

October 2007

EDITOR'S DESK

Get well wishes go out to Al Ponce who recently had surgery.

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Congratulations to Catherine Whitmer who won the 50/50 at the September members meeting.

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Bertha Stashinsky, a long-time Society member and a Lithuanian class alumnus, has moved to Indiana to live with her brother and family. Bertha would love to hear from her Pittsburgh Lithuanian friends. You can send your correspondence to Bertha at 818 South 21st Street, Richmond, IN 47374 or call her at 765-962-3030.

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Mark your calendars! 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.

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The Lithuanian Committee of the Pittsburgh Folk Festival is seeking a Committee Chair for the Cultural Display for the 2008 Folk Festival being held May 16-18. Interested parties should contact General Chair Dalia Yucius at 412-381-8669.

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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!

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Correction to the August/September 2007 Newsletter: The Visa Waiver Program article stated that visas for Lithuanians are obtained from the Lithuanian Consulate. The article should have stated that visas are obtained from the American Embassy.

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Bingo Report: 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. Come on down some time and play a few games with your friends!

Musical Ensemble Aitvaras Performs for Society Members



Aitvaras performs for members of the Lithuanian Citizens' Society at the Lithuanian Hall in the South Side on August 18. (photo by Janet Petrauskas).

Lively music, dancing, and enthusiastic clapping of hands occurred during the August 18 concert of Aitvaras, a Lithuanian music ensemble who performed at the Lithuanian Hall. The independent professional music group performed Lithuanian folk songs and instrumental pieces that included the violin, accordion, bass guitar, drums, reed-pipe, mouthorgan, flutes, and horns. The members of the band drew their audience into a whirlwind of their performance, and what fun it was!

With more than 50 people present for the concert, the band soon had the audience dancing around the Hall to every melody. Couples were dancing to polkas as well as having the audience join hands to snake their way around the Hall. The performance brought out Society members that everyone

was happy to see again. At the end of the performance, President John Baltrus presented flowers as a gesture of thanks.

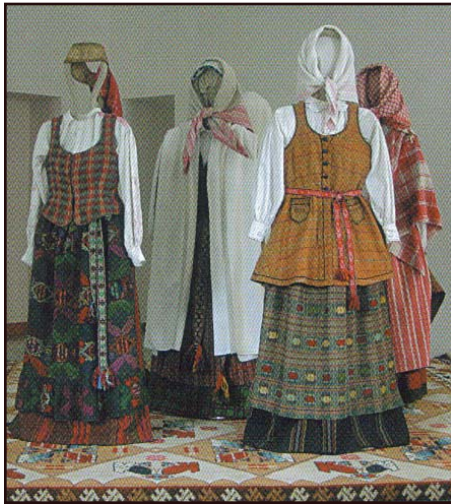
Afterwards, a spread of food was provided for the band and audience that included delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts. The event was quite successful, and the Society looks forward to more performances of the same in the future.



Long-time Society member John McCloskey with daughter Janet Carlisle attended the performance. (photo by Janet Petrauskas).



Lithuanian Folk Costume and Sash Weavers



Are you interested in obtaining a genuine Lithuanian costume for yourself or a loved one? These costumes may be purchased in Lithuania, but can also be found in Canada or in the United States.

Former Pittsburgh resident and LCS member Rob Medonis has identified a list of available weavers who can create a traditional costume for you. The closest contacts for Pittsburgh are located in Chicago, Toronto, and Quebec.

If you are interested in contacting a weaver, please call Janet Petrauskas at 412-341-7925 for information.

Traveling Members

A group of members from our Society recently returned from a two-week vacation in July touring Lithuania. Russell Sabo, David Didzunas, Theresa Kearns, and Caroline Krisciunas visited the cities of Vilnius, Druskininkai, Kaunas, Palanga, and Siauliai and were absolutely taken by the beauty of the cities and the countryside.

Take a moment to chat with these members to hear their stories and relive their awesome memories.

Important Reminder!

The LCS by-laws provide that only members with dues paid two (2) months in advance of an election shall be eligible to vote in that election. That is, to vote in the election of officers at the next December meeting, your dues must have been paid by the preceding October.

If you are unsure whether your dues have been paid, please call Frank Ziaukas at 412-381-5502, or email at frziaukas@hotmail.com.

Artists in the Baltics Roll Out the Welcome Mat

The following is an excerpt from an article that appeared in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on September 23, 2007. Written by Jean Thomas.

THE BALTICS -- Since 1989, Pittsburgh has hosted the Fiberart International, a series of juried exhibitions that attract fiber artists from around the world. This event has long made the Steel City a magnet for innovative contemporary fiber works.

