed along Lithuania's roads. The camp closed down the same day. We all went our separate ways.

Later we saw Russian soldiers. They were poorly clothed exhausted young men. Their officers expounded on how

wonderful life was in Russia to anyone who could understand Russian language. Sorrow and concern was evident in the faces of the Lithuanians. We learned that Lithuanian president Antanas Smetona and most of the Lithuanian government had crossed into Germany.

Very soon, all prisoners who had been imprisoned for communist activities were released. Amongst them was my cousin, who while in high school had been an Ateitininkas, but changed orientation to communism before entering Vytautas Didysis University, and was toward the end of a four-year sentence in Kaunas hard labor prison for anti-state activities. Even though we shared the same name (Jonas Zinkus), he was a few years older; I tried to keep distant from his choice. I was a scout, but not involved in any politics. Not only was I uninterested, I didn't want to be drawn into my older cousin's wake.

Slowly the school holidays drew on. Lithuania's political life was changing. Arrests of prominent people began. One time, the Kėdainiai region security officer, accompanied by the local militia (name changed from policeman) came to my parents' home in Krakės. They conducted a search. I don't know what they were looking for. They didn't find any anti-government material. They took me out of the home. I was kept in the Krakės militia office until midnight, then released.

A couple of weeks later, the day before the Zolinės holiday (Feast of the Assumption), the local militiaman required me to come back to their office. There I found the chief of the Kėdainiai area security forces, named Rugienius, waiting for me. I was arrested. Another militiaman brought in the son of a Krakės landowner Targonskis. He was a similar age to me, but intellectually challenged, small in height and child-like. He was crying. I thought, so this child-like person is also a threat to the mighty Russian nation. We were both arrested and taken by car to Kėdainiai. Targonskis was locked up in the Kėdainiai city jail, and I was taken to the Kėdainiai district prison. The following day was the Assumption Day (August

15). Through the iron bars of the window I could see Russian aircraft taking off and landing. On the walls of the cell I could see the names of previous prisoners, who never returned to their homes. The next morning, the guard asked me what I was imprisoned for. I suppose he had heard similar answers many times before. I saw his daughter, too; she was a student in the same high school as me, but younger and in a lower class.

The next day I was transferred to security chief Rugienius' facility for questioning. I saw a Jewish woman come out, hug Rugienius, and both conversed lovingly, like husband and wife. The questioning continued. I was ready for it. I admitted that while strolling along the banks of the river Smilga, I came across a meeting, to which I had not been invited. I confirmed that Targonskis wasn't there. The next day we were both released.

I realized I would never be able to live in Kėdainiai. I would always be persecuted. That strengthened what I'd already told my parents, that I wanted to study at the Kaunas Technical College. My interests from my youngest days showed I was unsuited for farming, but was always drawn toward technical studies. Even while I was still in primary school I built a working radio from a booklet my father had brought back from some exhibition. Everyone in the area was talking about it, that a child had built a radio receiver, but of course the radio technicians making their living in this field in Krakės were very unhappy.

In the autumn of 1940, my father organized accommodation for me in Kaunas, with the Kubilius family (husband, wife, two school-age children) who needed another person to meet the new government's decree on living space allowances. Days went by, living in Kaunas. On the evening of All Souls Day, many young people were arrested at the Kaunas cemetery. Some of my co-students were caught. At year end, tuition fees were introduced for the children of "exploiters." I understood that I would be caught up in this, too, because my parents lived frugally, but my mother had heart

disease, and had hired a dairymaid for the milking. I changed my studies to evening classes and spent the days looking for a job. This proved difficult, as I didn't hide my previous arrest, and employers were unwilling to give such a young man a job. I remember well when a boarder, Mr. Družilauskas, who had a spare room at the Kubilius home, said (June 21, 1941) that war with Germany would begin the next day. The Germans had mobilized a big army on the border. This was welcome news for us, but we had heard many rumors previously. The morning of June 22 dawned. There was nothing to be seen in our residential part of Kaunas. There were rumors that the German army had crossed the border and was moving onward. That was the best news we had heard all year. We could see that the people in the communist government were panicking, and getting ready to flee from Lithuania. Units of the Soviet army were also moving eastward. All government offices were closed. We could see German military aircraft, but no Soviet aviation was evident. The following day we could see more Russians withdrawing to the east. Third day of war. I go into the center of Kaunas. On Laisvės alėja [Freedom Avenue] I see a policeman now in a Lithuanian uniform. I enlisted in the courtyard at the Siauliu Sajungos building, Nr 20 Laisvės alėja. I was given a Russian gun smeared with Vaseline or something similar. Being young, without any military training, I was posted as an armed guard for the trucks that were transporting food from government stores to support the resistance. Later that day the first German soldiers appeared in Kaunas. We started to recover from the grim Russian-controlled life.

A few days later, two German soldiers appeared at a partisans' gathering. One said his father's brother lived in Lithuania, surname of Kromolz. One of our group was Jonas Kromolcas from Krakės. I knew the whole Kromolc family in Krakės. The father's Lithuanian was poor, and he and all the sons left in Krakės worked as saddlers, making leather harnesses for horses. The two cousins were unable to

communicate with each other. One spoke only Lithuanian, the other only German. I wasn't much help, as I'd only studied German for one year at school.

For the summer holidays I returned to Krakės to help my parents on the farm. By order of the occupying German authorities, all the Jewish people had to leave their homes and were confined in the Krakės convent, which had previously been closed down by the Russians. Lithuanians from Krakės and the surrounding areas were assigned for guard duty. My brother Vytautas was assigned this duty, as was I. Overseeing the guards was a policeman from the station house. One day, about 15 Lithuanians dressed in Lithuanian army uniforms arrived in Krakės. I didn't know any of them. We realized that the newly arrived soldiers would most likely be liquidating the Jewish people, as had happened in other areas. The following day, my brother and I called in "sick." That day, the Jewish people were shot nearby. Most of the population was sickened by this action by the German authorities, but nobody asked the people for their thoughts or advice. In the autumn, the new academic year began at the Technical College. The new college building had been taken over by the Germans and was operating as a hospital. We had to utilize the previous old buildings that were well past their use-by date. Studies continued with few changes.

At the end of the year, I was appointed to "Pienocentras" [Dairy center] (on Laisvės alėja in Kaunas) technical section for practical work.

The German authorities had decreed a vegetable-planting program in private lots, and since I was the least useful employee working at "Pienocentras," I was sent out for 10 days to conduct a survey of the plantings. Some six women and only two men from various workplaces in the city gathered for this task. I was appointed deputy leader of the group, and was allowed to choose which one of the survey areas I would work in from the map provided. I chose the smallest area that actually didn't require

detailed listing. So I spent many hours idling by the Nemunas River. However, during the final days I had to collate the lists put together by the other conscripts and produce the overall inventory. Here I met Marija Poleskaitė, who was running behind in the work. There were other women who needed assistance too. Our acquaintance developed into friendship. The Germans threatened to expatriate all unmarried women to Germany, so we went through a civil wedding ceremony on August 9, 1943, but continued to live separately. Then, on February 14, 1944, we were married in the Carmelite church in Kaunas and began our life together. It was a modest wedding attended by my brother Vytautas and his wife, Elytė.



Jonas and Marytė Zinkus' wedding photo in Kaunas in 1944.

As the war progressed, the Germans ran short of manpower and decided to form reserve units from the occupied countries. I was able to plead my way into a training course for stationmaster in the railways. Once the German had recruited sufficient numbers for their needs, the situation became less tense. I left the railway course and went back to the Technical College.

*To be continued in the December 2014 issue.*

## Preparing to "Sing the Song of Songs"

Choir Directors Polish Tenth North American Lithuanian Song Festival Repertoire at Camp Dainava

By Nijolė Benotienė, Translated by Rita Giedraitienė, Photos by Vytautas Čuplinskas



All participants at the seminar found it useful to become familiar with the repertoire.

The artistic and organizing committees of the Tenth North American (N.A.) Lithuanian Song Festival organized a choir directors' seminar August 14-17, 2014, at Camp Dainava in Manchester, Michigan. The Song Festival itself will take place July 3-5, 2015, in Chicago, at the University of Illinois-Chicago Pavilion. The main purpose of the seminar was to present the Song Festival's repertoire to the directors of the choirs who plan to participate. Similar seminars had been organized for the two most recent N.A. Lithuanian Song Festivals with great success and positive feedback. Choir directors once again were encouraged to not only personally participate in this seminar, but also bring along several other representatives from their respective choirs (singers, accompanists, etc.). In all, 68 people from Canada and the United States enthusiastically converged on Camp Dainava for several days of studying and singing.

The driving force behind this seminar was Darius Polikaitis of Chicago, the artistic director for the upcoming Song Festival, themed "We Will Sing the Song of Songs" ("Padainuosim dainų dainele").

Polikaitis recently returned from Lithuania, where he conducted several songs during their 2014 Song Festival and also received the prestigious "Aukso paukštė" ("Golden Bird") award for his many musical contributions to Lithuanian culture. Through his own enthusiasm and chosen repertoire of songs, Polikaitis energized the seminar participants and ignited a desire to bring this energy back to their hometown choirs.

The ambitious goal of reviewing, learning and singing every song in the upcoming Song Festival's repertoire made for a fun, yet intense, seminar. There was much to accomplish in just two full days of work! Every choir director attending the seminar presented at least one song from the repertoire, which they had been asked to prepare several weeks earlier by Polikaitis. Friday's program was also interspersed by presentations from Lee Kesselman, director of choral activities at the College of DuPage in Chicago. Polikaitis had invited Kesselman to share his vast practical knowledge of working with choirs. Kesselman presented information about breathing and conducting

techniques, composition analysis, and maximizing choir members' performances in an easily understandable and often humorous way. His participation at the seminar was greatly appreciated, and dialogues between Kesselman and seminar participants continued during program breaks and lunch.

Dalia Viskontienė, the artistic director of the Ninth N.A. Lithuanian Song Festival, made the following observation: "It is often difficult for choir directors to see beyond the boundaries of their own choirs, to know what musical activities are taking place in other Lithuanian communities ... and then you come to Dainava for a seminar. Suddenly your eyes are opened to new faces of talented composers, dedicated and enthusiastic conductors, fantastic singers and wonderful organizers. What an incredible amount of energy!"

