

bridges



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Front Page: Lithuanian Americans celebrate the Lithuanian Statehood Day by singing Lithuanian National Anthem on July 6th by the Buckingham Fountain in the center of Chicago. Photo by Sandra Ščedrina, Studio Light, Inc.

Back Page: Tomas Vengris in Lithuania in 1998. Photo by Vitolis Vengris.

Dear readers,

This issue of Bridges covers two months, July and August. It should have reached you at the beginning of August. I do hope that you enjoy reading the magazine and I would appreciate you sharing the information on how to subscribe to Bridges with all of your friends and family who you would thing might enjoy reading it.

As I think about some of the events that took place in our recent history during the months of July and August, three events come to mind: Darius and Girėnas's flight over the Atlantic in 1933, the Lithuanian Statehood Day, and the Baltic Way.

All three events have an underlying thread of uniting Lithuania to the world. The Lituania airplane flown from the United States across the Atlantic Ocean by Lithuanian pilots Steponas Darius and Stasys Girėnas had a mission to make Lithuania, a young independent nation, famous and help reunite it with the world. The Statehood Day, an annual public holiday in Lithuania celebrated on July 6 since 1991, commemorates the coronation in 1253 of Mindaugas as the only King of Lithuania. Mindaugas was also known for uniting Lithuanian lands into one strong state. And finally, the Baltic Way that occurred on August 23, 1989 united approximately two million people in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, who joined their hands to form a human chain spanning over 400 miles across the three Baltic states, and showed the world that Lithuania stood united with its Baltic neighbors in expressing their determination to be free.

On July 17th of this year, yet another celebration that had an underlying thread of unity took place in Vilnius. It was the celebration of the World Lithuanian Unity Day. Symbolically an image of Darius and Girėnas's airplane Lituania was displayed in the City Hall Square in Vilnius and passersby could take a picture. I hope they could feel at least a fraction of what Darius and Girėnas felt when they were dedicating their flight and, ultimately, their lives to Lithuania. I also hope that we, Lithuanians of the world, keep our Motherland and the land of our ancestors in our thoughts and participate in its life with our deeds.

Sincerely,

Karilė Vaitkutė
Editor



Rūta Mėlinskaitė during the World Lithuanian Unity Day celebration in Vilnius on July 17, 2017.

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...“I hope to tell stories that allow us to see ourselves in a new light”...

Interview with Tomas Vengris
By Viltė Vaitkutė



Filming “Kalifornija”. From left: Haris Mockus, director Tomas Vengris, and Mantas Valantiejus. Courtesy of “Kalifornija” film.

What led you to become a filmmaker? Did you stumble upon it or always knew it's what you wanted to do? How long have you been doing film?

I was always incredibly fascinated by film as a medium of art / communication. I was making videos long before I imagined it would be possible to do it professionally. Even if I wasn't working in the film industry, I'm sure I would still be making some sort of videos in my free time. I probably always knew that I wanted to pursue film, but it took a long time to realize just how to do that.

I started making videos as a teenager. A friend and I began using his dad's video equipment to make little movies. It just naturally evolved from our other games. It was incredibly fun -- we made so many different types of videos -- any genre you can imagine. This was during the early era of consumer digital video, so we felt like we were exploring uncharted waters. Many years later, when I was taking my first film class, I realized that I

had spent my teenage years unknowingly rediscovering all the basic building-blocks of filmmaking. It would be another 6~7 years before I actually began making some semblance of a living in film.

Cinema is not a profession of guarantees – what was it that drove you to keep doing it? Why is it better for you than any “safe” profession?

I was always pushed down a much more conventional path; creative pursuits were just my hobby (albeit, an obsessive hobby). When I was in college I had a few friends who were actively pursuing careers in creative industries (art, music, film). However, they all came from very wealthy families and never had to worry about questions of food or rent in New York City. This initially made me feel like that world wasn't attainable, so I took a “safe” corporate job after college. However, as I began to spend all of my free time and money on my “hobby,” I decided that even if it meant becoming totally destitute, I at least had

to try. Now, I don't think I could go back to an office life. I have total respect and admiration for the conventional professions that keep society ticking -- but find myself most comfortable in the creative industry, exploring the messy “grey areas” of life.

What are your films like? What do you make films about?

I prefer character-driven dramas, but try not to think too much about “my kind of films.” I hope to tell nuanced stories that allow us to see ourselves in a new light. I know that's vague, but I also don't like to over-intellectualize films. I just try to rely on instinct and pursue stories and characters that I find interesting. I'm just now making my first feature film so maybe it's too early to tell.

What is this new film about? What gave you the idea to do it? What inspired you?

“Motherland” is a film set in 1992 about a Lithuanian woman who escaped from the USSR and returns to newly independent



Filming “Motherland”.

Lithuania with her American-born son. The idea for the film initially came from conversations with American filmmaker friends about my trips to Lithuania in the early 90s. People who had no connection to the country found the stories so fascinating. I began speaking to people in the Lithuanian-American community about their experiences, and soon realized that there was a really interesting and complex story to be told.



Tomas Vengris (standing on the right) with his sister Indrė (standing on the left) in Lithuania in 1992. Photo by Vitolis Vengris.



Filming "Motherland".

What was the difference between working on someone else's films versus writing and directing your own?

Editing other directors' feature films feels entirely different from directing my own. I really enjoy editing all types of films -- I get to step into another person's creative vision. For example, I love editing comedy, but never write comedies myself. Every film, regardless of genre, teaches you a lot about the grammar of filmmaking. I find my editing work both challenging and creatively fulfilling, but the stakes are much higher when working on my own projects. The question "is this a story worth telling to the world?" is daunting, though integral, when writing a screenplay. When I'm working on somebody else's film, I don't have to worry about that and just get to enjoy the craft.

Why do you keep returning to Lithuania? How did you keep your connection to it growing up in Washington? Why is it important to you now?

I've been coming to Lithuania since I can remember, so it really isn't something that I can rationally explain. Lithuania feels as much like home as Washington, DC. I've spent significant time in four major American cities (DC, LA, NYC, and Austin, TX), but have always returned to Vilnius over the years. In a way, Vilnius is more of a constant in my life than any American city. Of course, I can probably blend-in better in the U.S., but my accent begins to fade after a few weeks in Lithuania, so I can be a local here as well. I've known many of my closest friends in Vilnius since childhood -- so when I land in Vilnius, it always feels like a homecoming rather than a visit.

The topic of immigration is still very prevalent in the world today. Do you think any of the themes in "Motherland" may correlate to today's issues and reach more hearts than those of the Lithuanian-American community?

While I hadn't been consciously thinking about worldwide immigration issues when I was developing the idea, after I began to share the project, I realized how poignant the theme of national identity is at the moment. Especially in Europe and the U.S., this question is at the center of some very heated political debates. The film isn't meant to be political, but the questions of home and identity certainly simmer just under the surface of the story. At the end of the day, the goal of the film is to paint an intimate portrait of characters trying to navigate their own personal crises. That being said, I think many people will be able to relate to the idea of returning "home" to a place that no longer exists. This experience isn't necessarily limited to immigrants. People experience this phenomenon even when returning to their childhood home, so I hope that viewers who have no connection to Lithuania will still be able to fully engage in the story.

Where can we keep ourselves updated about the coming film? How can we support the film? Where can we see it when it's out?

If you'd like to stay updated, please follow the film on facebook: fb.me/MotherlandMovie -- the best way to support us right now is to follow us and spread the word ... and when the time comes, please see it in any way you can! We definitely plan to have a theatrical release in Lithuania and hope to play as many festivals as possible. We'll see where those can lead as far as international distribution. We want to make sure that Americans, particularly the Lithuanian-American community, have a chance to see this film. Whether it's in a theater or streaming /VOD, we'll try to bring the film to everyone within the next year.

Tomas Vengris grew up the son of Lithuanian immigrants in Washington, DC. He received his BA from Columbia University. After a year of study at the Vilnius Academy of Arts, he moved to Los Angeles, CA to complete his M.F.A in directing at the American Film Institute. In 2013, his AFI Thesis film, KALIFORNIJA, a film about Lithuanian immigrants, was a national finalist in the prestigious Student Academy Awards, distinguishing it as one of the best narrative student films in the United States. His most recent short, SQUIRREL, premiered in the 2015 Berlin International Film Festival. Tomas has worked as an editor under several internationally acclaimed writer/directors, including Terrence Malick, Kelly Reichardt, and Lena Dunham. His feature editing work has garnered significant praise, most recently, the Grand Jury Prize at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival.



Filming "Motherland".



Filming "Kalifornija". From left: Mantas Valantiejus and director Tomas Vengris. Courtesy of "Kalifornija" film.

The Significance of the Battle of Grunwald

By Augustas Senuta



Zalgiris Battle. Image from the Chronicle by Diebold Schilling the Elder of Bern. 1474.

A few months ago in history class a research paper was assigned to all 8th graders on Middle Ages. Students had to select a topic from a list of historic figures, historic battles or historic places. Augustas chose the independent topic and decided to work on The Battle of Grunwald, which covered all: Historic figures, historic battle, and a historic place. And most importantly, this topic had great educational value, as it was unknown to his class and teacher. There were unique challenges for the project. First, there were very limited sources of reputable information: most information was in Polish and German. Second, information that was available was mostly in Lithuanian, meaning, Augustas had to translate little known historical terms and expressions into English. Third, historic sources deferred significantly in historic facts, making it challenging to gather accurate information. Augustas put at least three times the time and effort for this project, as compared to his classmates. His work paid off not only in highest grades, but also in immense learning for himself, his teacher, and other 8th graders about Lithuanian history, the Battle of Grunwald, and the significance of Lithuania's role in the history of Europe.

