

bridges



LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

\$5

December 2014

Your Lithuanian Tour Operator

BALTIC IDEA GENERATOR

kindly invites you to participate in guaranteed departure tour 2015

LITHUANIA – Feel it! See it! Love it!

10 days/ 9 nights

2015: May 8, May 22, June 19, July 3, July 17, August 7,
August 21, September 4, September 11

DAY 1 **Arrival to Vilnius.** Private transfer to the hotel in Vilnius Old Town. Time to relax and adjust to time difference.

DAY 2 Morning tea/coffee with the guide and group members. Today you will explore Vilnius: UNESCO-listed **Old Town** with its main historical and architectural monuments, **St. Peter's & Paul's church, Parliament and KGB museum.** The tour of the mysterious **Vilnius Cathedral catacombs** will reveal the story of Lithuania's Romeo and Juliet – Barбора Radvilaitė and Žygimantas Augustas. Overnight.

DAY 3 You will visit **Trakai** – the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, a majestic **insular castle** of the 15th century, will have a relaxing **sail at Galvė lake** and learn about local ethnic minority – **Karaites.** Recently renovated **Užutrakis** manor will provide a spectacular view to Trakai castle. In **Kernavė** you will climb a five-mound complex. Return to Vilnius for overnight.

DAY 4 You will travel to a unique **open-air country life museum in Rumšiškės** depicting 18th-19th century architecture, traditions, crafts and the way of life of different ethnographic regions. **Kaunas** – second biggest city of Lithuania. See the Castle, wonderful churches, Town Hall square, Sun clock, Perkūnas, Čiurlionis Museum and “the longest bridge in the world.” Overnight.

DAY 5 Along the most picturesque road of Lithuania you will visit **Raudonė** and **Panemunė castles.** **Ventė's Horn** – a unique place at the Curonian Lagoon, one of the most important points for bird concentration in the Northern Europe. Short tour and overnight at **Klaipėda** – the only seaport of Lithuania.

DAY 6 You will take a ferry and travel to the **Curonian Spit** – the pearl of Lithuania. In Juodkrantė you will visit the **weathervane gallery** and climb the authentic **Hill of Witches**, decorated with numerous wooden sculptures based on Lithuanian legends and folk tales. In **Nida** you will see majestic seashore sand dunes, unique wooden architecture, neo-gothic church and old ethnographic cemetery. Trip to Klaipėda for overnight.

DAY 7 **Palanga tour.** You'll visit the Botanic Garden, Birutė's Hill and the Amber Museum, which houses 25,000 pieces of amber. **Kretinga museum and winter garden**, which exhibits the history, traditions and crafts of this part of Lithuania; as well as all-year flourishing plants and nice water cascades. Return to Palanga. Free time to enjoy resort life and beautiful sunset. Overnight.

DAY 8 Drive to Vilnius with en-route stop in the holy site of Catholic pilgrimage – **The Hill of Crosses.** This is an expression of a spontaneous religiousness of people, and is a symbol not of grief and death but of Faith, Love and Sacrifice. From here the Pope blessed the people of Lithuania and Christian Europe. Free afternoon in Vilnius to get some souvenirs and relax.

DAY 9 You will have a chance to see the most interesting sights of **Aukštaitija National Park**, also called the Switzerland of Lithuania, and learn how the Lithuanian speciality – amazing **tree cake or Šakotis** – is made. Try it yourself, taste it and get some for your friends and family. Return to Vilnius. **Farewell drink and snacks.**

DAY 10 Private transfer to the airport. **Departure.**

Tour features: 9 nights in centrally located, well-selected 3-4 star hotels with daily breakfast/transport/round-trip airport transfers/English-speaking guide/ship sail in Galve Lake/entrance tickets/ferry and ecology fees /šakotis-making workshop/farewell drink and snacks/info package/souvenir.

SPECIAL EARLY BOOKER'S PRICE – 1050 EUR/ person

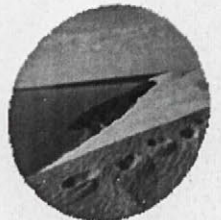
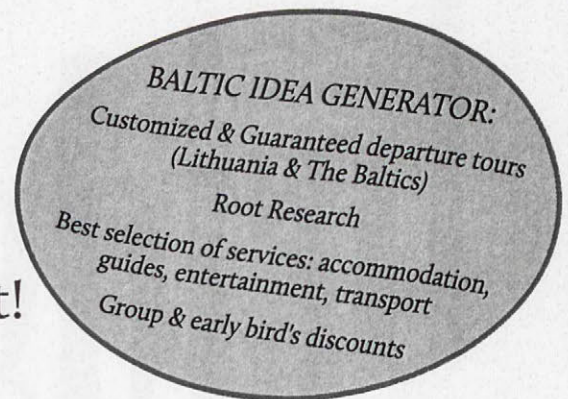
Should be paid until 1st March 2015/ price per minimum 4 people registered.

Regular price: 1250 EUR/ person / Single room supplement 250 EUR

FREE TRAVEL QUOTE, VALUABLE ADVICE and GREAT CARE

Email us: travel@balticidea.com / Call us: 011 370 678 78633

Web: www.balticidea.com



bridges

Vol. 38 No. 10 / December 2014

Bridges is the English-language publication of the
Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.
www.lithuanian-american.org

EDITOR

Teresė Vekteris

ART DIRECTOR

Daniel P. Craig, Jr.

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, FOOD

Jana Sirusaitė Motivans

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, GENEALOGY

Tom Sadauskas

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Aleksandra Vekteris

ADVERTISING & SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

Rimas Gedeika

HOW TO CONTACT BRIDGES

Editorial Office

6125 McCallum Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144
bridges.terese@gmail.com

Subscriber Services and Advertising

78 Mark Twain Drive, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690
gedeikar@aol.com

LAC, INC. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD

43 Anthony Street, New Haven, CT 06515

Phone: 203-415-7776, Fax: 703-773-1257

admin@lithuanian-american.org

All statements and opinions, including product claims, are those of the organization/advertiser making those statements or claims. The publisher does not adopt, or put forth, any such statement or claim as his own, and any such statement or claim does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publisher.

BRIDGES (ISSN: 87508028) is published 10 times per year (Jan/Feb and Jul/Aug combined) by Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. The known office of publication is located at 78 Mark Twain Dr., Hamilton Square, NJ 08690. The editorial office is located at 6125 McCallum Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144. Periodicals postage paid at Chicago, IL and additional locations. Vol. 38, No. 10. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections and changes to LAC, Inc./Bridges, 78 Mark Twain Drive, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690. SUBSCRIPTIONS: For subscription questions or address changes, write to LAC, Inc./Bridges, 78 Mark Twain Drive, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690. Subscription rates are: US: \$30 per year or \$58 for two years.; International: \$55 per year payable in advance in US funds. COPYRIGHT: ©2014 by Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of the publication may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. PRINTING: Printed in Chicago, USA by Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.

contents



4

Fragments of My Life

Part 2 of the memoirs of Jonas Zinkus, translated from the original Lithuanian by Ramunė Zinkutė Cobb



8

The Kids Were Like Normal Kids

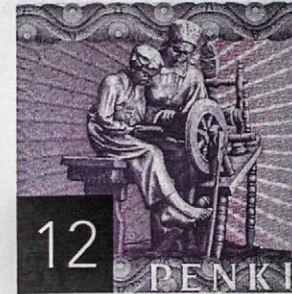
Tales from a summer volunteer opportunity by Monika Satkauskas



10

Pattern, Color and Thread

Documenting the weavings of the diaspora by Aldona Rygelis



12

Farewell to the Litas

The 92-year history of Lithuania's retiring currency by Irena Nakienė-Valys

And more...

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>2 from the editor
 Winter Warmth
 by Teresė Vekteris</p> <p>3 this month in history</p> <p>15 a taste of lithuania
 Meatless Kugelis for Kūčios
 by Jana Sirusaitė Motivans</p> <p>17 our community
 17 St. Peter's at 110
 18 Invitation to youth
 18 Chicago consulate is 90
 19 Saving musical culture
 19 Derse woman of year</p> | <p>20 Dance into Baltimore
 22 Awakening Goodness
 22 Donelaitis event in NY
 22 Philly's 38th Mugė
 22 LRSC sports exhibition</p> <p>23 current events</p> <p>26 sports
 American Professional Football Stars of Lithuanian Descent
 by John E. Domalakes</p> <p>29 calendar</p> |
|--|--|

Front cover: Vintage Christmas cards. Read more on page 2.

Back cover: Lithuania's 2014 holiday-themed postage stamps, with prices in both litai and euros. Artwork by Augustina Gruzdytė, an 18-year-old schoolgirl from Vilnius.

from the editor

Winter Warmth



1942 Christmas card from Lithuania, courtesy of the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in Chicago.

In this beautiful season of giving, as Old Man Winter turns down the temperatures outside, we counter by turning up the warmth in our hearts. It's the time of year that we're reminded that the best gifts of all don't come in a box, but instead come in the form of loved ones gathered together to celebrate the magic of the season. The lighting of a candle to pierce the dark, the singing of a carol in a hushed church, the passing on of a long-cherished tradition—all produce an abundance of warm feelings that could never be bound by a mere container.

As I pass the pen to the leader of our Lithuanian American Community to extend her greetings and to tell us about some of the exciting things coming our way in the new year, I wish you joy in measure to last well beyond the season.

Teresė Vekteris

Teresė Vekteris, Editor

Dear Readers of *Bridges*,

At this wonderful time of the year, when we think often of those we hold dear, I think also of you, because we are all part of the Lithuanian American family. Let our hearts share the wafer of Kūčios together.

2015 will bring our Lithuanian American Community many celebrations, including the 25 anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's Independence and a LAC-sponsored Song Festival in Chicago. LAC will provide a new crop of American college students of Lithuanian heritage with LISS interships in Lithuania. We will elect a new Board of Directors of the Lithuanian American Community, Inc. You will read about it—and much more—in *Bridges*.

Merry Christmas and Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Sigita Šimkuvienė-Rosen
President

Lithuanian American Community

On the cover:

From the archives of the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center, four original serigraphs from the 1950s, designed and hand processed in oil colors by Aleksandras M. Rackus, MD (1893-1965). Rackus was a noted numismatist as well as an artist, collector and editor who used his talents to promote awareness of Lithuania. He came to the United States in 1922 with his father, who was one of the *knygešiai* (book smugglers). A member of the Knights of Lithuania, he was one of the founders of its magazine, *Vytis*, and was its first editor.



December Anniversaries



435 years ago

December 31, 1579

Death of Valerijonas Protasevičius (1504-1579), bishop of Lutsk (1549-1555) and Vilnius (1555-1579), who invited the Jesuits to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and established the Vilnius Jesuit College in 1570 to combat the spread of the reformation. He continued to fund the college, and in 1579 obtained permission from Stephen Bathory, king of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, and Pope Gregory XIII to reorganize the college into Vilnius University, which became a spiritual and cultural center.

280 years ago

December 1, 1734

The army of King Charles XII of Sweden invaded Žemaitija (Samogitia).

245 years ago

December 2, 1769

The southern tower of the Cathedral in Vilnius, built during the cathedral's reconstruction in 1666, collapsed in a storm, killing six people and destroying the vaults of an adjacent chapel.



155 years ago

December 15, 1859

Liudvikas Lazaras Zamenhofas (L.L. Zamenhof, 1859-1917), creator of Esperanto, the world's most successful invented language, was born to Lithuanian Jewish parents in Białystok (in what is now Poland). Zamenhof, who learned nearly a dozen languages over his lifetime, grew up fascinated by the idea of a world without war, and believed that an international common language could promote peaceful coexistence among different people and cultures.

He developed his international language while still in secondary school, but was too young to publish his work. He studied medicine and began his practice as a doctor in 1885 in Veisiejai, Lithuania. He later practiced in Płock and Vienna.

In 1887, he published *International language: Introduction and complete textbook* under the pseudonym "Doktoro Esperanto" (Doctor Hopeful). Esperanto eventually replaced "Lingvo internacia" as the official name for the language.

Zamenhof Street in Kaunas, where his wife was born and where he lived and owned a house, is named after him.

135 years ago

December 29, 1879

Teresė Kubilinskaitė, teacher and social activist (1897-1926), was born in Aleksotas. Kubilinskaitė was one of the founders of Lietuvių Katalikių Moterų Draugija (LKMD, or Lithuanian Catholic Women's Society) in 1908, after the First Women's Congress in Kaunas in 1907, where tensions arose between the more intellectual and liberal women from Vilnius and the local organizers. LKMD created the first Lithuanian women's journal, *Lietuvaitė* (1910-1914) with Kubilinskaitė as editor, though much of the writing was done by priest Povilas Janusevičius under female pseudonyms. The journal was mildly feminist in tone, calling attention to the unequal division of power between women and men and encouraging women to achieve equal rights and economic independence through self-employment.



