

The Lithuanian Connection

Published by Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities, Inc

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The Lithuanian Connection is published quarterly by Madison-Vilnius Sister Cities, Inc., a non-profit organization devoted to developing and continuing the relationship between the people of Vilnius, Lithuania and Madison, Wisconsin

CALENDAR

June 15, 2004 – Annual Meeting and Banquet

July 3, 2004 – Sokių Sventė, Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

JUNE 15 ANNUAL MEETING SPEAKER

**Arvydas Daunoravičius
Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania
in Chicago**

MVSC is proud and excited to have Arvydas Daunoravičius, Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania in Chicago, as the speaker at our annual meeting and banquet on June 15, 2004. The topic of his talk will focus on Lithuania's entry into both NATO and the European Union and all the important implications of these developments as Lithuania joins with the rest of Europe as both a economic partner and a world player.

Born in Vilnius in 1963 and trained as a physicist, Con. Daunoravičius has spent much of his adult life in foreign service. He has served in many consular positions, among them Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, and with the MFS in Vilnius as head of the Russia Division, and head of the East European and Central Asia Division. He was awarded the Cross of Knight of the Order – the Commemorative sign reads "For personal contribution to the development of Lithuania's

transatlantic links and on the occasion of the invitation for the Republic of Lithuania to NATO.”

INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR JOHN TEFFT

The following is an interview that MVSC board member, Stase Semenien☉ conducted with Amb. John Tefft following his talk at our Annual Banquet in February. This interview was printed in *Draugas*, the Lithuanian newspaper, the weekend that Amb. Tefft was in Chicago:

1. Mr. Ambassador, although we feel we already know you well, please tell MVSC something about yourself and your background.

I was born in Madison, Wisconsin, the eldest of the five children of Floyd and Mary Tefft. I graduated from Madison Edgewood High School in 1967 and Marquette University in Milwaukee in 1971. At Marquette I married my “college sweetheart,” Mariella Cellitti of Overland Park, Kansas. In January 1972 I joined the United States Foreign Service and have spent my entire career working as a diplomat. After returning from our first assignment in Jerusalem, I went back to school in the evening and earned a Masters Degree in History from Georgetown University. In the course of my career I have served abroad in Jerusalem, Budapest, Rome, Moscow and Lithuania. I have also held a number of assignments in the Department of State including Deputy Director of the Office of Soviet Affairs 1989-1992, and Director of Northern European Affairs 1992-1994. I am currently serving as International Affairs Advisor and Member of the Faculty of the National War College in Washington DC. My spouse, Mariella, is a biostatistician and nurse, and has worked for the Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University and for the UN Development Program. I have two daughters: Christine, who is a staff attorney for the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights in Minneapolis, and Cathleen, who is a Program Specialist at George Mason University in Fairfax Virginia.

2. After living in Lithuania for 3 years, how would you characterize the country?

Mariella and I loved living in Lithuania. We enjoyed our work at the Embassy and we enjoyed the people of Lithuania. Lithuania is a country that has suffered great tragedies and is now trying to integrate itself in Europe and in the trans-Atlantic community of nations. As we look back at our assignment in Lithuania, we feel that we were able to represent the United States at a critical moment in Lithuania’s history and in the history of US relations with Lithuania. Helping Lithuania become a member of NATO is a contribution we are very proud to have been a part of.

3. What would you say about the Lithuanian people? Some foreigners think they are sad, unsmiling; is that true?

Mariella and I traveled all over Lithuania. We found the people invariably warm and welcoming. Lithuanians are down to earth and pragmatic, much like people from the American Middle West where we grew up. It is true the people of Lithuania suffered enormously in the twentieth century, but we found most people looking forward trying to take advantage of the possibilities which freedom has now provided.

4. Having left Lithuania, did you leave Lithuanian friends? Do you correspond with any of them?

We continue to stay in touch via e-mail with some of our friends. We have also seen some of them in Washington while they were visiting the US.