Rita Kliorienė, the artistic director of the Eighth N.A. Lithuanian Song Festival, echoed Viskontienė's sentiments. "I would like to believe that the quality of Song Festivals will continue to grow: that they will be better, nicer, the choirs



more polished, and the latest technology will be incorporated for amazing visual effects. I was delighted to see how enthusiastically the artistic and organizing committees of the Tenth Song Festival are working to make it as creative and interesting as possible," Kliorienė said. "It was especially heartening to watch the youth of the seminar; a new generation of Lithuanians are composing, creating, singing and showing leadership qualities. I am hopeful that in the near future we can pass the Song Festival torch to them."

The Tenth Lithuanian Song Festival's repertoire promises to be interesting, varied and emotional. Kliorienė, Polikaitis and Kęstutis Daugirdas composed four new songs specifically for this Festival. New arrangements and accompaniments have also been written for a substantial number of songs. During the seminar, extra time was taken to present Daugirdas' five-part composition, "The Singing Revolution," which recalls five important dates in Lithuania's struggle to regain its current independence. The words and music are particularly stirring, and many seminar participants had a difficult time seeing their music through tear-filled eyes.

Vytas Čuplinskas, a member of the artistic committee and the producer of the visual program for the Song Festival, addressed seminar participants several times throughout the weekend. He explained the meaning behind the Song Festival's logo (which he created), presented his ideas and plans for visual effects and encouraged the audience to ask questions, provide suggestions and share comments about what they had seen and heard. Jolanta Urbietienė, coordinator of written media relations for the Festival, also took the opportunity to invite people to spread information about the Song Festival and encourage families, friends and community members to attend it next summer.

By day, the seminar participants worked with great intensity, but evenings were spent relaxing, socializing and enjoying various creative, light-hearted presentations by Kristina Kliorytė, Aleksandras



Nearly 70 participants attended the choirs directors' seminar at Camp Dainava.

Stankevičius, Kęstutis Daugirdas and a group of young seminar participants. Liudas Landsbergis, another member of the artistic committee, was responsible for organizing these evening programs. The sounds of voices singing popular Lithuanian songs, a host of instruments improvising music as they went along, skits, "speed dating" and heartfelt laughter filled the air for three nights at Camp Dainava.

The seminar would not have been possible without the hard work of Rusnė Kasputienė from Detroit, who coordinated the registration of the participants, assigned rooms, arranged trips to the airport, made sure coffee and snacks were available throughout the day and generally oversaw the daily flow of the seminar program. Equally important and deserving of high praise was the kitchen staff: chief cook Laima Jarašienė from Denver, Colo., and Alma Jankienė, Daiva Lukaszewicz and Paulius Jankus, all from Detroit, Mich., who worked long hours to provide delicious meals with food choices spread out over four tables.

Though the focus of this seminar was the artistic program of the Song Festival, the chairman of its organizing committee, Kastytis Giedraitis (Detroit), was also present and consistently visible throughout the weekend (and not just because he is tall in stature!) Giedraitis mingled amongst the seminar participants, encouraged them to prepare their choirs

and spread the spirit of the Song Festival, and even found time to sing through the entire repertoire in the tenor section! Viskontienė labeled Polikaitis, Čuplinskas and Giedraitis the "Three Gentle Giants"—or "triumvirate!" The Tenth North American Lithuanian Song Festival is indeed in good hands.

No doubt the participants of this seminar went home highly satisfied, armed with a new song repertoire, new melodies in their heads, new information about working with choirs and a renewed energy to prepare for next summer's Lithuanian Song Festival. Before leaving, all participants signed a card for Faustas Strolia, a giant among Lithuanian conductors, who was unable to attend this seminar due to health reasons but is always remembered with great fondness.

Before leaving, I sat down with Darius Polikaitis and expressed my hopes that he would now have a chance to relax after a busy summer and a successful seminar. "I don't think that will happen," smiled Polikaitis, and proceeded to recite a list of jobs that await him, not the least of which is preparing the final draft of the repertoire for printing into song books that need to be distributed to choirs in the near future. Though the work is seemingly endless, the enthusiastic attitude and smiling face of Polikaitis leaves no doubt that next summer we will be singing the most beautiful "song of songs" in Chicago.

## Should We Be Worried?

Questions on Ukraine Crisis  
Posed to Baltic Defense Advisor

By Bruno Kelpsas



Baltic defense advisor Glen Grant

Glen Grant heard the concern his Baltic friends had over the Skype conference about the situation in Ukraine: Should we be worried? Should we be packing up, leaving?"

The very same evening, Glen—a former lieutenant colonel in the British Military and consultant to politicians, generals and businessmen—presented an overview of the Baltic military at the University of Washington. A roomful of worried and curious individuals sat silent, taking in Glen's reflections. The following is a recap of Glen's thoughts on Lithuania's military disposition, and my interview with Glen and friends over spirits at a local pub.

Those in our Seattle Lithuanian community first ask, "How is Lithuania's military?" Translation: Can we defend ourselves against Russia? Glen's outlook for Lithuania ran parallel with the status of its Baltic neighbors (Latvia, Estonia and Poland): High quality of fighting individuals who are hampered by ministerial bureaucracy.

Throughout Glen's presentation, I was reminded of one word—Transformation. Between 1992 and 1993, I served as a volunteer for the Lithuania Ministry of Defense. Early on, it appeared the seeds of flexible management and decentralized decision-making had a reasonable chance to take root. Glen discussed Lithuania's share of both successes and failures over the last 20 years.

Per Glen's observations, specialties have formed within the Lithuanian military: a world-class anti-mine warfare capability in Klaipėda, air transport in Šiauliai that has done "sterling work" and a leadership role at the Commandant seat of the NATO Baltic Staff College. Combat missions of Lithuania's military in Afghanistan are held in high regard. In addition, Lithuania has been active in NATO naval, air and ground exercises, modeling international cooperation at its best. All of this, not counting Lithuania's participation in training exercises in Mali and playing an official leadership role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. These specializations are impressive but disparate, especially in light of the need for joint doctrine and organizational fluidity.

Lithuania's military journey the last 20 years has been the regaining of its balance of structure. Glen highlighted two domains within the military that have experienced an ebb and flow of success: the defense model and the defense doctrine. The global recession in 2008 highly impacted both.

**First: The Model.** Lithuania's military is burdened with the same dilemma its Baltic neighbors are experiencing: Bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is encouraged by a top-down hierarchy structure, a skewed ratio of officers to NCOs (non-commissioned officers) to enlisted personnel, and two brigades when the country can only afford one. For example, fueling just one brigade for training exercises has become a costly line item in the budget. Glen highlighted how there are 29 battalions. Each should have roughly 500 personnel. Basic math arrives at a standing force of 14,500. The last head count Glen received from the Lithuanian Ministry of Defense was 8,000 "regulars" in the military. This creates a gap of 6,500 personnel. Maintaining this skeleton structure is expensive, financially and organizationally. It also creates bureaucracy "creep" to justify the gaps in the units and the model. A 10 percent to 30 percent pay cut for the military in 2008 also did not help in retaining talent to keep the "model" functioning.

**Second: The Doctrine.** Shoot – move – and communicate. This is the mantra of the warfighter, the nucleus of the fighting unit, and the common thread woven through a nation's military doctrine. Doctrine is the necessary framework connecting the common soldier up to the Minister of National Defense. What the warfighter is doing on the ground, air and sea must be reflected in doctrine. The two must be in sync. Lithuania's national security doctrine first began with a mobile defense: Military units strategically located throughout a country so they can respond to an attack. Since 2008, the nation's doctrine has steered toward territorial defense: Military units dispersed



Lithuanian soldiers at Combined Resolve II in May 2014. Photo courtesy of 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command from Grafenwoehr, Germany.

so they can defend the entire, physical nation and its border. The latter is outdated, costly and static. More so, autonomous decision-making by soldiers on the ground is lacking in comparison to mobile defense. Glen also noted how politicians found it easier to understand and manage the territorial defense model versus a mobile defense.

As Glen spoke on, it was difficult not to become disheartened. Lithuania's military model appears to be out of joint with doctrine. When this happens, internal cultural problems and friction arises with units.

A common denominator that Lithuania, the Baltic States and even European NATO allies face is complacency. The 2008 recession provided the fiscal cover for nations to lower their budget baselines. This diminishing of resources has impacted military models and national defense doctrines. A self-fulfilling belief that the Russians were now peaceful partners within the Western community further contributed to defense complacency. To point the finger at Lithuania for missing the boat would only be replied with a mirror being held up to the Western critic.

This transition into the topic of Russia was the opportune time to move the discussion to a more conducive military venue: The pub.

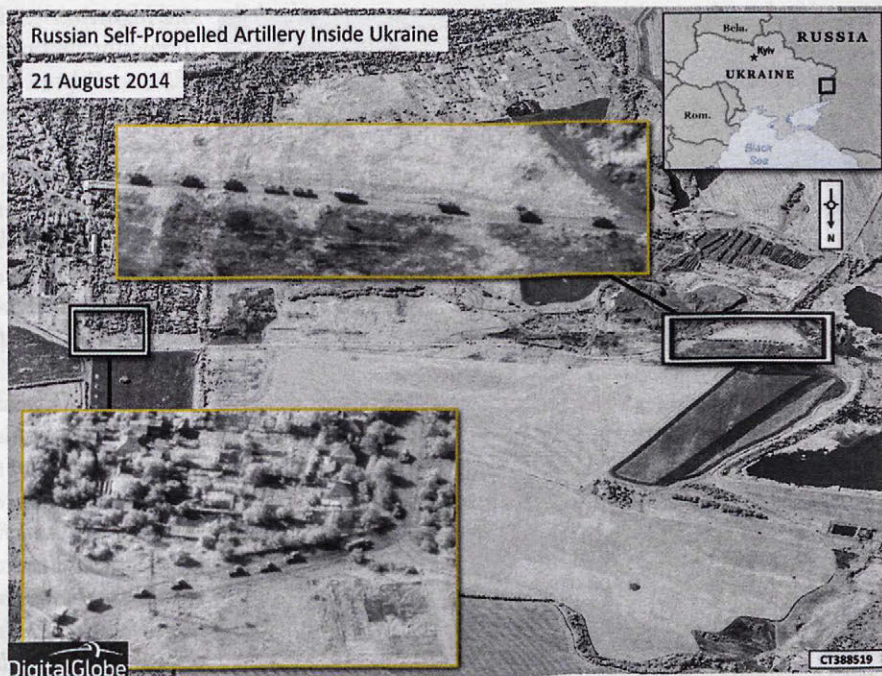
After the first toast, I presented question number one to Glen: Why didn't the Western intelligence community foresee Putin's actions in Ukraine? Quick answer: Groupthink. Glen recalled the times he

had forewarned civilians, politicians and those in uniform of the growing likelihood of a revanchist Russia. No one wanted to be the author of State Department cable, a NATO talking point or a ministry whitepaper of how the perceived friendly Putin regime was actually a threat. All resources, policies—and careers—were reliant upon the continued upbeat relationship with Russia. Nothing torpedoes job prospects in a bureaucracy more than being viewed as the folk-tale character, Chicken Little, claiming, “the Russians are coming.”

