

bridges



LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

\$5

September 2017

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LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN
NEWS JOURNAL

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bridges

Vol. 41 No. 7 / September 2017
Bridges is the English-language publication of the
Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.
lithuanian-american.org/bridges

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Our thanks to
LITHUANIAN FOUNDATION
for its support of this magazine.
www.lithuanianfoundation.org

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BRIDGES (ISSN: 87508028) is published 10 times per year (Jan/Feb and Jul/Aug combined) by Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. The known office of publication is located at 2711 W. 71st Street, Chicago, IL 60629. The editorial office is located at 139 Willow Blvd., Willow Springs, IL 60480. Periodicals postage paid at Chicago, IL and additional locations. Vol. 41, No. 7. POSTMASTER: Send address corrections and changes to LAC, Inc./Bridges, 208 Linden Ponds Way, Unit 403, Hingham, MA 02043. SUBSCRIPTIONS: For subscription questions or address changes, write to spauda@javlb.org. Subscription rates are: US: \$30 per year or \$58 for two years; International: \$55 per year payable in advance in US funds. COPYRIGHT: ©2017 by Lithuanian-American Community, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of the publication may be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. PRINTING: Printed in Chicago, USA by Lithuanian American Community, Inc.

Dear Readers:

The month of September is here. For some, it is a back-to-school time; for others, it's the-end-of-vacation time. For me, summer time always associates with vacation even though I can afford only two weeks of it. This year my vacation was a trip from Chicago through Pennsylvania to New York City and back. On our way, we tried to show our fourteen-years-old son some places that associate with the history of Lithuanian Americans. I have learned a lot as well. In the coming issues of Bridges I will tell of my experiences, and perhaps some of you will find new information. In this issue, I put several photos from the Anthracite Heritage Museum. In the photos you will see items related to the lives of Lithuanian Americans that came to work in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. I have heard stories of how hard they worked but I could never imagine that it was so hard. Only after I visited the Museum and went down under the ground into a now closed coal mine I could feel on a small scale the reality our ancestors lived in. I am appealing to all our readers who had ancestors as coal miners. Please, share the stories of the lives of your fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers. Some of them might have been miners while others might have worked in different fields. If you have photos or documents or any other items, and you don't want to keep them, please find a museum to give them to. Please, share the stories of your ancestors with Bridges readers. I would appreciate your stories. You can always reach me at kariledalia@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Karilė Vaitkutė
Editor

In the July/August issue, under the top photograph on page 24 I made a mistake writing the name of Vytas Čuplinskas. I wrote Darius Čuplinskas. It should have been Vytas Čuplinskas.

Dr. Adolfas Damušis

Part One: Resistance Fighter

By Augustine Idzelis
Lithuanian Research and Studies Center



Adolfas Damušis

History is not merely the end product of archival research or interpretation of documents. History has a profoundly human dimension. It is created by individuals who took part and participated in actions which make up the historical record. One such individual is Dr. Adolfas Damušis, a resistance fighter, one of the organizers of the anti-Soviet insurrection, member of the 1941 Provisional Government (PG), and a survivor of Nazi concentration camps and prisons.

Dr. Adolfas Damušis did not author any memoirs, nor has a biography of his life written. His references to himself are modest and reserved. Biographical gaps in his life are filled by accounts written by his associates and colleagues. Information about Damušis as a student between 1928-1934 at Kaunas was provided to the author by his father Henrikas Idzelevičius-Idzelis (1908-1994) who as a student was a roommate of Damušis and his associate in the activities of Moksleivių Ateitininkų Sąjunga (MAS).

The youth of Adolfas Damušis and Henrikas Idzelis had many similarities. Both were born in 1908 in Russia—almost on the same day. Idzelis was born on July 15 in Knagin, a small town in the province of Nizhny Novgorod. His father worked in a bank while his uncle Vincas was the stationmaster of the Nizhny Novgorod railroad station. Damušis was born on July 16 in the province of Mogilev in Belorussia. His father worked in the tsarist railroad system.

After the Bolshevik Revolution, both families returned to Lithuania. The Idzelis family came back to Telšiai, while the Damušis family returned to Panevėžys. In secondary school, both individuals became members of the Ateitininkai organization—a group which “was primarily concerned with the spiritual and intellectual development of its secondary school members and with Catholic Action”. (Encyclopedia Lituanica, Vol. 1, pp. 196-197)

Both individuals studied at the University of Kaunas and were active in the Ateitininkai organization. In 1930-1931 Damušis was head of MAS while Idzelis was a member of its executive committee. After graduation, the paths of Damušis and Idzelis diverged. Damušis remained in Kaunas as a faculty member of the uni-

versity. In 1940, just before Soviet occupation, Damušis became the head of the Department of Inorganic Chemistry. Idzelis began working for the Bank of Lithuania as an assistant manager of its branch in Šilutė, a town in the Klaipėda region which in the spring of 1939 was occupied by Nazi Germany. Henrikas Idzelis returned to Kaunas. His new assignment was to open up a new bank branch in Švenčionėliai. His first day of work was June 15, 1940. That day the Red Army marched into Lithuania.



Adolfas Damušis among the graduates from the Panevėžys State High School in 1928.

The resistance activity of Adolfas Damušis began in 1930-1931. He, as a 22-year-old student, became the head of MAS. While a secondary school student in Panevėžys, Damušis demonstrated his organizational and leadership skills. He wrote that in 1927, “in Panevėžys, we organized a strong Ateitininkai unit which had more than 300 members.”

In 1930, the Lithuanian government banned MAS. Its activities became clandestine. Alfonsas Lipniūnas, a 25-year-old priest became youth director of the diocese of Panevėžys. He organized secret meetings of members of the banned MAS organization in Panevėžys. During this time, Damušis promoted the work of the banned youth organization. Membership in MAS reached 12,000 members. Understandably, the government was not happy with this development. Its police and security services began to persecute the leadership of the organization. Adolfas Damušis became one of its victims. In 1931, Colonel Pranas Saladžius, the military commandant of Kaunas, issued

decree No. 154 which stated that Adolfas Damušis, “as a person dangerous to public order, is to be committed for six months in a concentration camp.”

Damušis was sent to a concentration camp at Varniai, a town not far from Telšiai. Here he found a number of other imprisoned members of the Ateitininkai organization. Ironically, Varniai also held a large number of imprisoned members of the illegal Communist Party of Lithuania. Damušis spent time in discussions and debates with his ideological opposites. He wrote: “there was an opportunity to discuss social issues, to compare our principles in this area and to strengthen our convictions.” Varniai became a place for his ideological maturation. Debates with hardcore Communists strengthened his Catholicism and ideological convictions. On a more practical level, at Varniai, Damušis became acquainted with the tactics of clandestine operations as practiced by the illegal Lithuanian Communist Party.



In the June 24, 1941 issue of the *laisvė* newspaper it was announced that the independence of Lithuania was restored.

The experience acquired by Damušis in clandestine work in the early 1930s reached its apogee during the first Soviet occupation of Lithuania (June 15, 1940 – June 22, 1941). Four centers of resistance formed. Vilnius, Kaunas and Kretinga were in Lithuania. The fourth center was in Berlin. Each center had a distinctive structure and objectives. The Berlin center was headed by Colonel Kazys Škirpa and with German permission it operated more or less openly. Contrary to the views of revisionist historians, the impact of the Berlin center on the resistance movement in Lithuania was limited and of minimal significance. The Kretinga center headed by Captain Osvaldas Žadvydas was destroyed in the spring of 1941 by a sting operation run by Aleksandras Slavinas, head of NKGB counterintelligence operations in Lithuania. The same fate befell early in June 1941 to the Vilnius center. Vilnius was to have been the center of the anti-Soviet insurrection and the site of the Provisional Government.

Kaunas became the linchpin of the insurrection. The city had certain advantages. In contrast to Vilnius, the population of Kaunas was predominately Lithuanian. It was the center of education, culture, political and civic activity. Kaunas University became the axis around which the resistance movement crystallized. Before the Soviet occupation, the University had about 3,000 students. Student life revolved around fraternities and sororities (korporacijos). These organizations grouped students having similar ideological or professional interests. After Soviet occupation these organizations were closed.

In August of 1940, a clandestine meeting of representatives of the banned student organizations took place. Ateitininkai were represented by Pilypas Žukauskas-Narutis, a 20-year-old engineering student who was also head of the student (SAS) component of the Ateitininkai organization. All the attendees agreed to form a committee named the Student Coalition which was to direct the anti-Soviet resistance movement among the students. Pilypas Narutis was elected chairman of the Student Coalition.

Simultaneously, anti-Soviet organizational work began in Kaunas among recent graduates and young professionals who

were members of the Ateitininkai movement. Dr. Adolfas Damušis played a key role. On October 9, 1940, Damušis meet with Leonas Prapuolenis and several other friends at Derby, a small diner in Kaunas. It was decided to begin organizing resistance to the Soviet occupiers. In order to avoid penetration by the NKVD, resistance cells could not have more than five members. Only one representative of a cell could have contact with a different cell. Damušis established close contacts with Pilypas Narutis. This was a natural development. Although Damušis was 12 years older and a chairman of a university department, both were graduates of Panevėžys gymnasium, both headed SAS, and were members of the same fraternity. In November of 1940, a clandestine meeting of SAS leaders took place. Damušis informed attendees that news had arrived from Škirpa in Berlin that in case of a German invasion, anti-Soviet insurgents would have to wear armbands with letters TDA. This was to distinguish insurgents from Red activists in civilian clothes. Škirpa also suggested that all the insurgent groups in Lithuania use the name Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF).

In December of 1940, the Student Coalition changed its name to LAF. Its headquarters staff in Kaunas was expanded. Adolfas Damušis and Leonas Prapuolenis became members. Damušis who had contacts with Kaunas University faculty, staff members and alumni, organized an advisory council which included Juozas Ambrazevičius-Brazaitis, Zenonas Ivinskis, Dr. Juozas Meškauskas and others. Two smaller advisory groups which were involved with military matters were also organized. One group was headed by Colonel Juozas Vėbra, the other group was run by Lieutenant Colonel Mykolas Mačiokas.

Damušis demonstrated that he was an excellent organizer and tactician. The insurrection in Lithuania had to occur the day Germany invaded the Soviet Union—with or without German approval. The date of the invasion became a key consideration in preparing for the insurrection. On February 9, 1941, Vilnius LAF headquarters staff sent Mykolas Naujokaitis, a courier who clandestinely went across the border into Germany. He

had to meet with Colonel Škirpa in Berlin and obtain information about Berlin LAF's plans and news of the German invasion. Having obtained this information, as well as Škirpa's views on the makeup of a Provisional Government (PG), Naujokaitis crossed the border on April 11, 1941 back to Lithuania and was severely wounded by NKVD border guards. While confined in Tauragė hospital, he transmitted to a nurse who worked for the Kaunas LAF the information he obtained from Škirpa.

Kaunas LAF headquarters staff, having received news from the nurse, concluded that the German invasion of the Soviet Union was imminent. It became imperative to determine as soon as possible the makeup of the Provisional Government (PG). On April 22, 1941, a meeting took place between representatives of Vilnius and Kaunas LAF in Kaunas. Colonel Kazys Škirpa was to be the head of the PG, while Rapolas Skipitis was to be the Foreign Minister. Both individuals were with the Berlin LAF organization. Vilnius LAF was given two important positions. Major Vytautas Bulvičius was made Defense Minister, while Vladas Nasevičius was given the post of Interior Minister. Kaunas LAF was given one post in the PG. Dr. Adolfas Damušis became the Minister of Industry.

On June 9, Slavin's NKGB operatives arrested Major Bulvičius. The Vilnius LAF headquarters staff was destroyed. Focal point of the insurrection became Kaunas. On June 14, the NKVD/NKGB with the help of local collaborators began massive arrests of so-called class enemies and their families. According to Adolfas Damušis, during the first mass deportation, 34,260 residents of Lithuania were taken by cattle cars to Stalin's gulag archipelago. Most died from starvation, disease or a bullet from an NKVD executioner.