On a recent trip to the Baltics with a group of Pittsburghers, I decided to seek out a couple of artists who have visited the Pittsburgh region in the past to see their studios and learn what inspires their work.

The arts have played a vital role in all three Baltic countries. Through the visual arts and music, particularly singing, the people have tried to retain their cultural identity and traditions. For example, during the Soviet occupation, the Baltic countries continued holding their national singing festivals which had been so important to these small nations for generations.

One of the fiber artists I wanted to visit was Feliksas Jakubauskas, who lives in Vilnius, Lithuania. He was among several international artists who traveled to Pittsburgh to attend the April 13 gala opening for Fiberart International 2007. His tapestry, "Light From East, Sheet Pulsation," was on display at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

His studio was located on one of the many narrow cobblestone streets in the city. On the day of our visit, a lot of upscale renovation was taking place behind the somewhat somber exteriors.

Climbing two flights of stairs, we entered a large, handsome room with skylights, fireplace and a large loom in one corner. His really large loom had been stored, he said. None of his larger tapestries were evident, and when we looked through his two large albums while sipping wine, we understood why. In one recent year, for example, he participated in 15 exhibitions.

In particular he expressed his warm feelings for Pittsburgh, where he has exhibited in no less than four of our Fiberart Internationals, winning best of show in 1997. His tapestries hang far beyond Lithuania -- Washington, D.C., Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Hungary and Australia.

As an added plus, Mr. Jakubauskas escorted us to several small galleries in his neighborhood that we never would have found on our own, and to a larger gallery where two of his tapestries were exhibited.

con't next column

Artists in the Baltics con't.

The final stop was a gallery close to our hotel, where we saw two fiber exhibitions. The first, juried by Mr. Jakubauskas, consisted of miniatures all made from linen, reminding me of our Up Over Down Under show with its similar size limitations. The other featured very large textile wall hangings by Hungarian artists.

That afternoon with Mr. Jakubauskas was one of the highlights of our stay in Vilnius.

The opportunity to spend time with Mr. Jakubauskas, thanks to Pittsburgh connections, greatly enriched our travel experiences.

You Know You're Lithuanian When...

1. You ask something from your dad, he sends you to your mom.
2. After being sent to your mom, she sends you back to your dad.
3. Your dad refuses to call a repair man because he thinks he can fix every broken thing in the house.
4. You have to fight the Russians at your school.
5. You have the natural ability to play basketball.
6. You do folk dancing on your time.
7. You talk about people that are right there in Lithuanian.
8. You'd drink anything anywhere.
9. You have "WAY TOO MUCH LITHUANIAN PRIDE"
10. Your friends will never understand why you spend so much time at church events, and you are the farthest thing from holy that there is
11. No one has ever pronounced your last name right, and every kid on the block has a nickname for it
12. You have a doily covering your DVD, VCR, printer, scanner.

...more next month!

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 Stabacinskienė,
 and Gerri Todd

.....
 Sergeant-at-Arms - Rose Carroll and
 Kastytis Vaicenasa

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

Seeking YOUR Lithuanian Recipes

It's not too late to submit your recipes for publication in our LCS Newsletter. Members have already submitted some delicious recipes for soup and desserts, but we need more!

We are planning a cooking issue in the coming months. We invite you to submit your recipes to the LCS News for the "Cooking Lithuanian" issue. All recipes will be created in our test kitchen before publication in the newsletter. Recipes of all types are welcomed! Salads, cookies, main dishes, soups...you name it, and we'll cook it!

Submit your recipes today to Editor Janet Petrauskas or email pittsburghlithuanians@yahoo.com. Be sure to include your name and phone number in case there are any questions.

Genealogy Conference Planned at U. of Pittsburgh for 2008

The 2008 Federation of Eastern European Family History Societies International Conference is being planned for August 1-3, 2008, in Pittsburgh. The conference will feature lectures from some of the leading experts in Eastern European genealogy during a two-day workshop at the University of Pittsburgh.

Volunteers are needed to help at the conference as well as partnering opportunities. If you are able to volunteer, please contact Lisa Alzo, FEEFHS 2008 Conference Chair, at 412-848-1394. The group is looking for a diverse representation among ethnicities.

A Day at the Beach for Our Tillie



PALANGA, Lithuania? No, guess again!

Tillie Milauskas spent her vacation with Deanne, Terry, and Patrick Kerrigan, her niece, nephew, and great nephew in Broomall, Pa. She also visited Tom's River and the pristine shore and sand dunes at Island Beach State Park in New Jersey.

During her vacation, Tillie had the opportunity to catch the latest news written in the LCS Newsletter.

KGB Documents Now Available on the Web

Historians from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania have initiated a research project documented into a website. The project aims to make public KGB documents from the years of the occupation of the three countries.

