

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



(American Professional Partnership

for

Lithuanian Education)

## E-Zine

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### Greetings!



Message from the President:

Happy Groundhog Day! Hope that winter will be kind to us this year, and not linger forever! The weather in Lithuania has been brutally cold, so let's pray for an early warming thaw!

Now that we are one month into the New Year, and have had time to reflect on our past endeavors, hopefully we've also had time to think about our role with A.P.P.L.E. and what lies ahead for us as we approach our 20th Anniversary. We have accomplished much, made many friends both here and in Lithuania, and we look forward to continuing our mission with our colleagues in Lithuania.

We remain optimistic that we will soon hear from the Ministry regarding funds in their support of A.P.P.L.E. for our 20th Summer Program.

We have heard from Dana Migaliova, Director of Viltis (Lithuanian Society for Persons With Mental Disabilities). Vitas Underys had received an e-mail from her regarding Camp Viltis. The good news is that it will be funded, but on a shortened schedule. The Camp will run from Saturday, July 10, 2010 to Wednesday, July 21, 2010.

Our annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 10, 2010 in Milan, Michigan, and more information will be forthcoming. I look forward to seeing you there!

Vida Gavin, 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."

**The Lithuanian Scholars Program.** Over the past five years A.P.P.L.E. has offered an opportunity for Lithuanian participants in the A.P.P.L.E. Seminars to apply what they have learned in the seminars to their schools, classrooms and/or communities. Teachers and education personnel are asked to write proposals for innovative projects that will link theory and practice. This is the fourth year that the Lithuanian Scholars Program has supported teachers as change agents in their educational communities. Please join us in celebrating the 2009-2010 Lithuanian Scholars Award Winners!

- **Ausra Stoskiene Jonaviciene** from Kedainiu special school in Kedainiu
- **Janina Dautartiene** from the same school and region
- **Neringa Kaminskiene** from Vilnius special school in Vilnius
- **Liuba Vaigauskiene** from Raseiniuy middle school in Raseiniu rajonas
- **Virginija Sinkeviciene** from Vaiku kindergarden in Kaunas
- **Asta Kaseliene** from Kaisiadoriai special school in Kaisiadoriu

- **Silva Morkeviciene** from Raseiniu region education system in Raseiniu rajonas
- **Egle Zarauskiene** from Vilniaus Sviesos elementary school in Vilnius
- **Rasa Bernotiene** from Skuodo kindergarden in Skuodas
- **Ligija Ubartaite** from Luxembourg Europo school and Klaipeda Prano Masioto elementary school in Liuksemburgo in Klaipedos
- **Jurgita Vasiliauskiene** from Ukmerges Senamiescio 10-year school in Ukmerge
- **Zydra Jakiuniene** from Ukmerges technical school in Ukmerge
- **Edita Staniuliene** from Lazdijai Motiejaus Gustaicio gimnazium in Lazdijai
- **Lina Skemiene** from Kauno region blind and deaf center in Kauno raj.
- **Aldona Sestuskiene** from the same school
- **Rima Rybakova** from Paberzes, Verdenes middle school in Vilniaus rajonas
- **Stase Aleksejuniene** from Vilniaus Simono Staneviciaus middle school in Vilnius
- **Irena Levanaviciene** from the same school in Vilnius
- **Laima Macijevskaite** from Vilniaus Simono Daukanto 10-year school in Vilnius
- **Aurelija Dirginciene** from Siauliu, Juventos school in Siauliai

For more details on the list of winners and their projects, visit the A.P.P.L.E. website: <http://www.applequest.org>.

If you would like to support this project, please consider making a contribution to the Lithuanian Scholars Fund. Send your donation to

A.P.P.L.E. P.O. Box 179017, San Diego, CA 92177

Thank You! - Barbara Henriques

### Organizational Development Message

The A.P.P.L.E. Seed continues to be a work in progress as we publish this, our third edition. We have assessed the results of a survey we recently conducted among our leadership team members and will incorporate a number of positive recommendations as a result.