In the 1380's lived two powerful cousins, Vytautas and Jagiello. Both wanted power over the Grand Duchy of Lithuania for a long time, eventually leading to their own civil war in 1389, even though Jagiello was already King of Poland and Vytautas ruling Lithuania. However, this chaos stopped soon after the 1390's because of an outside force called the Teutonic Order was escalating its ongoing invasions on the north sides of both of their lands. In the year 1409, Vytautas and Jagiello decided to put their cousin rivalry aside to find out a way to defeat the Teutonic Order together, once and for all.

The Teutonic Order was a well-organized force of crusaders sanctioned and financed by the Pope to conquer and to convert pagan territories in the Prussian and Baltic regions of Europe. They began their invasions in the early 13th century. They built castles and established themselves in the Prussian area with their headquarters in Marienburg (now Malbork). They continued their territorial expansion into Lithuania and Poland. The Grand Duchy of Lithuania was led by Vytautas the Great. Lithuania was the largest state in Europe, with its territory spanning from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Lithuania was pagan, but officially converted to Christianity in 1387. The Kingdom of Poland was led by Jagiello. Poland was already Christian.

After nearly two centuries of Teutonic invasions, Vytautas and Jagiello decided to combine their armies to finally stop the Teutonic Order. Vytautas and Jagiello combined armies met the Teutonic Order at a forest near the town of Grunwald in present day Poland. The Battle of Grunwald (also known as Tannenberg or Zalgiris) was fought on July 15, 1410. The battle was fought with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania led by Vytautas the Great and the kingdom of Poland led by Jagiello against the Germanic Teutonic Order led

by its Grand Master, Ulrich von Jungingen. Although historians' accounts vary greatly, it is generally estimated that the Lithuanian army consisted of 10,000, the Polish army of 18,000, and the well-armed Teutonic army of 18,000 personnel. Lithuania and Poland's victory at the battle led to a series of events in the aftermath that helped shape their future significantly. The Battle of Grunwald was significant to European history, because it stopped the continued raids of the Teutonic Order, established Lithuania and Poland as a power in Europe, and was known famous for its unique battle tactic.

First of all, The Battle of Grunwald was significant to European history, because it stopped the Teutonic Order's nearly two centuries' of continued raids of the Lithuanian and Polish lands. The Teutonic raids were brutal – burned villages, slavery, and plunder, under the guise of spreading their religion. If the battle was lost, Teutonic influence could have made Lithuania and Poland smaller and quite different countries today, perhaps destroy their modern day existence, or possibly, change Europe's course of history as a whole.

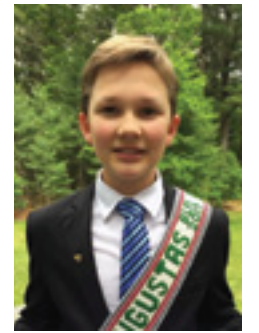
Second of all, the battle of Grunwald was significant to European history, because it established Lithuania and Poland as powers in Europe. Lithuania already stretched from the Baltic to the Black Seas, with lands far into modern Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Lithuania and Poland defeated their greatest enemy and enjoyed two decades of peace. The defeat permanently weakened the Teutonic Order. Lithuania's and Poland's decisive victory led to the signing of the first Peace Treaty of Thorn in 1411. The Treaty stated that the Order was required to pay "about five tons of silver in each of the next four years" to Lithuania and Poland. This payment of silver created a huge conflict to the Order that it was hard for them to get new troops replacing the dead from the battle. They also had to charge people large amounts of taxes as well. Second, this chaos in the Order led to some decline in their economy and a greatly weakened force.

Third of all, the Battle of Grunwald was significant to European history, because it was known famous for its unique battle tactic. It was famous because the Lithuanian army wanted to confuse the knights' charge and to defeat them once and for all. First, the Lithuanian/Polish plans were to invade Prussia to capture Marienburg, the Teutonic Order's headquarters and with one assault with both armies working together northwards. Secondly, the Order's plans were to pick the central position at Schwetz, west of Vistula so they could respond quickly to almost any problems in their way.

At the beginning of the battle, the Teutonic Knights gathered parallel to the Lithuania's and Poland's forces on the north. At the southern side of the field gathered the right flank of the Lithuanian force while the left flank next to them was the Polish force. Both forces charged forward at each other. Later, the Lithuanians started a false retreat and the Teutons thought that they were winning. One third of the Teutonic Knights charged after them thinking they could finish them. Meanwhile, the Pol-

ish flank was battling two thirds of the Teutonic Knights and were being pushed back. The Lithuanians turned around, and destroyed the Teutonic Knights, chasing after them. The Lithuanians returned and went to the north side of the battlefield. The leftover Teutons pushing the Polish flank was now being crushed from both the north and south. The Teutons did not last long before they surrendered. The Lithuanian and Polish forces attempted to capture Marienburg, the Order's headquarters, but were unsuccessful.

In conclusion, the Battle of Grunwald was significant to European history, because it stopped the continued raids of the Teutonic Order, established Lithuania and Poland as a power in Europe, and was known famous for its unique battle tactic. Many people in the world during the modern day have no knowledge of the Battle Grunwald and its significance. That's why this battle should be remembered at least for those who depend on its victory.



Augustas Senuta. Photo by Danguole Senuta.

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Where Do I Belong?

An Immigrant's Quest for Identity

By Tony Mankus

Introduction

Everyone has a story, they say. This one is mine—at least the immigrant part of it. It's not remarkable, as some stories go—not like the one about the rock climber who cut off his arm in order to save his life, for example; but it's an honest accounting of a part of my life.

I wrote it because I couldn't afford a shrink, I like to say—only partly in jest. I started it years ago as an effort to deal with the imbalance I felt inside of me. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but I knew it had to do with my past. Getting therapy would've been the usual way to deal with it, except that I couldn't afford it. Even if I could've, I didn't feel comfortable about therapy.

So I decided to start writing about my past. I began with the early years of my life, which were still vivid in my mind. Some of the events were painful to

remember and I had to stop from time to time, sometimes for days or weeks on end. But I always went back to it, sooner or later.

As I made progress, I began to feel better about myself. I also started to do research about the bigger events surrounding my personal experiences, which helped to put them into context. That's when it registered with me that I wasn't alone; that my experiences, or very similar ones, were shared by many thousands, even millions of other people—and some of theirs were much worse than mine. So I decided to turn my writing into a memoir. I thought it could be a part of our family history, as well as a sharing experience for those of us who have felt a sense of displacement, alienation, and a need to find ourselves.

I wrote about some events simply because they were so vivid in my mind. I hope they help to illustrate the larger

themes of the memoir: displacement, loss of identity, immigration, and trying to make it in a new environment.

Regarding the research material included in the book, I didn't cite the sources because this memoir is not intended to be a scholarly work. Much of it came from the myriad websites on the Internet, including Wikipedia, and I hereby acknowledge my gratitude to the authors. The relatively recent inventions and development of the personal computer, the Internet, and the search engines like Google, have made knowledge incredibly accessible and more widely available than at any time in the history of the world.

I also wish to express my thanks to the remaining members of my original family who have contributed to this memoir with their recollections. They include my brothers John and Ray and my sister

Maria.

I dedicate this memoir to my mother and father—God rest their souls. They led a hard life. I also thank God for my health and strong spirit. They helped me to survive and better myself.

Chapter 1 - World War II

I remember hearing the guns. They were the heavy ones. When they went off, I could feel them on my eardrums, on my skin, in my bones—and they were becoming louder by the hour. I was only five at the time and didn't know what to make of them. The low booms sounded like thunder, the only sound I could compare them to.

Mom barked out edgy orders to us kids. We became hyperactive and ran around playing rough games that usually involved knocking each other over. The dog ran under a kitchen chair every time cannon fired.

Dad called everyone into the dining room. Unlike most of the other rooms, it was kept clean and uncluttered. The stained wooden floor and the large Blaupunkt radio Dad loved to listen to, lent an air of dignity to it. We gathered around him in a circle and fell silent; we even stopped fidgeting.

"Those are Russian cannons," he said. "They're firing at the German soldiers that are retreating back to Germany. The Russian army is chasing them and will be coming through our town again."

We waited silently while Dad paused to think. I didn't understand everything he was saying, but I sensed it was serious.

"Some of you may be too young to remember," he began again, "but the last Russian occupation was pretty bad. A lot of our people were shipped off to Siberia in cattle cars and most of them didn't come back. We have to decide what we're going to do."

There was silence again. We didn't know what to say. Mom was the first to speak, tears welling in her eyes. "I don't want to go," she said. "Our home is here." She wiped her eyes with the apron.

"We may not be so lucky this time," Dad responded.

"But where will we go?" Mom pleaded. "What will happen to us?"

"Trains are heading to Germany with the retreating soldiers," Dad said. "We can get on one of them. Raudys said he wants to go, too."

Raudys was our neighbor and a friend of Dad's. A lot of other people were leaving, too. Dad decided to go. The bottom line was that he didn't want to find out what another Russian occupation would be like.

