

John Baltrus

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The A.P.P.L.E. Seed

(American Professional Partnership
for
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E-Zine



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Dear John,



Karl Janowitz

Message from the President

A most successful 25th and final A.P.P.L.E. session was held in Vilnius this summer. Three strands "Cultivating Language Skills in Middle School Students", " Developing Written Communication in Elementary School Students", and "Educational Leadership" were conducted. Articles on these activities will be highlighted in this and subsequent Ezines. The theme for this summer's seminar, "Meeting Today's Educational Challenges" seemed especially apropos in light of major societal as well as educational changes on both sides of the Atlantic. One of the highlights of our time in Lithuania was a reception honoring A.P.P.L.E.'s contributions over the past twenty-five years.

Our summer Board of Directors' meeting will be held the weekend of September 18, 2015 in Orlando, Florida to reflect on this summer and on A.P.P.L.E.'s incredible 25 year history.

I wish you a wonderful remainder of the summer. Thank you for your continued interest in A.P.P.L.E.

Karl

Dr. Karl P. Janowitz
President

Mission Statement:

"The American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education (A.P.P.L.E.) is a volunteer international non-profit educational organization. With the support of the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, A.P.P.L.E. partners with Lithuanian educators to foster the implementation of innovative educational approaches that contribute to the development of a democratic society."

A.P.P.L.E.'s Final Summer Program



**Program Participants Outside of the
Karolina Hotel in Vilnius**

During the week of June 29th A.P.P.L.E.'s final program was held at the Karolina Hotel in Vilnius. There were three strands: Educational Leadership led by Linda Brenneman of Acworth, NH; Developing Writing Skills in the Elementary Grades conducted by Laurie Hendrickson, Chicago IL; and Middle School Language Arts with Linda Spoleti, Lombard IL and Juli Roberts, Columbus OH. Teachers who live outside the city of Vilnius, particularly from rural regions of Lithuania were targeted for participation by the UPC. Teachers in attendance had all fees paid, which included room and board at the Karolina and an additional nearby hotel. Seventy-nine Lithuanian teachers and administrators participated. A.P.P.L.E. staff was accommodated at the Sarunas Hotel.



**L to R: Linda Spoleti, Juli Roberts, Laurie
Hendrickson, Dr. Karl Janowitz, Dr. Anita
Scarborough, Gedrius Vaidelis, Dr. Svetlana
Kauzoniene, Vida Anton, Dr. Loreta Statauskiene,
Linda Brenneman**

Selected recipients of 2014-2015 school year LMF grants presented overviews of their project: Rasa Meilyte-Jurjoniene of Gargzdu "Minijos" progimnazija; Sonata Vosyliene of Alytaus Dzukijos pagrindine mokykla; Eugenija Bieliauskaite of Jonava Neries pagrindine mokykla; and Grasilda Celiesiene of Kaunas Roku gimnazija were among the presenters. The procedure for submitting a proposal for the upcoming school year

was explained by A.P.P.L.E. administrator in Vilnius, Ramute Zemioniene. Presentations of the final LMF projects are planned to be held at the Education Expo in Vilnius in 2016.

On the afternoon of July 1st a reception recognizing A.P.P.L.E. was held at Verkiai Palace, located just north of Vilnius. The Minister of Education Audrone Pitreniene, Lithuanian Ambassador to the U.S. Zigimantas Pavilionis, and Ugdymo Pletotes Centras (UPC) Director Gedrius Vaidelis addressed the group. Past A.P.P.L.E. President Dr. Emilija Sakadolskiene and the first post-soviet Minister of Education Darius Kuolys recalled A.P.P.L.E.'s beginnings. Dr. Anita Scarborough presented highlights of the accomplishments of the 25-year partnership of American and Lithuanian educators, and Vida Anton remembered relationships that were forged. Jim Gust, husband of A.P.P.L.E. founder, the late Vaiva Vebraite, was in attendance as was Dr. Kestutis Kaminskas of Vilnius Pedagogical University and the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. Vida Anton, Dr. Barbara Henriques, Dr. Karl Janowitz and Amanda Muliolis were recognized by the Minister of Education for their contributions to fulfilling A.P.P.L.E.'s mission.



