

bridges



LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

\$5

June 2016

this month in history

June Anniversaries

750 years ago

June 18, 1266

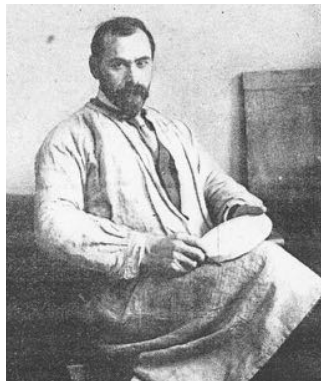
According to The Pskov 3rd Chronicle, a number of Lithuanian dukes, including Gotartas and Liumbis, were killed by Daumantas and his followers.

Daumantas, when he was Lithuanian Duke of Nalšia, had killed Mindaugas and two of his sons, then fled to Pskov. There he was baptized into Eastern Orthodoxy and became Pskov's military leader against the Lithuanians. He invaded his former territory in Lithuania, kidnapped rival Gerdenis's wife and sons, and seized land and property. When Gerdenis and his dukes discovered their homes and land had been pillaged, Gerdenis, Gotartas, Liumbis, Liugalo and other dukes mustered forces and set out after Daumantas with 700 troops. They were met and defeated by Daumantas' band of 90 men after they crossed the Daugava River.

175 years ago

June 21, 1841

Birth of Gasparas Feliksas Cirtautas, who became bishop of Žemaitija and began construction of the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Šiluva in 1912.



145 years ago

June 12, 1871

Birth of Victor David Brenner, a Litvak-American sculptor, engraver and medalist who designed the Lincoln penny. Brenner was born in Šiauliai, Lithuania, and immigrated to the United States in 1890. Brenner studied at Cooper Union in New York and also in Paris, where he won awards for

his work at the Paris Exposition of 1900.

Brenner's design for the Lincoln cent was selected by President Theodore Roosevelt, who ordered the new penny to be produced to commemorate Lincoln's 100th birthday in 1909. Brenner's initials, VDB, were featured first on the reverse side of the coin, but removed halfway through its first year of issue. The initials were replaced in 1918, appearing on the front below Lincoln's shoulder.

75 years ago

June 14, 1941

The Soviets began mass deportations of Lithuanians to Siberia. In just two days, between 16,000 and 18,000 Lithuanians were herded onto cattle trains and transported to the far eastern reaches of the Soviet Union, where many died. The deportations were interrupted by the advancing German army, but began anew after the end of the war, when the Soviets returned.

75 years ago

June 22, 1941

Beginning of the June Uprising (Birželio sukilimas), a brief period between the first Soviet occupation and the Nazi occupation, during which the Lithuanians attempted to declare renewed independence and establish the Provisional Government of Lithuania.

The uprising was organized by the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF), which had been working from Berlin, and in secret in Lithuania, since autumn 1940 to re-establish Lithuania's independence.

Viewing the Germans as liberators, LAF rebels mobilized to secure and protect strategic locations and resources to assist the German advance. In the ensuing weeks, however, the Nazis disarmed the rebels and replaced Lithuanian institutions with their own administration. When it became clear that the "independent" Provisional Government would only be allowed to exist as a puppet institution, despite its cooperation and lack of protest regarding the Holocaust, it self-disbanded on August 5, 1941.

June 23, 1941

A Nazi punitive squadron executed 42 villagers from Ablinga and nearby Žvaginiai (28 men and 14 women) and burned their houses.

June 24, 1941

The entire Jewish male population of Gargždai, Lithuania, was exterminated.

June 25, 1941

The Rainiai Massacre. Because of the Nazi advance, the NKVD was unable to evacuate all of its political prisoners, and decided instead to liquidate them. Many similar—and much larger—massacres were carried out by Soviet forces in Lithuania and other occupied countries during June 1941, but the killing of between 70 and 80 political prisoners in the Rainiai forest became the best known, due to the brutality of the tortures inflicted on the victims, many of whom were students and young people from villages around Telšiai. Victims were flayed and burned, and various body parts crushed or severed while they were still alive. Many were so mutilated that only 27 could be identified after the bodies were exhumed, only three days later.

June 25-29, 1941

The Kaunas pogrom was a massacre of Jewish people living in Kaunas that took place within the first few days of the Nazis arriving in Lithuania, at the exhortation of Nazi SS Brigadeführer Franz Walter Stahlecker. Though encouraged by the Nazis, most of the executions took place at the hands of Lithuanians. The most infamous incident occurred in the Lietūkis garage, where several dozen Jewish men were publicly tortured and executed on June 27, 1941.

Stahlecker reported that by June 28, 1941, 3,800 people had been killed in Kaunas and 1,200 more in nearby towns.

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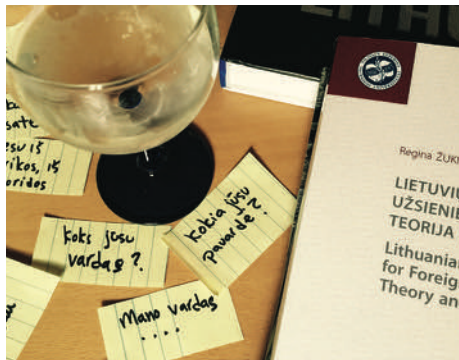
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Cover: The Meridianas, a 1948 sailing ship from Finland that has been converted into a restaurant, docked on the Danė River in Klaipėda. Photo: Yevgen Belich | Shutterstock.com

Back cover: Ceremony to commemorate the victims of occupation, genocide and Soviet repressions. Photo: Robertas Dačkus, Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania

from the editor

A Matter of Survival

As a teenager, reading Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, at once fascinated and appalled at the treatment of inmates in the Soviet gulag system, I marveled at how anyone could survive such physical and psychological abuse. Many years later, I would learn that two of my own relatives—my grandmother's niece and nephew—had themselves been imprisoned and deported, political prisoners, enemies of the state.

Like Mykolas Devenis, whose testimony about the time he spent in Siberia begins on page 3, my grandmother's nephew was a physician with a young family. Unlike Devenis, he had never lived in America. He was, however, a lieutenant in the Lithuanian Army. He was arrested during the first Soviet occupation and imprisoned at Ninth Fort in Kaunas—where his name is now inscribed alongside the names of other military held there—until he was transported to Siberia, eventually ending up to Norilsk. He was one of the lucky, a survivor of a prison camp in the world's northernmost city, who lived to see his country independent once again.

For those who escaped deportation, life was little better. Caught between the Soviets and the Nazis, many made unconscionable alliances and others suffered the consequences of their action or inaction. As Ellen Cassidy relates in her article on Holocaust remembrance, Lithuania is only now confronting that sad and difficult period during which relative peace turned into violent hatred with devastating rapidity.

Jocelyn Bartkevičius relates her own family's tale of survival in the context of her contemporary experience of language study in Lithuania. Her poignant and funny narrative, *How To Survive in Lithuania*, examines the many nuanced meanings of the word.

Lithuania today is a product of the survival of its people. It's our responsibility to help ensure that it continues to survive and thrive as an independent nation, and one way we can do that is at the polls. As you consider the options, be sure to weigh carefully who has the world's best interests at heart.


Teresė Vekteris, Editor

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reader's response

Have just received the WONDERFUL April issue of Bridges today, only a few months late, but am extremely happy about the Lithuanian costumes stories. More stories like this are welcome. Well done!

Interestingly, the sash worn by the male dancer on page 3 is poignantly inscribed (with apologies for my translation) "Heroes are sleeping in the cemetery."

I appreciate your research in producing "This Month in History" and "Current Events."

And the delicious story about "Garden-Milk Soup" brought back warm memories of home long ago.

Bukit sveika,
Tony Kiveta, via email

An American in Siberia

The Testimony of Dr. Mykolas Devenis



Dr. Mykolas Devenis in 1927, when he was practicing medicine in Waterbury, Conn., between his graduation from Yale Medical School and his return to Lithuania.

Soon after the Soviets occupied Lithuania in June 1940, they began to arrest and interrogate those they deemed most likely to mount the strongest opposition to Lithuania's loss of freedom. These "enemies of the state" included those involved in the post-World War I independence movement, government officials, Lithuanian army officers and soldiers, and those who traveled internationally.

A year later, during one short period in June 1941, right before the German

army invaded and began their occupation, the Soviets undertook mass deportations of Lithuanians to Siberia. Among the approximately 17,000 deportees were those judged to harbor "anti-Soviet attitudes"—the educated, the police, those with social standing, those with ties to anyone who had fled the country, anyone they considered capitalist, and "rich peasants" who owned land—as well as their families. Many of those imprisoned in 1940 were also deported.

The House Select Baltic Committee

The House Select Baltic Committee, chaired by Charles J. Kersten of Wisconsin, was established by Congress on July 27, 1953, to investigate Soviet activities in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Kersten Committee, as it became known, interviewed approximately 100 witnesses between November 30 and December 11, 1953, including Jonas Černius, the former prime minister of Lithuania; Juozas Brazaitis, the acting foreign minister of Lithuania; former President of the United States Herbert Hoover; and dozens of Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians from every walk of life. The committee's report states that some "testified in masks and from behind screens, lest their stories of brutal beatings, torture, mass killings, and inhuman mass deportations in which families were torn asunder and sent their separate ways into the vast reaches of Siberia, bring severe reprisals against relatives still behind the Iron Curtain."



Guard tower at a Soviet prison camp.

Included among the deportees were U.S. citizens—some who had emigrated in the first wave, become citizens, and then returned during the interwar years of independence; and some who were born on U.S. soil but currently living in Lithuania. Mykolas Devenis, M.D., was among the former group. Born on May 1, 1891, in Lithuania, he went to the United States in 1914, graduated from Yale Medical School in 1919 and practiced medicine in Waterbury, Conn., from 1919 to 1932.

Devenis became a U.S. citizen in 1920 and, in 1932, returned to Lithuania, where he and his family owned a farm near Ukmergė. He was arrested by the NKVD on July 22, 1940, on the pretext of illegally owning firearms, and held until being deported to Siberia in June 1941. Through the efforts of his wife and the U.S. government, his release was secured in 1942, and he returned to medical practice in Waterbury.

We learn Dr. Devenis' story through excerpts of his public testimony before the House Select Baltic Committee on December 3, 1953. Questions of the committee members are omitted for space.

Arrest and Imprisonment

... I was not arrested but rather kidnapped because I didn't have a formal warrant and no accusation. The armed men came in my place under pretext of searching for firearms. Then after a cursory search they said, "You come to police headquarters for half an hour and you then come back." They forced me to take my car there, and I went there and didn't come back for 2 years.

