

bridges



LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

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bridges

Vol. 41 No. 8 / October 2017
Bridges is the English-language publication of the
Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.
lithuanian-american.org/bridges

EDITOR
Karilė Vaitkutė

ART DIRECTOR
Daniel P. Craig, Jr.

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, FOOD
Jana Sirusaitė-Motivans

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR, CURRENT EVENTS
Alan J. Stankus, P.E. (ret)

ADVERTISING & SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER
Laura Vidžiūnaitė

Editorial Office
139 Willow Blvd., Willow Springs, IL 60480
kariledalia@yahoo.com

Subscriber Services and Advertising
spauda@javlb.org

Facebook
facebook.com/
BridgesLithuanianAmericanMagazine



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

LAC, INC. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD
43 Anthony Street, New Haven, CT 06515
Phone: 203-415-7776, Fax: 703-773-1257
admin@lithuanian-american.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. 8. 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 October issue of Bridges is the ninth issue of this year. We have one more issue left in 2017, and it will come to you at the beginning of December. The year has flown by so fast. Our team of writers, designer, and printer worked without a break so far this year in order to switch the time of receiving the magazine to the beginning of every month. The magazine was usually submitted to the printer on the 20th of each month and should have reached you in the first week of any given month.

I hope you enjoyed reading Bridges. I have tried to incorporate more extracts from the wonderful books that our Lithuanian Americans have written. I also tried to incorporate as many memoirs as I possibly could. I think it is important. Along with other English-language magazines published by Lithuanian Americans, Bridges has a task to tell the story of Lithuanian Americans for the posterity.

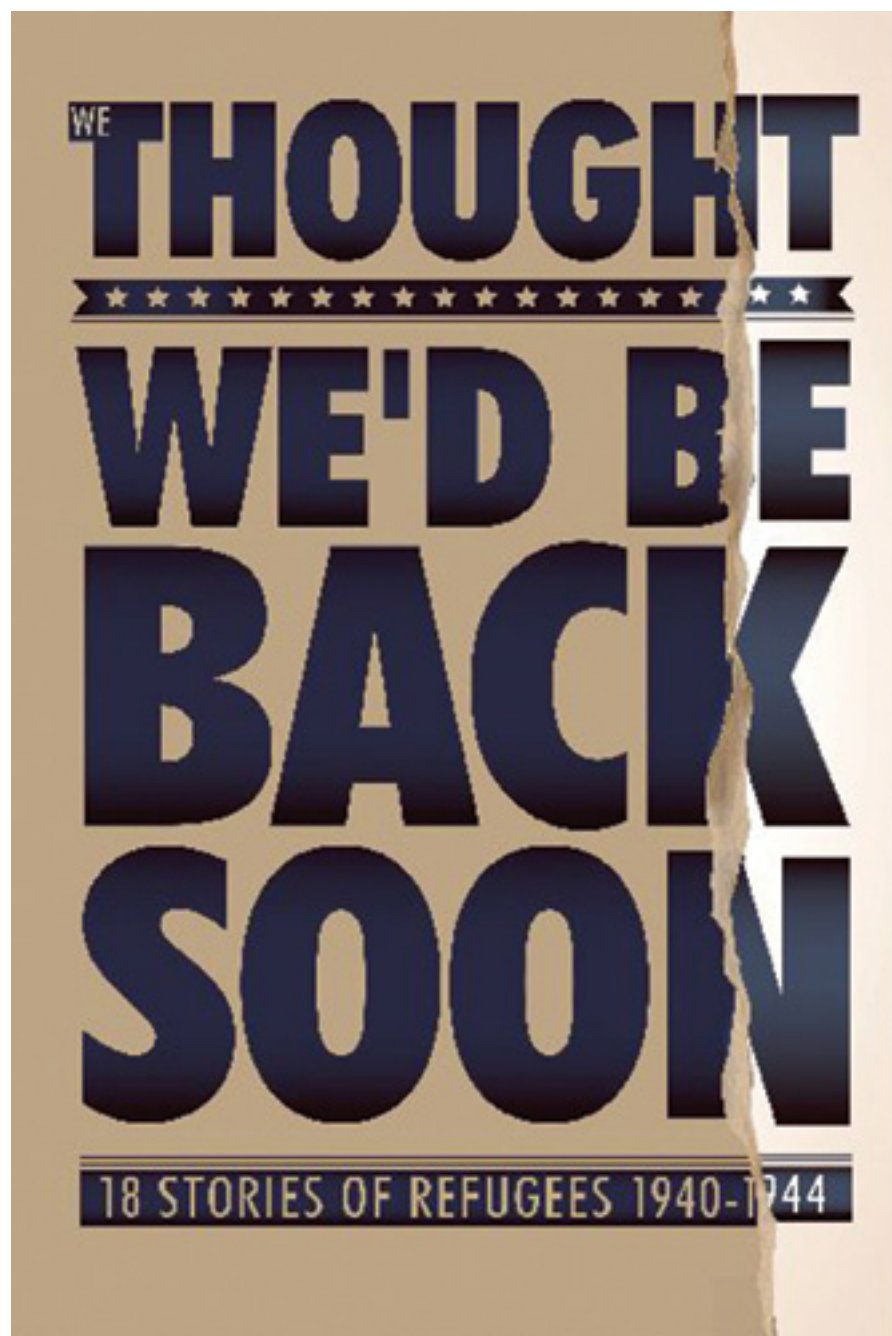
I do hope that you continue reading Bridges and recommend it to your family members and friends. In fact, I would ask you to find at least one family member or friend who does not subscribe to Bridges and recommend to him or her to subscribe. Or you could make a Christmas gift and subscribe the magazine for them. Imagine, if you would introduce at least one more reader to Bridges, our subscription would double, and that would be an immense help to us. Besides, I think that a subscription to a magazine is a wonderful Christmas gift that continues throughout a whole year.

I thank you for reading Bridges, and I thank you for your comments and notes. I would appreciate more letters from you with ideas and suggestions regarding the content of the magazine. Also, I am always looking for writers. If you have a story to share, please do so. There is nothing more important than a person's story. Our stories make up the pattern of the tapestry of our life in this country.

You can always reach me at kariledalia@yahoo.com.

Sincerely,

Karilė Vaitkutė
Editor



We Thought We'd Be Back Soon. 18 Stories of Refugees 1940-1944 is a collection of 18 compelling stories about displacement from Lithuania at the end of World War II. The primary sources for the book are the audio recordings that the Cultural Council of the Lithuanian American Community Inc. began gathering in 1995 as part of its Oral History Project. In selecting the eighteen interviews out of sixty-five, the editors sought to represent Lithuanian-American men and women varying by age, occupation, and socio-economic status. They also wanted to show their diverse circumstances in Lithuania, and their various ways and means of fleeing westward. Here we present one of the stories. It was told by Janina Jakševičienė.

I Bow My Head to Your University

During the Soviet and German occupations, pediatrician Janina Bortkevičiūtė Jakševičienė practiced medicine in a hospital in Šiauliai. As the Soviets returned in 1944 to reoccupy Lithuania, she fled with her family to Germany. There she worked at the hospital at the University of Breslau (now Wrocław, Poland), in the village of Zeitz, and at the Kempten children's hospital. Later on, from 1950, she was an army medical doctor in Pakistan. After immigrating to the USA in 1955, in Chicago she set up a practice in pediatrics, which she continued until 2000. She died March 14, 2013, at the age of ninety-nine. Laima Petrauskas VanderStoep interviewed Janina Bortkevičiūtė Jakševičienė (Yoksha) on October 23, 1995.

When did you leave Lithuania?
In 1944, on July 22.

Why did you decide to leave?

By then, the eastern part of Lithuania had been taken over by the Russians for the second time; as you know, the first time was in 1940. I had worked under the Russians for a year. And during the first occupation I saw what it meant to be a physician in the Communist system. I was a pediatrician. I'd graduated in 1938 or 1937, and I specialized in pediatrics. I was assigned to work in Šiauliai as a physician, and it was extraordinarily difficult to be a physician in the Russian system. Very, very difficult. For example, there was a rule that we had to examine six patients in ten minutes. They really pressed us to work. In my office, I had Basanavičius, Kudirka hanging on the wall. They came in to take a look: "Who is this on the wall here? Where is Stalin?" I said, "They're doctors, Lithuania's doctors." So somehow or other I got away with it. My husband had a law degree and had been appointed prosecutor for the Šiauliai district. He knew already that he'd better leave that position, so he went to work in a bank. But there he also felt lots of pressure. He feared that he might

be arrested, you know, since they didn't like lawyers. Then after the Russians left, the Germans arrived. Working was also difficult. But the Germans, if you didn't meddle in politics, would let you do your work. In 1944, when the Russians had come back again, we already knew of the deportations. In 1941, my friend had given birth to a baby. Her husband was the director of the sugar factory in Kuršėnai. So, you know, they came to take and deport him, but he was away. So they took that woman with her month-old infant. He came home—couldn't find his wife. He went around and was told, "She's been arrested." He went over there, and so they seized him immediately and transported him to Katorsk. He was taken to one side of the Urals, she—to the other. They didn't know anything for five months. But then, after fifteen years, when Stalin died . . . Well, so you see, in 1944, when the Russians returned, we already knew. They hadn't reached us yet, but we knew that it would be horrible, and we would all perish here. And what's more, there were lists of those who were to be deported that had been stolen by some Lithuanians. So why wait? My husband was advised, "Definitely flee, but Janė should stay here with that sick child." My husband said, "I won't leave without you, I'll go fight with the partisans." But I had hopes that if I left Lithuania, I might get medical help for the child. We all know now, as we knew then, that you can't replace the brain, but, you understand—the hope. There were three of us children in our family: my brother, my sister, and I. My sister was a young university student. My mother said, "We can't go with you," because my brother's wife was in her ninth month of pregnancy. So how could she be left behind? "We must stay with her," my parents said, "but you, children, go. It might be for just a couple of months—and this storm will pass. America will help us." Then everyone hoped for that America. "But your sister must go with you," said my parents, "because Janė will be working all the time." And it's true, there hasn't been a single day that I haven't worked since Lithuania. I've always worked, worked, worked. I had no choice but to work. So my sister went with us. We left from the station in Šiauliai—the trains were freight trains. That's where the Germans put us on board. We had an address to go to in Breslau, because a Lithuanian acquaintance of mine had written to me from Breslau. So we traveled straight to Breslau—my friend with her children and I with a sick, paralyzed three-year-old child. I took a small pot, so I'd have one, some diapers. . . Well, so my mother packed up a goose; she had roasted it for us—my husband carried the basket. I wore, actually took along, my winter coat, so I'd have it, and a bit of food for the child. And that was all of our possessions. And then the train traveled for four days, four nights. We arrived in Breslau, without ration cards we had no food. Immediately I went to the *Ärztckammer* and told them that I was a physician.

Ärztckammer?

The medical association. They immediately were so delighted, they needed doctors and right away told me to go to the hos-

pital to work. But you know, I hadn't slept, I hadn't eaten. And, you know, we had traveled standing on our feet, sleeping on the floor. So then they took me to introduce me and show me around. It was really beautiful in Germany—a large hospital, many doctors there. This Professor Schtal was pointing out to me that these and those would be my patients, was showing me what I would be doing. But I could barely stand. So the professor took a look at me and said, "Madam, did you sleep last night?" I said, "I napped a little bit on the floor of the railcar." "And when did you last eat dinner?" he asked. I answered, "Dinner?" So catching on, he said, "Oh, and I foolishly have been carrying on about the patients. Wait a moment, I'll bring you something to eat right away." He led me to his office, then hurried to the kitchen, brought a tray with milk, rolls, marmalade—you know, my eyes just lit up. So, of course, I asked if I could take some home with me, because I had run out of milk for my daughter. So he let me have all of it. Through the medical association I got food ration cards, we got an apartment. I worked at the University of Breslau hospital as a pediatrician. It was very interesting, very pleasant. I learned a lot. You know, this was, after all, a different world. I still have a document I got from Professor Stolte. Later on he was arrested by the Germans, sent to Dachau, because he was a humanitarian. My sister cared for the little one, and my husband was given a job at a bank. It seemed as if we'd gotten our lives more or less in order. Three weeks went by, the Russians were approaching, and my husband was pressed into digging trenches. He was sent off into the forest somewhere. In Breslau we celebrated our first *Kūčios*. It was Christmas Eve, and there was nothing to be had, nothing to eat. The mail carrier came. I opened the door—a friend of mine from Vienna had sent us some herring. My God, we were so overjoyed! The next day again a large package arrived. While in Danzig [now Gdańsk, Poland], Doctor Jonas Adomavičius (we had studied together) had heard that Janė with her sick child was living half-starved in Breslau. So he packed up a box with flour, apples, poppy seeds, mushrooms. Well, it's a feast, wouldn't you know! But my husband wasn't there. I didn't know if he'd be able to come. So I told my sister, "We'll prepare the Christmas Eve meal, you invite your girlfriends, and I'll bring the pediatricians—one Bulgarian (a Bulgarian woman), an Italian and a Spanish man, and one Prussian woman."

