

December 2007

## EDITOR'S DESK



*From the desk of the Editor...wishing all readers of the Society's Newsletter a Linksmų Sv. Kalėdų ir Laimingų 2008 Naujujų Metų!*

Get well wishes go out to Agnes Kuzen who recently had a fall and is recovering. Hope Agnes is feeling better!

Congratulations to Mildred Sukys who won the 50/50 raffle at the November member's meeting. Mildred graciously returned a portion of her winnings to the Society. Thank you Mildred!

Irene Pascuzzi recently had a bad fall down some stairs and broke three ribs, her thumb, and fractured her knee. Irene is in rehabilitation at the Consulate Retirement Village. We wish Irene a speedy recovery and send her our best wishes.

Get your dancing shoes on! The 52nd Annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival will be held on May 16-18, 2008, at the David Lawrence Convention Center. Please note the date change from the traditional Memorial Day weekend.

The Pittsburgh Folk Festival is once again offering Lottery Calendars for sale as fundraisers. The cost is only \$25 and your numbers are good for the entire 2008 year. Many of the Society members have been winners in the past. Why not take a chance and help the Folk Festival at the same time. Please contact Dalia Yucius at 412-381-8669 for information. Remember, these calendars make great Christmas gifts!

**CORRECTION:** In the November issue of the LCS Newsletter, the Lithuanian name for Lithuanian Straw Ornaments was incorrectly listed. It should have been "Šiaudinukų Pavyzdžiai."

As a reminder, Bingo is held at the Lithuanian Hall on South Side every Wednesday and Sunday evening and is open to the general public. We invited you to stop down one evening and play a few games with your friends!

## Meet your 2008 Society Board Candidates

This issue of the newsletter provides information on each of the candidates nominated for the 2008 Board of Directors. Elections will take place at the December 9 Member meeting.

### Office of the President Unopposed

#### John Baltrus

John has been an active member of the Society for 26 years and has held the position of Director on and off throughout those years. He is currently the Society's President.



John Baltrus

For the past 16 years, he has been President for the Knights of Lithuania C-10, Knights of Lithuania C-19, past National Treasurer for five years and past District President for five years. John is active in many Lithuanian organizations including APPLE and also updates and maintains the Society's web site. John is comfortably fluent in the Lithuanian language.

John holds both a Bachelor's and Ph.D. degree in chemistry and has worked as a research group leader for the U.S. Department of En-

**Candidate's Statement:** "As president I have tried to keep the members informed, especially with respect to the Society's finances. I believe that members can only make informed decisions about the future of the society by knowing the facts. While I expected some struggles in addressing the financial balance of the organization, I was unprepared for the sudden and significant decrease in revenue brought about by the temporary implementation of the county's smoking ban. The long-term affects of that ban are still being felt and have hastened the need to develop a long-term plan for our future. I will continue to keep the members informed and work with the appointed committee and officers to develop such a plan. As always, every member will be given an opportunity to voice their opinion on the future of our society. It is also important that we keep to our mission of providing heritage and cultural opportunities to our members and the community during this important time."

### Office of the Vice President Unopposed

#### Nancy Binkney

Nancy has been a Society member for the past 15 years during which she served as a Director for four years and Treasurer for two years. She is currently the Society's Vice President.



Nancy Binkney

She has been active in the weekly Lithuanian Language Classes for years. Nancy also is the unofficial "choir director" for the Lithuanian Language classes and has often performed on the piano for Lithuanian social events. Nancy is currently employed part-time by Carnegie Mellon University where she does desktop publishing, purchasing, and reconciliation of accounts.

Previously at CMU, she was employed as a Graduate Coordinator for Biomedical Engineering. Nancy has served as Secretary and Vice President of CMU's Staff Council, an entity similar to a professional union. While in that position, she served on a mediation board and authored a bi-monthly column for the Faculty/Staff newspaper. Nancy and her husband, Bill, have one daughter, Lisa Pinigis, and granddaughter Emily.

**Candidate's Statement:** "As Vice President, I plan to continually promote Lithuanian heritage within our Society and culture to the community at large. I also plan to keep the Society operating successfully with an eye to the future."

## Still Time Left to RSVP for the Kucios Event

The LCS Kucios Party will be held on December 8 from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the Lithuanian Hall on South Side. If you have not yet RSVP'd for the party and would like to attend, please contact Ausra Cunningham at 412-341-5649 or Nancy Binkney at 412-462-8865.



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## Office of the Recording Secretary Unopposed

### Janet Petrauskas

Janet has been a member for more than 20 years and has served as a director for the past year and a half. She currently is Editor of the LCS newsletter having assumed the position from her Uncle, Janet Petrauskas Ray Palket, after his passing in September 2006. In addition to the newsletter, Janet often creates promotional flyers for the Society.