This Western groupthink—in my opinion—most likely provided Ukraine with a false sense of security as well. And, if the West was wrong, Kiev could only be led to believe: “Well, NATO won't let the Russians get away with this.”

Round two of drinks were followed with my second question that I label: Take the Deal. Why didn't Ukraine just take Russia's deal? This drew looks of heresy at the table from my three drinking friends. First, understand the logic: Russia provided \$15 billion at a low interest rate, cheap gas and loan forgiveness for \$1 billion. Not bad terms. Especially when all the European Union could counter with in the fall of 2013 was just a shoulder-shrug. The West's memory of providing roughly \$30 billion of aid to Ukraine in the last 20 years was another reminder if it was worth throwing good money after bad money; a hard fact for policymakers to swallow—or to sell to constituents. The response from the EU should have told Kiev something—don't rely too much on the West.

Glen's response to “Take the Deal”: Ukraine would be beholden to Russia. And now I ask? The loss of Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, with no recourse, where's the pride in that? Ukraine could still have taken the Russian deal and maintained



NATO satellite imagery from August 2014 showing Russian combat troops inside Ukraine. Photo courtesy of NATO

relations with the West while making overtures to democracy. A balancing act? Yes. The alternative has played out more dangerously, however.

Speaking on Ukraine's behalf, Glen believed the current losses—for now, because the game isn't over—can be considered temporary. When I countered with the EU's unwillingness to further provide a counter-offer to the Russian deal, or to stand up to Putin annexing Crimea, Glen said Europe's bankruptcy was not financial, but moral. Since the interview, leading German corporations have made a never-before political overture of publicly voicing their opposition against Russian sanctions, concerned over the damaging effects it will have upon business.

As the evening drew near on a workday, question three was proposed: Why didn't Ukraine counter militarily to the Russians in Crimea? As a soldier, it was unsettling to see how complacent Ukraine's military was in abdicating its military bases, fleet and resources to the Russians. The propaganda wins were also compelling to Putin's cause. Why didn't the captain of Ukraine's only submarine scuttle his vessel—a common practice for centuries to ensure your ship doesn't fall into the hands of the enemy? With military humor, Glen believed it did more harm to Russia by having it maintain the cost of the submarine. Ships rusting at the Russian Northern Fleet docks in Murmansk came to my mind.

After the light banter, we revisited the topic of "rules of engagement," the dilemma being for the soldier on the ground: "When do you want me to fire?" (Recall the earlier introduction of "doctrine.") Having visited Ukraine three times recently, Glen was not surprised that the Ukrainian military was unable



NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen (right) assured the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Arsenii Yatseniuk (left), that NATO stands by Ukraine during a March 2014 meeting. Photo courtesy of NATO

to mobilize, let alone engage. Glen mentioned how after one meeting with Ukrainian defense officials, he went to his hotel room and was almost in tears of frustration. His hosts were more concerned with process than results. Forms over fighting, bureaucracy over battle; these appeared to be the priorities.

Because the structure and culture of the Ukrainian military was already so bureaucratic, rules of engagement never had a chance to be decided upon or disseminated to the front line. Decision-making became a vacuum as interim political leaders were chosen in Kiev. Who was giving the orders? Did they have a notion of where their line in the sand was with the Russians? Comply with the West's guidance to refrain from military action? "Engage or don't engage, sir?"

Those of us at the table brainstormed on options the Ukrainians could have implemented to deter Putin. Scuttling the submarine would have served as an effective, non-violent act of resistance, playing well to Ukrainian media and morale as the captain and his crew came ashore. Driving a wedge between Putin's KGB loyalists and the military would brew distrust within the Kremlin's leadership. One proposal Glen offered was for Ukraine to file an international lawsuit against Putin over every village, road and equipment piece confiscated in Crimea. This would tangle Putin in European court. Imagine him trying to move money internationally or buy property in London with such a lien. Dictators hate it when you make their lives difficult.

Heavy rains outside and an early call for work gave us reasons to bring the evening to an end. What developed most of all from Glen's seminar and follow-on discussions was a bonding all of us formed at the table. We all had a common interest and goal, a common hope in the future. Even as we all shook hands in the nighttime rain, I believe we parted eager to have another discussion, but under better circumstances.

*Bruno Kelpas is a director of cloud healthcare technology for a global provider. He is from the Lithuanian-American community of Cicero, Ill. Early upbringing with two priests in his family shaped his belief in Lithuania's independence. From 1992 to 1995, he volunteered as an advisor to the Lithuanian Ministry of Defense, assisting in establishing relationships between NATO and Western countries, and civilian oversight of the military. He served with the 82nd Airborne in the Grenada Rescue Operation. His tenure in the U.S. Army included intelligence analyst training, infantry officer basic training, and roles within Long Range Reconnaissance and Psychological Operations units.*

*Glen Grant is a lecturer at the Riga Business School in Latvia. He is a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and the Joint Service Defence College at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. After service as a defense attache' to Latvia and Estonia, he served as a defense advisor to the Baltic States and Ukraine. His main body of work in the last four years has been delivering reform and change for defense and security organizations in Europe on behalf of the Center for Civil-Military Relations at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif. He has assisted with defense reforms in Bulgaria, Poland, Montenegro and Serbia.*



2014

## The Year of Kristijonas Donelaitis

By Romualdas Kriauciūnas, Ph.D.

The Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, noting that 2014 marked the 300th birth anniversary of the most prominent Lithuanian poet, Kristijonas Donelaitis, stated that this outstanding date allows for increased cultural cooperation within the European region. Promoting worldwide dissemination of Donelaitis' work—as well as within the cultural community in Lithuania and abroad—the Parliament declared 2014 the Year of Kristijonas Donelaitis. The Lithuanian Tradition and Heritage Commission was formed and prepared the program for the commemoration of Donelaitis' 300th birth anniversary. The program includes various scholarly studies, art exhibits, sculptures, graphic art, theater, cinema, music, and dissemination of his work through the media. It also involves cultural and educational programs, and restoration of historical sites.

Kristijonas Donelaitis (he signed himself Christian Donalitiūs), 1714-1780, was a classical Lithuanian poet, the first to be translated and recognized in histories of Lithuanian literature. He grew up in a region inhabited by Lithuanians from early times. The region was occupied in the 13th century by the Teutonic Order, eventually becoming a part of the Duchy of Prussia. To Lithuanians that region is known as Lithuania Minor.

Donelaitis was born on January 1, 1714, in Lazdynėliai, district of Gumbinė. He grew up with six other children in a Lithuanian family of free peasants. Later he attended university, where he studied theology in preparation for the Lutheran ministry. After a brief period of teaching music in Stalupėnai (1740-1742), in 1743 he was appointed pastor at Tolminkiemis, only 20 km. from his native Lazdynėliai. He died there on February 18, 1780. One third of his 3,000 parishioners were Lithuanians. He would preach in German in the morning services, and in Lithuanian in

the afternoon. He sided with the serfs and resisted the landlords who tried to take over peasant lands. Besides pastoral work, he built a masonry church, a rectory and a home for the widows of clergy. The very first resident at this home was his own wife. In his spare time, he wrote poetry in Lithuanian and in German, composed music and constructed musical instruments, barometers and optical instruments.

His monumental work—*The Seasons* (*Metai* in Lithuanian)—consists of four parts: “Joys of Spring,” “Summer’s Toils,” “Autumn’s Wealth” and “Winter’s Cares.” According to Juozas Brazaitis (*Encyclopedia Lituanica*, vol. 2, Boston, 1972) in these four idylls, totaling 2,997 hexameters, are depicted the natural setting of Lithuania Minor, its people, their work and their customs. “The poem forms a realistic portrayal of Lithuanian peasant life in the 18th century, as it was affected by colonization.” Brazaitis went on to note that *The Seasons* did not have any single, simple plot, with characters described in detail. The characters are simply good or bad, with few nuances. Mikas Vaičekauskas, on [www.vilniusworldbookcapital.lt](http://www.vilniusworldbookcapital.lt), noted that this monumental work is based on the concept of ethics of the Christian world.

It is very interesting to note that during Donelaitis' life, not a single work of his was published. His manuscripts remained in the possession of his widow. They were then copied by a neighbor, J.F.Hohlfield. The first edition of *The Seasons* was prepared by Ludwig Rhesa, with a German translation. The publication was called *Das Jahr in vier Gesängen*, published in Königsberg in 1818. Other editions followed, including one in the U.S. in 1897. In 1940, on the initiative of Lithuanian Ministry of Education, the definitive and ornate edition of *The Seasons* was published in Kaunas. It was illustrated with woodcuts by Vytautas K. Jonynas. The attention to his work has inspired new editions and translations. To this day, *The Seasons* has been published more than 25 times in the Lithuanian language alone. It also has been translated into 12 foreign languages: English, Armenian, Belarusian, Czech, Georgian, Latvian, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Ukrainian, Hungarian and German. At the moment it is also being translated into Spanish and Italian. Vaičekauskas points out that *The Seasons* is the most studied work of Lithuanian literature.