... I told them that I was an American citizen. They just laughed, "You think that you are an American citizen and that you can't be arrested?"

... I was taken without formal charges, without any accusations. They just told

me to come to headquarters for further questioning and for an explanation of a half hour and I would be back. But after sitting there the officer came out and said, "Well, you are a dangerous person for public safety. You are going to be detained." And I was held in the prison for a year.

... They charged me later on for anti-Communist activities, espionage, and for following capitalistic, bourgeoisie philosophy.

... I was arrested on July 22. I spent there until March, and then was transferred. ... I protested, and well, I was not allowed to communicate and was not allowed to send any letter or any notice.

... At first [I was] put in solitary confinement in a cell, and after several weeks was put in with other prisoners in a small cell, probably 6 feet by 12 where there were about 10 or 12 prisoners, a newly built cement cell. The walls were dripping with



Train arriving at a Soviet gulag.

water. The straw mattresses on the floor were just blue from rotting straw.

... After almost 3 months I was continually interrogated for 4 days without being allowed to sleep, and during the interrogation I was ordered to stand at attention for about 8 hours. The interrogation usually began at night when the other prisoners went to bed. They used to call me about 10 o'clock and probably return back to the cell at 6 o'clock in the morning.

... They found on my American passport that I had visas to foreign countries, England, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and so on. They tried to fix that I was spying for those countries. They tried to find out who I saw, to whom I talked and what I talked about, and so on. They couldn't imagine that a free American citizen could travel to foreign countries. ... Then they tried to fix that I was anti-communistic because I exploited the workers, because I didn't divide equally my profits from the farm. They said I probably underpaid them all, although I actually paid more than anybody else on the surrounding farms.

... I was never tried. At the beginning I was told that I was going to have an honest people's trial by a court selected by the people, that I was going to be allowed to have an attorney, and then after being in prison for about 8 or 10 months, one night about 1 o'clock I was called by guards and was brought to a secret service man, and then he just read the sentence, that I was condemned to 8 years of hard labor. I asked, "Where, how condemned, where was the trial?" Well, he said the trial was in Moscow, that I was tried and condemned in absentia.

... Then I was transferred to prison in Vilnius. ... There men were waiting for transports to concentration camps. ... I was transferred there in March, and I stayed there until June 22.

... When I was arrested [my wife] was in Lithuania, and I was very much upset because I had three children, American-born children. I later found out that my wife escaped to America. That relieved me and gave me moral support and courage to stand that brutal treatment.



Aerial view of the gulag at Vorkuta in Siberia.

Deportation

... From Vilnius I was transported to Kozhva in the northern part of Russia ... not far from the Arctic Ocean.

... I was transported with other prisoners. The transport consisted of about 80 to 100 cattle cars. In each car there were approximately about 40 to 50 people. They were so packed that when you laid on the floor the other men couldn't move around. If he wanted to turn on the other side, somebody had to get up from the line and allow the man to move. That lasted for 16 days.

... In hot weather, in June, we were without water, without hot food, and besides that they gave us a small piece of salted fish that increased thirst. The people in every car were just yelling for water, but nobody would supply water.

... I was transported to a region, Vorkuta. That was a city in the Arctic region that administrated a newly formed coal mine and construction of railroads, they were building some new camps there, experimental farms.

... At first I was in Kozhva ... All the prisoners from Lithuania, Estonia, Poland were brought to that camp, and then they were distributed to different camps. [I stayed there] about 2 months.

... I was assigned to work as a physician. I wouldn't say I practiced medicine

there because that was just sham practicing because there were no drugs and no facilities to practice medicine. A physician's duties were just to find out whether a man was able to work, and, well, just sign a statement that he was free from work.

Transfer

After a time at Kozhva, Dr. Devenis was transferred to another camp, which he referred to as the Red City, and described as "where the Pechora flows into the Arctic Ocean." Though no other name was given for the city, it could possibly be Krasnoye. "Krasnyj" means red in Russian, and the city is at the mouth of the Pechora River on the Arctic Ocean.

... From Kozhva I was taken by boat.

... On the second day I was called to the hull of the boat. One of the guards — they were transporting sick people on that boat — got sick. They found out that I was a doctor, and they called me to treat that guard. I experienced an unusual sight there. There were about 80 people, invalids, some without arms, without legs, with frozen noses, ears, and so on. I was wondering what was happening. If they were taking them to hospitals, they would be taking them in the opposite direction, but they were taking them north to the Arctic Ocean. Later on, about



Cattle car of the type used to transport deportees to Siberia. Photo by Albert Jankowski.

several months after, when I was in Sovchos, I met that guard, and I asked what had happened with those people. He was rather friendly to me. He said, "What do you think? Don't you know the Russian constitution? Everybody who eats is supposed to work. Who don't work don't eat. They are invalids, they are unable to work. Why should we feed them? We just took them to the ocean and dumped them into the ocean."

Life in the Prison Camps

Devenis was the sole physician for a camp of 1,500 prisoners. He testified he had little in the way of medical supplies except "a few tablets of aspirin and quinine for malaria," and had to improvise medical treatment. He describes his time there.

... [The] prisoners had to unload ships that came in with machinery, with supplies, with food, from a Russian transport, coming from a Russian port, Archangel [Arkanghelsk]. Their duty was to unload machinery and food and supplies from the barges that went through the river.

... In the winter [it was] about 55 below zero. That is almost the same as 55 below zero Fahrenheit.

... [When people became ill] they just let them deteriorate and then later die, especially from—there are not so many infectious diseases there—lack of vitamins, from scurvy and pellagra. A man used to get sick and physically deteriorate in about 4 or 5 or 6 months. I was surprised to see men in the prime of life, about 25, 28, 26, with their teeth just shaken, they could be pulled out by hand. The gums were swollen and there were sores over their arms and all over their bodies.

... The only thing I could do—from reading literature I found that some vitamin C was in the pine needles and pine cones. So I used to cook them in a big kettle, and all the prisoners were given about a glass of that concoction to drink every night. That, to a certain extent, prevented scurvy, but it was not enough to cure well-developed scurvy.

... Every prisoner wore cotton-padded mackinaws and cotton-padded pants. But those were probably given out once in 2 or 3 years. And then when they wore out they tried to patch it, but still they were insufficient to prevent from cold.

... The footwear was very poor. The only footwear they had was from old rubber tires made with burlap. And then in the cold they were wrapped with sacks,

and then dipped their legs in cold water and then let it freeze to prevent slipping; they wrapped it again with sacks, and they walked like that.

... Ice is a poor conductor. So if ice froze around the burlap it prevented cold and prevented frostbite. It was very difficult to walk, but still, to such an extent it kept a man from frostbite.

... Food was mostly bread mixed with sawdust. About 20 percent sawdust added to the poor flour. [To drink] water, and then thin soup from millet seed.

... I had toothache and I probably suffered for 3 weeks because there was no dentist and there was no medicine and there were no instruments to extract. If I would have instruments I probably would have done the extraction myself, but I suffered for 3 weeks, and later on forgot about it, got used to that pain. I was suffering, probably from lack of food and scurvy. There was more suffering from that than from toothache. The Russians are used to that. They say that if you have a toothache, you just take off your shoes, go outside in the snow and let your feet freeze and then your toothache will be gone because you think about your frozen feet, not about your toothache, you would forget all about the toothache.

... The only difficulty I had [with authorities at the camp] is that when I was in that Red City one time the men were unloading wine, probably for the NKVD officials. They made a hole in the barrel and several prisoners got drunk. One man got so drunk that he was unable to work that afternoon, and he was sleeping. Then at night when the men were returning, about 150 of them, they made them stand and I was to find out who was drunk and who was sober. I happened to miss that man. The next day I was transported to headquarters of NKVD, and I had to give excuses, explanation of why I missed that man, I was probably sabotaging. They said, "Well, we are going to give you another 8 years for that." Well, I explained that the man was drunk several hours and he was sleeping and he had already got sober. Well, there was a strong admonition, he said to me, "Look

out. You are going to get another 10 years and you will never get out of this camp.”

... I stayed in the Red City until December, and then when the Germans got into the war and began to bombard, when the bombardment got very active, they couldn't transport any more of those supplies. Then that camp was dismantled and we were transferred to Ovwbor [possibly Novy Bor]. That is about 200 kilometers, or approximately 140 miles, from the Red City. It happened in the middle of December. The weather was very cold. As I said, at that time it was about 40, 50, 55 below zero. The rule was that we shouldn't walk when the temperature was below 35.

... [We] were divided into groups, from 50 to 80 men. They didn't want to have bigger groups because they didn't have enough Red guards to accompany the prisoners, so it was from 50 to 80 men in a group. That lasted about 14 to 15 days.

... In the Arctic area there, there are no farms, no villages, no cities at all. When we rested we were lucky if we found some empty shed to stay in a few hours overnight. If not, then under the trees. If we found a shed it was empty, unheated.

... On the fourth or fifth day I collapsed and couldn't walk any more and I didn't remember what happened. Later on I was told that the guard ordered them to pick me up just because I was a doctor. He said, "We will pick him up. Don't leave that man behind because we need him because he is a doctor, and we don't have very many doctors there." So I was saved.

... The other men were just left behind. I don't know, probably wild wolves and wild animals devoured them. ... I saw wolves following us.

... [At the new camp] I was again put there to take care of the sick people, but I wouldn't call that practice of medicine. It was mostly to check whether they were able to work or not. If a man refused to go to work, he would be tried for sabotage. If he had a doctor's certificate that he is sick, that he can't work, then he was excused from the work. But many a time, if many people were on the sicklist, they overruled the doctor's decision; they

just took even sick men and made them go to work.

... They were anxious to exploit, to get as much as they could from that man in physical work. When a man got weak and when they saw that he couldn't do any more work, that they couldn't get any more work out of him, then they didn't care any more. They just purposely cut the ration and they deliberately let them die. ... [Average life expectancy was] not more than 4 or 5 years.

Liberation

Devenis was liberated on April 13, 1942.

... One day I was told that the administrator of the camp received a telegram from the administrative center of all the camps. They read me the telegram that said, "Repeat. Immediately free Dr. Devenis." I was told to get ready in 1 hour. The horse with the sleigh was standing already. In an hour I had to get ready, and I was transported to the other camp.