And all of them were in Breslau?

And all of them had ended up there alone by themselves, without their families. The Prussian woman, she was from Karaliaučius [now Kaliningrad, Russia], her home had been bombed, her whole family had perished. She was there all alone, a pediatrician also. I felt sorry for them, so I invited them. The Spaniard said, "My God, what they give us on the food ration cards—it's not enough for even one dinner." So we prepared the Christmas Eve meal. I spread the tablecloth. I found hay somewhere, I got a fir tree. My sister got busy with her girlfriends, bought some powdered milk, created a true Christmas Eve. Can you imagine,

thirty-five years later, one night the telephone rang. The Prussian woman was calling me from Canada, “Doctor Jakševičienė, do you remember me? (I’ve forgotten her last name.) I’m in Canada and I’ll never forget that Lithuanian Christmas Eve meal. It was such a blessing for us!” The Spaniard had gotten chocolate somewhere and brought it for my daughter. We all exchanged something with one another. And you know, we stood and sang “Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht” [Silent Night] in German, because they knew it, too. And my husband arrived at the last minute, no socks on his feet. Christmas Eve passed, and in January we got word that the Russians were fifteen kilometers away.

What year was that?

1945. You could already hear the gunfire. And my husband was digging trenches and sending me letters from the trenches. Each day he wrote me letters: how beautiful the snow-covered fir tree looks, the moon is shining, the stars are twinkling. And as I’m reading this letter, I fling it down and say, “He’s crazy, he doesn’t realize that the Russians are almost here, he must flee. And he goes on writing these poetic letters.” He had no idea. Doctor Rudaitis came to me and said, “Doctor, tonight we’re leaving. This night is the last. If you don’t leave, you’ll perish. The Russians are right here.” If I left then, I’d lose touch with my husband. Again, the mail. Again, a letter about the moon, about the stars. I said, “You know, we have to go.” Go anywhere, to flee, flee from the Russians. I, too, packed our things and took them to the station, to mail them out by some sort of post. There’s one thing I must say—German order is remarkable! During times like those, things wouldn’t go missing, whatever you needed was operating. I ran to the station. Mobs of people, thousands wanting to leave. I stood in line for hours. I looked, and running through the enormous station—it’s my husband, no hat, wearing wooden shoes, no socks. “My God!” he exclaimed. “You know, I’ve escaped.” He had escaped from the forest, because they’d heard gunfire close by. We were overjoyed that we would be together. But how was he to get out of Breslau? There it was in writing: “No adult male is allowed to depart.” He would need separate, special permission. Well, you couldn’t buy a ticket, and without a ticket you couldn’t get on board. That order—remarkable. We went to the police to ask for a permit. They wouldn’t even talk to us. Everyone, alle Männer [all adult males] must go to the trenches, must defend Breslau. Apparently I looked so awful, probably from crying. I went up to a German and said, “Help us. He wasn’t born here, he’ll be no help—the Russians will ship him off immediately. And I’m here with a young sick child.” The German wrote out a permit for my husband to get a ticket. He said, “Remember in your life, that the Germans, they have a heart, too.” But when you were handing them your ticket they didn’t look to see if you had a permit or not, they just didn’t let men board. So I gave my husband a scarf—he had a small face—and said, “Make yourself smaller.” We got on the train. There were lots of people, we were told to lie down in those railcars. And they came with flashlights to

check whether there were any men. And I told my husband to clasp that small scarf and to take the child, while we shielded him. The Germans shone their lights, and he was pretty scared. Somehow or other we traveled far, so far—all the way to Zeitz. Again, we immediately went to the Ärztekammer there. We had to walk fifteen kilometers, I got blisters on my feet, I could barely walk. When I got there I told them I was a physician, and they were in great need of doctors. They immediately assigned me work in a small place, like a village, about seven kilometers from that town. Their physician had been drafted, so I was to replace him. I went there, brought my husband along to help me, gave him a white coat, so he would sit in the office. That doctor’s name still hung there, but I was allowed to practice there. Most patients came to me with a health insurance card, like here we now have Medicare, they had Krankenkasse.

You didn’t treat just children there, but you were a general practitioner?

I had to be. I was that village’s only physician. Of course, it was mostly children or women who would become ill. I ended up having to go all around the village on foot—one house would be one kilometer away, another—two kilometers. So that’s how we worked in Zeitz until spring. And they’d bomb us there. The town would be bombed. And whenever we’d hear air raid sirens, everyone would be ordered to the basement, not to shelters but to run to the basement. During Tiefflieger attacks physicians had permission not to go give medical assistance, because it was too dangerous. I would get so fatigued there that I wouldn’t want to get out of bed at night to go to that basement. I’d say, “If they drop a bomb, whether they drop it here or there, why go?” My husband would explain, “Listen, here you’ll get killed from the shrapnel. If we perish, we’ll perish together, but here you’ll be injured.” He’d drag me out of bed to the downstairs, to sit in that cold basement. One time, that Tiefflieger came again. We all ducked into the basement. Suddenly, a man came running in with a bike, yelling, “Where’s the doctor? My brother is injured.” Frightened, I grabbed my bag and was ready to go. My husband said, “You mustn’t go, because there’s that law.” And he was explaining this to all of them. But the man shouted, “I’ll kill you all right here, if she doesn’t come!” Those landlords of mine, those farmers, were frightened, “She has to go, she has to go!” I could see then that I had to go. I picked up my bag and went. He was walking ahead of me with his bike—I followed. And the Tiefflieger were flying low and always—poof! poof! poof!—kept shooting at people. We were going across the fields quickly, and I saw a shepherd boy’s head going down, obviously shot off—rolling. And I had this feeling—it’s my head! And I remember, I put my hand on my own head—was my head still there? And that German became so terrified, he threw down his bicycle and yelled, “Down on the ground, quickly!” He himself fell to the ground, and then I fell to the ground, too, so they’d think we’d been hit already. We went over to his brother, and his brother—his brain matter had spilled out. And he’d dragged

me into such danger and himself, too. So that’s what kind of times these were.

How long did you live in that village?

It was already into spring, the month of May, when we heard that the Americans were coming. My uncle Bartkus wasn’t far away, about twenty-five kilometers from us. They wanted to flee farther away from the Russian zone. And this uncle bought a wagon and a horse. He sat his wife and my daughter into the wagon. And all the rest of us went on foot to flee farther to the southern zone. Somehow or other we moved farther along. One time we were going to fetch some water from somewhere. And a truck drove by, and I heard, “Doctor Janė, Doctor Janė!” I looked—our Lithuanians. One of them was a driver for the Germans and saw them [the Americans] coming, so he gathered up a group of Lithuanians and with that whole truckload took off. So the truck was full, but they took us, my family. My uncle continued by horse and wagon to Wiesbaden, but we went all the way to the end—to Kempten. We arrived in Kempten. Where should we go? By then they had begun to organize DP [Displaced Persons] camps there. Our Lithuanians were beginning to gather in one place. We had a little bit of money, so we found a place to rent. With a sick child I had to find a quiet place for us. Because she could barely walk, other children would bump into her. We always had this tremendous worry. So my sister, I, and my husband rented a small room. We looked in on the camp to see what was going on. They had soup cooking there already, by then the Americans had begun to provide food. A cook’s soup—with meat, with potatoes. But, you know, I’m so unassertive. So I got in line. I stood and stood, and I kept getting pushed to the back. So at the very end, I got there, and all that was left of the soup was the watery broth, a couple of peas floating there. I brought over that cold soup, and they were all sitting there. So I remember there was this Lithuanian man, Malakūnas, he’s now in Australia—many years later he called me from Australia. He came up to me and said, “So what’s this you have here, just that water to drink?” I answered, “Well, you know . . .” And so he said, “But it’s cold, isn’t it, so what good is that?” And I, “Well, so where are you supposed to heat it up?” So the next day he came with a sort of heating apparatus he had made. He had made it himself and said, “I never eat anything cold.” In other words, he made it so that we could take our food home, and we’d have that burner—it was the invention of that Mr. Malakūnas. Afterwards we’d run to somehow get a closer spot in the line. So you’d have some of that soup, a bit of meat, and you’d feel human again. They gave us lots of oats—a bag of oatmeal. One day you’d eat cooked oatmeal, a second day cooked oatmeal, the third day—soup. Women would bake oatmeal cookies. In 1946, by the end of 1945 already, children in our camp started coming down with scarlet fever, diphtheria. By that time they had already set up the IRO (International Refugee Organization) that was after the UNRRA. A DP hospital was opened. It was the DP Children’s Sanatorium and Hospital. I immediately went to register

at that hospital. And we opened an office next to our camp—we women, the men didn’t join it.

Where was this hospital located?

In Kempten. And Professor Krammer was asked to organize that hospital. He had been chancellor at a university—one of the best pediatricians in Hungary. He had learned that there among the Lithuanians were, I think, thirteen doctors, and there were, I think, three of us women: Šimoliūnienė, Dr. Kalvaitytė, who was a radiologist, and I. He then invited me to meet with him and told me he wanted me to help him organize the hospital. He was so busy with its administration, and he asked me to handle patient care. Me—a young physician, all on my own, and, you know, I was terrified. So I went ahead and worked, and at night I’d run in to check on those children. And I’d say to my husband, “I’ve really gotten myself into it, really into it this time.” [smiles]

This was a very big responsibility?

Awfully big. He didn’t give me any help at all. He was handling administration, writing, writing, not even a consult, nothing. I was awfully disheartened. Two months went by, he called me in again. This is somewhat boastful, but this is what happened. He generally was a very reserved gentleman. He took my hand and kissed it. He said, “It’s not your hand that I kiss, but your university.” He continued, “You should know, when they told me there’s some young little female doctor from Lithuania, well, I said to myself, I’ll just observe how she works.” But that means, that while I was treating patients, he was watching me.

So this was an examination of sorts?

This was several months of final exams. He said, “I thought, you see, she’d been at Breslau University for a year, and in that year she’d gained skills, she’d begun to acquire more knowledge. But no, you can’t impart such determination and the way she does things, that must have been a remarkable university in Kaunas. I bow my head to your university and to you Lithuanians, who were able to provide such an education.” He said that we couldn’t, just the two of us, handle everything there, because we had four hundred children—it was a large sanatorium, they were bringing them to us from everywhere. “We must have,” he counted out for me, “at least seventeen doctors. Summon all of the Lithuanians who are here.” My sister was studying in Tübingen, and my husband, because we’d had a second child, was watching our second baby. When I was working in Kempten, I had become pregnant.

You were working and you were pregnant. Weren’t you concerned?

You know, it was like this, I was having serious heart problems, my legs had started turning blue from the pregnancy, from the work. In general, I’d had heart problems ever since I was young. So a Yugoslavian doctor carried me on his back to have an electrocardiogram done straight away. I couldn’t climb the stairs,

so he put me on his back, by then I was in my seventh month. And they told me the test results indicated that I should give up my work. How could I not work—all these children lying there? Well, they said, you'll die in childbirth anyway. That's what they said. I went to a gynecologist. He was from Chicago, his name was Saletta. He was of Italian descent but had studied in Chicago and was an obstetrician there. And I told him that it had already been decided that I would die in childbirth, but I was working, looking after my children. So he said, "You know, I'll be with you, and you won't die." The time came, I had prepared myself. I wrote a brief last will: this small cross—to this one, that to him, because anything we'd had that was gold, the Americans had stolen from us, when we lived with the farmer. Čiurlionio Ansamblis came to Kempten. And I enjoyed them so much. We went to that concert. As we were walking there the moon was shining, and as I gazed at it I wondered, would I ever see another new moon. The women dancers all come out to dance Blezdingëlė, and I said to myself, what a beautiful world, how I want to live. Why must I die? I remember that feeling. The pains started at night. And they took me to that Saletta—not to my own hospital, but I went there. They had nuns there, excellent care. He appeared immediately, and he held my hand and—"I will be with you." In a word, I had the baby, they put me to sleep, I don't remember, I just see my husband running up and down the corridor with a prayer book. [smiles] In the morning I woke up, they brought me my child. "So you see, you didn't die after all, and you have a healthy child." That was a great joy.

What happened next?