The Germans began their invasion of the Soviet Union on Sunday, June 22. The start of the invasion fortuitously coincided with the scheduled first meeting of all the members of the Kaunas LAF staff. The meeting took place at the old age home run by the Church of the Resurrection. Among the attendees were

Damušis, Prapuolenis and Vėbra. The meeting was short. All attendees had designated assignments and left for their posts. Narutis remained at the old age home and coordinated all activities. Adolfas Damušis and Colonel Vėbra returned to the Department of Engineering at the University of Kaunas which became the backup headquarters for the insurrection. (Adolfas Damušis, *Lithuanians Against Soviet and Nazi Aggression*, pp. 79; 82-83).

The insurrection began at 3:00 pm. An insurgent group led by Romas Šatas had installed a short-wave radio transmitter on the high ground in the Aleksotas section of Kaunas. It began broadcasting a message in Lithuanian, Russian, and German. It was specifically geared toward Red Army soldiers: "you are surrounded on all sides . . . your position is hopeless. We are fighting for the freedom of Lithuania; you are forced to fight for the preservation of Stalin's tyranny. Long live freedom. Down with Stalin's tyranny. (Pilypas Narutis, *Tautos Sukilimas 1941*, p. 314) All designated targets were soon seized by the insurgents. A key role was played by Juozas Rudokas. His assignment was to seize the Kaunas Post Office and the main telegraph and telephone station. Adolfas Damušis notes: "Before disconnecting the telephone network, J.R. telephoned the Soviet military commandant and stated that German paratroopers had landed. . . . around midnight, it was observed that Red Army troops were hastily loading railroad cars at Kaunas Railroad Station and Red Army unit were withdrawing on Ukmergė highway."

The disinformation disseminated by Rudokas caused panic among the Soviet leadership. A surprisingly well-organized evacuation process began. A convoy formed outside the NKVD/NKGB headquarters on Savanorių Street. The convoy contained about 50 motor vehicles and was to carry more than 600 members of the Soviet elite. Security was provided by a large detachment of NKVD troops under the direct command of NKVD head Aleksandras Guzevičius. At 8:00 pm the convoy left in a northeastern direction toward Daugavpils, Latvia.

Form 1407-A

ALIEN PASSENGER MANIFEST
For Passengers Traveling to the United States under President's Directive of Dec. 22, 1945

MANIFEST NO. 9

S/S MARINE MARLEN Sailing from BRISBANE On JUL 06 19 47 Arriving at NEW YORK On JUL 17 19 47

NO.	FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME & MIDDLE INITIAL	AGE	SEX	MARITAL STATUS	NATIONALITY	VISA NO. Quota	DESTINATION	REMARKS
1	Cukierman	Ira	44	F	M	Stateless	114	Hias New York, N.Y.	
2	Cukierman	Bern	16	F	S	Stateless	115	Hias New York, N.Y.	
3	Cukierman	Bathala	11	F	S	Stateless	117	Hias New York, N.Y.	
4	Damušis	Adolfas	38	M	M	Lithuanian	944	Sackett Pt. Rd. North Haven, NY.	161
5	Damušis	Jadvyga, A.	31	F	M	Lithuanian	994	Sackett Pt. Rd. North Haven, NY.	
6	Damušis	Vytelis	7	M	S	Lithuanian	1141	Sackett Pt. Rd. North Haven, NY.	
7	Damušis	Deulius	5	M	S	Lithuanian	1194	Sackett Pt. Rd. North Haven, NY.	
8	Damušis	Marije	1	F	S	Lithuanian	1195	Sackett Pt. Rd. North Haven, NY.	
9	Devide	Friederike	70	F	W	German	1184	8 Longwood Chicago, Ill.	Admitted by Sackett

Adolfas Damušis with family arrived in the United States of America on July 17, 1947.

Paradoxically, while the Soviet leadership was abandoning Kaunas, it instructed members of the Communist Party, Kom-somolsk and Red Activists to remain in place, give assistance to the Red Army, and fight the insurgents. Heavy fighting took place—especially in Šančiai, an industrial district of Kaunas.

Early morning, at 3:00 am, Damušis and Vėbra returned to the old age home. They drafted a text announcing the start of the insurrection and makeup of the PG. At 9:00 am, the text was read over Radio Kaunas by Leonas Prapuolenis. The broadcast was heard throughout Lithuania. After the radio broadcast, someone raised the national flag on top of the War Museum. People who saw it started streaming toward the surrounding park. A crowd of people flooded Maironis Street which was still filled with retreating Red Army soldiers. The soldiers, afraid that they would be engulfed by the mass of people, began shooting from rifles and machine guns. An intense firefight soon developed in the center of the city. Firefight continued throughout the day and night.

The duration of the PG was short and after six weeks it was closed down by the Germans. The first meeting of the cabinet took place on Tuesday, June 24. During its time of operation, a total of 34 cabinet meetings took place. Adolfas Damušis attended all except two of the meetings. The greatest practical achievement of the PG was its ability to reestablish the local administration and staff it with patriotic Lithuanians who played a key role in the subsequent anti-Nazi resistance.

During the summer of 1941, Berlin did not have a coherent position toward the PG. This is why it was able to function for six key weeks. Three German entities had direct or indirect ties with the PG. Initially the most significant entity was Wehrmacht's Rear Army Administration headed by General Robert von Pohl. Berlin prohibited von Pohl from having any direct contact with the PG. But he had permission to use the PG for the purpose of supporting the German army. Von Pohl maintained contacts with local administrative officials—primarily Kaunas mayor Kazys Palčiauskas and Kaunas City Commandant Colonel Jurgis Bobelis.

The second key German entity in Lithuania was the security units from the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA). In Lithuania, these units were headed by SS-Brigadeführer Dr. F.W.



Adolfas Damušis

Staghecker, commander of Einsatzgruppe A, SS-Standartenführer Karl Jager, commander of Einsatzkommando 3, and SS-Obersturmführer Martin Kurmis, the Kaunas Gestapo head. Kurmis was a German-Lithuanian who was one of the one hundred twenty-six defendants in the 1934-35 Neumann-Sass trial of German-Lithuanian Nazis. The goal of Stahlecker and Jager was to eliminate all the Jews in Lithuania as soon as possible. The Gestapo was more concerned with political enemies. While recognizing that the Wehrmacht had jurisdiction over the PG, Kurmis sought to gain control over it by stealth. On July 24-25, using policeman and officers associated with the Voldemarininkai (a local fascist group), Kurmis organized an armed putsch against the PG. Although the putsch was stopped by von Pohl, it was partially successful. The leadership of the Lithuanian police was replaced with pro-Nazi officials. The PG continued to function for about two more weeks.

The third German entity having dealings with the PG was the German civilian administration (Zivilverwaltung) which on July 25 replaced the military administration. In Lithuania, it was headed by General Commissar Adrian von Renteln. On August 5, the PG was dissolved.

After the demise of the PG, the underground resistance activity of Adolfas Damušis intensified. He became one of the leaders of the anti-Nazi resistance. Mindaugas Bloznelis, a participant in the insurrection and a survivor of Stalin's gulags wrote: "Adolfas Damušis expanded the activity of the Lithuanian Front, an anti-Nazi resistance organization; (he) was one of the leaders of its National Council, . . . coordinated activity of "Kęstutis", its military organization; participated in the formation of the Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania." (Mindaugas Bloznelis, *Lietuvių Frontas, Kaunas, 2008*, pp. 388-389)

On June 16, 1944, Damušis was arrested. He states: "I was arrested by the Gestapo and interrogated as vice-chairman of the Supreme Committee for Liberation of Lithuania. . . . The charges against me were so grave that Rauca, the Gestapo interrogator found cause to recommend that I give him the names of at least 12 members of the National Council. In return, he promised to make an effort to insure that my head would remain on my shoulders." (Draugas, January 24, 1982).

Helmut Rauca, although only a SS Master Sergeant, was not a run of the mill security official. He was Jager's Jewish affairs specialist and was in charge of Kaunas ghetto's Judenrat (Jewish Council). He also supervised the mass execution of Jews from the ghetto. On October 29, 1941, the largest single action against ghetto Jews in Lithuania took place. Rauca was one of the SS officials who selected the victims. That Sunday, 9,200 Jews, including 4,273 children, were murdered at the Ninth Fort. (Sol Littman, *War Criminal on Trial: Rauca of Kaunas*, Toronto, 1993).

The Gestapo did not keep Damušis in Kaunas for long. The military situation on the Eastern Front was rapidly changing. On June 22, 1944, the Red Army began its summer offensive which crushed the German Army. On August 1, 1944, units of the Red Army entered Kaunas. Damušis spent the next ten months in various concentration camps and prisons in Germany. On April 14, 1945, Damušis was liberated by the US Army soldiers from Bayreuth Prison in Bavaria.

Many of the associates and colleagues of Adolfas Damušis also paid dearly for their participation in the insurrection and PG. Kazys Škirpa never became Prime Minister of the PG. After the insurrection, the Gestapo placed him under house arrest in Berlin. Major Bulvičius, the envisaged future Minister of Defense was executed on December 17, 1941 by the NKVD at Gorky. Seven other members of the Vilnius LAF staff were also executed at Gorky at about the same time. Vladas Nasevičius, PG's envisaged Minister of Interior, miraculously avoided execution, but spent the next 11 years in the gulag. Osvaldas Žadvydas, the head of the Kretinga LAF staff, together with 90 other political prisoners, was removed from Kaunas prison by the retreating

Soviets and taken to Minsk. On June 26, 1941, between 800-900 prisoners were taken to Cherven Forest, a site about 60 kilometers east of Minsk, and subjected to automatic rifle and machine gun fire from NKVD shooters. Žadvydas survived the shooting and returned to Lithuania. Stasys Tilinskas, the clandestine head of the banned MAS, member of the Kaunas LAF staff and a close friend of Narutis did not survive the massacre. He was one of the 70 Lithuanian victims.

Many resistance leaders who were not arrested by the NKVD/NKGB fell later as victims of the Nazis. One of the first LAF leaders to be arrested was Leonas Prapuolenis. On September 27, 1941, he was arrested by the SD (the intelligence branch of the SS). He was taken to the concentration camp at Dachau. Pilypas Narutis was arrested by the Gestapo on March 15, 1943 and with 46 other resistance leaders was taken to Stutthof—a concentration camp in northern Poland not far from Danzig. So many inmates died at this hard labor camp from starvation, disease and beatings, that for all practical purposes, it performed the functions of a Nazi extermination camp. The first of the 46 Lithuanians incarcerated at Stutthof to be killed was Kazys Bauba—a 35-year old educator, and a member of Ateitininkai and LAF. After the insurrection, he was one of the first editors of *Į laisvę*, the newspaper of LAF which appeared in Kaunas immediately after the insurrection.

Among the more notable resistance leaders incarcerated at Stutthof were Mečislovas Mackevičius, PG's Minister of Justice, Lieutenant Colonel Mykolas Mačiokas, and Reverend Alfonsas Lipniūnas. During the winter of 1944-1945, as the Red Army approached Stutthof, SS guards forced inmates to march west. During the ensuing chaos, thousands died. Among the dead was Reverend Lipniūnas—the charismatic preacher who during the Soviet and Nazi occupations became famous for his daring sermons in Vilnius. The rapid advance of the Red Army cut off the forced marches. Pilypas Narutis was liberated by soldiers from the British Army. Mackevičius was cut off in Poland, but after a while was able to reach the western zone of occupied Germany. Mačiokas returned to Lithuania and became one of the leaders of the postwar armed anti-Soviet resistance movement. He was captured by Soviet security forces and killed on March 30, 1950. Juozas Rudokas, one of the operational heroes of the insurrection ended up in the same Gestapo prison in Bavaria as A. Damušis. When he was freed by US Army soldiers, Rudokas was so weak from torture and starvation, that he soon died.