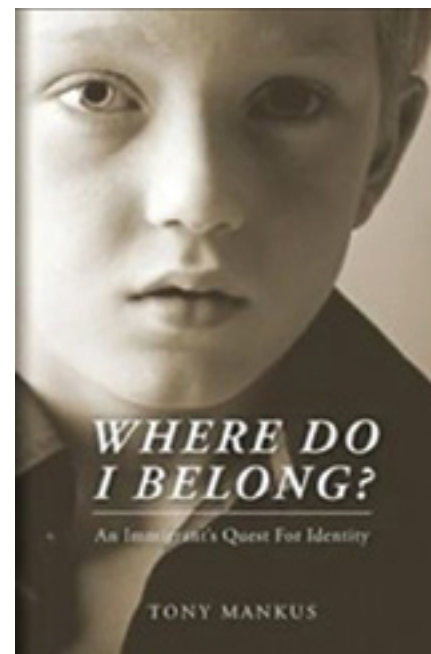
The Soviet tanks reached Plungė, our small town in the northwestern part of Lithuania, on October 8, 1944. We left maybe a day or two ahead of them. We took only what was needed for the next few days: food, some clothing and blankets, and what little else we could carry. The rest had to be left behind.

Mom cried again. It's not hard to imagine why: the life she and Dad had worked so hard to build would be gone, possibly forever. There would be no trace of it left, other than the memories. What the future held—or even if there was to be a future—was unknowable. She kissed good-bye her beloved cow, the one that had provided milk to us children, and left.

A steam-driven locomotive pulled the train we boarded. The water in the large tank was heated by coal. The diesel engines being developed around that time hadn't found their way into Lithuania yet. When the conductor shifted into gear, the pistons chug-chugged the steam out the chimney and the train began to gain momentum.

We kids were excited. It was going to be a new adventure. I don't think that was the feeling among the adults, though. I saw Dad gazing out the boxcar door. Maybe he was saying good-bye. As it turned out, he and Mom would never see Plungė—or Lithuania—ever again.

Going to Germany was a risky proposition. The Russian armies were heading west toward Germany; the Western Allies had landed in Normandy on D-Day in June 1944 and were fighting their way east, squeezing the German soldiers in the vise of the two armies. In retrospect, it seems like we were jumping out of the



frying pan and into the fire. But I'm not sure we had too many options at the time, or knew what they were.

So at age five I became a war refugee, a displaced person. I didn't realize then that being displaced from your land of birth is more than just a physical dislocation; it's also a disconnect from your identity. After we left Lithuania, the feeling of not really belonging anywhere didn't go away for a long time.

Chapter 2 - Exodus

We climbed into a boxcar with our belongings and made ourselves as comfortable as we could. Besides Mom and Dad, our immediate family included my two older brothers, John and Ray, ages twelve and eight; and my ten-month-old brother, Henry. Our extended family included my great aunt Diode; my maternal grandmother, Domincèle, who was about sixty at the time; my Mom's sister Eva; and her seven-year-old daughter, my cousin Irene.

We were joined in the boxcar by Raudys, who brought his wife and young daughter, the only family he had at the time.

It was October and the nights were getting cold. There was no heat in the boxcar, of course, although we kept the sliding door partly open to let in some fresh

air. My little brother Henry was bundled up in the baby carriage that we managed to bring for him.

As the train rolled on through the night, the carriage moved back and forth slowly, depending on the incline of the terrain. No one paid much attention to it since the land in that part of Lithuania was flat. Before long, everyone fell asleep. We were all worn out from the stress and uncertainty of the last few days.

I was the first to wake up early the next morning, just as the sun was rising. I looked around and noticed the carriage. It was very close to the open door. I sensed danger, but was afraid to say anything. The strange surroundings and the confusing events of the last few days had shut my usually chatty mouth. Fortunately for Henry, Raudys woke up at that moment. He jumped out of his makeshift bed on the floor and yanked the carriage back. "Wake up everyone!" he shouted out with nervous energy. "Who left the baby carriage so close to the door? Henry almost fell out!"

Everybody jumped up suddenly and began to level accusations at each other when they realized what had happened.

"I told you to push the carriage up against the wall," Dad barked at Mom.

"Diode was the last one with him," Mom retorted.

Diode usually got the blame for everything. She didn't defend herself. She just shuffled over to the carriage in her nightclothes and tucked the blanket around the baby.

I felt guilty too. "I woke up first," I said, trying to get someone's attention. "I saw the carriage close to the door. I should've pulled it back. I'm sorry."

The adults were too agitated to pay attention to me. Those who heard me didn't take me seriously. Maybe they thought I was just trying to boost my sense of self-importance. Raudys made a half-hearted effort to scold me, but I'm not sure he believed me either.

I crawled back into my makeshift bed on the floor and thought about the day Henry was born. My two brothers and I were alone in the house with our cousin

Irene, waiting for the adults to come back from the hospital. We made up a game we called "train," which meant we had to crawl on our hands and knees under all the chairs arranged around the dining room table, as if we were the cars of a long train. "Toot, toot," I intoned.

When we got tired of playing train, we took turns counting to see who could count the highest. "One million," I announced, certain that I would top everyone.

"One hundred zillion," Ray chimed in before I could bask in my victory.

Then all the adults came home. Dad was carrying a bundle wrapped in a white, frilly blanket. Mom seemed pale and weak, although her eyes sparkled when she saw us kids lined up to watch the goings on. Diode, our great aunt, helped Mom to remove her winter coat while Eva, my mother's sister, took the bundle from Dad. I was curious to see what was in the bundle.

Dad announced with a twinkle in his eyes that he had a present for us. He said it was "stinky," though, and that Aunt Eva was going to change it. Then the bundle began to cry. I sort of figured out it was a baby, but I couldn't understand what all the excitement was about.

I approached Aunt Eva cautiously to have a closer look. Aunt Eva was a widow, for all practical purposes. She didn't know whether her husband was still alive. He'd been shipped off to Siberia during the first Soviet occupation, a few years after they were married. She never heard from him again. My cousin Irene was their only child. Since there was no man to look after them, Aunt Eva and her daughter cast their lot with our family, more or less. It was a symbiotic relationship, based as much on need as on love and affection. She wasn't overly fond of my father, though, because of his hard drinking.

"This is your little brother Henry," she said quietly as I peered into the small opening of the bundle. His eyes were closed, although his mouth seemed to be making some sort of contortions. Maybe he's trying to tell me something, I thought. I didn't realize at the time that

his mouth was just contorting in some reflexive way and that there was no significance to it. In retrospect, though, I wonder sometimes whether he was trying to tell me something—like some idiot savant, maybe—about the future that would end so sadly for him.

Later that afternoon, the train lurched to a stop. We heard an airplane buzzing overhead, diving at us with the staccato fire of machine guns. We jumped out of the boxcar and dove into a ditch along the track. One of the passengers was hit in the leg before the plane flew off.

Fortunately, that was the extent of the casualties. We were lucky the plane didn't have any heavier ordnance, such as bombs. We got back on the train and resumed the journey.

After a few days, we stopped in Breslau, a Polish city near what used to be the Czechoslovakian and German borders, although it historically was a source of border conflicts between Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. We had to change trains before we could go on through Czechoslovakia on our way to Germany.

As we waited in the train station, German soldiers, some with rifles and sub-machine guns slung over their shoulders, barged in. One soldier, with a Luger in his right hand, was in front of the others. He scanned the room to see what was going on. The waiting room fell silent. Everyone looked away in an effort to be inconspicuous. Mom squeezed me closer to her while Diode held on tightly to Henry. John and Ray sat by Dad and stopped fidgeting, sensing the tension in the room.

The soldier with the Luger spotted John, my twelve-year-old brother, and walked over to him. "You!" he barked in German. "You come with us."

Mom cried out in grief, but Dad hushed her up. John hesitated, unsure of what to do. He looked at Dad who was squeezing Mom's hand, trying to calm her.

"Schnell! Schnell! The German officer barked again, waiving his pistol for John to follow.

John stood up and followed the soldiers. He threw a quick glance back at us

once before he was led out of the room. He wasn't crying, but you could tell from his blazing eyes that he was scared. Mom began to shake, sobbing with grief.

John was taken to a local Hitlerjugend school in Breslau where he attended classes in math and Nazi ideology, among other things, and was required to pass tests of physical strength. He was presented with the Blut und Ehre dagger for passing the athletic feats he was tested on. John doesn't remember many of the details. Maybe he was so frightened during captivity that he blocked out most of those memories. He does remember an older woman, though, the math teacher, and her strident voice. She taught them the multiplication table by repeating the numbers in German—over and over again—until they had memorized the answers correctly.

It's not clear why John was kidnapped, but it's likely that he was caught up in the Nazi Lebensborn program, which was begun in 1941 for children born of selected Nazi men and women. Hitler's vision was to swell the Aryan population with a form of genetic engineering. The program was later expanded to include kidnapped blond, blue-eyed children from other European nationalities. They were given new German names and placed in institutions, or fostered with families that had pledged to bring them up as good Germans. At this stage of the war, though, the teenage boys also underwent rigorous physical training at the Hitlerjugend schools in order to prepare them to become good Nazi soldiers. Due to the heavy casualties of the war, the Germans armies on the home front were filled with young boys and old men.

John did what he was told, but for the two or three weeks he was held captive, he plotted secretly to escape. One night, when everyone had settled down for the night, he sneaked out of the school and scurried back to the train station to look for us. He approached a family that he overheard speaking Lithuanian and asked if they had seen us.

"What's your name?" the man asked John.



Tony Mankus with his family. Photo by Karilė Vaitkutė.

"Jonas, Jonas Monkevičius," John answered.

"No, I'm sorry. I don't know anybody by that name."

We were long gone by then, of course, and no one knew where. John stood there silently, not knowing what to do. The man was preoccupied with the survival of his own family, but felt sorry for this forlorn boy.

"We're getting on this next train," he said, trying to be helpful. "It's going to Germany."

