

## Pittsburgh Folk Festival Scheduled for May 16, 17, 18

The 52nd Annual Pittsburgh Folk Festival will be held on May 16, 17, and 18 at the David Lawrence Convention Center. **The Lithuanian Dance Ensemble, Neris, will perform on Saturday evening at 7:00 p.m.**

The folk festival is a weekend-long multicultural celebration of more than 30 nationalities featuring tra-



ditional ethnic entertainment, food and refreshments. Shop in the international bazaar, learn a dance, see traditional crafts or visit the cultural exhibits to learn more about a country and its people.

The "Multicultural Educational Program - Around the World in One Day," provides instruction to elementary and middle school students (grades 2-9) on Friday, May 16. For a fee, this Multicultural Education Program provides a unique opportunity to learn about a variety of cultures in a single day trip. The purpose of this presentation is to promote a better understanding of various peoples by learning about their history, culture and customs.

Tickets may be purchased in advance from Dalia Yucius by calling 412-381-8669.

Advance ticket sale prices: Adults \$8; Children 4-12 \$4, Children under 4 are free.

Tickets purchased at the door: Adults \$10; Children 4-12 \$4, Children under 4 are free.

## LCS Newsletter Changes to a New Design

With this issue, we proudly introduce a new design for our newsletter. Created by Editor Janet Petrauskas, the design reflects our strong pride in our Western Pennsylvania Lithuanian community.

## Annual Summer Celebration Jonines Planned for June 21

Mark your calendar! **The Annual Jonines Day Celebration will be held on Saturday, June 21, at the Lithuanian Country Club in Jefferson Hills from 3:00 p.m. until dark.**

The picnic is held in observance of the Feast of St. John the Baptist, the longest day of the year when all who are named John are especially honored.

During the past celebrations, children hunted through the nearby woods for glow sticks representing fern flowers. The children had great fun doing this especially in the dark with only the light from the bonfire burning brightly.

The tradition of Jonines goes back to pagan times. It includes lighting of a bonfire in the field to keep witches and evil spirits from harming the livestock and crops. In more recent times, the young and old sang, danced and feasted.

This special day has been observed every year in Lithuania for several centuries. It observes the longest day of the year. Our Society marks the day that is closest to the start of summer.

Each year, a large showing of members and friends come to Jonines. We have even had visitors from Cleveland and New Jersey celebrate with us.

We suggest that you bring a folding chair and wear comfortable clothing. Remember, this is a traditional Lithuanian heritage picnic.

In case of rain, activities will be held inside. Hope to see everyone there!



Dennis Cunningham was the lucky winner last year with the raffle. Pictured with Dennis are Ray Sabo and Ausra Cunningham.

## Upcoming Events

**May 11, 2008, 2:00 p.m.**

Monthly members' meeting, Lithuanian Hall, South Side  
(no member meetings in June, July, and August)

**May 16-18, 2008**

Pittsburgh Folk Festival, David Lawrence Convention Center

**June 21, 2008, 3:00 p.m. - dark**

Jonines Celebration, Lithuanian Country Club, Jefferson Hills

**September 14, 2008, 2:00 p.m.**

Monthly members' meeting, Lithuanian Hall, South Side

**Every Saturday September through June, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon**

Lithuanian language classes, Lithuanian Hall, South Side

## Editor's Column

Yearning to brush up on your Lithuanian conversational skills? Former Board member John McCloskey is seeking a person to converse in Lithuanian with him for a few hours a week. Perhaps a student or Society member. He lives at Westminister Place in Oakmont. If you are interested, please contact John's daughter, Janet Carlisle, at 724-274-3748.

Congratulations to Society member Walt Mullen who won the 50/50 raffle at the April members' meeting. Walt graciously donated the money back to our Society. Labai Aciu!