110 years ago

December 23, 1904

The first issue of *Vilniaus žinios* (*Vilnius News*) was published. It was the first legal Lithuanian-language daily newspaper to appear after the Lithuanian press ban was lifted on May 7, 1904.

80 years ago

December 27, 1934

Birth of Birutė Kalėdienė-Zalagaitytė, the first Lithuanian track and field athlete to set a world record, with a javelin throw of 57 m, 49 cm in 1958. She won an Olympic bronze medal in 1960 and more recently set another world record in the 2008 European Athletics Veterans Games.

50 years ago

December 19, 1964

Olympic and world champion basketball player Arvydas Romas Sabonis was born in Kaunas. Part of "the other dream team" that defeated the Soviet Union in the 1992 Olympics, the hall of famer spent seven seasons with the Portland Trail Blazers.

25 years ago

December 19, 1989

The Lithuanian Communist Party declared itself independent of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, paving the way for reformists to be elected to the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet in 1990.



Fragments of My Life

The memoir of Jonas Zinkus, part 2

Translated from the original Lithuanian by Ramunė Zinkutė Cobb.

Jonas' family in Siberia in the 1950s. Standing, from left to right, are his brother Vytautas, niece Birutė and nephew Kazimieras. Seated, left to right, are his sister-in-law Elena, niece Liucija, mother Mikalina and father Pranas.

War was blazing on the eastern front. The Germans won large areas of Russian land, but were unprepared for the cold of the Russian winter. The Germans had lost many soldiers during the first winter. In order to fill the gaps opening up on the front, the Germans started collecting "volunteers" in the streets, theatres, churches and homes in occupied countries. Finally, all those born in the years 1921-1924 had to register for war service. Back I went to the railway and talked my way into a job. Young men working in the railway, fire brigade and police were exempt from this call-up.

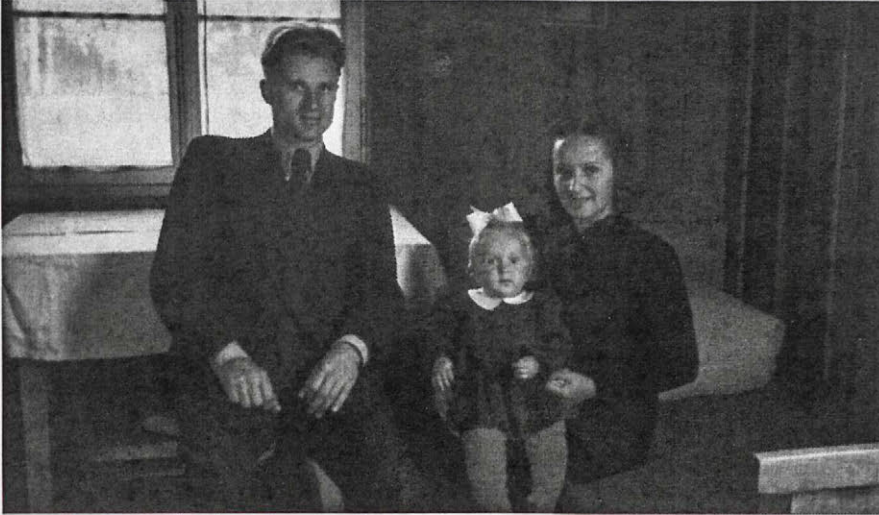
I was sent around the various different departments that were supervised by the Kaunas stationmaster. The long work hours were tiring (12 hours duty, 24 hours off). I wasn't able to sleep during the day

so my health suffered. I transferred into the railway reserve police unit, guarding the wagons in the Kaunas winter port. It was at the end of 1943 that I transferred to railway police duties. My work hours were shorter. The type of work changed too. This involved investigating thefts from the wagons, etc.

As the front drew closer to Lithuania, orders were issued that all railway workers and railway police were to withdraw to Kybartai (near the German border). The only two railway police who volunteered to stay at the Kaunas station were Jonas Ambrazevičius and I. My wife, Marytė, was staying with relatives near Kulautuva (west of Kaunas). Luckily, that very day she had come to Kaunas and was able to let me know where she was staying.

On Wednesday, July 26, 1944, Russian artillery fired upon Kaunas. That same day we were given orders to evacuate Kaunas the next day. The next day; i.e., July 27, we placed our belongings on a raft and headed toward the west on the Nemunas River. My work colleague brought a third Jonas along; he had been with the Kaunas criminal police. We floated westwards with few incidents.

During the weary journey down the Nemunas, we remembered a friend of Marytė's who was of the protestant religion and had been repatriated to Germany a year earlier. She had come to Lithuania without the required permits, had been denounced by her relatives, arrested and deported to Germany. Marytė and I decided we would go to Thuringia, to the city of Suhl, where her



Jonas, Marytė and daughter Ramunė in the immigrant camp in 1949.

friend had lived. After a protracted journey on overcrowded trains we arrived in Suhl station on September 10, 1944. We were amazed to see Marytė's friend walking along the street. We were delighted; perhaps she was pleased too. When she had been returned via the prison system to the factory she had worked at before, she was unable to work. She had developed lung abscesses. We asked Madze for help. She helped us. She took us to the factory and explained in German how we had arrived here. Marytė and I were the first people to come to this factory voluntarily. The workers there had been forced from many occupied countries. The factory management didn't know how to deal with us. Marytė was sent to the training section, distributing tools to trainees, and I was sent to the drafting division. There were incidents in the drafting section when the "brownshirt" supervisor would beat the children for making mistakes in the plans. Other foreigners in this section were a Belgian and a Frenchman. The supervisor was always courteous with us.

In the factory, the conscripted foreigners had to wear different colored patches. We worked at the Gustlof factory. The Belgians wore a black patch with the letter "G," the French yellow with the letter "G," Russians had "OST" and Poles "P." For a long time Marytė and I had no patch. We were constantly being stopped by the factory security. Eventually we were given

white patches (like the Greeks).

The Americans conquered Suhl toward the end of March 1945, its defense was by the Home Guard (volksturm). At first the Germans had to provide the foreigners with food, later this was done by the organization UNRRA [*United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*].

UNRRA was concerned with returning people to their native lands. They came up against resistance from people whose countries were occupied by the Russians. There were incidents where some people were forcibly returned. Later, that organization stopped returning people forcibly. In American-occupied Suhl, now that we weren't working, we met some other Lithuanian families. When the people from western countries (French, Belgian, Dutch) left, with Marytė we moved closer to Lithuanians that had worked in other factories. When the Lithuanians (and people from other Russian-occupied countries) refused to return to their native lands, we were driven by the Americans in three trucks to an estate in Bavaria, to Seligenstadt, a village with a church.

The estate management wanted all adults, men and women, to work, with the children to be taken care of by their invalid daughter. Not everybody agreed with these arrangements. I went to work but was not in agreement that mothers should have to leave their children in someone else's care while they had to

work. The next day, a few of us traveled into Wurzburg (20 km by train) where a Lithuanian camp was being set up in some army barracks. The camp leaders agreed to take in any Lithuanians that were unhappy with the situation at the Seligenstadt estate. The following day we were driven to the Wurzburg DP [*Displaced Persons*] camp in a truck from the estate.

Every day, new Baltic families arrived at the camp. Seeing that the camp was overflowing, three days later a new camp, for Lithuanians only, was opened near the unused Seligenstadt airport. All of the camp management was in Lithuanian hands. The newly established UNRRA was responsible for supplies. From July 30, 1945, I was a camp policeman, mostly having security duty at the camp entrance. When police numbers were reduced, on October 1 I was made responsible for the fuel storage depot, distributing firewood to the residents according to their ration cards. On March 13, 1946, I was elected to the four-person local board. I was the youngest member (there were six boards in all) as the others were either officers in the Lithuanian army or other high-ranking people. I remained a board member until July 31, 1947.

A Lithuanian lady we had never met agreed to sponsor us as immigrants to the USA. However, we had already chosen (April 19, 1949) to emigrate to Australia, about which we knew very little. When we were in the staging camp amongst the people we knew who were going to go to Australia, due to the large number of people, all those whose surnames started with V-Z were held over for a later ship. From the Sweifurt staging camp we were sent by train to Ludwigsburg camp. In the truck we got to meet some people from the other camps, Zakarevičiai, Vasiliauškai and Veliuoniškiai. We chose places in the train car next to the Zakarevičiai. From Sweifurt we travelled by train to Ludwigsburg camp. After a few days (April 25, 1949) we travelled by train across Germany, Austria and Italy to the port of Genoa. From the train, we were all taken to a ship named "Castelbianco"

that sailed out of Genoa that same day, about 9 p.m.

On April 28 we sailed past Corsica and Sardinia, the 29th Sicily, and on the 30th Crete. On May 1, the ship berthed at Port Said in Egypt. The following day the ship sailed into the Red Sea. On May 6 the ship berthed in the port of Aden. Many Arabs appeared in small boats to offer their goods, but since we had little money we didn't rush to buy. On May 12 the ship stopped in the port of Columbo in Ceylon [now Sri Lanka]. Shipboard life quickly became boring. Marytė was sick almost all the time so I had to take care of Ramunė a lot of the time. On May 14 we crossed the Equator, and the next day, everyone who had crossed the Equator for the first time was dunked in the ship's swimming pool.

After a month's sailing, the ship docked in Sydney Harbour (Pyrmont 13). Some Lithuanians that had arrived previously met the ship. They cheered us up, saying life was possible here. That evening we disembarked and were transferred to a train that left about 10:30 p.m. to the Bathurst camp that was more than 130 km to the west. About 7 a.m. we were transferred to the Bathurst migrant camp and housed in barracks that had been built for soldiers during the war.

Many of the camp staff were Europeans who had emigrated to Australia before us. The last days of May were the beginning of winter in Australia. We were very cold; we had expected Australia to be warmer. On May 30, we were tested and sent to English language classes. I was sent to J-6 class, and Marytė to M-14. My teacher was an Estonian who had emigrated to Australia many years before. Four days later, the families were sent by bus to Greta family camp, which was about 130 km north. That camp had been built for soldiers, on the outskirts of Greta village. The camp organizers weren't even established on the site when they transferred our families. There were many complaints. Once our families had left, we men (34 Lithuanians) were housed in Barrack D. The following Sunday, after Mass (June 6) I met the three Kirlytė daughters who had

previously lived in Seligenstadt camp. On June 16, after being interviewed in Bathurst town, I was given a job in the railways, in the goods yard at Darling Harbour in Sydney. At that time, the coal miners went out on strike for higher pay. At that time, the train engines were coal fired, so all the trains stopped. The railways had no work for any new employees. After some time, the Australian government sent the army into the coal mines, paying them coal miners' wages. The strike was broken. It took a long time for the NSW Railways to recover. We were without work for three months. At the camp we were given meals and a few shillings for spending money.

In the early days of July, another bus convoy was leaving to take families to the Greta family migrant camp. We missed our families, so sneaked onto the buses and were able to spend July 3 and 4 with our families. We came back to camp on the same buses on July 4. On July 21 we were transferred to the newly built camp for workers at Walgrove. We stayed there until the 29th. That day we were transferred to Chullora camp for railway workers that was on the outskirts of Sydney. The following day our supervisor led us to Darling Harbour goods yard, in the heart of Sydney. Now that we were working, every two weeks we were given a free railway ticket so we could visit our families.

I started working in the goods yard. Goods were unloaded from the wagons and transferred to a storehouse using trolleys; they were eventually collected from there by the consignee. While working there I met another Lithuanian who had arrived before me. I met Mykolas Nakutis, who was the brother of Mrs.

Sirusienė, my teacher from Kėdainiai. We worked closely together at the goods yard.

Every new arrival's discussion centered around buying a block of land and re-establishing life. In September 1949 I put a deposit on a building block in the suburb of Picnic Point. I had no money, but Nakutis promised to lend me money. I paid back the money for the land, and in 1950 Bankstown council approved my building plans. It took a long time to clear the block of the trees growing there and to build the foundations for a workshop (not the house) next to the site for the house. I bought the prepared framing for the workshop from a construction company and having built but not internally finished the workshop brought Marytė and Ramunė from the Greta camp home on December 28, 1950. The nearest railway station was Panania two kilometers away, from which I traveled to work.