John stood there, undecided. He didn't know whether he'd find us in Germany, but he didn't want to go back to the Hitlerjugend school.

"Many of the families that left Lithuania are heading there," the man said.

Not having anything else to go on, John decided to do the same. He climbed up and positioned himself between the cars. He was afraid to sit inside for fear of being questioned and sent back to Breslau as a deserter.

As the train rolled on, he became numb from the cold. It was November already. He wore only light clothing; he had been afraid to put on his overcoat when he left the school for fear of being noticed. John shivered and fought the urge to fall asleep. He was old enough to know that if he fell asleep, he'd tumble down under the wheels of the train and meet a certain end. Even though John blocked out many of the memories from this episode,

he remembers vividly to this day the overwhelmingly numbing cold and the deathly fear of falling under the wheels. But John's survival instinct must've kicked in and he managed to hang on for a day or two, until the train arrived at the outskirts of Kempten, Allgäu, a Bavarian town in the southern part of Germany. Apparently this was the train's destination, so he climbed off and just started walking along the tracks. Then—incredibly—he spotted Mom and us kids and ran stumbling toward us.

Apart from his legal duties as a tax and bankruptcy attorney, Tony also enjoys writing. He has published technical articles dealing with both tax and bankruptcy issues, as well as more personal and creative ones that were published in Chicago Daily Law Bulletin, Lithuanian Heritage magazine, and Rivulets.

In addition, he has published several books. The first one, "Where Do I Belong?, An Immigrant's Quest for Identity," was published in 2013. It is a memoir about his and his family's World War II experiences as Lithuanian refugees displaced in Germany before immigrating to the United States. The second one, a legal and political thriller, called "Chicago Tango," was published in 2016. They are both available on Amazon.com, Create Space, and Kindle, as well as local book stores, by request.

You can find out more about Tony's literary endeavors at www.tonymankus.com.

Connections Between the Lithuanian Government and Lithuanian Americans in 1926–1940: Search for the Ways of Consolidation

By Prof. Juozas Skirius



The Board of Directors of the Association of the Support of Lithuanian Abroad. Illustration from Pasaulio Lietuvių publication. 1935. Kaunas.

The Repayment of the Lithuanian Liberty Loan to Lithuanian Americans

During 1919–1923, the Lithuanian government distributed the Lithuanian Liberty Loan bonds (hereinafter – LLL) among Lithuanian Americans for over 1.9 million dollars by paying the annual interest of 5 percent and committing to repay the loan in 1935. The loan helped the government to pay wages to civil servants, to maintain the army and embassies abroad, and provided a firm monetary foundation for the introduction of the national currency.

The holders of the LLL bonds (securities) were not to sell them for the nominal price until 1935. Speculators who would purchase the bonds for 25–30 percent of the price took advantage of the situation. The émigré community was dissatisfied with the situation. Despite the timely payment of interest to the owners of the bonds, the Lithuanian government realized that the situation undermined the prestige of the Lithuanian government in the eyes of the Lithuanian émigré community. The government made an effort that starting with 1931, the Bank of Lithuania and the Credit Union in Kaunas officially accepted the bonds and their price started to rise.

Dealing with the effects of the economic crisis, the Lithuanian government started searching for ways to postpone the

repayment of the LLL. It tried to associate the LLL with a new domestic loan of 1935. However, warned by its representatives in America, the Lithuanian government refused such a step by extending the repayment term until July 1, 1945 and encouraging the Lithuanian emigrant community to take advantage of it and not to sell their bonds but profit from the 5 percent annual interest. Meanwhile, Lithuanian representatives in the USA, M. Bagdonas, P. Žadeikis, and A. Kalvaitis, favored a higher interest rate which would be of interest to bond owners. However, it was not taken into account. 1935 saw a massive return of the LLL bonds to the Lithuanian treasury. Out of 1,198,550 dollar-worth bonds, roughly 56.4 per cent of all the bonds in America were returned in July–November 1935. Affected by the economic recession, speculators, and people doubting Lithuania's financial capacities, part of the Lithuanian émigré community tried to get rid of the bonds. Afterward, the process of selling the bonds to Lithuania slowed down.

The LLL had a positive effect on the development of the state of Lithuania. In 1934, the country received unforeseen revenues when the American government implemented the devaluation of the dollar (it would be true to say that Lithuania saved at least 5 million litas). Besides, approximately ¼ of the bonds were never repaid. The money remained with the country which had



Lithuanian Libert Loan \$50 Bond.

to pay back the debt after the restoration of Lithuania's independence. However, 50 years later there was basically no one to accept the repayment of the loan.

The Support of the Association for the Support of Lithuanians Abroad to Lithuanians in The United States

With the support from the Lithuanian Government, an officially non-partisan Association for the Support of Lithuanians Abroad (hereinafter – the ASLA) was established in the beginning of 1932. At all times, especially when in power, nationalists tried to demonstrate that all Lithuanians were important to them and that they also represented the compatriots residing abroad. The establishment of the Association was not only determined by the aim to unite world Lithuanians, to strengthen Lithuanianhood and the use of the Lithuanian language, to control emigration and to reduce disagreements among Lithuanians but also for economic purposes – to seek for additional commerce partners among Lithuanians in emigration and to improve the country's economic situation on the basis of the capital and business experience of the émigré community. The goal of the organization was to establish close and mutually beneficial connections between Lithuania and Lithuanian compatriots in emigration. The ASLA activities notably strengthened in 1935 when the systematic allocation of funds from the Lithuanian Government began. In addition to the income from the membership fees, donations and lottery, the financial support from the government grew every year. The Association supported Lithuanian education by sending textbooks, books of fiction, newspapers, song texts, sheet music from Lithuania; they financed schools and churches, the publishing of Lithuanian papers; they organized camps for the children of Lithuanian community in emigration and annual training courses for teachers in Lithuania; they provided several scholarships every year for young people studies in Lithuania. They encouraged foreign Lithuanians to establish connections through correspondence with Lithuanian residents and vice versa. They sought to take care of small Lithuanian colonies abroad (in France, Germany, etc.) or those that were less prosperous (in South America, Poland, etc.). From

1935 on, the ASLA annual congresses were held; they presented and made public the Association's annual reports. The first and only World Lithuanian Congress was convened in Kaunas in the same year; by agreement of the émigré community itself, it outlined specific forms of connections between Lithuania and foreign Lithuanians as well as the ways of communication; it also announced the planned establishment of the Lithuanian World Union which would bring together and unite all Lithuanians. During the congress, the major merits of Lithuanian communities abroad for Lithuania in the form of financial support, propaganda, and experience of specific people were celebrated both verbally (by reports and in the press) and through specialized exhibitions showcasing various exhibits.

Lithuanian Americans took an exceptional role in the activities of the ASLA – most attention was paid to Lithuanian education of local youth. Though the USA was home to the most numerous Lithuanian community, the Lithuanian émigré community in the USA was considered to be the best-organized and prosperous and was the least in need of support. However, a rapid process of assimilation and denationalization of the Lithuanian American youth forced the ASLA to focus on numerous Lithuanian American colonies. The fear of losing such an important Lithuanian colony in the future forced the Lithuanian Government as well to shift its attention to the national problems arising among Lithuanian Americans in 1933. In the beginning of 1934, the ASLA shipped nearly 8.5 thousand textbooks to Lithuanian schools in the USA. The delivery of books and newspapers was not discontinued until 1940. The ASLA did not only meet the expectations of organizations which took care of Lithuanian schools but also individual enthusiasts in Lithuanian colonies for the required amount of Lithuanian teaching aids. In the period 1934–1939 the ASLA allocated the support of nearly 43 thousand litas to Lithuanian Americans. Even if it was not a very large sum but it was one of the largest amounts allocated for textbooks and other teaching aids, similar to those given to Lithuanians in Latvia or Argentina. The ASLA estimate of 1940 provided for the amount of as much as 50 thousand litas for Lithuanian Americans.

The ASLA attempted to promote its activities through proclamations in the press in emigration; it also asked the beneficiaries that were receiving the support to write about it in Lithuanian American papers. The association encouraged the youth from Lithuania, primarily students, to establish contacts with their contemporaries in the USA through correspondence. It gave rise to the idea of correspondence which became popular among Lithuanians from other countries as well. Lithuanian American public figures – Vytautas Širvydas, Kazys Karpis, Leonardas Šimutis and a number of others – showed the initial and immense enthusiasm. Gradually, the idea of correspondence extended to students in Lithuania. At the expense of the ASLA, the organization of camps for students in Lithuanian resorts began; they were also attended by Lithuanian American children. They had an opportunity to improve their Lithuanian

and to get to know the most famous places of interest in Lithuania.

From 1936 the ASLA launched a one month-long free summer training course for teachers from the emigrant community in Lithuania (Palanga). Accomplished lecturers (Dr. Salys, Dr. A. Šapoka, and others) gave lectures on the Lithuanian language, history and geography. Teachers willing to attend the course had to register and to cover their travel expenses. Despite a considerable distance, Lithuanian American teachers comprised up to 30 per cent of all attendants. To strengthen Lithuanian education, an idea was put forward to provide scholarships for the studies of the youth in emigration, in particular from the USA, to study in Lithuanian higher education institutions. It was not only a way to train qualified teachers but also future leaders of the youth and public figures in emigration. Five annual scholarships (including travel allowances) were introduced in 1937. The funds for the ASLA activities increased every year; the Lithuanian government's attention to the émigré community was growing. The functions of the ASLA expanded and covered the meeting, care and information provision to foreign Lithuanians in Lithuania. Unfortunately, Lithuania's occupation of 1940 discontinued the much advanced and rationally strengthened Lithuania's relations with the community in emigration.