The time came when the DP camps had to close, and everyone had to leave. Dalytė, that little sick child of ours, she was walking a bit, they'd give her massages, I remember, these teachers would come. And this priest Rev. Raila had arrived. He met us in the camp. He was from Philadelphia, he knew my sister well. He arrived and, whoever wanted to depart, he put them on a list—he could provide a hundred affidavits. Not knowing us well, he put our family on the list and sent us an affidavit so that we could go straight to Philadelphia. But all of us, before we left, had to be screened, you know. We went in, the doctor sitting there was a German of mixed heritage, but from America. I walked into the room and saw, written in large letters, that one child suffered from encephalitis. Someone had informed on us. And you know who informed on us—a Latvian. There was a Latvian physician at that hospital, and he couldn't stand Lithuanians. So he notified them that we'd be coming, though he didn't know me personally. I'd only see him from afar. And he informed them that there was a physician, she'd be coming in with her disabled child. And these children—one was three years old, the other six—with bows in their hair, these little girls stood there. And the German asked me, which girl was the disabled one. I had to tell him. He said, "You know, you can't, they won't allow her into America, they'll stop you. You must leave her and go without her." But why wouldn't they allow her

in, since the condition isn't contagious? No, it isn't contagious. America has a law from 1917 that if a person has tuberculosis, or some mental condition, America won't let them in. Even now this law still stands. "It's the law," the German said, "and they won't let you in. The rest of you may go, I can admit you." But how could I go without my child? So there, that's why I ended up in Pakistan.

So Pakistan did not have those restrictions?

Pakistan didn't. From Kempten we had gone to Augsburg.¹¹ But in Augsburg they wouldn't let us through. We had to return. Now what were we to do? And the announcements kept coming—everybody had to leave. Because the Germans were coming, taking over that hospital. There would be neither work nor a place to live. And a general arrived from Pakistan. They'd been partitioned since 1947. Ten million people were living in the streets in Pakistan. Ten million homeless, all of them ill, few doctors, people in the villages were dying like flies. So this general of theirs, surgeon general Faruhi, their minister of health, an ophthalmologist, had come seeking white doctors. He called us "white yeast," saying he'd bring over such doctors, and they would show by their example how one should work, what Western medicine means. Professor Krammer, for whom I worked for five years, wrote a letter of recommendation so that General Faruhi would take me. Maybe from there it would be easier to get into America. We signed up. Over four hundred doctors gathered in Munich. Hungarians, Russians . . . From those four hundred only twenty-four families would be chosen. Only that many, because the cost of the entire trip would be covered. I went back to work among those DPs of mine. Everyone was leaving, the hospital was closing, it was getting so depressing. My husband got a map and was studying Pakistan. And he saw where we were heading, Rawalpindi, just two hundred miles away—there's Russia.¹³ He said to me, "Janė, we ran from those Bolsheviks." (And he was terribly afraid of them.) "We'll fall into their clutches again! Russia's right there! Where are you going?!" He was starting to shout at me. I got scared. I was informed we'd be going the day after next. I become "sick." With a temperature of 104, I deliberately wouldn't get out of bed. I wasn't ill, but I decided to be ill. Let them go to that Pakistan of theirs—we won't go. And we didn't. You know, those twenty families left. Two weeks later, or maybe a month, we got a letter. "You didn't immigrate to America, you refused. Nor did you go to Pakistan. So if you're so smart, you can go live on your own, IRO will no longer be responsible for you." The letter said we were free to go wherever we pleased. Where could we go with a sick young child? What were we to do? So again, to Pakistan, we would go there, what could we do? So we, four families, some Czech friends of mine, set out.

Were you able to choose where you would work in Pakistan?

In Pakistan you'd belong in the army. They made you captain.

They gave you a salary of 180 dollars a month. In their money—600 rupees. A teacher of theirs would make thirty rupees, but he lived on a dirt floor. He ate only greens, yogurt. Without servants you couldn't manage to get by, because you couldn't go to the market yourself. You know, they'd see a white face, immediately you'd pay a hundred rupees for one orange. You had to have a servant, so he'd buy it for you. He'd skim some off the top for himself. I had five servants at a time there. But life there was like this: to send a letter to my sister, I'd have to pay eight. That's too much for me, so I wouldn't write. And she would think, what's going on here. She'd send us packages, but I'd have to pay duty on the package—thirty, thirty-two rupees, I don't remember. I didn't have the means. We send them back to her. Somehow or other we got settled. In life sad things are forgotten. People remember the good things. Now I'd really like to return to Pakistan. I have friends there. But there is no way. But those, oh, such shining moments remain. We landed in Karachi. Oh, it's hot there! You can't breathe! Suddenly we were separated: we women to one side, men to the other. We were starting to think, Jesus Mary, we felt fear, almost in tears. But in the morning we all came together to eat breakfast, thank God. I hired a driver to explore that place called Karachi. Pears for sale, so huge, I'd never seen the likes, oranges and the biggest mangoes. Everything covered with flies. And living right there were the homeless people. They were urinating right there, they were doing it all right there. And it looked to me that they were all spitting up blood. Well, there's these betel leaves, and they chew them. And it dulls the senses. Saliva builds up, and they spit it out. And there was red everywhere. To me it seemed like hell—everyone spitting up blood. My husband said, "See where we've ended up. Can't you see?" And we immediately went to the consulate, on the very first day to get their permission for us to go to America. The consul was sitting, his feet up on the desk, perspiring. "What do you want?" "To go to America." And with an ailing child. He heard us out and said, "Listen people, no matter whether you're in Germany, or sitting here in Pakistan, or sitting on the moon, America will not admit your girl, and that's it. There are laws. That's it. I'd like to help you, but that's it." And then we realized we'd have to go back and look at that "blood" . . . I bought a pound of pears, washed them in hot water, cold water and even soaked them in permanganate. I peeled them and ate them. And after that I couldn't eat for three weeks. Such diarrhea! After washing and soaking them all. I think it was cholera. Somehow I recovered. After that we were flown to Rawalpindi. They drove us to this army housing. We were given an apartment on the second floor, for which I was to pay from my salary. And the trees were so huge there. I gave the children sandwiches and let them go outside there. The girls were eating their sandwiches. And the vultures saw the children eating, and they swooped down on those sandwiches. God! I was frightened! I rushed to bring the children back inside. And an English army major was coming down the corridor with his wife, and the lady said, "Don't let the children

out there. Cobras live out there, and the vultures are always there, companions to the cobras." And she reassured me. She said, "You know, the day before last my husband was walking along, climbing up the stairs, and a cobra was going up to our apartment. So he hit it over the head with a stick." And I've been terribly afraid of snakes even in Lithuania, and here you had cobras! God! [laughs]

How did you adjust to life there?

The next day I had to go to work already. And it was a long way to the hospital, we had no money, we didn't even have a bicycle, we had nothing, a car was an impossible dream. There was this tonga, a vehicle on two wheels, but it cost eight rupees. You know, a horse pulled a cart on two wheels, and the driver sat on a bench in front, and there were two seats where you could ride. It went over asphalt very smoothly, the roads were good. Rawalpindi was beautiful, lush with trees. Eucalyptus trees, it was especially beautiful in the evening. The sky—I've never seen one like that anywhere in the world. All of the stars seemed like they were right there for you to touch. And they were bright. The eucalyptus were fragrant. But when you went for a walk, in the bushes you'd hear "ssshhhh . . ."—a snake. Once we were riding bicycles, and a thick rope was dragging across the street. My husband was riding in front, I was behind, and I saw him hop off—it was a cobra making its way across the street. There were so many stories like that. One Englishwoman put her foot into a slipper, and a scorpion was in there, stung her, and she died. All these years later, in the morning when I put on my slipper, I still shake it out. Without thinking. When we arrived, it was already November. And the nights were very cold. There were only fireplaces. But buying wood was like buying meat. There aren't any forests there. All the people collected dung. They'd take it to the veranda, dry it out, and then use it for fuel. They sprinkled some ashes on it. You'd buy a bag of ashes at the army post, and with the ashes and some pressed coal, pour that on, and then if you had a bit of wood from somewhere you'd put that on, and the wood would start to crackle. And you would always head over toward the fire. Whenever people came to visit, the men would stand there warming themselves. I'd say, "Don't block the heat!" My husband loved to play the piano and, whatever the circumstances, he would always have a piano. In Germany, the first thing I rented for our hospital apartment was a piano. And in Pakistan the first thing I rented was a piano. That's why my daughter loves music and married a musician, and my grandchildren play. And my first impression, when I went over to the hospital in the morning, I was sent to meet the doctor in charge [Dr. Adi Azisuddin]. I was appointed to be in charge of the family ward. Over there one served in the army for twenty-five years, so I cared for their families. And those soldiers served for that many years. So you know, I came in, and the doctor was sitting there, with a dark complexion, but very attractive. She said to me, "Oh, hello, you know, today I don't have time to show you around, I have to go play tennis, come back tomorrow." But

that ride had cost me money. I came the next day. The people in charge had told me this, "You will be taking over for her, but don't indicate to her that you're taking over, because she's been in charge here for fourteen years. We don't want to insult her." And she was the general's mistress. They said, "You know, you must be careful around her. Be very, very subtle." Well, I possess almost no such cunning. I walked all the way home, such a long trip would have cost me too much. The following day I came in, and she said to me, "Oh, today I have time. I'll show you the hospital. Here are those with tuberculosis, here you have typhus, those lying here are post-surgery." I asked, "So you mix tuberculosis with typhus?" "Why not? Here everyone has tuberculosis," she said. "It's just after surgery that they need to be kept separate. And if they have tuberculosis, why bother isolating them?" She can't be serious! But she's very pleasant. And again, "Oh, I have to go play tennis." Again she left. On the third or fourth day she said, "You know, I understand you're here to replace me. Go ahead and take all those papers, take care of all these patients, too." Then she said, "You know, I was playing tennis and I pulled something, and there's swelling here, take a look at it for me." I had her lie down and examined her, and she was a beautiful woman, Dr. Adi Azisuddin. I looked at her, her skin was brown, with this beautiful glow. I said, "God, you have such beautiful skin." She said, "What?! My skin, beautiful! Yours is white, beautiful. You just take a look at this skin." I said to her, "You know, Doctor, in Lithuania all the beautiful ladies go away in the summer to lie in the sun." She began to laugh, I'd never seen anyone laugh so hard. That there should be such foolish people in the world. God has given them white skin, so they go and sunbathe. "Well," she said, "I've heard many things in my life, but nothing like this." And from that moment on she considered me a real friend. She helped me so much. We had shipped our blankets, everything we had, by boat. And, you know, those boats take two, three months. And there the nights get cold. We'd rented beds, mattresses, but there was nothing else. We'd lie down, cover ourselves with whatever we had—it was cold. We'd huddle together—it was cold. In the morning I came in, my nose was probably red, completely frozen. She asked, "Did you sleep last night?" I answered, "I slept a bit." "Did you have anything to cover yourself?" I said, "You know, our things haven't arrived from Europe yet." "So why didn't you say so? My God! We're going right now, forget those patients!" I went, climbed into a tonga, we went to her apartment. She took blankets from a chest, everything she had, curtains for our windows, tablecloths. "You have nothing," she said. She was incredibly kind, truly kind. Months passed, and my husband was without any work, because he was a lawyer. I realized there might be a problem with him, he was so anxious. I went to see a bishop, whom we knew. I said, "Please help us. Is there anything that could be done to find my husband some work?" So he took him on to do bookkeeping. For pennies, but it was important to me. But, of course, I had to hire a woman to look after the children, I had to hire an aja [nanny]. You know, those years were not

easy. I didn't earn anything, and I wasn't able to save anything.

Why? Were your expenses too high?

From a 180 dollar monthly salary you had to take away at least ten percent—you couldn't do without servants. Food—a kilogram of meat—four dollars. We lived without a refrigerator for so many years. So finally, in the last year I rented a refrigerator—thirty dollars per month rent. This is why everyone fled from there. They saw there was no future. Nothing. It was impossible to stay there. But, most importantly, my husband came down with malaria. Our daughter Jūratė had spotted fever. God, she was so sick. I had a weak heart, but somehow I made it through. But if we were to leave . . . what to do about Dalytė? This was a huge concern. Rev. Vincas Mincevičius from Italy came to see my sister in Philadelphia. He came with Father Raila. They came to my sister, and she explained to them that we weren't being allowed to enter here [the US]. He said, "In five years' time they'll all be dead there. There's no reason for them to stay there, we must find a place for Dalytė." In Italy he [Rev. Mincevičius] went to various institutions, to the mayor of Rome, to the president of Italy, to the American ambassador (so that Dalytė could be brought to Rome). And he looked for and found an institution (I will be forever grateful). This then was all of my compensation, all of the wealth that I took with me from Pakistan. And we didn't even have a camera to take a picture. And my husband, I hadn't ever seen him cry, but he was crying then. I was standing there, crying. He said to me, "Stop bawling! Be glad that you're leaving!" I often remember his words.

Where did you arrive in America, and when?

In Philadelphia, by boat from Italy in 1955. Once we arrived, we began a new chapter. My sister was in Philadelphia, and we discussed whether I should stay there in Philadelphia, near this Lithuanian community center. But my uncle was here in Chicago. So my uncle said, "Come here, you'll stay with us for a while." So we stayed with them for five months after we arrived. And soon I got an internship, a hundred dollars a month. Now they pay a thousand. But in 1955 it was a hundred dollars. God was good—I passed my exams on my first try.