Jonas Zinkus was active in Lithuanian Scouts all his life. This photo was taken in 1969.

Once I arrived in the city by train, I had a 10-minute walk to work in Darling Harbour station.

When the station supervisors noticed I was learning English, they gave me the duty of recording in the goods ledger where the package was sent from, consignee's name and address. Later, I would transfer wool and furs shipped from the interior of the country to the truck drivers. Afterwards, when my English had improved, I would accompany the truck drivers to various businesses in the suburbs. The truck driver would load the goods, and I was responsible for reconciling their number. On April 10, 1953, my second daughter, Rasa, was born.

One day while on the train to work I saw an advertisement in the newspaper that there were vacancies for telephone technical assistants at telephone exchanges. A four-week training period was offered. I was interested. After taking the entrance examination and a health screening I was accepted into the telephone technical assistant training course. Having finished the course I successfully passed the examination with close to 100 points.

I was posted to a location further from home than Darling Harbour. However, for work travel beyond the central telephone exchange, I was paid for distance and time. For the next two years, after work I attended Sydney Technical College, and on completing the course I passed the examination to qualify as a telephone technician. Later, due to a shortage of experienced personnel I was promoted to senior telephone technician, with a corresponding pay increase. For more than 30 years I worked in various telephone centers in Sydney. When I turned 65 I retired.

In addition to my daily work, I spent many hours working for Lithuanian organizations. The Lithuanian Scouts commenced while I was still in Seligenstadt in 1945. At first I was a troop leader, later leader of the adult Rover Scouts. On the February 15, 1948, the first scout "Židinys" was established based on a decision taken by the scout management in Germany. [*Židinys, in the sense of hearth*



Jonas celebrating his 70th birthday and name day at the Lithuanian House in Bankstown, Sydney, Australia.

and home, was an organization for older, experienced scouts to act as a resource and support for active scouts.]

In 1958 I rejoined the scout Židinys group that was working in Sydney, and was voted in as overseer. In 1964 I took on leadership of the Sydney scouts troop "Aušra" and two years later was appointed the representative for world Lithuanian Boy Scouts Association (U.S.-based) in Australia. I was the leader of 18 of the 20 excursions arranged by Židinys over the years.

In 1948 I was awarded the "Už Nuopelnus" (Achievement) scouting award, later the "Lelijos" (Lily) and "Padėkos" (Gratitude) awards. In 1996 I was given the highest award in Lithuanian Scouting, the "Gelžinio Vilko" (Iron Wolf) award. The Scouting leadership in the U.S. promoted me to deputy commissioner rank in 1964, commissioner in 1969 and senior commissioner in 1986.

In my activities for the Australian Lithuanian community, I was elected to the Sydney Regional Council in 1975, 1987, 1994-1999. My responsibilities were in communications. I was elected to the Australian Lithuanian National Council for two-year terms in 1961, 1989 and 1997. When the bi-annual Australian Lithuanian Days were being organized in

Sydney I was invited to join the organizing committee as publicity officer. I was approved as a "Justice of the Peace" by the NSW justice department, authorized to notarize signatures on documents.

In 1976 [sic, actually 1996] Marytė became ill. Our medical practitioner sent her to an internal medicine specialist who diagnosed cancer of the colon. She underwent surgery and things looked good. A year later she became ill again. The cancer had spread. In 1997, Marytė prepared Kučios for the family but was too ill to join us at the table. In January 1998, Marytė was admitted to Liverpool hospital where her life flickered out. Ramunė and Rasa sat by her bedside, and I would spell them in the evening for the night. On January 24, 1998, Marytė's life extinguished, with me and a nurse by her bedside.

Postscript: Jonas lived for another 15 years after Marytė's death. He remained active in the Lithuanian community, in Lithuanian Scouts, and continued to support other Lithuanians in need until ill health caused him to withdraw from outside activities at the age of 89. Jonas died in 2013 at age 91, and will be remembered as a good husband, father, grandfather, friend and neighbor, a loyal Lithuanian and lifelong Scout.

The Kids Were Like Normal Kids

Taking advantage of a summer volunteer opportunity in Lithuania

By Monika Satkauskas



Children and staff from Svajonė, the Caritas Children's and Teen's Day Center in Varėna, on an outing to pick berries. Monika is holding the girl in pink on her lap.

Planning summers is an ordeal. My family likes to piece them together so well that they fit like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. If your faculty led trip to Spain ends



One of the Day Center students drawing.

June 7, then why don't you fly to Lithuania to be with your Baba (my grandma)? Then, after a little more thought, I can go to Lithuania and do more. Would it be an internship? Volunteer opportunity? Employment? In high school, some of my Lithuanian-American friends volunteered at Children's Centers through Vaiko Vartai į Moklą (Child's Gate to Learning). Their constant storytelling about their experience when they got back made me regret that I wasn't able to do it in previous years. Even though I was already a college student, I enquired if it was possible for me to join the group this year. The centers were so excited with the participation last year, they were fine with anyone who was ready to go.

With the limited amount of people going this year, I was going to Varėna "Caritas" Children's and Teen's Day Center, "Svajonė," alone. To prepare for our experience, we had a training session about kids from low-income, high-risk families. We were given scenarios that involved lying, stealing, fighting and other rough behaviors. These descrip-

tions reminded me of the students that went to my own rural high school. I felt both nervous and calm after this meeting about the interactions with the kids.

After a few months of school, summer finally began and I got to Lithuania. My relatives were overjoyed to see me when they picked me up at the Vilnius airport. With them, I considered Lithuania home. When I had to go to Varėna, I was reluctant to board the train alone. The two-hour commute from Vilnius through beautiful forests didn't make me feel any less jittery. However, even though I had never seen my supervisors before, I spotted them right away. Dalija's wide smile and Valerija's eager face at the station just made me comfortable instantly. Within moments, I could feel their warmth and openness. They fussed over me almost more than my relatives (we all know Baba fusses the most when it comes to grand-kids). They were fine sleeping in the center with me if I ever got scared or lonely. That same evening, Dalija introduced me to Žilvinas and Deivydas, the oldest boys at the center, to show me around the town for a bit. Everyone was so eager to meet me.

I spent the next day with the younger children. Rima, the first one there, came before 12 so she gave me a little tour of the room and the grounds. She was very crafty, so she showed me how to make wire beaded trees. Other kids started coming in and they were a little shy at first, but after a couple of rounds of Uno, we were talking about everything. They stayed until 4 p.m., but I didn't stop being with the kids; Žilvinas and Deivydas came to hang out more. We probably walked a couple of miles each day around town.

There became a steady rhythm after the first week. At 10 a.m. the children between the ages of 7 and 14 came on Tuesday through Thursday, and at 1 p.m. the kids between 12 and 18 came on Thursday and Friday. We played board games, did many handicrafts, dealt Monopoly Deal and routinely played Uno. After spending many hours with them and after the center was closed, we would go to the lake, take pictures, play football and,



Some of the after-school centers that are supported by Child's Gate to Learning also operate in the summer, like the one in Varėna where Monika (standing, left) volunteered.

once the FIFA World Cup started, watch the football games together. We had three major excursions. One field trip was to Marcinkonys to learn about Dzūkija, a region of Lithuania, and to make traditional beeswax candles. Another was to Merkinė where we could see how a craftsman made distinctive black clay pots. The final trip was to the Vilnius Stables.

Those four weeks impacted me. I didn't feel like I was working strenuously; I was playing with children all day long. I realized that all people just wanted someone to listen to them. It makes people's days if you remember the little things they've mentioned before. Sitting in front of a laptop and watching the Portugal vs. USA game in Polish together is enough to make someone feel appreciated. I had a moment when I was Skyping my mom and sister late one night. They asked me how I was doing with the children. I described how I expected them to act with the teachers at my school back home. To be honest? They were more respectful than a good amount of children I knew. The kids were like normal kids. They wanted to play with each other. They got bored at home. They liked talking with their friends. And that hit me while I was on the line with my mom and sister. Halfway through my story I started to cry and couldn't get any words to come out. It struck me that those children are no different from you or me.

Did I make an impact on them? I hope so. Did they make an impact on me? Definitely. Will I go back? I see it in the future. Even if it isn't to that same children's center or to Lithuania, I will go back to serve.

Monika Satkauskas grew up in Kewanee, Illinois, and is now a student at Creighton University.

Child's Gate to Learning

Since 2000, more than 50 Lithuanian-speaking high school upperclassmen and university students from the U.S. have spent part of their summer vacations volunteering in Lithuania. They have worked at some of the Child's Gate to Learning-supported after-school centers that work with youths and children from at-risk families. A number of the centers also operate in the summer. The organization, which supports 11 centers attended by more than 300 children and youths, helps match the Lithuanian-American volunteers with centers that can host them in the early summer, and helps prepare them for their work with at-risk youth and children. Volunteers' families financially support them by paying their travel and related expenses. More information about Child's Gate to Learning can be found on the non-profit organization's website at www.childgate.org or Facebook page, [tinyurl.com/ocje5ek](https://www.facebook.com/tinyurl.com/ocje5ek).



Monika (center) with some of the older students on a field trip.

Pattern, Color and Thread

Documenting the complexity, sophistication and beauty of weavings of the diaspora

By Aldona Rygelis



Above: Aldona Rygelis photographs an apron during a recent visit to Philadelphia. Opposite page, top left, project director Aldona Rygelis (center) with "assistants" Danutė Surdenienė (left) and Danutė Gedeika (right). Opposite page, clockwise from top right, a blouse, skirt and apron woven in the U.S. to be worn as part of a Lithuanian folk costume. Photos: Rimas Gedeika

Lithuanian weavers in the diaspora played a very important role in keeping the culture of Lithuania alive and vibrant so far away from our homeland. How many of us remember going to endless rehearsals for folk dance concerts? And then would come that magical moment, the day of the performance, always marked first by putting on this wonderful, elaborately, colorfully woven Lithuanian costume. As an audience member, the beauty and complexity of the exquisite sea of color would bring tears to one's eyes, and love to one's heart of this beautiful culture that is our own. All this stimulated and supported and nourished by the work of thousands of hours of thinking and weaving by the hands, minds and hearts of, truly, a handful of amazingly creative and prolific weavers.

Many of the weavers who have woven costumes for the Lithuanian diaspora in the last 73 years have died. Among them all, they have woven thousands of costumes. However, there is no cohesive documentation of this massive work. As we all know, clothing does not last forever. Soon, not only will all of our weavers be gone, but the weavings will also go the way of all clothing.

The Lithuanian Folk Arts Institute, founded in 1977 by Anastazija and Antanas Tamošaitis, with branches in the United States and Canada, has begun a project to create a photo archive of Lithuanian folk costumes woven in the diaspora. Our goal in creating this project is to create a comprehensive, high-quality photo archive that will be loaded onto the LTFAI website (currently being built). That will aggregate into one place a massive, detailed, visual documentation of the work of these weavers, and the historical direction of Lithuanian weaving in Lithuanian communities outside the borders of Lithuania. In addition to being a historical documentation, it will be a resource for studying Lithuanian weaving in all its complexity, sophistication and beauty.

The first photo shoots have been started in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Toronto and Mississauga, Ontario. Each costume is photographed in great detail: each piece separately and its patterns in close-up, so the pattern, colors of each individual thread and the thread count can be seen. This kind of thorough photographic documentation allows for very sophisticated study and comprehension of Lithuanian weaving, making such an archive invaluable for someone wanting to study the direction of Lithuanian folk weaving in the diaspora, and for someone wanting to weave.

If anyone has a costume they would like photographed, please contact Aldona Rygelis, the project director, at aldona@rygelis.net. We will be arranging photo shoots in various cities in the U.S. and Canada.





Editor's note: In this article, we will use the Lithuanian singular, "litas," and plural, "litai," when referring to the currency.

Without a national currency, there is no national state. That is why the introduction of the litas was so important in Lithuania. On October 2, 2014, we celebrated the 92nd anniversary of our currency, the litas, right after the 22nd anniversary of the temporary "talonas" (temporary money) on October 1. Even the name of the litas comes from the name of our state, Lithuania. On the back of the Lithuanian coin is the Vytis, demonstrating our nationhood for 600 years.

The origin of our national currency goes back to the days of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Lietuvos Didžioji Kunigaikštystė, or LDK). The first coins of the LDK were of silver alloy in the form of half-round sticks, used in the 13th-14th centuries. Their beginning is linked with the Lithuania of King Mindaugas. The silver alloys were fixed amounts, weighing around 100 grams. They were used to settle wages and large transactions such as ransoming captives or buying luxury goods.