The site is still in the process of being built but there are documents available for reading. The address is: <http://www.kgb-documents.eu>.

The Eastern Front

The following article was submitted by John Kuncas and is an excerpt from "The Presidential Crisis," Lituaniu.

We all have probably read in our newspapers of the Estonian-Russian controversy about moving a bronze statue of a Soviet soldier. The statue stood in a prominent place in downtown Tallinn, the nation's capitol. It was moved to a Soviet soldier's cemetery outside of town over the objection of the Kremlin.

There have not been any newsworthy disagreements between Lithuania and Russia recently, but there is undercover activity beyond Paksas, Borisov, and Us-paskich. Lithuanian analysts wonder if the Russian were involved in the Lithuanian presidential election, what could be their objective? Analysts know that Russia views Lithuanian membership in NATO to be an anti-Russian move. What else?

The Russian foreign ministry sees Lithuanian contact with Belarus, Ukraine, and Georgia as furthering the interests of the United States. Russia doesn't like Lithuanian politicians supporting the Chechen cause. Lithuanian analysts believe Lithu-

con't next column

October (Spalis) Birthdays Listed

Among members with October birthdays are: John Chasky (1); Mary Ann Schaum (3); Michael Vidunas (9); Frances Shagas (10); Joan Richards (11); Janice Savinis (12); Frances Gill (13); John Baltrus (16).

Nell Brazauskas (18); Darryl Wisbar (18); Kristina Antanaviciene (19); John E. McCloskey (20); Joan Turner (22); Colleen Beall (24); Dana Miselis (25); Marcella Zizza (29); Julia Doleno (31); Vincent Paul Rodgers (31).

Linksmų Gimtadienių!

The Eastern Front con't.

anian democracy could appeal to former USSR members Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, and therefore the Russians disapprove. That could lead to unrest. Russia would have Lithuania act favorably on Kremlin objectives.

The Russian Embassy in Vilnius controls the efforts to influence Lithuania's internal development, such as replacing Adamkus with someone who could be easily manipulated. In the Paksas campaign, money was traced to Russian sources. The Russian Embassy players work toward prominent places in Lithuania's energy, business, economics, and foreign policy initiatives. Not all Lithuanians accepted the roles played by Borisov and Upaskich, who were prominent players.

One high level Lithuanian official claims the Kremlin desires to destabilize Lithuania. Doing so will make Estonia and Latvia easier to convert to Kremlin objectives. He also believes that most leftist Lithuanians would not welcome Russian control over Lithuanian affairs again. Nevertheless, the group most dissatisfied with the present government are those former USSR bureaucrats who held prestigious jobs with desirable preferments.

On the bright side:

1. The Presidential election's upheaval was settled by rule of law.

2. Corruption on the national level has been curtailed. The focus is on corruption on local levels. The EU must aide those small nations which lack the resources to combat these forces. Organized crime threatens democracy.

Possible Russian objectives:

1. Punish Lithuania for joining NATO.
2. Lithuania is a path to vast EU markets.

3. Use Lithuania to influence developments in the West.

4. Force Lithuania back into the Russian sphere of influence.

Contact information for the editor has changed. Please send your digital correspondence to Janet Petrauskas at: pittsburghlithuanians@yahoo.com.

Society Member Designs and Paints Image for Pittsburgh Mural Project



Society member Jeff Katrencik displays his artwork that is painted on a mural wall located in Wilksburg. The design includes a large muscular man modeled after the old steelworker folklore character Joe Magarac. Jeff drew the design free hand and also painted it. The design shows molten steel hitting the back of Joe Magarac while he's bending a white hot steel bar.

The painting is intended to help beautify the Wilksburg community and is being painted with two other artists and six to eight teenage artists. The mural measures 105 feet by 10 feet. The project was conceived by Wilksburg artist Kyle Holbrook. Artists submitted design proposal for the project and is a collaborate effort of the designs of several artists.

Jeff is the son of long-time Society member Helen Katrencik. Nice work Jeff!

What's Happening at the Lithuanian Club

October 14, 2007

Monthly members meeting starting at 2:00 p.m. at the Lithuanian Hall on South Side.

November 3, 2007

St. Casimir Alumni Association will hold their annual Dinner Dance at the South Hills Country Club. Cost is \$30 per person and is open to all St. Casimir alumnae. For more information, contact Mrs. Dorothy Flaherty, 468 Judith Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15236.

November 10, 2007

Lithuanian Nationality Room Committee will hold their annual Decorating of the Lithuanian Christmas tree event from 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. in the Lithuanian Classroom at the Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh. Please contact Vince Rodgers at 412-461-9957 for more information.

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.

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- Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, October 11 at 5:45 p.m.
- Members' Meeting
Sunday, October 14 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
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