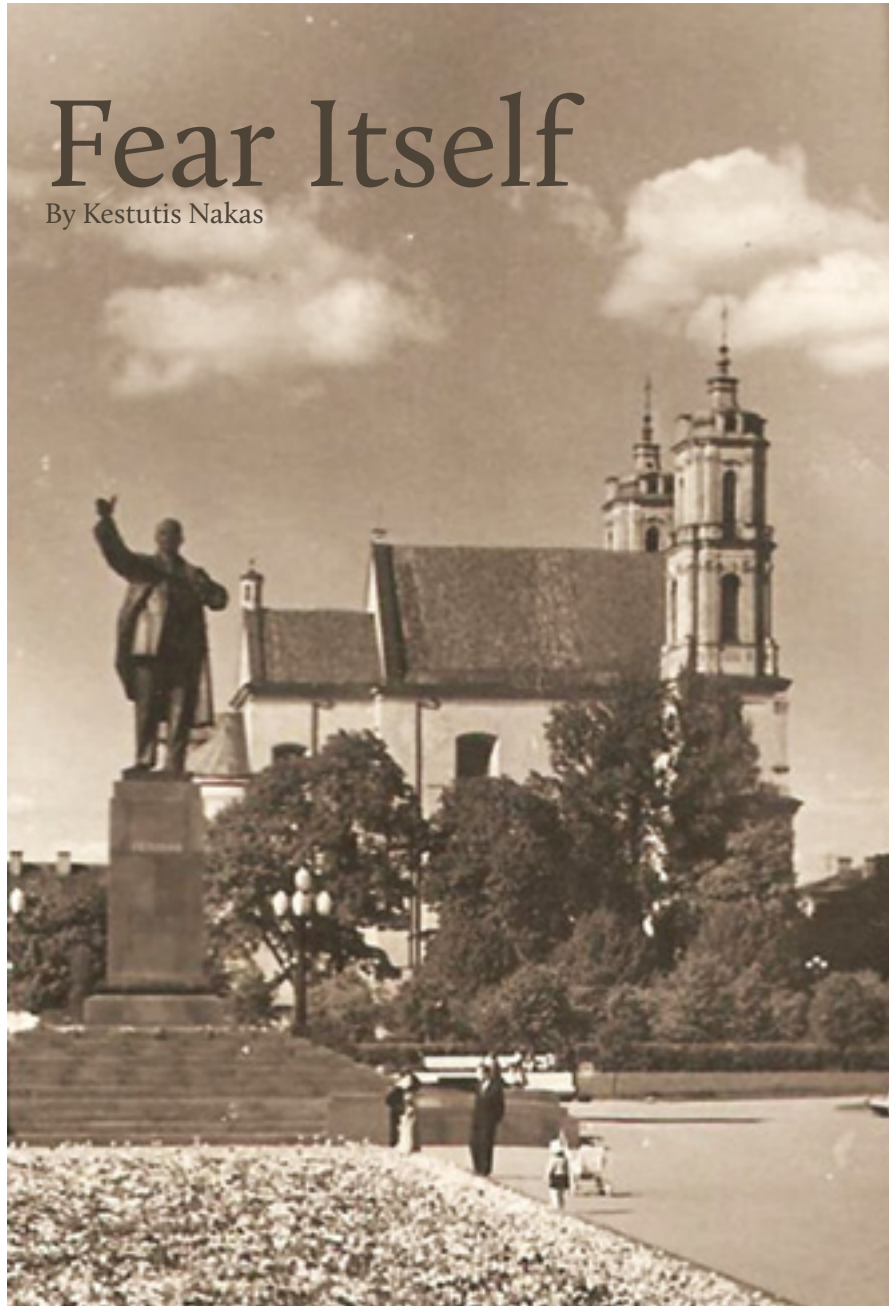
In 1947, Dr. Adolfas Damušis, together with his family, arrived in the United States. A new phase of activity began for the resistance fighter.



Augustine Idzels

Fear Itself

By Kestutis Nakas



Vilnius in Soviet times.

I'm in hell. I really can't wish this away. I'm in Soviet Occupied Lithuania. It's the summer of 1985. I came here for a six week language and culture course at Vilnius University. And even though I'm flashing back now as I speak, I can't, in 1985, flash forward and say something like, "Don't worry, they're just hassling you. It's going to be okay." Here, now, in 1985, "okay" is not possible. People in our group have been messed with in strange

ways. Like when they collected our passports:

"We're required to take them to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, you'll get them back in a few days." But when they passed them back, one was missing.

"Where's my passport?" the young woman asked.

"I don't know. Did you give it to us?"

"Yes."

"It's not here. You can't leave the country without a passport."

"I gave it to you with everyone else. You counted them. Remember?"

"No. I gave back all the ones we had. Go to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Tell them you lost your passport."

"I didn't lose it. You lost it."

"We don't lose important things like passports. Go to the Ministry and explain what you did. They are the only ones who can help you at this point."

This happened at the beginning of the six-week language and culture course and I was glad it wasn't happening to me. I lost myself in the program: hard language classes in which I was by far the worst student, and tours of the countryside with a vodka-bribed bus driver at the wheel. There were castle hills, storks, songs and state-regulated terror. Maybe instilling fear is just "terror-light" by today's standards. But when you're on the receiving end, you're not really thinking globally. It's me, me, me.

So now I'm in hell. I've got no wallet. No cash. No credit card. I'm screwed. What happened?

The other night I returned drunk to my dormitory past curfew. I'd done this before. But this time something was different. The lights were off in the downstairs lobby. The door was unlocked and I stepped into the darkness. If I could find my way up the stairs I'd be okay. I paused to let my eyes adjust. A woman shrieked just as someone grabbed my arm and scraped my forearm hard against the sharp corner of a brick wall. Strong hands pushed me up the stairs. I crumpled. My hand reflexively reached for my back pocket where I kept my wallet. The wallet was gone. I scrambled up the stairs, fished my dorm room key out of my front

pocket and went into my room. I sat on my bed and felt my head swirl in a whirlpool of alcohol and adrenaline. What the f___ is going on?

I pressed my palm into the gash of my bleeding arm, went back outside my room and ran down the hall screaming. No response. I went back to my room and laid myself down. The room spun above me. Why did I get so drunk? What are they doing to me? I must have slept because I woke up in a cold grey dawn. My head hurt.

All my money was in that wallet, along with my American Express card and the key to my suitcase, which was in a special pocket in my wallet. I'll bet that's what they want. It must have been the Saugumas. Literally, "Saugumas" just means "security". But it's the Lithuanian-language variant of "KGB". It is the spying, lying, thieving, murdering secret police in this occupied, forgotten country. The word strikes fear into the heart. Anyone can feel its heat. But why do they want to f___ with me? I'm funny. I'm nice. I'm not up to anything TOO seditious.

Yes, I am out every night drinking. Yes, I cut gleefully through the night, evading my tail, twisting and turning through courtyards into ancient alleyways headed for secret rendezvous. But that's romance, not revolution. I like to live.

But now I sit on the concrete bench outside my dorm while everybody sleeps. Will I ever get out of here? I've still got my passport and plane ticket. But clearly, they can take those things anytime they want. They can do anything they want to anyone. This is what it means when the state controls the terror. I get it. I stack up reasons why I'll be OK. I'm an American. I'm a writer and actor living in New York. I'm not famous but they don't know that. I might write about all of this. That's a good reason for letting me out. Or for making me disappear. That does happen. OK that's way too paranoid. All I want is to go home, but will I? Can I?

It's crazy but I feel like I'm even being watched right now, way out at this dorm complex in the piney woods at the edge of



Vilnius in Soviet times.

Vilnius. I feel eyes burning into the back of my booze-soaked head. I turn around, and there, in the lowest window of the dorm, stands a ghostly, dark-haired girl of maybe twenty. She's watching me. She's talking on the phone while holding the window curtain open. She sees me see her and lets the curtain drop robotically.

Later, when I tell my group leader what happened, he says I need to go to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He makes an appointment and at the appointed time, he takes me there. "That's it. Just go in there." He points at it but doesn't even cross the street with me, as if that would be entering no man's land. I go to the door, knock and it opens.

I'm shown into a luxurious, wood-paneled room and told to wait. It feels like forever. Are they watching me sweat? Finally, a well-dressed man comes in and introduces himself. By "well-dressed" I mean it's the kind of stiff blazer ensemble you might see in a JC Penney circular. But neat. Clean. Much nicer than average for this country. "You can speak English to me," he says. All he needs is a furry white cat to be the perfect James Bond villain.

"Your English is very good." I say.

"I worked in England for many years. In

the Soviet embassy. "

"Oh, I see."

"Now please, sit down. Would you like some tea? "An old woman, a močiutė, comes in with a good, strong cup of tea. I need this tea. My head hurts. Oh, how it hurts. But I can't think about that.

"Now please explain what happened."

"I was coming home late and I was drunk. It was dark in the entryway and when I came in, I was attacked. They tore my arm against the corner of a wall and took my wallet. "

"I see." He takes a deep breath and smiles a little smile. "Lithuania is a nice country. But sometimes, bad things happen. Sometimes we can help. And sometimes things just get worse." He takes a pause, breathes, shifts gears.

"I wouldn't worry about your wallet. I have a feeling someone will find it. "

"I'm not so worried about the wallet itself. It's what was in it."

"What was in it?"

"My American Express card. What if someone uses it? I have no way of calling the credit card company."

"I would not worry about this. Nobody here knows what that is. And there is no place to use it."

"I still have to call American Express".

"Let's talk about something else. Are you enjoying your trip?"

"I was, I guess."

"Is there anywhere in Lithuania you would like to go?"

"Everybody says the beach at Palanga is nice. I would like to see that."

"This can be arranged. Where else?"

"Maybe my Tėviškė, over by Kamaijai. Your "Tėviškė" is your ancestral village."

"This, too, can be arranged. But we should talk. Get to know one another. Would you like to have dinner with me at my house? Perhaps you'd like to meet my daughter? She speaks English."

"No thanks, that's OK. I'm pretty busy visiting my relatives when I don't have classes."

The man got around to talking about Lithuanians in the diaspora. He asked me about one guy in particular, a theatre guy like me, living in New York.

"Do you know him?"

"Yes, he is a great guy. You should put on one of his plays."

"What about one of your plays?"

"You wouldn't like my plays."

So he dropped that subject but went on to name more names of Lithuanians living in the US. He wanted to know about them. I told him nothing. I didn't know anyone he mentioned. I told him that but he probably thought I was lying. I wasn't. I'm really bad at lying.

"I really have to go. I have to go...play tennis." That was a lie, badly told. But I had to get out of there. Would he try to stop me? I must have looked like a scared rabbit.

"Alright, yes, you can go. Please keep in touch. And don't worry about that wallet. I think you will get it back."

"Thanks, I would appreciate that."

"And if you want to stop your credit card, do it by telegram. It's the best way."

"Oh, thanks."

I got out of there quick. I wish I could paint a more heroic picture of myself. But at least I was happy I hadn't traded information for the freedom to travel outside

Vilnius. Another member of my group did. No judgments, fear does crazy things to all of us.

In the end, I got my wallet back, complete with American Express card and cash. All that was missing was my suitcase key, which had been cut out of its secret compartment. The dorm monitor said, "Some children were playing in the woods and found it there." It had been raining for a week and the wallet was dry. All's well, right? But they sure managed to scare the crap out of me.

Fear. That's what made the Soviet boat float. About ten days before I left Lithuania, I heard a woman say, "I'm just not going to be afraid anymore. What can they do to me? Kill me? Fine. It's better than living in fear." The next day, I heard another Lithuanian say the exact same thing. With each passing day I heard more and more people say that. And not too long after I left, the first open meeting of the new independence movement took place under a statue of Adam Mickiewicz, the great Polish poet who considered Lithuania his fatherland.

