

# bridges



LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

\$5

November/December 2017



Dear Bridges readers, Lithuanian-American Community Members and Friends,

Here it comes, a very special Christmas time redolent of cinnamon and gingerbread and illuminated with colorful Christmas lights and joyful Christmas songs. Here comes this long-awaited time for all our family members to gather around Christmas table and to spend magical, cozy, and merry Christmas days together. On the other hand, traditional Lithuanian Christmas starts with the Advent marked with deep thoughts and abstention from joy, parties, and other life pleasures. It is the time when we should think through the ending year, evaluate it, and prepare Lithuanian-American Community for the new challenges and projects.

2018 will be a challenging year for all of us who are linked to Lithuania or Lithuanian culture. Many of our community members will go to Lithuania to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Lithuania's Independence with friends from all over the world. Let us think why Lithuanian heritage is so important to us. How could we help this young democracy on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean? Are we good ambassadors of our beloved Lithuania?

I wish you a very nice and meaningful Advent time, a joyful Christmas morning and a really good 2018 which would make your biggest and most secret wishes come true! We hope you would consider Bridges to be a good Christmas gift for your loved ones and subscribe to this unique magazine.

**Sigita ŠIMKUVIENĖ**

President of the Lithuanian-American Community



**LITHUANIAN  
-AMERICAN  
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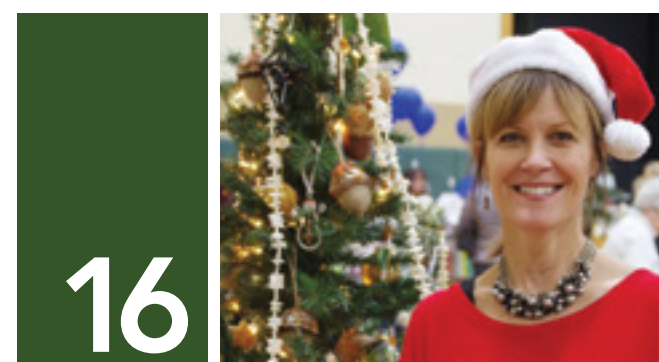
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from the editor

Dear Reader,

# Merry Christmas!

Sugar and spice and everything nice...  
And I hope you'll get Bridges subscription  
for Christmas!



I thank you for reading Bridges and I truly hope that you enjoyed your ten issues of the magazine this year.

2017 was a very busy year, and 2018 will be a very exciting year as we will be celebrating 100th Anniversary of Lithuania's Independence!

I hope that next year we will all share our stories and the stories of our parents and grandparents, especially the ones that relate to Lithuanian Americans helping Lithuania in its efforts of proclaiming its independence, fighting for it, and strengthening independent Lithuania in many different ways.

Karilė Vaitkutė  
Editor

# bridges

Vol. 41 No. 9 / November/December 2017  
Bridges is the English-language publication of the  
**Lithuanian-American Community, Inc.**  
lithuanian-american.org/bridges

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

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BRIDGES (ISSN: 87508028) is published 10 times per year (Jul/Aug and Nov/Dec 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. 9. 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.



## My Grandfather's Gift

By Aldas Kriaučiūnas

One night in June 1944, my grandfather Mykolas went outside of the school building within which he lived. He and his wife, Rozalija, were teachers in the village of Gustonys, about 10 km. west of Panevezys in north-central Lithuania. As teachers, they were allowed to live in the second story of the two-story school house. My grandfather had a shovel in his hand. It was quite dark at that time of night. Perhaps a dog barked somewhere off in the distance. He did not have a lantern with him. The light from the school house and the moon gave him enough light for his task.

He took about 15 steps from the building and went through a hedge. The hedge stretched parallel to the school house from some woods almost to the road. He was standing in his orchard, trying to decide where to dig. Perhaps he had already selected the location earlier in the day when it was light outside. Under cover of night, he began to dig. Perhaps he heard gunfire in the distance as well. At that time, the Soviet army was already in Lithuania and was pushing back the German army. Many knew what awaited Lithuanians once the Soviets came. They would complete the deportations that had started on June 14, 1941. My



Viktoras, Romas, and Aldas (Author) digging for dishes.

grandparents and their three children were on the list of people to be deported. They had been lucky in June 1941. A person who had helped type up the list had seen my grandparents' names on the list and had warned them. Maybe that kindly stranger's children attended the school. My grandparents knew that their lives would be at risk if they stayed.

As my grandfather dug, he probably did not have much time. The wagon and horses needed to be prepared for the trip. Where would they go? I don't think even he knew. However, he did know that they could not take everything with them. There would be five people travelling, along with clothing and food supplies. Being a teacher and poet, maybe he would take a few books. But the trip would be rough on everyone and certainly on any items they took along. However, they could not leave many valuables in the building. An empty building would be entered by Soviet troops who would either take or break things. That is probably what my grandfather thought as he kept digging the hole. He dug for 30-40 minutes in the cool June night. The hole was about a meter in diameter and about 1.5 meters deep. At last he was done digging.

It was time to bury his valuable items that could not be taken on the trip. But what valuables could a teacher have? Primarily, they were dishes. Some were glass dishes. They included herring plates, yellow cookie dishes, and butter dishes. He also put in Bohemian china – dinners plates, cups and saucers, sugar and cream bowls, tea and coffee pots with scenes of pyramids and palm trees, and various wine glasses. In some of the items, he put in hay as packing material to reduce breakage and to

keep the mud out. He would be back in several months – perhaps a year – and would reclaim his property. As he covered the dishes, he put a ceramic tile on top to both mark the area and to provide protection. He finished covering up the hole and spread the dirt out evenly. Few people would come through here and look under the bushes. Once it rained, the digging would not be visible. The family's dishes were safe.

Within a day or two, my grandparents and their three children joined other families and began their journey westward. They crossed Lithuania and near Tilze, they entered eastern Prussia. At this time, my grandfather was taken by the German army for two weeks of manual labor. While he was away, the Soviet front moved forward. My grandmother debated – should she move or stay until her husband returned. It was an agonizing decision. In the end, she decided to move with the others further west ahead of the approaching Soviet army.

My grandfather never re-united with his family. He searched for them for months, not knowing if they had gone west or had gone back to Lithuania. In the end, he returned back to Lithuania while his wife and three children emigrated to the U.S. In Lithuania he settled in another town in north-central Lithuania. He told a few relatives about the dishes, but at this point, there was no way to retrieve them. In all likelihood, any-



The initial edge of the pile of dishes.

one caught digging near the school would be arrested and sent to jail. At this point, he wasn't even 100% sure if the dishes were still where he had buried them. My grandfather died in 1975 in Lithuania.

This story would remain speculative, except for the fact that Lithuania re-declared her independence in March 1990. In that same year, I visited the school for the first time, oblivious to the story about the dishes. From 1993 to 1999, I worked and lived in Lithuania. Along with my father, we provided support to the school through Christmas presents and funding of an annual field-trip to a historic place in Lithuania. While I lived in Lithuania, my parents would come visit on occasion. During one such visit, my father told me about the dishes. He even drew a crude map of the approximate location on a scrap piece of paper, saying "I want someone to have this information".

In 1999, I moved with my family back to the U.S. for my doctoral studies in business. Since my wife is from Lithuania, we would visit Lithuania every summer. For several summers, I thought of going to look for the dishes, but decided to wait. In June of 2005, I decided it was time to determine if the story about the dishes was true. I asked my brother-in-law Romas and a good friend of mine, Algis, to help out. Both were good natured about the idea and willing to come along and dig. Our wives were highly skeptical, but stopped short of telling us not to go. So, with packed sandwiches and shovels, we set out from Vilnius in Algis' jeep to Gustonys. Algis was also able to borrow a metal detector which would help us find the dishes if there were any additional metal items buried, such as pots and pans.

It was a beautiful June day – sunny with expected temperatures in the high 70s. We arrived at the school house around 9 AM. I went to the current teacher's house, which was about 50 meters from the schoolhouse. I had first met her in 1990 and she had become a good family friend during the ensuing years. As is common in Lithuania, she had some coffee and breakfast all set out for us. We chatted for a bit and then went to work. The teacher, Aldona, joined us initially out of interest and to help us. The first problem was that the hedge next to which my grandfather buried the dishes was gone. That would make our task much harder. A second major problem was that a few years earlier, the village had installed underground sewer pipes next to the school. As such, the dishes could easily have been smashed by the excavators and bulldozers. Aldona did not have much hope that we would find anything. However, she was able to show us where the hedge had been since

when she had moved to the village 30 years before, the hedge had still been in place.

Before digging, we decided to use the metal detector. This was a high-risk, high-reward approach. The risk was that there may not be any metal at all with the dishes. The reward was that we may save ourselves a lot of digging if we do find metal. We spent close to an hour with the metal detector. First, Algis used it and then Romas used it. It proved to be fruitless. Although it was useful for finding large metal pieces close to the surface, it couldn't even detect a set of keys thrown on the grass. At that point, we shifted to Plan B.

Plan B was, of course, to dig for the dishes. It was our plan all along. Although I had been to the school many times before, during this particular trip, the building seemed much bigger than I remembered it. The orchard was also quite large. However, the clues regarding the hedge gave us an approximate place to dig. In addition, my grandfather Mykolas probably did not bury the dishes very deep. On that side of the school, there was only one window from which my father could have seen my grandfather bury the dishes. So, we approximated an angle from the window of what my father may have seen that night. For the digging, we decided to dig trenches of about 4 feet wide and 20 feet long. Our logic was that if the dishes were not fully contained within the trench, at least some edge of the dishes would be. The harder part was to decide how deep we should dig. We decided on a depth of about 2.5 feet thinking that should be enough to find something, if there was anything to be found.



Close-up of the dishes.

Algis volunteered to be our foreman, as back problems prevented him from doing any actual digging. He also called up a mutual friend to see if he “wanted to hunt for buried treasure”. Although the friend, who lives in Panevezys, is usually away on weekends, this time he happened to be around. We explained our location and he arrived within an hour. As is customary among Lithuanians, he asked where the beer was. We had not gotten any, so he and Algis went to a local store for some Lithuanian beer. When they returned, Algis and our new arrival Viktoras chatted. It then became clear to me that Viktoras thought this was more of a joke. However, I did convince him to help dig and he did so with great energy.

The digging went slowly. On occasion, Romas or Viktoras would comment that the earth appeared disturbed based on mixed layers of soil and sand, indicating someone had done some digging. However, trench after trench revealed only odd bits of china and the top of a very large green bottle. Were these just pieces of trash thrown out 50 or more years ago? Or perhaps the digging for the underground sewage system had left only these small pieces. After two trenches were dug (and filled back in), Viktoras raised the idea of just hiring the locals to do the digging. From a cost-benefit analysis, it really made a lot of sense. For about \$1.50/hour per person, we could have gotten 10 men from the village to dig. The problem would be that if we did find something, how would they react. Would they want part of it? Additionally, I did not want strangers participating in what was a personal quest. The three people who were with me I had known for 15 years. I had met Algis and Viktoras in October 1989 – my second month in Lithuania. I met Romas in June 1990, when his sister (my now wife) and I visited his house. They were digging not because they wanted something. In fact, they weren’t digging because they actually thought something was there. As they later commented, in their hearts, they felt the odds were 10:1 against finding anything. They were there since they were friends and I had asked them to come there.