... I had an impression that they didn't want the other prisoners should see that I was liberated. It was something unusual. They were surprised. Even the administration didn't believe it, and they sent another telegram to confirm the previous telegram that I was liberated. So I was transported to a neighboring camp where I waited for transportation to Russia.

... One guard said, "Well, the American Government must be good if they care for individual persons." It was something unusual for a government to interfere and have a person liberated.

... I was transported to that other camp, Medvezička [possibly Medvezegorsk], and then from there I was taken by airplane to the distributing camp, Kozhva, where I had to wait for a train ... I came to America in September. I had to go to Teheran, India, and other places. ...

... [My release came about] through the efforts of my wife, but the main credit belongs to Ambassador Standley [Admiral William Harrison Standley, U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1942 to 1943]. I think he came on April 10 to Moscow, and on April 13 I was already released. Previous to that they used to tell my wife



Memorial to the deported at the church in Plungė.

that I was not in Russia, I probably was in Germany or somewhere else, or probably I was killed. They never admitted that I was deported to a concentration camp.

... The Russians in Washington ... said they didn't know where I was. Then later when the Russians were expelled, my father-in-law got a prison record that my number was such and such, and that I was transported to such-and-such camp. Then he telegraphed to my wife that information. With that information she went to the State Department. She just confronted the Russian Ambassador, and she said I was in such and such a camp.

... Several times while I was in prison camp I wrote to the American Embassy that I was an American citizen and would they take steps to have me liberated. Later on I found from the Embassy that they didn't receive any communication at all. It didn't go any further than the wastebasket.



Holocaust Remembrance in Lithuania

By Ellen Cassedy

Amit Belaitė in independence march in Vilnius. Photo: courtesy of Amit Belaitė

This year we mark the 75th anniversary of the Holocaust in Lithuania.

German tanks rolled into Lithuania in June of 1941. Over the next months, across the country, the majority of Lithuania's Jews were massacred.

At times over the past 75 years, the reality of the Holocaust in Lithuania has been buried. At times it has been denied or distorted. Today, a variety of initiatives are enabling Lithuanians to face the history of the Holocaust, to engage with that history, and to seek to use an understanding of the past to build a more tolerant future.

For nearly seven centuries, Jews and non-Jews in Lithuania lived side by side mostly in peace.

Lithuanian cities were renowned as centers of Jewish culture and religious learning. On the eve of World War II, Lithuania's Jewish population totaled more than 220,000 out of 2.8 mil-

lion—about 7 percent. One-third of the occupants of Lithuanian cities and one-half of the residents of Lithuanian towns were Jewish.

But by the mid-20th century, friction between Jews and non-Jews was on the rise. Nazi propaganda flooded the region. The Soviet incursion of 1940 caused further divisions in Lithuanian society. So did the deportations (of both Jews and non-Jews) to Siberia in June of 1941.

In late June of 1941, the German army rolled in. And a land of relative harmony became a place of terrible brutality.

During the Nazi occupation, Lithuania's political and church leaders did not save the Jews. Some individual Lithuanians rescued Jews, at the risk of their own lives. Many did nothing. And some assisted with the killing. While it was German commanders who gave the orders, in most cases it was Lithuanians who pulled the triggers. In the cities, tens of thousands of Jews were

confined in ghettos. Most were eventually killed. By the end of the war, only 6 percent of Lithuania's Jews remained alive.

After the war, in Soviet Lithuania, mention of Jews all but disappeared. In the 1970s, when Jews were allowed to emigrate, most of Lithuania's Jews departed for Israel or the West, and Lithuania's Jewish heritage sank further from sight. Today, Lithuania's Jewish population is only about 4,000.

But as the Soviet Union began to collapse, Lithuanians had the opportunity, and indeed the responsibility, to shape their own narratives about the past. Truths that had been suppressed under the Soviet system began to be told.

The leaders of Sąjūdis, the Lithuanian independence movement, made clear that an important element in the building of a new nation was the re-incorporation of Jewish history into the national narrative. Bringing Lithuania's Jewish history out of the shadows, independence leaders believed, was essential. The story of the Holocaust would have to be told.

With the help of Britain's Holocaust Educational Trust, hundreds of mass murder sites were clearly marked. New monuments were erected.

In 1998, President Valdas Adamkus founded the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes. "It is not for the Jews that we are doing this," a Commission staffer said, "and not for international relations. This is for us. Our goal is to transform ourselves from a society of bystanders into an active civil society."

With its dual focus, on both the Soviet and the Nazi eras, the Commission has been wracked with controversy. For several years, the Holocaust division was shut down. Recently, however, the Commission was reconstituted, with a new proclamation emphasizing the uniqueness of the Holocaust. The educational arm of the Commission has created more than 100 high school tolerance centers all over the country.

Since independence, enough time has elapsed for a new generation of Holocaust remembrance leaders to emerge.

Faina Kukliansky is the new head of the Jewish Community of Lithuania. She started a project called Bagel Shop, which is run by young non-Jewish Lithuanians, with the aim of attracting Lithuanians to learn about the nearly vanished Jewish heritage that was once interwoven into the fabric of Lithuanian life. Bagel Shop is located within the Jewish Community building. So once again, bagels are now being served in Vilna (Vilnius).

Another new effort is called Vardai (Names), a grassroots project led by young non-Jewish Lithuanians that has spread to towns and cities all across Lithuania. In each location, on September 23, the anniversary of the liquidation of the Vilna



Photographs from ruins of Vilna ghetto, enlarged and placed in windows of former ghetto library in Old Town Vilnius. Photo: Ellen Cassedy

Ghetto, people are invited to come forward and take a turn reading out loud, one at a time, the names of the former Jewish residents of their city or town.

These are solemn and uniquely personal ceremonies. They last for hours. One by one, name by name, people step forward to say the names and professions of Jews who once called Lithuania home. As they do so, they feel both a presence and an



Plaque in Vilnius commemorating Vilna ghetto. Photo: John Armaugh

absence. They sense both the vibrant Jewish culture that once was, and with the gaping void left behind by the Holocaust.

One participant said: "This is our history, our memory. When one whispers the names and professions of the people who lived here, one can no longer forget."

Last fall, my own ancestral town of Rokiškis, where my Jewish forebears lived, installed signs in Yiddish and Lithuanian remembering the Jewish history of the town, including the massacre of the Jews in August of 1941.

A number of Lithuanian towns are doing the same—posting signs, erecting memorials and holding commemoration ceremonies.

There's no doubt that anti-Semitism is alive and well in Lithuania today. Despite the proliferation of Holocaust remembrance efforts, there are constant flashpoints and crises.

In 2012, there was controversy over the honoring of Juozas Ambrazevičius-Brazaitis, a World War II-era Lithuanian leader who signed orders forcing Jews to move into the Kaunas ghetto in 1941. Another controversy flared when the government

announced plans to expand a sports stadium near Vilnius on the site of a historic Jewish cemetery.

Every spring, when Lithuania celebrates its independence, neo-Nazis are among those who parade through the streets of Vilnius and Kaunas. Recently, leaders of the Jewish community in Vilnius made a point of joining the march. Amit Belaitė, chair of the Lithuanian Union of Jewish Students, carried a handmade poster that said "I Love Lithuania," with a Star of David in the middle. "I wanted to send the message," she said, "that we Jews are part of a multicultural Lithuania and we are proud to be Litvaks"—the traditional term for Lithuanian Jews.

Another recent development in Lithuania's engagement with the Holocaust is the publication of a book called *Mūsiškiai* (Our People), by Rūta Vanagaitė, who was moved to write after discovering that her own grandfather had collaborated with Nazis. She researched archives and, alongside "Nazi-hunter" Efraim Zuroff of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, travelled to killing sites across Lithuania to talk to living witnesses of the Holocaust.

"I tried to take a closer look at people who killed," Vanagaitė said, "to understand them, to see how they started, what motivated them.

"If, under particular circumstances, it happened once," she said, "can we be sure it won't happen again?" She went on, "We cannot close our eyes to truth, however painful and ugly it is. A mature nation must know its history so it is not repeated."

The book became an instant bestseller in Lithuania. Four printings sold out right away. The publication of the book prompted the Lithuanian government to promise to release a list of more than 2,000 names of Lithuanians who participated in the Holocaust.

The best of Lithuania's Holocaust remembrance efforts have several qualities in common:

- They pose questions, rather than supplying answers.
- They do not force people to repent or feel guilty. Instead they invite people to design their own vehicles of remorse;
- They celebrate the glories of the Jewish past along with mourning the tragedy.
- They call on people to join together. Lithuanians are called to step forward because their finest selves are appealed to and respected in the difficult dialogue that must take place. All hands are needed in the vitally important project of repair.

Lithuania has not finished coming to terms with its past, and in fact that past will never be finished—and should never be finished. Through a variety of Holocaust remembrance efforts, Lithuanians today are seeking to face the past and to use their understanding of history to build a better future—a future in which people can join together to resist the forces of hatred.

Ellen Cassedy traces her Jewish ancestry to Rokiškis and Biržai in Lithuania. She is the author of We Are Here: Memories of the Lithuanian Holocaust, an account of how Lithuania is encountering its Jewish heritage. It is available in Lithuanian as Mes esame čia. For more information, visit www.ellencassedy.com