So you didn't win on the last Superball ticket? You still have a chance to win with our Bingo games. Held every Wednesday and Sunday evening at the Lithuanian Hall on South Side, our Bingo nights are fun and exciting. Why not stop down one evening and play a few games.

Submit your articles and photographs for publication in our newsletter to pittsburghlithuanians@yahoo.com or mail to Editor, LCS Newsletter, 1010 Arch Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15234



## The Meaning of May (Geguže) in Lithuania

In the last issue of the LCS Newsletter, we ran a story about the meaning of March. So many members were interested in learning more about the month names that we are presenting the meaning of May.

Month names are derived from the names of ancient gods or Roman emperors. The names of the months in Lithuanian are unique and original. The months of an agricultural nation are named after natural phenomena or tasks performed at a particular time of the year. These names are typical of the Lithuanian nation, her nature and the Lithuanian way of life.

(retrieved from Lithuanian Customs and Traditions <http://lithuanian-american.org/educat/tradicijos/months.html>)

Geguzis (May) is the most beautiful month in Lithuania. Everything is sprouting, blooming and verdant. In the forest the call of the cuckoo (gegute or geguze) is heard. The bird is cherished by Lithuanians and gives the month its name.

The cuckoo is a mysterious and magic bird. It is the harbinger of true spring. Until the cuckoo's call is heard, venturing outdoors in bare feet is dangerous even if the weather is warm because the earth underneath is still frozen and can cause ailments. The cuckoo's call dispels the last vestige of winter and ensures the cold is gone for good.

The cuckoo's first call determines a person's fortune for that year. Upon hearing the cuckoo for the first time, a person frets whether he has money on his person. If he does, he'll have money all year, things will go well; if he has no money, his pockets will be empty all year long, the wind will blow right through them. It is very good to be carrying a full bucket, basket or bag when hearing the first call of the cuckoo. You will then be wealthy (full of everything) the entire year. It is also to one's advantage to be in a happy mood when the cuckoo's first call is heard. A frowning, unhappy person is condemned to live in a foul mood all year.

When a person hears the cuckoo's first "coo-coo" he or she may ask: "How many years will I live? In how many years (months) will I wed?" The answer is the number of times the cuckoo calls after the question. Upon hearing the cuckoo's first call, a young woman walks backwards until she backs into a tree. She must then break a small bough from the tree and pluck it clean until it looks like a hook. With this hook she can "catch" the young man she prefers.

If the first cuckoo is heard in the company of a large group, the year will be happy, many dances, weddings and parties will be attended. If the cuckoo happens to call from the tree under which a person is seated, it is a bad sign, the year will be dif-

*cont. next column*

## Who Were the Teutonic Knights?

Excerpted from *Lituanus*, Vol 53-4 (2007) from "Vilnius on the Map of Sarmatia: I" by Laimonas Briedis. Graciously submitted by Society member John Kuncas.

Throughout the 14th century, despite being concentrated on the eastern fringes of the Baltic Sea, the warfare between the Teutonic Knights and Lithuanians resonated all over Catholic Europe. The continuous crusades were ordered by the Pope, and among the arriving crusaders there were:

Bohemians in 1323, Alsatians in 1324, Englishmen and Walloons in 1329, Austrians and Frenchmen in 1336, John of Bohemia made 3 trips, as did John Boucicaut and Count William IV of Holland, Henry of Lancaster went in 1352. Henry of Derby, the future King Henry IV of England, went in 1390 and 1392. In 1337, Duke Albert of Austria came with 2000 knights for his "Tanz mit der Heiden" (Dance with the Heathen). In the following year the duke of Lorraine joined the winter reysa with 70 knights. Shortly after this, Albert of Austria turned up again with the Count of Cleves, and they had a special reysa laid out for them so that they could fulfill their vows before Christmas. Count William I of Guelderland went 7 times between 1383 and 1400.