After three trenches had been dug, the teacher Aldona invited us for lunch. We had eaten all of the sandwiches we had brought, so some additional food and a soft chair would be a welcome break. She felt rather bad for us, given all of our work. I don’t recall what we ate, but it was good, since Lithuanian food is always good. Her sister and son were also visiting that day. Her sister was making strawberry jam and the house did smell wonderful. After the lunch, I would have welcomed a nap. However, we chose to go back to the digging.

Around this time a local man in his 60s or 70s came up to see what we were doing. His first comment was “You’re looking for the gold in the wrong place”. He indicated that his mother had visited the former teacher some years before in Chicago. The former teacher, Rozalija, had indicated that some valuables were hidden elsewhere by the school. I may have introduced myself as Rozalija’s grandson. If I did, he either did not believe me or was not terribly impressed. We returned to our work and he, sensing we were not terribly chatty, went on his way.



More of the dirt removed – getting a better idea of our find.

Around 3 PM, we were working on the fifth trench. At that time I decided to call up my father in Michigan. My friend (and foreman) Algis, had a very handy cell phone that I used. I had wanted to call much earlier to get more details from my dad, but with the seven hour time difference, I decided to wait. I figured that I would not get much useful information from my dad had I called at 4 AM. In fact, the most likely piece of information at that time would be “Do you know you’re calling at 4 AM?”. However, at 8 AM, my dad was quite enthused with our project. I then asked him what he recalled seeing that night in June 1944. My father replied “Oh, I didn’t see anything. What I know is what your grandmother told me many years later.” Oh. I then asked if he thought it would be buried closer to the road or farther. He indicated that farther would be more likely, so that no one would see him.

At 3:30 I told my friends that we would dig for another half-hour and then wrap things up? Why 30 more minutes? Well, that would allow us to finish work by 4:30 and be back home in time for dinner at 6:30 PM. About 15 minutes later, I unearthed a white porcelain sugar bowl. What was exciting was that unlike everything else we had found that day, this particular piece was intact. I felt that this indeed was something that had been buried 60+ years earlier. However, I was disappointed since there were no other dishes nearby. Given that this edge of the trench was approaching the area where the sewage line was placed, I speculated that the rest of the dishes had been destroyed.

At 3:50 PM, my shovel made a ‘tink’ sound. Thinking I had hit a rock, I went at the earth with my shovel and heard the sound again. I stopped and laid down my shovel. With my gloved hand, I started clearing dirt from the area I was digging. Within a few

seconds, I saw that it was the edge of some type of plate. As my friends gathered around, we cleared the earth more and it was clear we had found what appeared to be a stack of plates. What my grandfather had buried in June 1944, I, his grandson, had found in July 2005.

We began to clear more and more of the dirt away. One difficulty was that we really did not know how many items might be buried here. Over the course of the next hour, we dug more and more of the earth away. We ended up digging a big circle around the pile, so that as the earth fell off the dishes, it would not be in the way. We also found a 1940s ceramic tile marking the top of the pile. The teacher Aldona was amazed that we had found the dishes. We were right at the edge of where the sanitation work had taken place. Also, the dishes were not that deep, so for them to last 60+ years was a minor miracle.

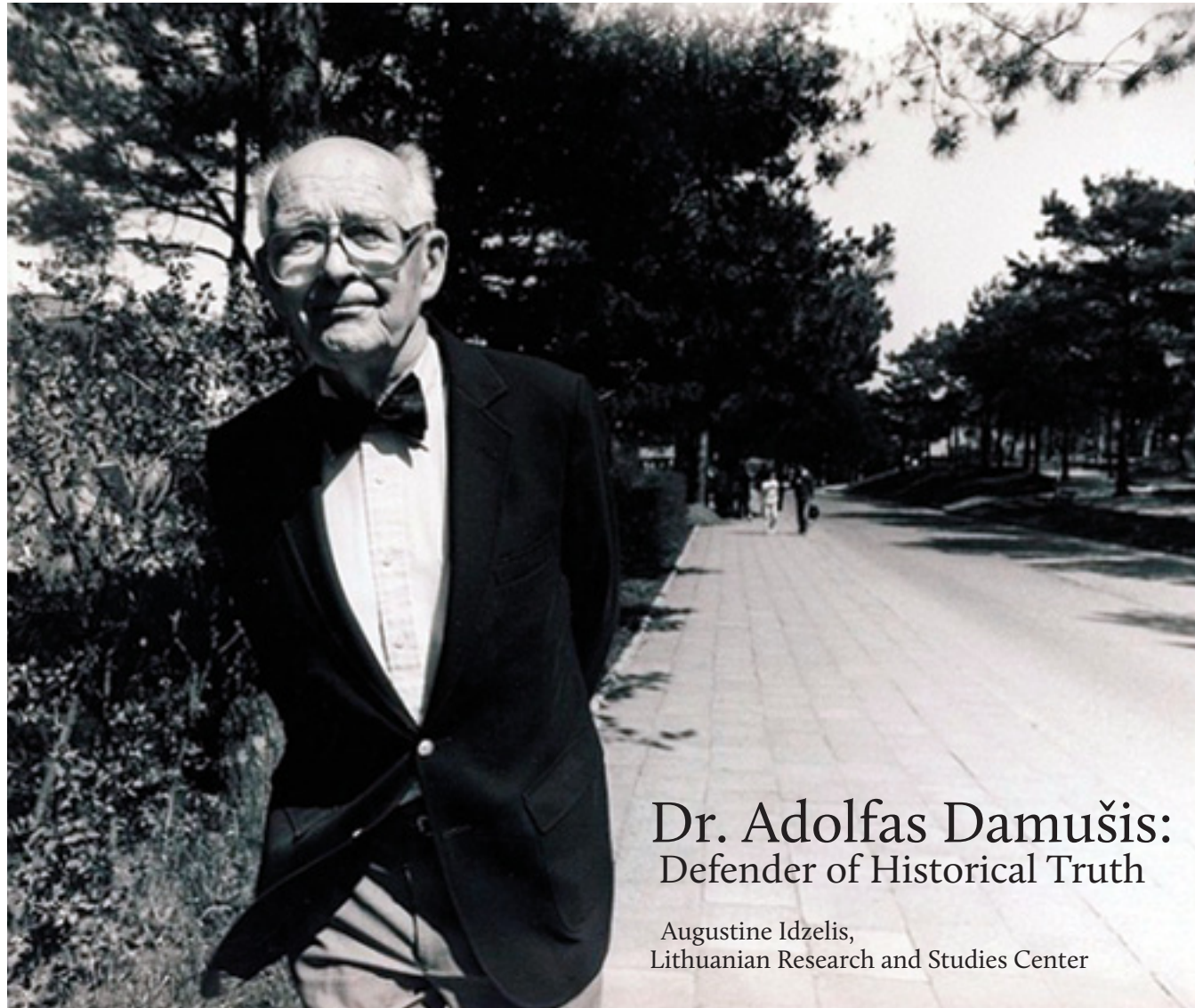
As the euphoria subsided, the question arose – what should we do with the dishes? We had not brought any boxes or newspapers or anything in which to place the dishes. That clearly betrayed our expectation that we would not find anything. The teacher Aldona provided what she had for packing materials. As we unearthed more and more items, we handed them to Algis who tried to systematize things. The items were either glass or porcelain. Many of the glass items had broken, especially those made of thinner glass, such as wine glasses and fruit juice glasses. Pretty much all the shot glasses had stayed intact, as

had two decanters, butter dishes, and cookie plates. The clay and ceramic items were much more intact. There was a serving set for 16 people, including cups, saucers and plates. There was a large bowl and cover (perhaps for cepelinai) and a very large serving dish. The serving dish was at the very bottom of the pile and created a foundation for many of the pieces. Also, my grandfather had placed various glass items in the large bowl with the hope that keeping them covered would ensure that they would last. Certainly, it did provide protection. The plates were practically ‘glued’ together with the mud. We decided to not try to separate them, but rather took various piles caked in dirt. We stayed there until about 7 PM, packing everything in Algis’ jeep and filling in the last ditch.

I subsequently spent many an hour soaking the items in water to clean off the mud. As the plates came apart, many were broken into many pieces. Over several years, I cleaned the dishes (or parts thereof) and glued them back together. I was also able to bring some of the smaller items to the U.S., such as shot glasses and egg holders. My father recognized the egg holders, but not the glasses. In the fall of 2005, my brothers, father and I met in northern Michigan where we brought four of the shot glasses – dark amber glass with a twisted shape. We used the glasses again and raised a toast to the man who had buried them on a dark June night so many years before.



Getting the dish ready for transportation.



## Dr. Adolfas Damušis: Defender of Historical Truth

Augustine Idzelis,  
Lithuanian Research and Studies Center

Adolfas Damušis

After being freed from Nazi prison by the U.S. Army, Dr. Adolfas Damušis remained in Germany until 1947 when he and his family came to the United States. He lived in Cleveland, Ohio until 1957 when he moved to Detroit. Here he was instrumental in developing Dainava, a youth camp not far from Ann Arbor. Dainava soon became the premier venue for leadership training and education of Lithuanian-American youth. Several generations of Lithuanian community leaders are alumni of Dainava. In 1997, Adolfas Damušis and his wife returned to Lithuania where he lived until 2003. He is buried in Petrašiūnai cemetery.

Although Adolfas Damušis was active in work with Lithuanian youth, Ateitininkai, and other organizations, he never forgot his participation in the 1941 Insurrection and work of the Provisional Government. As a participant and witness, Damušis was interested in the way these events were portrayed by historians. He became a defender of historical truth.

In 2009 a large number of articles by Adolfas Damušis were collected and published (Ilona Strumickienė, *Žvilgsnis nukreiptas į idealų aukštumas: Adolfo Damušio tekstai*, Vilnius, 2009). About one-third of the book contains articles dealing with LAF, the 1941 Insurrection,

and the Provisional Government. Historian Linas Venclauskas in his forward questions the objectivity of the accounts written by Damušis: "Having read the articles by Damušis on these topics, it can be stated that the author exhibits a one-sided view of events. In texts dealing with the insurrection, there is a lack of criticism, an avoidance of 'sharp edges' and questions which are still being raised." Venclauskas concludes: "in contemporary historiography, there has taken root a different assessment of the 1941 Insurrection, the LAF and work of the Provisional Government" (*Žvilgsnis*, p. 20).