Janet is also a member of the Lithuanian Nationality Room Committee with the University of Pittsburgh.

She has been active in many Lithuanian activities over the years including dancing in the Folk Festival in the Civic Arena and participating in United We Sing. She has been to Lithuania twice in recent years to visit family.

Janet is often seen around the Lithuanian Hall assisting her father, Bruno Sukys, with building tasks at both the South Side and Jefferson Hills locations.

Janet is employed by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit as a Web Developer and also teaches multimedia classes for Duquesne University. She holds a bachelor's degree in Information Technology, a Master's in Multimedia Technology, and a Master's in Education.

She has a 9 year old son, Andrius, who often assists her with taking photos for the newsletter. She is the daughter of long-time members Mildred and Bruno Sukys.



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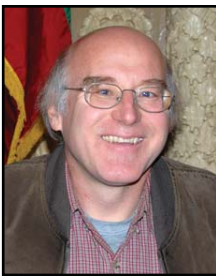
## Office of the Treasurer Unopposed

### Bill Kolicius III

Bill has been a Society member for more than 20 years. He was a participant in the committee that reviewed financial options for the Society about ten years ago. Bill has also helped with painting and maintenance of the Society's properties.

Bill has provided assistance as a Folk Festival volunteer, helping with setup of the Lithuanian Display and Food Booths.

He has been employed as a social worker for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the past 14 years and holds a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Pittsburgh. Interests include hiking, music and travel. He is currently first Vice President of the Catholic Alumni Club of Pittsburgh, the local branch of a national Catholic singles club.



Bill Kolicius III

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## Office of the Financial Secretary Unopposed

### Don Martello

Don has been a member of our Society since January 2005. During the past three years, Don has served as a member of the Society's 2006 Financial Committee, and as a member of the 2007 Long - Term Planning Committee.

Don has extensive volunteer experience including Vice President, Treasurer, and Union Steward for the American Federation of Government Employees Local 1916, and as an Allegheny County - City of Pittsburgh 14th Ward 39th District Democratic Party Committee Representative.

Don earned a Master's degree in Materials Science and Engineering (Ceramic Engineering) and a Bachelor's degree in Metallurgical Engineering, from the University of Pittsburgh, and a PA Professional Engineering Board certified Engineer-in-Training license.

Don and his significant other, Ellie Sero, have lived together in Squirrel Hill for more than 23 years. Their daughter Julia Sero and son-in-law, John Springford, reside in Cambridge, MA.



Don Martello

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## Office of the Director Four Candidates

### Ray Sabo

Ray has been a Society member for the past 17 years. He was on the Society's Building Committee and active in keeping the Lithuanian Country Club operating. He is also on the Society's Strategic Long-Term Planning Committee, the House Committee, and the Nominating Committee.

A graduate of Operating Engineering School, Ray also completed coursework with CCAC. He is a U.S. Navy veteran where he held the position of flight engineer. He is Treasurer for Vintage Tin of Western Pennsylvania and on the council for Tri-River Car Club Council. Ray is a member of Elks Lodge #11 and Chairman for the upcoming 2009 Oldsmobile National at Seven Springs. Ray is retired from his position of Operating Engineer and now works as a real estate investor. He and his significant other, Susie, live in Duquesne.



Ray Sabo

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## Lithuanian Proverb

*Nesėjes nepjausi*

If you do not sow, you will not reap.

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## Kathie Skalka

Kathie has been a Society Member for more than 15 years. For the past two years, she has served as a Director.

She is currently a member of the Lithuanian Nationality Room Committee with the University of Pittsburgh and a member of the Knights of Lithuania.

Kathie attends the Lithuanian Language classes held each Saturday morning.

Kathie has danced with the Neris Dance Group for six years and represented our Lithuanian Heritage at the Folk Festival by volunteering at the Lithuanian booth.

Kathie is a retired CRNA (Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist) and retired from UPMC McKeesport where she held the position of staff anesthetist and clinical instructor.

Kathie holds a Bachelor's in Education from California University and completed Graduate work at the Graduate School of Anesthesia, McKeesport Hospital. She received her Registered Nurse Diploma from St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing. Kathie has also completed additional classes with the University of Pittsburgh and Rider College in Trenton, NJ.

Kathie has four children, Mark, Vince, Marcy, and Jennifer, and eight grandchildren. She enjoys traveling, photography and taking informal education classes (she has complete four this semester!). She also enjoys silk flower arranging and collecting satirical cartoons.



Kathie Skalka

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## Gerri Todd

Gerri has been a member of our Society for eight years and a director for the past four years.

Gerri and her husband, Cliff, are well known for providing catering for our Society for five years.

