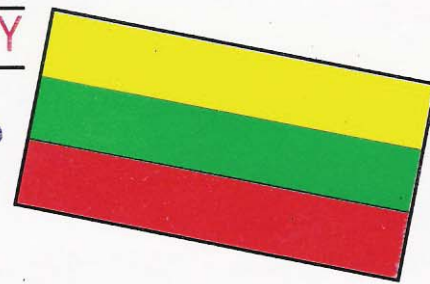


# Newsletter



April 2007

## EDITOR'S DESK

*Linksmų Velykų!*  
*Nuoširdūs sveikinimai ir linkežimai*  
*šv. Velykų proga.*

Easter is the greatest annual church and national calendar, spring holiday.

The egg being the symbol of life and rebirth of nature is given special meaning in Easter traditions. The tradition of egg dyeing and exchanging is much older than Christianity. In Lithuania, eggs were dyed not only before Easter but also before St. George's day and Pentecost.

There were two methods of egg decorating: drawing designs with wax or scratching designs on dyed eggs. Numerous designs consisted of blossoms, snakes, wheel and cog, stars, branches of rue, snowflakes, and many others.

The most common dye used was onion skins. A pot was filled with dry onion skins and water and allowed to soak for several hours, then brought to a boil, then raw eggs were placed for seven or ten minutes, later the pot was removed from the heat, but eggs were left in the dye for some time to intensify the reddish brown color. Nettles were used for green and raw beets for red. Black and dark brown colors were obtained by soaking black alder bark with rusty metal pieces and adding fermented juices of beets or sauerkraut.

-:-

Last month, an article from the Catholic New York discussed the closing of Our Lady of Vilnius parish in New York City. Since that time, the story has been published in a variety of forums from newspapers to the Internet. View the story on YouTube.com at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKKxJTVMcas>

You can also view the status of the parish at <http://ourladyofvilnius.org>.

-:-

Congratulations to the February 50-50 winner Ruth Thon.

-:-

The LCS Newsletter continues to seek stories of interest to the Lithuanian community. Contact Janet Petrauskas at 412-341-7925 or [j\\_petrauskas@yahoo.com](mailto:j_petrauskas@yahoo.com) with your story or photos for publication. ☺

## Vytautas J. Sliupas Featured Speaker at Independence Day Celebration

The Lithuanian Citizens' Society celebrated Lithuanian Independence day on March 11 at the South Side Location. Vytautas Sliupas, P.E., President of the Aukščiauji Foundation for Agricultural and Forest



Vytautas J. Sliupas

Development, was the guest speaker for the event. The celebration included a display of Lithuanian culture, musical accompaniment provided by Nancy Binkney and Ruth Thon, and Lithuanian songs. After the presentation, a meal of cepelinas was provided.

The Society thanks Vytautas for speaking at our event and graciously provided him with a \$100 donation to support his foundation with the intention that it would encourage individual members to donate on their own.

Below is the note received from Vytautas Sliupas as received by President John Baltrus.

"I would like to thank you for your hospitality and for the invitation to take part in Lithuanian Independence commemoration. Personally I am very thankful, since I was able to meet many kind and friendly people. The organization and excellent control of your meeting surprised me very much.

It would be a good example for others to follow.

Also thanks to your Society for the check, which will help us continue our work. I also believe that the individual members who told me they would send their donations will not forget to do that.

Best wishes to everyone for the upcoming Easter holiday."

*Vytautas J. Sliupas*

## Society's South Side Club Fined for Smoking During Bingo

On March 21, an Allegheny County Health Inspector visited our South Side location to investigate complaints of smoking during the Society's Bingo. The Society's officers believed that the Society was covered by an injunction issued by Common Pleas Judge Della Vecchia delaying the implementation of the county's new no-smoking ordinance for bars and restaurants. John Baltrus met with the inspector to answer all his questions and to discuss the Society's reasoning for not implementing the ordinance. The Society currently holds a liquor license that covers the entire building, including the areas where bingo is played.