The "contemporary historiography" referred to by Venclauskas has its origins in Soviet historiography which viewed the LAF as a neo-fascist organization and a tool of the Nazis. The Provisional Government was portrayed as an active collaborator of Berlin in the persecution and murder of Soviet citizens while trying to restore the bourgeois system. After the demise of the Soviet Union, a number of Soviet historians modified their interpretation of events of 1941. The murder of Soviet citizens was now articulated in terms of anti-Semitism and murder of Jews. One such historian was Solomonas Atamukas. In 2001 he wrote that the Provisional Government "implemented anti-Jewish legislation which hastened the destruction of Lithuanian Jewry. On June 30, the Provisional Government approved the formation of a concentration camp. All Jews in Kaunas were ordered to leave their residences and move to the new location. All had to wear yellow stars. Their property was confiscated, if not looted first. Their Lithuanian citizenship was revoked" (*Lituanus*, No. 4, 2001, p. 24).

Solomonas Atamukas was not just a Soviet historian. He was a prominent advocate and teacher of Marxism-Leninism. He joined the illegal Lithuanian Communist Party in 1937. During the first Soviet occupation, he performed "party work" in Kaunas. During his tenure in Kaunas, the Soviet class cleansing campaign began. The mass arrest and deportation of class enemies in Kaunas began on June 14. They were under the direction of Danielius Todesas, a NKGB officer who was a colleague of Atamukas. In his June 19 report to P. Gladkov, head of the NKGB in Lithuania, Todesas points out that instead of arresting the planned 1,371 persons, the actual number of arrestees was 1,965. The larger number was due to the fact that the original list ignored the "multiplicity of children" found among the proscribed families. (United States Congress, Report of the Select Committee to Investigate Communist Aggression and the Forced Incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR, Washington,

1954, p. 524).

The anti-Semitic characterization of LAF and the Provisional Government advanced by Atamukas has been repeated by historians from the post-Soviet generation. In 2006 historians Christoph Dieckmann and Saulius Sužiedėlis in their report to the International Commission for Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation stated: "The anti-Semitic attitudes of the LAF and PG are well known . . . The most comprehensive expression of the PG's official anti-Semitism was the draft of the Situation of the Jews of 1 August 1941." The International Commission accepted the conclusions of Dieckmann and Sužiedėlis and added: "The PG, which claimed to speak on behalf of the nation and more than once insisted on its own moral authority, did not publicly disassociate itself from the murder of Lithuania's Jewish citizens" (C. Dieckmann and S. Sužiedėlis, *The Persecution and Mass Murder of Lithuanian Jews during the Summer and Fall of 1941*, Vilnius, 2006, pp. 176; 280).

Anti-LAF and anti-Provisional Government attitudes resurfaced with great fury in 2012 when the Lithuanian government agreed to rebury in Kaunas the ashes of Juozas Ambrazevičius, The acting Prime Minister had died in 1974 in the United States. Thirty-six liberal intellectuals and historians signed a public statement condemning the act. The language of their protest mirrored the conclusions of the International Commission: "The Provisional Government was unquestionably inspired and headed by the Lithuanian Activist Front, whose anti-Semitic and authoritarian program is well-documented. The Government's rhetoric, actions, and cooperation with German authorities, inescapably compromise its legitimacy and moral status. As Acting Prime Minister, Juozas Ambrazevičius-Brazaitis cannot avoid responsibility for its activities. Documents of the time show that the Provisional Government led by Ambrazevičius-Brazaitis did not distance itself from the pro-Nazi policies actively supported by Kazys Škirpa's Lithuanian Activist Front. Moreover, the Provisional

Government declared its willingness to contribute to the organization of Europe on 'New Foundations' as formulated by Nazi Germany" (<https://www.economist.com/blogs/eastern-approaches/2012/06>).

Adolfas Damušis categorically rejected the Soviet characterization of LAF and the Provisional Government as well as its subsequent permutations. In 1970 Soviet historian A. Rakunas published a monograph which described the LAF as Hitler's fifth column, its members as a band of killers, and the Provisional Government as an entity which promulgated "racist laws." In his 1973 review of the book, Damušis notes that Rakunas wanted to create the impression that the Provisional Government helped the Germans persecuted Jews. Damušis denies this allegation and states that future historians will have quite a few facts to confirm his denial. (*Žvilgsnis*, p. 195).

In 1981 the U.S. Department of Justice began denaturalization proceedings against Kazys Palčiauskas. The gravamen of the government's case was the allegation that Palčiauskas failed to disclose in his immigration papers the fact that he was the mayor of Kaunas in 1941 and that "in this capacity, he ordered the interment of the 20,000 Jews of Kaunas in the ghetto and promulgated orders confiscating their property and requiring them to wear the Star of David" (Allan A. Ryan, *Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*, 1984, pp. 358-359).

Damušis was one of the first leaders of the Lithuanian American community to defend Palčiauskas. According to Damušis, the case against Palčiauskas was orchestrated by Moscow. In his opinion, the case was not only against Palčiauskas, but against the 1941 Insurrection and the Provisional Government. In his 1982 *Draugas* article, Damušis explicitly rejected the accusations against Palčiauskas: "Members of the Provisional Government as well as officials such as Kazys Palčiauskas who were appointed by it, sought ways to mitigate the transfer of Jews into the ghetto and accordingly, after consulting with the Jewish community, made demarches to the German

military leadership to stop the annihilation of Jews” (Žvilgsnis, pp.345; 347).

In 2000, three years before his death, the veteran resistance fighter and survivor of Nazi death camps made his final pronouncement on the issue: “I feel a duty to react to false claims, to wit, that the Provisional Government allegedly promoted terror by the Nazis and their collaborators against the Jews. Anti-Semitic attitudes were and still are foreign not only to me but were also completely incompatible with the thinking and behavior of members of the Provisional Government. . . . I clearly can assert that the Provisional Government and participants of the insurrection wholeheartedly sought the restoration of an independent Lithuanian state and did not want to destroy the Jews or appease Hitler” (Žvilgsnis, pp. 273-274).

Historians critical of LAF and Provisional Government place great weight on material produced by LAF in Berlin and certain documents of the Provisional Government. Although Adolfo Damušis was not a historian but a participant in events assessed by critics, his insight on the significance of documents, and particularly on the Statutes of the Situation of the Jews, is especially noteworthy. According to Damušis, the importance of a document is not necessarily connected with its text: “Documents serve as a means by which it was sought to achieve a certain goal and the purpose of the goal is not set forth (in the text). This can be only ascertained by compiling information on the drafters of the document and their objectives” (Žvilgsnis, p. 275). Damušis in his writings did not present details supporting his conclusions, nor the circumstances behind the drafting of the Statutes. Nevertheless, an examination of accounts by other participants and witnesses support the conclusions Damušis reached.

The genesis of the Statutes on the Situation of the Jews dates back to June 29. The German high command in Berlin instructed rear army commanders to establish ghettos. The directive stated that “the Jews will be concentrated within

closed areas in the settlements in which they live. . . . Ghettos will be established in places with large communities” (Arad, The Holocaust in the Soviet Union, 2008, pp. 96-97). Von Pohl informed A. Zubrys (AKA Zemribas), the Provisional Government’s liaison officer, “that a directive arrived from Berlin relating to the relocation of Jews to camps. Jews in Kaunas had to be removed to the Gaidziunai military reservation” (Draugas, March 19, 1964, p.6).

On June 29, Mayor Palčiauskas and Colonel Bobelis went to the headquarters of von Pohl. The general was not willing to meet face to face. Zemribas and a German officer acted as go-betweens (Dunzila, Kazimieras Palčiauskas 1941-1944 m. Kaune, 1994, p. 32). Colonel Bobelis expressed objections to von Pohl’s demand on grounds that Jews were citizens of Lithuania and their rights could be restricted only by law—i.e., a statute. Von Pohl rejected the arguments of Palčiauskas and Bobelis stating that “the Reich government considers the Jews to be untrustworthy and a hostile element. They had to be isolated, in short, in a ghetto.” In response to the legal objections made by Bobelis, von Pohl stated that the Provisional Government should draft a statute and deliver it to him. The only concession von Pohl made was the change the site of the planned ghetto from Gaidžiūnai to Vilijampolė—a poor neighborhood in Kaunas. (Genocidas ir rezistencija, No. 2, 2000, p. 137; Dunzila, pp. 32-33).

On June 30, Colonel Bobelis participated in the morning meeting of the Provisional Government. He informed the attendees of the meeting he and Palčiauskas had with von Pohl, Bobelis reported on the demands of von Pohl regarding the ghettoization of Kaunas Jews and the drafting of a law governing the process (Genocidas ir rezistencija, No. 2, 2000, p. 137). The minutes of the meeting state: “to approve the establishment of a concentration camp for the Jews and to authorize Mr. Sviopa, Deputy Minister of Municipal Economy together with Colonel Bobelis to take care of the above” (Lietuvos lai-

kinoji vyriausybė: posėdžių protokolai, 2001, p.20).

The drafting of the Statutes presented a difficult task for the Provisional Government. Not only did the drafters want to mitigate the oppressiveness of the situation facing the Jews, but they had to satisfy the demands of von Pohl. The drafting of the statute was supervised by Mečislovas Mackevičius, the Minister of Justice. Before the draft was to be submitted to the cabinet for a vote, it was reviewed by selected individuals. Mackevičius showed a copy of the draft to Professor Simon Bieliatzkin, a leading expert on civil law and one of the Jewish professors at the University of Kaunas who taught there between 1924-1940. Bieliatzkin had close ties to Mackevičius and was his dissertation advisor. According to Mackevičius, the response of Bieliatzkin was favorable: “he was very pleased with the draft because he understood very well and was aware of the policy of Nazi Germany toward their Jewish minority (Ibid.).

Sometime before the July 23 Volde- marist putsch against the Provisional Government, Colonel Bobelis brought a draft of the Statutes to von Pohl. Bobelis noted that now for the first time two or three SS officers were with von Pohl. According to Mackevičius, “Colonel Bobelis had to present the draft. It had been translated into German. He began to read and after finishing the first paragraph, one of the SS officers interrupted Bobelis stating: ‘I think you will not be able to take care of the Jewish matter. We will take care of it’” (Ibid.). Acting Prime Minister Juozas Ambrazevičius stated that the prepared draft was tabled and not considered by the Provisional Government until the arrival of the German civil administration at the end of July (Sūduvis-Brazaitis, Vienų vieni, 1964, p. 137).