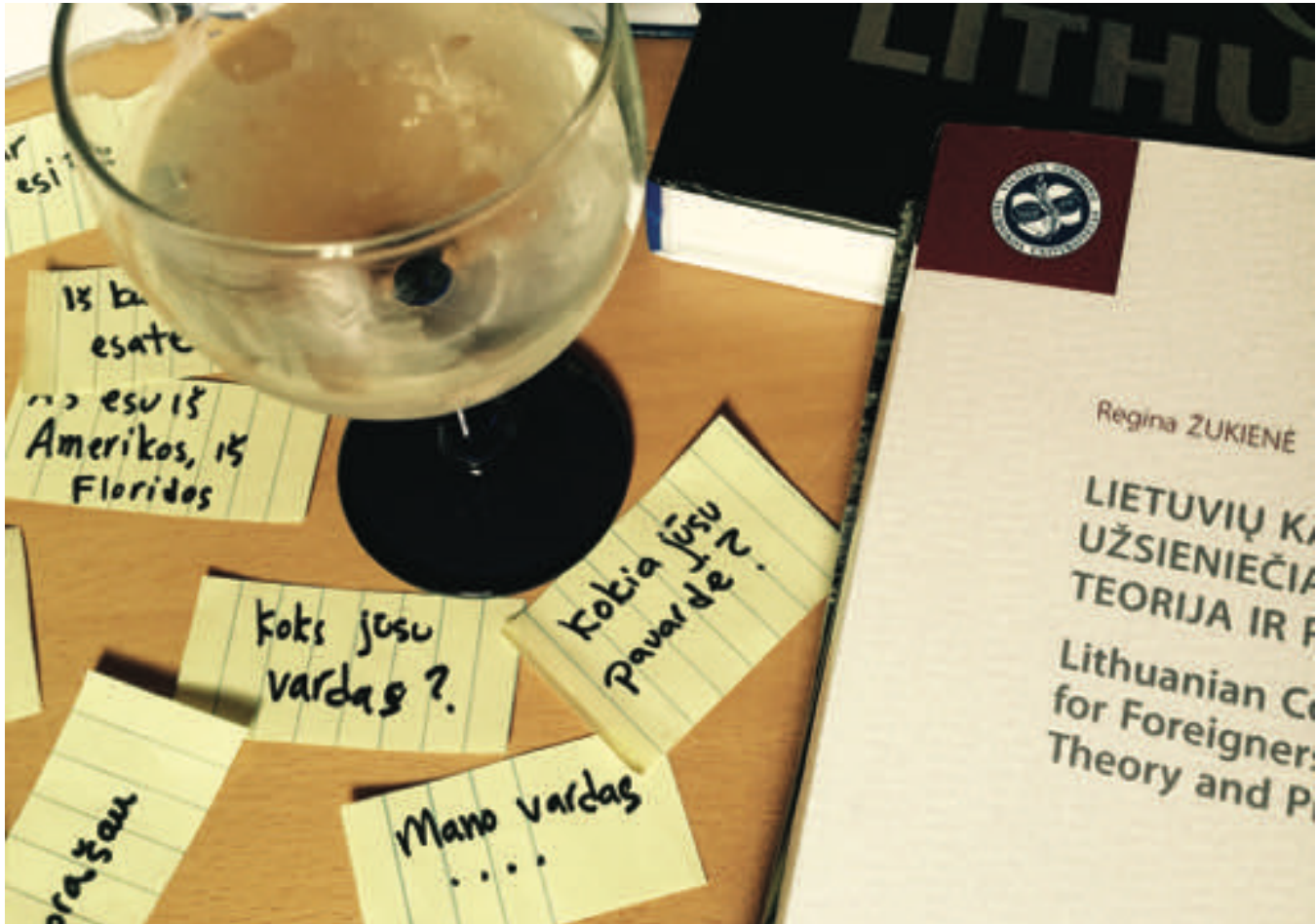
Swastika in Jewish cemetery. Photo: Ellen Cassedy



Memorial at killing site in Rokiškis. Photo: Ellen Cassedy

How to Survive in Lithuania

By Jocelyn Bartkevičius



The author's language study method—a glass of wine and slips of notebook paper with key phrases. Photo: Jocelyn Bartkevičius

Start by procrastinating. Toast to Independence in 1990 and the fourteen who stood up to Soviet tanks in 1991, but don't go until there's no trace of the Soviets. Wait until Lithuania has joined NATO and the E.U. Until border checks are over and Aeroflot is not the only option. Promise to go in 1996 and then back out after relatives make plans for you to stay with the old people in their Soviet-era cinderblock flat. You will not be the first to disappoint your Lithuanian family. Nothing your grandmother sent during the Cold War reached them. Other than your grandmother, no one else so much as sent a letter.

When you finally go, sign up for immersive Lithuanian language study, because your father has forgotten his mother tongue, and your grandparents only rolled their eyes at your feeble efforts to learn it. Rent a studio apartment in the Jewish Quarter of Old Town, Vilnius. Walk past the courtyard walls displaying photos of the murdered Jews who used to live there, the plaque where the synagogue once stood.

Betrayal after betrayal.

Get lost in the maze-like streets of Old Town, twisting alleys, thoroughfares with bike paths crossing through. The ten-minute walk to Vilnius University will take you an hour. Join the elementary immersive language class and struggle with pronunciation and vocabulary. Struggle to hear the difference between “What's your name?” and “How are you?” Try to remember that *iš* means from and isn't, as in English, a form of “to be.”

In your apartment, pour a glass of wine. Tear notebook paper into tiny squares—you can't find index cards in Old Town Vilnius. Write a vocabulary word and useful phrase on each one. Scatter them on the table. Sip your wine and drill and drill. Struggle with the oldest living Indo-European Language, old as Sanskrit, and comprehensible to Sanskrit scholars.

Switch to vodka. Drill nominative, genitive, locative—terms vaguely familiar from college Latin.

At the coffee shop, get used to the clerk rolling his eyes when you try to order kava, using the nominative, when kavos, the genitive, is required. Every day he'll correct your pronunciation

of didelis, large, telling you, in English, that the word is soft. “Don’t grind up the vowels.”

Consider flinging yourself out the second-story classroom window at Vilnius University when you can’t grasp the words and declensions having to do with time. It’s the last straw when you find out that 7:30 means not thirty minutes after 7:00 but thirty minutes before. Skip the movie at Cathedral Square that begins at 0:00 o’clock. Give up on speaking of time in Lithuanian. But order beer and cold borscht soup in a language that is effectively Sanskrit.

Don’t be surprised that no one back in the States knows where Lithuania is, not even your veterinarian who takes exotic trips every year. Show her on the globe in your living room, and watch her marvel at its close proximity to Scandinavia, from which she has just returned. Celebrate the obscurity of your father’s birthplace, the fountainhead of your heredity. Recall elementary school classmates’ Polack jokes, in which Eastern Europe was inhabited by a comic carnival of buffoons.

Don’t be surprised when only one person replies when you post on Facebook that Putin, even now in 2015, is questioning the Baltics’ independence. “No one cares,” an American poet friend will reply. “We’re too busy refighting the civil war.”

Brace yourself to encounter a country stunted by the Soviet occupation. In your grandmother’s photos, her village is a sepia-tinged portrait of despair. Remember how your best friend laughed at family pictures from abroad—an atavistic collection of stiff poses, countenances weighted by strained, toothless smiles, the women wearing homespun sackcloth dresses.

When your second cousin—your grandmother’s sister’s grandson—drives you around, try not to bring up politics. Wonder what it was like for him, born and raised in Soviet times, studying under murals of Stalin and Lenin, wearing a red scarf and hammer and sickle pin, growing up to spy for East Germany during the Cold War. There’s no telling what he’ll make of you, a liberal from a capitalist country, the enemy for most of his life. Too far right? Too far left?

Don’t ask how he became a professor of marketing, specialist in peddling the spoils of capitalism.

When he tells you that Lithuania is a good place to die, there will be a moment when you suspect that he wants you to die there, in a crash on the narrow village roads where he is driving fast and passing on blind curves.

Just grip the seat, and close your eyes as the scenery, like history, rushes imperceptibly by.

Ask him why Lithuania is a good place to die. When he tells you that family will tend your grave forever, try not to think of the neglected gravesite in the U.S. where your grandparents are buried under plastic flowers tended by hired cemetery custodians. You won’t be able to remember the last time you visited.

When you enter the village and your cousin’s cell phone and GPS signals disappear, agree that Gelvonai is stuck in time, between the world wars. It will feel like entering the past, entering a twilight fairy tale, entering your grandmother’s memory.

When your cousin leads you to the gravesite where the parents of your grandmothers lie, marvel at his delicacy and precision, the way he holds the gallon jar above the fresh flowers, moistening leaves and then saturating soil, readjusting the vines that climb over the headstone carved with the plural form of your great-grandparents’ last names. Sigh when you see their first names, which you’ve forgotten: Mykolas and Ieva. Watch your cousin step carefully over to the next grave, pull weeds and water flowers, and read the name, Kazys, the great-uncle who inherited the family farm.

Walk past the gravestone with your own last name, the one handed down by the fathers. Your cousin knows nothing of that family, and your grandfather—who left for the U.S. between the world wars—never spoke, just drank whiskey and glowered. Berate yourself later, when it’s too late, that you didn’t even glance, kept your camera hooked to your belt, and may never see that cemetery again.



The gravestone of the author’s great grandparents, Mykolas and Ieva. Photo: Jocelyn Bartkevičius



The stand of trees marks the spot where the author's grandparents' house and neighboring houses were destroyed by the Soviets. Photo: Jocelyn Bartkevičius

Stand on the farmstead your grandmother told you about all your life, feel as if time has reversed itself, as if you are standing in her past. Everything is precisely as she described it, down to the wood-plank cottage, the apple trees, the field where she slept beside the horses, hobbled so they couldn't run, listening for wolves and thieves. Agree with your cousin that you've both gone back in time, that this village has not changed since your grandmothers were children. Stunted by World War I that they lived through together, and by the Soviet occupation that your grandmother escaped and his did not.

Look for the forest where they hid from Prussians and Russians. You had always assumed it was nearby, just a mad dash from the house under cover of the night sky. But there is no forest in sight. Rethink your assumptions. Grasp the huge difficulty they faced, transporting food by wagon or on foot, building a shelter miles away in the cold, and in ever-present mortal danger.

Travel dirt roads to the next village over, where another of the brothers farmed. Your grandmother married and moved nearby, but only a grove of trees remains. Marvel at her insight, the distrust of Russia that made her flee with the children. Wonder how they left the village, three years after her husband moved to America in 1927. Your cousin will guess by horse-drawn sleigh, and you picture her holding the two toddlers beneath blankets, the three-year old who will become your father as terrified as he looks in the last picture taken in the village, before their third-class transit across the Atlantic, wave-tossed emigrants too sick to eat or even stand. Chastise yourself for never asking your grandmother for the information you crave now, where she lived those three years without her husband. Alone at their farm? Back with her family? With his family? Whether they sold the farm or gave it away. That lost and forgotten plot of land, submerged in shadows and dreams, no trace of the living remaining.

Travel to another village where your cousin's grandmother is buried. Here is the place Vytas and his mother tend every Sunday. Watch as he waters red flowers, pulls weeds. Note that



The childhood home of the author's grandmother and her siblings in Gelvonai. Photo: Jocelyn Bartkevičius

a child is buried beside her, the son who died in the Siberian Gulag where his mother survived for eight years, on heavy work detail, in zero hours of daylight in winter, subzero temperatures, and in swarms of mosquitoes in summer. Try to imagine how the dead boy's older brother—Vytas's father—traveled to Siberia and brought the small body home after she, their mother, Vytas's grandmother, was released during Glasnost. Believe that you know this woman, your great-aunt, your grandmother's sister, from the fragile letters she sent, written in tiny foreign words, marred by thick black lines where KGB censors kept any real information from getting through the Iron Curtain. Try to fathom how she survived it, watching her little boy starve to death, laying him to rest in foreign soil.