Today, in 2014, Lithuania is free again. But Russia wants it back in its orbit and often rattles its saber along the border. And somewhere in Ukraine, near the Russian border a paramilitary thug might be spending Euros or Australian dollars looted from a shot down Malaysian airliner. What did he think as he rifled through the ipads, purses, and toys among the corpses in the wreckage he was complicit in causing? Was it "I deserve this"? Did it ever dawn on him that these murdered foreigners came from a place where folks live securely, in peace and prosperity, without fear of the state?

I'm so glad I'm living in the USA. I don't fear my government. Not yet. God knows it's not perfect. But I'm really glad we don't have to live in hell. I hope we never do.

If things do get bad here, I hope I can remember those average Lithuanians I met who, all at once, decided to stop being afraid, and started acting like free people.



Vilnius in Soviet times.

Kestutis Nakas is a writer, performer, director, and teacher whose work has been presented at the New York Shakespeare Festival, Yale Rep, La Mama, Dixon Place, P.S. 122, St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, 8BC, The Kitchen, Highways, Prop Theatre and numerous other national venues. Performance works and plays include *RIP*, *No Bees for Bridgeport*, *Railroad Backward*, *Remembrance of Things Pontiac*, *My Heart*, *My President*, *Hunger and Lightning*, and *The Andrew Carnegie Story*. In the 1980's, he was active in New York's East Village performance scene and was Artistic Director of *Gates of Dawn*, which showcased New York performers. He has taught at NYU, UCLA, CUNY, and the University of New Mexico. He is a Professor of Theatre at The Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University in Chicago. His performance text about urban beekeeping, *No Bees for Bridgeport*, was recently published in *Animal Acts*, *Performing Species Today*,

an anthology of new performance edited by Una Chaudhuri and Holly Hughes, University of Michigan Press. A bilingual edition of his critically acclaimed tragi-farce cycle: *When Lithuania Ruled the World* was published by Aukso Žuvys (Gloden Fish), Vilnius, in February 2017.



Kestutis Nakas



Vilnius in Soviet times.

ASK NOT WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU, ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY

2017 Winning Essays of the Alytus-Rochester Sister Cities Committee Essay Writing Contest

For the third year in a row, the Alytus-Rochester Sister Cities Committee has sponsored an essay writing contest for students of A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas High School. The prizes of 300, 200 and 100 euros were awarded to the top 3 winners. The selection was done by Committee members Arvydas and Carrol Cieminis, Jolanda Chesonis, Bernadette Mack, Judy Harriis, Kristina Nomeika and the group leader Jan Naujokas.

The essays are presented in both, English and Lithuanian deliberately in hopes that English-speaking Lithuanian Americans would deepen their knowledge in Lithuanian.

1st Place Winner



Deivilė Kvaraciejūtė

Age: 17

Teacher Leonida Tolvaišienė

Ask Lithuanian people for their opinion on their country and you will get a variety of responses ranging from very patriotic to totally condemnatory. One of them will say that their homeland is absolutely astonishing. On the other hand, you will hear that a considerable amount of citizens have really difficult and demanding lives: wages are low, the government is defective as the laws are. They base their fail destinies on faulty government and forget that only they can create or improve our marvelous and majestic homeland. What can we do for Lithuania and how can we make it the best and the only one for us?

It is fairly easy to understand the fact that emigration is the main threat for our country. First of all, the brain drain process, when young Lithuanians set out from our country right after having graduated from hard and consumptive school or university studies, is increasing. In this way opportunities for improving or growing up as a European country are becoming unrealizable. These people justify their decision due to the fact that it is hard to live in this small country and the only recipe which can give them a possibility to reach a desirable life is to graduate from Lithuanian universities and make families abroad because, to their mind, it is easier to find a well-paid job in a foreign country and specialists from Lithuania are highly valued there.

If young Lithuanians stay here and devote all their efforts to implement innovative projects and ideas in their homeland, this country will have a chance to become a rather well-known one all over the world. Thus, one of the things which can be done for Lithuania is to create lives here, despite the fact, that it can be complicated.

Another way, in which we can help Lithuania and ourselves, is to maintain our native language. We live in the 21st century then the world has become small and, surely, it might be the reason why it is really hard not only to embellish but at least not to let this extraordinary language become extinct. Firstly, compatriots of Lithuania should not use loanwords from other languages, like English or Russian. In addition to this, the other malady, which is being made to our native language, is text messages. For instance, word phrases, misspellings, punctuation errors, which are widely noticed in SMS are destroying our language skills, too. That is why our mother tongue must be treasured by all of us no matter what part of the world we live in.

All in all, we know a great deal of amazing stories about the heroes of our country, achievements and victories. Because of this we must not let our country fall to pieces and we have to save the exclusive Lithuanian language, which, of course, is our nation's framework. What is more, we always have to remember the fact that fostering Lithuania is less about an obligation and more about a privilege. I wish that words once pronounced by President John F. Kennedy "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country", would encourage the Lithuanian nation to make decisions in favor of our country and enable our Motherland to flourish long long years.

Neklausk, ką tavo šalis gali duoti tau, bet klausk, ką tu gali duoti savo šaliai

Lietuva – mano gimtasis kraštas, apie kurį kasdien girdžiu tūkstančius skirtingų nuomonių, minčių bei replikų. Deja, daugelis išgirstų žodžių man, kaip savo tautos patriotei, sminga tiesiai į širdį, nes jais dažniausiai yra išreiškiamas nepasitenkinimas, pagieža ir skaudi kritika, kurios šis kraštas visiškai nenusipelnė. Lietuviams sunku pripažinti, jog dėl visų jų nelaimių, nesėkmių, mažų atlyginimų, didelių mokesčių, korupcijos yra kalta ne Lietuva, o patys Lietuvos piliečiai, nes tik jie gali užtikrinti, kad mūsų gimtasis kraštas teiktų džiaugsmą, tik optimistiškas mintis bei spinduliuotų savo drąsa ir ryžtu taip, kaip tai darė Vytauto Didžiojo gyvavimo ar okupacijos laikais. Vienas garsiausių Italijos filosofų Džuzepė Madzinis, mano nuomone, puikiai įprasmino žodį šalis: „Šalis nėra tik teritorija; tam tikra teritorija yra tiktai pamatas. Šalis yra mintis, kuri kyla iš to pamato; tai yra jausmas meilės, prasmė draugijos, kuri suriša visus tos teritorijos sūnus.“ Tokiu būdu šis garsus vyras įrodė, jog iš tikrųjų, visos negandos, kurios stipriai savo gniaužtuose kadais laikė mūsų tėvynę ir, žinoma, tos, kurios sklendo aplink ją dabar, yra ne Lietuvos, o pačių lietuvių elgesio padariniai, kad

tik mes esame atsakingi už tai, kaip ši nuostabi šalis yra vertinama. Vienas svarbiausių mus šiandien kankinančių klausimų turėtų būti: ką aš galiu duoti Lietuvai?

Jau ne vienerius metus Lietuvoje yra stebimas procesas, vadinamas protų netekėjimu, kuomet gimtinėje mokslus baigę lietuvaičiai taikyti įgytas žinias išvyksta į užsienį. Žinoma, daugelis tokius savo veiksmus bando pateisinti tuo, kad mažoje šalyje trūksta darbo vietų ar mokami nedideli atlyginimai, tačiau tai yra tik tuščios kalbos, nes kiekvienas Lietuvos pilietis, o ypač jaunas žmogus, kuris turi jėgų bei galimybių savo gimtąjį kraštą paversti bent kiek geresniu, privalo to siekti, o ne jį palikti ir savo jaunystę paaukoti užsienio šaliai. Aukštos kvalifikacijos specialistų išvykimas iš šalies itin skaudžiai atsiliepia mokesčių surinkime, vadinasi, valstybės ateities perspektyvoms, tokiu būdu yra užkertamas kelias Lietuvos tobulėjimui. Kadangi mokausi vienuoliktose klasėse, dažnai tenka su bendramoksliais padiskutuoti temomis apie jų ateities planus, apie tai, kur jie norėtų baigti aukštesniuosius mokslus ir kurti šeimą, deja, daugelis teigia, kad vienintelis receptas siekiant gero ir laimingo gyvenimo yra pabaigti sunkius ir alinančius mokslus Lietuvos aukštosiose mokyklose ir išvykti darbo ieškoti į užsienį, nes ten, jų teigimu, tokie specialistai yra itin ieškomi bei vertinami. Pūkų pavyzdys, kuris turėtų būti ir šiuolaikinio jaunuolio sektnas yra vienos iš geriausių moderniosios lietuvių literatūros atstovės Kristinos Sabaliauskaitės knygos „Silva rerum IV“ pagrindinis herojus Pranciškus Ksaveras iš Milkantų Norvaiša. Tai kunigas, kuris į svetimą užsienio kraštą buvo išsiųstas su užduotimi – pargabenti techniką observatorijai, kuri buvo būtina to meto Lietuvai. Nepaisant to, kad jaunuolis buvo ten paliktas be cento, jis užsispyrė bet koku būdu, nesvarbu, kiek valios pastangų tai kainuotų, pargabenti observatorijos reikmenis į Lietuvą, nes žinojo, kad tokiu būdu įvairaus amžiaus lietuviams bus suteikta galimybė tobulėti. Skaudu stebėti, kuomet šiandieniai lietuviai daro priešingai: visa gera, ką įgavo Lietuvoje, stengiasi rasti būdų pritaikyti užsienyje, į kurį išsiveža vaikus, leidžia juos į užsienio mokyklas, tokiu būdu užkirsdami kelią pasireikšti jų patriotizmo dvasiai. Deja, daugelis emigrantų save laiko kosmopolitais, nepuoselėja senųjų lietuvių tradicijų, yra visikai atitrūkę nuo tautos interesų. Taigi, turbūt vienas iš svarbiausių dalykų, kurį galiu padaryti dėl savo tėvynės, yra visas įgytas žinias taikyti būtent Lietuvoje, tokiu būdu padedant ne tik savo tautiečiams siekti tobulinti savo valstybę, bet ir kuo geriau ją bei jos tradicijas pristatyti užsienio šalims.