Late in July von Pohl’s military administration was replaced by a civilian administration. Theodore Adrian von Renteln was appointed general commissar for Lithuania. Hans Cramer was made city commissar for Kaunas. He arrived in

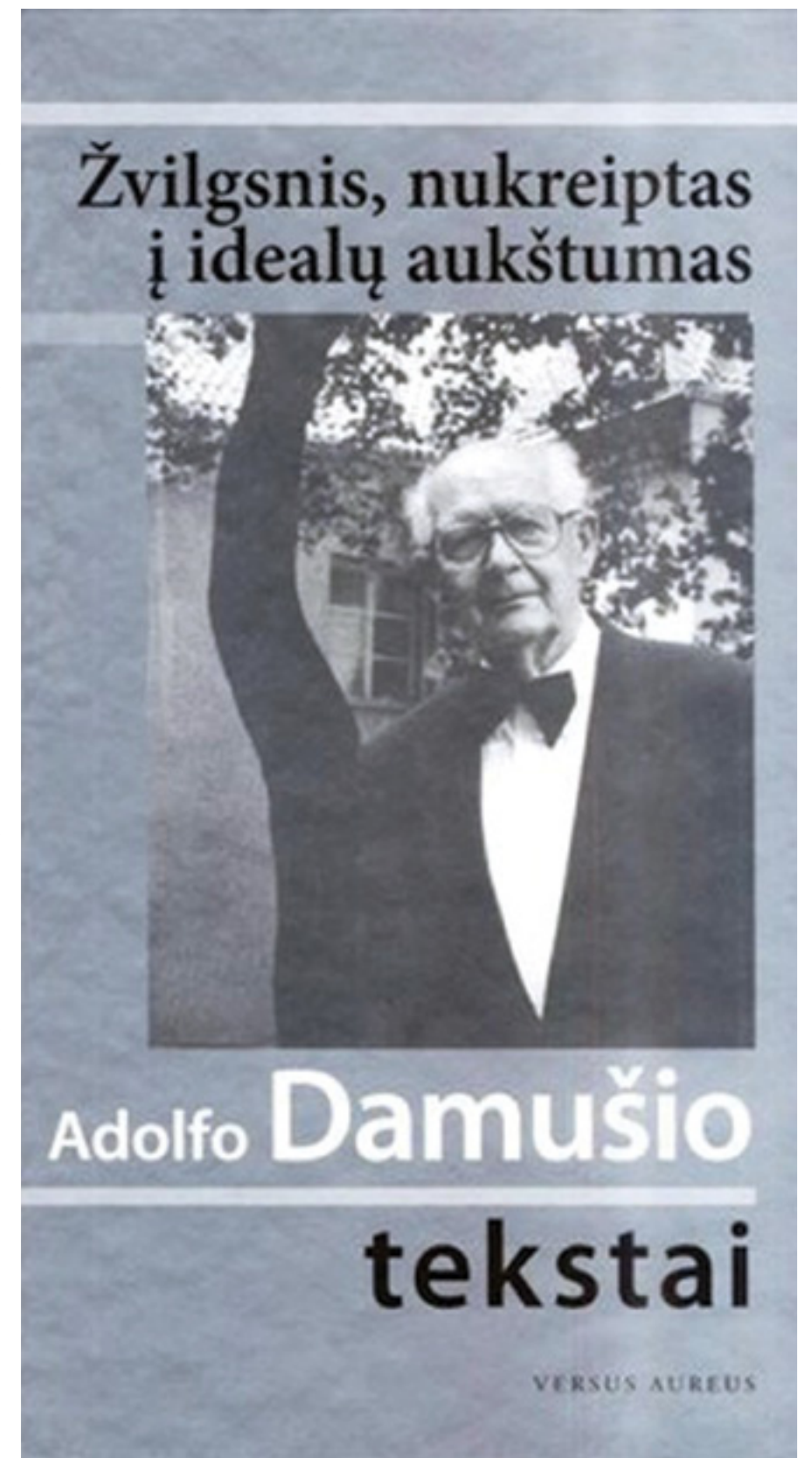
Kaunas on July 27. On July 28 and July 31, Cramer issued his first two orders. Both orders dealt with Jews in Kaunas.

With a change in German occupational administrations, members of the Provisional Government thought that maybe now was the time to resurrect the tabled draft of the Statutes on the Situation of the Jews. The draft’s provisions were much more lenient than Cramer’s draconian orders. On July 28, the draft was discussed during the Provisional Government’s cabinet meeting. Minutes of the meeting state that the draft was presented by Colonel J. Šlepetys, the Minister of Interior, who stated that the purpose of the Statutes was “to standardize the handling of the Jewish question throughout Lithuania. During the open discussion, the ministers expressed their views and made certain changes. While the ministers acknowledged in principle that the provisions were acceptable, the drafting of the final text was turned over to a committee of jurists” (Posėdžių protokolai, p. 123).

The final text of the draft was short—two and one half typewritten pages, The last paragraph (10) stated that the Statutes would become operative after it was approved (ibid., pp.96-97). Approval required a vote by the cabinet. On July 31, Colonel Bobelis meet J. Ambrazevičius and asked that the Provisional Government approve the Statutes (Vienų vieni, p. 551).

On Friday, August 1, the typed draft text of the Statutes was signed by Acting Prime Minister J. Ambrazevičius and Interior Minister J. Šlepetys (Posėdžių protokolai, pp. 96-97). The signed document was not a law as assumed by some historians. It was a draft which had to be approved by the cabinet According to Ambrazevičius, proposals which were approved during a cabinet meeting (i.e. nutarimai) had to be signed not only by the Acting Prime Minister but also by the cabinet’s chief of staff J. Svelnikas (Vienų vieni, p. 543).

A key question is why did J. Ambrazevičius and J. Šlepetys sign on August 1 the proposed Statutes. It is pos-



Žvilgsnis nukreiptas į idealų aukštumas: Adolfo Damušio tekstai, Vilnius, 2009



Memorial plaque for Adolfo Damušis in the Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas

sible that since a meeting with von Renteln was scheduled for August 2, it was hoped that the Statutes, once approved by the cabinet, might have mitigated Cramer's orders. Violation of Cramer's orders meant death. Violation of the Statutes would have resulted in a slap on the wrist: "(violators) may be sent to hard labour camps for a term of up to one year" (Documents Accuse, 1970, p. 145). In reality, the Provisional Government's concern with helping the Jews became moot. On August 1, it was overshadowed by news Ambrazevičius received from Škirpa. Although Škirpa was under house arrest in Berlin, he sent Antanas Valiukėnas, his chief of staff, to Kaunas to meet with Ambrazevičius (Treinys, Gyvenimas - meteoro skrydis, 2003). Valiukėnas had with him a letter in which Škirpa discussed in detail Berlin's plans for Lithuania. Škirpa advised Ambrazevičius not to cooperate with the Germans: "From a political stand-

point, this would completely sink us. We would become mere helpers of a German occupational regime having achieved nothing with respect to restoration of an independent Lithuania. The world would view us as German flunkies and in the future, it would be difficult for us to extricate ourselves from this morass. Looking toward the future, it would be more appropriate if the Provisional Government would strictly avoid such collaboration and be ready to accept termination or even removal by the police" (Škirpa, Sukilimas, 1973, p. 477).

The August 2 meeting between von Renteln and members of the Provisional Government was postponed (Treinys, p. 338). On August 4, the Provisional Government was evicted from its headquarters by the Germans (Bubnys, Vokiečių okupuota Lietuva (1941-1944), 1998, p. 56). On August 5, the Provisional Government ceased its activity.

During the August 5 meeting with von Renteln, Acting Prime Minister Ambrazevičius presented him with a memorandum signed by all cabinet ministers. Ambrazevičius asked that the memorandum is forwarded to Berlin. The memorandum contained pro forma language thanking Hitler and the German army for liberating Lithuania. It also spelled out in detail the problems the Provisional Government faced during the time of its existence. The memorandum noted its de facto recognition by the German military administration "encouraged the Provisional Government of Lithuania to reestablish state office and local government; it attempted to eliminate the abnormalities of the Soviet system and to return to the normal situation which existed beforehand in Lithuania. It began to revive economically the country, but it was not able to resolve certain problems without an agreement with German authorities (Liekis, Lietuvos Laikinoji Vyriausybė (1941 06 22 - 08 05), 2000, p.306).

The memorandum does not spell out what "certain problems" remained unresolved. It can be surmised that the Jewish question was one of these problems.

After meeting with von Renteln, the Provisional Government had its last cabinet meeting. Ambrazevičius reviewed at length the work of the Provisional Government. He addressed the Jewish question. He stated that since the German authorities had prohibited the Provisional Government from using the radio and press, "the Government could not positively influence any outrages, e.g., the execution of Jews in Kaunas and in the provinces (Document Accuse, p. 96).

Participants in the June Insurrection and members of the Provisional Government such as Adolfo Damušis who wrote accounts during the time Lithuania was still under Soviet control did not go into details and specifics. A number of participants and associates were still alive - some in Lithuania, others like Kazys Palčiauskas in the United States. They were targets of Soviet security services. Members of the anti-Soviet and anti-Nazi resistance who were survivors had a tendency to be careful in what they said and wrote—even under conditions of freedom in the United States.

Notwithstanding the paucity of detailed accounts by the main actors in the events of 1941, individual statements by witnesses such as Zemribas, Palčiauskas, Mackevičius, Ambrazevičius and Valiukėnas, taken together, form a more complete picture of the circumstances surrounding the drafting of the Statutes on the Situation of the Jews. It corroborates the assertion of Adolfo Damušis that the document was not a manifestation of Provisional Government's anti-Semitism, but a good faith effort to help the Jews of Lithuania.



Augustine Idzels

## Our Summer in Lithuania



Greta and Ema volunteering in Lithuania

A. Kazickas Lithuanian Heritage school's (Riverhead, NY) graduate Greta Diržytė and student Ema Vilčinskaitė took a service trip to Lithuania to volunteer in two camps in the summer of 2017. Camp "Draugai/Friends" (Alsėdžiai, Plungė region) and "Rogių šunys/Sled dogs" (Kernavė, Širvintos region) have been welcoming the diaspora youth for several years in a row. Thank you "Draugai" and "Rogių šunys" for building bridges between Lithuania and its diaspora!

### Greta Diržytė

My friend, Ema Vilčinskaitė from Westhampton High School, and I, Greta Diržytė from Southampton High School, volunteered in Lithuania this summer. We first went to a camp in Alsėdžiai, Lithuania for 10 days where we worked on a project and I taught lacrosse. I used equipment donated by Southampton High School Athletic Department and brought to Lithuania in 2014 by my cousin Vilia Baumilas, SH graduate of 2017. Lacrosse is still new in Lithuania. Nobody plays it there.

"Draugai"(Friends) is a camp for kids ages 8-18 but, when we went to volunteer, instead of the normal camp there was an ERASMUS project MUSICAL TRIP going on. There were 55 people between the ages of 15-27 from 6 different countries, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Italy, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Ema and I were part of the Lithuanian team because even though we live in America we are Lithuanian. For 10 days we were learning about all 6 countries and their cultures. One of the days, we had a theatrical performance. Almost every night we had a cultural evening where each country would teach the others about their culture and we would learn dances, eat foods from that country, and listen to some of the country's music. The Ukrainians taught us dances which at first were difficult



Greta with her sled dog.

to learn but were a lot of fun dancing after we learned them. We had both thought that we would be volunteering during the camp week, and I was so excited to teach kids my favorite sport, lacrosse. Since it was a project and the people were my age or older it was cool to do something new because I usually





Erasmus Plus Lithuania Music Camp 2017.

play with people my age or a few years older but this time there were people who were even 10 years older than me. It was so interesting teaching people how to play lacrosse because I got to introduce a sport to them that they have never seen before. Since it was a project we didn't have as much time for lacrosse but we still found some time to play. It was absolutely amazing to see how people who knew nothing about it could learn so much about the game in about an hour. It was really fun to teach everyone how to hold the stick, how to throw the ball and how to pass to each other.