Gerri has been involved with many social activity over the years for our Society including Kucios, Jonines, and Market Day. She has sponsored three bus trips for Society members to West Virginia, New York, and Cleveland.

Gerri was one of the original dancers in the Neris Dance Group and danced at the first folk festival held at the Syria Mosque. She is a graduate of St. Casimir's School and is now on the Board for St. Casimir's Alumnae Association.

Gerri is retired from the Catering business. She and her husband reside in Carrick.



Gerri Todd

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## Don't Forget!

Elections for our 2008 LCS Officers will be held at the December 9 Business Meeting.

## Office of the Director con't. Four Candidates

### Dalia Yucius

Dalia has been a Society member for many years.

Best known as the Host of the "Echoes of Lithuania" Radio Program since 1998, Dalia brings a variety of experience to the Pittsburgh Lithuanian Community.



Dalia Yucius

Dalia is a member of the "Neris" Lithuanian Dancers and has been the General Chairman of the Lithuanian participation in the Pittsburgh Folk Festival since 2000. She has also served the LCS in past years as a director and as the first woman President in the history of the organization, positions that were previously held by her late father, Vito Yucius.

A registered nurse by education and former medical instructor, Dalia currently works with her long-time boyfriend, Carl, in his business, Beer World, where she is the Assistant Manager.

## Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western PA

President - John Baltrus

Vice President - Nancy Binkney  
Recording Sec'y - Austra Cunningham  
Financial Sec'y - Frank Ziaukas

Treasurer - Greg Baurnes

Directors - Andrew Marculaitis,  
Mathilda Milauskas, Janet Petrauskas,  
Kathie Skalka, Halina Stabacinskienė,  
and Gerri Todd

Sergeant-at-Arms - Rose Carroll and  
Kastytis Vaicenasa

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

## Decorating a Christmas Tree - Lithuanian Style

In Lithuania it became accepted to decorate Christmas trees only during the period of independence. The custom and most of the tree decorations came from Germany. The decorations were mostly made of glass: angels, various figures, soldiers, balls, etc. Candy in shiny colored wrappings, red apples and pretty cookies were also hung on the tree. After Christmas, the children were allowed to "pick" the goodies off the tree, while the decorations were put away for next year. Because the trees were lit with real candles, these were lighted only once, after dinner on Christmas Eve. Later the tree's branches were already too dry and people were afraid the candle flames could cause a fire. The tree remained in the home until the Epiphany (the official conclusion of the Christmas season).

Every family should acquire straw ornaments and use them to decorate its Christmas tree at home. The straw ornaments can be used year after year because they are quite durable. When the Christmas tree is decorated with straw ornaments, tinsel and other decorations are usually not added. If lights are put on the branches, they are all yellow, not multicolored. The straw ornaments are then shown to the best advantage. Some people prefer to illuminate the tree decorated with straw ornaments with a spotlight placed on the floor.

Source: <http://neris.mii.lt/CHRISTMAS/christmas.html>

## Lithuanian Physician Visits Pittsburgh Hospital

Dr. Giedre Rudinskaite, from Vilnius, Lithuania, recently stopped by our Lithuanian Hall to meet our Pittsburgh Lithuanians.

Giedre was in Pittsburgh during November completing a two-week fellowship with the West Penn Hospital.

Giedre, shown here with Dr. Arvydas Usas, is a Physician Surgeon of Oncology with the Vilnius University Institute of Oncology in Lithuania.

We were happy to meet with her and wish her the best during her visit in Pittsburgh.

Dr. Arvydas Usas (l.) with Dr. Giedre Rudinskaite (r.) shown during her visit to Pittsburgh. Photo by Janet Petrauskas.



## ~ In Loving Memory ~ Bertha (Papeaka) Kuzma

Bertha Papeaka Kuzma, 90, a life-time member of the Lithuanian Citizens Society and member of the Knights of Lithuania, died on November 26. She was the wife of the late William Kuzma; beloved mother of William Kuzma, Jr. (Emily) and Robert Kuzma (Gloria); Grandmother of Maria Arden, William Kuzma, Douglas Kuzma, and Christine Tunder; Sister of Julie Aciri, Matilda Ghelarducci, Alice Lewellen, Evelyn Walles and Dolores Schmitt; preceded in death by sisters, Margaret Papeaka, Anne Magdich, Mary DeMarco, Edith Kelminsky and brothers Peter Papeaka and Constant Papeaka.

May she rest in peace.