The winter reysa was a chevauchee of between 200 and 2000 men with the aim simply of devastating a given area as quickly as possible. There were usually two of these a year, one in December, the other in January or February, with a gap between the Christmas feast. The sommer-reysa was usually organized on a larger scale with the intention of gaining territory by destroying an enemy stronghold or building a Christian one, although plundering was a feature too. These reysen were not unlike sports, subject to the weather conditions in much the same way as horse-racing is today. ...Were it not for the brutality and the very real hardships, one is tempted to write of the reysen as packaged crusading for the European nobility, and their popularity demonstrated how attractive this package could be when wrapped in the trappings of chivalry. But they depended on the existence of a frontier with paynim and an infidel enemy which could be portrayed as being aggressive.

Vilnius, which was unsuccessfully stormed by the crusaders several times, entered the European geographical consciousness during this century of perpetual reysen.

### *The Meaning of May cont.*

ficult. If this befalls an unmarried girl, she will bear an illegitimate child.

This is but a small sampling of the beliefs related to the cuckoo's return and call. It shows that the cuckoo was a favorite bird. It is thus not surprising that the spring's most beautiful month is named after the cuckoo.

## May & June (Geguže & Birželis) Birthdays Listed

May Birthdays: Paul Vitartas (1); Pam Martello (4); Joseph Gluharty (8); Ausra Cunningham (9); Halina Stabacinskiene (9); Roberta Stackowitz (9); Elaine Evo-sevic Lozada (12); Leatrice Ziefel (12); John Stokes (15); Joanne Karcher (16); Kurt Valenta (19); Ericka Maculis (20); Viola Stanny (23); Karen Tarasenkov (23); Rosanne Zusinas Majcher (25); Al Ponce (27); Jeanne Sidoruk (31);

June Birthdays: Georgiann Zoog (1); Clare Doran-Kolat (2); Wanda Jankoski (3); Karen Pasquini (3); Len Barcousky (4); Joanne Moore (5); Steve Rozman (5); Eleanor Kondrot (8); Annette Parker (9); Eldona Sabo (9); John McCloskey III, (11); Patricia Macey (11); Mary Moore (12); Nancy Sukys (15); Stanley Kondrot (20); Bernard Slancauskas ( 22); Nick Knight (23); Ann Zusinas (24); John Kolicius (24); Daina Vis (25); Lisa Pini-gis (26); Alphonse Vaina Jr. (27); Helen Zappa (29); Arvydas Adomavicius (29); Frank Bucholtz (29); Albert Yanushefsky (30).

### *Linksmu Gimtadienių!*

## 2008 Member Meetings

*Cut and post these meeting dates for future reference.*

**Sunday, May 11, at 2:00 p.m.**

*(No Meetings held during the summer)*

**Sunday, September 14, at 2:00 p.m.**

**Sunday, October 12, at 2:00 p.m.**

**Sunday, November 9, at 2:00 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 14, at 2:00 p.m.**

## Lithuanian Citizens' Society of Western PA

.....  
President - John Baltrus

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.....  
Newsletter - Janet Petrauskas

1010 Arch Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15234

412-341-7925

# Latest Mating of Tigers Raises High Hopes at Zoo

Society member Kathy Suthard appeared in this March 4, 2008, Pittsburgh Post Gazette article. Written by Linda Wilson Fuoco.

A Russian-born Amur tiger that was rejected at birth by his mother is settling in well in his new home at the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium. The 13-year-old male, Globus, has mated with the female tiger, Toma, and playfully rubs noses with her 18-month-old cubs, and has bonded with keepers.



Kathy Suthard scratches Globus, a 12-year old Amur Tiger. (Photo by Andy Starnes)

It will take about a month to find out whether Toma is pregnant. She mated with Globus in late January. If conception occurred, cubs would be born 103 days later.

There is no instant pregnancy test for tigers. The official method involves testing stool samples for hormone levels. But zoo workers are looking for unofficial signs.

