

**John Baltrus**

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**Sent:** Monday, February 06, 2012 9:01 AM  
**To:** jonaspb@verizon.net  
**Subject:** News from A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education)

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The A.P.P.L.E. Seed  
(American Professional Partnership  
for  
Lithuanian Education)  
E-Zine

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**Dear John,**



**Karl Janowitz**

## **Message from the President**

Deep winter is upon many of us, at least on the Lithuanian side of the Atlantic. It is a good time to think about our summer break and our upcoming work in Lithuania. We are already finalizing plans for our 22nd year of A.P.P.L.E. In just four months, the A.P.P.L.E. 2012 programs will be in full swing! With half of the current school year behind me, I believe our theme, "Building Educational Communities in Our Schools" is more important than ever before. Your continued support is key to our efforts.

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. Member Profile - Jane Serbent**



**Jane & Walter Serbent**

The romance of the revolution was burning in the hearts of Lithuanians as well as in the hearts of those who had some percentage of Lithuanian blood when the Soviet union disintegrated and the Russians retreated from Lithuanian soil.

It was in 1991 that Vaiva Vebraite spoke at a Knights of Lithuania meeting in New Haven, CT. If you have never heard her speak you have missed an experience that was unique. She was passionate. She was eloquent. She was persuasive. Although it was still in its infancy, she spoke of an organization called the American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education whose aim was to reach out to Lithuanian teachers and administrators by sending American educators to work with them.

I could hardly wait to get home to tell my recently retired husband, Walter, that I had found the perfect place for his educational expertise. After all, he was 50% Lithuanian from his father's family; I was 100% Lithuanian. How could we possibly not get involved with A.P.P.L.E.?

That was the start of 17 trips to Lithuania over a ten year period for him. I accompanied Walter on two (maybe three) of those trips. He was the educator; I was the behind-the-scenes person. Although the summer A.P.P.L.E. sessions were important, he felt it was equally important to spend time in various towns when schools were in session.

The A.P.P.L.E. lecturers that signed up for the summer sessions came from all over the U.S.A. as did the membership. The "headquarters" was an integral part of the Vaiva Vebraite/Jim Gust household for at least five years. It was there Walt and I would go at least twice a month to post donations, write thank you's, and prepare the A.P.P.L.E. newsletter for mailing. Walter took over as treasurer in 1992 and then I succeeded my husband when he went on the Board. I volunteered for the secretary's position because I thought it was important to keep an accurate record of our meetings. Those were the days of the highest excitement and enthusiasm.

### **Discover a New World in the Library**

A Project titled, "Discover a New World in the Library" recently received the highest ranking among proposals selected for funding from A.P.P.L.E.'s Lithuanian Scholars' Fund. The project was submitted by Violeta Kvasiene from the Silenu Pagrindine Mokykla. The school is located in the Siauliai region. Ms. Kavasiene participated in the 2011 A.P.P.L.E. summer seminars. Approximately 40 students and 25 adults are expected to participate in the project. The numbers are what would be expected for a small school located in a rural area. What is unique about the project is that it not only for the benefit of students and teachers, but for the community at large.

The Silenai elementary school library is the sole educational, cultural and information center for the school and rural community. It is a resource to help fight alcoholism and delinquency among the youth, especially those from families affected by unemployment and other difficult circumstances. Unfortunately, for two years, no funds have been budgeted for the school's library to purchase new books. This project not only seeks funds to purchase newly-published books, but also proposes various activities for students and adults to make use of the library as a cultural and educational resource.

Some of the objectives of the project include developing the ability to use information technology; organization of events to encourage reading; to hold events inviting the school and rural community; to hold informal activities which would include children from disadvantaged families. The activities will permit people of all ages and social status an outlet to spend their leisure time and will foster development of cultural literacy. Students will be able to broaden their horizons and complement their classroom knowledge. Students and adults will deepen their computer skills and learn how to find information on the Internet; something we in a more "connected" part of the world take for granted. Finally, there are plans to partner with the Siauliai University Library and the Siauliai County Povilo Visinskio Public Library.

Some of the specific activities that were proposed as part of this project include:

- A trip by 8th and 9th graders to Siauliai University Library to become acquainted with electronic library catalogs, to see how traditional paper documents are translated into online information, and to work with a variety of academic library and information systems.
- "When it snows outside the window": an evening where 1st to 4th graders spend time reading with their grandparents.
- An activity where students use information technology and computer programs

to design their favorite book covers.

- Browsing in cyberspace with an explanation of rules and etiquette.
- A book presentation contest for 5th to 8th graders in cooperation with the Siauliai County Povilo Visinskio Public Library.
- "A meeting with poet Eugenija Liumaite": An event for Children's Book Day.
- A photograph display and awards ceremony for the best readers.
- An afternoon where all 35 books purchased with project funds will be put on display.

The entire project will be carried out in the February to June, 2012 timeframe. Can you guess how much this ambitious project will cost? It will all be done with a budget of 1,225 litas (~ \$470 US). A.P.P.L.E. will provide a grant of 1,000 litas, the maximum under the Lithuanian Scholars' Fund Program. Matching local funding will cover the remainder. Imagine what more could be done if A.P.P.L.E. had the funds to offer larger grants!

### A.P.P.L.E. Board Spring Meeting

Mark your calendars for the Spring Meeting of the Board of Directors and the Annual Meeting for the purpose of electing officers which will be held the weekend of April 14-15 in Howell, New Jersey. You may obtain additional details by contacting [Vida Anton](#).

### Fundraising Corner

Do you know of an organization (foundation, club, etc.) that would be willing to financially support A.P.P.L.E. or its various projects such as the Lithuanian Scholars' Fund? If so, we would like to hear about it. We can accept outright donations or submit a project proposal for a grant. While we do receive periodic donations from some of the more well-known and larger Lithuanian charities, we believe there are other groups out there that we have not heard about. Please forward your suggestions to our President, Karl Janowitz at [karl8333@temple.edu](mailto:karl8333@temple.edu), and we will be sure to follow up on them.

Find out more about donating to A.P.P.L.E. on the [A.P.P.L.E. Website](#).

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.

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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