Vida Anton receiving award from Minister of Education Audrone Pitreniene

The 2015 program was a great success. A strong rapport was built between Lithuanian educators and A.P.P.L.E. lecturers, making the interactive process highly rewarding. Egle Keturakiene, an administrator from Prienu r. Veiveriu Tomo Zilinsko gimnazija, summarized this the evolution of this interaction:

We Lithuanians are frequently ruled by stereotypes and observe 'safety rules' when communicating. Lecturers encouraged us to look at communication from different viewpoints. We learned that there are no wrong answers or opinions. Every informed decision can lead to positive change. Ten years ago it was important for us to observe free people. The experiences they shared were almost like science fiction to us. Every summer I left A.P.P.L.E. courses with a new notion about the basics of being a human being. We are saddened by the ending of the A.P.P.L.E. program; it is a feeling as if you are losing a piece of your heart.

Anita Scarborough, PhD

2015 Summer Program Co-Director

Summer Program Reflection - Linda Spoleti



Linda Spoleti

APPLE Experience 2015 - Teaching Highlights

We are greeted each morning and afternoon by a class full of smiles and energy. Teachers with experience from 2 years to 30, from every school level, eagerly await instruction in language arts all in English-no translator necessary. They even laugh readily at our jokes so we know they fully understand each presentation.

Appreciating Howard Gardner's kinesthetic intelligence, they line up for general knowledge questions from history to art in a game of "Ring the Bell." They roam around the room meeting up with their four appointments for a "Round the Clock" discussion on educational experiences. It was fun to see where each one literally stood on the "Human Graph" on controversial issues like whether or not mothers should stay at home to raise their children. But their most artistic side was shown in frozen snapshots of Romeo and Juliet scenes using "Dramatic Tableaux." Juliet's scream still rings in our ears. Every teacher participated wholeheartedly in these social and physical exercises.

For lessons in vocabulary, the teachers were given a list of American slang phrases to study ahead of time. They eagerly took part in the drama of charades, drew freely for "Pictionary," swatted words in a team race, and shouted answers competing with each other in a game of "Around the World." Clearly, they had prepared ahead of time doing their summer homework for these lessons.

Using Kagan's cooperative learning structures, the teachers got into a serious discussion about the grammar questions used in the "Inside-Outside Circle." Having only four paper clips, each group member learned the value of speaking and listening using the structure of "Talking Chips." More artistic expression came with group poetry. Using patterns with prescribed parts of speech, groups came up to the podium to deliver their heartfelt creations. The listeners snapped their fingers Beatnik style in appreciation. All of us were awed by their creativity.

One thing we all agreed on was the importance of discussing values while studying a language so as to foster authentic expression among young people. The teachers lined up under each quality of Ben Franklin's 13-point improvement plan that they felt is missing in society today: humility, justice, cleanliness, resolution, sincerity, industry, frugality, moderation, order, silence, temperance, chastity, and tranquility. Though written in 1726, this plan is still applicable today, and a lively discussion ensued

comparing Lithuanian and American societies.

Though it was the first thing discussed in class, we talked about forming real relationships with our students through personal letters, lifelines, coat of arms, or using basketball coach John Wooden's "Pyramid of Success" to talk about the strengths and weaknesses in ourselves. We all sat around in a circle and revealed one of our strong and weak points with each other. It was maybe at this moment that our sisterhood began. Because what we discovered in many shared discourses was that though we may be geographically apart, we all want the same things for our students: education that is meaningful, relevant, and even fun.