"She is cranky and she is hungrier than usual," said Kathy Suthard, lead carnivore keeper at the zoo. "She was cranky and hungry the first time she was pregnant."

Globus came to Pittsburgh in late October from the Bronx Zoo in New York. Born in 1995 on a tiger reserve in Russia, he and his brother were abandoned by their mother. When the owner of the reserve found the cubs, they were severely malnourished. The owner, Victor Yudin, fed them by hand, but the other cub died. Globus was sent to the United States in 1997.

"Globus is a real sweetheart," Ms. Suthard said. "I have never known a cat to behave like him. I think Globus' personality was formed when he was hand-raised. He is comfortable around humans."

Globus also has a reproductive track record. He sired four cubs in two separate litters at the Riverbanks Zoo in Columbia, S.C.

Globus is out in the tiger exhibit every other morning, alternating with Toma. Cubs Mara and Petya go out in the public exhibit with each other, but not with the adult tigers.

"Tigers are solitary in the wild," Ms. Suthard said. "Toma separated herself from her cubs in late January when she went into estrus," which means she was ready to mate with an adult male.

con't. next column

## Tigers Raise Hope cont. from Col. 1

Before putting the big cats together for an attempted breeding, zoo keepers introduced them through fences.

"Toma really likes Globus," Ms. Suthard said. "She calls to him and when they are together, she nuzzles up close to him."

She actually disliked Yorgi, the sire of her first two cubs. That male, who was lent to the Pittsburgh Zoo, has been sent back to the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Neb.

Globus gets nose to nose with Mara and Petya through a fence. He calls to them and the cubs answer back.

At the Riverbanks Zoo, Globus was diagnosed with kidney disease. Zoo veterinarians do not know why he has kidney problems, but it is managed with daily medication. He eats normally, is playful and active, but he does drink a lot of water, which is typical with kidney disease. Kidney disease is common in cats, both domestic and wild, zoo officials said.

Amur tigers -- formerly called Siberian tigers -- are extremely endangered. There are 190 Amur tigers in U.S. zoos and less than 400 in the wild. The breeding of endangered species is carefully planned and monitored by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

## Crowd cheers Porky's 90th at 'Roots of Rock'



Porky Chedwick and his wife, Jeannie, celebrated at the Benedum Center. (photo by Scott Mervis)

Society member and Pittsburgh legend Porky Chedwick celebrated his 90th birthday on March 8 at the Benedum Center in downtown Pittsburgh for the Roots of Rock and Roll XXXIV concert.

Promoter Henry DeLuca used the concert to celebrate the Porky's birthday with a cake ceremony and a big show of love from the crowd.

Although his vision isn't what it use to be, Pork the Tork hasn't lost the voice, the banter or his mad love for "dusty discs." He still can be heard spinning records Saturdays on WKFB 770 AM. "No one's been on the air longer than me," he said. "I have 60 years uninterrupted."

con't. next column

## Porky Chedwick cont. from Col. 2

"I was the inventor of the concept of old records," said Chedwick. And it's no boast. "I took them and played them and made people think they weren't old records."

We send our best wishes out to Porky on his birthday! The entire story can be read online at: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08070/863839-42.stm>

## Golden Age for Amber may be Over in the Baltics

The time when huddled masses of foreign tourists headed straight from the airport to local gift shops to buy amber artifacts may be coming to an end in the Baltics. As reported in the May 1 issue of the Baltic Times, merchants are concerned that amber jewelry sales are declining and complain that public interest toward amber is fading away. "I can't say that amber sales are sky-rocketing, it's quite the opposite," says a manager at the Vilnius Amber Museum. Most buyers are tourists from Italy, Spain, and Japan. (Source: Baltic Times, May 1, 2008)

## Lithuanian Dance Festival to be Held in Los Angeles on July 6



The XIII Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival will be held in Los Angeles, CA, on July 6 at the Galen Center, University of Southern California. Promoters promise that this will be a show to remember that combines the traditions of old with a bit of Hollywood dazzle.