A plethora of news articles have appeared since that time. The Society has filed a letter of appeal and a hearing is expected to take place within 30 days. County Executive Dan Onorato has already called the fine excessive and has indicated that a compromise on the fine should be reached.

The following is an excerpt from an article written by Bonnie Pfister in the Pitts-

*con't. on Page 2*

## April Members' Meeting Date Changed to April 15

The monthly Members' meeting will be held on Sunday, April 15, at 2:00 p.m. at the South Side location. The date was moved forward one week because of the Easter holiday.

## Survey Results are In!

At the March Members' meeting, a survey was distributed asking members the type of articles they'd like to see more (or less) in the LCS Newsletter.

The results have been tallied with an overwhelming positive result! The majority of our members are very pleased with our newsletter and would welcome additional articles on Personal Interviews, News Articles from Lithuania and on American Lithuanian Events, Recipes, Contests, and Photos.



# Koplytėlės (Lithuanian Wooden Shrines)

Submitted by John Kuncas,  
as written by Zita Žemaitytė

For ages crucifixes, roadside shrines, poles with shrines, and roofed poles have stood by the roads, fringes of forests, near homesteads and in cemeteries. Made by talented folk craftsmen, they harmoniously blended with the Lithuanian landscape, and became an inseparable feature of the every day life of the village people, reflecting their aesthetic and religious world outlook and their veneration for the Almighty. The origin of these wooden folk monuments can be traced back to the ancient Balts' custom of commemorating their dead. For the first time mentioned in written chronicles in the 16th century, beginning with the 17th century these shrines have also been erected to honour prominent persons and families and they mark important villages or folk events.

Shrines could be found all over Lithuania. They were especially numerous in Zemaitija (western Lithuania). They were erected on the ground, on stone wreaths, later on concrete basements. Small shrines were nailed to oak and lime tree trunks. Different in shape -- quadrangular rotund, triangular, the shrines, despite their smallness (1.5m in height), nevertheless produced a monumental impression. In some of them, transformed elements of major architectural styles - Baroque, Gothic, Classic - may be traced. The shrines usually had glazed doors on one, two, or four sides and contained painted sculptures of saints - village or family patrons: Virgin Mary, the mourning Christ, St. Isidor, St. Rochas and others.

In recent years, shrines have been rapidly decaying. The disappearance of these tiny oases of spirituality, emanating peace and harmony, would be devastating for the Lithuanian landscape.

## Lithuanian Club Bingo

### April 2007 Specials!

April 1 - Monthly Drawing: 1 month free admission and 3 \$50 prizes  
 April 8 - CLOSED Easter Sunday  
 April 18 - \$15 night  
 April 22 - April Showers  
 \*\*\*Save your April and May admissions tickets for a drawing in June for one 6 months admission

**\$1 off** **\$1 off**  
**COUPON** **COUPON**  
 Valid April 2007 Valid April 2007  
**\$1 off** **\$1 off**  
**COUPON** **COUPON**  
 Valid April 2007 Valid April 2007

BINGO con't from Page 1

burgh Tribune Review on March 29, 2007:

## County dings S. Side bingo hall for \$16K over smoking

Bingo players who enjoy smoking during the games reacted angrily to the Allegheny County Health Department's decision to fine a South Side social club for allowing them to light up.

"I'm thinking of leaving if I can't smoke," said Mary Capozzoli, 55, of the South Side, while waiting for the games to begin Wednesday night at the Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western Pennsylvania hall on Jane Street.

"My rights are being taken away from me," said Capozzoli, who has been going to the games for 30 years.

The club, which plans to stop the games for smoking breaks, said it will appeal the \$16,250 fine, the first in the county since a smoking ban took effect this year.

The organization was fined because it allowed 64 people to smoke during bingo games on March 21, the health department said. The fine was \$250 for each violation -- totaling \$16,000 -- plus a \$250 fine for failing to have a workplace smoking policy.

Club officials said they believed that, as a social club selling liquor and food, they were exempt until May 1, as are bars and restaurants.

"We were not trying to defy the order," said club financial secretary Frank Ziaukas. "We honestly thought that we were exempt."