Apart from *The Seasons*, Kristijonas Donelaitis has also written six fables, and three poems in German. According to Vaičekauskas, a few fragments of poetry, letters, autobiographical texts and documents remain. Literary scholars consider *The Seasons* to be a still-unrivalled masterpiece of Lithuanian literature.

*Dr. Romualdas Kriauciūnas is a clinical psychologist, formerly affiliated as a clinical professor at the College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University. After retiring from Community Mental Health in Lansing as a chief psychologist, he has been a psychological consultant to the Social Security Disability Program. He is active in the Lithuanian-American Community and other ethnic and professional organizations.*

# Excerpts From *The Seasons* (*Metai*)

By Kristijonas Donelaitis



Woodcut from *The Seasons* by V.K. Jonynas

From "Spring's Joys" (*Pavasaros linksmybės*)

And the stork, returning gladly with his neighbors,  
On the straw roof, landlordlike, clattered his bill.  
And his wife, already, as he stood rejoicing,  
Clambered once again out of the cold household,  
Greeting with her pointed beak her loved companion.  
They discovered the straw roof grievously damaged,  
And their new home, built a mere two years before,  
Weather-beaten, torn, and broken — almost ruined.  
Walls and braces, beams, and many solid rafters  
Winter gales had loosened from the roof of straw.  
Doors were ajar, the windows and the sills had fallen;  
Somehow, everywhere, the whole abode seemed crooked.  
So they both at once, like all good homemakers,  
Turned to the task: everything to rebuild again.  
Soon the husband gathered boughs and twigs in armfuls,  
While, without delay, his wife patched up their home.  
Then the two, after their heavy toil and labor,  
Flew off swiftly to a marsh, to fish their dinner.  
Then, when they had eaten some few toads and froglets,  
They thanked God with all their faith and hearts.  
Trivial man, thou, learn at last to be contented!  
And in tastier satisfactions, think on God.

(Clark Mills translation)

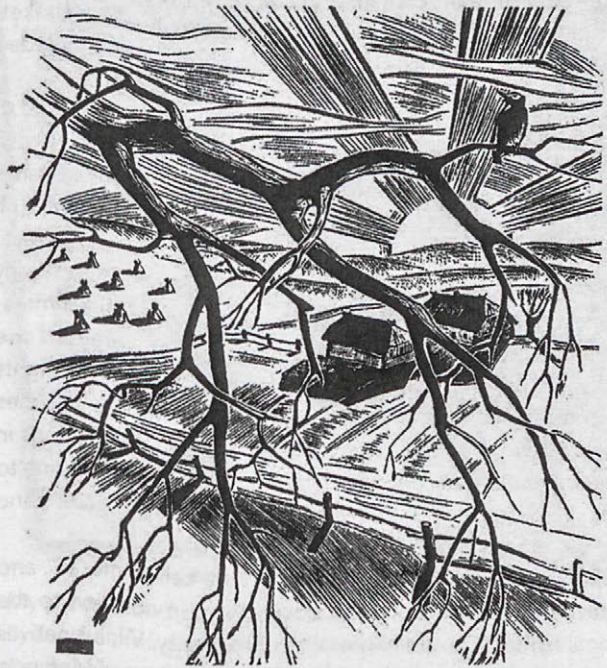
From "Summer's Toils" (*Vasaros darbai*)

"We Lithuanians shod in bast shoes, we're called wretches,  
We're too lowly for the lords and all their servants;  
But we're not afflicted by their lordly ailments.  
How they grunt and groan in town and country manor  
While the summer comes to cheer us with a visit;  
There's one with his gout, he's bawling loud and loutish,  
There's another, how he bellows for a doctor!  
Ah, but why are rich men plagued by such afflictions?  
Why does death reap up the lords before their hour?  
It's no riddle; scoffing at the chores of peasants,  
Lazy, shamming good, they overstuff their stomachs;  
We, the serfs they scorn, our stomachs light with skimings,  
Buttermilk and whey, we hurry-scurry briskly;  
With a snatch of bacon or Lithuanian sausage,  
We work better at the labors forced upon us..."

(Demie Jonaitis translation)



Woodcut from *The Seasons* by V. Kalinauskas



Woodcut from *The Seasons* by V.K. Jonynas

From "Autumn's Riches" (Rudens gėrybės)

Skeletal Death racks all the shrubs and candid forests,  
 And the tempest tears and wastes away their beauties:  
 Branches where the birdlings, hatched in heavy leafage,  
 In the nest, as in a cradle, cried and twittered,  
 Or later plump with feathers, flew about and chattered,  
 And aflight, without their mother, caught their dinners  
 — Everywhere, all places have undressed themselves  
 And like brittle twigs and branches, quake and rattle.  
 — There, where he-bear cut his honeycombs from stumps,  
 And where she-bear muttered as she nursed her silly cubs,  
 Where the elk paused, frightened by the wolves that tear,  
 Where the wolves taught their new pups to rob and howl,  
 Where the hawk's whole household pecked at many chickens,  
 And where troops of ravens stole our little goslings...  
 There, look now, all pleasure's gone, has melted,  
 Crows alone joy in the foul decay of autumn,  
 While the birds, with all their songs concealed and silent  
 And their cares forgotten, sleep in their cool dreams.  
 (Clark Mills translation)

From "Winter's Cares" (Žiemos rūpesčiai)

... the winter's scowling wraths are already returning,  
 And again the bristling north wind is flying to scare us.  
 Look, how everywhere on pondwater panes are appearing  
 Just as, in that house, a glazier is putting in windows.  
 And the fishes' home, where bullfrogs saluted the summer,  
 Puts its armor on, because of the quarrels of winter,  
 Sending all its animals to sleep in the darkness.  
 There, the northern wind has frightened the fields with its scolding  
 So that bogs and swamps are shrinking, contracting themselves to  
 Stop the puddles of mud from their usual splashing and gurgling.  
 Listen, how the road, when skipping wheels try to strike it,  
 Rattles — having frozen — like a well-tightened snaredrum  
 So resounding that its sound keeps echoing in you.  
 Thus the world begins again to welcome the winter.  
 (Theodore Melnechuk translation)

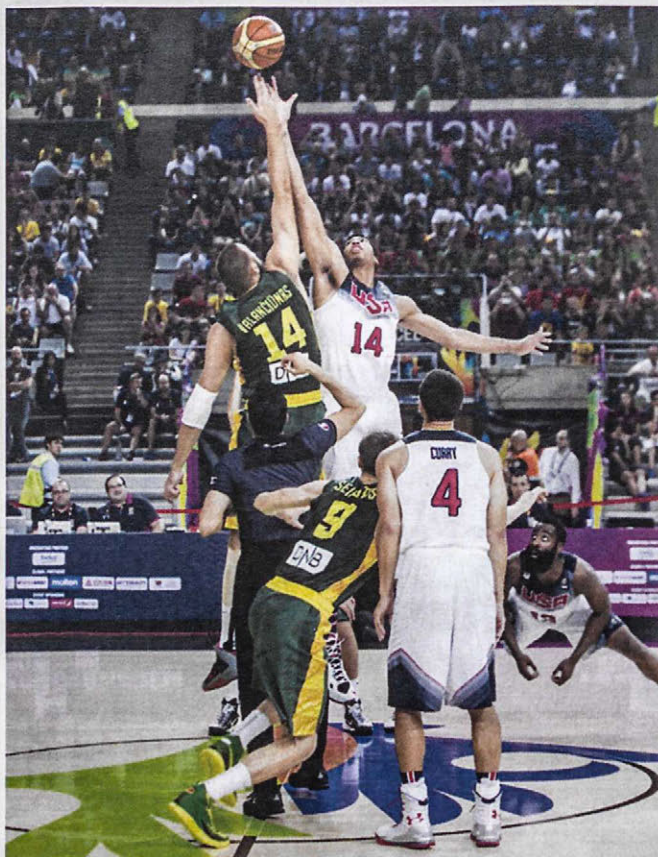


Woodcut from *The Seasons* by V.K. Jonynas

## sports

## World's Fourth Best

By Arūnas Povilas Paliulis



Jonas Valančiūnas, Lithuania, vs. Anthony Davis, USA, in a tip-off during the September 11, 2014, FIBA World Basketball Championships semifinal. Photo © Natursports | Dreamstime.com - USA Vs Lithuania Photo

LIE-TU-VA ... LIE-TU-VA ... LIE-TU-VA ... LIE-TU-VA ...

That was the resounding chant heard on the streets and in and around the basketball arenas of Cabildo de Gran Canaria in Las Palmas and the Palau Sant Jordi in Barcelona, Spain, during the FIBA World Basketball Championships from August 30 to September 14, 2014, where the Lithuanian national basketball team won fourth place among 24 competing nations from six continents.

The Lithuanians won the D division, which included Mexico, Angola, Australia, South Korea and Slovenia before beating New Zealand in the round of 16 and then Turkey in the quarterfinals. The men in green then put up a valiant effort against a formidable Team USA in the semifinals before losing 68-96. They then lost a heart-wrenching game for third place to France 93-95 and barely missed out on the bronze medal.

Still the Lithuanians maintained fourth place in the global rankings of 83 nations, behind the USA, Spain and Argentina and ahead of France, Russia and Serbia, an extraordinary achievement for a nation of barely 3 million citizens.

The side fought valiantly despite a rash of injuries, including the loss of team captain and star player Mantas Kalnietis. The point guard had previously won several Lithuanian Basketball League professional slam-dunk competitions that included much taller players.

Some 3,600 rabid fans made the trip to the Canary Islands to support their side, and approximately half of them were residents outside of the homeland. The majority of these came from Ireland and the United Kingdom, but others came from all over Europe and even Canada, the United States and Australia.

All were decked in the bright green national colors, and many had matching wigs and socks and painted faces. The camaraderie amongst them was overwhelming, and they greeted one another across the town and throughout the days and nights with the familiar terms "mes laimėjom" (we won) and "mes laimėsime" (we shall win). There were no restaurants or pubs in the arenas, so it was common for fans to gather at cafes one to two hours before and after the games to discuss the games and share a glass of cheer.