Translated by Asta Čuplinskis

Edited by Birutė Vaičūrgis Šležas

We Thought We'd Be Back Soon. 18 Stories of Refugees 1940-1944. Compiled and edited by Dalia Stakė Anysas, Dalia Cidzikaitė and Laima Petrauskas VanderStoep. Vilnius: Aukso žuvys, 2017. - 384 p. - ISBN 978-609-8120-27-1

It is available to buy at www.amazon.com.

Memories That Last a Lifetime

Knights of Lithuania 104th Annual National Convention

By Regina Juška-Švoba, K of L Supreme Council President Honorary Member and K of L Public Relations Chair



Knights of Lithuania Convention. Photo by Alexandra Rudmin

The Knights of Lithuania is a national Roman Catholic organization consisting of men and women of Lithuanian ancestry. Its motto is "For God and Country." The Knights of Lithuania's primary focus is to foster, maintain and nurture an appreciation of the Lithuanian language, customs, traditions and culture among its members. It further stresses the importance of the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. The Knights are actively involved in programs to assist their less fortunate brothers and sisters in Lithuania. There are currently three charity groups within the organization and function under the auspices of the "Knights of Lithuania Charities". They are: K of L Foundation, St. Casimir's Guild, and Our Lady of Šiluva Fund. Aid to

Lithuania, Inc. functioned from 1991 until it was suppressed in December 2007.

The Knights of Lithuania organization was founded by Mykolas Norkūnas in 1913, in Lawrence, MA. Currently there are 40 councils in the United States with nearly 1,100 members. A National Convention is held annually at different state sites. In 2013 the Knights of Lithuania celebrated its Centennial Anniversary Convention in Quincy, MA. This year's Knights of Lithuania 104th National Convention was hosted by Council 96, Dayton, OH from July 28-30, 2017. The Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn Hotel was the home base for the convention. 60 delegates, clergy, guests and 4 K of L Juniors converged to

participate in the 3-day long meetings, cultural activities and banquet celebration. Prior to each day's sessions and meetings, Mass was celebrated. For those members who arrived prior to the convention, an optional pre-convention tour was offered on July 27, 2017.

Thursday, July 27, 2017

Early Thursday morning, July 27, 2017, 28 eager K of L travelers embarked on pre-convention tour to the world famous National Museum of the United States Air Force, which is one of the largest aviation museums in the world. The K of L members had the opportunity to see the new 224,000 square foot hangar, which in 2016, was opened. It features the various aircrafts that include the Presidential and R&D planes and spacecrafts. There was a guided tour for the group and then time to explore the museum individually.

After lunch, the group traveled to the historic Indian Creek Farm and Distillery. The tour included a visit to the grist mill, Ohio's oldest original mill, mash house and distillery. The small batch artesian distillery, which dates to pre-Civil war, has the oldest copper still in operation.

What a day, what an experience, what a time we shared! Those who participated in the pre-convention trip were certainly impressed. We returned to the hotel with plenty of new experiences and stories to share with our fellow members.

Friday, July 28, 2017

The 104th National Convention's opening Mass was celebrated at the Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn Hotel in Dayton, OH. The main celebrant was the K of L spiritual advisor Rev. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis, HM. He was assisted by Rev. Audrius Arštikaitis, Rector of the St. Casimir Pontifical College in Rome, Italy. The opening Mass was offered for the of the Knights of Lithuania organization, the success of the convention and the host council. Hymns were led by Marytė Bizinkauskas, C-1, Boston, MA.

The first plenary session was also held at Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn Hotel. K of National President and Honorary Member Regina Juška-Švoba officially opened the convention. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis, HM led in the opening prayer. The National Anthems of the United States, the Republic of Lithuania and the Knights of Lithuania were sung. The roll call of the Supreme Council Officers was led by National Recording Secretary Liza Macke. Alex Fletcher, co-host of the 104th National Convention welcomed all delegates and friends to Dayton and wished everyone a good and memorable stay. The convention presidium was elected and consisted of and Elena Nakrosis, H. M, C-90, Kearny, NJ and Dave Boucher, C-78, Lawrence, MA as co-chairs. Marytė Bizinkauskas, C-1, Brockton, MA, and Savina Breslin, served as secretaries.

Greetings in writing were received from: Most Reverend Joseph R. Binzer, Auxiliary Bishop of Cincinnati; Rev. Tony Cutcher, Pastor of Region XII, Huber Heights, OH; Honorary

Consulate of the Republic of Lithuania in Philadelphia, Krista Butvydas Bard; Archbishop of Vilnius Gintaras Grušas; Msgr. Edmond J. Putrimas, Lithuanian Bishops' Conference Delegate for the Lithuanian Catholic Apostolate Abroad; Bishop of Siauliai Eugenijus Bartulis; Rev. Msgr. Albert J. Contons, HM, president emeritus of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Priests' League; religious orders- Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Sister Ignė Marijošius, Superior), Sisters of Jesus Crucified of Our Lady of Sorrow Convent (Sister Mary Valliere, General Superior) and Sisters of St. Casimir (Sister Regina Dubickas); Mirga Girnius, Amerikos Lietuvių Kultūros Archyvas (ALKA); Erika Dilys-Brooks, President, Chicago Lithuanian Women's Club; Vida Kuprytė, editor - "Draugas" and "Draugas News"; Saulius V. Kuprys, President of the Lithuanian Roman Catholic Federation of America; Saulius V. Kuprys, National President of JBANC and the Lithuanian American Council. These greetings were included in the specially prepared 103rd National Convention program book.

National President and Honorary Member Regina Juška-Švoba gave a comprehensive state of the organization report. Special prayers were said in memory of Honorary Members Estelle Rogers, Vivian Rodgers and Ann Marie Kassel; and Honorary Member, past Supreme Council President and founder of St. Casimir's Guild and Aid to Lithuania, Inc. Robert S. Boris, who passed away in during the past year.

National treasurer and Cathy Nakrosis gave a full financial report of the organization's status.

Honorary Membership Committee member chairperson France Petkus, HM. presented one candidate for Honorary Membership- June Grenier, C-6, Hartford, CT. She was unanimously approved by the convention delegates and honorary membership will be bestowed on her during the 2018 National Convention in Brockton, MA. Resolutions were presented and approved by the delegates for long-time members Sister Helen Ivanauskas and Fran Burmila, both of C-1, Brockton, MA, for these worthy candidates and they will also be elevated to Honorary Membership status at the 2018 National Convention in Brockton, MA. Honorary Membership will be bestowed on Irene Svekla, C-3, Philadelphia, PA, at the closing banquet of this year's National Convention.

The K of L membership report was given by Marytė Bizinkauskas, Second Vice-President. It was announced that the organization gained 17 new and rejoining members. The councils that gained the new/rejoining members are: C-140, Syracuse, NY; C-7, Waterbury, CT and C-144, Anthracite, C-3 Philadelphia, PA; C-27, Newark, NJ and C-17 S. Boston, MA. A representative from each of these councils accepted the certificate of award.

The Scholarship Committee chair Alex Fletcher announced the 2017-2018 scholarship recipient winners. They are: Tristan Pant, C-96, Dayton, OH and Julia Merone, C-146, Hudson-Mohawk, NY. In all, \$3,500.00 will be awarded.

Irene Ozalis, President of the Knights of Lithuania Foundation, an ancillary arm of the K of L reported about the last fis-

cal year. A resolution was passed to use the principal funds of the Foundation's assets to distribute for various worthy causes. Ms. Ozalis announced that during the 2017-2018 fiscal year, donations will be made to the following: a grant to the Council hosting the 104th National Convention; continued support of an orphan through "Saulutė" organization; stipend for each Junior member who attends and participates in the convention; reimbursement for the purchase of specially made lapel pins celebrating Lithuania's centennial ("1918 Celebrate Lithuania 2018"); reimbursement for financial donations approved via resolutions; towards the erection of a bronze sculpture in Lukiškių plaza in Vilnius, Lithuania, of a Knight riding horse (VYTIS) that symbolizes and remembers those who fought for Lithuania's freedom. In all, nearly \$10,000.00 will be donated to these worthy causes!

Each year the K of L foundation sponsors an essay contest. This year's choice of topics was "Why I am happy to be Lithuanian?" Or "My fondest memory of a National Convention." Ms. Ozalis announced the three winners of the annual essay contest: first place (\$150) - Catherine Shulna; second place (\$100) - Mary Claire Voveris; and third place (\$50) - Ronald Voveris., all members of C-143, Anthracite, PA. This year there was one winner in the Junior category - Mackenzie Mooney, C-16, Chicago, IL, who will receive \$100. The Essay Fund was established in 1987 via grant of \$10,000 from Rev. J. Prunskis. After 30 years

of distributing monetary awards for the essay contest, the fund has been depleted. This is the last year for the essay contest.

A resolution for the constitutional change to include auxiliary membership was discussed. During the 103rd National Convention in 2016 held in Binghamton, NY, the delegates voted to proceed with the process of including Auxiliary Membership into the organization's constitution. The constitutional requirements concerning this change have been observed with 80% of the councils approving of the submission, the delegates of the 104th National Convention approved the inclusion of Auxiliary Membership into the Knights of Lithuania Constitution as stipulated by the article changes. This is an historic moment for the organization as it will now allow prospective candidates to become K of L members who are of non-Lithuanian ethnicity and of non-Catholic religious backgrounds.

June Grenier, C-46, Hartford, CT and National Ritual Chair reviewed the current point system that is used for attaining degrees. It was noted that not all councils/districts are adhering to the point system. There needs to be uniformity with all councils when determining degrees. J. Grenier welcomes suggestions in writing to assist in updating the current point system.

The first plenary sessions closed with a prayer led by Rev. Audrius Arštikaitis.

For the group get together we traveled to St. Peter Reis Center for an evening of Lithuania culture and fun, food, songs and



Knights of Lithuania Supreme Council for 2017-2018. Photo by Regina Juška Švoba

music. The participants had the opportunity to visit various tables consisting of Lithuanian culture and heritage. Each participant received a “passport” and when they went to each table, their passport was stamped and they received some type of gift. There was an amber table and each member received a bag of amber chips; a textile table with Lithuanian costumes and tapestries – there the participant received an American/Lithuanian flag patch; at the Krupnikas table, there were samplings of various types of Krupnikas; there was table with Christmas ornaments made of drinking straws and wheat straw- the participant received a bag containing directions and cut plastic drinking straw. In the basketball area, participants tried their luck in getting the ball through the hoop. Informational reading material was provided. At the bar, there were samplings of Lithuanian beer, wine and champagne. There was a raffle afterwards. Prizes included items noted in Dayton- beer, potato chips, lottery tickets and chocolates. A truly fun -filled, entertaining and enjoyable get together evening was had by all.

Saturday, July 29, 2017

Prior to the second plenary session, Mass was celebrated at the Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn Hotel. The main celebrant was Rev. Audrius Arštikaitis. The con-celebrant was Rev. Msgr. Dr. J. Anderlonis, HM. Marytė Bizinkauskas led the delegates with hymns for all the daily Masses.

The second session was opened with a prayer led by Rev. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis, HM.

Georgianna Macke, Ritual Committee chairperson announced that 4 members were approved to receive their 4th degrees- Marytė Bizinkauskas, C-1, Brockton, MA; Francesca Zajauskas, C-16, Chicago, IL and Anthony Rightus and Margaret Valinsky both of C-144, Frackville, PA. Andrew Berczelly, C-96, Dayton, OH, was approved to receive his 4th degree last year, but was unable to attend. He will receive the 4th degree this year.

Norma Petkus, acting supervising archives liaison gave a presentation: “Knights of Lithuania Archives – What are they and why do we care?” For the last several decades, the K of L Archives were housed in the basement of the Sisters of the Immaculate Conception Convent’s basement in Putnam, CT. Over the years, documents, records, photographs, various items were “dropped off” at the archives. Items were left in boxes or on shelves. There was flood damage a few years ago and, due to the damage to the K of L documents, space constraints, retirement of the former Archives Chair Fran Burmila, there was a need to organize and preserve the records. Norma Petkus, her husband K of L MCD President Michael Petkus traveled from Dayton, OH to Putnam, CT, where they and others packed up over 100 boxes of records. They were then loaded onto a truck and driven back to the Petkus residence, where for the next almost two years, the process of sorting and cataloging occurred. With the assistance of Mary Beth Slakis, C-112, Chicago, IL and a graduate student of Wright State University, the records were sorted, analyzed, categorized, discarded and prepared for the archival home.

Next, a location to house the K of L archives had to be identified. Several facilities were considered, but due to costs and access, a centrally located area deemed most appropriate. It was, therefore, determined to house the K of L Archives at the University of Dayton – US Catholic Special Collection as this area preserves the records of the Catholic Church and Catholic life in the US. The collection has official church documents, school text books, biographies and books and serials used or published by various Catholic immigrant groups. N. Petkus then outlined the types of documents that councils and districts should send to her for review prior to sending them to the K of L archives. She stressed the importance of dating and identifying all items, documents, records being submitted. Question and answers followed the informative presentation.