We ended up playing a game of lacrosse after they all knew the basics of it and it was so cool to watch other people play after I taught them. Seeing them play made me want to volunteer and teach lacrosse more often and I hope I can come back to this camp and teach some kids lacrosse. This project really opened our eyes to what other countries are like, how every country is unique, and how volunteering is something that is super interesting and fun because you get to experience so many different things and most importantly help people and teach them new things like lacrosse.

During this project, I got to learn so many things about other countries and their cultures. Every country is so unique in its own way and it makes you realize wherever you go in the world there is always something beautiful to see or something fun to do. After we finished the project it was super sad to say goodbye to everyone there because we all became like a family but it was time to go to the next camp. The other camp that we went to was a dog camp called "Rogių Šunys/ Sled Dogs." I went to this camp last year in 2016 so it was my second year here and Ema's first time here. The camp is 5 days long and is located in Kernavė, Lithuania. We decided even though the kids would be younger that we still want to go so we could spend time with the dogs and volunteer to help out with the dogs and the

younger kids. Each person had a partner and they would take turns walking and running with the dogs, feeding them and brushing them. Every day at that camp we would go for a walk in the morning with the dogs. The dogs would be wearing a harness on them and there would be a rope connecting that to a harness that you would wear so when you walked, the dogs would kind of pull you.

Some days we'd walk to the forest and there would be paths where we would run with the dogs. One dog goes at a time, they run a certain distance and its timed to see how fast you run with your dog. The dogs there are really fast and they love to run. We run with the Huskies but they also have European dogs at the camp. At night sometimes we would go dog sledding but instead of a sled, there

would be a wagon on wheels where you sit and a group of about 6-8 dogs pulls you. Before our dinner, we would also go feed the dogs their dinner.

There were 29 dogs. We would take turns every night with our partner feeding our dog. One day out of the 5 days we went on a hike to Kernavė town center and went to see the hill forts, visit a museum and go to the store to get some snacks. Almost every day in the afternoon we would train the dogs. At first, we'd practice how to sit, lie down, make eye contact, walk around in a circle while making eye contact, and then eventually we'd practice how to go through obstacles.

On the last day, we had a police officer who trains police dogs come and judge how we go through the obstacles with our dogs. At this camp, we helped out the little kids if the dogs were being very energetic and when the kids needed something we'd help. Both camps were absolutely amazing and I am so glad we got this experience. I hope to volunteer in Lithuania every year and I hope I can come back to both of these camps soon.



Greta and Ema in sled dog camp.

## Ema Vilčinskaitė

I live in America and whenever I tell people of my cultural background they look at me with confused faces. Is Lithuania a religion? Where is Lithuania? I shake my head and for the thousandth time I repeat: "It's right above Poland". Each time I repeated myself I wished that there was a way the world would be able to learn about Lithuania and where it is. This opportunity was presented to me and my friend, Greta Diržytė, when I heard that we were able to volunteer at camp "Draugai" (friends) in Plungė, Lithuania, with the exception that this is year it hosted the Erasmus and a project. This camp is usually for Lithuanian children ages 8-18, but for 2 weeks of the summer the camp had 6 different countries with people ages 17-29. Being a part of this project really gave me an insight of what people from foreign countries are like. So many of us hold stereotypes or travel to a country without actually sitting down to talk with a native person and miss out on what makes a country and the culture special. I learned that barriers such as language can be demolished with emotion and action. During the 10 days that this project lasted, 55 strangers from 6 different countries (Italy, Romania, Ukraine, Turkey, Slovakia, and Lithuania) came together and created something beautiful. We were able to use our emotion, to create a performance, thanks to a theater performance with minimal use of language but the maximum amount of emotions, acting, and creativity to move a mountain. Each person had their own plate of differences, but in the end the arts showed each person inside is the same no matter where they live. In this project, I was able to teach the countries about Lithuania, what makes it the country that I love, and the culture that it holds. Not only did I teach people about Lithuania, but I was able to learn more about other countries. My mission of spreading the news about Lithuania was accomplished when I went to this camp. The second camp, camp "Rogių Šunys" (Sled Dogs), had given me an opposite, but still valuable experience. Instead of me teaching other people about Lithuania, the children had given me knowledge, unintentionally, about Lithuania that I could bring back to America. Upon our first impressions, we thought we would not be able to enjoy this camp at all, since we came as volunteers. Nine-year-old and ten year olds flooded the camp, bringing flashbacks of elementary school, but to our surprise we were able to form bonds with people who were drastically younger than us. During the camp, we bonded with everyone over our love for dogs. We helped one another to train the dogs and talked about how every dog was amazing. Each day we woke up looking forward to what the day held for us. In the morning, we would do an exercise that woke us up and after eating breakfast, we went out on a long walk with the dogs. Along the walk I observed the nature and I realized how beautiful Lithuania is. There were wild flowers filling the wild open fields and an occasional horse eating them away. After the walk for fun, races and dog sledding were held. Each day there was plenty of exercise, so to quench our thirst, everyone begged



Ema presenting LT at Erasmus.

for gaiva. The name of this drink comes from the word gavisus (refreshing). During free time, we would play Uno, sit around the campfire while our food cooked, made artwork, and told scary stories. This camp will definitely be nostalgic for many. At the end of the week, all the hours and hard work that we put into training the dogs taught everyone that patience is key. The last day of the camp, a competition was held to show how each person had successfully trained their dogs. I will definitely look forward to returning each summer to the camps to not only teach people more about America and Lithuania, but to return home and share my experiences in Lithuania.



SHS and WHS girls in Erasmus Plus Lithuania.

## Lithuanian World Center's Holiday Craft Fair

By Elena Reklaitis



Elena Reklaitis.

Shiny baubles, earthy straw ornaments, fuzzy hand-knit slippers, and multi-colored floral bouquets catch one's attention at every turn. Scents of freshly baked rye, smoked Lithuanian sausages, and sweet buttery pastries waft through the air. Sounds of carolers and fiddlers lift the spirits of the crowds of people buzzing about. Such are the sights, smells, and sounds of the Lithuanian World Center's Holiday Craft Fair in Lemont, Illinois.

Whether you take pride in your Lithuanian heritage (or maybe want to learn a bit about it), are eager to run into old friends (or maybe make some new ones), or simply need to do your last-minute Christmas shopping (or maybe want to treat yourself to something unique), this annual event is a tradition that must not be missed!

The Lithuanian World Center (Pasaulio Lietuvių Centras or "PLC") in Lemont, Illinois, is a not-for-profit organization that is considered "second home" to many other non-profit organizations which focus on culture, religion, education, and sports. In order to keep the building and grounds safe and inviting for

those organizations and their guests/members, PLC organizes several fundraisers a year. The goal is not only to raise money but to create opportunities for the Lithuanian American community to come together, to build long-lasting friendships, to keep the language alive, to remind one another of old world traditions. The Holiday Craft Fair accomplishes all of those goals.

The fair has been held at PLC for close to two decades. Overcrowding in the main banquet hall (caused by the ever-increasing number of vendors and guests) created a need to move the event to the large gymnasium called Riškus Hall. The banquet hall maxed out at 64 vendors, but the large gym allows for 80 participants and offers much more room for customers to wander the more spacious aisles.

Customers will find vendors selling their handmade or home-baked items, along with companies which provide valuable services to the community and many of the organizations which call PLC their second home (e.g., scouting groups like Lituanica, Nerija, and Aušros Vartai/Kernavė; schools like Maironis Lithuanian School and Žiburėlis; churches like Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis Mission; charities like Sunlight Orphan Aid - Saulutė).

Here's a sampling of the types of items and services you'll find at the fair: amber jewelry; handmade soaps; flower arrangements; traditional Lithuanian food (including packaged goods imported from Lithuania); handmade straw and glass ornaments; knit clothing items; loom-woven sashes (juostos); books; beauty and health products; travel, insurance and financial services.

Many of the customers come looking specifically for items that are traditionally Lithuanian and will make a nice addition to their Kūčios (Christmas Eve) decorations or table: straw ornaments (šiaudinukai), tree cake (šakotis), or blessed host (plotkelės). It's clear that first-wave, second-wave and third-wave Lithuanians alike are trying to keep their traditions alive, to celebrate with their children and grandchildren the customs they themselves know and love.

For many years, hot food was prepared lovingly by the PLC Women's Auxilliary Club, led by Alė Karaliūnienė. Now, hot food, snacks, smoked meats, and sweets are available from Grand Duke's (Kunigaikščių Užėiga) during all hours of the event. Plenty of freshly baked cakes, tortes, and other pastries can be purchased from a variety of vendors, including women from an organization called Child's Gate to Learning (Vaiko Vartai į Mokslą) which is dedicated to helping children from economically disadvantaged and at-risk households in Lithuania. Such an event attracts hundreds of spectators and customers, and PLC makes sure that the experience is fun for all. Vol-



Christmas Fair Choir.



Blessed Jurgis Matulaitis Mission participates at the Christmas Fair.

unteers don Santa hats and help the vendors prepare their spaces, direct traffic, and sell raffle tickets for monetary prizes. Choirs, quartets, and other musicians are invited to perform in the lobby throughout the weekend to create a holiday atmosphere. The music department at Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park has consistently provided entertainment for the last 5 years, bringing joy to passersby.

The PLC's most exciting change to the weekend event has been the recent addition of a tree-lighting ceremony & Christmas spectacular on Friday before the fair. Children and adults alike will love the entertainment provided by dancers, singers, musicians, and even Santa Claus!

The Lithuanian World Center's Holiday Weekend begins on Friday, December 1 in the Main Banquet Hall from 6 pm - 10 pm. The Holiday Craft Fair takes place on Saturday, December 2 from 9 am to 4 pm, and on Sunday, December 3 from 10 am to 3 pm. Bring your friends and your family and kick off the holiday season with an ethnic bang! Laukiame Jūsų! (We're waiting for you!)



Traditional Lithuanian Christmas Tree decorations at the Christmas Fair.



Girl Scouts perform at the Christmas Fair.

## November/December Anniversaries

### 585 years ago

On December 8, 1432, the first battle between the forces of Švitrigaila and Žygimantas Kęstutaitis is fought near the town of Ašmena, launching the most active phase of the civil war in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

### 520 years ago

On December 6, 1497 the City of Pasvalys was founded.