Popular national songs such as "Ant kalno murai" and "Lietuva brangi" were spontaneously sung in addition to the national hymn. In a rare expression of solidarity, Vilnius natives joined their Kaunas rivals in the Kaunas anthem, "Mes prie Nemuno užaugę" (Born on the Banks of the Nemunas). After the victory over the Turks, one irrationally exuberant Kaunas native named Liutauras (the lion man) raised this 270-pound reporter onto his shoulders and did a dozen whirling dervish-like spins before two merciful young ladies convinced him to take a break.

It is commonly stated that basketball is the most uniting force of all Lithuanians worldwide. In their lead article of September 10, the *Barcelona Vanguard* focused on the reactions of Arvydas Sabonis, to whom they referred as probably the best European basketballer of all time and one of the best NBA centers. They said that Arvydas can now rest confident that the future of Lithuanian basketball has been assured by the young, enthusiastic group of long-range snipers and powerful front men. They finished by stating that basketball has entered into the mainstream of Lithuanians' cultural identity.

LIE-TU-VA ... LIE-TU-VA ... LIE-TU-VA ... LIE-TU-VA

*Arūnas Paliulis was born in Waterbury, Conn., the son of displaced persons. He attended St. Joseph's parish and parish school, and graduated from Harvard College. He currently works in agricultural product trading and marketing. He has lived in France, England, the Emirates, Australia, Hong Kong and Ukraine. He went to Lithuania to live in 1991. His wife, Caroline, is an actress and their daughter, Lina, works in healthcare.*



## Močiutė's Adopted American Specialty: 7UP Cake

By Jana Sirusaitė Motivans



Jana's two močiutės hold her and her twin brother.



My parents and grandparents left Lithuania during World War II, lived as refugees and displaced persons in Germany, and finally came to the U.S. in 1949, along with immigrants from many other European countries, including my husband's family from Latvia. Most immigrants tended to concentrate in certain cities, and established ethnic communities. My grandparents lived in a thriving Lithuanian community in Brooklyn, N.Y. They established churches, community centers and schools. They formed dance groups, choirs, scout groups, and numerous political groups and committees. They helped each other and socialized together to make a home in their new country. Most Lithuanians continued to eat the same kind of food they had eaten back in Lithuania, and to maintain the same traditions.

Lithuanians were also eager to embrace their new lives—they needed to learn English, they needed jobs and they needed education for their children. Gradually, Lithuanians were exposed to various aspects of American culture and the influence of other ethnic groups. As they became more comfortable and more financially secure, they were able to lean on their Lithuanian safety net, yet explore more of what America offered.

By the time I was born in 1962, both of my močiutės (grandmothers) were making lasagna! I grew up in a strictly Lithuanian household—both parents and all four grandparents spoke only Lithuanian at home. I did not learn English until I started kindergarten. Naturally, my brothers and I assumed lasagna was a Lithuanian food, since both močiutės made it and used the name in a Lithuanian sentence—"valgysim lasagna šiandien" (we will eat lasagna today). One time my brother Petras went to

a friend's house for dinner and was served lasagna. He excitedly proclaimed, "I didn't know you like Lithuanian food, too!"

My grandparents' generation also lovingly embraced 7UP. The only drinks Lithuanians were familiar with were the basics—water, milk, juice, coffee and tea, or alcoholic drinks such as beer, wine and spirits. Soda was a new American luxury, and treated with reverence. We never had any in our house, but my husband remembers his Latvian grandparents offering him 7UP as a special drink when he was sick in bed. He would be brought a glass of slightly flat 7UP as a magical cure-all.

My Lithuanian association with 7UP started much later, when I was a teenager. I vividly recall going to the Lithuanian Music Hall in Philadelphia for events where 7&7s (7UP and Seagram's 7 Crown Whiskey) were the drinks freely flowing from the hands of the old men behind the bar. If you could order it, you could have it. Oh, those were the days!

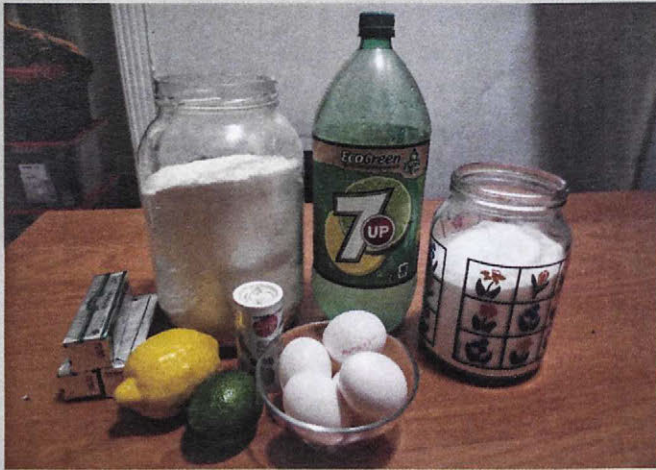
Bundt cakes were very popular in the 1960s and many recipes were available. One recipe that caught the attention of my Močiutė Elena featured 7UP as its key ingredient. It was a sort of magical cake because it didn't use any kind of leavening agent to make it rise. Instead of baking powder, the cake got its lift from the bubbles in the 7UP. My močiute bought a Bundt pan and started baking what was to become her specialty.

This month's recipe is 7UP cake, in memory of my Močiutė Elena and all our grandmothers who kept our Lithuanian food traditions strong, but were also willing to try something new in their new country.

# a taste of lithuania

## Lemon-Lime Pound Cake

### INGREDIENTS



- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 cups sugar
- 5 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 teaspoon grated lime peel
- 3/4 cup lemon-lime soda (7UP)
- powdered sugar for dusting

### PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 12-cup Bundt pan with non-stick spray and dust with flour.
2. Whisk flour and salt in a medium-sized bowl to blend.
3. Using an electric mixer, beat butter in a large bowl until fluffy. Gradually beat in sugar. Beat in eggs, one at a time, then beat in the lemon peel and lime peel. Beat in flour mixture in four additions alternately with the soda in three additions.



4. Transfer the batter to the prepared Bundt pan. Put the cake in the oven immediately. The soda bubbles give the cake its lift. It will go flat the longer it sits.



5. Bake the cake until golden on top and a tester inserted near the center comes out clean, slightly longer than one hour (mine took one hour and five minutes).
6. Cool the cake in the pan for 15 minutes, then turn the cake out onto a cooling rack and cool completely.



7. Dust with powdered sugar before serving.



## Season Full of Accomplishments for Lithuanian Research and Studies Center

By LRSC Vice President Loreta Timukienė

Translated by Dr. Indrė Antanaitis-Jacobs



LRSC guests Mike Umbras and his wife, Colette. Photo: Loreta Timukienė.

As in many institutions, the spirit of vacation can be felt in the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in the summer, but the work does not stop. Guests interested in our nation's history drop by the Center in the summer, looking for archival material about their families, as do those collecting material for their research work or wanting to donate their archives to our establishment.

In the beginning of the summer, we had guests from far away. After a week-long car trip, Mike Umbras and his wife, Colette, visited us from the West Coast. Why were these people resolved to make such a long trip? It would appear that Mike's grandfather was Lithuanian. Thus, this Lithuanian-blooded Portlander was determined to drive to Chicago from Oregon to find out as much as he could about Lithuania and its history. At the same time he brought gifts—his grandfather's documents, letters, photographs, books. Mike and Colette spent an entire half day at the Center; everything connected with Lithuania interested them. Mike became so interested in the past and culture of his ancestral land that he decided to fly to Lithuania next summer with his wife. He does not know the Lithuanian language, so as we said our good-byes we gave him an English-Lithuanian dictionary in order for him to have an easier time communicating in his ancestral homeland, together with our wishes for him to learn the language of his forefathers.

We are happy about all the work we accomplished this summer: we organized and recorded the Lithuanian American Community's archives that we received from Mr. Algimantas Gečys,

active LAC member of many years, as well as that of members active in other organizations in the Community. Funds were allocated by the LAC and more of the same work is forseen in the future.

This summer was very generous to the LRSC, with a considerable amount of various archival documents, publications, art works and records received. A special place, however, is taken by the Algimantas Kezys Archive and collection. Just who is Algimantas Kezys does not need to be explained to either Lithuanians living in Lithuania, nor those living abroad, as rare is the person who has not heard of this talented photographer's name or seen at least one of his works. The LRSC is very closely associated with Kezys's work, as he was the Lithuanian Photo Archive's (later renamed the Budrys Lithuanian Photo Archive) founder and trustee. LRSC is also the repository for Algimantas Kezys's Art Archive, which houses the results of many years of painstaking work in the form of clippings about artists, programs and everything associated with Lithuanian artists residing abroad.

Visitors to LRSC's Facebook page ([facebook.com/pages/Lithuanian-Research-and-Studies-Center/355571529353](https://facebook.com/pages/Lithuanian-Research-and-Studies-Center/355571529353)) had the opportunity to win books published by the LRSC by guessing which churches in Lithuania were being depicted in the photos posted from LRSC collections. The LRSC archives have a multitude of photographs of Lithuanian churches houses of prayer of various time periods and architectural and decorative styles. We decided to wipe off the dust from these photographs and for two months we posted them on Facebook. The winner of the contest was Raimundas Kaminskas, who lives in Lithuania and is interested in Lithuanian history. We visited him in Kaunas and presented him with two LRSC publications: Dr. Robertas Vitas's *Civil-Military Relations in Lithuania Under President Antanas Smetona 1926-1940* and Henrikas Paulauskas's *Vytautas Petrulis: Lietuvos Respublikos ministras pirmininkas, finansų ministras, lito tėvas, Sibiro tremtinys, bolševikų sušaudytas* (*Vytautas Petrulis: Prime Minister of Lithuania, Minister of Finances, Father of the Litas, Exile in Siberia, Executed by the Bolsheviks*). In gratitude for the gift, the contest winner gifted the Center with his own book, *Prof. A. Voldemaro likimo kelias* (*The Fateful Road of Prof. A. Voldemaras*) and a publication co-authored with Vygaudas Molis, *Vilijampolės metraštis: faktai, įvykiai ir žmonės* (*The Vilijampolė Chronicle: Facts, Events, People*).