Picture your father's mother's grave, beside her husband's, with no room for the children, all of whom survived into adulthood, a place you have visited once or twice, where plastic flowers and small potted plants are tended not by family, but by workers employed by the cemetery. Wonder what it means that you are kneeling at the grave of the sister she left over seventy-five years before on a cold winter's day, on the soil of the homeland to which neither she nor the children she fled with ever returned.

And what about Petras, your partisan great-uncle with the angular, handsome face, executed by the KGB deep in the primordial forest, his bones beneath the loam and pine needles in a place visited only by the seasons? Ask your cousin about him, your grandmothers' youngest brother, who dressed in his army uniform and joined the men they called the Forest Brothers to fight the Soviets, in combat the Soviets called "the Invisible Front," the resistance they kept secret from the West.

Petras's body was never recovered, and you want to know how Lithuania was a good place to die for him, whether there are flowers or a memorial, someone tending a place of memory for this man who died too young to have children. Try several different ways to ask this question, since your cousin doesn't seem to understand. No, at last he'll tell you. There is no place like that for him.



Hallway at the Genocide and Resistance Museum, the restored KGB prison and torture facility where the author found the names of her great-aunt and her child in *The Book of Lithuanian Genocide Victims*. Photo: Jocelyn Bartkevičius

Ask your cousin why the KGB seized his grandmother and her child in the night, packed them into a cattle car, and shipped them to Siberia like cargo. He will tell you that she helped him and somebody saw, and you picture the kind of help she might have provided, food or shelter, mending or washing his uniform, hiding him beneath her floor.

Ask yourself why you've taken so long to come here, over two decades since the Iron Curtain fell. Ask yourself why it's so important to you, this place so indelible in your memory from the stories your grandmother told. Maybe she forged the connection so you'd return to the place she believed was too dangerous for a sister of a partisan. Maybe she simply needed to hear the stories herself and you were the excuse to say them out loud.

Walk through the forest with your cousin, stopping to see wooden carvings of the pagan gods. Lithuania was the last European country to give up paganism, and you wonder if they really did, given these elaborate totems—the path to the stone carved with pagan symbols lined with wood sculptures of gods. Marvel at your cousin's almost pantheistic eye for the natural world, how out of what seems an aural vision he notices a tiny strawberry plant nearly concealed by undergrowth beneath a distant tree, how he turns up a leaf to reveal the tiny berries, no more than a quarter of an inch, and picks them for you to eat. Try not to resent all that was withheld from you: your father's native tongue, your grandmother's knowledge of gardening and foraging in the forest. Remember that silence determined survival, and silence was carried through the generations, as if genetic, all the way down to you, a middle-aged college professor desperate to know your origins. Celebrate the stories your grandmother did tell, the connection she forged between you and the family on the other side of the world.

Laugh when your cousin jumps off the trail again, returns with a piece of bark, and says, "I know I'm strange." He'll tell you the bark is for cultivating orchids, which, along with cucumbers and tomatoes he grows in the large windows of his Soviet-era flat, a fifth floor walkup. Think of the dead orchids on your windowsill in the States. Remember your own attempts at gardens, bolting bitter lettuce, stunted tomatoes. Your grandmother's garden thrived, but you never learned to create one yourself.

Study the vocabulary for your Lithuanian immersion course. Celebrate memorizing words for things you like to drink: water, coffee, wine, beer, vanduo, kava, vynas, alus. Try not to cry when you discover that to order these drinks, you need different words: vandens, kavos, vyno, alaus.

Brave the streets by yourself anyway, order cold borscht (šaltibarščiai) and alaus, then stop at the market to stock the kitchen of your rented studio apartment. Sort through Euros (pronounced ahh-ooorrr-ose) to pay for strawberries (braškės), eggs (kiaušiniai), kavos, milk (piena) and, if you've translated correctly, butter (sviestas).

Write more words and sentences on strips of notebook paper, spread them out on the small table in your studio, drink vyno and do vocabulary drills. Make yourself understood at the post office, bookstore, and at the Genocide and Resistance Museum—a restored KGB prison and torture facility—where you will find your great-aunt and her child—their names, flotsam drifting in an ocean of death, in a volume of a collection known as *The Book of Lithuanian Genocide Victims*. Read, beside their names, the results of the KGB's fetish for details: the day of their arrest, the day of the boy's death and the dates of your great-aunt's pardon and release.

Peer into the water torture cell, the padded soundproof torture cell, and the "boxes," more cabinets than cells, where individual prisoners awaiting torture were stored. Wonder if your great-uncle was brought there, or your great-aunt and her son.

Open the guard's peephole in a thick metal cell door, and with a sudden gasp, realize that the eye peering back at you is your own, reflected in a small mirror. What if it had been you, is



The author wondered if Lithuania had really given up paganism as she admired wood carvings of pagan deities lining the path to a locally famous stone carved with pagan symbols. Photo: Jocelyn Bartkevičius

the unspoken, somewhat complicit interrogative the museum director wants you to consider.

What if you had been born there, your father used to say, his attempt at instilling a love of country—your country—a thought that plays at the edge of an ill-defined sense of American exceptionalism. Worry about your love of Lithuania, your other country, exceptional by way of its suffering, the depraved ravages of ghoulish continental nationalism: How you were finally drawn to it, how you had to face all your preconceptions, misconceptions, and inchoate fears to travel here.

Mention to your cousin the stories your grandmother told about hiding in the forest during World War I from the lethal, metronomic plunder and violence of invading Russians and Prussians. Realize his grandmother never spoke of those days, that by the time he first met her, after her release from the Gulag, her more recent suffering and witness to atrocity eclipsed what the sisters had lived through together. Keep to yourself what you read about former Gulag prisoners, that they were so broken they recognized each other by a vital absence, by a deeply altered sense of who they'd been before, the story ground into the blank rheuminess of their eyes and sunken countenances. Try not to remember the first time your cousin told you that his grandmother had died in a fight, how you thought it was a language problem and laughed. Recognize that it has taken you years to comprehend why he believed her time in Siberia contributed to that skirmish over wood scraps to build a planter. Regret that you will never know the extent of what his grandmother managed to convey to her sister, your own grandmother: Their brother's capture? His murder? The Gulag? And if your grandmother did know, why she didn't trust you with the truth.

Try to imagine growing up like your cousin, in a Soviet school, with a red kerchief around your neck, forbidden from going to church (so that your parents must smuggle you to the village, out of sight of the KGB, for your secret confirmation). And how, by comparison, your most "terrifying" moments involved practicing duck-and-cover from Soviet nuclear weapons. Alongside your friends at school. Supervised by teachers. Followed by a mid-day snack.

Drive with your cousin to see his daughter at the language camp where, while you labored over Lithuanian terms and grammar for two weeks, she has become fluent in the school-based English she'd spoken so haltingly the day you met. Say a few words in Lithuanian to the camp director, a colleague of your cousin's from Vilnius University: You are pleased to meet her. You speak and understand only a little Lithuanian. Man labai patinka Lietuva: You like Lithuania very much.

When she suggests that you could teach English in the camp the following summer, and learn Lithuanian from the teachers, thank her in Lithuanian, ačiū, and consider doing it.

As you leave, she asks you if you could survive in Lithuania. Fixate on that word, survive. Consider your grandmother and her sister, surviving in the forest while armies seized their

farm. Consider your cousin's garden, his eye for berries, how he learned like the elders to select mushrooms from the forest floor. Consider his grandmother, surviving imprisonment and the death of her child in Siberia. Think of your great-uncle, murdered in the forest. Think of your poor gardening skills, your inability to tell poisonous berries and mushrooms from those you can eat.

Tell her, no, you could not survive in Lithuania. Notice how she looks at you askance. Wonder what survivalist skills have to do with teaching English.

Realize, hours later, that by survival, she meant walking through Vilnius in the twenty-first century—not fleeing KGB agents or Prussian or Russian soldiers, not foraging in the forest to prevent starvation. Consider that only someone lost in her grandmother's past would misconstrue what the teacher was really asking, would not comprehend that she wanted to know if two weeks of study provided you with the rudimentary language skills to get by, to allow you to purchase what will sustain you, eggs, and coffee, and beer, the same basic command of language necessary to lead a small group of children in memorizing similar simple words and phrases in English.

Rest assured that the teacher will not invite you to language class, believing that after such careful study you are not capable of even basic, if stilted, communication.

Get lost in Vilnius even with a map of the city, directional dyslexia making you turn left when the map indicates right. Miss the dinner out with others in the language class, who have come to believe that, lost as you continue to get on the way to school and outings, you will never survive in Lithuania.

Learn to slow down, find a stillness within the centuries around you. Make a list of some places and details, and realize that it will have to do, that all of this is just another way of going home.

Jocelyn Bartkevičius, Ph.D., has received the Missouri Review Essay Award, The Annie Dillard Award in Creative Nonfiction, the Iowa Woman Essay Prize, the Vogel Scholarship in Nonfiction at Bread Loaf and the 2016 John Guyon Literary Nonfiction Prize. Her work has appeared in anthologies and in such journals as The Hudson Review, The Missouri Review, The Bellingham Review, The Iowa Review, Fourth Genre, TriQuarterly, Crab Orchard Review, Gulf Coast and Sweet, and has been selected for the "notables" list in The Best American Essays. She is working on a memoir about the Lithuanian diaspora and secret mass deportations in Soviet Lithuania. She teaches in the MFA program at the University of Central Florida and is the former editor of The Florida Review.



The author enjoys a moment on the dock at Trakai.

Lithuania on the Road to Rio



During an official send-off ceremony, Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė presented the Lithuanian Olympic team with a flag that will be carried into the Olympic Stadium in Rio de Janeiro by team captain Gintarė Scheidt (kneeling, right). Photo: Robertas Dačkus, Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania

Sixty-eight Lithuanian athletes are competing in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from August 5 to August 21. Their participation will mark Lithuania's ninth appearance in Summer Olympic history, and its seventh consecutive appearance since independence from the Soviet Union.

A number of athletes are making repeat appearances, and are favored to repeat their medal-winning performances, including Laura Asadauskaitė in modern pentathlon and Rūta Meilutytė in swimming. The men's and women's rowing teams are also expected to do well. And, of course, everyone is rooting for the Lithuanian basketball team, which narrowly missed the semi-finals in 2012.