Linda Spoleti, Lombard IL

Re-Visioning Education - Reflection



Juli Roberts and Linda Spoleti

As my strand's first day opened in Vilnius, Lithuania, my teaching partner Linda Spoleti and I met 24 Lithuanian English Language teachers who brought to my mind this well-known line from poet Robert Burns in "To a Mouse": *The best-laid plans of mice and men / Often go awry*. Despite my realization that we had a different audience before us than I had expected, Linda and I were prepared to shift gears, understanding that flexibility is one of the key components of instruction. In fact, we were excited by this challenge and looked forward to finding ways to help the Lithuanian teachers use these lessons to improve their craft, and most importantly, improve student learning.

Knowing that our lessons would need to be revised based on our audience, Linda and I discussed our prepared lessons, our audience, and the contexts in which we would demonstrate these lessons. We realized that our "sister teachers," as we affectionately called them, needed lessons tailored to their specific situations that necessitated discussions on classroom management (how would a particular lesson work with a child who is ill-prepared or off-task, for example), teacher collaboration (what are some ways you could bring in other teachers to share/tailor/observe a new strategy?), and other contextual situations. We began by listing the teachers' concerns and questions about teaching English to their students, and we followed up these concerns and questions by incorporating role-playing, experiential learning using poetry and vocabulary lessons,

and providing a wealth of online resources for the teachers to use with their students.

By retooling our lessons to fit the needs of our teachers, we were able to address a number of their concerns and questions, providing ample time for teachers to share and reflect on how they will use each lesson with their students.

Linda and I benefited from this change of plans as well: we realized our sister teachers were more like us than not as we share many of the same questions and concerns about our profession: student motivation, time on task, digital natives, technophobes, student behavior, collaboration, and more. What better way for us to find these answers than to have 26 teachers—all of us so passionate about our profession and our students—brainstorm, role-play, evaluate, and reflect on these issues?

As we ended our week with the teachers, I noted the energy and excitement in everyone. We left A.P.P.L.E. and Vilnius looking at education through new eyes—our sister teachers' eyes—and we see a new year filled with renewed passion, hope, and determination to improve student success in English language classes.

Juli Leitnick Roberts

A.P.P.L.E. Video

At the reception for A.P.P.L.E. held at the Lithuanian Embassy, a short video with a collection of photos and media clips was shown by Amanda Muliolis. At that point it was, and still is, a work in progress. The DVD that she is preparing will contain several presentations - one will be all 25 years in pictures. Then she divided it up into 6 parts - five 5-year segments, and the sixth - closing year - embassy reception, last seminar and closing in Lithuania. She will also include a 10-year presentation prepared by Romas Sakadolskis. She is not sure yet what else she will include, since she has a lot more information, like president Adamkus' speech during A.P.P.L.E.'s 15-th year celebration and some videos.

Amanda will be offering copies of the DVD to anyone who would like to purchase a copy. The cost is \$10.00, and the DVD will be ready this fall, (September or October). She will send it to all who order by end of September. They can order it from her by sending their address and \$10.00 to her at: 1820 Dansy Dr. Euclid, OH 44117-2010. Questions may be directed to Amanda at atmuliolis@gmail.com

Fundraising Corner

Thank you for your support of A.P.P.L.E. over the last 25 years. We are no longer soliciting donations. Feel free to support one of the many organizations supporting Lithuania.

This electronic newsletter is designed for quick delivery of A.P.P.L.E.-related news to an audience that includes current A.P.P.L.E. members, friends of A.P.P.L.E. and interested potential members both within the United States and Lithuania. Note that because of compositional software constraints, we are not able to include proper Lithuanian characters in words and names.

Increasing communication and the exchange of ideas among our members increases the strength of our organization and our ability to be relevant to our Lithuanian constituents. Exciting and pertinent events occur all year round, and we want to keep all of you abreast of what is happening, when it's happening.

Consider passing this email along to a friend who you think might be interested in hearing about us.

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