## December (Gruodis) Birthdays Listed

Among members with December birthdays are: Eva Martin (1); Beatrice Packy (2); Barbara Lee Sass (3); Rita Emerick (7); Bernard Burdulis (8); Douglas MacPhail (9); Laverne Perry (9); Norman Martello (12); Jean Schoentag (13);

Anna Greegus (18); Rita Johnson (18); Arminas Maciulis (18); David Stanley (20); Edward Johnson (21); Edward Young (21); Stanley Andrunas (23); Dolores Morante (24); Benedict Savinis Jr. (26); Bernadette Valenta (31);

Linksmu Gimtadienių!

## You Know You're Lithuanian When...

This list started with the October newsletter and has carried over for two months. Read on and see how many of these are true for you?

28. Every party consists of Lithuanians breaking out in song and polka.
29. You own the tie-dye basketball jersey/shirt with the skeletons from the Lithuanian basketball Olympic team.
30. You meet a new Lithuanian cousin at every event.
31. Your parents won't go to the doctors unless they have a severed limb.
32. You team all your American friends how to say "i sveikata" because it is better to drink Lithuanian style.
33. You know you're Lithuanian when someone asks for your name to document it and you give them your first name. They then ask for your first name thinking your first name was your last name.
34. When you have two sets of friends: your American ones and your Lithuanian ones.
35. You have a headache and the prescription is more polka.
36. Someone mistakes you for a Russian and your friends have to hold you back from beating the person up ... then you give them a ten minute lecture on how totally different the two are (and how obviously superior the Lithuanian culture is).
37. When you say you're not hungry and your mocute just gives you more and more food and says that you are too skinny. Then she says if you return back home skinny your parents won't send you back because they'll think that she did not feed you.
38. When people ask you what your background is your explanation turns into a geography lesson.
39. You could drink a fifth of vodka at 16 years old.
40. When you sing an all-purpose celebratory song at all events (i.e., ilgiausiu metu) .. perfect for birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, graduations.. and your American friends have heard it so much they can sing the valio verse!
41. You go to parties and there is a never-ending supply of shots for you.
42. When people ask for your last name, you don't bother saying it. You just start spelling it out.

And how was your week?

## Nationality Room Committee Members decorate tree at University of Pittsburgh



Shown with the decorated Christmas tree are (left to right) Vince Rodgers, Kathie Skalka, Rose Carroll, Tillie Milauskas, and Vince Rodgers Sr. Missing from picture is Mildred Sukys. Photo by Kathie Skalka.

Members from the Lithuanian Nationality Room Committee for the University of Pittsburgh recently decorated the tree with Lithuanian-made straw ornaments.

Each year, hundreds of visitors come from all over the world to see the Nationality Rooms. The Lithuanian Room is one of the original rooms and was dedicated over 75 years ago.

The room will remain decorated for Christmas until mid-January.

*Linksmų Kalėdų!*

## What's Happening at the Lithuanian Club

**November 30 & December 1, 2007**

Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God in Whitehall will hold their 4th Annual Creche Display at the Sisters' Motherhouse. Friday 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.; Saturday 10:00 - 3:00 p.m.

**December 8, 2007**

Kucios will be held at the Lithuanian Hall on the South Side. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more details.

**December 9, 2007**

Monthly members' meeting and 2008 officer elections.

**May 16-18, 2008**

The 52nd Annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival will be held at the David Lawrence Convention Center.

**Every Saturday**

The Lithuanian language classes are held at the Lithuanian Hall on South Side from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. Classes are free of charge and open to anyone interested in learning the Lithuanian Language. The classes run each Saturday from September through June.

**EXTRA!**

The December 2 showing of CBS' reality show "The Great Race" will feature scenes of the race that was filmed in Lithuania. John Baltrus had the honor of seeing part of the filming crew at the Vilnius Airport when he was visiting Lithuania this past summer.

The show will be broadcast on CBS on Sunday, December 2, at 8:00 p.m.

## Changes are A-Happening with our Newsletter

We are always seeking ways to make our LCS newsletter more progressive with the times. **Beginning with the January 2008 issue, those Society members who receive their newsletter through email delivery will not receive a copy of their newsletter through the U.S. Postal Service.**

In light of the Society's financial situation, we have decided to eliminate duplicate copies being sent to our members.

Remember, if you are not on our email list and would like to receive a digital copy of the newsletter, contact Editor Janet Petrauskas and provide your name and email address. Digital copies are sent up to 15 days in advance of receiving your copy in the postal mail.

- Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, December 6 at 5:30 p.m.
- Members' Meeting  
Sunday, December 9 at 2:00 p.m.
- BINGO  
Sunday & Wednesday from 7 - 10 p.m.
- Echoes of Lithuania  
echoes98@hotmail.com  
WEDO 810 AM  
Every Sunday 12:30 to 1:00 p.m.

Lithuanian Citizens' Society  
Of Western Pennsylvania  
1725 Jane Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203  
www.pittsburghlithuanians.com  
email: info@pittsburghlithuanians.com

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