Mary Beth Slakis, president of the ancillary program, St. Casimir’s Guild, gave the annual report about the Guild’s past year’s activities and the support to the St. Casimir’s Pontifical Lithuanian College in Rome, Italy. During the last year, St. Casimir’s Guild received donations totaling \$6,835 .00. There were 253 Mass requests made. M. Slakis explained that the Mass requests can be made for special intentions, health, sympathy and “On your special day.” This card be used for birthdays and anniversaries. Currently the card is written in English, but a Lithuanian insert will be included. Over the past year, \$22,000.00 was given to the Lithuanian Pontifical College in Rome for operating expenses and Mass requests. This year’s proposed project is the renovation of seven (7) rooms (including private bathroom installation), corridor and purchase of furniture for the fourth floor of the College. Also, there is a need for replacement of a pump for the heating system on the fourth floor. The entire project cost \$42,000 US dollars.

Rev. Audrius Arštikaitis is the current Rector of the Pontifical Lithuanian College in Rome and the director of the Villa Lituanæ. He thanked the Knights for adopting the Pontifical Lithuanian College in Rome. The K of L organization has steadfastly and consistently supported the College’s various projects throughout the years. Rev. A. Arštikaitis informed the delegates of last year’s project of replacing the current diesel boiler to a gas fired boiler. This is due to the city of Rome’s newly issued regulations concerning city air pollution, which will no longer allow the use of the heating broiler to be fueled by diesel. The project was successfully completed. The second project was to renovate the facades of the Pontifical St. Casimir Lithuanian College from the Casamonferrato street side, the Piazza Asti street side and the sisters’ living apartments. The most damaged area is found on the facade of the Piazza Asti. This project was temporarily placed on a hold status due to other needed priorities.

Rev. Audrius Arštikaitis received two (2) checks for \$2,035 USD for Mass stipends and \$42,000 USD toward the needed renovations on the fourth floor of the College. On behalf of the estate of the late Robert S. Boris, H.M, K of L National President Regina Juška-Švoba, H. M., presented Rev. A. Arštikaitis

with a check for \$10,400 for the works at the Pontifical College. Rev. A. Arštikaitis thanked the K of L organization for its generosity and ongoing support. He extends his blessings upon the K of L members.

The second plenary session concluded with a prayer led by Rev. Msgr. Dr. J. Anderlonis.

After lunch, the third plenary session began with a prayer led by Rev. Msgr. Dr. J. Anderlonis. Elena Nakrosis, H.M. president of Our Lady of Šiluva Fund, one of the ancillary organizations of the K of L, gave a comprehensive update of the activities during the past year. The history of Our Lady of Šiluva continues to be promoted on the official website www.our-ladyofsiluva.com. The history has been translated in the Polish and Spanish languages to promote further dissemination about Our Lady of Šiluva. In closing, E. Nakrosis thanked every-

one for their continued support to the Our Lady of Šiluva fund.

Erin Petkus, C-96, the third vice-president (working with the junior/youth members), gave a summary of the junior K of L member’s activities. This year 6 Junior members attended the National Convention. The Junior Knights conducted a meeting. Later they had an excursion and traveled Ohio Caverns and enjoyed the petting zoo, horseback riding and exploring the area. Later the youth learned to bake traditional Lithuanian cookies angel wings (žagareliai) and mushrooms (grybukai). They will sell their baked goods and the profits resulting from the sales will be slated for the K of L organization.

After their presentation, each of the Juniors who attended and actively participated received a \$100 stipend from the K of L Foundation President Irene Ozalis, H. M.

Trustees Ellie Nakrosis, HM and Dave Boucher announced the bid for the 105th National Convention in 2018, will be hosted by C-1, Brockton, MA. The Boston-Dedham Hotel will serve as the home base for the meetings and special activities. The dates for the convention are August 03-August 05, 2018.

The 106th National Convention will be hosted by C-157, Lemont, IL. The Embassy Suites in Lombard, IL will serve as the home base for meetings and activities. The specific dates and hotel costs are pending. We are grateful to the councils that volunteered and offered to host the upcoming National conventions. As anyone who has run a convention, realizes the time, effort, energy that is put forth in making it a successful event. Elections of the new 2017-18 Supreme Council were held. Regina Juška-Švoba Honorary Member, Council 102, Detroit, MI was unanimously re-elected as president for a sixth-year term to lead the K of L organization.

Donations to various charities were collected during the con-



The Knights of Lithuania youth. Photo by Regina Juška Švoba

vention. A total of \$4,350.00 was received and will be distributed to: St. Casimir’s Guild, Scholarship fund, Our Lady of Šiluva (includes general fund and for the Shrine in Washington, D. C.), Knights of Lithuania general fund, K of L Foundation, Vytis-The Knight, Father Jutt Fund, and Juniors. In addition to the above donations, a donation from the estate of Robert S. Boris, HM was presented by National President Regina Juška-Švoba, H. M. in the amount of \$1,000.

The Financial Review Committee announced that there were six (6) requests for donations to the four (4) religious order congregations: Sisters of St. Casimir, Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Sisters of the Jesus Crucified, Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God; Lithuanian press “Draugas” and “Draugas News” and JBANC. A total of \$2,350.00 was allotted for the donations.

The formal sessions were concluded with a prayer by Rev. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis and the singing of the Vyčių hymn.

Banquet

After every K of L National Convention completes the working sessions and elects a new Supreme Council for the next year, a celebratory banquet is held. So, too, the 104th National Convention celebrated with a formal banquet. Approximately 90 delegates, guests, clergy and families participated. Prior to the banquet, the Supreme Council Elect, clergy and dignitaries gathered for a brief meet and greet.

The head table guests were presented: Rev. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis HM, Regina Juška-Švoba, H.M., National President; Rev. Johann Roten, University of Dayton; Honorary Member Committee Chair Frances Petkus, HM; Honorary member candidate Irene Svekla; and Alex Fletcher, 104th National Convention co-chair.

Council 96 convention committee member Anna Marie Berger, welcomed everyone to the K of L C 104th convention closing banquet. Knights of Lithuania National President Regina Juška-Švoba, H. M. thanked the distinguished guests, clergy, Knights and friends for their participation in the banquet. She thanked Alex Fletcher, Robert Petkus and the members of C-96, for doing an outstanding job in organizing the 104th National Convention. She encouraged everyone to continue to dedicate and fully participate in the various celebrations and activities on the K of L organization, as not many organizations with such longevity continue to be active and exist. We continue to exist because we are a multigenerational organization that has loyal, dedicated, committed and talented members. And let us never forget our roots and heritage. With that, she recited 20th century's preeminent Bernardas Brazdžionis's poem "Mano protėvių žemė" ("Land of My Ancestors").

Rev: Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis gave the invocation.

After a delicious banquet meal, K of L National President Regina Juška-Švoba, H. M announced the "Friend of Lithuania" recipient. Rev. Johann Roten is internationally recognized as a scholar and authority on Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ. For the last 15 years Rev. J. Roten headed the International Marian Research Institute/Marian Library at University of Dayton. He teaches and serves as director of research and special projects at the University of Dayton. Rev. J. Roten was the former director of the Ecole Normale des Instituteurs in Sion, Switzerland and assistant professor of social philosophy at the University of Frimbourg. He is an international speaker on theological anthropology, religious art and Marian Studies. Rev. J. Roten is multilingual – he is fluent in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek and other languages. He recently authored books: "The Mirror of Hope" (2012) and "God Still Comes – From the Manger to the Heart" (2015) He has lectures throughout the world, served on a Vatican appointed commission on Blessed Mother Mary and is a resource for dioceses around the world on a variety of topics including canonization and apparitions. In 1993 m., the then pastor of Holy Cross Church in Dayton, OH, Rev. Vaclovas Katariskis fell ill. A parishioner of Holy Cross parish approached the University of Dayton to inquire if there was someone who would be willing to assist the parish. Rev. J. Roten volunteered. He has assisted Holy Cross and the parishes of Old North Dayton since that time. When Rev. V. Katariskis passed away, Rev. Michael Holloran was appointed pastor of Holy Cross parish, and two years later, he was appointed pastor of the four parishes in Old North Dayton. Rev. Roten continues to assist with the Mass for all four parishes to maintain their own individual Masses. Rev. Roten participates in Lithuanian and C-96 events. His homilies at the annual St. Casimir's Mass and his homilies on Our Lady of Šiluva are inspirational and informative. He participates with the C-96 members for the annual Kūčios celebrations. He has been the celebrant of the traditional Lithuanian Christmas Midnight Mass and the Easter Resurrection Mass. Rev. J. Roten has hosted delegates

and members of C-96 and the Mid Central District weekends in Dayton with presentations on various religious and historical subjects. His presentations on how cultures throughout the world see the birth of Christ and how they express their faith in the form of Nativities (creches) are informative. Holy Cross Lithuanian Church, C-96 and the Dayton Lithuanian Community are indebted and most grateful to Rev. J. Roten for his time, efforts, energy, loyalty and support of the ethnic churches in Old North Dayton!

Rev. Johann Roten, humbly accepted the "Friend of Lithuania" award by thanking the K of L organization for this special award to him. He spoke of the wonderful people he has encountered at Holy Cross Lithuanian Church and members of the Knights of Lithuania, C-96. He has shared many fond and wonderful memories here. "It's all about the people," stated Rev. J. Roten. Honorary Member Committee chair Frances Petkus, HM was invited to present the new Honorary Member-Irene Svekla. Mrs. Svekla was honored and thanked her family, K of L and guests for being present when she was elevated to Honorary Membership status.

The official portion of the banquet program concluded with a benediction given by Rev. Johann Roten.

Musical entertainment for dancing continued.

Sunday, July 30, 2017

The closing Mass was celebrated at Holy Cross Church in Dayton, OH. The main celebrant was

K of L National Spiritual Advisor Rev. Dr. Msgr. Joseph Anderlonis. He was assisted by Rev. Tony Cutcher, Rev. Ethan Moore and Rev. Audrius Arštikaitis.

Prior to the celebration of the Mass, the fourth-degree candidates gave their oaths and received their 4th degree medal and certificates. The Supreme Council elect gave their oath of office. After the closing Mass, the official 104th National Convention photograph was taken outside on the stairs of Holy Cross Lithuanian Church. A farewell luncheon took place in the parish social hall. Rev. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Anderlonis, HM blessed the food. After the luncheon, delegates and friends bid their farewells to one another and wished each other safe travels to their homes or next destination.

The 2017 National Convention and sessions were productive and fruitful. It was good to see and nurture special friendships of members known for many years and establish new acquaintances and contacts. It was a special time of sharing and catching up. May this organization continue to live and work by our motto: For God and Country - Dievui ir Tėvynei! Valio Vyčiai, ilgiausią metų!

Our next and 105th convention will be hosted by C-1 Brockton, MI, president Marytė Bizinkauskas and co-chair Susan Trautman and council members. The convention will be held on August 03-05, 2018, at the Hilton Boston-Dedham in Dedham, MI. Mark your calendars and save these important dates! Hope to see everyone there!



Schuylkill Lithuanian Days

A Community Celebration Continues For More Than A Century

By Margaret Valinsky

Lt to Rt. Rima Adomaviciene, Cleveland, OH. Vendor, Margaret A Valinsky, Vice President of K of L Anthracite Council 144, Coordinator of vendors for Schuylkill Lithuanian Days.

Lithuanian Day began in Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania 103 years ago. Lithuanian priests together with representatives of various parochial and beneficial societies convened in Mahanoy City in 1914 and decided to unite at a gathering, enjoying friendships, singing songs of Lithuania and observing "ancient and honored customs". On August 15th, the mines were shut down for the holy day and miners would enjoy a day freed from the coal collieries tough and dirty jobs in the mines to relax with loved ones. All parishioners could meet with relatives and other regional Lithuanian immigrants from throughout the entire anthracite region. There have been at least 11 Lithuanian national parishes in the region over the years.

Lithuanian Day was first observed in Lakeside Park. It was scheduled at this location because of its proximity to the Lithuanian population and the ease of arrival at the park via the train. August 15th marked the designated holiday as Lithuanians could celebrate the Assumption of the Blessed Mother. The miners attended mass and traveled to the park with friends and

families. They carried homemade food, drinks, Žolinė bouquets with rūta, even musical instruments. Here, they picnicked, sang and danced to the Lithuanian folk music accompanied on accordions, and fiddles.

Back then holy Mass was the official opening ceremony, followed by a baseball game and contests. Lithuanian church choirs also competed. A program of songs and dances was added when the games were discontinued.

