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LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN NEWS JOURNAL

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November/December 2016

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Cover: The stirna, or roe deer, is a common sight in Lithuanian forests. The country is home to about 86,000 roe deer, identified by their characteristic short tails and bright white rumps. Photo: Vytautas Knyva

Back cover: The Christmas tree on Cathedral Square in Vilnius, which cast a net of 50,000 lightbulbs over the Christmas Market, was lit on the evening of November 26, 2016. Photo: Alfredas Pliadis, pliadisfoto.com

from the editor

So Long, Farewell, auf Wiedersehen, su Diev

I hope Rodgers and Hammerstein will forgive me for a little Lithuanian adaptation of their Sound of Music classic. As you'll remember from my letter in October, this will be my last issue as editor. Not surprisingly, I have a few thank you's to dispense.

First and foremost, thank you, dear readers, for your guidance, your wisdom, your patience and your abiding love of all things Lithuanian, which have sustained our publication—and me—over the years. Thank you for correcting us when we made an error, and for applauding us when we hit a home run. Thank you for ever challenging us to become better and better. I hope we've met the challenge.

More thanks go to Vytas Maciūnas, former LAC president, for bringing me on, and to Sigita Šimkuvienė-Rosen, current LAC president, for encouraging me to stay on. To Algimantas Gustaitis, Juozas Kazlauskas, Loreta Timukienė, Vilija Joyce, Laima Liutikienė and Ina Stankevičienė for their behind-the-scenes involvement in finance, publishing, printing and website management that keep us running day-to-day.

I'm thankful for Rimas Gedeika, whose connections and contributions have helped fill many a page in this journal. For Dan Craig, whose design expertise and creativity make beautiful sense of all of the text and images I send his way. For Jana Sirusaitė Motivans, Laima Vincė Sruoginis and Alan Stankus, in their roles as contributing editors, for their dedication in bringing us fresh content month to month. And to all of the writers, poets, photographers and illustrators whose work has enlivened these pages, thank you.

Special thanks are due to Karilė Vaitkutė, our new editor, who has agreed to carry on the work of Bridges. I wish her nothing but the greatest success as she guides the publication in the coming years.

The winter solstice marks the birth of a celestial new year, a symbolic new beginning. We have made it through the longest night, and look forward to lengthening days, the festival of lights, the ascendency of the sun and the Son.

I personally am looking forward to fresh start because, I'll admit, 2016 has not been my best year for a number of reasons. Judging from the memes proliferating on social media as the days wind down, it seems that many are glad to see the calendar year come to an end. But that doesn't mean 2017 won't present its own challenges—any change will. It's up to us to turn the challenges into opportunities.

As I look to the new year, I have only one resolution—and it's not to lose weight, or cut down on carbs, or incorporate a workout into my daily routine, all of which undoubtedly are things I need to do—it's to become the best person I can be. To be a person who extends a hand. To be a person who rights a wrong. A person who spreads love, not hate. Who values humanity over doctrine.

We all have the ability to become our best selves—no one can take that power from us. It just may be more or less challenging, depending on circumstances.

James Joseph Brown reminds us in his essay, Stebuklas, that no matter the reality, one can still believe in miracles. Barbara Tedrow, in relating conversations during Kūčios, addresses themes of forgiveness, mercy and social responsibility—and acknowledges that, yes, sometimes we fail, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try.

In her historic examination of Gabrielė Petkevičaitė-Bitė, Diana Vidutis chronicles the life of a woman who was unable to pursue her youthful dream due to circumstance, but who later became a force in shaping a newly independent Lithuanian nation and defining its ideals.

Changes don't have to be big to have an effect, but they do have to be conscious. How can you make your little corner of the globe a better place? What if everyone did the same?

That's all I wish for us, and for the world.

Teresė Vekteris, Editor

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current events

… The European Union and Canada have signed a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), which will eliminate 99 percent of customs duties, improve access to Canadian public procurement and eliminate non-tariff barriers to trade. Typical Lithuanian exports to Canada include cheese, furniture, textiles, clothes, electrical equipment and fishing nets. In 2015, Lithuania exported products worth 164 million euros to Canada. The agreement still awaits approval by the European Parliament and national Parliaments.

International Relations

… The United Nations in Geneva was the site of the Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review of Lithuania's progress in human rights. Lithuania received plaudits for passing anti-human trafficking legislation, establishing the Department of National Minorities and hosting Baltic Pride 2016 in support of the LGBTQ community. Lithuania received recommendations to prevent child abuse and corporal punishment, to increase funding for victims of trafficking and to investigate hate crimes against LGBTQ, Roma (Gypsies) and refugees. There are about 2,000 Roma in Lithuania.

… The 22nd Baltic Council met in Riga to review the trilateral cooperation among Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia for 2017 including security, defense, regional energy markets and transportation links. The foreign ministers of the three countries also met with Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze to help reintegrate Ukraine into Europe.