Donna Baker, of Carnegie, agreed with Capozzoli that smokers will stop patronizing the club's bingo games.

"If they aren't allowed to smoke, people aren't going to come," she said.

Deborah O'Rear, 58, a South Side realtor, said she believes the fine "is totally unjust because all the other bingo halls are allowed to have smokers."

O'Rear said it is more dangerous to walk along East Carson Street after midnight on weekends than it is to sit in a bingo hall with smokers.

But Vonda Little, 40, of the South Side, who has been going to the club's games for five years, said she is happy the smoking ban is being enforced.

"It's about time. Everybody is always blowing smoke in your face," said Little, adding that her mother died of cancer.

Allegheny County Council voted 14-1 to prohibit smoking in nearly all workplaces, including bars, restaurants and casinos. Only tobacco retailers and volunteer-staffed events were exempted.

## April (Balandis) Birthdays Listed

Among members with April birthdays are: Dalia Yucius (1); Leonard Marculaitis (7); Nancy Patton (7); Walter Pikunas (7); Charles Degrosky (9); Arunas Nesavas (9); Sylvia Hraychuck (10); Jurgita Bakutyte (12); Emilia MacPhail (13); Leonora Kusleikiene (14); Ann Hyman (15).

Sheila Mars Mollica (16); Barbara Degyan-sky (18); Alice Wellen (21); Niles Slavin (21); Irene Pascuzzi (24); Kathleen Skalka (25); David Melesky (26); Jane Dansevich (27); Albin Vareha Jr. (3).

Linksmų Gimtadienių!

# Sisters of St. Francis Celebrate 85th Anniversary



The pioneer Sisters of St. Francis in front of the newly built motherhouse in Whitehall, Pennsylvania.

The Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God are celebrating their 85th anniversary as a congregation in 2007.

The Sisters trace their ancestry to John Neumann, the saintly fourth bishop of Philadelphia, and Anna Bachman. Before their roots sank into Franciscan soil, their earlier religious rooting had begun with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Des Plaines, IL. The community's mission was to serve a distinct ethnic group, in this case, Polish immigrants.

Young women of Lithuanian ancestry called to serve God's people but finding no Lithuanian congregation, also entered this community. As the number of Lithuanian women increased and their superiors assigned them to Lithuanian parishes to teach, they attempted to receive canonical approbation for forming a separate province to allow them greater freedom in serving Lithuanian immigrants and their children. The response from the Polish congregation was a firm "impossible."

They found assistance from three clergymen in whose parish schools some of them were already teaching. In the beginning, most of their efforts were directed

con't on Page 4

## Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western PA

President - John Baltrus  
 Vice President - Nancy Binkney  
 Recording Sec'y - Ausra Cunningham  
 Financial Sec'y - Frank Ziaukas  
 Treasurer - Greg Baurnes  
 Directors - Andrew Marculaitis,  
 Mathilda Milauskas, Janet Petrauskas,  
 Kathie Skalka, Halina Stabacinskiene,  
 and Gerri Todd

Sergeant-at-Arms - Rose Carroll and  
 Kastytis Vaicenasa

Newsletter - Janet Petrauskas  
 1010 Arch Avenue  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15234  
 412-341-7925

## *Familiar, and sometimes forgotten, names turn up in back issues of Vytis*

by Len Barcoucky

The Vytis, or Knight, is one of the best known symbols of Lithuania. It also is the name of the magazine published for many years by the Knights of Lithuania.

Thanks to the efforts of volunteer correspondents who sent in articles about the activities of Pittsburgh's Council 19, the magazine provides a source of information on life in our Lithuanian-American community decades ago. Thanks to the late Walter and Mildred Chinik and to Sam and Anne Aleliunas, who saved many of their copies, we can look back at some of those old stories. There are lots of familiar names and places.

The October-Spalis 1951 issue of the Vytis contains a report by "Mitzie" on the Pittsburgh delegation to the Knights Convention in New York City. "Yes, we were well represented," Mitzi writes. "35 of us to be exact."

Council 19 members received special praise for writing the largest number of letters in support of Lithuanian independence of any council in the nation. "Credit really goes to Helen Girdis and Nellie Kuntz for their untiring work," Mitzie writes.