During the time of Grand Duke Jogaila, LDK money was first forged, about 1386-1387. It is thought that the money took the form of coins with a crowned portrait on the front and on the other side a four-footed beast, probably a lion. But there is another theory that the first coins had a lion and an eagle. They are linked to the proclamation of Jogaila as king of Poland. Lithuanian coins continued to be forged until the reforms of Stephen Bathory, who was elected King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania in 1576.

In 1914, World War I began, and by August 1915 Lithuania was

occupied by Germany. In September 1915, our country saw the emergence of two monetary units—the czarist ruble and the German mark. At that time, the currencies were independent of each other. Germany wanted to use its monetary mechanism for its own purposes, so with a declaration on November 11, 1915, it legalized the circulation of the mark and proclaimed its rate of exchange alongside the ruble.

The price of goods in rubles was lower than in marks, so the people trusted in the ruble and thus valued it higher. On April 17, 1916, the Rytų skolinamoji kasa (Eastern Credit Bank) was founded, with its headquarters in Poznan, Poland. The bank printed currency for circulation in Lithuania called the eastern ruble, or "ostruble," to assure Lithuanian citizens that they were equal to the Russian ruble. With a declaration on April 27, the exchange rate of the new ruble was set. The German occupiers collected gold coins from the citizens to settle accounts for goods: sugar and salt were paid with gold, for vodka – half the price in gold. In this way, the sum of 2.2 million gold marks in the form of gold rubles was taken from Lithuania to Germany. In Lithuania there were three forms of wages circulating: ostrubles (mandatory means of payment), Russian rubles and German marks. The people considered the Russian rubles to be the best, and the "ostus," Eastern rubles, to be the worst. In October 1916, the 1, 2 and 3 kopeck coins were issued, and in 1917, the paper 20 "ost" kopeck bills. On May 30, 1917, the German Darlehnskasse (savings bank) headquarters moved to Kaunas and began to exchange Eastern rubles for marks at the rate of 1:2; but the czarist ruble exchange still remained, and in May of 1917 the ruble was worth 2.43 marks. The rise of the exchange

rate of the czarist ruble increased its demand and weakened the position of the German money. Until 1922, Lithuanian citizens used German mark (auksinas, or golden) and pfennig (skatikai, or penny). On July 24, 1917, the use of czarist rubles to settle accounts was forbidden. Money issued by the Russian government and Kerensky administration appeared in Lithuania, but the Germans immediately banned their use. The value of the Russian ruble fell. On April 4, 1918, ostmarks were issued and exchanged for marks. The ostmark and ostruble endured until December 31, 1922. Germany gave Lithuania's government a loan of 100 million marks. The agreement was signed by then-independent Lithuania's president, Antanas Smetona, and finance minister Martinus Yčas. The agreement juridically legalized the "ost" money as the rightful means of payment in Lithuania.

By the post-WW I peace agreement of July 12, 1920, Soviet Russia was obliged to give independent Lithuania 3 million gold rubles as compensation for national treasure taken to Russia, although 25 million had been hoped for. The gold was brought to Vilnius on October 8, 1920. The ruble disappeared from circulation only in autumn of 1921. When the litas was introduced in 1922, rubles were not exchanged for litai.

As Lithuania's political and economic situation became stronger, it was decided in the summer of 1922 to create our own monetary system. The national currency had to be based on gold, with the creation of a gold fund.

The sudden devaluation of the "auksinas" (German mark) increased Lithuania's losses. It was decided to issue temporary bills. That was done by Berlin's Otto Elsner press and dated September 10, 1922. In September the temporary banknotes were brought to Kaunas. The litas appeared on October 2, 1922. The initial exchange of the auksinas to the litas was 175/litas. As the exchange rate of the mark fell, the exchange of the auksinas to the litas increased. The litas had a hard time penetrating the Lithuanian consciousness—the only trusted means of saving were the dollar and gold. On November 3, 1922, an order was sent to banks to pay foreign remittances only in litai, price hikes were forbidden, and wages paid only in litai.

There were arguments in the Lithuanian Constituent Parliament over the naming of the currency—dollar, lietas, litas, lyra, vytis and others. Litas and centas were chosen. The first litas banknotes were designed by the famous inter-war Lithuanian artist Adomas Varnas (1879-1979), who also chaired the commission overseeing the printing of the money. Later banknotes issued were designed by artists A. Žmuidžinavičius, A. Galdikas and V. Jomantas. Lithuanian banknotes, especially the bigger bills, are of a high artistic quality. On February 16, 1938, issues of 10-litai banknotes, with A. Smetona's portrait, printed by the English firm Brandbury, Wilkinson and Co., Ltd, were not circulated.

On June 20, 1924, the Seimas (Parliament) accepted the coinage statute. This statute gave the Government treasury the right to mint and circulate metal coins. The coins were minted at

Evolution of the Litas Banknote



1922: One of the very first litas banknotes.



1938: Bills with president Antanas Smetona's likeness were never circulated.



1991: The first bills printed after re-establishment of independence notoriously lacked security features.



2001: Modern banknote, in circulation through December 31, 2014.



1936 coin featuring a portrait of Grand Duke Vytautas.

England's Royal Mint and the English firm King's Norton Metal Works. In 1925 the coins appeared in circulation. Coins issued in 1936-1938 were minted in Kaunas. The author of the coins was sculptor J. Zikaras.

On February 14, 1931, the Bank of Lithuania (Lietuvos Bankas) introduced the gold standard—the most widespread monetary system in the world. Those who had no less than 20,000 litai could exchange their banknotes for a gold brick (3 kg.) at the Bank of Lithuania headquarters. Incidentally, the litas was the fifth world currency, having survived the 1929-1932 world economic crisis.

On June 15, 1940, the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania and by November 23 the ruble was issued into circulation beside the litas. On March 26, 1941, the litas exchange ended and the only money in circulation were the ruble and the "cervoncas," which was worth 10 rubles. After the annexation of Lithuania on June 15, 1940, the Bank of Lithuania was converted into the Soviet Union State Bank's Lithuanian republic office, and from March 25, 1940, the circulation of the litas was forbidden; moreover, from April 1-30 all the litas banknotes held in storage were burned in the former Bank of Lithuania headquarters furnace.

With the restoration of Independence in 1990, the litas did not return immediately into circulation. However, its return was already prepared earlier: at the end of 1989 a competition for designs for the litas and centas was announced. Many Lithuanian artists participated. Australian monetary production specialist Kestutis Lynikas submitted sketches by Australian artists. The current litas banknote and coin creators are the artists Giedrius Jonaitis, Justas Tolvaisis, Rimvydas Bart-

kus, Rytis Valantinas, Raimundas Miknevičius, Petras Garška, Antanas Žukauskas.

The agreement to print the litas was prepared by Kazimiera Prunskienė, and signed by Vytautas Landsbergis. R. Ozolas was tasked with finding the means to print the first banknotes. It was complicated, but achieved. The path of the litas was set.

With the March 1, 1990, establishment of the Bank of Lithuania and the March 11, 1990, restoration of Independence, more active efforts were made for the introduction of our own money. At the state commission conference it was decided to print the litas at the U.S. firm U.S. Banknote Corporation. The first printed litai arrived in Lithuania in October 1991. With the complicated economic situation, the Bank of Lithuania, seeking to protect Lithuanian goods from the devaluating ruble, on May 1, 1992, issued into circulation general "talonas," which was used alongside the ruble in acquiring high-demand manufactured goods. One ruble was equal to one talonas. On September 16, 1992, the litas committee decided that on October 1 the temporary talonas would be introduced in the Republic of Lithuania and the ruble would be removed from circulation. The lawful means of payment in Lithuania became the talonas—the national monetary unit. Its design was created by artists G. Jonaitis, R. Miknevičius, J. Tolvaisis and R. Valantinas. By the June 14, 1993, decision of the litas committee, litai and centai were issued into circulation. After a break of more than 50 years, the litas had returned. All the nominal litas banknotes were printed by the U.S. firm U.S. Banknote Corporation, the English firm Thomas De La Rue and Company, Ltd., and the German company Giesecke & Devrient.

And so, Lithuania, having lived its 1,000 years, having its own currency that represented our nation, our statehood and cultural level, is now parting with it, seemingly forever. Today, in comparing the litas with other state banknotes and coins, not only does it not defer to another, but often it surpasses them in its artistry, appropriate symbolic choices and moderate use of ornament. The litas—our former national currency—will again lay on museum shelves. It is not surprising that nowadays large 1924 banknotes are numismatic rarities, among which was a 1000-litai banknote given by U.S. Lithuanians to the historical museum in Trakai. Going to Trakai Island castle, among its exhibits we will be able to admire not only this gifted banknote but also the present replaced ones—for the museum saves exceptional and rare examples, reflections of the period of independent Lithuania.

Despite the change to the euro, the litas will always remind us of the pride of our restored nation.

Irena Nakienė-Valys is a member of the Lithuanian World Community, member of the XX Board of Directors of the Lithuanian-American Community (LAC) and LAC Eastern Connecticut Chapter Community Chair.

Meatless Kugelis for Kūčios

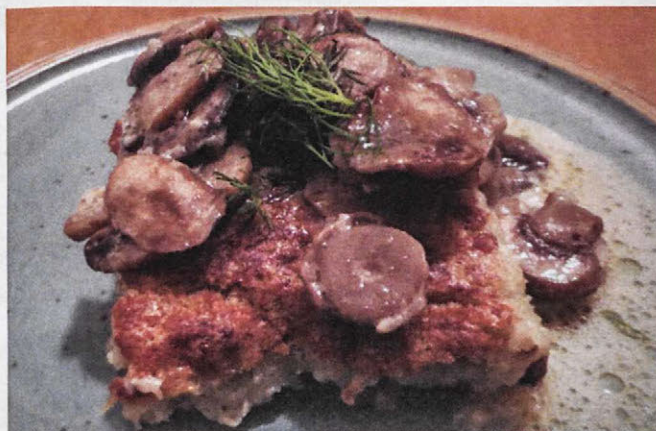
By Jana Sirusaitė Motivans, Bridges food editor



Kūčios (Christmas Eve) is my favorite time of the year. It is an opportunity for our entire extended family to gather and celebrate together and to honor our Lithuanian heritage with a traditional meal. It is very comforting to know that Lithuanians all over the world and those in the homeland all celebrate in the same way. It is the most important time of the year to remember our connection to Lithuania and our traditions.

Kūčios begins with a prayer and the sharing of plotkelės (Christmas wafer, also called kalėdaitis, paplotėlis, plokštainėlis or Dievo pyragai). After everyone has exchanged greetings and broken bread together, the traditional meal follows. It consists of 12 dishes (symbolizing the 12 Apostles), all of which must be meatless. In Catholic tradition, Christmas Eve was a day of fast, like Fridays during Lent. Just as Fridays became known as "fish Fridays," so did Kūčios become a fish day.

Dinner usually is served in two courses, the first course consisting of cold dishes (photo at top), followed by a hot dish for the second course. In our family, the cold course includes herring (of course!), smoked salmon on Lithuanian bread, balta mišrainė (mixed vegetable salad), stuffed eggs (*Bridges* December 2013), deviled eggs, beet salad and fish in tomato sauce with onions. Sometimes we add another vegetable or a salad but we try to keep it traditional and, of course, meatless.



The hot dish follows. In our family we serve kugelis (above), made with dried mushrooms in place of the usual bacon, and served with a creamy mushroom sauce. Delicious!

After our Kūčios dinner, we exchange gifts and enjoy our dessert of šližikai (aka kūčiukai, Christmas Eve biscuits, see *Bridges* November 2013), kisielius (cranberry pudding) and Napoleonas (a very rich torte). The celebration of Christmas Eve continues with Bernelių mišias (Shepherds' mass or Midnight mass).

I wish you and your family a joyful celebration. Linksmų Kalėdų! Merry Christmas!

a taste of lithuania

Kugelis With Dried Mushrooms

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ounce dried baravykai (porcini mushrooms)
- 5 pounds potatoes (Idaho or russet potatoes are best)
- 2 large onions
- 6 eggs
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 400°.
2. Soak the dried mushrooms in 1 cup of boiling water for 30 minutes while you prepare the potatoes.
3. In a large bowl, mix the eggs, oil, flour, salt and pepper.



4. Coarsely grate the potatoes and onion by hand using a box grater or with a food processor.



5. Add the grated potatoes and onions to the egg/flour mixture in the large bowl.
6. Strain the soaking dried mushrooms, and chop the softened mushrooms. Add to the mixture in the bowl. Mix everything thoroughly until smooth.