Held every four years, Lithuanian dance ensembles from around the world will gather to celebrate the artistry and tradition of folk dancing.

More information and tickets for the event can be found online at [http://www.sokiusvente.com/\\_en/main.php?id=home](http://www.sokiusvente.com/_en/main.php?id=home)

## Baltic Studies Offered at UCLA this Summer

Learn to speak Lithuanian at UCLA this summer! A basic intensive Lithuanian language course is being offered from June 23 through August 15 (Monday-Friday, 4 hours per day, 12 credit course)

For scholarships apply at: <http://www.summer.ucla.edu/FinancialAid/langscholarship.cfm>

For more information contact Dr. Daniel Ryan at [danryan@ucla.edu](mailto:danryan@ucla.edu).

## Society Member Elizabeth Shukes Mars Grandmother for the 13th Time!



Congratulations to Society member Elizabeth Shukes Mars on the birth of her 13th grandchild. Callum James Dench was born on January 18, 2008, and weighed 8 lb, 6oz and was 22 inches long. Elizabeth's daughter, Melissa Dench, is shown holding her newborn son, Callum, while sitting with her nephew, Luca Raymond.

Congratulations to both Elizabeth and Melissa!

## Auksuciai Farmer's Program Strengthened

The Auksuciai Farm & Forestry Center (AUMC) located near Kursenai, Lithuania (affiliated with the Auksuciai Foundation USA), is pleased to announce the addition of three new members to its current nine person board of directors.

The AUMC is organized under Lithuania law as a non-profit public institution. Its purpose is to develop a sustainable agriculture and to help today's farmers compete in a rapidly growing global market. Farm families and rural communities benefit directly from the activities of the Center.

The new board members are: Dr. Algirdas Radzevicius, Lithuanian University of Agriculture, Kaunas, Lithuania; Dr Gary Hartman, Texas State University, San Marcos, Texas and Heather E. White, Board Member, Auksuciai Foundation, Palo Alto, California.

They join the current board made up of President, Vytautas Sliupas, Burlingame, California; Calvin Qualset, Rohnert Park, California; Darius Malinauskas, Siauliai, Lithuania; Leland Ruth Rutkauskas, Sacramento, California; Gintaras Federas, Lafayette, California; Aldas Kikutis, Vilnius, Lithuania; John Chiles, Davis, California; Vincas Laurutis, Siauliai, Lithuania; Mindaugas Kuklierius, Vilnius, Lithuania; and Hans Christian Nissen, citizen of Denmark, residing in Siauliai, Lithuania.

More information may be found at: [www.aukfoundation.org](http://www.aukfoundation.org)

## Special Birthday Wishes for Halina!

Special birthday wishes go out to Halina Stabacinskiene in recognition of her 50th birthday on May 9.

Halina wears many hats with our Society. She is one of our Neris dancers, a director



*Halina Stabacinskiene* on our Board, our Saturday language class teacher, and one of our primary chefs for our Lithuanian events (not to mention mother of two).

We wish you a very happy birthday. Many many happy wishes!

## Don't forget!

The Pittsburgh Folk Festival will be held May 16, 17, & 18 at the David Lawrence Convention Center. Our very own Neris Dancers will perform on Saturday evening at 7:00 p.m.

The annual Jonines Picnic will be held on Saturday, June 21, at the Country Club location in Jefferson Hills from 3:00 p.m. until dark.

Hope to see everything at these wonderful, fun-filled events!

## Lithuanian Citizens' Society of W. Pennsylvania

1725 Jane Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15203



### • Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, May 8, at 5:30 p.m.

### • Members' Meeting

Sunday, May 11, at 2 p.m.

### • BINGO

Sunday & Wednesday from 7 - 10 p.m.

### • Echoes of Lithuania

[echoes98@hotmail.com](mailto:echoes98@hotmail.com)

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