Gimtoji kalba turi nepapratai didelę reikšmę ne tik žmogui, bet ir visos tautos gyvenime. Nenuostabu, jog gyvenant XXI-ajame amžiuje, kuriame nuolat stengiamasi kuo labiau suvienyti viso pasaulio valstybes, nyksta ne tik unikali tradicijos, blunka tautų identitetas, bet ir į lietuvių kalbą patenka nepaprastai daug skolinių, kurie šią išskirtinę indoeuropiečių tarmę itin žaloja. Ne tik paaugliai, bet ir suaugę lietuviai nesibodi į sakinius įterpti anglišku ar rusišku žodžių, teigdami, kad lietuviškai negali iki galo perteikti to, ką nori pasakyti, tačiau tai negali būti tiesa, nes ši kalba yra nepaprastai turtinga įvairiausių

žodžių bei jų junginių. Nepaisant to, kad dar mokykloje esame supažindinami su sunkia lietuvių kalbos praeitimi, gegužės 7-ąją minime Spaudos atgavimo, kalbos ir knygos dieną, kuri simbolizuoja tautos kovą už vieną svarbiausių tautos vertybių – kalbą, mūsų kalbai gresia išnykimas. Grėsmė kyla iš pačių piliečių, kurie kelia jai grėsmę neroddami meilės ir užuojautos protėvių puoselėtai tarpei ir kol kitos pasaulio tautos stengiasi pildyti ir gražinti gimtąją kalbą, mes savąją menkiname. Žiniasklaida – priemonė, kuri informuoja piliečius. Statistiškai įvairaus amžiaus žmonės didžiausią laisvo laiko dalį praleidžia įsistebeiliję į televizijos ekraną, iš kurio semiasi žinių bei tokiu būdu atsipalaiduoja, tačiau, ko galime tikėtis iš paprasto Lietuvos piliečio kalbos įgūdžių, kuomet televizijos žinių vedėjai vartoja netaisyklingus žodžius, netinkamai kirčiuoja. Kita nepaprastai opi problema, daranti įtaką lietuvių kalbos nykimui, yra trumpųjų žinučių rašymas nenaudojant lietuviškų raidžių ir skyrybos ženklų, tokiu būdu daugelis pamiršta taisyklingą kalbą ir po truputį to net nepastebėdami, tampa beraščiais. Lietuviškos katalikiškos literatūros pradininkas Mikalojus Daukša į savo skaitytojus kreipėsi įtikinėdamas ir skatindamas žodžiais, kurie turėtų būti nepaprastai vertingi ir šiandienos lietuviui: „Visais amžiais žmonės kalbėjo savo gimtąja kalba ir visados rūpinosi ją išlaikyti, tvirtinti, tobulinti ir gražinti. Nėra tokios menkos tautos, nėra tokio niekingo žemės užkampio, kur nebūtų vartojama sava kalba.“ Žinoma, užsienio kalbų mokėjimas yra tai, kas leidžia komunikuoti su plačiuoju pasauliu ir suteikia neregėtas galimybes, tačiau svetimos kalbos negali užgožti gimtosios, todėl kiekvienas save gerbiantis lietuvis privalo puoselėti ją net ir gyvendamas užsienyje, nepamiršti ir mylėti taip, kaip tai darė ankstesniųjų kartų lietuviai, nes tai yra vienas iš svarbiausių uždavinių, kuriuos galime padaryti dėl savo brangiosios tėvynės. Tėvynė visais laikais buvo ir yra vertinama kaip vertybė, tai vieta, kur norisi sugrįžti, nes čia glūdi patys nuostabiausi prisiminimai. Meilė tėvynei galima išreikšti įvairiais būdais: eilėmis, sunkiu darbu, atsidavimu, šalies vardo garsinimu ir panašiai. Lietuvių tautos dainiumi laikomas Maironis ragino savo gyvenamojo laikmečio tautiečius žodžiais: „Gražu už tėvynę pavargti, kentėti; <...>/Sustoję į darbą už mylimą šalį, /Prikelkime Lietuvą mūsų!“. Jono Mačiulio poezija yra nesenstanti ir tinkanti visoms epochoms, ji turėtų užvesti ir mano laikmečio tautiečius atsiduoti Lietuvai, kraštui, kuriam priklausau, nepaisant to, kurioje pasaulio vietoje gyvena. Kiekvienas Lietuvos pilietis negali pamiršti, kad privalo rūpintis ne tik savo šeima, bet ir savo tėvyne. Siekdami puoselėti didingą šalies vardą turime, žinoma, ne tik likti gyventi tėvynėje, taisyklingai vartoti gimtąją kalbą, bet ir daryti didelę puokštę įvairiausių ir spalvingiausių kitų dalykų. Mano nuomone, kiekvienas nuo pat mažens, planuodamas savo ateitį, privalo vadovautis Jungtinių Amerikos Valstijų prezidento Džono Kenedžio žodžiais: „Neklausk, ką tau gali duoti valstybė, klausk, ką tu gali jai duoti.“

2nd Place Winner



Vaiva Urbonaitė

16 years old

Supervisor Ramune Petrosian, English teacher

As once John F. Kennedy said “And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.” Patriotism is an attachment to a homeland. An attachment which sets our hearts towards loving a place where we were born. In my mind, patriotism is not thinking that the country that I was born in is superior to others, just because I was born in it, it is loving and respecting your country and most of all – helping it succeed. Patriotism has nothing to do with supporting your Government at all times, but rather supporting it when it deserves the support. And we shall never to be blinded by patriotism so much that we cannot face the reality. Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it. But what about doing good ourselves?

True patriotism hates injustice in its own land more than anywhere else, leading to patriots being the power that kills injustice. But do we know how to be patriotic with not only our words, but also our actions? Remember why you are a patriot. I am a patriot because I love Lithuania and I want everyone living here, including myself, to be happy, to make a difference starting from the core. To be the supporting mechanism of your homeland, understand what is important: embracing free speech, being a part of a community, equal liberty for women and men of all races, ethnicities, and origins and fighting for freedom for everyone. Freedom is the most important thing a person could ever have, without it you have nothing to lose, nothing to gain and nothing to give.

Patriotism is voluntary. It is a feeling of loyalty and allegiance that is the result of knowledge and belief. People need to understand how valuable their voice is. Never believe that a few caring people cannot change the world. Indeed, they are all who ever can. Let our kindness become like a ripple in the ocean

made by a small stone, touching people every time they see it. And while we may be a nation divided in some beliefs, we are a nation united in condemning hate, violence and injustice in all of its ugly forms. I believe that being patriotic means loving your country and the people, spreading kindness and speaking your mind to help do good. One flag, one land, two hands, one nation. Not only as a nation of a country, but as a nation of the world.

Meilė Lietuvai

Kartą John F. Kennedy pasakė „Taigi, mano mieli Amerikiečiai, klauskite ne ką jūsų šalis gali padaryti jums, klauskite saves ką jūs galite padaryti savo šaliai. Mano mieli pasaulio piliečiai: klauskite ne ką jums gali padaryti Amerika, bet ką mes kartu galime padaryti dėl žmogaus laisvės“. Patriotizmas yra prisirišimas prie gimtinės. Prisirišimas, kuris palenkia mūsų širdis link meilės savo gimtajai šaliai. Mano manymu, patriotizmas nėra galvojimas, kad mano šalis yra geresnė už kitas, vien dėl to, kad aš joje gimiau, patriotizmas yra meilė ir pagarba savo šaliai ir svarbiausia-pagalba jai pasiekti suklestėjimą. Patriotizmas yra nesusijęs su visokeriopu vyriausybės palaikymu, o su palaikymu kai vyriausybė to nusipelno. Ir mes niekuomet negalime būti apakinti patriotizmo tiek, kad nepamatytume realybės. Blogis yra blogis, nesvarbu kas jį daro. Tačiau, kaip su mūsų pačių gerų darbų atlikimu?

Tikras patriotizmas nekenčia neteisybės savoje šalyje labiau nei bet kur kitur, tai patriotus veda prie neteisybės naikavimo. Tačiau, ar mes žinome kaip būti patriotais ne tik savo žodžiais, bet ir veiksmais? Paprasta- prisiminkite, kodėl esate patriotas. Aš myliu Lietuvą ir noriu, kad visi čia gyvenantys žmonės, įskaitant ir mane, būtų laimingi. Norint padaryti skirtumą reikia pradėti nuo svarbiausių dalykų. Tam, kad būtumėte savo gimtinės palaikantysis mechanizmas, supraskite kas yra svarbu - palaikyti žodžio laisvę, būti bendruomenės nariu, skelbti lygias teises visų rasų, tautybių ir kilmų moterims ir vyrams, bei kovoti dėl laisvės visiems. Laisvė yra pats svarbiausias dalykas, kurį gali turėti žmogus, be laisvės nėra ko prarasti, gauti ar duoti.

Patriotizmas nėra priverstinis. Tai yra lojalumo ir ištikimybės jausmas, žinių ir įsitikinimų rezultatas. Žmonės privalo suprasti, koks svarbus yra jų balsas. Niekada negalvokite, kad keli rūpestingi žmonės negali pakeisti pasaulio, nes priešingai – tie žmonės tą ir daro. Leiskime mūsų gėriui tapti tarsi pulsavimu vandenyne, kurį sukėlė mažas akmenėlis ir šis pulsavimas palies žmones kaskart jį pamačius. Ir net jei mes esame tauta, išsiskirianti savo įsitikinimais, mes esame tauta, susivienijusi ties neapykantos, smurto ir visokeriopos neteisybės visose jos formose panaikinimo. Aš tikiu, kad buvimas patriotu yra meilė savo šaliai ir jos žmonėms, gėrio skleidimas ir savo minčių išsakymas norint padaryti kažką gero. Viena vėliava, viena žemė, dvi rankos, viena tauta. Mes - tauta, ne vienos šalies, bet viso pasaulio.

3rd Place Winner



Arijana Tatolytė

18 years old

Teacher Agnė Ingelevičienė

"Lithuanian people are like pussy-willows, who manage to root even in the less fertile land. However, nowadays we need to root in Lithuania itself." - said the historian Egidijus Aleksandravičius. Emigration in our country has become such a usual phenomenon that most of us believe it is completely normal. Young families leave Lithuania, taking with them both children and the elderly, because they think that it is pointless to search for a dignified life here. Young generations are growing with the idea that here they will only be followed by misery and shortage. Yet Lithuanian citizens tend to see only the problems that Lithuania has, ignoring the possibilities they have to make it better. But what are we, the youngest generation of Lithuania, able to do for our motherland? How can we help our people "root" again in our homeland?

The youth of Lithuania is too concerned in its own life to look for ways to improve our country. This generation is full of ambitious dreams that force them to look for possibilities to accomplish their wishes somewhere else, since the future perspectives in our country might be uncertain. While being afraid of failure people do not tend to risk, so they prefer to try their luck abroad. The writer L. Tolstoy once said: "Patriotism is

a survival from barbarous times which must not only be evoked and educated but which must be eradicated by all means - by preaching, persuasion, contempt and ridicule." However, lately people from our country do not want to suffer its harder times and improve as a nation, since they are way too afraid of the unexpected future. But if we want Lithuania to prosper, first of all we have to fight this fear and stay in our homeland. Emigration might be an easier choice, but only by accepting the challenges of life we will manage to improve our personalities, which will lead to a stronger society. The next step is to fight for the country and look for ways to make its future promising. It does not matter in which field is the person interested, since it is possible to create something better everywhere, no matter if you choose pedagogics, economics or politics. For example, if someone believes that our government does not put enough effort into searching for ways to develop higher education, perhaps that person should try to change something himself by persuading a prosperous career in politics. Only by comprehending our national duties we will manage to accomplish Tolstoy's conception of patriotism, since if we expect our country to give us something we need to give something in return.

But even by living abroad our countrymen are able to foster our culture. Since the beginning of times humanity has been looking for ways to travel, investigate and discover, consequently in the head of the person arises a conflict between patriotic values and the search for personal gain. Yet in every paradoxical dilemma it is possible to find an equilibrium point that links both sides of the conflict. An example for this balance could be the phenomenon during 6th of July, when Lithuanians from all over the world unanimously sing together the National Anthem, this way reminding to everybody else their roots and mentioning one of the most memorable events of our history. This way a harmony is created between the wish of exploring the vastness of the world and the need to implement your ideas. Another example for this situation would be Master of Arts Diana Moisejenkaite, who handled to fulfil this harmony perfectly. This violinist from Alytus got her PhD in the University of Massachusetts, located in the USA. For her dissertation D. Moisejenkaite chose an unexpected theme - a four-part musical composition that represents the four regions of Lithuania, with their culture and traditions. Although the idea was risky, since the name of Lithuania is unknown for most Americans, D. Moisejenkaite decided to present her root to the world. Usually only famous athletes are known for representing our country, but maybe we should also align with less known promoters of our culture, like Dr. Moisejenkaite. Supposing the young personalities' need to explore the world is bigger than the wish to improve our country, there are still many ways to find a compromise and work for the motherland abroad.

Every Lithuanian citizen has to comprehend not only his rights, but also his responsibilities that are one of the most important country improving factors. The vision of the future that emigrants create may seem more practical than sacrificing

for your country, but only by accepting this challenge we will be able to create not only a better world for us, but also for the future generations. The youth does not need to be attached to Lithuania completely, yet we also should not forget our roots. We, the young generation of Lithuania, can travel, discover and investigate the world, but at the same time we need to work and fight. Only by finding the harmony between our desires and duties we will be able to improve not only our personalities, but also the whole society, this way helping our nation to "root" again in our motherland.