For more information about the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, please visit [lithuanianresearch.org](http://lithuanianresearch.org).

## our community

### Lithuanian PM Visits Pittsburgh to Launch Cancer Hospital Project



Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevičius (second from right) and Lithuanian Ambassador to the United States Žygimantas Pavilionis (left) with representatives of UPMC and GK Klinika Group. Photo: Maryann Donovan

Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevičius was in Pittsburgh, Pa., on October 7, 2014, for the signing of 15-year, multimillion-dollar deal between the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and private healthcare company GK Klinika Group to develop and co-manage a new 100-bed cancer hospital, scheduled to open in 2017 near Vilnius.

GK Klinika Group will finance construction and UPMC will provide administrative and clinical expertise for training staff, information technology planning, developing early cancer detection programs and ongoing management of the hospital. UPMC has about a half-dozen international programs in places ranging from China to Italy.

When finished, the Vilnius hospital will offer standard cancer care as well as higher-level care such as stereotactic radiosurgery that targets tumors with radiation beams. Currently, cancer patients in Lithuania might have to travel to Germany, France or Italy for that care.

Before the signing ceremony, Butkevičius visited the Lithuanian Nationality Room at the University of Pittsburgh, where he said he was "very positively surprised to look up and see the names of Donelaitis, Basanavičius and Čiurlionis on the walls" of the university's Cathedral of Learning.

The Lithuanian room, one of 30 nationality rooms used as classrooms in the Cathedral of Learning, was dedicated in 1940 with contributions from the region's Lithuanian-American community.

### Historic Sisters of St. Casimir Motherhouse to Transfer to Catholic Charities



Vintage postcard of the Sisters of St. Casimir Motherhouse in Chicago.

The Sisters of St. Casimir Motherhouse, an institution founded by a Lithuanian order more than 100 years ago in the Chicago Lawn neighborhood, will soon be transferred to Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. The Motherhouse and surrounding property at 2601 W. Marquette Road will become home to several Catholic Charities programs and hundreds of staff.

The property dates back to 1911, when Mother Maria Kaupas, foundress of the Sisters of St. Casimir, moved the religious order from Scranton, Pa., to Chicago. Mother Maria was born

Casimira Kaupas in Gudeliai in Ramygala, Lithuania, in 1897. After spending four years in the U.S. as housekeeper to her brother, a priest in Scranton, she felt called to prepare for a religious life helping Lithuanian Americans to sustain their faith, spiritual and cultural identity, and values. The first three novitiates took their vows in Scranton in 1907.

At one time the congregation numbered almost 500 Sisters who ministered to Lithuanian communities across the United States and in Argentina. Today there are 66 Sisters, and the order continues to sponsor Villa Joseph Marie High School for Girls in Holland, Pa., and two missions in Argentina. A property the size of the Motherhouse was no longer needed.

While the administrative offices of the Sisters of St. Casimir will continue to operate out of the Motherhouse with some Sisters and employees, most of the Sisters moved in July 2014 to Franciscan Village, a senior living community. The St. Elizabeth Food Pantry operated by the Sisters for the last 23 years closed in May 2014.

The Sisters will continue to use the chapel in the Motherhouse for their special celebrations. The remains of Mother Maria Kaupas will stay at the site. The Vatican has declared Mother Maria "Venerable" and her cause for beatification continues.

## U.S. Historian Receives Lithuanian Star of Diplomacy

Historian Timothy Snyder, a professor at Yale University and author of *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, received the Lithuanian Diplomacy Star at a ceremony at the Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania in Washington, D.C. on October 27, 2014.

Snyder, who specializes in the political history of central and Eastern Europe as well as the Holocaust, was recognized for his contributions to preserving human dignity, for his courage to speak for all victims of totalitarian regimes, for his opposition to the lies and propaganda that these regimes disseminate, and for his fight for historic truth in the face of the cynicism and relativism that these totalitarian regimes aggressively spread.

After the award presentation, Snyder gave a talk, "Ukraine, Russia, and Europe," which was followed by serious questions, comments and discussions from the audience, which included Washington leaders and members of U.S. and Lithuanian media.



Professor Timothy Snyder received the Lithuanian Diplomacy Star from Ambassador Žygimantas Pavilionis. Photo: Ludo Segers

## Consulate General in New York Honors Genocide Victims



Kristina Malinauskaitė sings during the memorial. Photo: Algirdas Grybas

The New York Lithuanian community gathered on September 23, 2014, at the Consulate General of Lithuania in New York, for a concert to commemorate the victims of the liquidation of the Vilnius ghetto.

Soloist Kristina Malinauskaitė, with tenor Erik Bagger and accompanist Dalia Sakas, presented works by Ravel, Belazaras, Kačianauskas and Verdi. Lithuania's Minister of Foreign Affairs Linas Linkevičius was a special guest at the concert, which New York Lithuanian-American Community President Algirdas Grybas also attended.

## Philadelphia Lithuanians Show Support for Ukraine



Vytas Maciunas, president of the Philadelphia chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community, addresses protesters on Independence Mall. Photo: Linas Gineitis

On September 14, 2014, the Philadelphia Lithuanian community gathered twice to show support for Ukraine. There was a special morning Mass at St. Andrew's Lithuanian Church in the city's Fairmount section in remembrance of the Honorary Consul of Lithuania Mykola Zelenec, who was kidnapped and murdered in Ukraine earlier in the year. Members of the city's Ukrainian and Polish communities attended the service.

Later in the afternoon, members of the area's Lithuanian, Latvia, Estonian, Polish and Ukrainian communities gathered at Independence Mall in Philadelphia's historic district for a demonstration against Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Community leaders addressed attendees with reminders that Russian terrorism still exists and let them know what they can do to fight it.

## the list

## Lithuanian Choirs in North America

Choirs and vocal groups from across the United States and Canada will be singing in the Tenth North American Lithuanian Song Festival in Chicago in 2015. As of press time, these were the choirs that had registered to perform.

## UNITED STATES

- |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Aidas</b><br>Detroit, Michigan<br>led by Rimantas Kasputis   | <b>Detroit Žiburio Lithuanian School Chorus</b><br>Detroit, Michigan<br>led by Simona Gavrilenko                       | <b>KDLM Dainorėliai</b><br>Washington, D.C.<br>led by Vaida Meižienė                                    | <b>Los Angeles Youth Ensemble LB Spindulys</b><br>Los Angeles, California<br>led by Viktoras Ralys and Danguole Varnienė | <b>Spindulėlis</b><br>Belmar, New Jersey<br>led by Violeta Kundrotienė                                  |
| <b>Aušra</b><br>Indianapolis, Indiana<br>led by Dalia Mockienė  | <b>Eastern Long Island Chorus</b><br>Riverhead, New York<br>led by Rita Klimavičienė and Irma Diržius                  | <b>Kreviukai</b><br>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania<br>led by Ramunė Stankevičiūtė and Irina Melikova        | <b>Maironis Lithuanian Community School</b><br>Lemont, Illinois<br>led by Revita Durtinevičiūtė                          | <b>Svajonė</b><br>Willowbrook, Illinois<br>led by Alina Simkus  |
| <b>Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis Mission Choir</b><br>Lemont, Illinois<br>led by Jūratė Grabliauskienė                | <b>Exultate Children's Choir</b><br>Cleveland, Ohio<br>led by Virginija Bruožytė-Muliolienė and Rita Čyvaitė-Kliorienė | <b>Laisvė</b><br>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania<br>led by Ilona Babinskienė                                 | <b>Mist (Ūkana)</b><br>San Francisco, California<br>led by Indrė Viskontaitė   | <b>The Chanters (Giedoriai)</b><br>Boston, Massachusetts<br>led by Daiva Navickas                       |
| <b>Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis Mission Children's Choir Vyturys</b><br>Lemont, Illinois<br>led by Darius Polikaitis | <b>Exultate Choir</b><br>Cleveland, Ohio<br>led by Rita Čyvaitė-Kliorienė  | <b>Lietuvėlė</b><br>Jackson, New Jersey<br>led by Žydrūnė Mladineo                                      | <b>New Generation (Nauja Karta)</b><br>Milwaukee, Wisconsin<br>led by Fausta Urbonienė                                   | <b>The Little Chanters (Giedorėliai)</b><br>Boston, Massachusetts<br>led by Daiva Navickienė            |
| <b>Capital Voices (Sostinė Balsai)</b><br>Madison, Wisconsin<br>led by Michael Etwiler                            | <b>Gediminas Lithuanian Cultural School</b><br>Mundelein, Illinois<br>led by Agnė Januškis                             | <b>Lithuanian Opera Choir</b><br>Chicago, Illinois<br>led by Jūratė Grabliauskienė and Jolanta Baniienė | <b>New York Lithuanians</b><br>New York, New York<br>led by Gintarė Bukauskienė  | <b>Vakarai</b><br>Seattle, Washington<br>led by Dainius Vaičekonis                                      |
| <b>Chicago Lithuanian Cultural School Chorus</b><br>Chicago, Illinois<br>led by Dale Gedvilas                     | <b>Genys Lithuanian School</b><br>San Francisco, California<br>led by Vanesa Kašelionytė and Sabyna Sandoval           | <b>Lithuanian Youth Choir Polėkis</b><br>Chicago, Illinois<br>led by Liudas Landsbergis                 | <b>New York Maironis Lithuanian School Choir</b><br>New York, New York<br>led by Gintarė Bukauskienė                     | <b>Venta</b><br>St. Petersburg, Florida<br>led by Asta Lukas  |
| <b>Dainava Lithuanian Chorale</b><br>Lemont, Illinois<br>led by Darius Polikaitis                                 | <b>Gintaras</b><br>Indianapolis, Indiana<br>led by Dalia Mockienė  | <b>Little Bell (Varpelis)</b><br>Elizabeth, New Jersey<br>led by Birutė Mockienė                        | <b>Wind (Vėjas)</b><br>Elizabeth, New Jersey<br>led by Birutė Mockienė   | <b>Vocal Ensemble Dainelė</b><br>West Palm Beach, Florida<br>led by Renata Armalaitė                    |
| <b>Detroit Motown (Momiestelis)</b><br>Detroit, Michigan<br>led by Mikas Giedraitis                               |  | <b>Los Angeles Lithuanian Choir</b><br>Los Angeles, California<br>led by Kęstutis Daugirdas             | <b>Šiaurinė</b><br>Minneapolis, Minnesota<br>led by Laima Adomavičienė   | <b>Women's Chorus Little Linden (Liepelė)</b><br>New Britain, Connecticut<br>led by Rūta Pakštaitė Cole |