As always, your constructive comments, suggestions and reactions to our e-zine are welcome and appreciated. We will also continue to accept your articles, anecdotes and those comments deemed relevant to our readers for possible publication here in future issues. To inquire about submitting your content or commentary, contact us: Ed Topar at [edtopar@gmail.com](mailto:edtopar@gmail.com); Gail Cassidy at [gail@coachability.com](mailto:gail@coachability.com); and/or Vitas Underys at [Vitasu@msn.com](mailto:Vitasu@msn.com).

The initiative to invite Lithuanian Nationals to become official members of A.P.P.L.E. is moving forward with help from our primary contact in Lithuania, Ramute' Zemioniene. She will be the focal point for this effort once all the preliminary guidelines are in place. We anticipate that this program will be implemented during our Summer Program activities in Lithuania during July.

We look forward to everyone's continued support and cooperation as we continue our efforts to expand the communications capability within our organization, to provide the incentive for a more open dialogue amongst all our members and to facilitate the improved functionality and capability of A.P.P.L.E. in the vigorous pursuit of our mission.

We have included a request for email addresses from all those who respond to our request for donations and membership fees by including that request on both the Newsletter back page and the envelope provided for donations. We expect that this will add additional readers to The A.P.P.L.E. Seed and allow us to expand our ability to spread the exposure of A.P.P.L.E. to new as well as old friends of A.P.P.L.E.

## Heard in Lithuania

**According to the latest information available from Lithuania's Labour Exchange**, on January 14th, there were 280,500 officially recorded job seekers while there were 1,138 jobs available for the taking. Throughout the past week, there were 8,800 additional job applications. Such an unprecedented level of unemployment did not manifest itself in Lithuania even during the so-called time of the Russian crisis, when a record number of those without jobs (the unemployed) was registered at 237,000. Source: A daily in Lithuania, "Lietuvos ziniuos", January 16, 2010-- (submitted by Irene Ross)

**Internet access**....as reported in Respublika, 60% of Lithuanian households had access to the internet. Sweden, at 80%, had the highest household broadband connections of the EU27 during the year 2009. Those who bought goods over the internet varied widely. In the United Kingdom, 64% of the residents bought goods via the internet. In Lithuania only 8% of the residents used the internet to purchase goods.

**Improved economic indicators**...Swedbank's chief analyst on Lithuanian economic factors, Tomas Andrejauskas, forecasts that following a difficult first half

of 2010 economic conditions should be improved by spring and be on a definite upswing by summer. The major impediment will continue to be the excessive rate of unemployment, which currently stands at 16%.

**Putting together the world's largest puzzle:** Judith Cepulienė from Siauliai, who has been doing progressively larger and larger puzzles over the past 14 years, recently completed a puzzle that included over 24,000 pieces and was measured at 4.28 meters long and 1.57 meters wide. She assisted, by her three sons, completed the puzzle in just three weeks. (Reported on LRT TV by Anželė Mockutė)

## Summer Program Activities

**VP of Air Baltic, Tadas Vizgirda, has announced that Air Baltic now has direct flights between Vilnius and** the following cities: London, Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Copenhagen, and Munich.

**Charging a fee to enter Old Town... Vilnius municipal officials are considering charging a fee for cars to enter the area designated as *Old Town*.** For those of us participating in A.P.P.L.E. summer programs this coming July, we should be aware that the congestion that sometimes plagues the Old Town area will be addressed this summer. The estimate of cars entering that area so popular with residents and tourists alike during the summer months is causing them to consider such a move. It is estimated that during peak hours 43,000 cars enter that area each day. The rationale is that by reducing traffic in that area they will reduce pollution and congestion as well as limit the physical wear and tear on this historic area. The fees under consideration range from three (3) to ten (10) Euros per car.