5. What do you consider the main cause of Lithuania's being invited to join NATO and the EU?

Lithuania and the other six nations invited to join NATO seized an historic opportunity to become full members in the greatest defensive alliance in history. They prepared themselves well, by implementing their respective NATO Membership Action Plans and institutionalizing the democratic values that unite all members of the alliance.

6. Please give us your impressions of Pres. George W. Bush's visit to Vilnius.

Mariella and I will never forget the day President and Mrs. Bush visited Vilnius. In addition to the ceremonies and the never-to-be-forgotten speech in front of the City Hall, we will always remember the private moments we had with the President and Mrs. Bush. We were so pleased that they enjoyed their time in Vilnius and that they were able to feel the warmth and high regard in which they were held by so many Lithuanians.

7. What do you think of the proposed memorial to that visit being placed at the Vilnius Rotuse?

I support any effort to commemorate the President’s visit and the significance of Lithuania’s invitation to join NATO.

8. How does America value Lithuania's participation in the restoration of Iraq?

The United States values very highly Lithuania's participation in the rebuilding of Iraq. Lithuania and its leaders have understood that security is something to which all of us must contribute. Just as Lithuanian soldiers are working side by side with other NATO soldiers in Afghanistan, they are also working with the United States and other allies in an effort insure the freedom and security of the Iraqi people.

9. What did you think of Lithuanian art and culture? Did you manage to acquire any works of art?

We have many pieces of Lithuanian art displayed in our home in Springfield, Virginia including prints, paintings and woodcarvings. Mariella's mother and father recently visited us and said our house looked like a little museum. Among the many things we miss about Lithuania is all the wonderful music and opera that we were so privileged to see and hear in Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda. Lithuania is fortunate to have so many world-class performers. We feel the music really enriched our lives.

10. You are very popular among Lithuanians on both sides of the Atlantic. What made you go mushrooming, and how did you enjoy it? What do we hear about the Klaipeda Jazz Festival? Did you really sing and sing in Lithuanian?

We had never gone mushrooming until we went to Lithuania. We will never forget the day we went with the Foreign Minister and Deputy Chairman of the Seimas and their spouses to Varena for the Grybu Svente. It was a great way to get out with many Lithuanians. I have to tell you that we had no idea when we set out that there would be so much media coverage of our mushroom picking or of our sampling the fine meats, cheeses and samane of Dzukija. We had a great time in Dzukija, as we did in Klaipeda for the jazz festival. I introduced in Lithuanian the great American jazz trumpeter, Maynard Ferguson, and his band. I also sang a bit of Louis Armstrong's "It's a Wonderful World" with my friend, Vytas Grubliauskas. I am not a very good singer but the crowd was kind and applauded all the same.

11. We hear that you speak Lithuanian. Was it hard to learn? Could you, in parting, give us a few words in Lithuanian?

Lithuanian was extremely hard to learn, particularly at the age of 51. I had studied other hard languages such as Hebrew and Hungarian at younger ages. They were hard but Lithuanian was harder. I always thought it was kind of the Lithuanian people to be so understanding of my many mistakes. I think they were just happy I made the effort. Baigiant noreciau pasakyti kokia dedele garbe man teko buti Amerikos Ambasadoriumi Lietuvoje. Tai buvo vienas is ryskiausiu momentu mano gyvenime. Dekoju viesiems mano draugams uz ju parama ir draugyste. As niekad ne pamirso Lietuvos. (In conclusion let me say what a great honor it was to serve as American Ambassador in Lithuania. It was one of the highlights of my entire life. I thank all of my many Lithuanian American friends for their support and friendship. I will never forget Lithuania.)

Visit to Madison by Profs. Vaidotas Lukošius and Galen Hull, Tennessee State University

Profs. Vaidotas Lukošius and Galen Hull of the Tennessee State University visited the School of Business at the University of Wisconsin on March 25-27, 2004. This is an excerpt of their report to the School following the visit. MVSC board members were an integral part of their stay in Wisconsin.