7. Pour into a greased 9x13 baking dish.



8. Bake uncovered for one hour or until golden brown on top and a knife inserted in the middle comes out clean.



Creamy Mushroom Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped (about 1 cup)
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 pound mushrooms
- 1/2 cup cream (or evaporated milk)
- pinch of nutmeg
- fresh dill
- salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION

1. Melt 3 tablespoons butter with 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Add onion, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and lightly golden.
3. Add garlic and cook for one minute.
4. Add remaining 3 tablespoons butter and remaining 1 tablespoon oil, and mushrooms.
5. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mushrooms are lightly golden and cooked through.
6. Add cream and nutmeg; stir in chopped dill. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with kugelis.

Saint Peter Lithuanian Parish in South Boston Celebrates 110th Anniversary



Current pastor Stephen Žukas and Pastor Emeritus Monsignor Kontautas blessing the newly restored Hill of Crosses at St. Peter's in South Boston.

St. Peter Lithuanian Parish in South Boston, Mass., was feverishly preparing to celebrate its 100th anniversary in June 2004. Plans for the Jubilee Mass and an anniversary banquet at an iconic Boston seafood restaurant overlooking Boston Harbor were made. Almost 500 parishioners had reserved their spots for the celebration.

Three weeks before the much-anticipated celebration, in May 2004, the parish received the devastating word that it would be closed under the onerous Archdiocesan plan to close parishes in response to the shortage of priests in the archdiocese.

Needless to say, parishioners and Lithuanians from across New England were inconsolable and outraged that the last remaining Lithuanian parish in New England with a Lithuanian-speaking pastor would be closed.

Parishioners banded together, forming the Friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish to combat the proposed closing. Funds were raised to wage the battle that would ensue. Demonstrations took place, legal counsel was sought, letters were written and a time capsule in the church's cornerstone was investigated, all



Father Žukas and some of the workers from the Friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish place the finishing touches on the Hill of Crosses the day before the rededication. From left, Gloria Adomkaitis, Algis Adomkaitis, Vytautas Dilba, Fr. Žukas, Gintaras Čepas and Wanda Griganavičius Kiely.

in an effort to keep the parish alive. Parishioners established their own Hill of Crosses as a means to protest the closing of the parish, just as our ancestors protested communism by building and rebuilding the Hill of Crosses in Šiauliai, Lithuania. Crosses were placed in front of the church as symbols of resistance.

Fast forward to 2014—St. Peter Lithuanian Parish celebrated its 110th anniversary in late September and the Friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish rededicated and rejuvenated the Hill of Crosses. Parishioners and Lithuanians from all six New England states rejoice and are grateful that the beautiful church built by the first wave of Lithuanian immigrants in 1904 remains open to serve the spiritual and cultural needs of the Lithuanian community. Today, our Hill of Crosses continues to serve as a vibrant reminder to the community of the determination to save a part of our heritage in the face of opposition.

Saint Peter Lithuanian Parish will survive as long as the Lithuanian community values it as a treasure. The parish welcomes the newest wave of immigrants to join its ranks and to continue the traditions valued by Lithuanian parishes everywhere in the diaspora. Anyone interested in joining the parish may contact Pastor Stephen Žukas by phone at 617-268-0353 or via email at klebonas@me.com.

Submitted by Gloria Adomkaitis, chairperson, Friends of St. Peter Lithuanian Parish.

our community

LYA Invites Young People to Participate



Lithuanian Youth Association members in Los Angeles.

The United States Lithuanian Youth Association (US LYA) and the Lithuanian American Community (LAC) are working to bring the energy of youth into the work of local chapters. To encourage active youth participation and leadership, we seek to learn what interests youth and what kinds of activities would draw them in to community events.

The US LYA is a chapter of the World Lithuanian Youth Association (WLYA), which brings together young people ages 16 to 35 to international events, facilitates their cultural activities in their home countries, and acts as a medium for information exchange regarding events, professional development and education. In addition, the WLYA maintains close relationships with Lithuania's youth organizations and governmental institutions. Every three to five years, the WLYA organizes a World Lithuanian Youth Congress—the last one took place in the UK and Lithuania in 2013, and the next Congress is expected to take place in the U.S. A major goal is to strengthen the networks of Lithuanian youth associations around the world.

To learn more about what would engage young Lithuanian Americans, US LYA representative Liepa Boberienė conducted a pilot test survey, which showed that some participants thought that the activities of local chapters were geared toward either socializing and partying among youth, or traditional commemorations for older Lithuanians. Some admitted that there is a lack of interesting cultural events that have meaning for young people.

The new US LYA board—Matas Anužis, Monika Bernotaitė, Liepa Boberienė, Aistis Juška, Alytė Mažeikaitė, Lina Polikaitytė and Vita Reivydaitė—which was elected during the last annual meeting in Los Angeles in March, decided to prepare a longer survey for youth, to better understand how to engage them. We wanted to hear about young people's experiences in the Lithuanian American Community, their relationships with Lithuanian organizations, and their ideas about the goals of US LYA as an organization. We also wanted to learn what motivates (or hinders) youth motivation to participate in Lithuanian activities, what LAC programs would promote greater engagement, and what communications strategies people would prefer to learn more about LAC activities and events.

Lithuanian Americans ages 16-35 were invited to fill out the survey, which closed on December 1, 2014. The US LYA is currently analyzing the results.

Through this process, we aim to rejuvenate local communities' activism while collaborating with young people. We hope that this project will help us understand how to create a more open and accessible environment for young people to join into cultural activities and to strengthen US LYA as an organization. Please feel free to get in touch with us at javljvaldyba@gmail.com.

Submitted by Liepa V. Boberienė, representative of the US Lithuanian Youth Association.

Lithuanian Consulate General in Chicago Celebrates 90 Years

This year, the Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania in Chicago celebrated its 90th year. Established in 1924 by Povilas Žadeikis, who served as first consul in Chicago from 1924-1928, the consulate now serves 28 U.S. states. There are also Lithuanian consulates in New York and Washington, with another expected to open in December 2014 in Los Angeles.

The jubilee years was marked in October at the Lithuanian World Center (LWC) in Lemont, Ill., with Chicago's current Consul General Marius Gudynas, Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkevičius, Lithuania's Foreign Affairs Minister Linas Linkevičius and Lithuanian Culture Minister Šarūnas Birutis in attendance.

The event also marked the opening of a commemorative art exhibition, curated by the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center at the LWC's Lithuanian Museum, about the history of Lithuanian diplomacy, featuring consular documents, press clippings, articles and photographs.

Consulate General of the Republic of Lithuania
211 East Ontario Street, Suite 1500
Chicago, Ill. 60611
312-397-0382
kons.cikaga@urm.lt

A Place to Preserve Our Musical Culture



The Žilevičius-Kreiveno Musicological Archive at the LRSC.

Through the centuries, music has been an integral part of Lithuanian culture. There is ample evidence that Lithuanians bonded by singing and playing instruments in the deep past, and even in the recent struggle for independence, we were said to have had a "singing revolution."

It is difficult to overstate the importance of the Žilevičius-Kreiveno Musicology Archive at the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in Chicago. Besides being the largest and most complete musical archive outside of Lithuania, it also documents the achievements of the diaspora more thoroughly than anywhere else. This, along with the fact that it covers much of the activities that were forbidden during the Soviet Regime in Lithuania, makes it a truly unique and important archive.

The "vargonininkai" or church organists were key figures in

the lives of Lithuanian immigrants in the 19th and 20th centuries. Besides leading the church choirs, they moonlighted at weddings and other social functions, and thus knew all the goings-on in the community. Our founder, Professor Žilevičius, as president of the Vargoninku Association, was thus able to build a foundation for documenting all ethnic activities in this archive, not just musical.

The archive is a treasure trove of musical scores and audio recordings in all formats—many one of a kind—biographies, press clippings, films, photos, books, magazines and instruments. We have preserved for posterity such irreplaceable items as the scores, correspondence and personal effects of composer Vytautas Bacevičius who, though he toiled in relative obscurity during his lifetime, is now recognized as one of the most important Lithuanian composers, on a par with Čiurlionis. Our shelves are replete with a half century of the activities of the Chicago Lithuanian Opera Company, the Dainavos Ansamblis and other venerable Lithuanian musical institutions.

When Sąjūdis leader Vytautas Landsbergis first arrived in America, one of the very first places he was eager to visit was the Žilevičius-Kreiveno Musicology Archive. We are proud of his signature in our guest book. Back then there was much interest and respect for our archive. Today's world events prove that your support for this irreplaceable archive is just as important as ever, perhaps even more so! There is still much work to be done, and future generations will still need access to accurate information. Let's not take it for granted.

Submitted by Vytas Beleska, director of the Musicology Archive at the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center

Derse Named Balzekas Museum Woman of the Year 2014

On December 13, 2014, the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture presented its Woman of the Year 2014 Excellence Award to the Honorable Anne Elizabeth Derse, the Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of Lithuania, 2009-2012, for diplomatic and economic achievements throughout her career and contributions to Lithuania through educational exchange programs. The Award was presented at the Gala Award Dinner in the Amber Ballroom of the Balzekas Museum in Chicago.

Derse, a career Foreign Service Officer with the rank of Minister Counselor, served for more than 30 years with the U.S. Department of State in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. She was U.S. Ambassador to Lithuania 2009-2012 and to Azerbaijan 2006-2009. For achievement throughout her career, she holds a Presidential Meritorious Service Award, both of the State

Department's top economic awards, the Herbert Salzman Award for Excellence in International Economic Performance and the Cordell Hull Award for Senior Economic Achievement, and six Department of State Superior Honor Awards.

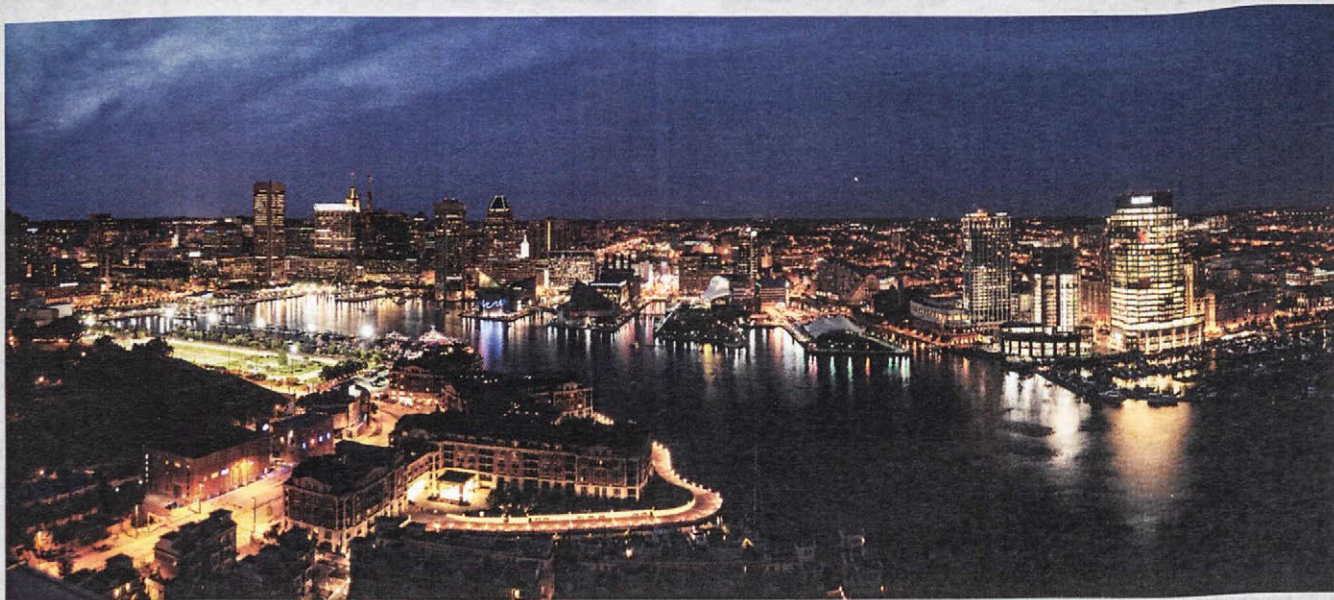
Since retiring from the State Department in 2012, she has been active in support of ExCEL, the high school exchange program she established in Lithuania, and has continued her interest in efforts to address the legacy of the Holocaust.



our community

Why You Should Dance Into Baltimore in 2016

15th North American Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival Comes to "Charm City"



Baltimore skyline at night. Photo: Dean Ray/Visit Baltimore

Imagine 1,600 dancers from around the world in beautiful traditional costumes dancing their hearts out in unison to Lithuanian folk music. In just two years, the city of Baltimore will host the 15th North American Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival. Since 1957, tens of thousands of dancers have gathered in major North American cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Hamilton, Toronto, Los Angeles and Boston to celebrate their Lithuanian heritage through song and dance.