Neklausk, ką tau gali duoti valstybė, klausk, ką tu gali jai duoti. O ką valstybei gali duoti tu?

„Lietuviai primena karklus, kurie sugeba išsiskirti net pačioje nederlingiausioje žemėje. Kita vertus, šiandien mums reikia išsiskirti ir Lietuvoje.“ – teigė istorikas Egidijus Aleksandravičius. Emigracija mūsų valstybėje tapo tokiu įprastu reiškiniu, kad daugeliui tai atrodo natūralu. Iš Lietuvos išvyksta jaunos šeimos, pasiimdamos ne tik vaikus, bet ir senolius, kadangi lietuviams atrodo, kad siekti oraus gyvenimo Lietuvoje – beprasmiška. Jaunoji karta tokia paveikta šios klaidinančios idėjos, kad daugelis jaunų protų auga su viltimi kada nors išvykti iš Lietuvos, nes namuose mano sulauksiantys tik vargo ir nepritekliaus. Tačiau daugelis lietuvių tedižta kalbėti apie ryškiausias Lietuvos valstybės negandas, o apie galimybes pagerinti susiklosčiusią padėtį verčiau nutyli, nors tik jaunoji karta yra pajėgi pakloti darnesnio valstybės gyvavimo pamatus. Tačiau ką gi iš tiesų mes, jaunosios Lietuvos kartos atstovai, galime padaryti tėvynės labui? Kaip galime priversti lietuvius vėl „išsiskirti“ savo Tėvynėje?

Jaunimas Lietuvoje yra pernelyg susitelkęs į savo ateities lūkesčius, tad nesistengia galvoti apie būdus, kaip pagerinti pačios valstybės padėtį. Jaunosios kartos atstovų širdyse glūdinčios ambicijos dažnai verčia jaunuolius ieškoti galimybės save realizuoti svetur, mat Lietuvoje ateities perspektyvos kartais gali būti miglotos. Žmonės, pabūgę nesėkmės, laimės kelio verčiau stengiasi ieškoti užsienyje, neapsvarstę galimybės pranašesnę ateitį kurti Lietuvoje. Kaip kadaise teigė rašytojas L. Tolstojus: „Patriotizmas – ne vien meilė savo tėvynei. Tai kur kas daugiau. Tai suvokimas, kad esi jos dalis ir kartu su ja išgyvenai laimingas ir sunkias jos dienas“. Tačiau pastaraisiais dešimtmečiais lietuviai nenori laukti tų laimingesnių laikų, kadangi juos baugina ateities nežinomybė. Norint tautai suklestėti, visų pirma reikia nepasiduoti šiai baimei ir likti gimtajame krašte, mat tik patys dirbdami pajėgsime kažką pakeisti. Nors emigracija dažnai yra lengvesnis pasirinkimas, tik iššūkiai bei keblios situacijos leidžia asmenybei tobulėti, o kuo daugiau visapusiškai išprususių žmonių – tuo tvirtesnė visuomenė. Todėl kiekvienas jaunas Lietuvos valstybės pilietis turėtų priimti kiekvieną iššūkį ir rizikuoti dėl savo gimtinės. Kitas žingsnis – kova dėl savo tikslų bei paieška būdų, kaip pakloti perspektyvesnės ateities pamatus. Nesvarbu, kokia sritis

domina žmogų: ekonomika, politika ar pedagogika - pakankamai paplušėjus bet kuri karjera gali pakrypti link didingesnių planų įgyvendinimo. Pavyzdžiui, jeigu žmogus mano, kad vyriausybė nėra pakankamai susitelkusi į aukštojo mokslo raidą, galbūt vertėtų pačiam kilti politikos karjeros laiptais ir pakeisti pamažu situaciją. Tik savo, kaip valstybės piliečio, pareigų suvokimas padės įgyvendinti Tolstojaus patriotizmo sampratą, kadangi kiekvienas jaunosios kartos atstovas turi atminti, kad norint kažko reikalauti iš valstybės reikia suteikti jai kažką mainais.

Tačiau net ir gyvendami užsienyje mūsų tautiečiai gali puoselėti savo kultūrą. Žmogaus prigimtis – tai noras keliauti, tirti ir atrasti, todėl vidiniame žmogaus pasaulyje kyla konfliktas tarp patriotiškų vertybių bei asmeninės naudos paieškos. Tačiau kiekvienoje paradoksaloje dilemoje galima atrasti tam tikrą pusiausvyros tašką, siejantį abiejų konflikto šalių interesus. Pavyzdžiui, šią pusiausvyrą galime pastebėti kai liepos 6-ąją visi pasaulio lietuviai vieningai gieda „Tautiška giesmė“, taip paminėdami vieną svarbiausių valstybinių švenčių bei primindami kitiems apie savo šaknis. Tokiu būdu sukuriama harmonija tarp prigimtinio žmogaus troškimo tirti pasaulio platybes bei noro įgyvendinti patriotiškas idėjas. Kitas šiai situacijai tinkamas pavyzdys būtų neeilinė asmenybė, sugebėjusi ne tik atrasti, bet ir išpildyti šios harmonijos lūkesčius – muzikos mokslų daktarė Diana Moisejenkaitė. Alytuje gimusi smuikininkė doktorantūros laipsnį įgijo Jungtinėse Amerikos Valstijose esančiame Masačusetso universitete, o savo disertaciniam darbui mergina pasirinko itin drąsą temą – pristatė keturių dalių muzikinį kūrinį, vaizduojantį visus keturis Lietuvos regionus, jų papročius bei kultūrą. Nors idėja buvo rizikinga, mat Lietuvos vardą Amerikoje žino tik nedaugelis, D. Moisejenkaitė vis tiek nusprendė neapleisti savo šaknų ir panoro pati pasaulį supažindinti su savo gimtine. Nors įprastai tėvynės vardo garsinimas siejamas tik su žymiais atletais, kartais derėtų lygiuoti ir į ne tokius kasdienius pavyzdžius, kokiu galima būtų pavadinti Dr. Moisejenkaitę. Jeigu troškimas pažinti pasaulį jauną žmogaus sielą užplūsta stipriau nei noras renovuoti savo valstybę, galima atrasti kompromisą ir tėvynės labui dirbti netgi svetur.

Kiekvienas pilietis privalo prisiminti ne tik savo teises, bet ir pareigas, kurių viena svarbiausių – tai geranoriškumo vedamas noras tobulinti savo šalį. Emigracijos šalininkų kuriama ateities vizija gali pasirodyti praktiškesnė nei ilgametis aukojimasis savo šalyje, tačiau tik priimdami šį moralinį iššūkį galime sukurti geresnį gyvenimą ne tik sau, bet ir ateities kartoms. Jaunimas neprivalo visapusiškai prisirišti prie savo valstybės, tačiau savo šaknų apleisti negalima. Mes, jaunoji Lietuvos karta, galime nevaržomi keliauti, pažinti ir kurti, tačiau tuo pat metu savanoriškai turime dirbti ir kovoti. Tik atradę harmoniją tarp savo troškimų bei pareigų pajėgsime tobulinti ne tik save, bet ir visą visuomenę, tokiu būdu leisdami lietuvių tautai vėl „išsiskirti“ gimtajame savo krašte.

September Anniversaries

595 years ago

On September 27, 1422, the Treaty of Melno was signed between the Teutonic Knights and an alliance of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at Lake Melno, east of Graudenz. The treaty resolved territorial disputes between the Knights and Lithuania regarding Samogitia, which had dragged on since 1382, and determined the Prussian–Lithuanian border, which afterwards remained unchanged for about 500 years. A portion of the original border partially survives as the border between the Republic of Lithuania and Kaliningrad Oblast, Russia, making it one of the most stable national borders in Europe.



Teutonic Order in 1410.



Monument commemorating the Treaty of Melno in Poland.

495 years ago

On September 14, 1522, the Fourth Muscovite-Lithuanian War ended. Despite the previous peace treaty, the relationship between Lithuania and Russia remained tense. Sigismund I demanded extradition of Michael Gliniski for trial, while Vasili III demanded better treatment of his widowed sister Helena. Vasili also discovered that Sigismund was paying Khan Meñli I Giray to attack the Grand Duchy of Moscow. At the same time, Albert of Prussia became the Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights and was unwilling to acknowledge Poland's suzerainty as required by the Second Peace of Thorn (1466). The tension eventually resulted in the Polish–Teutonic War (1519–21) and allied Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor with Vasili III. In December 1512, Muscovy invaded the Grand Duchy of Lithuania seeking to capture Smolensk, a major trading center. Their first six- and four-week sieges in 1513 failed, but the city fell in July 1514. Prince Vasili Nemoy Shuysky was left as viceregent in Smolensk. This angered Gliniski, who threatened to rejoin Sigismund I but was imprisoned by the Russians. Russia then suffered a series of defeats in the field. In 1512, Grand Hetman of Lithuania, Konstanty Ostrogski, ravaged Severia and defeated a 6,000-strong Russian force. On 8 September 1514, the Russians suffered a major defeat at the Battle of Orsha. Despite their victory, the Polish–Lithuanian army was unable to move quickly enough to recapture Smolensk. In 1518, Russian forces were beaten during the siege of Polotsk, when according to legend the Lithuanian forces were inspired by the sight of their patron saint, Saint Casimir. The Russians invaded Lithuania again in 1519, raiding Orsha, Mogilev, Minsk, Vitebsk, and Polotsk. By 1521, Sigismund had defeated the grand master and allied with the Kazan and Crimean Tatar hordes against Moscow. Crimean khan Mehmed I Giray carried out a ruinous attack on the Moscow principality, resulting in a commitment from the grand prince to pay tribute. The Lithuanian troops led by Dashkovich participated in the attack and tried to take Ryazan. In 1522, a treaty was signed that called for a five-year truce, no prisoner exchange, and for Russia to retain control of Smolensk. The truce was subsequently extended to 1534.

460 years ago

On September 5, 1557, the Treaty or Peace of Pozvol (Pasvalys or Pozwol) was signed and an alliance concluded between the Livonian Confederation and the Polish-Lithuanian union, whereby the former put its territories under Polish-Lithuanian protection. The treaty was preceded by disputes between the members of the Livonian Confederation and military pressure by Sigismund II Augustus, king of Poland and Grand duke of Lithuania, and provoked Russian tsar Ivan IV "the Terrible" to start the Livonian War.

110 years ago

On September 23-24, 1907, Lithuanian Catholic priests organized the first Lithuanian Women Congress in Kaunas. The congress decided to establish the Lithuanian Women's Union, but women Catholics did not want to join the same organization with social democrats. Therefore, they established the Society of Lithuanian Catholic Women (Lithuanian: Lietuvių katalikių moterų draugija) which was officially registered on 21 March 1908 by the authorities of Kovno Governorate. Thus, the Lithuanian women's movement split into two branches – Catholic and social democratic. The Lithuanian Women's Association (Lithuanian: Lietuvos moterų susivienijimas) was the first Lithuanian women's organizations and the predecessor of the Lithuanian Women's Union. It was active during the Russian Revolution of 1905 and campaigned for women's suffrage and for autonomy of Lithuania within the Russian Empire.

100 years ago

On September 18-22, 1917, the Vilnius Conference or Vilnius National Conference (Lithuanian: Vilniaus konferencija) met, and began the process of establishing a Lithuanian state based on ethnic identity and language that would be independent of the Russian Empire, Poland, and the German Empire. It elected a twenty-member Council of Lithuania that was entrusted with the mission of declaring and re-establishing an independent Lithuania. The Conference, hoping to express the will of the Lithuanian people, gave legal authority to the Council and its decisions. While the Conference laid the basic guiding principles of Lithuanian independence, it deferred any matters of political structure of the future Lithuania to the Constituent Assembly, which would later be elected in a democratic manner.