The Policy of Awarding Lithuanian Orders and Medals to Lithuanian Americans in 1927–1940

The coup d'état of 1926 set many Lithuanians in emigration against the nationalist Government. In order to regain emigrants' respect and confidence, Lithuanian authorities decided to use one out of many means i.e. to award the most active representatives of Lithuanians in emigration who had made a significant contribution to the restoration of Lithuania's independence and cultural development with orders and medals such as the Order of Vytautas the Great, the Order of Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas or the Riflemen's Union's Riflemen's Star Medal. The negative attitude of Lithuanian Americans – Catholics, sandariečiai, socialists, except for the right-wing nationalists – towards the national awards forced the government to change its plans and solve this problem in several stages: until 1931 these awards were not bestowed on Lithuanians residing in America; in the period of 1931–1936 the so-called provisional plan was introduced, i.e. only the most worthy representatives of older generations of emigrants were awarded, especially to commemorate their age or activity jubilees, in order to award medals to the representatives from the opposition, especially priests. In 1937–1940, the number of people who received awards and their political spectrum expanded significantly – awards were bestowed both on ordinary members and leaders from Catholic and sandariečiai organizations, the editors of their newspapers, etc. Only socialists made an exception.

All in all, throughout the period under analysis Lithuanian Americans were officially awarded over one hundred orders

and their medals; besides, some of them received the Medal of Lithuania's Independence. However, we do not possess exact data concerning their number; we are only aware of the fact that in four cases medals were not accepted. Lithuania's representatives in the USA Bronius K. Balutis, Povilas Žadeikis, Mikas Bagdonas, Petras Daužvardis, Antanas Kalvaitis, Jonas Budrys made the lists of the candidates for awards very carefully by taking into consideration the proposals of various organizations and individual activists and asking for candidates themselves to confirm whether they were willing to accept decorations, and made appropriate recommendations to the Lithuanian authorities on the orders and medals to be awarded to the candidates. However, this did not prevent some cases of dissatisfaction among Lithuanian emigrants in America either because of candidates appointed or the degree of decoration. Lithuanian representatives tried to avoid such misunderstandings which could have deepened the opposition between emigrants and Lithuanian authorities as well as among the movements of Lithuanian Americans themselves. To sum up, the above-discussed policy of awarding orders and medals could be viewed positively; activists who made a substantial contribution to the Lithuanian culture and social life were remembered and evaluated; as a result, they and their like-minded contemporaries would automatically become stronger supporters and defenders of Lithuania.

The Attempts of the Lithuanian Government to Unite Lithuanian Americans from September 1, 1939 to June 15, 1940

After the governments of Lithuania and the USSR signed the treaty of the return of Vilnius to Lithuanians with the placement of numerous Soviet troops on the Lithuanian territory, on October 24, 1939 Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys wired to Ambassador Žadeikis authorizing him to unite all political movements of Lithuanian Americans into a single political organization, later called the Lithuanian American Council. Seeing the growing political and military influence of the Bolshevik USSR and the threat to independence, the Lithuanian Government sought to obtain propaganda and material support from Lithuanians in emigration. With the assistance of Lithuanian emigrants, it was aimed to reveal Moscow's true attempts in respect of Lithuania to the world. However, the initial aim was to unite the Lithuanian American community divided into different and confronting ideological movements: Catholics, nationalists-sandariečiai, and socialists. As a non-patriotic movement, Lithuanian American communists were not in the center of attention. Only joint political activities of Lithuanian emigrants could yield the desired results in propaganda and the collection of the required financial resources for Lithuania's affairs. By the end of November, Žadeikis tried to find out about the possibility of establishing a joint organization among the leaders of emigrant community (L. Šimutis, M. Vinikas, P. Grigaitis, K. Karpius, P. Jurgėla, etc.). The attempt

for unity among the émigré community was very complicated. In his reports to Minister Urbšys, Žadeikis revealed the reasons of miscommunication among the leaders of Lithuanian emigrants in a clear and reasoned way: mutual disagreements between movements; diverging views towards the nationalist government in Lithuania; economic weakening of emigrant organizations; division of the national type movement; wide-spread denationalization among the community in emigration.

On December 9–10, 1939 Washington hosted the conference of Lithuanian representatives (Ambassador P. Žadeikis, Consul General Jonas Budrys, Consul Petras Daužvardis and Honorary Consul Antanas Šalna) initiated by Urbšys. The conference paid much attention to the necessity, conditions, and obstacles of setting up the Joint Body of Lithuanian Americans. A conclusion was made that only Lithuanian Americans themselves could decide on the establishment of such a body through their leaders and organizations. According to the coordinated tactics of Lithuanian representatives, the leaders of the Lithuanian émigré community had to be explained about the necessity of such a body, convinced to take the initiative and provided consultation.

Žadeikis advised the leaders of political movements to start with setting up a steering group and appointing their representatives who would make up the joint political organization. He proposed several variants for group composition taking into consideration the actual influence of movements in the émigré society. However, Catholics requested the majority; socialists demanded the number of representatives equal to Catholics, whereas nationalists-sandariečiai requested even more than socialists. In the midst of such number combinations, the Lithuanian ambassador made a conclusion – such a joint political organization could perhaps in some way be established only if Lithuania was actually facing a disaster.

Due to the war, the attention of the Lithuanian authorities to Lithuanians in emigration considerably increased (telegrams were sent to the USA on October 24, 1939 and May 17, 1940). In the beginning of 1940, the Commission for Affairs of Foreign Lithuanians to the Government was set up in Kaunas at the initiative of Prime Minister Merkys. Its aim was to coordinate and support the national activities of Lithuanians abroad, to centralize them and to set their activity guidelines. Close and permanent relations were the target. It was already the matter of concern of the Government rather than individual organizations. In principle, it meant the concentration of Lithuanian emigrants for political activities and the support of Lithuania's independence. After Lithuania's occupation, the Commission's activities were not brought to life.

The Lithuanian ambassador, seeing that the consolidation of



Lithuanian Press Club. New York. From Susivienijimas Lietuviu Amerikoje. 1886-1976.

the leaders of different movements for joint work would not be achieved in the near future, tried to unite the Lithuanian community through their non-party organizations and societies. He proposed to set up joint committees for the support of Lithuanians in Vilnius because the issue of Vilnius was highly relevant among all emigrants irrespective of their political beliefs. In this sphere, the desired results were achieved – the committees bringing together different political movements were established in various Lithuanian colonies (in Chicago, Detroit and elsewhere) as the basis for the future political body of all Lithuanian Americans. However, it could only be achieved after Lithuania's occupation.

Dr. Juozas Skirius is Dean of the World History Department of the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences (LUES), the LUES Senate Member, Members of the Vytautas Magnus University Department of Humanitarian Sciences Committee, Chairman of the Editorial Board of the LUES History Department's multi-volume publication *Historia Universalis in Lithuania*, and members of many other boards and organizations.

Dr. Skirius has published: *Lietuvos istorijos chrestomatija 1861–1990 03 II* (1993), *Naujausiuju laikų istorijos chrestomatija 1918–1945* (1994), *Iš Lietuvos teisės ir valstybės istorijos* (2001), *Lietuvos užatlantės diplomatija 1918–1929 m., Istoriniai asmenys ir jų epocha 1918–1945, Lietuvos užsienio reikalų ministrai 1918–1940* (1999), *Amerikos lietuvių tarybos kūrimosi 1939–1941 m. atspindžiai dokumentuose ir spaudoje* (Chicago, 1998), *U.S. Government Policy Toward Lithuania 1920-1922* (Chicago, 2000), *Amerikos lietuvių tarybos veikla 1945–1948 m.: išėivijos pastangos dėl Displaced persons act priėmimo* (Chicago, 2001), *Lietuvių visuomenininkas ir diplomatas Bronius Kazys Balutis (1880–1967): Tėvynei paaukotas gyvenimas* (2001), *Julius J. Bielskis (1891–1976) Gyvenimas Amerikoje tarnaujant Lietuvai: JAV lietuvių veikėjas ir diplomatas* (Chicago, 2004 and Vilnius, 2008)

He earned his Ph.D. degree in history at the Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences. He advanced his studies in Great Britain (1994, 2002), Poland (1991–1994, 2006), Germany (1993), the USA (1998, 2000, 2003, 2008), Stockholm (Sweden) Institute of International Relations (1993), and Izrael (2011).

Security

...China is planning on taking part in Russian war games in the Baltic Sea. Three Chinese warships will join Russian ships near Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg and may be joined by Chinese helicopters.

...A train traveling from Kaliningrad to Moscow was stopped at the Kybartai checkpoint and four Russian servicemen in civilian clothes were removed because they did not have specific permission to travel as a "team" which is defined as a group of four or more. Within 3 hours they were permitted to take the next train back to Kaliningrad.

...In response to Estonia's decision to expel two Russian diplomats, Russia in turn expelled two Estonian diplomats. Neither country explained their tit-for-tat (action/reaction).

...Reuters reports that the Lithuanian Central Bank detected that Russian hackers were active against the central bank and energy networks in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Russian President Vladimir Putin conceded that "patriotic" Russians on their own initiative may have engaged in cyber-attacks but he denied that the Russian state had ever been involved in such hacking.

...The Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the International Committee of the Red Cross hosted a one day training session on safety of journalists who report from conflict zones.