**Young Chanters  
(Jauni Giedoriai)**  
Boston, Massachusetts  
led by Daiva  
Navickienė

**Church of the  
Resurrection  
Children's Choir**  
Toronto, Ontario  
led by Danutė  
Pargauskaitė-Biskienė

**Pašvaistė,  
London, Canada  
Lithuanian Choir**  
London, Ontario  
led by Edmundas  
Petrauskas



## CANADA

**Arija**  
Ottawa, Ontario  
led by Loretta  
Lukša-Cassidy

**K5/Kristina ir  
penketukas**  
Montréal, Québec  
led by Kristina Kliorytė  
and Aleksandras  
Stankevičius

**Toronto Maironis  
School Choir**  
Toronto, Ontario  
led by Janet  
Kriščiūnienė

**Volungė**  
Toronto, Ontario  
led by Nijolė  
Puranaitė-Benotienė  
and Dalia Viskontienė

**Volungė Song  
Festival Choir**  
Toronto, Ontario  
led by Nijolė  
Puranaitė-Benotienė  
and Dalia Viskontienė

**Children and  
Youth Choir Amber  
(Ginterėliai)**  
Toronto, Ontario  
led by Deimantė  
Grigutienė

**Montreal  
Lithuanian Choir**  
Montréal, Québec  
led by Aleksandras  
Stankevičius and  
Kristina Kliorytė

**Toronto Youth Choir  
Toronto, Ontario**  
led by Nijolė  
Puranaitė-Benotienė  
and Dalia Viskontienė

**Volungė Women's  
Ensemble**  
Toronto, Ontario  
led by Dalia  
Viskontienė

**Žemyna**  
Edmonton, Alberta  
led by Adrijana  
Podberskienė

## current events

**Lithuania Celebrates a New "Independence"**

Independence, Lithuania's new floating liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal, capable of storing 170,000 cubic meters of LNG, steamed into the Port of Klaipėda in October, signaling the country's end to dependence on Russia's Gazprom. Without the terminal, Lithuania could survive only four to five days without Russian gas.

By the end of October, Lithuania had received its first shipment of LNG, which will be used for testing throughout

November. Regular operations are expected to start in early December. The first commercial LNG cargo will be delivered to the Independence by January 1, 2015, and will be available to consumers at that point. The terminal could furnish all the country's gas needs as early as next year, and could eventually fulfill 80 percent of Latvia and Estonia's needs as well.

Litgas has signed a five-year agreement with Norway's Statoil to provide the terminal with 950,000 cubic meters of LNG, equivalent to 540 million cubic meters of natural gas annually. The Independence is leased from Norway's Hoegh LNG Holdings for 10 years with an option to buy.

While Lithuania seems to have succeeded in gaining energy independence, the rest of Europe won't significantly reduce its dependence on Russian gas for a decade or longer. Buyers are locked into multiyear contracts with Gazprom varying from 10 to 35 years. Lithuania's contracts, however, expire in 2015.

The European Commission has urged the Baltic states and Finland to launch an emergency back-up plan, fearing Russia may cut off vital gas supplies amid the crisis in the Ukraine. The commission said the countries must diversify their gas suppliers, a task Lithuania is already addressing with its LNG terminal.

## current events

### In the EU and Eurozone

... Lithuania's long-term debt security interest rates are at record lows, and euro adoption is one of reasons. The head of the Monetary Policy Division of the Bank of Lithuania says the single currency eliminates the risk of the national currency's devaluation and diminishes the risk of insolvency. This has permitted trust to grow among international financial market participants in Lithuania. The general trend in the EU market has been lower interest rates; however, Lithuania's are lower than the average.

... The Bank of Lithuania began issuing euro coins to commercial banks in October and plans to begin issuing them euro banknotes, borrowed from the Central Bank of Germany, in November. In December, commercial banks will begin providing the new currency to businesses, Lithuania Post and credit unions.

... The European Investment Bank (EIB) has approved a €1.30 billion (\$1.65 billion) loan to Lithuania for a number of projects. The debt is expected to mature over a 25-year tenure and will be made available before the end of 2014. The EIB funding will cover the development of a gas pipeline between the port city of Klaipėda—the site of a new LNG terminal—and Vilnius. It will also cover a new bypass road around the western suburbs of Vilnius.

... On October 10, 2014, Lithuania became the eighth country to sign the European Cooperating State Agreement with the European Space Agency (ESA). During the ESA's assessment of Lithuanian space industries and research in February 2013, Lithuania demonstrated strong and broad capabilities in laser technologies and showcased its investment in five science and technology parks that provide access to highly specialized equipment.

### Ukraine and Russia

... Lithuanian and EU leaders hailed Ukraine's recent parliamentary elections, which produced Ukraine's most pro-European parliament since the country became independent in 1991. For the first time, the hard-left Communist party was left without representation after failing to meet the 5 per cent vote threshold. Lithuania has offered to help Ukraine implement euro-integration reforms. Subsequent elections initiated by separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk, which showed sizeable wins for pro-Russia rebel leaders, were termed illegal and were not recognized by the EU.

... Ukraine has requested Lithuania's help for orphaned children affected by the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Lithuania has committed €95,000 euros to support orphans and two teachers from Donetsk and Luhansk, covering the children's education, accommodation, meals, utility bills, health insurance and other expenses.

... NATO says it has seen a surge in intercepts of Russian war-planes near Polish and Baltic airspace since Moscow's annexation of Crimea, and has quadrupled its patrols there. Officials say that in addition to provocation, there is risk of collision with civilian and commercial planes, as the unregistered Russian flights do not file flight plans or respond to air traffic control. Although the Russian jets have flown close enough to elicit a response, they have not penetrated NATO airspace.

... For the first two weeks of November, 2,500 troops from eight NATO member countries will be in Lithuania for a large-scale multinational training event. It will be the largest such event in Lithuania this year, after NATO made the decision to expand it in response to the ongoing events in Ukraine. Iron Sword 2014 will involve troops from the Czech Republic, Estonia, the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary and Germany, as well as 1,900 Lithuanian troops.

... At the Transport, Telecommunications, and Energy Council held in Luxembourg on October 13, Lithuania, Poland, Latvia and Greece addressed the impact of Russian ban on imports of agricultural products on transportation companies. Re-exports to Russia comprise a majority of Lithuanian transports, thus it has hit Lithuania's economy the hardest. Transportation volume there has decreased by 19 percent since the bans took effect.

... Lithuania's efforts to diversify its export markets in the face of Russia's embargo are paying off due to the efforts of diplomats and the government, according to Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevicius. He said he expects Lithuania's diplomatic presence to strengthen in China, Kazakhstan and Turkey next year.

### In the World

... In the top-10 ranking compiled by the world's largest travel guide book publisher, Lonely Planet, Lithuania was named "one of Europe's best-kept secrets." Topping the list of best countries to visit next year is Singapore, followed by Namibia and then Lithuania. The article points out the Baltic coast, the Curonian Spit, Vilnius and the Hill of Crosses as must-see attractions.

... The Lithuanian Parliament approved plans to open a consulate in Los Angeles. The new consulate will help improve the provision of consular services in the western United States and strengthen cultural ties with the local community. Besides the embassy in Washington, Lithuania has consulates general in Chicago and New York.

... The Bank of Lithuania has made its first investment in China's capital market, using about \$100 million of foreign reserve for investment in Chinese securities by buying short-term Government bonds. The bank says it is seeking diversification of investment risks.



... Lithuania continues to develop political cooperation with China for the purpose of encouraging efficient and streamlined economic relationship between the two countries. Chemical and engineering industries, transport and logistics, biotech, lasers and ICT sectors could be areas for closer cooperation, according to Lithuanian Economy Minister Evaldas Gustas.

... After lengthy negotiations, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania signed an agreement in October to create a joint venture company to build a standard-gauge high-speed line linking the Baltic States with Poland. Each country will hold a 33.3 percent share in the new company, RB Rail, and each will provide €650,000 in start-up capital. Passenger trains will operate at an average of 170km/h on the new infrastructure. When the line is completed in 2024, travel time from Tallinn to Warsaw will be cut to around six hours. At an estimated €3.68 billion, Rail Baltica 2 is the largest infrastructure project ever implemented in the Baltic States.

... Lithuania's parliament debated the prospects of creating a TV channel dedicated to countering Russian propaganda but refused to consider President Dalia Grybauskaitė's initiative to cut broadcasting in the Russian language by two thirds. She had sought to ensure that at least 90 percent of re-broadcasted television programs are in the official languages of the EU. Opponents of the initiative said the move would introduce censorship and violate the right to free information distribution, and are pointless in the era of internet and satellite television.

... On October 11, 2014, Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevicius met with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden in Washington and discussed cooperation between the countries, promotion of transatlantic trade and investment partnership, European security and energy security. Biden promised continued support from the U.S. and NATO.

... YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, the world's largest center devoted to Yiddish studies, has launched a \$5.25 million, seven-year project to work with Lithuania's Central State Archives to digitally copy 250,000 pages of documents and 4,200 books from a pre-World War II collection that were saved from Nazi and Soviet destruction. They will be placed on a Web portal, where scholars worldwide can access them, according to a *New York Times* report. The materials were rescued during the war by enslaved Jewish laborers who risked their lives to hide books, diaries, paintings and sculptures.

... A Lithuanian car thief was caught on October 23, 2014, after being chased by police through two countries. The thief, described as a professional, stole a BMW X6 from Dachau, Germany, and drove at speeds up to 150 mph through Germany and the Czech Republic. Eventually the man ran out of gas and surrendered.