The tradition will continue in 2016 in "Charm City," as Baltimore is known, home to a vibrant Lithuanian-American community.

The Lithuanian connection with Baltimore goes back to 1876, when Lithuanians first arrived in the city. From the 1880s until the 1920s Lithuanians continued to arrive in waves. By 1950, the Baltimore Lithuanian community had risen to 9,000. Most of the Lithuanians had settled close to Baltimore's Inner Harbor, just North of Hollins Street, in what came to be called "Little Lithuania" by most Baltimoreans. They founded three Catholic churches—Saint Wenceslaus in 1872, Saint John the Baptist in 1888 and Saint Alfonsus in 1917, which today is still considered a Lithuanian parish.

In December 1916 and April 1917, the Baltimore Lithuanian community purchased two buildings near Hollins and Parkin Streets and renovated the structures. On February 17, 1921, the grand opening of the new Lithuanian Hall took place. The Lithuanian community celebrated all month long with a grand banquet, produced the play "Piliniečiai," and organized musical and sports events.

According to the 1960 U.S. Census, Lithuanians comprised 44 percent of South Baltimore's residents who were born overseas. In the late 1970s, 2,000 Lithuanians lived in metropolitan Baltimore. By 1991, approximately 20,000 Lithuanians lived in the Baltimore area. Today, the Lithuanian Hall is still the center of dynamic activity where Lithuanians meet to socialize and enjoy cultural events such as concerts, plays and sports events. The Hall is still home to such organizations as the folk dance group Malūnas, the Baltimore Lithuanian Athletic Club and the American Legion Lithuanian Post 154, whose charter members were not only veterans of World War I, but also prior members of the Lithuanian Legion of America.

Geographically, Baltimore is located along the tidal portion of the Patapsco River, an arm of the Chesapeake Bay. The city is the largest in the state of Maryland, and the 26th largest in the U.S. In 2012, Baltimore had approximately 621,342 residents. Baltimore is the second largest seaport in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Baltimore's history goes back to the early 1600s. In 1632, England's King Charles I granted land along the shore of the Chesapeake Bay to Lord Baltimore. In 1706, a port was established and on July 30, 1729, Baltimore was officially founded. In time, Baltimore grew into an important tobacco trade center with Europe, developed a milled flour and grain trade with the West Indies and the Mid-Atlantic region, and evolved into a shipbuilding center.

Baltimore was later an influential actor in the events leading up to the American Revolution. Baltimore's city leaders and

merchants joined the protest against British taxes and refused to trade with England. Baltimore also temporarily became the capital of the United States when the Second Continental Congress fled from Philadelphia and held sessions in Baltimore from December 1776 to February 1777.

Baltimore is also known as the city where America's national anthem was written by Francis Scott Key. Key, a Maryland lawyer, witnessed the Battle of Baltimore on September 13 -14, 1814, during the War of 1812, as the British Navy bombarded Baltimore, and the U.S. forces successfully defended the city.

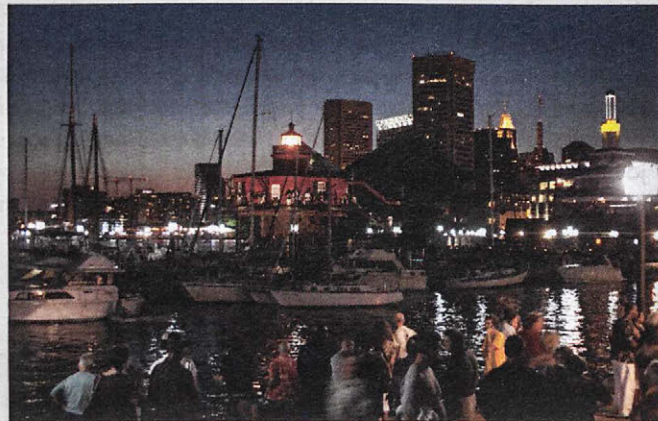
Key was inspired to write a poem entitled "Defense of Fort McHenry," which ironically was put to a 1780 melody by a British composer, and later in 1931 became the U.S. national anthem. Today, the Baltimore area is known for its health and science sectors because of Johns Hopkins Hospital and the Johns Hopkins University. Baltimore also has a thriving tourist sector, and remains a center for shipbuilding.

Describing things to do in Baltimore, *USA Today* wrote that "although there are other excellent places to rest and refuel in smaller neighborhoods throughout the city, the Inner Harbor is a one-stop spot where it can all be done within walking distance. The Harbor and streets within its immediate vicinity are home to shopping, dinner, cruises, nightlife, outdoor entertainment, museums, the National Aquarium and other area attractions." The paper called steamed crabs and crab cakes "probably Baltimore's greatest claim to fame" and said that "the fun of it all is researching amongst the hundreds of restaurants that call Baltimore home and offer some of the finest seafood in the Mid-Atlantic region."

Now, let's go back to the future—July 3, 2016, and the Royal Farms Arena, where 1,600 dancers of Lithuanian heritage from around the world will gather just four city blocks from Baltimore's Inner Harbor to celebrate the 15th North American Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival.

The venue is also just four blocks from the official folk dance festival hotel—the Hilton Baltimore. The other festival hotels, the Lithuanian Hall, St. Alphonsus Lithuanian church, the Baltimore Orioles Camden Yards baseball stadium, Port Discovery Children's Museum and a panoply of restaurants and nightlife activities are all located within walking distance, a short cab ride or a Baltimore Water Taxi cruise away.

The folk dance festival's organizing committee is planning events for Friday and Saturday evenings. Plans for organizing a craft fair to showcase Lithuanian artisans are being put together to be held right next to the Hilton Baltimore. Banquets featuring unique themes and live music for youth and adults will take place at the Hilton Baltimore Sunday evening after the main folk dance festival event.



Baltimore's Inner Harbor nightlife activity. Photo: Visit Baltimore

If that is not enough, after the weekend's festivities, you can visit Washington, D.C., which is just some 40 miles away—about 45 minutes to an hour by car or Amtrak train from Baltimore. Once you're there you won't want to miss visiting the Lithuanian Embassy, the Washington Monument, the U.S. Capitol, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, Victims of Communism Memorial and, of course, the White House.

There's plenty of fun for everyone in Washington: the International Spy Museum, the National Zoo, the Newseum, the Air and Space Museum, Washington Nationals baseball stadium and July 4th celebrations on The Mall. If you get hungry, there are countless local and international restaurants in trendy D.C. neighborhoods such as Georgetown, Dupont Circle, Adams Morgan, Capitol Hill and the H Street Corridor.

The city of Baltimore is honored to host the 2016 Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival and looks forward to welcoming you to "Charm City." You will indeed be charmed by the sights and sound of a historically rich, unique and dynamic city that is proud of its Lithuanian-American heritage.

The Lithuanian-American communities of Baltimore and Washington cannot wait to see you at the Arena in Baltimore on July 3, 2016. Let's renew and rekindle old friendships, and hopefully make new ones.

For More Information:

Web: www.Sokiusvente2016.org

Twitter: @svente2016

Facebook: [facebook.com/svente2016](https://www.facebook.com/svente2016)

Instagram: [instagram.com/svente2016](https://www.instagram.com/svente2016)

Email: info@sokiusvente2016.org

About Baltimore: baltimore.org

Submitted by Deanna Izabelė Howes and Algis Šilas

our community

Community Members "Awaken Goodness"

15th North American Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival Comes to "Charm City"

On November 9, 2014, the Central New Jersey Lithuanian American Community organized a fundraising event, "Pažadink Savyje Geruma" (Awaken Goodness Within Yourself), featuring an afternoon of song by children from the Elizabeth, N.J., Philadelphia and Central New Jersey communities. The purpose of the event, now in its second year, is to bring Christmas joy to needy children in Lithuania. Christmas gifts donated by participants were shipped to Lithuania free of charge by event sponsor Atlantic Express Company.



Photo: Danutė Dombroski

N.Y. Community Commemorates Donelaitis



The Lithuanian Consulate General in New York hosted a commemoration of the 300th birth year of poet Kristijonas Donelaitis on December 2, 2014, featuring an exhibition created by students of Lietuvėlė Lithuanian heritage school and a screening of the film "Donelaitis tarp mūsų" ("Donelaitis Between Us"). Participants enjoyed readings of passages from Donelaitis's poem *Metai* (The Seasons).

Left to right, Jolanta Vitkauskaitė, vice-consul; Aukse Motto, head of Lietuvėlė school; and Laura Žilijaitė, acting consul-general, holding a version of *Metai* with children's illustrations.

Philadelphia Community Holds 38th Mugė

Philadelphia's Lithuanian community celebrated its rich cultural heritage at the 38th Annual Mugė (Lithuanian Festival) on the first weekend of November. Participants enjoyed two days of live music, folk dancing, shopping, Lithuanian food and family fun, as well as an evening concert by Lithuanian pop singer Ramunė Stankevičiūtė. Visitors were able to pin their ancestral homes on the map in the newly renovated Cultural Center and learn the correct spelling and meaning of their Lithuanian family names.

Photo: Rimas Gedeika



LRSC Looking for Sports Memorabilia

The Lithuanian Research and Studies Center (LRSC) is planning a sports exhibition for March through May 2015. Various Lithuanian sports organizations outside of Lithuania, as well as those

interested in sports history, will be invited to take part. Interested parties or those who have valuable exhibits are asked to contact the LRSC at info@lithuanianresearch.org.

Baltic States Awarded "European of the Year" Title



Holding their Golden Victoria awards are, left to right, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė and Latvian President Andris Bērziņš.

At a solemn ceremony in Berlin, Lithuania's President Dalia Grybauskaitė accepted the Golden Victoria award (Goldene Victoria für die Europäer des Jahres) given to Lithuania and other Baltic States for the promotion of European ideas. In her speech, the President underlined that this award was the recognition of efforts and determination of all Lithuanian people to build a strong European state.

This year, the Golden Victoria in the category of "promotion of pro-European ideas" was awarded by representatives of the influential analytical German media to the Baltic States. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were acknowledged for the promotion of European ideas, their peaceful struggle for freedom, their successful handling of the economic crisis, achievements in implementing European reforms and trust in the future of Europe.

Previous recipients include former European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, European Council President Donald Tusk and Ireland's Prime Minister Enda Kenny.

EU and Eurozone

... Citizens of EU member states who permanently reside in Lithuania will now be able to become members of local political parties, after Lithuanian parliament approved an amendment of the Law on Political Parties. However, only citizens of Lithuania are given the right to establish a political party. The new regulation is expected to take effect January 1, 2015. A permanent residence permit in Lithuania can be granted to an EU citizen if he or she has a temporary residence permit and has lived in the Baltic country for five years in a row.

... Beginning in January, 330 post offices in Lithuania will exchange the litas to the euro free of charge for 60 calendar days. To aid the process, Lithuania Post will add 75 employees in mobile teams that will work in every region of Lithuania.

... Despite the upcoming euro introduction in Lithuania, postage stamps with values indicated in litas will be accepted when paying for postal services until December 31, 2016. The same applies to envelopes and postcards with the nominal value already printed. Starting in July 2014, Lithuania Post has been releasing postage stamps with the nominal value indicated in both euros and litas, which will remain valid indefinitely. Beginning in 2015, only the euro value will be indicated on new stamps.

... UK online money transfer service Azimo announced on November 27, 2014, that customers can now send money to Lithuania for a flat fee of just £1 for any amount. The new service comes ahead of Lithuania's scheduled adoption of the euro in January. Azimo already charges a flat £1 fee to the Eurozone, meaning that the estimated 100,000 Lithuanians living in the UK will no longer have to pay high fees to transfer money. According to the World Bank, Lithuanians living abroad sent \$1.387 billion back home in 2012, with over \$200 million being sent from the UK alone.

... To mark the last month of the litas as currency before switching to the euro on January 1, volunteers have unveiled what they call the world's largest coin pyramid made of old Lithuanian cents. Volunteers spent nearly three weeks arranging one million of the coins into a pyramid over one meter tall.