...The President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, 63, and the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, 64, plan a June 30 meeting at the Kremlin to review the results of their 2016 cooperation in trade and economics. It also precedes their Zapad 2017 war games planned for August/September. They often meet including April 2017 and November 2016. Lukashenko has been President of Belarus since the establishment of the office in 1994. They share a love of mixing it up by playing ice hockey.

...The Lithuanian Defense Minister Raimundas Karoblis met with PA governor Tom Wolf at the PA Capitol in Harrisburg to discuss Pennsylvania's 24 year partnership between the PA National Guard and the Lithuania military. During this period more than 500 exchanges have occurred and have included joint deployments to Afghanistan for police and reconstruction projects.

...NATO held war games to defend the critical "Suwalki Gap" which runs from the Russian Kaliningrad enclave to Belarus along the Polish-Lithuanian border. More than 1500 service members participated from the U.S., Britain, Poland and Lithuania. The Rail Baltica project to link Germany, Poland, the Baltics and Finland passes thru this Gap.

Business

...The CEO of NASDAQ, Adena Friedman, is so impressed with the

quality and depth of Lithuanian technical talent that its Vilnius team has grown from 30 to 300 employees. One specialty is in machine intelligence to track illegal trading activities.

...Dematic, a Grand Rapids Michigan company, will be expanding their Kaunas finance, control engineering and computer simulation capability by increasing their staff from 60 to 100 over the next three years. Dematic, with 6,000 employees, has operations in 35 countries and is a major supplier of logistics automation equipment. Many of the current Kaunas employees come from Kaunas Institute of Technology, local vocational schools and universities in Vilnius and Klaipėda.

...Lithuania has been invited to join CERN (Council of the European Organization for Nuclear Research) as the fifth associate member and collaborate with the 22 full members. Membership will enable scientist to participate in large scale research in physics, radiobiology, medicine and nuclear physics. Lithuania has been associated with CERN since 2004 and its scientists have utilized the Large Hadron Collider. Companies based in Lithuania are now able to bid on CERN contracts.

...Poland's largest oil refinery, PKN Orlen has reached agreement with state owned Lithuanian Railways on resolving bills going back to 2014 and lower tariffs on future transport of oil from its refinery in Mažeikiai, Lithuania to the oil terminal in Klaipėda. It is hoped that this agreement will lead to cooperation on defense, electrical grid synchronization, and a gas link.

...The European Crowdfunding Network will host the 6th Annual Crowdfunding Convention in Vilnius during October 19-20, 2017. An Early Bird two day pass is priced at 159 euros. Two hundred delegates are expected.

...The 2015 NordBalt power link between Lithuania and Sweden was shut down for two weeks in June for scheduled repairs. The 550 million euro cable will be offline every summer for planned replacement of the sleeves which have caused unscheduled disconnections of the underwater and land based cable.

General

...Archbishop Teofilus Matulionis was declared "Blessed" in a ceremony on Sunday, June 25 in Vilnius after having been judged a martyr in December, 2016. Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for Saints' Causes spoke to about 30,000 people gathered in Cathedral Square. Pope Francis sent greetings to Lithua-



Teofilus Matulionis.

nian Catholics for the first Soviet era martyr. After 16 years in prison for refusing to turn over church properties, he was given a lethal injection to prevent his attending the 1962 Second Vatican Council at the invitation of Pope now Saint John XXIII.

...Unseeded, 20 year old Latvian, Jelenia Ostapenko won the 2017 French Open in tennis. She was the first unseeded women champion at the French Open since 1933. Her next goal is to win at Wimbledon.

...The European statistical office, Eurostat, found that food and non-alcoholic beverages in Lithuania were among the lowest in the European Union. Against a norm of 100%, Lithuania prices were 78%. Lower prices were reported in Poland (62%) and Bulgaria (71%). Latvia prices were 91% and Estonia 90%. On the high end of the scale, Denmark was 148%, Sweden (126%) and Austria (123%). Alcohol and tobacco was the most expensive in Ireland (175%), UK (162%) and Finland (135%) and alcohol was relatively low prices in Lithuania (73%).

...An investigation of the actions the Director of the National Opera of Lithuania has resulted in his firing. Long-time Director, Gintautas Kėvišas, was dismissed by Culture Minister Liana Ruokytė-Jonsson because he is accused of making contracts with organizations with which he had employment agreements. The many conflicts of interest included ones with a company associate with his son.

...The widow of Algirdas Brazauskas, the first President of Lithuania (1993-1998) after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Prime Min-

ister (2001-2006) and her family are being investigated regarding the source of funds for their purchase of two South Florida properties. One house is located in Hallandale Beach and one was located in Coconut Creek. The two properties were worth about a million dollars. It turns out that in a 2017 poll of 1005 persons aged 18-75, Brazauskas who died in 2010 was rated the leader who made the most contribution to the country.

...Lithuania has raised the legal drinking age from 18 to 20 and restricted alcohol sales between 8 PM and 10 AM. Ads for alcohol will be restricted after January 1, 2018. The ban includes TV, radio, billboards, hard copy and the internet. The World Health Organization data indicated that Lithuania led the world in drink with those over 15 drinking the equivalent of 16 Liters of pure alcohol per year.

...Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis has raised alarms regarding the slow collapsing of Gediminas Hill and associated Gediminas' Tower. Work has begun on strengthening the north-western slope but work also needs to be done on the south-eastern slope where Gediminas' Tower is located. This multi-million euro project is using Lithuanian and Polish geologists and the National Museum of Lithuania.

...Lithuania again gained international recognition for its annual Fastest Baby Contest as part of International Children's Day, June 1, in Vilnius. Ten month old Mykolas Pociūnas bested 25 crawling toddlers over a 5 meter carpeted venue. One video gathered almost 4 million views.



Gediminas Hill in Vilnius. Photo by S. Žiūra.

July/August Anniversaries

765 years ago



Klaipėda castle.

On July 29, 1252, the Crusaders decided to build a castle in Klaipėda. Klaipėda Castle, also known as Memelburg or Memel Castle, is an archeological site and museum housed in a castle built by the Teutonic Knights in Klaipėda, Lithuania, near the Baltic Sea. The Teutons called the castle Memelburg or Memel, and Klaipėda was generally known as Memel until 1923, when Lithuanian military forces took over the city. The castle was first mentioned in written sources in 1252, and underwent numerous destructions and reconstructions in the centuries that followed. During the 19th century, having lost its strategic importance, the castle was demolished. Archeological work was performed at the site during the 20th century, and in 2002 a museum was established underneath one of its bastions. Currently, the castle is being restored. The construction works are scheduled to finish until 2020.

680 years ago

On July 6, 1337, the name of Old Trakai was first mentioned. Senieji Trakai (literally: Old Trakai, Polish: Stare Troki) is a historic Lithuanian village located 1.9 miles east of Trakai. The central part of the village is proclaimed an architectural reserve. The main street is dominated by uniform wooden houses, facing it with two-windowed sides. Sometime before 1321, Grand Duke Gediminas transferred the capital of Lithuania from Kernavė to Trakai (today's Senieji Trakai) and erected his brick castle. In 1337 it became a seat of the newly established Duchy of Trakai. Gediminas' son Kęstutis erected a new castle in New Trakai (today's Trakai). Kęstutis' son Vytautas was born in Old Trakai ca. 1350. The castle in Senieji Trakai was destroyed by the Teutonic Order in 1391. The ruins of the castle were gifted to Benedictine monks by Vytautas in 1405. It is supposed that the present monastery building dating from the 15th century incorporates the remains of the Gediminas' castle.

The Trakai name, derived from Lithuanian: trakas - "the glade", suggests that the castle was built in a hollow area after deforestation.

635 years ago

On July 6, 1382, the Treaty of Bražuolė was signed between Jogaila and the Teutonic Knights against Kęstutis.

On August 15, 1382, the Grand Duke of Lithuania Kęstutis was murdered in the castle of Krėva.

630 years ago

On July 9, 1387, Skirgaila and the Livonian Order signed an agreement allowing the merchants of Vilnius and Polotsk to trade in Riga.

625 years ago

On August 4, 1392, according to the Ostrów agreement, Jogaila acknowledged Vytautas as the ruler of Lithuania. The Ostrów or Astrava Agreement (Lithuanian: Astravos sutartis, Polish: Uгода w Ostrowie) was a treaty between Jogaila (Władysław II Jagiełło), King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, and his cousin Vytautas the Great, signed on 4 August 1392. The treaty ended the destructive Lithuanian Civil War, launched in 1389 by Vytautas who hoped to gain political power, and concluded the power struggle between the two cousins that erupted in 1380 after Jogaila secretly signed the Treaty of Dovydiškės with the Teutonic Knights. The Ostrów Agreement did not stop attacks from the Teutonic Knights and the territorial dispute over Samogitia continued up to 1422. According to the treaty, Vytautas became the ruler of Lithuania (styled Grand Duke), but he also acknowledged Jogaila's (styled Supreme Duke) rights to Lithuania. The details of the Polish–Lithuanian relationship were clarified in several later treaties, including the Union of Vilnius and Radom in 1401 and Union of Horodło in 1413.