In 1926, the event moved to Lakewood Park near Barnesville. "Everyone, even the young ones, sang the lovely Lithuanian folksongs" as a reminder of the Lithuanian immigrants who carried their traditions to America. reminisced a woman for whom this had been a childhood memory. This gratitude and love of generations past prevailed in those who never miss the annual Lithuanian Day at the end of summer each year.

In 1958, Lithuanian Day was changed to the Sunday closest to August 15th.

After the US bicentennial celebration in 1976, a Lithua-



Gilliana Norkus Alber Baltia, Canton, MA, Vendor creative jewels with amber, coral & turquoise.

nian heritage bicentennial group regrouped to form the local Anthracite Council of Knights of Lithuania and continued planning the events for Lithuanian Day.

Over the years, it has made many adaptations with the closing of amusement parks which hosted the event: Lakeside Park, Lakewood Park, Rocky Glen in Moosic, PA, the Fairlane Village Mall and lately the Schuylkill Mall in Frackville, PA. But the generations maintained their Lithuanian identity.

With the Frackville Mall closing its doors in 2017, the event was moved to Annunciation Hall in Frackville, a Lithuanian par-



Thomas Sadauskas, Genealogist.

ish consolidated with the other churches in the town to become St. Joseph the Worker Parish. Because of these transitions, a picnic event attracting young and old changed to a different venue in an indoor building environment. But the crowd still came although not like the numbers of the past when 20,000 people were estimated to have attended the parks.

Over the years, many well-known dignitaries and celebrities attended Lithuanian Days, including Antanas Smetona, President of Lithuania, General Čemius of the Lithuanian Armed Forces, partisans Bishops Brizgys, Bučys of Lithuania, and Baltakis, Rūta Lee, Simas Kudirka and other guests, governors, senators, and judges.

Proceeds from Lithuanian Day have benefited many Lithuanian causes: Lithuanian seminarians, War Relief Fund, Lithuanian orphanages, and students' funding, Displaced Persons of Lithuania, the Ateitininkai, Defense of Lithuania, Lithuanian Sisters congregations and Lithuanian Catholic Religious Aid. This sharing tradition has continued as the Knights of Lithuania C-144 today donate monies from Lithuanian Day to educational and medical institutions, students and orphanages.

With freedom from communist rule, recent migrants from Lithuania to America of the past 20 years have made their presence known at Lithuanian Days with updated cultural heritage items for sale, language and food.

Visitors to the latest Lithuanian Days held at Frackville in August were introduced to kibinai (a lamb pocket native to Trakai), šakotis ("tree with many branches" due to its conical shape, like a pine tree with the drips as branches), and cepelinai (potato meat dumplings).

Schuylkill Lithuanian Days on August 12th & 13, 2017 have therefore, reaped the benefits of these third wave immigrants and Lithuanian independence. The two day event was highlighted by vendors who provided amber jewelry designed by unique styles and modern elements, tee shirts, Lithuanian wooden arts, margučiai decorated eggs, weavings, and foods particularly rye breads, sausages, dešros, kielbasa, cheeses, cakes, etc.

Musical presentations added an important dimension to this year's festivities. Local Gintaras Dancers under the direction of Joanne Filiciani and the Malūnas Dance Group from Baltimore whizzed across the stage in perfect precision to the folk music as they thrilled the audience with swirling national skirts in high stepping routines. Not only dancing, but also instrumental music was provided by Augis (Eugene Dicevičius), Lynne Cox and Steve Kline as roaming troubadours. A Lithuanian Sing-A-Long and folk tales were enacted with participation of audience

members under the direction of Paul and Karen Domalakes.

Crowning the musical agenda of Lithuanian Days was the beautiful voice of Simona Minns from Boston. Simona displayed her credentials as a jazz singer, composer, arranger and artistic director originally from Lithuania. She has merited degrees from The Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre and also holds a contemporary composition degree from Berkley College of Music of Boston, MA. Proficient in playing the kanklės, Simona accompanied herself on the kanklės while singing melodies and folk songs perhaps familiar to the early immigrants from Lithuania.

The kanklės, not heard of or seen very often in the PA anthracite area today, is a stringed instrument that rests on the player's lap and is plucked with the fingers or pick made of bone or quill. Dating back to ancient days, it was constructed from linden tree, ash tree, oak, maple or black alder and made by hollowing out a cavity. A thin sheet of softwood makes a sounding board that covers the body. Sound holes in the shape of flowers or stars allow sound to project outward. Strings made of wire are attached to a metal bar and strung across the narrowest part of the instrument.

Simona, highlighting the weekend musical venue, was wearing a traditional woven linen dress designed and sown by her mother in Lithuania.

Besides the vocal entertainment, scholarships were awarded to Lithuanian elementary students. The Color Guard PA National Guard and Partisans marched in procession, bringing weapons for display that were utilized during the dark days of the world wars. Krista Bard, Honorary Consul from Lithuania to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania visited the event. Travelers from many states including Texas, Maine, New York and New Jersey were impressed with the quality and enthusiasm of the day's events.

Through musical talent, books, amber jewelry, artistry, tasty drinks and delicacies, Lithuanian vendors from New Jersey, Michigan, Ohio, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Oregon, and Philadelphia contribute a shared global connection. Lithuanian pride once more bonded the assembly through a love of things Lithuanian as everyone browsed and sampled their wares. Festivities concluded with the singing of the Lithuanian National Anthem.

Planning will soon expand to next year's program, so mark your calendars for 2018 Lithuanian Days as the Knights of Lithuania C-144 continue to aggrandize beyond 103 years of celebration. The new friendly atmosphere makes everyone there proud to claim Lithuanian heritage.



Linus Lithuanian Food, LLC. Toms River NJ Lina & Andrius Stanioniene - Owner.



Antoinette Pancerella, Treasurer of K of L C-144 selling homemade desserts.

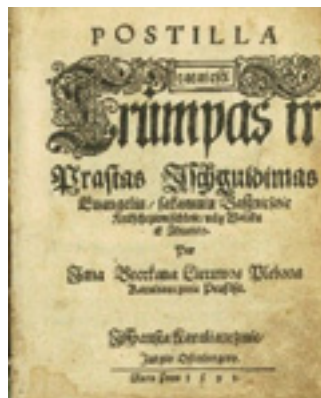
this month in history

October Anniversaries

655 years ago



On October 17, 1362, in the Battle of Blue Waters on the shores of the Synjucha River, the Grand Duke of Lithuania Algirdas and the army of Grand Duchy of Lithuania beat the Golden Horde. The victory finalized the conquest of the Principality of Kiev which became part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

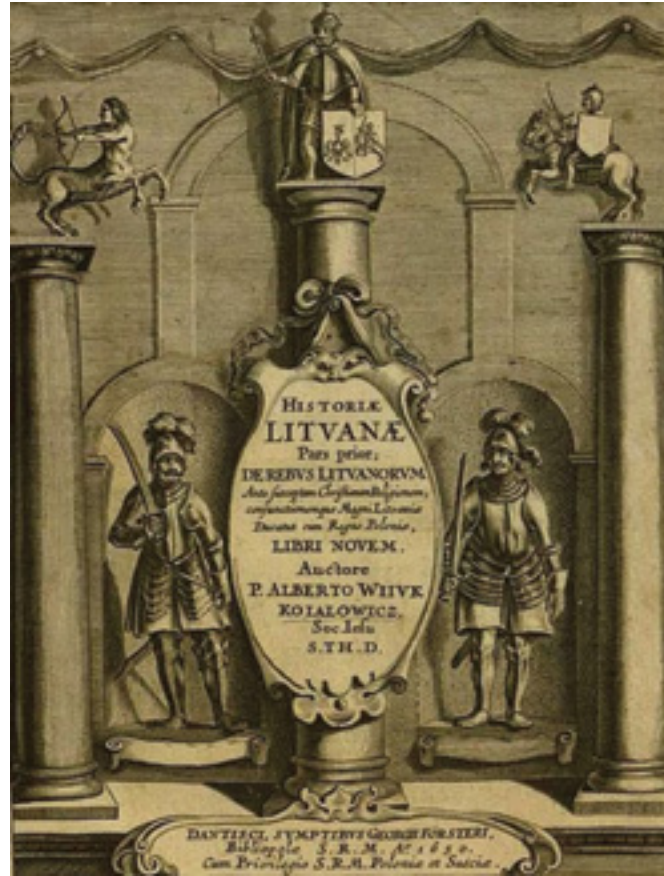


415 years ago

On October 1, 1602, Jonas Bretkūnas (Johann(es) Bretke) died Königsberg). He was a Lutheran pastor and one of the best known developers of the written Lithuanian language. He translated the Bible into Lithuanian, was the author of twelve Lithuanian books, and a historian as well. Jonas Bretkūnas was born in Prussia in 1536. His

mother tongues were Old Prussian and Lithuanian. In 1555, when Bretkūnas was nineteen years of age, he began studying theology at the University of Königsberg. In 1556, he transferred to Wittenberg University. During his studies, in 1562, he was appointed a Lutheran pastor at Labiau (now Polesk) by Duke Albert. In 1579, he started translating the handwritten Bible from German using Martin Luther's analog, and the translation took more than ten years to complete. In 1589, he published several new works, in particular "Giesmes duchaunos" (Spiritual Hymns), based on Martynas Mažvydas' works, as well as a small collection of hymns called "Kancionalas netukriu giesmiu", and a prayer book translation from German into Lithuanian "Kollectas", all printed by Georg Osterberg of Königsberg. On November 29, 1590, Bretkūnas finally completed his translation of the Bible (Old and New Testaments). It is the first surviving translation of the Bible into the Lithuanian language. In 1591, he finished the Postilla (Postilė), one of his best known works.

340 years ago



On October 6, 1677, historian, theologian and translator Albertas Viiūkas-Kojelavičius died in Warsaw. He was a devoted Jesuit and religious polemicist, interested in genealogy and heraldry. In 1653, Albertas Viiūkas-Kojelavičius became the rector of the Vilnius University. He was famous for his rhetoric talent and research in the Lithuanian history. He is considered one of the best and most productive historical writers of the 17th century. Among his forty publications, the most important is "Historiae Lituanæ", the first full research on the history of Lithuania.

135 years ago

On October 19, 1882 Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius, a Lithuanian writer, poet, novelist, playwright and philologist was born to a family of peasant farmers in the village of Subartonys in Dzūkija ethnographic region of Lithuania. In 1898, he became a student for the Roman Catholic priesthood at the Vilnius Semi-



this month in history

nary, but in 1900 he was expelled from the seminary. In 1904, he enrolled the University of Kiev. However, a year later, the university was temporarily closed due to the revolutionary conditions in the Russian Empire, and Krėvė-Mickevičius, unwilling to interrupt his studies, entered the University of Lviv, in Galicia, which was at the time part of the Austrian Empire, and in 1908, he received his doctorate in philology. That same year, the University of Kiev awarded him a gold medal for his thesis on the original home of the Indo-Europeans. In 1913, the University of Kiev awarded him the degree of Master of Comparative Linguistics for his dissertation on the origin of the names Buddha and Pratiġakabuddha.

In 1909, Krėvė-Mickevičius became a high school teacher in the city of Baku, Azerbaijan. Three years later he assisted in founding the People's University of Baku, and delivered lectures there. Lithuania achieved independence in 1918, and a year later, Krėvė-Mickevičius became Lithuanian Consul in Azerbaijan. In 1920, he returned to Lithuania, and settled in Kaunas, which at the time was the temporary capital. When the University of Lithuania was founded in 1922, Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius became professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures, and remained there as part of the faculty for the following two decades. On 24 June 1940, he was appointed as Prime Minister of Lithuania by acting President Justas Paleckis. After the start of the Nazi occupation of Lithuania in 1941, and the closing of higher educational institutions in 1943, Krėvė-Mickevičius went into hiding. Soviet forces reoccupied Lithuania in 1944, at which point he fled the country and settled in a displaced persons camp at Glasenbach, near Salzburg, Austria. There, he taught at the local camp's high school. In 1947, the

University of Pennsylvania extended an invitation to join its faculty. There, he served as an Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures until 1953, when he retired. On July 17, 1954, Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius died in Broomall, Pennsylvania, United States.

115 years ago

The Lithuanian Democratic Party was established on October 17, 1902 at count Zubov's manor in Dabikinė near Akmenė by activists publishing Varpas. In 1906, it adopted a political program prepared by Kazys Grinius, Jonas Vileišis, Povilas Višinskis, Juozas Bortkevičius and Jurgis Šaulys. The goals of the party were to seek autonomy status for ethnic Lithuania within the Russian Empire. The local governance would be delegated to parochial committees, which could collect taxes. The program supported education and cooperation, promoted participation in public life, and advocated national unity. The party supported wealthier farmers, therefore during the Great Seimas of Vilnius of 1905 it opposed land reform that would have confiscated land from large landlords and distributed it to small peasants. After the Seimas, LDP sponsored the formation of the Peasant Union, which initially was a branch of LDP. Some member of LDP founded the Lithuanian National Democratic Party headed by Jonas Basanavičius.