The council gained other honors that year. "Stephen Onaitis, now of Council 19 and for many years member of Homestead Council, was awarded our coveted 4th degree medal ..."

A day after their return, the delegates met at the Chinik home to plan the year's events. Activities included Sunday bowling and a card party.

"The comely president of Council 19, Jeannie Walkauskas [Schoentag], came back imbued with enthusiastic spirit and ideas from the convention. An orchid to her for the good job she is doing conducting all her meetings solely in Lithuanian. Joseph Boley would be proud of her for that ..."

## Welcome New Members!

The membership drive is in full swing to bring in new members. We are happy to announce that the following have been accepted for membership:

John Chasky  
Egidijus (Agis) Petrauskas  
John Shukes  
Cynthia Kaufold  
Linda Terrick  
Colleen Beall  
Ted Kirys

When you see these new members, please greet them with a true Lithuanian LABAS, and welcome them into our Society.

## Cooking Time!

*Do you have a favorite Lithuanian recipe that you would like to share with the membership? Submit your entries to Janet Petrauskas at 1010 Arch Avenue, Pgh., PA 15234 or j\_petrauskas@yahoo.com. All recipes will be tested in the kitchen before being printed. Recipes of all types are welcome for publication.*

Results from the recent survey distributed to Society members indicate that the readership would like to see more recipes printed in the newsletter. Based on that response, the **Cooking Time** column will be featured from time to time that shares authentic Lithuanian cuisine.

Soup has long been considered a traditional Lithuanian cuisine and a staple with many meals. Beet Soup is one variety that is enjoyed both hot or cold. Regardless of the time of year, a bowl of soup is always a delicious treat!

### COLD BEET SOUP

#### Šaltibarščiai

2 qts. sour milk  
4 tbsps. sour cream  
2 boiled beets, peeled  
6 stalks beet tops  
2 small cucumbers  
1/2 cup chopped green onion  
3-4 blossoms fresh dill  
4 hard-boiled eggs

Beat together milk, cream and finely graded beets. Add peeled, diced cucumbers, diced egg and chopped dill. Chop beet-tops, boil in salt water. Cool, add to first mixture. Salt to taste. Chill thoroughly.

*Source: The Baltic Times, March 15-21, 2007*

### HOT BEET SOUP

#### Burokėlių sriuba

3 lbs. pork or beef  
4 medium red beets  
6 dried mushrooms  
6 peppercorns  
1 bay leaf  
1 cup sour cream  
Soup greens

The broth tastes better if cooked with pork. Put meat, soup greens, seasonings, and well-washed dried mushrooms into boiling water and cook until meat is tender. Remove meat and mushrooms, strain broth, cut mushrooms into julienne strips.

Cook or bake the beets, peel and grate coarsely. Add lemon or beet juice to the broth for tartness (to taste). Add beets and mushrooms, heat the broth so that it will turn a red color from the beets.

Saute 1 tablespoon of flour in butter, dilute with the broth and add to soup. Stir in sour cream.

Serve with peeled or unpeeled cooked or baked potatoes.

*Source: Lithuanian Heritage Magazine, Jan/Feb 2007*

## Newsletter Now Digital

The LCS Newsletter is now available through email! If you are interested in receiving a digital copy, please contact Editor Janet Petrauskas at j\_petrauskas@yahoo.com. Provide your email address and phone number in case there are any questions. Starting with the April issue, the newsletter will be digitally sent to those submitting a request.

The Society is researching the option of allowing members to choose their method of delivery. For the present time, all members will continue to receive a hard copy in the mail.

As a reminder, archived issues of the LCS newsletter for the past year are available in digital format on our website at <http://www.pittsburghlithuanians.com/newsletter.htm>.