### 470 years ago

On December 8, 1547, the Simple Words of Catechism (Lithuanian: Katekizmo prasti žodžiai) by Martynas Mažvydas was printed Hans Weinreich in Königsberg. It was the first printed book in the Lithuanian language. The 79-page book followed the teachings of Martin Luther but reflects both religious and secular needs. The book included the first Lithuanian-language poem, primer with alphabet, basic catechism, and 11 religious hymns with sheet music. The book was written in the Samogitian dialect and printed in Gothic (schwabacher) font; Latin dedication and preface are printed in Latin font.

### 405 years ago



Jonušas Radvila by B. Strobel, 1634

On December 2, 1612, Prince Jonušas Radvila was born. He was a noble and magnate in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Throughout his life he occupied a number of posts in the state administration, including that of Court Chamberlain of Lithuania

(from 1633), Field Hetman of Lithuania (from 1646) and Grand Hetman of Lithuania (from 1654). He was also a voivode of Vilnius Voivodeship (from 1653), as well as a starost of Samogitia, Kamieniec, Kazimierz and Sejwy. He was a protector of the Protestant religion in Lithuania and sponsor of many Protestant schools and churches. For several decades, the interests between the Radvila family and the state (Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth) had begun to drift apart, as the Radvila increased their magnate status and wealth. Their attempts to acquire more political power in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania culminated in the doings of Jonušas Radvila, who is remembered in Polish historiography as one of the Grand Duchy nobles responsible for the end of the Golden Age of the Commonwealth. In his times he was one of the most powerful people in the Commonwealth, often described as a de facto ruler of the entire Grand Duchy of Lithuania. During the "Deluge", the Swedish invasion of Poland-Lithuania during the Second Northern War, he sided with the Swedish king signing the Treaty of Kėdainiai and the Union of Kėdainiai. This move however antagonized him with most of other nobles, including members of his own family. His forces were eventually defeated in battle and he himself died in a besieged castle at Tykocin.

### 160 years ago

On December 2, 1857 On December 2, 1857, a decree was signed by Alexander II and distributed all over Russia (including Vilnius, Kaunas and Gardinas Provinces), in the name of Vladimir Nazimov, Governor General of Vilnius. This decree announced the beginning of gradual liberation of peasants and ordered the creation in each province of noble committees for entering offers and amendments to the project of reform. Open preparations for the abolition of the serfdom began.

On December 16, 1882 Tadas Ivanauskas, a prominent Lithuanian zoologist and biologist, and one of the founders of Vytautas Magnus University was born. After finishing Warsaw Gymnasium in 1901 Ivanauskas moved to Saint Petersburg, where studied in the 1st gymnasium of the city. In 1903 he studied at the natural sciences department of the Saint Petersburg University. He met and befriended Lithuanian students here and learned Lithuanian language. In 1905 he moved to Paris, and studied at Sorbonne University Nature-history faculty and graduated in 1909. Since 1904 was member of Lithuanian society Lituania. Together with another early twentieth century Lithuanian activist, Michał Römer, Ivanauskas gave lectures about Lithuania in Paris in 1905. In 1909 he again entered Saint Petersburg University, as Russian Empire did not recognize foreign diplomas, and finished with first grade diploma in 1910. During the studies he was active in Lithuanian student society, was elected a chairman. In 1910 in Saint Petersburg established natural sciences visual devices laboratory Zootom,

that prepared various biological, botanical, anatomical and mineralogical devices. In summertime he traveled around Lithuania collecting material for his devices. 1914 and 1917 Ivanauskas participated in scientific expeditions into Northern Russia (Murmansk and Archangelsk) and Norway. 1918 Ivanauskas returned to Lithuania and together with his wife Honorata opened Lithuanian school. 1920 he moved to Kaunas and worked as adviser in Ministry of Agriculture of Lithuania, also helped organizing Higher courses, that later became University of Lithuania. Together with Konstantinas Regelis organized Kaunas Botanical Park in 1923. together with his wife started organizing annual National day of birds and Tree planting days. He was a professor in University of Lithuania (later Vytautas Magnus University) from 1922 until 1940, and in 1929, became the head of the Zoology Department. He became a professor at the re-established Vilnius University between 1940 and 1941. He returned to this position in 1944, which he held until 1956. He simultaneously held a professorship at the Kaunas Medical Institute from 1954 until 1970. Among his other achievements, he is known for opening one of the first bird banding stations in Europe, at Cape Ventė in 1929. He also founded the Zoological Museum in 1918, the Kaunas botanical garden in 1923, Žuvintas preservation in 1937, and the Kaunas Zoo in 1938. Ivanauskas published 37 books and brochures, most famous of them - Birds of Lithuania. Since 1941 he was a full member of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences.

### 100 years ago

On December 11, 1917, the Council of Lithuania announced the restoration of independent Lithuania in the union with Germany. The Act of December 11 was the second stage in the progression towards the final Act of Independence. The first draft, demanded by chancellor Georg von Hertling, was prepared by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 1. Further changes were jointly prepared by the German chancellery and by a delegation of the Council of Lithuania. The delegation's members were Antanas Smetona, Steponas Kairys, Vladas Mironas, Jurgis Šaulys, Petras Klimas and Aleksandras Stulginskis. After discussion amongst the parties, a compromise was reached on the document's text. The German representative, Kurt von Lersner, insisted that not one word be changed in the agreed-upon text and that all the Council members sign the document. After the delegation returned to Vilnius, a session of the Council was held on December 11 in order to discuss the Act. It was adopted without any further changes. Fifteen voted in favor of the Act, three voted against it, one member abstained, and one did not participate. It is not entirely clear whether every member of the Council signed this document. The Act was written in German, and apparently no official Lithuanian translation was prepared. Therefore, different sources provide slightly different translations. The Act of December 11 pronounced

Lithuania's independence, but also asked German government for protection (clause 2) and called for "a firm and permanent alliance" with Germany. Since the Act specified that the alliance was to be formed based on conventions concerning military affairs, transportation, customs, and currency, many Lithuanians argued that the Council had overstepped its authority: the September resolution adopted by the Vilnius Conference clearly demanded that a constituent assembly decide these crucial matters of state.

### 95 years ago

On December 20, 1922, Lithuania's independence was recognized de jure by Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan.



The Supreme Committee for the Salvation of Lithuania Minor

On December 18, 1922, the Supreme Committee for the Salvation of Lithuania Minor (SCSLM), chaired by Martynas Jankus, was established in Klaipėda to lead the revolt and later organize a pro-Lithuanian regime in the region. According to Jankus testimony to the Conference of Ambassadors in March 1923, up to 8,000–10,000 persons (5–7% of the population) were united around the Committee before January 10, 1923. On January 3, 1923, a congress of the committees authorized SCSLM to represent the interest of the inhabitants of the entire region. However, at the time the organization was just a name and apart from issuing several declarations had no other activity. Some of its members admitted that they learned about their role in the SCSLM only after the revolt. On January 7, the SCSLM published a proclamation, Broliai Šauliai!, alleging that the Lithuanians were persecuted by foreigners, declaring its resolve to take up arms to rid itself of "slavery", and pleading the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union for help. This became the official pretext for the riflemen to enter into the region on January 9.

## Silkė for Kūčios (Herring for Christmas Eve)

By Jana Sirusaitė-Motivans



Silkė (herring) is traditionally one of the standard foods served for Kūčios (Lithuanian Christmas Eve). Of the twelve dishes on the table, herring seems to play a starring role in many of them - often hidden in the vinegretas! Over the years, I have eaten a lot of silkė. Most of them have been too salty, or too vinegary or just too herring-y. As the years passed, herring has been relegated to a small serving dish, just for tradition's sake, but no one seems to eat it. Until now!! Thanks to my friend Terese Vekteris, former Bridges editor, silkė will be back on our Kūčios table in a starring role!

Terese has been searching for some good herring for Kūčios, and finally found what she calls "the silkė of my childhood". Fittingly, the herring is imported from Lithuania. VICI brand herring from Lietuva can be found in most Russian grocery stores, or can be ordered on-line if there are no suppliers in your neighborhood. The herring is sold fresh, not preserved in jars, but in a plastic container. Smaller quantities are sold packaged in a rectangular shaped box, while a larger amount is sold in a jar-shaped container. The herring is lightly salted and preserved in oil.

The preparation is simplicity itself. All you need is herring, an onion and fresh dill and your herring is ready to take place number one on the list of twelve dishes on the Kūčios table. Remember, all twelve dishes, symbolizing the twelve Apostles, must be meat-free. According to Catholic tradition, Christmas Eve was a day of fast, like Fridays during Lent. Just as Fridays became known as 'Fish Fridays' so did Kūčios become a fish day.

The meal begins with a prayer and the sharing of Plotkelės (blessed Christmas wafers). After everyone has exchanged

greetings and broken bread together, the traditional meal follows.

Here is a suggested menu based on previous Bridges articles.

1. Herring (recipe follows)
2. Balta mišrainė (vinegretas), Bridges Nov/Dec 2015
3. Raudona mišrainė (vinegretas), Bridges Nov/Dec 2015
4. Burokėlių salotos (beet salad), Bridges July/August 2015
5. Morkų salotos su obuoliais (carrot and apple salad), Bridges July/August 2015
6. Agurkų salotos (cucumber salad), Bridges July/August 2015
7. Smoked salmon on Lithuanian bread with cream cheese and dill
8. Įdaryti kiaušiniai (stuffed eggs), Bridges December 2013
9. Žuvis su pomidorais (fish fillets in tomato sauce), Bridges Nov/Dec 2016
10. Kugelis with mushroom sauce, Bridges December 2014
11. Sližikai (Christmas Eve biscuits), Bridges November 2013
12. Kisielis (cranberry pudding), Bridges December 2012

The first nine dishes are served as a cold first course, followed by a hot course such as kugelis or maybe more fish, or even mushroom-filled crepes. The above list is just a suggestion based on Bridges articles. Every family has their own special favorite foods.

Kūčios is a special time to remind us of our Lithuanian heritage. It is important for our entire extended family to gather and celebrate together. It is comforting to know that Lithuanians all over the world as well as those in Lithuania all celebrate in the same way. Linksmų Šventų Kalėdų!

## Silkė for Kūčios (Herring)

### INGREDIENTS

- VICI herring, imported from Lithuania, traditional style (lightly salted, packed in oil)
- one onion (sweet onion or Vidalia onion is nice but regular onion is fine)
- fresh dill



1. Open the package of herring.
2. Pour off the oil.
3. Pat the fish fillets with paper towel to remove excess oil.



4. Cut the herring into bite-sized pieces and arrange on a serving platter.



5. Top the herring with finely chopped onion and dill.



6. Serve with dark Lithuanian bread.



**Security**

...The Russian – Belarus military week-long exercise known as Zapad (West) 2017 during September 14-20, involved at least 5,500 Russian and 7,200 Belarusian troops but less than the 100,000 troops that NATO envisioned. Every year Russia plans a military exercise in one of four quadrants; it has been 4 years since Zapad 2013. The current exercise gives NATO the opportunity to gage the improvement in Russia's modernization of its military capability and involved 6 locations in Russia and 5 locations in Belarus.