95 years ago

On October 2, 1922 Lithuanian currency litas was first introduced. The Lithuanian litas was the currency of Lithuania, until 1 January 2015, when it was replaced by the euro.



Lietuviškas sūris

(Lithuanian Cheese)

By Jana Sirusaitė-Motivans



My Močiutė Elena used to make Lietuviškas sūris, a cultured soft cheese, using a special pressing device my Senelis Jurgis made for her. He took two wooden boards and attached a hinge, and then found a heavy rock out in the fields. The soft fresh cheese would be wrapped in a cheesecloth, placed between the two boards, and weighed down with the rock. The whole set-up was placed in the bathtub. In my memory, it seems that every time we went to the farm, there was always cheese in the bathtub. Even though I grew up in the country, I am now firmly a city girl. Therefore, when I make cheese I use two plastic cutting boards weighed down with a Le Creuset pot!

My grandmother used to make cheese with fresh milk from the dairy farm next door. In Lithuania this cheese was usually made in the countryside with milk from the family cow.

Lithuanian immigrants to North America used to make this cheese at home using store-bought milk, however recently this has become more difficult as most milk is now ultra-pasteurized or UHT (ultra-high temperature) pasteurized. This type of pasteurization makes milk that is not suitable for culturing. The curds are soft and do not hold together well. Ideally, raw milk from a farmer would make the best cheese. Unfortunately, this is not a realistic option for most of us. I have had success in making cheese with grocery store milk that is simply pasteurized, not UHT. Use whole milk, read the label carefully, and look for the less expensive store brand.

The process is fairly simple. Heat the milk in a sturdy pot until it is just about to simmer. Pour in buttermilk, allow to rest for ten minutes, and the curds and whey will separate. The curds are then gently lifted out and drained in a cheese-cloth, and then pressed between two boards, producing a soft fresh cheese. This cheese is traditionally eaten with honey and cucumbers. The whey can be kept for smoothies and shakes for added vitamins, minerals and protein or can be used as a cooking liquid for potatoes, rice or grains, or as a soup base.

In Montreal, where we lived until recently, all the milk is ultra-pasteurized so I was unable to make cheese. However, I found an alternative method in Jeff Smith's 1990 cookbook *The Frugal Gourmet* on our Immigrant Ancestors. To prepare this cookbook, Mr. Smith travelled across America, meeting with ethnic communities and collecting recipes. For the Lithuanian section, he visited the parish of St. Casimir in Pittstown, Pennsylvania. There he obtained a recipe for making Lithuanian cheese that bypasses the milk and starts with a mixture of cottage cheese, farmer cheese and sour cream. I can attest to the fact that this version works beautifully and produces a very tasty cheese with minimal effort. For both methods, use whole milk dairy products and not low-fat. I recommend using plastic cutting boards. Wooden ones will warp or split from prolonged contact with moisture.

Lietuviškas sūris (Lithuanian Cheese)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 gallon whole milk
- 1/2 gallon buttermilk

Pour the milk into a sturdy pot, and heat slowly until it is just about to simmer. The temperature should be approximately 170° F. Slowly pour in the buttermilk and turn off the heat. Do not stir. When it starts to curdle, stir gently, then let sit for ten minutes for curds to form.

Set a cheese-cloth lined strainer over a bowl, and gently ladle the curds into it. Use a slotted utensil to transfer curds with the least amount of liquid. Scoop out as much as you can from the pot. Allow the curds to drain until most of the liquid has escaped. Tie up the corners of the cheese-cloth to make a bundle, and tie a string around it. Attach it to the sink faucet or a cabinet handle to elevate the cheese and allow further draining of the liquid. When the liquid stops dripping, place the bundle between two boards, and place a heavy object on top to press it down. Try to put it on a slight incline, for example on an overturned baking pan, to help the liquid flow away from the cheese. Press at least overnight, or longer, until the cheese is firm. Unwrap the cheese and let it air dry slightly before serving.

Alternative method

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound dry-curd cottage cheese or farmer cheese (I used two 7.5 ounce packages of Friendship farmer cheese)
- 2 pounds small-curd cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup sour cream

In a large bowl, combine all the ingredients and mix well. Drain in a colander lined with several layers of cheese-cloth. Tie up the corners of the cheese-cloth, and hang the bundle from a cabinet handle or the sink faucet, with a bowl underneath. When the dripping stops, place the cheesecloth bundle between two boards to press, at least overnight, possible longer, until the cheese is firm. Remove the cheesecloth, let the cheese air dry slightly before serving.



Security

...The Belarus news source Charter '97 reports that 4,000 railcars have been involved with the transport of Russian troops that are scheduled to participate in the Russian-Belarusian military exercise, Zapad-2017, September 14-20. Some military equipment on railcars has been located only 8 km from the Lithuanian border. Others have been located at the major rail junction at Asipovichy, also in Belarus. There is some concern on Belarus' part that once in-country the Russians may not leave.



...Under the "Vienna Document," NATO will send 3 observers to the Zapad-2017 exercises. Russia says that the maneuvers will involve 5,500 Russian and 7,200 Belarusian troops, about 70 aircraft, up to 250 tanks, 200 artillery and 10 ships. NATO believes the 100,000 troops will participate.

...Lithuania will send 2 observers to Zapad-2017: one will be in Belarus; the other will be at the Luga training ground in the Leningrad region of the Russian Federation.

...The U.S. European Command is rotating air policing over the Baltic in anticipation of Zapad-2017. Seven Air Force F-15C Eagles and 140 airmen out of RAF Lakenheath, UK will be based in Siauliai, Lithuania until the end of the year and replace four Poland's F-16s which have been providing cover. Two aircraft will be on duty 24/7 which means the crews live in their flight suits near the flight line.

...Six hundred US paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade from Germany will be in the Baltics.

...An additional six F-15Cs from Louisiana and Florida National Guard will conduct surveillance missions in support of NATO out of Keflavik, Iceland.

...Under the 1992 "Treaty on Open Skies," Russia is permitted to carry out unarmed observation flights over Latvia and Lithuania with

representatives of both countries controlling the use of observation equipment. It was scheduled for August 21-26.

...Lithuania is considering sending up to 30 special operation instructors to operate outside training bases in Iraq to aid the US in anti-terrorist activities.

...Lithuania's school year is being extended by 10 days to accommodate two new subjects: national security and defense and sexuality and family life education. The national security and defense program is being prepared jointly with the Defense Ministry and is being added as an optional course for senior high school students.

Business

...Lithuanian Evaldas Rimašauskas, accused of attempting to defraud Facebook of \$99 million and Google of \$23 million, was turned over to US authorities and held without bail in New York. He posed as an Asian computer hardware manufacturer and sent fraudulent invoices.

...Lithuania received the first shipment of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the US at the port of Klaipeda. The shale derived LNG was shipped from Cheniere Energy's Sabine Pass terminal in Louisiana and reduces the Baltic's dependence on Russia's Gazprom. Additional LNG is expected in Klaipeda via Spain's Natural Gas Fenosa in September. In response Russian President Vladimir Putin during a recent visit to Kaliningrad recommended that Belarus divert its oil shipments from Klaipeda to Russian ports in St. Petersburg and Ust Luga on the Gulf of Finland, east of Estonia. Russia can pressure Belarus via oil pricing and rail rates. Belarus processes Russian oil and makes up to 40% of Klaipeda's current loading volume. Both Russia and Belarus depend on oil revenue for government funds. Klaipeda has the advantage over the Gulf of Finland ports which can freeze during winter.



...Lithuania's inflation rate increased to 3.5% because of the expiration of a reduced VAT on heating fuels on June 1 and the increase of excise duty on alcohol and tobacco.

...Statistics Lithuania reports that in the 2nd Quarter of 2017 the unemployment rate was 7% (male was 8.6% and female was 5.4%) a reduction from 2nd Quarter of 2016 of 8%.

...Vilnius Airport reopened on schedule August 16 after a 35-day closure for enhancing the foundation, replacing old pavement, adding new drainage and rainwater collection piping and renovating the lighting control system. The work was accomplished by Latvia's A.C.B. and Lithuania's Autokausta for 18 million euros. During this downtime, approximately 3,100 flights were diverted to Kaunas Airport and express buses moved passengers the 100 km to Vilnius in about 90 minutes. The next renovation project at Vilnius will be to renovate the terminal.

...Lithuania is among the destinations of Northern Irelanders seeking medical treatment because of long wait times under the National Health Service. Some wait times exceed 5 years. The Health and Social Care Board has approved reimbursement for almost 300 patients for out of pocket treatment but not travel expenses. Most procedures are orthopedic but others include brain-related illnesses and kidney surgery. One Vilnius hospital offers a package deal of 6,000 pounds for hip replacement which includes travel, surgery and post-op care. One concern is how this program will fair under BREXIT.

...Thermo Fisher Scientific Baltics of Vilnius, a developer/producer of molecular products, has won a Shingo Prize for operational excellence and lean management given by the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at the Utah State University. Inaugurated in 2010, only 15 companies have won the award and Thermo Fisher Scientific Baltic is the first from the Central & Eastern European region. It joins the exclusive company of Boeing, GE, Johnson & Johnson, and Verizon. The award follows 4 years of internal improvement and documentation plus a 3-day onsite inspection by experts.

General

...The Lithuanian Interior Ministry desires to narrowly define those classified as public servants and reduce their numbers from 52,600 to 20,000. It wants to reclassify the others as contractors, who presumably would not have the benefits and protection of public servants. Public servants would perform public administration; others who perform service functions, e.g. internal administration and accountants would be reclassified as contractors.

...Audra Plepytė has been appointed Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations in NY. She has worked within the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1989 in various capacities including being Director of the European Union Department and Ambassador to Spain and Argentina.

...A Lithuanian man and a couple from Maidstone in Kent, south-eastern England, will be tried in Klaipeda Regional Court on trafficking and exploiting 30 Lithuanian men who worked a chicken operation in Kent.

...Using a blueprint of 19th-century plans found in the municipal archive of Vilnius archeologists from the Israel Antiquities Authority used ground penetrating radar to uncover two ritual baths of the Great Synagogue in Vilnius, site of the famous Strashun rabbinical library. Looted and burned by the Germans in 1941, the Soviets leveled the rubble in the 1950s to make room for a new school. The archeologists are collaborating with personnel from the Lithuanian Cultural Heritage Organization and Hartford University. They hope to erect a memorial to the vanished Jewish community which at one time comprised nearly half of the population of Vilnius.

...“Science” magazine published an article by 5 Lithuanian scientists from Vilnius University Life Science Center Institute of Biotechnology. This article describes enhanced aspects of the Type III CRISPR-Cas system which has been issued a US patent in conjunction with DuPont Pioneer. The further presentation will be made at the bi-annual “Life Sciences Baltic 2018” scheduled in Vilnius, September 26-27.

...Lithuanian, French and German authorities worked together to seize 600 Kg of cocaine in the port of Klaipeda. The shipment from Ecuador via Columbia and Hamburg was hidden in casting molds for plastic items and was addressed to a Lithuanian company owned by a Russian citizen.

...The CEO of the Lithuanian Post, Lina Mindrienė, was dismissed over weak money laundering prevention. Nigerian citizens going to school in Kaunas were able to withdraw 1.5 million euros with forged IDs. The Lithuanian Post has a license for electronic transfer of money as a Western Union agent. The investigation was undertaken by the Financial Crimes Investigation Service of the Ministry of the Interior and the Bank of Lithuania.

...Hooters of Vilnius has opened near Vilnius University. The Atlanta, GA restaurant chain has new franchisees: Lithuanian basketball stars Darius Songaila and Robertas Javtokas who plan to open Hooters in Latvia and Estonia. The wife of Darius, Gintarė Songailė, will be the General Manager and be in charge of marketing.

...This spring the Lithuanian Finance Minister handed over to Polish monks a former Franciscan monastery which had been rented to about 40 tenants. Some tenants had been asked to move by April 30. In August one of Vilnius' biggest bars-“7 Fridays” found monks and security guards inside and its locks changed. P.S.-Hooters is now open.

Lithuanian Alliance of America (LAA) Susivienijimas Lietuvių Amerikoje (SLA)

By Giedrė Stankūnas, SLA Vice President



From left: SLA archivist Aldona Marijošienė, SLA President Laima Mihailovich, and SLA Vice President Giedrė Stankūnas. Photo by Karilė Vaitkutė.

Founded in 1886, the Lithuanian Alliance of America, (LAA) is the oldest continuously operating Lithuanian organization in the world. It was founded by Lithuanian immigrants to provide economic assistance for newly arrived countrymen in the form of life insurance, health benefits, mortgages and loans. LAA was established by Dr. Jonas Šliūpas to preserve Lithuanian heritage and culture among the immigrants and to help them integrate into American society. Eastern Europe's turbulence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries displaced many Lithuanians from their homeland. This increased the necessity to safeguard language and culture, endow Lithuanian organizations to prosper, and advocate for an independent Lithuania.