## Society Member Patricia Macey featured in Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Article



Retired legal secretaries from the Reed Smith law firm gathered at the Allegheny Harvard Yale Princeton Club in Downtown Pittsburgh for a luncheon. The gathering of the retired secretaries has occurred for the past 14 years. Society Member Patricia Macey is the fourth person from the left. This photo was featured in the March 5 edition of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. (Photo Bob Donaldson/Pittsburgh Post-Gazette)

# St. Casimir's Day Proves Extra-Special in 2007

by Len Barcousky



Feast of St. Casimir partipants (left to right) Sister Miriam, Patricia Beyer, and Alice Lewellen. Photo by Len Barcousky.

This year's Pittsburgh commemoration of the Feast of St. Casimir was special for at least two reasons.

First, it fell on March 4, the actual feast day of St. Casimir, Lithuania's only canonized saint.

Second, it offered a chance for at least one former student taught by the Sisters of St. Francis to rekindle an old friendship.

Kathy Zovko, who now lives in Upper St. Clair, was a student of Sister Ona Buswink at St. Gabriel's School.

Mrs. Zovko and her husband Joe were among a dozen Lithuanian-Americans who traveled to the Sisters of St. Francis chapel in Whitehall for the annual event.

Father Donald Lippert, a Capuchin friar, celebrated the mass. He is Lithuanian on his mother's side. His late aunt, Julia Adomaitis, was a member of the Lithuanian-Franciscan order.

John Baltrus, who serves a dual role as president of the Pittsburgh Knights council and of the Lithuanian Citizens' Society, served as lector. Sister Augusta Skulis assisted Father Lippert as server.

Clare Doran-Kolat and Brian and Rita Johnson and their young sons, Brian Jr. and Justin, did the presentation of traditional gifts—a portrait of St. Casimir, a cross, lily and crowns of gold and thorns.

After mass, the sisters hosted a brunch in their cafeteria that featured Lithuanian bacon buns, sometimes called bundukai or pyragėliai su lašiniai.

Cold weather and the threat of snow appeared to have kept numbers down for this year's commemoration. The Knights and the Sisters, however, are already making plans for a combined mass and brunch for the 2008 celebration.

Born in Krakow in 1458, Casimir was the grandson of Jogaila, the grand duke of Lithuania and later king of Poland. Known for his piety, St. Casimir died at age 25 in Grodno, an ancient Lithuanian city now part of Belarus, and was buried in Vilnius.

*SISTERS con't from Page 2*

towards finding a Midwest congregation willing to accept a fledgling Lithuanian community. Meeting with no success here, two Pittsburgh priests turned to the Franciscans in Millvale where the diocesan clergy were to have their annual retreat. The incumbent general superior and her Council agreed to gradually accept 24 transferees from Des Plaines since their novitiate could not accommodate both their own candidates and those of a prospective new congregation.

March 12, 1922, was the day when the Millvale Franciscan congregation agreed to foster the Lithuanian community and became the Foundation Day for the Lithuanian Sisters. In groups of six and four and two, they found their way from Chicago to Pittsburgh where they were met at the train station and were brought to either the Larkins Way convent in the South Side or the Motherhouse in Millvale.

Three years later with the blessing of Bishop Boyle, the financial help of the Lithuanian clergy and laity, and the encouragement of the Millvale Franciscans, they purchased a 33-acre farm in the South Hills area of Pittsburgh and built a convent to accommodate their growing numbers. On August 15, 1925, the new Motherhouse was dedicated.

## Did you know?

"Romuva" was Lithuania's religion before the introduction of Christianity.

Lithuania was the last country in Europe to be converted to Christianity.

In pre-Christian Lithuania, the oak tree was of religious significance. The oak tree is still a symbol of long life and strength.

Every Sunday 12:30 to 1:00 pm.

WEDO 810 AM

echoes98@hotmail.com

• Echoes of Lithuania

Sunday & Wednesday from 7 - 10 pm.

• BINGO

Sunday, April 15 at 2:00 pm.

• Members' Meeting

Thursday, April 12 at 5:30 pm.

• Board of Directors Meeting

email: info@pittsburghlithuanians.com  
www.pittsburghlithuanians.com

1725 Jane Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203  
**Lithuanian Citizens' Society**  
**Of Western Pennsylvania**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
NEW BRIGHTON, PA  
PERMIT NO 218