World

... Lithuania is planning to hold a referendum on allowing citizens to hold dual citizenship. Under the current law, citizens may not retain their Lithuanian citizenship after acquiring citizenship of another country, but Lithuania's President Grybauskaitė would like to see those with "special merits" be able to retain their Lithuanian passports. According to the President's Office, special merits are considered activities that significantly contribute in strengthening Lithuania's statehood and increasing its authority in the international community. The President's initiative followed reports that Žydrunas Ilgauskas, a former NBA star, will lose his Lithuanian citizenship after he acquired U.S. citizenship last year.

... In cooperation with law enforcement officers from 16 EU member states, including prosecutors from Lithuania's Prosecutor General's Office and criminal police investigators, U.S. officers have shut down an illegal international online trade network, Silk Road 2.0, which was a marketplace for drugs, guns and other contraband. According to the Lithuanian Police, 17 traders and administrators were arrested as part of Operation Onymous, and 410 online sites that operated on the anonymous network were shut down. The Silk Road servers were located in Lithuania, although the network's alleged administrator is a 26-year-old Texan who was arrested at his San Francisco home.

current events



... The Invisible Front, a documentary directed by Vincas Sruoginis and Jonas Ohman, opened in New York on November 7, in Chicago on November 14, and in Los Angeles on November 21. A national release is planned. The film, which tells the story of the Forest Brothers, an underground resistance movement of Lithuanians who resisted the Soviet invasion, won the Audience Award at the international film festival "Kino Pavasaris" in Vilnius 2014.

... Kaunas has been chosen to host the International Children's Games, also known as the Children's Olympic Games, in 2017. The International Children's Games have been taking place since 1968 and are held in a different city each year. The games showcase 1,500 to 2,000 athletes under the age of 16. In 2010, in the Games held in Manama (Bahrein), then-13-year-old Rūta Meilutytė won gold medals in 50- and 100-meter breaststroke, a silver medal in 50-meter freestyle and a bronze medal in 4x100-meter combined relay with the Kaunas team.

... More and more Lithuanian businesses are relocating abroad. Last year alone, Lithuania's foreign investment increased by roughly 1 billion litas. Investors credit the moves to more favorable tax environments elsewhere in the world; however, Lithuania's government believes their tax situation is no worse than other countries'. Economists credit the moves not only to taxes, but also to the lack of expansion opportunities in Lithuania due to a decreasing population.

... Lithuanian company Versli Lietuva returned from the 10th annual Trade Promotion Organization Network World Conference in Dubai in November with a first place award for its young leader development program "Wings." The program ranked best among export initiatives in the developed countries category in the Excellence in Export Initiatives Awards. "Wings" provides prospective graduates from Lithuanian and foreign higher education institutions with knowledge and business experience by working with in more than 40 small and medium-sized enterprises in Lithuania and with professional mentors.

... Lithuanian and Swedish defense ministers discussed increased cooperation in defense activities during a meeting in Vilnius on November 28. Minister of National Defense of Lithuania Juozas Olekas and his Swedish counterpart Peter Hultqvist discussed cooperation in the framework of the NATO partnership, exchange of sea and airspace surveillance data, Nordic-Baltic defense cooperation, and other points of security and defense. During the discussions, Olekas highlighted the strengthening of mutual and regional partnership and emphasized joint military exercises.

... A son of the late Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev was fined on December 4, 2014, for possessing a forged Lithuanian passport. Dudayev pleaded guilty to document forgery and illegal drug possession in November and agreed to testify in the case against him and three other defendants. The four were arrested in March 2011 in Kaunas after police found seven forged Lithuanian passports and drugs in their car. Dudayev said that he had wanted to help several Chechen families persecuted in Chechnya to emigrate to Europe.

... Two CDs recorded by the Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra, featuring internationally renowned soloists, have been nominated for the International Classical Music Awards. The nominated CDs are entitled "Power Players" and "Virtuoso Rossini."

... According to Bloomberg News, Lithuania is ranked 31st among the world's countries for most expensive gasoline prices. Currently a gallon of gas costs approximately \$5.88 in Lithuania, even though gasoline prices there declined 14 percent in the past 6 months.

Ukraine and Russia

... Lithuania accused Moscow in November of blocking its vehicles and goods at the Russian border, and summoned its ambassador to protest. No Lithuanian-registered cars or trucks had been admitted into Russia's Kaliningrad region since the previous weekend. Trucking and logistics for trade with Russia are a crucial part of the Lithuania's economy, and have largely survived tit-for-tat embargoes between Russia and the EU, however, ties are under strain.

... Three natives (one each) of the United States, Georgia and Lithuania were hastily granted Ukrainian citizenship in order to become key ministers in the new government of Ukraine, which was approved by the country's parliament on December 2, 2014. Natalie Jaresko of the U.S., who currently heads the Kiev-based Horizon Capital investment fund, will take the reins at the Ukrainian Finance Ministry. The position of health minister went to Aleksandr Kvitashvili, who occupied a similar post in the Georgian government in 2009-2012. Lithuanian Aivaras Abromavicius will become Ukraine's economy minister.

... Lithuania may supply weapons to Ukraine as part of plans to increase its support to the Ukrainian military with the formation of a joint Lithuanian, Polish and Ukrainian Brigade project. The plan grew out of a visit to Kiev in November by Lithuania's president Dalia Grybauskaitė and Ukraine's president Petro Poroshenko. Grybauskaitė announced that Lithuania would provide Ukraine with military aid, but did not specify if this would include weaponry or be purely non-lethal. Russia's foreign ministry warned that supplying weapons to Ukraine would violate international agreements.

In Lithuania

... The Lithuanian government is considering removing VAT from electric vehicles and reducing it to 9 percent on hybrid vehicles in an effort to encourage more Lithuanians to embrace sustainable car travel. Environmentally friendly vehicles are increasingly popular in Lithuania and are already granted several advantages, such as being able to drive in bus lanes and park for free in city centers.

... The General Prosecutor's Office of Lithuania revealed in November that two Lithuanians have been accused of spying for Belarus. One of these persons, who worked for a state-owned aviation company, is set to be tried on espionage charges. The other, whose identity has not been released, remains under investigation. Other cases from recent years have shown that Belarusian intelligence is interested in its immediate neighbors, Poland and Lithuania, for military intelligence and opportunities to advance Belarusian economic interest in these countries.

... One of the most active initiators of the referendum against land sale to foreigners in Lithuania, Pranciskus Sliuzas, has announced plans to create a new political party Gimtasis Krastis (Homeland). Sliuzas said that the party is not going to be right-wing, left-wing or center, but "an independent and organized group of citizens united under strict order." In Lithuania, a political party may be established if it has at least 2,000 founders who must hold a congress, adopt articles of association and elect managing bodies.

... Lithuania's parliament has decided to extend the reduced 9 percent VAT rate on heating and hot water until July 1, 2015, rather than to apply the ordinary rate of 21 percent immediately.

... President Dalia Grybauskaitė attended the launching ceremony of Klaipėda University maritime research vessel Mintis. According to the president, the modern ship will ensure freedom for scientific activities and will help Lithuania to consolidate its position in the field of maritime research and innovation. The scientific vessel Mintis is the first and the only such multifunctional laboratory in the Baltic States, which will be used by both Lithuanian and foreign scientists.

... The Ministry of Communications in Lithuania, in cooperation with municipalities across the country, recently moved 42 state and municipal services to the web. Minister of Communications Rimantas Sinkevičius said that businesses will be able to receive permits, licenses or certificates online, adding convenience while reducing administrative effort and time. It is projected that by August 2015, businesses and residents will be able to use 64 e-services provided by municipal institutions across Lithuania.

... U.S. soldiers joined Lithuanians in celebrating the Baltic nation's 95th Armed Forces Day with a display of American equipment in Kaunas on November 21, and with a parade and formation in Vilnius's Cathedral Square on November 23. For Lithuanians, the holiday honors the restoration of the country's Armed Forces on November 23, 1918, just weeks after the end of WWI, when prime minister Augustinas Voldemaras signed Order No. 1 giving legal basis for formation of the armed forces of the newly independent Lithuania.

... Lithuania's retail sales growth slowed in October, after accelerating the previous month. Retail sales, excluding VAT, climbed 5.2 percent year-on-year in October, slower than September's 5.8 percent growth. Retail trade, excluding automotive fuel, rose by 5.3 percent. Sales of non-food goods increased 7.9 percent annually in October and those of food, beverages and tobacco sales rose by 2.7 percent.

... The Lithuanian Minister of Economy recently approved a new regulation entitling foreign investors in Lithuania to receive grants up to 4.34 million euros. Any investor complying with the conditions set in the regulation and investing in tangible and intangible assets related to setting up a new establishment or extending the capacity of an existing establishment may now apply to Invest Lithuania for a grant. The amount of the grant will be based on criteria such as the amount to be invested, the number of jobs to be created, average monthly salaries to be paid, etc. Grants will be paid out as compensation of eligible costs incurred during the term of the investment project, which may not exceed 36 months.

... A Ukrainian gaming company is set to open an office in Vilnius, creating 15 new jobs. Half of the Melior Games team will be transferred from Kiev to the company's new office in Lithuania.

Clarifications and Corrections

The author of the October article on the Ateitis confence requested that we mention that there is also an Ateitis camp in California in addition to those in Michigan and Maine.

In "From the Editor" in September, the quoted article by Elona Vaisnys on the Baltic Way appeared in the New Haven Register.

An eagle-eyed reader and fan of "This Month in History" noticed a transposition on the arrival date cited in the entry on Aleksandras Burba in the October issue. Burba arrived in the United States in 1889, not 1898.

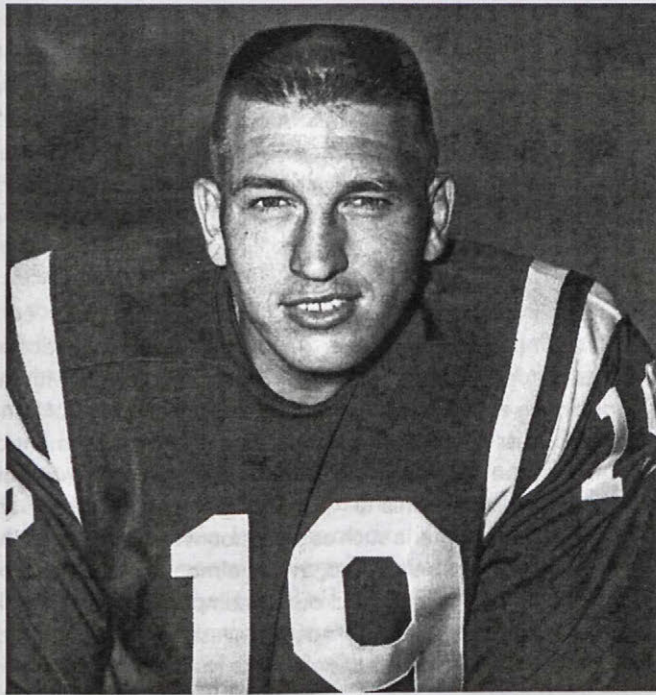
sports

American Professional Football Stars of Lithuanian Descent

By John E. Domalakes

As we enter the playoff season, with the Super Bowl right around the corner, it's a fitting time to look at some of our Lithuanian football stars, past and present.

Although the sport of basketball has become a national obsession in Lithuania and the Lithuanian Olympic Team has distinguished itself in world-wide competition since it won the bronze medal in the 1992 Olympic Games, a number of individuals of Lithuanian descent have become household names among National Football League (NFL) fans due to their exploits on the gridiron. Among the best known of the football greats are Jonas Jonaitis, Dick Butkus, Joseph Jurevicius and James Laurinaitis.



JONAS JONAITIS (aka JOHNNY UNITAS)
Born May 7, 1933 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Died September 11, 2002

"Johnny U" has been acclaimed by many football experts as the best football player in NFL history. Known as the "golden arm," Unitas quarterbacked the Baltimore Colts from 1956 to 1972, completing his career with the San Diego Chargers in 1973. In 17 NFL seasons, he completed 2,830 passes for 40,239 yards and 290 touchdowns. He also rushed for 1,777 yards and 13 touchdowns. This was during the era when the regular NFL

season amounted to only 12 games. During his career, the season was extended to 14 games. Unitas quarterbacked the Colts to a victory in Super Bowl IV against the Dallas Cowboys in January 1971.