Vytautas the Great

570 years ago

On July 25, 1447, Grand Duke Kazimierz of Lithuania was crowned king of Poland in Krakow. Casimir IV Jagiellon (Polish: Kazimierz IV Andrzej Jagiellończyk; Lithuanian: Kazimieras Jogailaitis) of the Jagiellonian dynasty was Grand Duke of Lithuania from 1440 and King of Poland from 1447, until his death. He was one of the most active Polish rulers, under whom Poland, by defeating the Teutonic Knights in the Thirteen Years' War recovered Pomerania, and the Jagiellonian dynasty became one of the leading royal houses in Europe. He was a strong opponent of aristocracy, and helped to strengthen the importance of Parliament and the Senate

525 years ago

On July 26, 1492, in the Vilnius City, Alexander was crowned Grand Duke of Lithuania. Alexander I Jagiellon (Polish: Aleksander Jagiellończyk; Lithuanian: Aleksandras Jogailaitis) of the House of Jagiellon was the Grand Duke of Lithuania and later also King of Poland. He was the fourth son of Casimir IV Jagiellon. He was elected Grand Duke of Lithuania on the death of his father (1492), and King of Poland on the death of his brother John I Albert (1501).

210 years ago

On July 9, 1807, the Tilžė (Tilsit) Treaty between Russia and France was signed and the Duchy of Warsaw was founded. The Duchy of Warsaw included the Užnemunė part of Lithuania. The Treaties of Tilsit were two agreements signed by Napoleon I of France in the town of Tilsit in July 1807 in the aftermath of his victory at Friedland. The first was signed on 7 July, between Tsar Alexander I of Russia and Napoleon I of France, when they met on a raft in the middle of the Neman River. The second was signed with

Prussia on 9 July. Napoleon had created French sister republics, which were formalized and recognized at Tilsit: the Kingdom of Westphalia, the Duchy of Warsaw and the Free City of Danzig; the other ceded territories were awarded to existing French client states and to Russia.

95 years ago

On August 1, 1922, the first permanent constitution of Lithuania was adopted. During the closing stages of World War I, Lithuania declared independence on February 16, 1918. Three separate temporary constitutions were enacted on November 2, 1918, April 4, 1919 and June 10, 1920. On November 2, 1918, the State Council adopted a constitutional act. At the time, it was still constrained by the decision of July 11, 1918, declaring Lithuania a constitutional monarchy, with close ties to Germany. In a changing environment, the council chose to adopt the constitutional act without specifying the form of government or the head of state, leaving the decisions to the Constituent Assembly (Steigiamasis Seimas). On April 4, 1919, the State Council adopted modified Fundamental Principles of Temporary Constitution. The modifications were mainly notable for the introduction of the office of the President, in place of the Presidium of the Council. Once assembled, the Constituent Assembly adopted another temporary constitutional act on June 10, 1920, confirming Lithuania as a parliamentary republic and providing the framework and limits to its own powers. The Constituent Assembly did not adopt a constitution until August 1, 1922. A democratic constitution, it resembled contemporary Western European constitutions, enshrining the main rights and freedom of the people, political freedoms, political pluralism and a mechanism for democratic elections. The constitution envisioned a strong parliament (the Seimas) and a politically weakened President as the head of state.



Napoleon and Alexander meet in a pavilion set up on a raft in the middle of the Nemunas River.

Sūdyti Agurkai (fresh pickles)

By Jana Sirusaitė-Motivans



This summer, my family is leaving Montreal and moving back to the States. Our time in Montreal has truly been a pleasure. It is a very livable city with an interesting mix of French and English and a very rich cultural life.

The Lithuanian community here is also culturally rich with an abundance of musical and creative talent. The well-known Tamošaitis weaving group originated here and are still well-known for their beautiful woven sashes, table linens and traditional Lithuanian folk costumes. In addition to weaving, there is also a strong musical tradition. The Aušros Vartų Parapija choir has been going strong for 66 years. We recently enjoyed a musical evening organized by Paulius Mališka, our parish priest, which featured talented local singers and musicians.

There are also a number of talented cooks in the community, and I have learned a lot about Lithuanian food while living here. I have had many opportunities to help in the church kitchen and exchange recipes with others. A number of my Bridges articles were inspired by something I learned while in Montreal.

This is my fourth year as food editor for Bridges, and over nearly forty issues I have explored a wide spectrum of Lithuanian food, from the well-known (kugelis) to the obscure (obulinis sūris – apple cheese). I have enjoyed the challenge and

learned so much in the process.

Returning back to the States will allow me to take a new approach to the monthly column. In addition to featuring new recipes for you to make at home, I will also focus on places and people who are active in Lithuanian cuisine. I am interested in finding suppliers of Lithuanian food, such as bakers, smoke houses, and caterers and attending events listed on the back page calendar of Bridges. For example, I am looking forward to the annual Mugė (craft fair) in Philadelphia (potato pancakes), the Sunday brunch out on Long Island at the Avenue Restaurant (kugelis) and the Lithuanian brunch in Cleveland. I hope to travel and report on many different events where traditional and Lithuanian-inspired food is served. If you or your organization have an event coming up, please write to Bridges to place it on our calendar. I look forward to exploring our living food culture.

This month I will share a final recipe from Montreal, from my friend Nijolė Bagdžiūnienė, for sūdyti agurkai (fresh pickles). These are quick pickles, made with fresh garden cucumbers and eaten right away for a pure taste of summer. Make sure to use Kirby cucumbers which are similar to cucumbers grown in Lithuania.

Sūdyti Agurkai (fresh pickles)

INGREDIENTS

- 8 cups water
- 1 pound small Kirby cucumbers (6-8 cucumbers)
- ¼ cup salt
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 bunch fresh dill

1. Pour the water into a medium-sized pot, and heat slowly until lukewarm. Add the salt and stir to dissolve. Set aside to cool.



2. Trim both ends of the cucumbers, and cut them into quarters lengthwise. Peel the garlic and cut the cloves in half.



3. Using either one big jar or two smaller ones, make a bed of fresh dill on the bottom of the jar(s), and add half the garlic. Place the cut cucumber pieces upright in the jar(s), and top with more dill and the rest of the garlic. Pour the cooled salted water into the jars to cover the contents completely. Close the jars and set aside in a cool

area. In about four hours the fresh pickles will be ready. The flavor at this point is delicate and mild. If you prefer a stronger flavor, let the pickles sit a bit longer until the taste is to your liking, but do not leave overnight or they will become too salty. Once you achieve your flavor point, put the jars in the refrigerator to stop the process. Remember, these are fresh pickles and are meant to be eaten the same day or the next day. They will not keep longer than a few days.



The Record World Lithuanian Sports Games



President Valdas Adamkus speaks at the Games opening.

On June 30 - July 2, 2017 the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games took place in Kaunas, Lithuania. The LSFS President Rimantas Kveselaitis presented the figures: 3,982 athletes from 27 countries, 300 judges, 200 volunteers, 100 guests, and thousands of spectators participated. This was the largest World Lithuanian Sports Games on record. The previous games drawn together 1,600 athletes. The average age of the athletes was 35 years. Out of the total of 77 sports delegations, 28 were from abroad and 49 from Lithuania. Athletes competed in 19 different sports. More than 600 sets of medals were awarded. The next World Lithuanian Sports Games will take place in 2021 in Druskininkai, Lithuania.



The flag of the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games.

Photos by Saulius Strazdas.



Women's volleyball champions at the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games.



Chicago Lithuanian basketball team with President Valdas Adamkus and Rimantas Dirvonis.



President Valdas Adamkus lights the Flame of the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games.



Football players at the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games.



Archers at the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games.



North American Lithuanian Sports Association President Laurynas Misevičius, President Valdas Adamkus, Rimantas Dirvonis.



Braлиukai basketball team - the champions of the 10th World Lithuanian Sports Games.

Farewell, Consul General Marijus Gudynas!



Darius Čiuplinskas led the farewell event.



Representatives of the Chicago Lithuanian Saturday School greet Consul General Marijus Gudynas.



Representatives of the Lithuanian American Club greet Consul General Marijus Gudynas.

The farewell event held to honor Consul General in Chicago, Marijus Gudynas, became a striking example of how the powerful Lithuanian community in Chicago is able to come together and unite for a great event. Sixty three Lithuanian American organizations from Chicago and its surroundings contributed to the event and made sure that Consul General Marijus Gudynas who headed the consulate for the last five years, would be return to Lithuania with his heart full of warm memories of the

work he has done for Lithuania and many wonderful moments together with the Lithuanian community.

This event reminded us that power is in the unity and, of course, inspired everyone to think about his or her individual contribution to the future of a strong Lithuania.

Thank you Sandra Scedrinska and Studio Light, Inc. for great photos!

Info by the Consulate General of Lithuania in Chicago



Consul General Marijus Gudynas is overwhelmed by the welcome.



Representatives of the Lithuanian Foundation greet Consul General Marijus Gudynas.



Representatives of the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture greet Consul General Marijus Gudynas.



Representatives of the Maironis Lithuanian School greet Consul General Marijus Gudynas.



The Dainava Choir greets Consul General Marijus Gudynas. Choir leader Darius Polikaitis at the piano. The event was filmed by Arvydas Reneckis.



Representatives of the Lithuanian American Community say farewell to Consul General Marijus Gudynas.

Year Premier – The Theatricalized Oratorio "Chronicles Of Vilnius"

September 3rd, Palace of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania



The Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, along with the State Choir "Vilnius" and the most famous Lithuanian opera soloists, will perform the theatricalized oratorio "Vilnius Chronicles" written by composer Gediminas Rimkus Rimkevičius and libretto author Rūta Mėlynė.

It is a contemporary narrative of music, poetry and visual expression that will send listeners to the times of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas and his descendants Gediminaičiai and Jogailaičiai. The historical tale covers about 170 years of Lithuanian history.

The authors dedicate their work to the 700th anniversary of the founder of the city of Vilnius, the Grand Duke Gediminas, and to the centennial of the Lithuanian state.