During the Zapad 2017 exercise, the Associated Press reports that a Russian "Alligator" attack helicopter accidentally fired on observing journalists, military experts and foreign military attaches injuring three. The accident occurred at the Luzhshy Range near St. Petersburg about 100 km east of Estonia.

During Zapad 2017 two Russian jets violated Lithuanian airspace for two minutes on a flight to the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. The Russians said that they asked for permission because of a thunderstorm over the Baltic Sea. The state-owned Air Navigation service denied giving permission. The Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Ambassador of the Russian Federation who was given a note of protest.

The Kremlin reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin observed Zapad 2017 exercises in the Leningrad Oblast and the Belarusian news media Belta reported that Belarus President Lukashenko visited the Borisovsky training ground. It is noteworthy that despite this joint military exercise the Presidents did not meet or visit the other's country.

Russia went beyond the scope of Zapad 2017 to deploy the Northern Fleet in the Barents Sea region of the Arctic Ocean - north of Norway. The fleet included a nuclear-capable missile cruiser, a destroyer, two small rocket ships and three anti-submarine ships. The Russians also launched a nuclear-capable Iskandar-M short-range ballistic missile from the Astrakhan Oblast in southern Russia near the Caspian Sea. In late September Russia said that 4,000 troops would be involved with maneuvers with a truck mobile Yars missile in Siberia. The Yars is Russia's most advanced nuclear capable ICBM.

At the fall meeting of the UN, Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė reviewed Russia's attacking Georgia, annexing Crimea, and directly participating in the war in eastern Ukraine. She expressed concern regarding Russia's meddling in western elections and "Sputnik" sources of fake news and destabilizing propaganda. For example, "The Baltic Review" has republished news from "Sputnik" the Russian government news outlet. During her speech, the Russian delegation walked out in protest.

Thirty thousand Ukrainians were evacuated in face of the fire and explosion of a major arms storage depot which authorities ascribe to sabotage. Heavy munitions and air defense missiles were destroyed. This was the second major depot fire this year. Some officials in Kiev expressed the possibility that the first fire was caused by an explosive dropped by a drone controlled by agents of Moscow or Moscow backed insurgents.

**Politics**

...The 10-month-old coalition between the Peasant and Green Union of Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis and minority partner Social Democrats collapsed because of the PM ignored the Social Democrats over policies involving alcohol age limits, subsidies on central heating and reforms of state-owned forestry companies. The Economy Minister, Mindaugas Sinkevičius resigned but Foreign Minister, Linas Linkevičius, has decided to remain and resign from the Social Democrats. Justice Minister Milda Vainiutė indicated that she was not a member of the Social Democratic Party and would not resign. The 19 Social Democrat members of Seimas may remain in the government in defiance of their party's chairman. The once dominant Social Democrats ran a distant third in the 2016 general election.

...Lithuania's Special Investigative Service (STT) has investigated bribery and influence peddling cases involving the Liberal Movement Party and the Labor Party as beneficiaries of payments from various Lithuanian companies, including MG Baltic. Lithuanian police found 100,000 euros in the possession of Eligijus Masiulis, former chairman of the Liberal Movement Party, the second largest opposition party in Seimas. The MG Baltic Group includes 80 companies with close to 4,000 employees covering various activities including construction, real estate, retail, manufacturing, and media.

...Seimas is considering modifying the agreement to conceal the names of 1,589 persons who admitted to collaborating with the KGB related services during 1940-1991. The collaborators were granted unlimited secrecy during the grace period, 1991-1992. In 2015 the agreement was changed so that the names would be kept secret for 75 years. The new agreement would enable publishing the names in January 2018. The names of those who did not admit collaborating but who are known to have collaborated from KGB documents have been available on a public website, www.kgb-veikla.lt for a few years.

**Business**

...In the second quarter of 2017 overall Labor costs rose 10.4% in Lithuania and for IT personnel it rose 14% versus the second quarter of 2016. The annual inflation for Lithuania was 4.6%, the highest in the European Union where the average was 1.7%.

...The Baltic venture capital fund, Baltcap Infrastructure Fund, will invest 16 million euros for the construction of a 48-megawatt biomass plant in Vilnius which will supply about 10% of the city's demand for heat. A dual flue gas cleaning system will use multi-cyclone and electrostatic precipitators will clean the discharged gas. Sixty percent of the Funds' investments come from pension funds of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Lithuania happens to be a leader in the trading of biomass in the form of tonnes of oil equivalents of wood chips, wood pellets, and milled peat. In 2016 Lithu-

ania required all regulated heat providers buy all biomass via the trading form, BALTPPOOL, which has 292 registered members. Biomass is popular in Lithuania because about one-third of the country is covered in forests and logging is relatively easy because it lies in the East European Plain. In 2016 over 60% of Vilnius' heating came from biomass.

...Ikea, the Swedish furniture company, is building a new particle board and furniture facility in Kazlų Rūda, about 40 km southeast of Kaunas. The new facility will double the existing capacity which last year produced over 0.5 million cubic meters of particle board and 1.2 million pieces of furniture with a workforce of 700. Increased automation will allow the doubling of capacity with only minimal number of increased jobs and a shift from 7 days of operation to 5 days per week. The facility is located in a forest bisected by a railroad which facilitates transport.

...The city of Vilnius is auctioning unneeded public properties to gain revenue and reduce maintenance costs. In 2015 it received 3.4 million euros; in 2016 – 6.7 million euros and in the first six months of 2017 – 2.5 million euros. The auctions are published on www.vilnius.lt as well as www.aruodas.lt and www.alio.lt. Pictures and information are available in Lithuanian, English, and Russian.

...The Japanese company, Yazaki - the world's largest manufacturer of automotive wire harnesses, plans on expanding its Klaipėda facility to produce wire harnesses for Mercedes Benz. Currently, it produces harnesses for Volvo and Renault trucks which over a history of 20 years has not had any returned as defective. The Klaipėda plant has 1000 employees and plans on adding 400. The company has 289,000 employees in 487 branches in 45 countries.

...The US and Lithuania have agreed to exchange reports on multinational businesses to help tax authorities identify those who may be avoiding tax through transfer pricing, etc. The US has already executed Competent Authority Agreements (CAA) with twenty counties including Latvia and Estonia.

...AirBaltic flew 21% more passengers (2,345,371) in January – August 2017 than in the same period in 2016. The number of flights increased 14% to 22,059 and the load factor increased to 77.7%. AirBaltic has direct flights from Riga, Tallinn, and Vilnius.

**General**

...Heavy rains during August prevented farmers from going in the fields to harvest summer crops and to sow winter crops. The Ministry of Agriculture will appeal to the European Commission for financial assistance for farmers. Losses are estimated between 40 and 200 million euros.

...Lithuania has selected the movie Frost/Šerkšnas as nominee for an Oscar in the Best Foreign Language Film Category. The Lithu-

anian/Ukrainian/French/Polish production tells the story of a young couple who carry aid from Vilnius to the Ukrainian front in Donetsk. The film premiered in the Directors' Fortnight section at Cannes in 2017 and is available from Luxbox. The director is Šarūnas Bartas who in 1989 founded the first independent studio in Lithuania. Frost is his ninth feature film.

...On the eve of "Baltic Unity Day", September 22 the foreign ministers of Lithuania and Latvia announced the establishment of "The Baltic Prize" to be given in 2018 to honor the popularization of the Latvian and Lithuanian languages and literature, historical research and other fields. "Baltic Unity Day" commemorated the 1236 Battle of Saulė where the Baltic tribes defeated the Livonian Brothers of the Sword which halted the Crusader advance for decades.

...Japan is the fastest growing market of Lithuanian incoming tourism from Asia. The former Lithuanian Ambassador to Japan, Egidijus Meilūnas, attributes this affection to the strong Lithuanian connection with nature and paganism and Japan's nature-oriented Shinto religion. The heroic acts of Chiune Sugihara during World War II enable Japanese tourists to feel welcome at his home in Kaunas. The newest issue of Japan's JAL airline magazine, Skyward, has an article about places to visit in Lithuania. It has a circulation of 3 million.

...As if Gediminas Hill doesn't have enough problems with heavy rains and landslides, a World War II German explosive was discovered and disabled during reconstruction work on the Hill.

...With forests covering more than 33% of Lithuania, hunting wild mushrooms is a very popular activity. A festival was held in Varėna, 60 km south of Vilnius to crown the national championship in mushroom foraging. Twenty-one teams competed and the winning group, Mushroom Nightmares, gathered 58 kilograms (128 lbs.) The festival was attended by thousands of visitors and local mushroom sellers dressed in Lithuanian folk costumes.

...The publishing group, Alma littera will cease working with author Ruta Vanagaite and retrieve all of her books because of her speech about Lithuanian officer and partisan commander Adolfas Ramanauskas-codename-Vanagas (Hawk), who is to be honored by the Seimas in 2018, the 100th anniversary of his birth. She has apologized for her statements which she admitted contained errors in alluding that he committed suicide when there is evidence that he was tortured and killed by the KGB. Born in the U.S. his family returned to Lithuania in 1921. He attended a teacher's college and graduated from the Kaunas War School in 1940. He participated in partisan attacks and steadily rose in command to eventually become leader of the Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters. He was betrayed by a fellow graduate of the War School in October 1956, sentenced to death in September 1957 and executed November 29, 1957. His place of burial is unknown.

# Lithuanian Culinary Heritage Weekend

By Jana Sirusaitė-Motivans



Participants of the Lithuanian Culinary Heritage Weekend.

Lithuanian Culinary Heritage Weekend, held at Camp Neringa, was a resounding success. This entirely new endeavor was held September 15-17 and organized by Vilija Bonda, Dalia Bubnys, Audra and Romas Buivydas, and Vida Strazdis. Administrative and organizational support was also provided by Dana Vainauskienė, Camp Neringa's assistant director. Additional instructors included Arnas Gasparonis, Reggie Jagminas, Norbertas Lingertaitis, Joe and Joyce Liudzius, Jana Sirusaitė Motivans, Lukis Strazdis, and Saulius Vainauskas. The goal of the program was to rediscover the art of preparing traditional Lithuanian dishes because learning to cook Lithuanian food helps to keep our culture alive. It is part of our heritage and unites Lithuanians worldwide.

The weekend agenda was ambitious, including both presentations and hands-on lessons. We started with an informal gathering Friday evening where everyone had an opportunity to introduce themselves, and the organizers explained the schedule for the weekend. The first presentation Friday evening was making Lithuanian pressed cheese, which I organized. We gathered in the kitchen where I explained and demonstrated the cheese-making process (see last month's Bridges for more detail). Concurrently, another group of participants was learning how to make Gira (fermented beverage made with black bread) with Romas Buivydas and Kepta Duona (garlic bread) with Dalia Bubnys. I followed up with Pupelės su Spirgučiais (beans with bacon and onions).