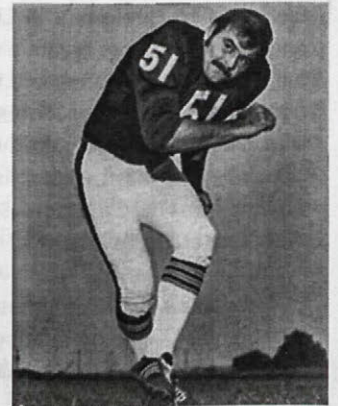
Born in Pittsburgh, Pa., Unitas starred at St. Justin High School but, at 6'1" and only 145 lbs., was considered too small for major college football. He found a place at the University of Louisville, was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers, but then was cut by the Steelers without ever being allowed to throw a pass. He played sandlot football, then signed with the Baltimore Colts in 1956 after their starting quarterback, George Shaw, was injured. He became an immediate star. Unitas quarterbacked the Colts to an overtime victory over the New York Giants in the 1958 NFL Championship Game, which has been voted the "greatest game ever played" by sports writers. His thrilling performance in that game, which was nationally televised, led to the popularity of the NFL, which remains popular today. He is considered the greatest field general of all time and the inventor of the two-minute offense. He set a record of throwing touchdown passes in 47 consecutive games and was honored as the National Football League's Most Valuable Player in 1959, 1964 and 1967.

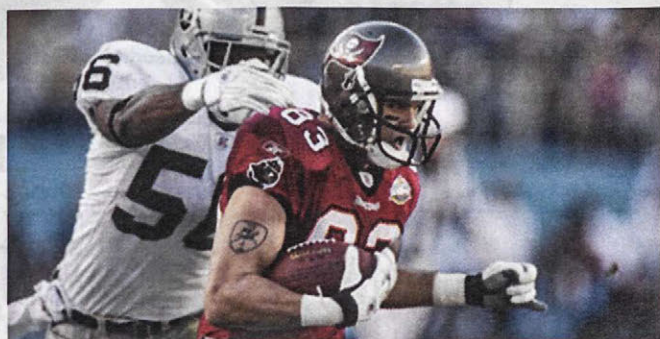
Unitas is a member of the NFL Hall of Fame. He died of a heart attack in Towson, Maryland, on September 11, 2002.

DICK BUTKUS
Born December 9, 1942
in Chicago, Illinois

Dick Butkus played the position of middle linebacker for the Chicago Bears from 1965 to 1973. He is a member of the NFL Hall of Fame. He stood 6'3" and weighed 245 lbs. He was drafted #3 in the first round of the 1965 NFL Draft. He was selected to the Pro Bowl eight times and was honored as NFL Defensive Player of the Year two times—in 1969 and 1970.

Butkus played college football at the University of Illinois. During his NFL career, he was credited with 1,020 tackles, 27 fumbles recoveries and 22 interceptions. He forced numerous fumbles but statistics on forced fumbles were not kept during his playing days. He was named the "Fifth Best Player of NFL History" by the Associated Press.





JOE JUREVIČIUS

Born December 23, 1974, in Cleveland, Ohio

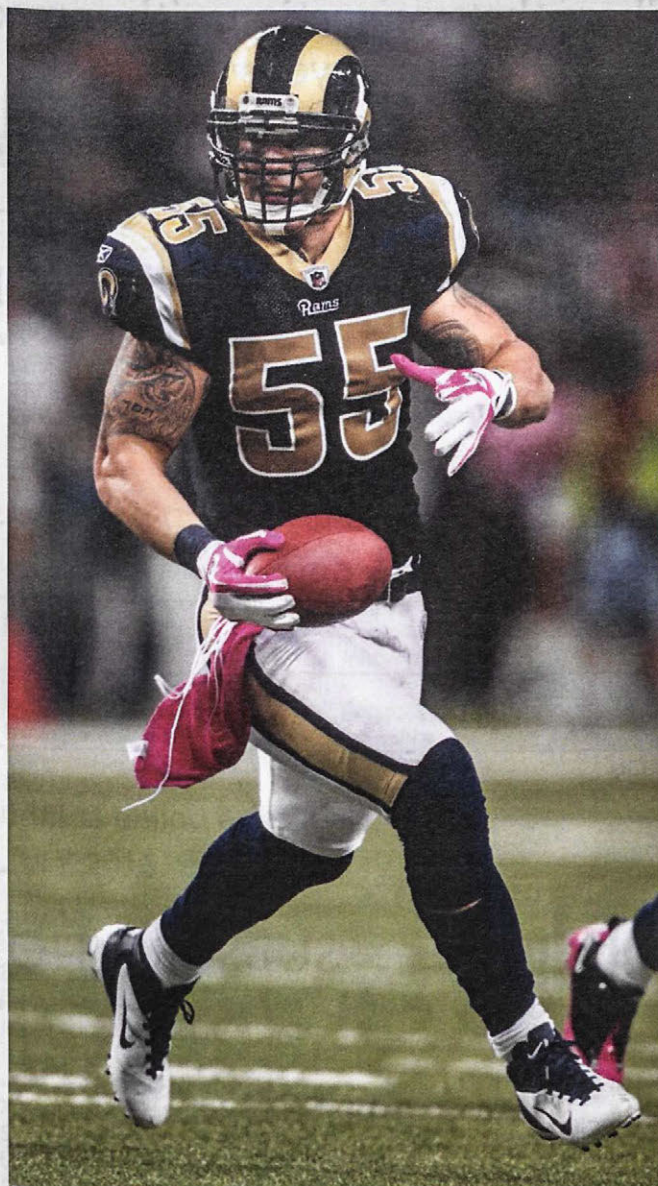
Jurevičius was a wide receiver for the New York Giants, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Seattle Seahawks and Cleveland Browns. During his NFL career, he caught 323 passes for 29 touchdowns, gaining 4,119 yards.

A knee injury resulted in several staph infections and seven knee surgeries, ending Jurevičius's career after the 2008 season. He played college football at Penn State University, where he had 94 pass receptions for 1,905 yards and 15 touchdowns. He was drafted by the New York Giants in the 1998 NFL Draft. He earned a Super Bowl ring while playing for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers when the Bucs defeated Oakland 48-21 in Super Bowl XXXVII. Jurevičius led his team in receiving in that game, with four receptions and 78 yards. His most unique characteristic was the "Vytiš" tattoo on his right bicep that was highly visible when cameras focused on him during the games. At 6'5", the slender receiver presented an inviting target for quarterbacks.

JAMES LAURINAITIS

Born December 3, 1986, in Minnesota

James Laurinaitis is the son of Joe Laurinaitis—better known as "the Animal" to professional wrestling fans. Laurinaitis played college football at Ohio State, where he was a linebacker, earning All America Honors in 2006. He won the Nagurski Award as the nation's top defensive player in 2007. He also won the Butkus Award as the nation's best linebacker and was honored as the Big 10 Defensive Player of the Year. Laurinaitis was drafted by the St. Louis Rams as the 35th draft choice in the 2009 NFL Draft. He led the Rams in tackles during his rookie year and is currently an active member of that team.



While basketball remains Lithuania's national sport, the contributions of these National Football League stars to American popular culture is worthy of recognition, especially by Lithuanian-Americans.

The Honorable John E. Domalakes is a judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Schuylkill County, Pa., and is a member of the Knights of Lithuania, Anthracite Council 144.

Give the gift of heritage this season!

Bridges is your connection to Lithuanian life and culture in the United States and around the world. Share that connection with someone you love at the holidays and year-round!



bridges

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Please check all that apply:

- New Renewal
 Gift Donation

Mail to:
 LAC, Inc./BRIDGES
 Subscriptions
 78 Mark Twain Dr.
 Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690

Please send:

- 1 year electronic (10 issues via email) \$20
 1 year print (10 issues by mail) \$30
 2 years print (20 issues by mail) \$58
 Print subscription outside U.S., add \$25 per year

makes a
great gift
 at the holidays!

Your Name (please print)

Gift Subscription Name (please print)

Your Email

Gift Subscription Email

Your Address

Apt. No.

Gift Subscription Address

Apt. No.

City

State

Zip

City

State

Zip

Subscribe online at lithuanian-american.org/bridges

November 2014

bridges

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Please check all that apply:

- New Renewal
 Gift Donation

Mail to:
 LAC, Inc./BRIDGES
 Subscriptions
 78 Mark Twain Dr.
 Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690

Please send:

- 1 year electronic (10 issues via email) \$20
 1 year print (10 issues by mail) \$30
 2 years print (20 issues by mail) \$58
 Print subscription outside U.S., add \$25 per year

e-subscriptions
60% off
 the cover price!

Your Name (please print)

Gift Subscription Name (please print)

Your Email

Gift Subscription Email

Your Address

Apt. No.

Gift Subscription Address

Apt. No.

City

State

Zip

City

State

Zip

Please enclose your subscription payment in U.S. funds.

December 2014

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

JANUARY 2015

January 10, 2-6 p.m.
Šimtmetis 100-Year Anniversary
Lithuanian Hall, 851-853 Hollins
Street, Baltimore, Md.
Info: Lithuanianhall.com

January 10, 6-11 p.m.
First Ever Lithuanian Quizzo
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2517 E.
Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
Info: lithuanianmha.org

January 11, 1 p.m.
Walk for a Free Klaipėda
31st Street Beach, 3100 S. Lake
Shore Drive, Chicago
Commemorating the freeing of
Klaipėda and to honor Freedom
and Its Defenders Day
Info: 773-899-0167

January 23-25
Winter Šventė/Celebration
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

FEBRUARY 2015

February 1, 12:30 p.m.
Child's Gate to Learning Annual Update
Lithuanian World Center, 14911
127th St., Lemont, Ill.
Meeting conducted in Lithuanian.
Info: www.childgate.org or
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

February 21-22
**No Home To Go To: The Story
of Baltic Displaced Persons
1944-1952**
Chicago Estonian House, 14700
Estonian Lane, Riverwoods, Ill.
Info: www.balzekasmuseum.org

February 28, 6 p.m.-midnight
Kaimė Virto Ažuolai
Lithuanian Hall, 851-853 Hollins
Street, Baltimore
Info: 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 Lithuanian Consulate.
Info: dmb@aspenconsul.com

March 6
**Summer Language Institute
Scholarship Deadline**
Intensive language courses,
including Lithuanian, at University
of Pittsburgh
Info: sli.pitt.edu

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

March 8, 2-4 p.m.
Independence Day Celebration
Wyandotte County Museum, 631
N. 126th St., Bonner Springs, Kans.
Info: sallyzdannov@gmail.com

March 19-22
Women's Weekend
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

March 29 - April 5
**ŠALFASS/LAUNA/ALGS Annual
Lithuanian Ski Trip**
Snowbird Ski Resort, Utah
Reservations: Linda Crouch,
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 or Dr. Vytas
Saulis at vsaulis@sbcglobal.net

APRIL 2015

April 11, 2 p.m.
Benefit Concert for Neringa
600 Liberty Hwy., Putnam, Conn.
Featuring Eglė Jarkova on violin
Info: neringa.org

April 11, 6-11 p.m.
2nd Annual Kugelis Cook-Off
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2517 E.
Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
Info: lithuanianmha.org

MAY 2015

May 9, 6 p.m.
**Grandis Annual Folk Dance
Concert**
Lithuanian World Center, 14911
127th Street, Lemont, Ill.
Info: grandis.vadova@gmail.com,
630-254-4953

JUNE 2015

June 6-7
Talka Work Weekend
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Help get camp ready for summer.
Info: regina@neringa.org, 978-
582-5592

June 8 - July 17
**Lithuanian Language Intensive
Course**
University of Pittsburgh
Info: sli.pitt.edu

June 27 - July 1
**Heritage Family Camp - English
(younger children)**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

JULY 2015

July 1-5
**Heritage Family Camp - English
(older children)**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

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

July 5-11
**Family Camp for Lithuanian
Speakers**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

July 12-26
**Children's Camp for Lithuanian
Speakers ages 7-16**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

July 26
**Lithuanian Friendship Day
"Putnam Picnic"**
600 Liberty Hwy., Putnam, Conn.
Info: neringa.org

July 26-August 1
**"Third Week" Youth Camp for
Lithuanian Speakers ages 12-16**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

AUGUST 2015

August 2-15
**Heritage Children's Camp in
English ages 7-16**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

August 15-22
**"Third Week" Youth Camp in
English ages 12-16**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

August 22-30
**Meno8Dienos Adult Art Camp in
Lithuanian**
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

OCTOBER 2015

October 9-11
Iškyla/Walk-a-Thon
Camp Neringa, Marlboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

JULY 2016

July 3
**15th North American Lithuanian
Dance Festival**
Royal Farms Arena, Baltimore
Info: sokiusvente2016.org

Like Us on Facebook!
facebook.com/BridgesLithuanian
AmericanMagazine

bridges

VOLUME 38 ISSUE 10

LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

PERIODICALS
POSTAGE

POSTMASTER:
Dated Material
Please Deliver Immediately