Interesting to note: while you probably won't see Lithuania's name among the top in the daily medal tally, given its small number of athletes relative to many larger countries, this republic is no

slouch at medals per capita. Lithuania has garnered 21 total medals since 1992 (six Olympiads), compared to a combined 31 total in the same period for the 10 competing nations closest to it in population.

Here's the full roster of Lithuanian athletes who are Rio-bound. Be sure to watch for them during televised coverage.

Basketball

The Lithuanian men's basketball team is composed of Lithuanian athletes who play for teams around the world during the regular season, including North American players Domantas Sabonis (Oklahoma City Thunder), Mindaugas Kuzminskas (New York Knicks) and Jonas Valančiūnas (Toronto Raptors). The team is scheduled to play Brazil (August 7), Nigeria (August 9), Argentina (August 11), Spain (August 13) and Croatia (August 15) in the opening round to determine if they will advance to the quarterfinals.

Mantas Kalnietis: Point Guard
Adas Juškevičius: Guard
Jonas Mačiulis: Small Forward
Renaldas Seibutis: Shooting Guard
Domantas Sabonis: Forward/Center
Antanas Kavaliauskas: Center
Paulius Jankūnas: Power Forward
Robertas Javtokas: Center (Captain)
Jonas Valančiūnas: Center
Mindaugas Kuzminskas: Small Forward
Marius Grigonis: Guard/Forward
Vaidas Kariniauskas: Guard/Forward

Boxing

Evaldas Petrauskas: Light Welterweight (2012 Bronze Medalist)
Eimantas Stanionis: Welterweight

Canoeing – Men's Sprint

Ignas Navakauskas: K-1 200m
Henrikas Žustautas: C-1 200m
Aurimas Lankas and

Edvinas Ramanauskas: K-2 200m
Ričardas Nekriošius and Andrej Olijnik: K-2 1000m

Cycling

Ignatas Konovalovas:

Men's Road Race

Ramūnas Navardauskas:

Men's Road Race

Daiva Tušlaitė: Women's Road Race

Simona Krupeckaitė:

Women's Sprint and Women's Keirin

Gymnastics

Robert Tvorogal: Men's Artistic

Gymnastics

Judo

In the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, Lithuania for first time had two judo athletes, both men, compete. This year, Lithuania for the first time qualified a woman, Santa Pakenyte, in the sport.

Santa Pakenytė: Women's +78kg

Modern pentathlon

Laura Asadauskaitė: Women's (2012 gold)

Justinas Kinderis: Men's

Ieva Serapinaitė: Women's

Rowing - Men

Armandas Kelmelis: Single Sculls

Mindaugas Griškonis and Saulius Ritter: Double Sculls

Aurimas Adomavičius, Martynas Džiaugys,

Dominykas Jančionis and Dovydas Nemeravičius:

Quadruple Sculls

Rowing – Women

Lina Šaltytė: Single Sculls

Milda Valčiukaitė and

Donata Vištartaitė: Double Sculls

Sailing

Juozas Bernotas: Men's RS:X

Gintarė Scheidt: Womens' Laser Radial

Shooting

Ronaldas Račinskas: Men's Skeet



Airinė Palšytė, Lithuania's best high jumper, won the silver medal at the European Track and Field Championships in Amsterdam in June 2016, clearing 1.89 meters. She will represent Lithuania at the Summer Olympics in Rio. Photo: Alfredas Pliadis, pliadisfoto.com

Swimming

Rūta Meilutytė: Women's 100m

Breaststroke

Simonas Bilis: Men's 50m Freestyle, 100m Freestyle

Danas Rapšys: Men's 200m Freestyle, 100m Backstroke, 200m Backstroke

Andrius Šidlauskas: Men's 100m Backstroke

Giedrius Titenis: Men's 100m Breaststroke, 200m Breaststroke

Simonas Bilis, Deividas Margevičius, Danas Rapšys and Giedrius Titenis: Men's 4 x 100m Relay

Tennis

For the first time in its Olympic history, Lithuania is sending a tennis player to compete. Ričardas Berankis is currently ranked 54th in the world.

Ričardas Berankis: Men's singles

Track and Field – Men

Valdas Dopolskas: Marathon

Remigijus Kančys: Marathon

Arturas Mastianica: 50km Walk

Marius Šavelskis: 20km Walk

Tadas Šuškevičius: 50km Walk

Marius Žiukas: 20km Walk

Andrius Gudžius: Discus Throw

Track and Field – Women

Neringa Aidietytė: 20km Walk

Eglė Balčiūnaitė: 800m

Rasa Drazdauskaitė: Marathon

Diana Lobačevskė: Marathon

Živilė Vaiciukevičiūtė: 20km Walk

Brigita Virbalytė-Dimšienė: 20km Walk

Vaida Žūsinaitė: Marathon

Airinė Palšytė: High Jump

Zinaida Sendriūtė: Discus Throw

Weightlifting

Aurimas Didžbalis: Men's -94kg

Wrestling

Edgaras Venckaitis:

Men's Greco-Roman -66kg



Brief Takes

By Rimas Gedeika

Diving

Platform diver Genevieve Akvilė Angerame is a remarkable story. She was born in Alytus, Lithuania, and spent the first 18 months of her life in an orphanage. She was adopted by an American-Lithuanian family and brought to Connecticut, where, during the next 16 years, she became one on the best 10 m platform divers in the U.S.

As she perfected her diving skills, she began to develop a keen interest in the country of her birth. Her interest was sparked by her Lithuanian mother, who related many awe-inspiring stories about the beauty of Lithuania. What began as a passing interest soon became a deep yearning to see Lithuania. To satisfy her desire, her mother took her there.

Angerame returned to the U.S. with many wonderful memories, as well as many dreams spinning through her head. One of those dreams was to become a member of Lithuania's National Swimming Team and represent the country in the Summer Olympics in Rio.

The Lithuanian Swimming Federation, after reviewing her application, her achievements and her future potential, accepted Angerame on the National Team.

The next challenge facing her was the Olympic Qualifying Standard. She would have to attain it at the World Swimming Championships in June, in Rio.

Before competing at the World Swimming Championships, Genevieve made her debut as a member of the Lithuanian National Team at the European Diving Championships. And what a sensational debut it was! The youngest competitor in the Championship, she took 10th place out of 20 competitors, and qualified for the finals. What made this achievement even more amazing was that it was the first time in 25 years that a Lithuanian diver qualified for the finals in the 10 m platform. In the finals, she was able to take only 12th place.

At the World Diving Championships, Angerame did not fare as well. She failed to attain the qualifying norm in either the 10 m platform or the 3 m springboard. Thus, her dream of representing Lithuania in the Olympics will have to be postponed at least until 2020.

Many experts see a very bright future for Angerame—a medal for her, a medal for Lithuania.

Swimming

Simonas Bilis, swimming for North Carolina State University in the NCAA Swimming Championships, in Atlanta, Ga., won two silver medals: one in the 50 m individual freestyle and the other in the 4 x 50 freestyle relay. Bilis comes from Panevežys, Lithuania, and has been swimming for NC State for the past four

years. He holds the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) record in the 50 m, 100 m and 200 m freestyle. This year, Bilis was named the ACC Swimmer of the Year for the second consecutive year. Bilis will represent Lithuania in the Rio Summer Olympics in the 50 m and 100 m freestyle. He will be the first swimmer from NC State to qualify for the Olympics.

Basketball

In June 2016, the NBA's New York Knicks signed Mindaugas Kuzminskas for two years with a contact worth \$6 million. The 26-year-old 6' 9" inch small forward has been playing professional basketball for six years. His last year was with Spain, where he averaged 12 points for Malaga's Unicaja.

In 2013 and 2015, Kuzminskas played for Lithuania's National Team, helping them win two silver medals. He will play for Lithuania in this summer's Olympics in Rio.

Kuzminskas joins four fellow Lithuanians who are already playing in the NBA: Jonas Valančiūnas (Toronto), Domantas Sabonis (Oklahoma), Mindaugas Motiejūnas (Houston) and Nik Stauskas (Philadelphia).



Mindaugas Kuzminskas. Photo: Augustas Didžgalvis

Dance

This May, for the first time in Lithuania's history, two pairs of its dancers won medals in the World DanceSport Federation European Championships (Adult Standard Division). Evaldas Sodeika and Ieva Žukauskaitė won the silver medal and Vaidotas Lacitis and Veronika Golodneva won the bronze medal.



Evaldas Sodeika and Ieva Žukauskaitė and Vaidotas Lacitis and Veronika Golodneva.

Track and Field

Vaida Žūsinaitė ran the Hanover Marathon in 2:32:50, five minutes faster than her previous best. She qualified for the Rio Summer Olympics, which will be her third consecutive Olympic Games.

Football

Tautvydas Kieras signed a contract to play football for the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, becoming the first athlete from Lithuania to sign a professional football contract without ever playing the sport.

Kieras never heard of football until he came to the University of Mississippi on a track and field scholarship (in Lithuania, he was considered heir apparent to the legendary discus thrower, Virgilijus Alekna). In his senior year, the 24-year-old, 6' 3", 271-pound discus thrower set a school record with a throw of 196' 11".

This spring, Kieras participated in the University of Mississippi's Pro Football Day, where NFL scouts evaluate the University's football players. He so impressed the KC Chief scouts with his strength and natural athletic abilities, that they offered him a contract to try out for a linebacker position.

Hockey

23-year-old Mantas Armalis, one of Lithuania's best hockey goalies, signed with the National Hockey League's Saint Jose Sharks, joining fellow Lithuanian Dainius Zubrus. This is the first time that two Lithuanians are playing on the same professional team.

Armalis is the third hockey player from Lithuania to play in the NHL. Zubrus was the first and Darius Kasperaitis, now retired, was the second.

Kick Boxing

In May, in Hungary, at the World Kick Boxing Championships, Mantas Rimdeika won the World Heavyweight Division by knocking out his Ukrainian opponent. Forty-three countries and 2,000 athletes participated in the Championships.

Baseball

This year Deividas Neverauskas became the first baseball player from Lithuania to play on a Major League Baseball team. He pitched for the Pittsburgh Pirates during spring training. Currently he is playing on their triple-A minor league team—just one small step from the majors.

Soccer

Vytautas Andriuskevičius, 26-year-old offensive player, signed a contract with the Portland Timbers of the American Soccer League. He is the second Lithuanian player to do so.