SLA/LAA became a significant conduit for preservation and political activism establishing chapters across the United States. As a cultural hub, the organization attracted notable Lithuanian activists such as Jonas Basanavičius, Žemaitė, Martynas Yčas. In 1910, LAA acquired a four-story building in Manhattan which housed the main LAA offices as well as the publishing facility for



From left: SLA President Laima Mihailovich, Bridges editor Karilė Vaitkutė, SLA archivist Aldona Marijošienė, filmmaker Arvydas Reneckis, SLA photo archivist Aldona Guobužas, and SLA Vice President Giedrė Stankūnas. Photo by Vincentas Reneckis.

Tėvynė and other LAA publications. In 1930, there were 22,332 members in 332 lodges in 24 states. Some lodges acquired their own buildings which were used for meetings and cultural activities.

Launched in 1896, a weekly newspaper Tėvynė, was printed in SLA/LAA's headquarters and was intended to keep American Lithuanians abreast of pertinent information related to Lithuanian culture, politics, economics etc. In more recent publications the use of both Lithuanian and English languages are present. Original copies of Tėvynė are safeguarded, as are SLA/LAA insurance forms, member lists, medals, seals, accounting books, photos, correspondence between SLA/LAA's chapters. The library contains Lithuanian literature, dating from the late 1800's when Russian occupied Lithuania was banned from publishing in their native language. This encouraged SLA to print their own Lithuanian literature as well as collect material from other Lithuanian publishers in the U.S. and abroad.

Over the years SLA/LAA has reshaped itself according to its cultural needs. At one point, it transformed from a fraternal coalition to an insurance company, fiscally aiding those in need and investing capital into Lithuanian cultural activities. The organization bought property, built churches, created Lithuanian schools, supported students, orphans and the Lithuanian culture. As membership declined, the need for fraternal organization services decreased, and in 2012 the insurance portion of LAA was transferred to the Croatia Fraternal Union in Pittsburgh, PA. SLA/LAA was transformed into a Lithuanian fraternal organization which exists for the benefit of its members and the Lithuanian community.

In 2015, SLA/LAA established an art space to present art exhibits; it serves as a venue for lectures, book presentations and other cultural events. SLA/LAA, the oldest Lithuanian



Looking at the SLA archives. Photo by Karilė Vaitkutė.

organization, continues as a viable institution serving as a cultural, historic, archival, and information center to all who are interested in our Lithuanian heritage both past and present.

Today SLA's archives consist of back issues of Tėvynė, books and pamphlets printed in house and elsewhere, various periodicals, photos of SLA events and people associated with the organization. We are hopeful that Tėvynė will be able to be digitized in the near future. The bulk of our archives are the insurance documents which contain extensive personal genealogical information of those members who were insured by SLA from its inception. Eventually, when it is digitized, this information will be easily accessed. At present, information can only be retrieved manually if the date of death is available.



The SLA Art Gallery. Photo by Karilė Vaitkutė.

Summer Interns at the Lithuanian Research and Studies Center

By Dr. Indrė Antanaitis-Jacobs

The Lithuanian Research and Studies Center in Chicago was graced by the presence of two outstanding American Lithuanian college students who worked in the Center's archives as interns this summer – Marija Čyvaitė and Paulius Vitas – both of whom expressed satisfaction with their taste of handling various Lithuanian heritage records. Marija Čyvaitė will be starting her third year at The College of Wooster, a small Liberal Arts college in Ohio. She intends on graduating with a major in sociology, and minors in both mathematics and Russian Studies. Paulius Vitas is a double major in physics and philosophy and also is entering his junior year of undergraduate studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Marija's major assignment at the Center was cataloguing a part of the ALT archive – the Amerikos lietuvių taryba or Lithuanian American Council (LAC) archive. LAC is an umbrella organization that represents Americans of Lithuanian descent and the interests of the Lithuanian American organizational community. Marija reorganized and catalogued multiple drawers and boxes of LAC, and created an electronic record of the various photographs and documents which include records of meetings, finances, and various correspondence.

What Marija especially personally appreciated was coming across a few documents and pictures related to her grandfather, Vytautas Kamantas, who was the President of the PLB – the Pasaulio lietuvių bendruomenė or Lithuanian World Community (LWC) – for many years. "It has been so interesting to see and hold the documents that prove what an impact people like my grandfather and those who worked in organizations like LAC and LWC had on Lithuania regaining its freedom."

"I now have a new appreciation for the history of Lithuania and Lithuanian communities, especially here in Chicago. I find it perfect that I ended up interning here at the LRSC, as I plan to write my senior thesis on the formation of Lithuanian communities in Chicago, post WWII. I know I will be back in the future, to help in any way I can and to satisfy my growing desire to keep learning about the amazing and rich history of my beloved Lithuania."

Paulius's assignments were scanning old photographs of soldiers and displaced persons from the German DP camp archive, sifting through American newspapers from the 1990s and early 2000s for articles about Lithuania, and transcribing Dr. Augustine Idzelis's book *Insurrection: Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) in Kaunas June 1940 – June 1941* (for press).

"My most memorable experience was transcribing Dr. Idzelis's book. 1940 and 1941 are part of a period in which I am especially interested, and I had the opportunity to learn about



LRSC interns Marija Čyvaitė and Paulius Vitas.

figures on a spectrum from the historical "other"—e.g., SS-Brigadeführer Franz Walter Stahlecker and Colonel Kazys Škirpa—to people my father actually knew—e.g., Adolfas Damušis and Jonas Dainauskas. The connection to my own family gave the whole story a heightened sense of reality."

When asked what Paulius got out of the internship, he said "I was not working with documents in isolation, but also had contact with the other books and materials. Besides giving me concentrated lessons in certain points of 20th century Lithuanian life and experience with archival work, my time here increased my appreciation for my Lithuanian, Baltic, and ancient Indo-European heritage."

The Lithuanian Research and Studies Center is most thankful to the Lithuanian Foundation, Inc. who supported this internship. We are heartily gratified as well for the labors of enthusiastic American Lithuanian youth such as these two individuals in the preservation of our heritage records.

I Spent My Summer Learning Lithuanian

By Emi Milukas



Lithuanian BALSSI class 2017.

I was greeted with a familiar, cheerful "Labas", as my teacher Dalia walked into class on the first day. We were a class of five and all came from different backgrounds, ages and reasons for spending eight weeks of our summer learning Lithuanian. I was the youngest, entering my junior year at Indiana University and had learned about this summer workshop after doing some web-browsing to find out how I could get more involved with the Lithuanian community at IU. I am a second-generation Lithuanian born in America. As a child, I went to Lithuanian school on Saturdays, participated in Lithuanian Scouts and spent my summers at Camp Neringa, a Lithuanian cultural camp. Although I grew up surrounded by the Lithuanian language and culture, I was excited to take part in a program where I could approach learning Lithuanian in a collegiate environment. Not only could I strengthen my speaking abilities, but I could increase my knowledge of general language learning.

In addition to spending lots of time learning Lithuanian grammar and vocabulary, we spent just as much time learning about the country's culture, history and customs. This included pairing up with the other Baltic language classes because Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians have shared history. Every Wednesday, our classes would combine and watch a movie, either in Estonian or Lithuanian, and have a discussion afterwards. The discussions were eye-opening because I did not know a lot about Estonian history and it was fascinating to see how Baltic history intertwined.

I love to sing, especially in Lithuanian. Singing with Lithuanians is not so much about the quality of one's singing as it is about the sense of community and pure happiness when sing-

ing a tune. My favorite part of the week was when the Baltic language classes got together and sang songs in Estonian and Lithuanian. Some of my other favorite memories included searching the fields of Bloomington, IN for long and beautiful flowers to make vainikai (flower crowns), getting coffee and fruit snacks during our ten minute pertrauka (break), attending the Midsommer's Festival in Indianapolis and watching each country carry a torch to light the bonfire in celebration of midsummer, having revelations during class, and altogether being with such a great group of people.

I would recommend this class to everyone. I remember sitting and eating lunch with my Lithuanian class during the second week and we only spoke English together. By the fifth week, it warmed my heart seeing every single person in my class being able to speak and understand our professor Dalia speaking majorly in Lithuanian. The close community that Dalia and Liinaly (the Estonian instructor) fostered allowed for us to feel like we were at a home away from home. I was amazed that we could learn a year's worth of some of the oldest (and coolest) languages in one summer.

Iki pasimatymo!!



Emi Milukas is a junior and secondary-education math major at Indiana University. She is a scout leader at Atlanto Rajono Scout Camp and also works at Neringa, a Lithuanian cultural camp. Next summer, she plans to intern in Lithuania and will be there for the 100th anniversary of Lithuania's independence. Valio! Valio! Valio!

The Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI) offers intensive Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian language courses. BALSSI is sponsored by a consortium of ten American universities: University of California-Los Angeles; Harvard University; University of Illinois (Urbana and Chicago campuses); Indiana University; University of Iowa; University of Michigan; University of Texas; University of Washington-Seattle; and University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2003 and 2004, the UW hosted the tenth and eleventh BALSSI programs as well as the first two summer programs when the consortium was established. BALSSI is funded with support from the consortium universities as well as grants from the Social Science Research Council, the Estonian-American National Council, and the American Latvian Association. Every two or three summers BALSSI travels to another American university. 2018 BALSSI will be held at Indiana University Bloomington.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation
(All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)

1. Publication Title: **BRIDGES**
 2. Publication Number: **0017-1311**
 3. Filing Date: **SEPTEMBER 12, 2017**

4. Issue Frequency: **10 TIMES PER YEAR**
 5. Number of Issues Published Annually: **10**
 6. Annual Subscription Price: **\$30.00**

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®):
**LITHUANIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY, INC.
 43 BRYANT STREET
 NEW HAVEN, CT 06511-1831**

8. Complete Mailing Address of General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer):
**LITHUANIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY, INC.
 43 BRYANT STREET
 NEW HAVEN, CT 06511-1831**

9. Full Name and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):
 Publisher: **JUDAS HAZAUSKAS
 20 HILL STREET
 WETHERSFIELD, CT 06108**
 Editor: **KARLE VOITHUTE
 139 LINDEN WAY
 L-1001 S POND, CT 06480**
 Managing Editor: **N/A**

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)
 Full Name: **LITHUANIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY, INC.** Complete Mailing Address: **43 BRYANT STREET NEW HAVEN, CT 06511**
NO STOCKHOLDERS
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11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box None.
 Full Name: **NONE** Complete Mailing Address:

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)

13. Publication Title: **BRIDGES**
 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: **9/12/2017**

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:
 a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run): **717**
 b. Paid Distribution (By Mail, Outside the Mail, In-County Paid Subscriptions, Other Paid Distribution): **905**
 c. Paid Distribution Outside the Mail (Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS): **0**
 d. Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®): **4**
 e. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of b, c, d, and e): **909**
 f. Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3841: **0**
 g. Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3841: **0**
 h. Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®): **0**
 i. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means): **0**
 j. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of b, c, d, e, and f): **0**
 k. Total Distribution (Sum of e and j): **909**
 l. Copies not Distributed (See instructions to Publishers at page K2): **0**
 m. Total (Sum of k and l): **909**
 n. Percent Paid (Sum of e and j) (Line 10): **100%**
 o. Percent Free or Nominal Rate (Line 10) (Line 10): **100%**

16. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner:
 Signature: *[Signature]* Title: **PUBLISHER**
 Date: **9/12/2017**

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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

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: Info@balzekasmuseum.org or 773-582-6500

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

October 14
Concert and newest album presentation by Jurga Šeduikytė from Lithuania in Philadelphia, PA in the Lithuanian Music Hall.

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: Info@balzekasmuseum.org or 773-582-6500

NOVEMBER 2017

November 4
Lithuanian Foundation 55th Anniversary Gala
 Info: www.lithuanianfoundation.org

November 4, 5
The traditional Lithuanian Fair at the Lithuanian Music Hall, 2715 East Allegheny Avenue, Philadelphia, PA. 19134.
 There will be Lithuanian folk dancing, songs, food, beer and various Lithuanian goods for purchase.

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

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

DECEMBER 2017

December 2
Lithuanian Christmas Ornament Workshop
 Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
 Info: 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

FEBRUARY 2018

February 8,9,10, 2018
Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla will conduct Philadelphia Orchestra performances at Kimmel Center.

February 23 - March 5, 2018

Lithuanian Athletic Union of North America organizes its snow ski and winter trip in Aspen Mountain Resort, Aspen, Colorado.
 Info: Ed Mickus at edmickus1@aol.com or Dr. Vytas Saulis at vsaulis@sbcglobal.net

February 28
The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society presents pianist Ieva Jokubavičiūtė at the American Philosophical Society.

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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VOLUME 41 ISSUE 8

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