Promega Corporation

We were hosted there by Mr. Gedimas Vidugiris, senior scientist for research and development, and also a member of the Madison-Vilnius (Lithuania) Sister City Program. After a walk-through of the Promega facility, we then were provided with a presentation of Promega by Ms. Sue Gullickson, Director of International Finance & Operations, and Mr. Rick Smith, Director of Digital Marketing. Founded in 1978 by William Linton, a former WU-Madison student, Promega is a bio-technology firm

with headquarters in Madison employing over 750 workers. From the outset, Promega was a global firm and now has operations in some 55 countries. For those of us interested in international business, this was an eye-opening experience.

Madison-Vilnius Sister-City (MVSC) Board Members

The TSU delegation had requested a meeting with members of the Madison Sister City program because of our contacts with the Vice Dean and members of the faculty of the Vilnius University in Lithuania. Prof. Lukocius is originally from Lithuania and had recently been home for a brief visit. He met with Dr. Algirdas Miskinis, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Economics at Vilnius University and subsequently Dr. Hull has exchanged email communication with him. They are interested in exploring faculty exchanges with a U.S. university.

The TSU delegation shared lunch with several members of the Sister City program in the Union

cafeteria. They included Ms. Daina Zemliauskas Juozevicius, MVSC president and docent at the Wisconsin State Capitol; Dr. Daina Penkiunas, past President of MVSC and currently with the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society; and Nijole Etwiler, current Board Member of MVSC and Past President of the Wisconsin council for Local History. We managed a brief introduction and discussion about possible mutual interests. MVSC is mainly involved in cultural exchanges with Vilnius, but would welcome an opportunity to help host university exchange visitors to the U.S. There followed a fascinating walking tour of the Wisconsin State Capitol building, courtesy of Ms. Daina Zemliauskas. In her professional capacity as

docent, Daina was able to give us insights into the history of Wisconsin and the construction of the capitol building itself. The highlight, however, was a walk all the way up to the top of the tower of the building, consisting of some 180 steps! The views of the city from that vantage point are wonderful. Finally, the last meeting with the Sister-City Board members was also beneficial. The board members have been very enthusiastic about the initiative that TSU has shown to establish an exchange program with the Vilnius University. The sister city organization extended their help (should it be needed) for our future cooperation with Lithuanian counterparts

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**PLEASE SEND IN YOUR BANQUET RESERVATION AND PAYMENT BY
JUNE 1, 2004 (see enclosed reservation form)**

**Madison Vilnius Sister Cities, Inc.
P.O. Box 55034
Madison, WI 53705**

**BANQUET ANNOUNCEMENT
ISSUE**

Please join the Madison-

**Vilnius Sister Cities Board
Annual Banquet & Meeting:
“Lithuania in the 21st Century”
with Speaker Arvydas Daunoravičius,
Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania in Chicago**

Tuesday, June 15, 2004

**Tripp Commons, UW Memorial Union
6:00 - social hour (cash bar); 7:00 - dinner; 8:00 program**

Menu:

Pacific Northwest Buffet:

Roast pork loin with golden carrot relish,
Spinach and cheese pie (vegetarian).
four-grain rice pilaf, deviled eggs, seasonal fresh vegetable
two salads
assorted dinner rolls & croissants with butter.
coffee, tea, decaf and milk.
Lemon Poppy Pound Cake with Fresh Strawberries or Blueberry Wine Sauce

\$25/person.

Parking nearby in the Helen C. White Ramp across from the Union, in the city ramp on Lake Street, or (if available) the Union Parking lot between the Union and Red Gym. Parking also may be available next to Vilas Hall.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

of Reservations: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____ **(\$25.00 per person)**

Please Detach and Mail by June 1, 2004 with your Banquet Reservation Payment to:

**Nijole Etwiler
321 4th Ave.,
Baraboo, WI 53913
For questions please call (long distance): 1-608-356-6549.**