Vytautas Andriuskevičius. Photo: Anders Henrikson



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Desertinis Sūris su Žele

Cheese Delicacy With Jell-O

By Jana Sirusaitė Motivans



Jell-O was very popular in Lithuania during the 1970s and 1980s, and was often served for dessert when I visited my relatives during those years. The Jell-O was always carefully presented in glass serving bowls, and often included more than one flavor or color carefully cut into evenly sized cubes, which made the dessert look much fancier than it actually was. I remember one time being served a dessert with yellow, green and red Jell-O—the colors of the Lithuanian flag! That was bold back in Soviet times when any displays of Lithuanian nationalism were strictly forbidden.

In recent times, with the wider availability of imported goods in food stores, Jell-O has been “dressed up.” The availability of Philadelphia Cream Cheese in Lithuania led to the creation of this unique dessert, known as desertinis sūris (cheese delicacy). This recipe was brought to Montreal by the sister of one of our former priests from Lithuania and is a favorite of the Rutos Klubas pensioners club. This is a fun, “retro” dessert for a summer cookout or picnic.

a taste of lithuania

Desertinis Sūris su Žele (Cheese delicacy with Jell-O)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 packages (8 oz. each) Philadelphia Cream Cheese, room temperature
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 package (4-serving size) Jell-O, any flavor
- 2 tablespoons Knox gelatin (2 small envelopes)

1. Empty the Jell-O into a small, heat-resistant bowl. Pour 1/2 cup boiling water over the Jell-O powder and mix until dissolved.



2. Chill in refrigerator for several hours until completely firm. When it is solid, slide it out of the bowl onto a cutting board and cut into small evenly sized cubes.



3. Empty the Knox packages into another small, heat-resistant bowl, and pour 1/2 cup boiling water over the powder. Mix until dissolved.



4. Place the softened cream cheese into a large bowl, and add the sugar and vanilla. Using an electric mixer, mix until combined. Add the milk, and mix until completely smooth.



5. Add the dissolved Knox to the cream cheese, and mix thoroughly. Add the chopped up Jell-O to the bowl, and use a large wooden spoon to gently mix the Jell-O cubes into the cream cheese mixture.



6. Spray a 10-inch loaf pan with cooking spray, and spread the mixture carefully into the pan. Refrigerate overnight before unmolding and serving.



All of Us Together Is a Celebration

By Irina Buroskas

Translated by Danutė Gedeika

Just as spring peeked in on our activities at Philadelphia's Vincas Krevė Lithuanian School, we were preparing for the traditional end-of-school-year family celebration. It turned into an unexpected wonder—"Mums visiems kartu smagu" (All of us together is a celebration)—as the school children, along with their families and friends, and the folk dance group Aguelė (Poppy), all joined together and displayed what they had learned, living what they learned.

On Sunday, May 15, 2016, in the church hall of St. Andrew's Lithuanian parish in Philadelphia, the older students began the program with a guitar trio. Poetic expressions about family followed. Our youngest children recited their heartwarming tributes about mothers, and with spirited voices sang about fathers. Other songs were about the duckling family. The first half concluded with the children's uplifted voices carried by burbulai (wind instruments), singing the popular Džimba group's song, "My whole-hearted love for mother."

The school's families and friends opened the second act of the show. Some families were a little hesitant to participate, but all that did, displayed extraordinary talent. Each family introduced one another. Some sang, others played instruments and some danced. A few even performed circus and gymnastic stunts.

The school's folk dance group, Aguelė, was featured opening the third part of the show. Although this group has been dancing only for a short while, it has attracted 20 children who performed splendidly in Kalvelis (The Blacksmith), Pasėjau Kanapę (I Sowed the Hemp) and Malūnėlis (Little Windmill).



The older students began the program with a guitar trio. Photo: Tautvilė Kazakevičiūtė

The girls' debut of Barborytė (Little Barbara) was performed gracefully as they danced adorned with beaded wreaths and fashionably patterned leggings. The folk dance teacher, Estera Washofsky, not only teaches the dances, but also embellishes the group with her handicrafts.

And now, what is a celebration without food? The parents of the folk dance group made and sold cepelinai (potato dumplings). The proceeds helped fund the group's participation in the XV Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival in Baltimore, Md., on July 3, 2016.



The youngest children sang songs about their mothers and fathers—and ducklings. Photo: Tautvilė Kazakevičiūtė

New York Honors Lithuanians Exiled to Siberia

By Milda Stanislauskaitė

Translated by Raimundas Šližys

On Sunday, June 12, 2016, following the Lithuanian Mass at Annunciation Church in Brooklyn, N.Y., a commemorative program was held marking the Lithuanian national "Day of Mourning and Hope" in honor of the memory of Lithuanians who were exiled to Siberia. The program was held in the Annunciation parish hall and was hosted by the president of the New York City chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community, Rasa Sprindys. Following an opening prayer by Fr. Vytautas Volertas, the Annunciation parish choir led everyone in the singing of the American and Lithuanian national anthems. A representative of the Lithuanian Consulate in New York, Second Secretary Aistė Jakštienė, presented a speech about the tragic exile of thousands of Lithuanians to Siberia during and after World War II. Three survivors of their exile to Siberia took part in the commemoration: Teresė Paškevičiūtė, Vytautas Čereška and Irena Bladykienė, who were invited to light candles in memory of those who perished in Siberia and to honor them with a moment of silence. One of the survivors of the Siberian camps, Vytautas Čereška, described how Lithuanians were left in the cold, barren terrain of Siberia and how those who survived believed that no foreign power could conquer their will to live. He also noted that during those very difficult times, Lithuanians helped each other and were united. He added that it is equally important today for Lithuanians to maintain that deep sense of unity and



Survivor of exile to Siberia, Vytautas Čereška.



From left to right: Vida Bladykaitė Wilson, Artūras Wilson, Irena Bladykienė, Valdas Buožys, Rasa Sprindys, Teresė Paškevičiūtė, Vytautas Čereška.

patriotism for their homeland.

The director of the New York Lithuanian Theater Group, Vida Bladykaitė Wilson, presented a very moving reading of poems composed by Antanas Miškinis and Sigitas Geda, accompanied by accomplished pianist Artūras Wilson, who performed compositions by Beethoven and Shostakovich. Another member of the New York Lithuanian Theater Group, historian Valdas Buožys, described some of the horrific details of the deportations to Siberia, which the Soviets had planned as early as 1935 to deport more than 320,000 Lithuanian citizens. He reminded everyone that the Soviet aggression against Lithuanians is also reflected in the thinking of the current Russian leadership and that we must remain vigilant and united.

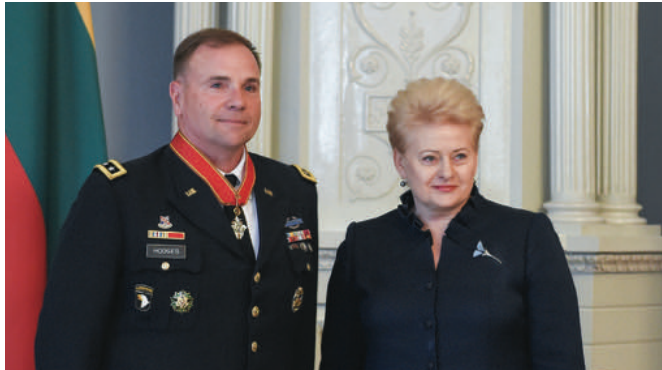
Following the program, those assembled viewed an exhibition of drawings by Gintautas Martynaitis, who had been exiled to Siberia. In his drawings, Mr. Martynaitis depicted the entire process that the Soviets employed in deporting victims to Siberia, from their arrest at their homes, to their transport in cattle cars, to their struggle to work and to survive under the brutal conditions of Siberia.

The survivors of the Siberian camps who participated in the commemoration were deeply touched that the hardships that they endured, as well as those who did not survive, will never be forgotten by their Lithuanian countrymen.

Milda Stanislauskaitė is a board member of the New York City chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community.

Photos by Raimundas Šližys.

U.S. Army Europe Commander Receives Lithuanian State Decoration



Lt. Gen. Frederick Hodges with Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė. Photo: R. Dačkus, Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania

President Dalia Grybauskaitė awarded the Cross of Commander of the Order for Merits to Lithuania to Lieutenant General Frederick Benjamin Hodges, U.S. Army Europe Commander on June 6, 2016, in Vilnius.

Hodges was awarded for helping strengthen the security of Lithuania. Two years ago, he responded quickly to the aggression in Ukraine and took active steps to immediately deploy U.S. rotational forces and military equipment in the Baltic States. According to Grybauskaitė, Lithuania highly values the firm support of the United States and its security guarantees for the Baltic countries.

Grybauskaitė and Hodges discussed preparations for the upcoming NATO summit in Warsaw. Grybauskaitė pointed out that NATO's deterrence had to be based on specific capabilities, allowing for an effective counter-action against threats on NATO's Eastern flank. She also stressed that it was necessary to maintain a continuous rotation of U.S. troops in Lithuania, conduct military exercises based on real threat scenarios and continuously improve interoperability between Lithuanian and U.S. military units.

Hodges praised Lithuania for its decisions to strengthen national defense by reinstating compulsory military service, increasing defense spending and modernizing the armed forces. He said that he often cited Lithuania as a model example for rapid and effective reinforcement of defenses.

Lithuania supports Hodges' proposal to create a "military Schengen zone" in Europe, which would ease bureaucratic barriers and facilitate the movement of NATO's support across the Baltic countries, if needed.

The meeting also focused on the pre-positioning of U.S. military equipment in Lithuania, which is one of the most important measures to accelerate the arrival of NATO Response Force. Among the other issues discussed were prospects for developing a unified air defense architecture in the Baltic countries and the need to change NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission to air defense mission.

House Baltic Caucus Gains Two New Members



Rep. Ted Lieu



Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart

Rep. Ted Lieu (R) and Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R) have recently joined the House Baltic Caucus.

Lieu is a freshman congressman, serving California's 33rd Congressional District. He serves on the House Budget Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. He is frequently sought out for his insight on

technology and innovation matters including cybersecurity, cloud computing and innovation.

Lieu has established himself as a leader on environmental protection, Social Security and Medicare, civil liberties and veterans. He is a former active duty officer in the U.S. Air Force and currently serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Reserves.