… Lithuania's President Dalia Grybauskaitė extended congratulations to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump. She said that she is convinced that the United States will remain the strongest and closest ally of Lithuania and will jointly defend the principles of freedom and democracy, implement mutually beneficial projects in the fields of economics, security and energy, and continue work based on the U.S.-Baltic Charter and NATO.

Politics

… Lithuania's new prime minister, Saulius Skvernelis, former national police chief, proposed the following cabinet ministers:

- Foreign Minister: Linas Linkevičius, current foreign minister
- Transport and Communications Minister: Rokas Masiulis, current energy minister
- National Defense Minister: Raimundas Karoblis, current deputy foreign minister and former representative to the European Union
- Finance Minister: Vilius Šapoka, economist and former head of financial services and market supervision at the Bank of Lithuania
- Economic Minister: Mindaugas Sinkevičius, mayor of Jonava in central Lithuania
- Energy Minister: Žygimantas Vaičiūnas, Lithuania's energy attaché for the European Union
- Culture Minister: Liana Ruokytė-Jonsson, actor and translator

The new cabinet took office on December 13, 2016.

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November/December 2016

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

ONGOING

Through April 22, 2017
Daily Life: Photography from Lithuania Exhibit
The Print Center, 1614 Latimer St., Philadelphia, Pa.
Free and open to the public
Tuesday through Saturday
11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Info: printcenter.org,
215-735-6090

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

FEBRUARY 2017

February 11
Poker Tournament to Benefit Versmė Lithuanian School of Kansas City
Cedar Creek Clubhouse, 25775 W. 103rd St., Olathe, Kans.
$45 ticket includes $3,150 in chips, dinner buffet, soft drinks and Lithuanian snacks.
Info: Renata Nantz, 913-271-3422

February 24-March 4
Lithuanian Snow Ski Trip
Aspen Mountain Resort, Aspen, Colo.
Sponsored by Lithuanian Athletic Union of North America and Lithuanian American Doctors Union. Skiers, non-skiers and families welcome. Race schedule TBA. Travel and accommodations: linda@ski.com, 800-525-2052 x3329 or 970-925-9500 x3329. Identify yourself as part of the Lithuanian Ski Group.
General info:
edmickus1@aol.com
or vsaulis@sbcglobal.net

February 26, 4 p.m.
Annual Aspen Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration
809 South Aspen Street, Aspen, Colo.
Special guest Rolandas Kriščiūnas, Lithuanian Ambassador to the U.S.
Info: dmb@aspenconsul.com

MARCH 2017

March 3-6
17th Annual Florida Lithuanian Open Golf Tournament
Info: LTConsulFlorida.com,
727-895-4811

March 17-19 (new date)
Women's Weekend
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Group discussions, exercise, art, cooking, and spiritual and personal rebirth.
Info:
kerry@watershedcoachingllc.com
or kriscon@frontiernet.net

March 17-20
Vyresnių Skaučių + Gintarių Lithuanian Scouts Jamboree
Agatha A. Durland Scout Reservation, 1 Clear Lake Road, Putnam Valley, N.Y.
Registration: via Facebook: Vyr. Sk. + Gintariu Suvaziamas 2017 or Skautai.net
Info: djmattis@gmail.com
or vaiva.rimeika@gmail.com

March 25
Ethnic Heritage Mass
St. Peter and Paul Basilica, Philadelphia, Pa.
Choir "Laisvė" will sing at the Mass

APRIL 2017

April 1
Benefit Concert for Neringa
600 Liberty Hwy., Putnam, Conn.
Info: neringa.org

MAY 2017

May 13-14, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.
45th Annual Baltimore Lithuanian Festival
Catonsville Armory, 130 Mellor Avenue, Catonsville, Md.

May 19-21
Counselor Retreat
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

JUNE 2017

June 3-4, 2017
Talka Work Weekend
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: regina@neringa.com,
978-582-5592

June 5 – July 28
Baltic Studies Summer Institute
Indiana University Bloomington Campus, 107 S. Indiana Ave., Bloomington, Ind.
Six-week intensive beginning Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian language courses.
Application deadline for Title VIII Fellowships is February 1, 2017.
Info: indiana.edu/~swseel/balssi

June 9-11
New England Chapter Knights of Lithuania Retreat
Franciscan Guest House,
26 Beach Ave., Kennebunk, Maine
Info: 207-967-4865

June 24-29
Heritage Family Camp in English
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

JULY 2017

July 2-8
Family Camp for Lithuanian Speakers
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

July 9-23
Children's Camp for Lithuanian Speakers 7-16
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

July 23
Lithuanian Friendship Day/ Putnam Picnic
600 Liberty Hwy., Putnam, Conn.
Info: neringa.org

July 23-29
"Third Week" Youth Camp for Lithuanian Speakers, 12-16 Years Old
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

July 27-30
Knights of Lithuania 104th National Convention
Holiday Inn Hotel, Dayton, Ohio
Info: knightsoflithuania.com

July 30-August 12
Heritage Camp in English, 7-16 Years Old
Camp Neringa, Brattleboro, Vt.
Info: neringa.org

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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