Medieval Livonia 1260.

320 years ago

On September 15, 1697 in Wawel Cathedral, Kraków, Poland, Augustus II the Strong was crowned King of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Following the death of Polish King John III Sobieski and having converted to Catholicism, Augustus won election as King of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth with the backing of Imperial Russia and Austria, which financed him through the banker Berend Lehmann. Augustus' great physical strength earned him the nicknames "the Strong", "the Saxon Hercules" and "Iron-Hand". He liked to show that he lived up to his name by breaking horseshoes with his bare hands and engaging in fox tossing by holding the end of his sling with just one finger while two of the strongest men in his court held the other end. As Elector of Saxony, he is perhaps best remembered as a patron of the arts and architecture. He established the Saxon capital of Dresden as a major cultural centre, attracting artists from across Europe to his court. Augustus also amassed an impressive art collection and built lavish baroque palaces in Dresden and Warsaw. His reigns brought Poland some troubled times. He led the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Great Northern War, which led to the Russian Empire strengthening its influence in Europe, especially within Poland. His main pursuit was bolstering royal power in the Commonwealth, characterized by broad decentralization in comparison with other European monarchies. He tried to accomplish this goal using foreign powers and thus destabilized the state.



Presidium and secretariat of the Vilnius Conference. The hall was decorated with small two-color (red and green) flags (three are visible in the picture).

Plokštainiai

(Squares)

By Jana Sirusaitė-Motivans



Here is a recipe for making plokštainiai (squares) three different ways: with a poppy seed filling, a jam filling, or a sweet cheese filling. The same recipe is used for the crust and only the filling varies.

The first step is to make the dough, which is used for both the crust and the lattice top. Plan ahead, because the dough needs to chill for an hour in order to be sufficiently firm to roll for the topping. Even though the lattice topping looks impressive, it is actually very easy to make. The cold dough is cut into pieces and rolled into 'ropes'. The ropes can be any length, as long as they are of a uniform thickness. The pieces of shorter lengths can be simply pinched together to fit the baking pan. First the

dough ropes are laid across the baking pan in one direction, and then more dough ropes are placed diagonally over the top of the first ones to create a lattice pattern. No weaving is necessary.

The squares look attractive on a serving tray, and make a nice Lithuanian dessert for any occasion. They also freeze well and can be kept in the freezer until needed. Try one variety or all three!

Plokštainiai (Squares)

CRUST INGREDIENTS

- ¾ cup butter (1 ½ sticks), softened
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 large egg
- 2 cups flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Lightly grease an 8" by 8" baking pan. Line the pan with parchment paper (or foil), and lightly grease the paper (or foil).

In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar until blended with an electric mixer on low speed. Increase the speed to high and beat until light and creamy, approximately two minutes. Reduce the speed to medium, and beat in the vanilla and egg. Switch to a wooden spoon, and stir in the flour and salt until the dough begins to form. Using your hands, gently knead the dough until it comes together. Divide the dough into two pieces, one slightly larger than the other. Wrap the smaller piece in plastic, and refrigerate. Using your fingertips, press the remaining larger piece of dough into the prepared baking pan and then place the pan into the refrigerator. Chill both doughs until firm, about one hour.

While the dough is chilling, prepare the filling.

TOPPING INGREDIENTS

- 1 can SOLO poppy seed filling **OR** 1 cup jam (berry or apricot) **OR** Cottage cheese filling (following recipe from Lithuanian Cookery, 1993, Darbininkas NY)
- 1 pound cottage cheese
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons softened butter
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

In a medium-sized bowl, use an electric mixer to cream the egg yolks with the butter and sugar

Force the cottage cheese thru a sieve to remove any lumps. Mix the smooth cottage cheese with the egg yolk mixture until well combined.

To prepare the topping, remove the baking pan and the dough ball from the refrigerator. With a small spatula, spread your filling of choice over the dough in the pan. Set aside. On a lightly floured surface, cut the remaining dough ball into 20 pieces. Roll the pieces into ¼ inch thick ropes (lengths may vary). Place half the ropes diagonally across the filling, about one inch apart, pinching the shorter pieces together to fit the pan. Repeat with the remaining ropes. Placing them diagonally the other way, across the first ropes, to make a lattice pattern, again pinching pieces as needed to make the proper lengths. Bake 30 minutes at 375° for the poppy or jam filling, or 40 minutes for the cheese filling, or until the crust is golden. Remove pan from oven and place on cooling rack and allow to cool completely. When cool, use the parchment paper or foil to help lift onto a cutting board. Cut into squares for serving.



Security

...During President Donald Trump's visit to Poland, he belatedly endorsed Article 5 of the NATO pact which states that an attack on any NATO member is considered an attack on all.

...The US deployed a battery of long range anti-aircraft Patriot missiles at Šiauliai air base in north central Lithuania, about 75 miles south of Riga. The Raytheon built system was on temporary duty to demonstrate its capability but did not launch a missile. Poland is purchasing 8 systems at a price of about \$1 Billion each. Romania is planning on purchasing 7 systems. The cost of one system exceeds the annual Lithuanian defense budget. President Dalia Grybauskaitė suggested that NATO should permanently deploy a Patriot battery in the Baltics.

...The Russian – Chinese naval drill in the Baltic Sea, known as Joint Sea 2017, included a Chinese supply vessel, a destroyer, a frigate, and associated helicopters. The Russian vessels included two Corvettes, a rescue tug, helicopters, a bomber, and a transport aircraft. They practiced artillery fire at surface and air targets and assistance to a ship in distress. After the exercise, the Chinese vessels are scheduled to travel to St. Petersburg and participate in Russian Navy Day celebrations, July 30. The ships will be open for visitors during their stay.

...The Russian media outlet, Sputnik, said that the Belarusian Ministry of Defense has invited all accredited military attaches to attend the Zapad 2017 military exercises in September. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have received an invitation to attend a briefing, observe the exercise, and possibly visit a Belarusian defense company. Lithuania was late in acknowledging receipt of the invitation.

...The Ukrainian security agency, SBU, has accused the Russian security services of planning and launching a massive cyber attack known as NotPetya. Affected were Ukrainian agencies, energy companies, and banks. Their data was encrypted with associated demands for ransom. Both Russian Kaspersky Labs and Slovakian cyber security company, ESET, have linked the NotPetya structure to previous cyber attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure. Ukraine has accused Russia of hacking their voting system ahead of the 2014 election and an attack on its power grid in 2015.

...Vice President Michael Pence met with the Prime Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in Tallinn on the first stop on a four-day European tour which included stops in Georgia and Montenegro, the newest NATO member. The Prime Ministers discussed the need for regional air defenses and cooperation in the energy sector to lessen dependence on single sources.

...US Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the "Dark Web" site HANSA had been taken down by Dutch police after being monitored for one month in the trading of drugs, firearms,

computer hacking tools, and other illicit goods. Two Germans were arrested, and servers were seized in Germany, the Netherlands, and Lithuania.

...Nikolai Filipchenko, a Russian citizen, was sentenced to ten years in prison by a Vilnius court for working for the Russian Federal Security Forces (FSB) to recruit agents to plant listening devices in the office and home of President Dalia Grybauskaitė.

...Yuri Gorsky, a Russian nationalist, arrived in Lithuania just days after being arrested by the Russian FSB on charges of calling for extremist activity and organizing unauthorized "Russian Marches" in support of jailed dissident Dmitry Dyomushkin. After his arrest, he was placed under house arrest by a Moscow court but he slipped out of Russia and entered Lithuania by way of Belarus and currently has a valid visa.

Business

...The Vilnius Regional Court ruled that Lithuanian citizen, Evaldas Rimašauskas, can be extradited to the U.S. to face charges that he used email fraud to steal \$100 million from Google and Facebook between 2013 and 2015. He has been in Lithuanian custody since March 2017.

...Lithuania has made two purchases of Liquefied Natural Gas from the United States. The first purchase of 150,000 m3 was from Cheniere Energy with delivery in August and the similar size shipment was from Spain's Natural Gas Fenosa with delivery in September. There is about a two-month delay between purchase and delivery. Traders buy gas in the summer and sell it in the winter.

...Carlsberg Group and Brooklyn Brewery are investing 5 million euros in building a new brewery and restaurant in Klaipėda on the site of the existing Švyturys Brewery which will create high-quality craft beers. This joint venture will be their fourth project. Others include London Fields Brewery, E.C. Dahls Brewery in Trondheim, Norway, and the New Carnegie Brewery in Stockholm.



Brooklyn Brewery and Švyturys Brewery in Klaipėda.

...An outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) will cause the destruction of 23,464 pigs on a farm in central Lithuania. Valued at 5 million euros this is the second large outbreak of ASF in recent years. In 2014, 20,000 pigs were slaughtered in eastern Lithuania. The disease is thought to have been brought to Lithuania in 2013 via wild boars. Humans are not affected by ASF but it is lethal to pigs and boars.

...Sicor Biotech, a division of Teva and Lithuania's leading biopharmaceutical manufacturer, recorded a net profit of 74 million euros in 2016 up 6.8% from 2015. Revenue increased by 15%.

...Hella, a German manufacturer of automotive electronics, has signed a 99-year lease in the Kaunas Free Economic Zone and will invest up to 30 million euros in a 7000 square meter production facility to produce sensors, actuators, and control modules with approximately 250 new employees. Hella joins 21 companies that are established in the Kaunas FEZ.

...The Startup Visa legislation approved by Parliament earlier this year has helped four companies begin activities in Lithuania. Serious Gaming Private Limited from India is a virtual reality gaming company. GoTalent from Ukraine is a human resource company. MUUL from Russia develops technology for social media and ARTapp also from Russia develops neural network advanced image analysis.

General

...The winner of the French Open, Latvian Jelena Ostapenko, made it to the quarterfinals at Wimbledon but lost to Venus Williams who came in second to Spain's Garbine Muguruza.

...July 20 marked the 77th anniversary of the then Acting US Secretary of State Sumner Welles diplomatic statement refusing to recognize the Soviet annexation of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The event was celebrated by three hundred people at Washington Square in Vilnius with speeches, national anthems, hamburgers, and donuts.

...Gediminas Hill was in the news as seven bodies were discovered. They are thought to be prisoners who were executed in the 1863 Lithuanian uprising against tsarist Russia. One body has been identified as Zigmantas Sierakauskas, the leader of the uprising because it wore a gold ring with an identifying inscription.



Zigmantas Sierakauskas's gold ring.



Zigmantas Sierakauskas.

...Approximately 200 children (7-12 years old) will be invited to receive free programming lessons during the school year in Kaunas and eventually Šakiai (65 km SW of Kaunas). The Devbridge Group, a US-based provider of programming services with a division in Lithuania, provides this "Sourcery for Kids" program via an accredited non-formal educational program organized by "Bit&Byte" to expose students to design, electronics, 3D, animation, virtual reality, and game development.

...Lithuania congratulated the United States on Independence Day with President Dalia Grybauskaitė writing to President Donald Trump; Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis writing to Vice President Michael Pence and Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius writing to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.



Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius holding the Washington Square street sign.

...Lithuania celebrated Statehood Day, July 6, with concerts, sporting events and three volleys shot from hill forts: one for King Mindaugas, one for the state of Lithuania, and one for the people of Lithuania. Mindaugas was crowned King on July 6, 1253. President Dalia Grybauskaitė urged all Lithuanians to sing the national anthem on one of many hill forts on that evening.

A Lithuanian Language Proficiency Test for Lithuanian Heritage Schools Students Abroad



Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies Lecturers with Lithuanian Heritage Schools' Teachers. USA, Boston, January 2017. Photo by Aiste Solly

On March 25, 2017, one hundred sixty-eight Lithuanian Heritage Schools students from the US and Europe took a Lithuanian Language Proficiency Test. The test and its creation serve as one good example of the benefit of the Global Lithuania initiative: a collaboration between Lithuanians in the diaspora and in Lithuania.