Saturday morning, everyone participated in making Koldūnai (dumplings), led by Dana Vainauskienė and assisted by Audra

Buivydas and Dalia Bubnys. We had nearly sixty people (participants, instructors and organizers) so we needed to make a lot of Koldūnai for our lunch. We made two different types, one batch with meat filling and another with mushroom filling. Both were delicious.

After our koldūnas lunch, we had a very busy afternoon. There were several cooking sessions occurring simultaneously, and participants had the opportunity to pick what they were most interested in, and were free to come and go to as many as they wanted to or stay in one place if they desired.



Joe Liudzius making Raguolis



Arnas Gasparonis taught how to make bread

Joe and Joyce Liudzius demonstrated how to make a Raguolis (traditional tree-shaped cake, also known as Šakotis). They mixed the batter in the kitchen, explaining the process and answering questions. They then moved outdoors to a specially prepared grill where they spent a good part of the afternoon pouring the batter and turning the cake on a spit to achieve the recognizable tree shape.

In the dining hall, Reggie Jagminas was making Grybukai (mushroom-shaped cookies) with her group, while Vilija Bonda was making Lašinukų Bandelės (bacon buns) with another group and Vida Strazdis was making Dešros (sausage) with yet another group. Meanwhile, Norbertas Lingertaitis was outside smoking two beautiful whole salmon, and I was in the kitchen with another group making cepelinai.

In the course of the afternoon, Vida Strazdis moved on to Žagarėliai (fried dough, also known as Ausukės) when she finished with the sausage making. In addition, Arnas Gasparonis demonstrated how to use a Raugas (starter) to bake Lithuanian bread.

We enjoyed an amazing dinner, featuring all the food we had spent the afternoon preparing. After dinner, we played a unique game about Lithuanian cooking heritage and tradition, with our game-show host Romas Buivydas. The evening finished with making Krupnikas (Lithuanian honey liquor), led by Lukis Strazdis and Saulius Vainauskas.

We had prepared such an ample quantity of food that we were able to enjoy leftovers for both breakfast and lunch on Sunday. Pan-fried Koldūnai and Cepelinai are delicious!

In addition to the food aspect, the weekend also included some Neringa traditions including flag-raising and lowering. On Sunday, we had a concluding prayer service in the Birch Shrine, led by Aldona Lingertaitienė.

The program ended with a closing ceremony, where everyone received a small gift. In addition, two lucky participants won autographed copies of Beata Nicholson's book Taste Lithuania. Everyone went home with copies of recipes and full bellies!



Reggie Jagminas leading Grybukai lesson.



Desert table - finished Raguolis and Grybukai.

## The Lithuanian Foundation Celebrated Its 55th Anniversary

By Laima Apanavičienė



Chairman of the Board of the Lithuanian Foundation Saulius Čyvas, President of the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community Sigita Šimkuvienė, President of the Lithuanian Foundation Marius Kasniūnas, Chair of the Lithuanian Community Department of Cultural Affairs Austėja Sruoga.



Consul General of New York, Julius Pranevičius, Consul General of Chicago, Mantvydas Bekešius, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to the United States of America and Mexico Rolandas Kriščiūnas, Consul General of Los Angeles, Darius Gaidys.

The Lithuanian Foundation's 55th anniversary gala "On the Wings of Freedom" took place on November 4th, 2017. Today, perhaps we would not find one Lithuanian who would not know of this organization. However, its beginnings were not very easy. It all started on March 19, 1961, when two women and twenty men came together in the apartment of teacher Alicia Rūgytė. At the meeting, it was decided that the Lithuanian Foundation would work together with the Lithuanian American Community in support of Lithuanian activities in the United States. It was also decided to open bank accounts and start the collection of donations.

On March 14, 1962, the Lithuanian Foundation has become an officially recognized nonprofit organization in the State of Illinois. On June 22, 1962, the organization had 46 members, and the LF funds exceeded \$30,000.

I wonder if the founders of the LF could have foreseen that this charitable organization would live for 55 years and become one of the largest organizations that support the Lithuanian activities. During the period of its existence, the Foundations collected almost 40 million dollars, and 20 million dollars were distributed to support the cultural, educational, and social

activities as well as students.

A large group of the LF members, sponsors, diplomatic corps, and representatives of the Lithuanian American Community came to congratulate the Lithuanian Foundation with a beautiful anniversary. A large team of honorary consuls from the United States and Mexico arrived. Guests from Ireland, Lithuania, and Mexico also attended. The congratulatory remarks were made by the Chairman of the Board of the Lithuanian Foundation Saulius Čyvas, the Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to the United States of America and Mexico Rolandas Kriščiūnas, and the President of the National Executive Committee of the Lithuanian American Community Sigita Šimkuvienė. Letters of congratulations were sent by the President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania Linas Linkevičius, President of the World Lithuanian Community Dalia Henke, and President of the Lithuanian Community of Great Britain Dalia Asanavičiūtė.

The musical program was performed by a winner of Avon Voices-2011, singer, songwriter Evelina Anusauskaitė-Young and a well-known Lithuanian musician, producer, and composer Marius Leskauskas.



Marius Kasniūnas, President of the Lithuanian Foundation and Rolandas Kriščiūnas, Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to the United States of America and Mexico.

A ball would not be a ball without a festive cake. This time, a huge tree-cake (Šakotis) was brought into the hall. After the toast by Marius Kasniūnas, the President of the Lithuanian Foundation, the guests sang "Ilgiausių metų".

Richard Sokas' music band played and couples twirled on the dancing floor, other guests engaged in conversations, enjoyed the dessert and took photographs. All together we celebrated the work of the Lithuanian Foundation.

We are delighted and proud that thanks to the thousands of our donors, to all those who worked and still work tirelessly, the Foundation continues its activities today. We are convinced that we will continue to be together, we will boldly go forward on the path of our predecessors, and we will carry the torch of Lithuanians from generation to generation supporting our activities.

All photographs by Sandra Ščedrina, Studio Light, Inc.



Lithuanian Foundation's 55th Anniversary banquet guests.



Lithuanian Foundation's 55th Anniversary banquet guests

## Lithuanian Ski Week and Independence Day Celebration in Aspen, Colorado

The snow ski and winter trip to the beautiful Aspen Mountain Resort in Aspen, Colorado will take place on February 23 - March 5, 2018! The trip is being organized by Šiaurės Amerikos Lietuvių Fizinio Auklėjimo ir Sporto Sąjunga (ŠALFASS) aka Lithuanian Athletic Union of North America (LAUNA). As in the past, there will be many sports enthusiasts from the USA, Canada, and Lithuania attending and having a great time. Both skiers and non-skiers and their families are welcome. We will be having organized ŠALFASS ski races that week for all who wish to participate!

Accommodations and other information: Please contact Linda Crouch who is a "Mountain Vacation Specialist" to make your hotel reservations. Her email address is: linda@ski.com, or you can call her direct at: (800) 525-2052 x3329, or (970) 925-9500 x3329. She can also assist with any ground transfers, lift

tickets, and/or airfare. In order to receive special rates, please identify yourself as part of the Lithuanian Ski Group trip. Please contact Linda Crouch at ski.com to confirm booking ASAP as this is a heavy travel week.

The 2018 ŠALFASS ski championships on Aspen Mountain has tentatively been set for Monday, February 26th at the NASTAR course. Race registration will be Sunday Feb. 25th from 4 to 6 PM at 809 S. Aspen St. Suite 1, or at race course on ski day. Ski Aspen Highlands on Tuesday, February 27th, and have lunch at Cloud Nine Restaurant at Noon.

Any general questions can be directed by email to either Ed Mickus at edmickus1@aol.com or Dr. Vytas Saulis at vsaulis@sbcglobal.net. You are urged to make all your travel reservations now as this is a busy travel period.

## The Annual Aspen Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration

You are also invited to come to Aspen to celebrate Lithuania's Independence on Sunday, February 25, 2018 at 4PM - 6PM! This year, our special guest of honor will be the Lithuanian Consul General Mantvydas Bekešius. The event will be sponsored by Honorary Consul and Dean of Aspen Consular Corps John Vytutas Prunskis, M.D. The Lithuanian Consulate in Aspen is

the highest elevation Lithuanian Consulate in the world and the first diplomatic mission approved in Aspen by the U.S. State Department. Please RSVP to Daiva if you plan on attending the Independence Day Celebration at dmb@aspenconsul.com.

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

### ONGOING

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

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

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

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

Every Third Saturday, Mar-Jun & Sep-Nov, 1-3 p.m.  
**Amber Roots Lithuanian Heritage Club**  
Lithuanian Music Hall, 2517 E. Allegheny Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.  
Use Tilton Street entrance. Bring a dish to share.  
Info: milliemarks@aol.com

### DECEMBER 2017

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

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

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

December 11, 7 p.m.  
**Evening with Kestutis Nakas at MOMA**  
Modern Mondays presents Channel D, a new multimedia performance work by Lithuanian American theater artist Kestutis Nakas, revisiting his own 1982-83 Manhattan Cable public-access show Your Program of Programs (which was recently acquired and preserved by the Museum). Staged weekly at the Experimental Television Center, YPOP joined Glenn O'Brien's TV Party and Colab-produced programs in New York's rich post-punk artists' television scene. As host, Nakas riffed on the early TV work of Ernie Kovacs and Sid Caesar while flaunting the tatty, precarious nature of its production in a theatrical impulse rooted in Brecht and Dada. Through spoken word and video, Nakas will channel YPOP participants and East Village artists such as John Sex and Tseng Kwong Chi, all the while articulating a more sinister side of American selfhood on the other side of the monitor—then and now.

December 15, 6:30 p.m.  
**John Maciuka's lecture Resonant Patterns: The Art of Kazys Varnelis in the Context of Bauhaus Modernism**  
at Susivienijimas Lietuvių Amerikoje (SLA), 307 W 30th Street, New York, NY 10001.  
Organized by Gintarė Bukauskas. Tel. 347-415-6379, E-mail: zybuokle@gmail.com

December 17, 1:00 p.m.  
**Ateitis Organization's Christmas Eve Celebration**  
at the Lithuanian Youth Center (5620 S Claremont Ave, Chicago, IL 60636). Registration by December 10 with Ona Daugirdienė: tel. 630-325-3277 or E-mail: odaugirdas@hotmail.com.

### JANUARY 2018

January 28, 2018, 12:30 p.m.  
**Lithuanian Research and Studies Center Celebration and Concert**  
at the World Lithuanian Center in Lemont, IL

### 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.

February 16, 2018, 6 p.m.  
**Lithuania's Independence 100th Anniversary Celebration**  
at JW Marriott Essex House New York, 160 Central Park South, New York, NY 10019. Organizers: New York City Lithuanian Community and Lithuanian Consulate in New York. Robert Nagys tel: 212-484-4686, E-mail: Robert.nagys@marriott.com.

### JUNE/JULY 2018

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

**GOT EVENTS?**  
Let us help you spread the word! Please send your event notice to kariledalia@yahoo.com two months in advance of the month in which you would like to see it listed.



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