Participating:

Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, leader Modestas Pitrenas;

Conductor: Robertas Šervenikas;

State Choir "Vilnius", leader Artūras Dambrauskas;

Shadow puppet theater "Budrugana Lietuva," leader Vytautas V. Landsbergis;

Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theater soloists: Joana Gedmintaitė, Irena Milkevičiūtė, Fausta Savickaitė, Egidijus Dauskurdis, Audrius Rubežius, Dainius Stumbras, and others;
Narrator-Chronicler: Actor Vidas Bagdonas;

The theatrical oratorio "Chronicles of Vilnius" tells the history of the five generations of the Gediminas dynasty, from the founder of the capital city Gediminas to prince Kazimieras, whose life and early death became the legendary symbol of Christian Vilnius. The most prominent figures of Vilnius come to life in the oratorio: The Grand Dukes of Lithuania Gediminas, Algirdas, Kęstutis, and Vytautas, the ruler of the kingdom of Poland and Lithuania Jogaila, the successor to his throne, his younger son Kazimieras, as well as the son of the latter, prince Kazimieras, who was destined to inherit the heavenly crown in place of an earthly one.

The royal gallery would not be imaginable without the brilliant portraits of women: Algirdas's wife Julijona, Kęstutis' wife Birutė, Vytautas' wife Ona, and King Kazimieras Jogailaitis' wife, mother of kings, Elžbieta Habsburgaitė.

The story of "Chronicles of Vilnius" begins with the lesser-known legend of the founding of Vilnius, according to which, the foundation of the castle of the capital's ruler had to be strengthened by the voluntary sacrifice of his most beloved son or a virgin girl. From the second part of the piece, the Chronicler (Vidas Bagdonas), embodying the historical memory of Vilnius, will lead listeners through the world of the earthly time: the five parts of the oratorio are dedicated to the five generations of the Gediminas Dynasty, each residing in Vilnius for different periods of time. The last, seventh, part of the plot will again carry you away onto the other side of time and space - into the imaginary world of Spirits, where the boundaries between the past and the present have been erased, and where, through the broken barriers of time, the spirits of the former inhabitants of Vilnius may speak.

The theatricalized oratorio will unite various genres of vocal and instrumental music, harmonies of choral and solo music, as well as folklore and religious music. During the performance, the poetic musical act will be complimented by an actors' troupe, filmed inserts by the shadow-puppet theatre, three-dimensional video projections, animations, and images of chronicles and archival documents.

Composer: Gediminas Rimkus-Rimkevičius;

Libretto by: Rūta Mėlynė;

Director: Alvydas Šlepikas;

Stage Designer: Neringa Baciuskaitė;

Premiere: September 3rd

Event sponsor: President of the Republic of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus

Lithuania 4,000,000

A Project that Strives to Unite Lithuanians of the World for the 100th Anniversary of Lithuanian Independence



Project Lithuania 4,000,000 organizers with President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė. Photo by Rytis Šeškaitis.

It all started with The Millennium Odyssey. On the 5th of July 2009, the yacht Ambersail LTU 1000 returned to Lithuania, having circumnavigated the globe on a mission to invite the world's Lithuanians to gather together for the millennial commemoration of the first mention of the name Lithuania. At 9 PM (Vilnius time) on the 6th of July, the international Lithuanian community, scattered around the world, joined together in thoughts and words. They sang the Lithuanian anthem - as one. Since then, Lithuanians from all over the world gather together to sing the national anthem on July 6th at 9 PM, Vilnius time. With the upcoming celebration in 2018 of 100 years of the restored Lithuania state, this idea has transformed into the LITHUANIA 4,000,000 initiative.

In 2018, the organizers are throwing a very special party: Modern Lithuania celebrates 100 years of statehood! All around the world we'll commemorate it together by singing Lithuania national anthem.

Every Lithuanian deserves to be invited to a celebration like this, so send out an invite to all the Lithuanians you know, especially those living outside Lithuania. And don't forget to mark your place on the Global Lithuania Map!

This way we'll finally learn how many Lithuanians there are around the world and, despite the distance between us, we'll be one click away from one another. By coming together virtually, we'll truly become a Lithuania without borders, where no one will ask what coat of arms is on your passport and how well you speak Lithuanian. A world in which Lithuania is not a geographic location, but a community, an idea, and a feeling, joined by human contact.

To view the map of Lithuanians in the world, please go to <https://www.4000000.lt/en>.

TĖVYNĖ / PATRIA

An Exhibition Commemorating the 130th Milestone of the Lithuanian Alliance of America

JULY 15 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2017



EXHIBITION VISITING SCHEDULE

AUGUST 1 - AUGUST 31
By appointment only: 917
501 3275 - Laima Mihailovich

SEPTEMBER 8 - SEPTEMBER 30
Wednesday - Saturday,
12pm - 6pm

SLA/LAA is the oldest American Lithuanian Organization still active today. The exhibition displays SLA/LAA's unique and original artifacts and memorabilia, which contextualize the rich historical evolution of the organization from its inception in 1886. SLA/LAA germinated via Dr. Jonas Šliupas's editorial: Lietuviškas balsas/Lithuanian Voice, where mutual ideas and concerns were shared and the concept of SLA/LAA was born.

Launched in 1896 Tėvynė was printed in SLA/LAA's headquarters and was intended to keep American Lithuanian's abreast of pertinent information related to Lithuanian culture, politics, economics etc. In more recent publications the use of both Lithuanian and English languages are present. Original copies of Tėvynė will be on display in addition to SLA/LAA insurance forms, member lists, medals, seals, accounting books, photos, correspondence between SLA/LAA members, albums, cultural pamphlets, original Tėvynė printing plates and a selection of books from SLA/LAA's Collective Library. As part of the exhibition, you will have an opportunity to see Jonas Mekas' film Was There a War? - a glimpse into everyday life of Lithuanian immigrants in 1950-1953 America. NY premiere! The film is in Lithuanian language only.

For more information please visit: sla307.com

SLA is excited to present a historical and cultural exhibition entitled: Tėvynė / Patria commemorating 130 years of American Lithuanian history unified under SLA, Susivienijimo Lietuvių Amerikoje. SLA is the acronym in Lithuanian for LAA, the Lithuanian Alliance of America. This exhibition will be on view from July 15 - September 30, 2017 at the heart of SLA/LAA located at 307 W. 30th Street, New York, NY 10001.

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

ONGOING

Most Fridays, 4:30-7:30 p.m.
Friday Fish Fry at the Rockford Lithuanian Club
716 Indiana Avenue, Rockford, Ill.
Open to the public. Weekly specials vary. First Friday of the month—Lithuanian dumplings.
Info: lithuanianclub.org, 815-962-9256

Every Sunday, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
All-You-Can-Eat Lithuanian Brunch Buffet
Lithuanian Club and Gintaras Dining Room
877 E. 185 St., Cleveland, Ohio
\$15 per person; \$6 kids 6-12
Info: lithclub@gmail.com, 216-531-8318

First Sunday of the Month, 12-4 p.m.
Lithuanian Brunch
The Avenue Restaurant, 71-22 Myrtle Ave., Glendale, N.Y.
Reservations strongly recommended.
Info: 347-725-3853

First Sunday of the Month
Rockford Lithuanian Club General Membership Meeting
716 Indiana Avenue, Rockford, Ill.
Open to all members.
Info: lithuanianclub.org, 815-962-9256

Every Third Saturday, Mar-Jun & Sep-Nov, 1-3 p.m.

Amber Roots Lithuanian Heritage Club
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2517 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.
Use Tilton Street entrance.
Bring a dish to share.
Info: milliemarks@aol.com

AUGUST 2017

August 12-13
Lithuanian Days Festival
The Knights of Lithuania Council 144
The Annunciation Hall in Frackville, PA
7 South Broad Mountain Avenue.
570-874-1109

August 12-19
"Third Week" Youth Camp in English, 12-16 Years Old
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.

August 5-11, 2017
Ateitis Annual Lithuanian Cultural Week
Franciscan Guest House, 26 Beach Ave., Kennebunk, Maine
Concert and lecture series with accommodations available.
Info: 207-967-4865

August 20-27
Meno8Dienos Adult Art Camp in Lithuanian
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

SEPTEMBER 2017

September 16, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
Everyone welcome. Use side entrance on Tilton Street.
Bring a dish to share.
Info: milliemarks@aol.com

OCTOBER 2017

October 6-8
Iskyla/Walk-a-Thon
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

October 21, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
Everyone welcome. Use side entrance on Tilton Street.
Bring a dish to share.
Info: milliemarks@aol.com

NOVEMBER 2017

November 5, 1 p.m.
Chicago Lithuanian Women's Club
will present a fashion show of Lithuanian designers and others at Palos Country Club, 13100 Southwest Hwy, Orland Park, IL.
More information: ericabrooks1@yahoo.com

November 18, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
Everyone welcome. Use side entrance on Tilton Street.
Bring a dish to share.
Info: milliemarks@aol.com

DECEMBER 2017

December 9, 1-3 p.m.
Amber Roots Heritage Club Kučios
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia
Everyone welcome. Use side entrance on Tilton Street.
Bring a dish to share.
Info: milliemarks@aol.com

JUNE/JULY 2018

June 30 – July 6
Dainu Svente: Lithuania's Centenary Song Celebration
Vilnius and Kaunas, Lithuania
Info: dainusvente.lt/en/programme/



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July/August 2017



The World Lithuanian Unity Day in the Vilnius City Hall Square featured posters with biographies of famous Lithuanians. The Garbanotas Bosistas played on the stairs of the City Hall. July 17, 2017. Photos by Rūta Mėlinskaitė.



bridges

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