... Lithuania may soon be allowed to export meat products to the United States. The U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service has drawn up the final draft equivalence verification audit report stating that the state meat quality control system in Lithuania meets all requirements and is equivalent to the existing quality system in the United States.

#### In Lithuania

... On October 13, 2014, Lithuania announced the formation of a "rapid reaction" force to address potential situations like those in Ukraine. The group will take from two to 24 hours to mobilize, allowing for swift actions against provocation, attack from non-state groups and illegal border crossing.

... Lithuania's law banning the sale of energy drinks to individuals under 18 went into effect November 1. It is now illegal for juveniles to purchase or possess energy drinks. Selling these drinks to minors is punishable by a fine of up to 400 litas, and individuals caught supplying them could be fined up to 200 litas. Lithuania is the first country in the world to enact such a ban.

... Lithuanian Special Investigation Service (SIS) officers searched the headquarters of the Order and Justice Party and five private homes in October as part of a probe into suspected corruption at the Ministry of Interior. Five suspects—two Ministry staff and three business owners—were detained for alleged influence peddling. The sum of suspected bribes amounts to 32,000 litas. A week after the raid, Lithuania's Minister of the Interior Dailis Alfonsas Barakauskas submitted his letter of resignation, citing deteriorating health.

... Vilnius Mayor Arturas Zuokas has announced the construction of Vilnius Tech Park, a tech hub for startups and other businesses. The site will be in Sapiiega Park in what's currently a run-down 19th century hospital that will be renovated, upgraded and subsequently used for offices, as well as temporary living spaces for outside talent. The project is slated for completion by the summer of 2015.

... Lithuania has begun exercises to prepare to address and treat an outbreak of Ebola virus disease. It is not believed that Ebola is a threat to the Baltic region, as there are no direct flights from infected regions of Africa to Lithuania, but hospitals across the country are engaging in preparedness training.

... The Lithuanian National Union of Students has presented a higher education vision that sees Lithuania reducing the number of higher education institutions and universities by 2030. The students say reductions will be driven by competition in the internal higher education field and the need to improve the quality of studies, which is only possible by consolidating the resources of higher education institutions.

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November 2014

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

## ONGOING

### Through December 13 2nd Annual Lithuanian Alliance of America Art Auction

Featuring works of premiere Lithuanian artists donated by Virginija and Vitalius Sirusas. All proceeds will be used to renovate the Lithuanian Alliance of America building at 307 W 30th Street in New York. View the works and bid for them online through 6 p.m. on December 13 at [www.artatsla.com](http://www.artatsla.com).

### Through December 31 No Home To Go To: The Story of Baltic Displaced Persons 1944-1952

Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, 6500 S. Pulaski Rd., Chicago  
The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., except for Easter Sunday, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.  
Info: [www.balzekasmuseum.org](http://www.balzekasmuseum.org)

## DECEMBER 2014

December 6  
**Lithuanians in Texas Kučios**  
Info: [ven.grant@hughes.net](mailto:ven.grant@hughes.net)

December 6, 6-11 p.m.  
**1st Ever Lithuanian Quizzo**  
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2517 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia  
Hot pizza, cold Lithuanian beer, music, prizes and lots of fun!  
No cover charge.  
Info: [lithuanianmha.org/event/1st-lithuanian-quizzo-a/](http://lithuanianmha.org/event/1st-lithuanian-quizzo-a/)

December 6, 6:30 p.m.  
**Miglė Žaliukaitė Concert**  
St. Anne Church, 1600 Mount Hope Ave., Rochester, N.Y.  
Memorial Concert remembering Danute Liauba featuring Miglė Žaliukaitė (mezzo-soprano) and Anthony Baron (piano). Free.  
Info: [nylithuanian.org/renginiai/695/](http://nylithuanian.org/renginiai/695/)

December 6  
**Baltic Fair**  
Latvian House, 425 Hoffman Ave, San Francisco  
Info: Tomas Janusas 310-993-8912, [info@sflithuanians.com](mailto:info@sflithuanians.com)

December 6-7  
**Advent Silent Retreat**  
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.  
Facilitation in Lithuanian.  
Info: [neringa.org](http://neringa.org)

December 6-7  
**Lithuanian World Center  
Holiday Craft Fair**  
Lithuanian World Center, 14911 127th St., Lemont, Ill.  
Info: [reklaitis@lcenter.org](mailto:reklaitis@lcenter.org)

December 7, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.  
**Orange County Lithuanian  
School Christmas Celebration**  
Woodbury Elementary School, 125 Great Lawn, Irvine, Calif.  
RSVP by Dec. 1: 949-212-6610, [vilmaremeikaite@hotmail.com](mailto:vilmaremeikaite@hotmail.com),

December 7, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
**Kalėdinė Muge/Christmas Fair**  
Church of the Annunciation, 7 Havemeyer St., Brooklyn, N.Y.  
Straw ornaments workshop at 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.  
Info: [PatSidas,SID100@aol.com](mailto:PatSidas,SID100@aol.com)

December 7, 3 p.m.  
**Lietuviškos Kūčios/Christmas  
Eve Party**  
Mission San Luis Rey Parish, 4070 Mission Ave., Oceanside, Calif.

December 13, 1-3 p.m.  
**Amber Roots Kūčios**  
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia  
Bring a meatless dish to share.  
Info: [lithuanianmha.org](http://lithuanianmha.org)

December 13, 5-11 p.m.  
**Lithuanian Christmas Party  
and Baltic Lithuanian School  
Fundraiser**  
Charlotte, N.C.  
Info: [facebook.com/pages/Charlotte-Lithuanians/150697298307817](http://facebook.com/pages/Charlotte-Lithuanians/150697298307817)

December 14, 12-3 p.m.  
**Christmas Eve Kūčios**  
Main Hall, Lithuanian World Center, 14911 127th Street, Lemont, Ill.  
Info: [www.lcenter.org](http://www.lcenter.org)

December 14, 2-6 p.m.  
**Christmas Bazaar**  
Lithuanian Hall, 851-853 Hollins Street, Baltimore  
Info: [Lithuanianhall.com](http://Lithuanianhall.com)

December 21, 1 p.m.  
**San Francisco Lithuanian Community Traditional Christmas**  
Oakwood Athletic Club, 4000 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette Calif.  
Performance by children from the Genys Lithuanian School. Potluck.  
RSVP: [sflithuanians.com/main/2014/11/21/kaledos-lietuviskai/](http://sflithuanians.com/main/2014/11/21/kaledos-lietuviskai/)

December 21, 1 p.m.  
**Chicago Ateitininkai Christmas  
Eve Fellowship**  
Lithuanian Youth Center, 5620 S. Claremont Ave., Chicago  
Info: [odaugirdas@hotmail.com](mailto:odaugirdas@hotmail.com), 630-325-3277

## JANUARY 2015

January 10, 2-6 p.m.  
**Šimtmetis**  
Lithuanian Hall, 851-853 Hollins Street, Baltimore, Md.  
Info: [Lithuanianhall.com](http://Lithuanianhall.com)

January 24-25  
**Winter Šventė/Celebration**  
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.  
Info: [neringa.org](http://neringa.org)

## FEBRUARY 2015

February 1, 12:30 p.m.  
**Child's Gate to Learning Annual  
Update**  
Lithuanian World Center, 14911 127th St., Lemont, 60439, IL, USA  
Meeting conducted in Lithuanian.  
Info: [www.childgate.org](http://www.childgate.org) or [trudaitis@att.net](mailto:trudaitis@att.net)

February 7  
**KC Lithuanian Community  
Poker Night Fundraiser**  
Cedar Creek Swim & Racquet Club, 25775 W. 103rd St., Olathe, Kans.  
Info: [sallyzdannov@gmail.com](mailto:sallyzdannov@gmail.com)

February 21-22  
**No Home To Go To: The Story  
of Baltic Displaced Persons  
1944-1952**  
Chicago Estonian House  
Info: [www.balzekasmuseum.org](http://www.balzekasmuseum.org)

February 28, 6 p.m.-midnight  
**Kaime Virto Aзуolai**  
Lithuanian Hall, 851-853 Hollins Street, Baltimore  
Info: [Lithuanianhall.com](http://Lithuanianhall.com)

## MARCH 2015

March 1  
**Annual Aspen Lithuanian  
Independence Day Celebration**  
Aspen, Colo.  
Suggested hotel: Limelight Hotel in Aspen. Mention you are with the LT Consulate.  
Info: [dmb@aspenconsul.com](mailto:dmb@aspenconsul.com)

March 6-15  
**No Home To Go To: The Story  
of Baltic Displaced Persons  
1944-1952**  
Consulate of the Republic of Lithuania, 44 Coconut Row, #T10, Palm Beach, Fla.  
Info: [www.balzekasmuseum.org](http://www.balzekasmuseum.org)

March 8, 2-4 p.m.  
**Independence Day Celebration**  
Wyandotte County Museum  
Info: [sallyzdannov@gmail.com](mailto:sallyzdannov@gmail.com)  
Info: [neringa.org](http://neringa.org)

March 19-22  
**Women's Weekend**  
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.  
Info: [neringa.org](http://neringa.org)

March 29-April 5  
**SALFASS/LAUNA/ALGS Annual  
Lithuanian Ski Trip**  
Snowbird Ski Resort, Snowbird, Utah  
Reservations: Linda Crouch, [linda@ski.com](mailto:linda@ski.com), 1-800-525-2052, ext. 3329 or 970-925-9500 ext. 3329. Identify yourself as part of the Lithuanian Ski Group trip.  
General info: Ed Mickus at [edmickus1@aol.com](mailto:edmickus1@aol.com) or Dr. Vytas Saulis @ [vsaulis@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vsaulis@sbcglobal.net)

## JULY 2015

July 3-5  
**X North American Lithuanian  
Song Festival**  
University of Illinois at Chicago Pavilion, 525 S. Racine St., Chicago  
Info: [dainusvente.org/en](http://dainusvente.org/en)

## JULY 2016

July 3  
**North American Lithuanian  
Dance Festival**  
Baltimore Arena, Baltimore, Md.  
Info: [lithuanian-american.org](http://lithuanian-american.org)

# bridges

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