The goal of this test is to document various proficiency levels that students have achieved in the use of the Lithuanian language. Reading, writing, listening and conversational skills are all evaluated. Such proof can be presented to other educational institutions and this test evaluates language proficiency level according to guidelines developed in the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment" (CEFR). Students who pass a given level of the proficiency test receive a certificate from the Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies Department.

The currently used test was put together by a team that included Joana Pribušauskaitė, Elvyra Kutanovienė, Rita Migauskienė, Virginija Stumbrienė, and Lina Vaškevičienė, all from the Vilnius University Lithuanian studies department.

The need for such a Lithuanian language proficiency test was raised several years ago. The project was born during long discussions led by its initiators Neila Baumilienė, the Kazickas Family Foundation New York office director, and Gaila Narkevičienė, Boston Lithuanian School Principal. They had been communicating the need for these tests to different departments at various Lithuanian institutions and searched for experts to develop the tests. In an initial stage of the project, the Ministry of Education and Science ordered development of an A2 level test. The test was field-evaluated by students at the Boston Lithuanian School. After reviewing the testing experience and results, it

was decided to make a test that included more than a single level of proficiency. During the next stage, a test assessing 3 proficiency levels (A1, A2, B1) with the A1 and A2 level reserved for beginners.

Even though the skills of students attending Lithuanian schools in the U.S., differ from those who are starting to learn Lithuanian with no previous experience with the language, the language skills of heritage speakers often are still limited due to lack of situations where Lithuanian can be spoken. According to the testing scheme, B1 level language users (called Threshold or Intermediate users) are known as independent users. With a help of basic language tools they can communicate in Lithuanian in various everyday life situations. A new test targeting this level of proficiency was prepared by the Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies department, with consultation and coordination by Gaila Narkevičienė on behalf of the Lithuanian Educational Council of the USA. The B1 level test was financed by the Ministry of Education and Science and supported by the Vilnius University Language Studies department.

Only examiners with special training can test students at the A1-B1 proficiency level. For that reason, on January 29-30, 2016, a training seminar for examiners was held at the Boston Lithuanian School. During the training, qualified teachers were taught how to best administer the speaking part of the test, as well as the main test. Implementation factors and future trial tests were discussed. These seminars were taught by Joana Pribušauskaitė and Rita Migauskienė, and expenses of the seminar were covered by the Kazickas Family Foundation, a nonprofit that has been contributing to Lithuanian education for many years.

In February, the first trial A1-B1 proficiency level test was administered to 76 students, coordinated by G. Narkevičienė.

This was followed by similar trial tests given in many other Lithuanian schools across the USA. After reviewing the results and feedback, and making some adjustments, an official proficiency level test was finalized and was administered on April 16, 2016 at seven different testing centers across the USA. Eighty nine students from eleven Lithuanian Heritage schools participated. Soon afterwards, Lithuanian schools in Europe also expressed interest in such tests. In that same year, on November 25-26, the Ministry of Education and Science, together with the Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies Department organized examiner training in Vilnius. This training was again supported in part by the Kazickas Family Foundation. Fifteen Lithuanian language teachers from schools in Ireland, Great Britain, USA, Norway, France, Russia and Sweden participated. They were introduced to language proficiency level structure, and learned how to test students, especially how to administer the speaking part of the test.

With a goal of ensuring continuing professional examiner training and development, on January 13-15, 2017, a continuing education seminar was organized again in Boston. One part was designed to help previously trained examiners advance their skills, and another part was aimed at new qualified teachers. Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies Department specialists Joana Pribušauskaitė, Loreta Vilkienė, Rita Migauskienė and Lina Vaškevičienė provided the training. The seminar was organized by Gaila Narkevičienė, Boston Lithuanian School Principal, and financed by the Kazickas Family Foundation, the Lithuanian Educational Council of the USA and the Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies Department. Thirty teachers from Lithuanian Heritage Schools in Boston, New York, San Francisco, Chicago and other cities participated in order to expand their knowledge in this area. All of the participating teachers met qualifications to administer the tests at the conclusion of the seminar.

Teaching Lithuanian language as foreign language is a very important part of the Vilnius University Lithuanian Studies Department's work. Accordingly, lecturers provided an additional seminar to those interested in the most effective ways to teach Lithuanian language abroad. Suggestions were provided regarding how to create guidelines and teaching goals, how to plan language courses and individual lessons and how to develop language activities. Participants actively engaged in sample grammar and vocabulary lessons and discussed various issues that they had encountered while teaching.

After several conversations with colleagues from Lithuanian Heritage schools, it is clear that there is a need to continue examiner training, so that only qualified specialists would be



Aleksandra Kazickas (1920-2011).

Aleksandra Kazickas was deeply committed to the preservation of a Lithuanian identity for young people growing up in the US. In her memory Aleksandra Kazickas Grant Program (AKGP) was established in 2012 to support Lithuanian Heritage Schools in the US. The mission of the AKGP is to support the work of the Lithuanian Heritage schools, operating in accordance to the regulations of the Lithuanian Education Council of the US. These schools help preserve Lithuanian language and culture for the benefit of individuals, communities and society. Over the last 5 years 34 participating schools shared \$560 000 support. Thanks to this grant, official A1-A2-B1 Lithuanian Language Proficiency test for youth was developed as well.

administering these proficiency tests. Also, there should be certain teaching resources available for the candidates interested in going through the training, resources that would provide Lithuanian language teachers with testing format guidelines, assignment samples and testing schedules. Students graduating from Lithuanian Heritage Schools are not the only ones who need Lithuanian language proficiency level certificates. Individuals who graduated previously, in some cases students who now are enrolled in Universities, or even non Lithuanian heritage individuals, could also benefit from having such certificate documentation of their Lithuanian language ability. There is a need to organize even higher level (B2 and C1) language proficiency tests for individuals 17 years and older. Testing centers need to be established, preferably close to the Lithuanian consulates, so that confidentiality of the tests and identical testing conditions can be secured. In other words, there should be a consistent Lithuanian as foreign language testing system for both, adults and school age children.

I Fulfilled My Childhood Dream

By Rūta Misiūnas



Ever since I was little, I always said, “When I graduate school, I’m definitely moving back to Lithuania!” I was three years old when my family and I immigrated to America. Even though I grew up in the United States, it was very important to my parents that I maintain my connection with Lithuania. Every summer I would fly back home and spend three months with my grandparents. Many summers passed, yet the desire to move back never left me.

One Saturday in spring, while I was working at the Maironis Lithuanian School, the President of the Lithuanian Community in the USA, Sigita Šimkuvienė, came for a visit. She urged students to apply to the LISS program. She explained how students receive the opportunity to live and complete an internship in their respected fields in Vilnius. After the meeting, I knew right away that I wanted to participate in this program. That evening I typed up my motivational letter and sent it in. After a few months, I received my acceptance letter and was informed that I would be interning at Palekas Arch Studija, which is run by Rolandas Palekas, a very famous Lithuanian architect.

In May, I graduated with my Bachelors of Science of Architecture, said goodbye to my family, and flew out to Lithuania. The first weekend of the program we went to Kaunas to volunteer at the 10th Lithuanian World Games. While we were there we also had the opportunity to participate in the games and cheer for our home teams. The last night in Kaunas, at the closing ceremony, we were introduced to Lithuanians from Canada and Australia. We ended our Kaunas trip with a fun night out in the old town.

When we returned to Vilnius, we settled at our hostel and

began getting ready for our internships. The first official week of the LISS program was filled with meetings, trips, and experiences. We had the pleasure of meeting, Jurgis Didžiulis, a songwriter and artist, as we spent an afternoon singing and dancing together. The next day, we all attended the official opening of the program at Vilnius University where we were introduced to the faculty and internship leaders.

Next, we met with Lithuania’s Speaker of Seimas, Viktoras Pranckietis. Later in the week, we attended a lecture by Igoras Vailiauskas, who is a specialist in body language in the business world. During the weekend, we traveled to Anykščiai, where we visited many historical landmarks, museums, and even played a friendly soccer match against the local high school students.

One of the biggest highlights of the program was when former President Valdas Adamkus came to have a private meeting with our program participants. It was very interesting to discuss the role and responsibilities of Lithuanians living abroad and what impact we can play in the development of Lithuania’s economy.

During week 2, we began our internships. Everyday from 9 am until 6 pm I spent my time at my internship placement. This allowed me to be fully immersed in the field and to truly understand the way that a Lithuanian architecture firm operates. In just a few weeks there, I was able to learn key architectural terminologies in the Lithuanian language and participate in a competition for a concert hall in Kaunas. Overall, I am beyond thankful for the opportunity that the LISS program provided. Not only did I attain experience in my field, but I also fulfilled a childhood dream living and working in Lithuania.

Traces of Lithuanian Life in the Anthracite Region

The first big wave of immigration from Lithuania began after the second unsuccessful insurrection against czarist Russia in 1863. The famine of 1867 and 1868 and poor economic conditions also were the reason to look for a better life elsewhere. Many Lithuanians came to work in the coal mines of Pennsylvania. Today we can find out about their life in the Anthracite Heritage Museum in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Here are a few glimpses of Lithuanian artifacts in the Museum.



Diary of Lithuanian immigrant Stanley Poteleneas (Poteliunas) is displayed among artifacts of other nationalities. Lithuanian immigrant Stanley Poteleneas had a love of learning and books. He recorded United States geographic information among the entries of his diary. He was killed by a roof fall in the Plymouth No. 2 mine on December 11, 1912, leaving a widow and 6 children. His diary was donated to the Anthracite Heritage Museum by his sister Bonaventure Patalunas.



A banner from St. Ann’s Society, Sacred Heart Lithuanian Church in New Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1918. The banner was donated by Robert Scherr in memory of Helen Nanartavage Scherr.



Lithuanian bumper sticker “Labas” (Hello) from the memorial collection of Agnes and Anthony Miskinis is displayed among artifacts of other nationalities.



Two-harness loom built by Lithuanian immigrant John Martinkas of West Scranton. All-wooden looms were common in Eastern Europe and many of the Anthracite Region's immigrants brought this tradition with them. The loom was donated to the Museum by the Drazdauskas Family.



Placemat made for the Knights of Lithuania for the Mid-Atlantic District Convention in 1979. Donated by Knights of Lithuania, Council 74.



Lithuanian Wayside Cross carved by Joseph Ambrozaitis in 1985. This wayside cross is on loan at the Museum from Knights of Lithuania, Chapter 74.

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

SEPTEMBER 2017

September 15-17, 2017
Lithuanian Culinary Heritage Weekend at Camp Neringa
 Info: neringa.org

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 7, 11 am - 5 pm
World Dumpling Fest
 Millennium Park, Chicago
 Info@balzekasmuseum.org or 773-582-6500

October 13, 7 pm
Lithuanian Hotline -- book presentation
 Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
 Info@balzekasmuseum.org or 773-582-6500

October 14, 6:30 pm
Lithuanian Hall of Fame: Valdas Adamkus, Stanley Balzekas, Juozas Kazickas (Jurate Kazickas)
 Lithuanian World Center
 14911 127th Street
 Lemont, IL

October 21, 2017
We Thought We Would Be Back Soon
 Book presentation
 Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
 Info: 773-582-6500

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

October 28, 12-2 pm
Lost and Found: Stories of Displacement from Chicago and the Baltic Nations
 Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
 Info@balzekasmuseum.org or 773-582-6500

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 5
Lithuanian Foundation Annual Gala
 www.lcenter.org/calendar-events

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 2
Lithuanian Christmas Ornament Workshop
 Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
 Info@balzekasmuseum.org or 773-582-6500

December 2-3
Lithuanian World Center Holiday Craft Fair
 www.lcenter.org/calendar-events

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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