Diaz-Balart is in his seventh term, serving Florida's 25th Congressional District. He is a senior member of the House Committee on Appropriations and three of its subcommittees. He is a member of the U.S. Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, vice-chairman of the Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations (PCTR) of the Political Committee. He also chairs the U.S. Delegation to the Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue.

Diaz-Balart acts tirelessly in defense of individual rights and liberties, promoting economic prosperity, and supporting a strong national defense. He is well known for his advocacy of human rights and democracy around the world, as well as for his staunch support of the U.S. global allies.

LF Supports Lithuanian Culture With Grants

By Juozas Kapačinskas, Chairman, LF Grants Committee



LF Grants Committee (from left): Arvydas Tamulis, Dalius F. Vasys, Ingrida Strokovas, Virgus Volertas, Laura Garnytė, Vytautas Narutis, Renata Dambrauskaitė-Kancleris and Juozas Kapačinskas. Photo: Lithuanian Foundation archives

The Grants Committee of the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc., met on May 21-22, 2016, to award \$502,174 to various organizations, supporting activity in Lithuanian education and culture worldwide. The two-day meeting, held in the Lithuanian World Center, in Lemont, Ill., was the culmination of a two-month review process, in which 177 requests were considered. Of these requests, 74 were approved, with major grants allocated in the following areas:

Lithuanian-American Educational Council	\$149,440
Lithuanian Youth Camps	\$74,500
Lithuanian Research Center	\$26,000
Lithuanian Media	\$35,500
Lithuanian Dance Festival – Baltimore 2016	\$30,000
Lithuanian-American Cultural Council	\$25,000
Lithuanian Int'l Student Services	\$25,000

Attending the meeting, with voting rights, were four directors of the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc. (LF) and four representatives of the Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. (LAC): Juozas Kapačinskas, LF, chairman of the Grants Committee, Vytautas Narutis, LF, Dalius Vasys, LF, Arvydas Tamulis, LF (alternate voting member), Virgus Volertas, LAC, Renata Dambrauskaitė-Kancleris, LAC, Laura Garnytė, LAC, and Ingrida Strokovas, LAC (alternate voting member).

Also in attendance were Saulius Čyvas, LF chairman of the board, Marius Kasniūnas, LF CEO, Jūratė Mereckienė, LF administrator, and Vida Bieliauskienė, LF secretary.

Two additional grant-allocation meetings will be held this year. During the Fall Grants Meeting in October, an additional \$90,000 will be awarded to organizations in support of Lithuanian activities. In the November Scholarship Grants Meeting, \$170,000 will be awarded to students of Lithuanian descent or students that are pursuing studies in Lithuanian culture or heritage.

The Lithuanian Foundation is sincerely grateful to all of its members and donors who have made it possible to provide

over 50 years of continuous support to Lithuanian organizations in the worldwide Lithuanian diaspora, as well as in Lithuania.

For more information about the Lithuanian Foundation, and the 2016 Grants Program, please visit lithuanianfoundation.org.



Members of the Lithuanian Foundation Grants Committee, discussing funding requests at the Spring Grants Review Meeting. Photo: Lithuanian Foundation archives

Security

... U.S. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter said that NATO is considering rotating four battalions, about 4,000 troops, among the Baltic States and Poland in addition to an armored brigade of about 4,299 troops, in February 2017. Andrei Kelin of the Russian Defense Ministry stated, "I am afraid this would require certain retaliatory measures, which the Russian Defense Ministry is already talking about."

... A NATO-led table-top exercise, Critical Energy Infrastructure Protection, gathered 60 experts from 12 countries with the aim of increasing NATO's identification of vulnerable targets and protection of the Baltic region's energy infrastructure, including electrical generation and distribution.

... Lithuanian Special Operations forces worked for three weeks with British, Danish, Georgian, Latvian, Norwegian, Polish, Swedish, U.S. and Ukrainian soldiers in Exercise Flaming Sword 2016. Personnel from the Lithuanian Land Force, Air Force, Training and Doctrine Command, Military Logistics and Rifleman's Union augmented the Lithuanian group. The exercise included activities in more than 16 Lithuanian locations plus Latvian territory.

... A regiment-sized convoy of 400 Stryker combat and support vehicles will move from Vilseck, Germany, to Tapa, Estonia, covering 2,400 km over multiple routes, including river crossings. Estonia is the lead nation this year, with joint exercises occurring in the Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, all to wind up in Tapa.

... More than 1,200 soldiers from the U.S., Canada, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany and Poland participated in the exercise Hunter 2016 at a training facility in Pabradė, Lithuania. The allies trained on Javelin, Spike and Carl Gustaf anti-tank weapons.

... The U.S. showed off its MQ-1 Predator drone and A-10 Warthog ground-attack craft at the Lielvarde airbase in Latvia. The two-week demonstration was meant to show the intelligence staff of the Baltic States, Poland and Germany their capabilities. Predator has a range of 2,000 nautical miles and top speed of 135 mph, and can carry out data-gathering missions as well as carry Hellfire missiles.

... Mindaugas Žičkus, Deputy Chief of Mission and Minister Counselor of the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, spoke on "Russia and the West—The View from Lithuania" at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia in May. He made three points: The importance of NATO even with the restriction on the stationing of permanent troops in the Baltic states; countering Russian supported anti-American, anti-NATO and anti-European Union populist candidates; and weaning Lithuania from dependence on Russian gas by buying gas from Norway and the U.S., opening the LNG (liquefied natural gas) terminal in Klaipėda and supporting fracking to enlarge the supply of gas.

Business

... Uber, the ride-sharing network that began service in Lithuania in the fall of 2015, has opened an engineering center in Vilnius with 20 engineers to support the operation in 70 countries and 400 cities.

... The Lithuanian Supreme Court recently issued a "Solomon"-like ruling that DNB Bank split losses with investors who suffered in a stock-backed bond plan that was marketed as a "risk-free" investment. The financial collapse of 2008 caught investors who had borrowed funds to finance this plan. Some had mortgaged homes and now face foreclosure.

... Lithuania plans to work with Iran to invest in and provide technology assistance to import Iranian liquefied natural gas (LNG), oil and oil products. Lithuania's goal is to reduce its dependence on Russian gas. Lithuania's Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius led a delegation on a three-day visit, and in turn Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif concluded a tour of the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Poland and Latvia with a visit to Lithuania.

... The "Cauliflower Revolution" gripped Lithuania this spring as food prices became a hot topic and an informal three-day boycott seemed to drive prices down. Seasonal price spikes are exacerbated by Lithuania's 21 percent value-added tax (VAT) in contrast to Poland's 3 percent VAT on fruit and vegetables and 5 percent VAT on meat.

... The European Commission (EC) formally requested Lithuania modify its restrictions that purchasers of rural land be qualified as farmers. The EC views such restrictions as excessively restrictive in terms of attracting investment and their goal of the free movement of capital and the establishment of non-agriculture enterprises.

... The government-owned Lithuanian Airports is working with Dutch consultancy InterVISTAS to find a concessionaire to manage the airports in Vilnius, Kaunas and Palanga over a 25-year contract. The major goal is to finance necessary renovations and expansions. Last year, Vilnius handled 3.3 million passengers, while Kaunas had 750,000 and Palanga saw 145,000.

Science

... The international forum Life Science Baltics 2016 will be held in Vilnius September 14-15, 2016. Organized by Enterprise Lithuania every two years, it is the largest life science forum in the Baltics and is attended by life science leaders from 40 countries.

... Transplant surgeries of hematopoietic progenitor cells are now taking place in Vilnius and Kaunas for treatment of multiple myeloma, a blood cancer. The program is advised by Professor D. Niederwieser of the Leipzig University Hospital Oncology and Hematology Clinic.

calendar

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

AUGUST 2016

August 13-14
102nd Lithuanian Days
 Schuylkill Mall, Frackville, Pa.
 Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Sunday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.
 Info: kofl144.weebly.com

August 21-28
Meno8Dienos Adult Lithuanian-Language Art Camp
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: danguole@kuolas.com,
 781-383-6081

SEPTEMBER 2016

September 3-5
Camp Dainava: 60 Years
 15100 Austin Rd., Manchester, Mich.
 Entertainment, activities, presentations, good food, good company. Saturday evening: Dainava Choir Men's Ensemble.
 Info: dainava.org

September 10
Portland Lithuanian Community Piknikas (Picnic)
 Rooster Rock State Park, Hwy. 84, Corbett, Ore.
 Info: 503-974-6407

September 11, 12:30 p.m.
Daughters of Lithuania LA Benefit Concert: Liudas Norvaiša
 St. Casimir's Parish Hall, 2718 St. George St., Los Angeles, Calif.
 Tickets: \$60
 Info: daughtersoflithuaniala.org

September 11
Omaha Lithuanian Community Fundraiser
 Sts. Peter and Paul School gym
 5912 S. 36th St., Omaha, Nebr.
 Info: facebook.com/OmahalB

September 17, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, PA
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

September 18, 3 p.m.
Vilija Kerelytė Concert "Bring Me a Song"
 Sabre Room, 8900 W. 95th St., Hickory Hills, Ill.
 Info: vrk15@att.net, 708-567-6718

September 25, 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Divine Providence Lithuanian Church Parish Picnic
 25335 West Nine Mile Rd., Southfield, Mich.
 Info: divineprovidencechurch.com

OCTOBER 2016

October 7-9
Iškyla/Walk-a-Thon
 Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
 Info: neringa.org

October 9
Golden Jubilee of Our Lady of Šiluva Chapel
 Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C.
 Info: siluva50usa.org

October 15, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, PA
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

NOVEMBER 2016

November 5
Lithuanian Foundation Fall Gala
 Lithuanian World Center, 14911 127th St., Lemont, Ill.
 Info: lithfund.org

November 5
Omaha Lithuanian Community Fundraiser Bowling Tournament
 Immaculate Conception Hall, 2708 South 24th St., Omaha, Nebr.
 Info: facebook.com/OmahalB

November 19, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, PA
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

November 25
Kansas City Lithuanian Community Christmas Party
 Cedar Creek Clubhouse, Olathe, Kans.
 Info: kclith.org

DECEMBER 2016

December 3-4
Holiday Craft Fair
 Lithuanian World Center, 14911 127th St., Lemont, Ill.

December 10
Amber Roots Heritage Club Kučios
 Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, PA
 Info: milliemarks@aol.com

December 11
Lithuanian Scouts Kučios
 Divine Providence Lithuanian Catholic Church, 25335 West Nine Mile Rd., Southfield, Mich.
 Info: divineprovidencechurch.com

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Liudas Norvaišas

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