## A.P.P.L.E. Member Profile: Blanche Woolls

**A.P.P.L.E. Member Profiles.....**Each month we will profile a prominent member of A.P.P.L.E. as a way to acknowledge their contributions to our organization and to allow our members to have a better understanding of and introduction to those individuals who positively influence our ability to support Lithuanian education. This month we salute one of our most beloved Board Members, Blanche Woolls.

Dr. Blanche Woolls, Professor Emeritus, is a graduate of Indiana University where she has a Bachelors in Fine Arts and a Masters and Doctorate in Library and Information Science. She was Department Chair of Library Science and served as Chair of the Doctoral Studies Committee for 12 years at the University of Pittsburgh. She was appointed Director of Library and Information Science at San Jose State University in 1997 and remained there until her retirement in August 2005. She is past president of the American Association of School Librarians and the International Association of School Librarianship. Author of over 24 books, parts of books and journals, Dr. Woolls has been a cornerstone of the school library movement in Lithuania as a result of her participation in A.P.P.L.E. summer programs for the past 16 years.



Once upon a time a school library colleague from Scranton, Pennsylvania, Regina Petraskis, called to ask me if I would like to teach a two-week seminar in Lithuania with her. This sounded like an interesting thing to do, so off I went. It was an amazing experience. The students sat in their rather dull jackets and seemed to wait for the interpreter to tell them what to write down on the notebooks they had in front of them. We visited a school library in Vilnius, which was mostly textbooks. They seemed to listen, but they seldom said much.

The next year, I asked my husband, Don to come along and share the comforts of the "hotel," and a friend, to join me. For a few years, Brenda White, Marge Tassia, or Barbara Immroth came along to co-teach. What I watched over the years was the change in the way my students dressed and how they began talking about things in their school libraries. Each year they opened their lives more and more.

In 2000, I was elected President of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL) and I observed what great attention could be paid to school librarians in Lithuania if they could host this association's annual meeting. One requirement was that someone who was going to be on the planning committee would attend one conference. Because the 2004 conference was to be held in Dublin, Ireland, I asked my 2003 class to elect someone to attend, and they chose

Snaige Raguckienes.

The IASL conference is often held at the same time as A.P.P.L.E. and a great distance from Lithuania or the U.S., so neither Snaige nor I were able to go to Hong Kong in 2005. In 2006, Snaige began teaching the seminar with me, and she did this so I could attend IASL in Portugal in 2006.

When I was given the opportunity to plan the program in 2008, the time chosen did not conflict with A.P.P.L.E. and both Snaige and another former student, Aldona, came to the University of California at Berkeley. A.P.P.L.E. members in California helped me locate someone who had come to the seminar one summer. She took three Lithuanians under her wing giving them a lovely tour of San Francisco and also furnishing them with clothing when their suitcases did not arrive. Snaige and Aldona, as well as our San Francisco friend, were in Padua in September 2009. I still want very much to see Lithuania sponsor this international event.

What does A.P.P.L.E. mean to me? It means us non-Lithuanians like Phil Taylor and me who see what a difference this group has made and continues to make in this wonderful country. It has introduced me to people who have given and given and continue to give like Al and Amanda. Irene has offered me all the reasons in the world to become a Vegan. Barbara is a person who isn't afraid to make changes when they are needed and to stick by them in the face of mountains to climb. A.P.P.L.E. introduced me to two people who have written best selling books (in an education community that is in the thousands, not millions) for my company.

It's been such an interesting and enjoyable part of my life and a constant learning experience. How could I have not known that animals in other countries do not say the same things as animals in the U.S. say, that every Lithuanian can sing in four-part harmony, at least the birthday song.

Last summer the American Library Association Conference was held at the same time as A.P.P.L.E. and I have both professional membership commitments as well as my day job as an editor for Libraries Unlimited, and so I had to stay at home and work, but I'm planning to return this next summer and "help" Snaige teach because she does such a great job.

NOTE: In our March issue, we will be profiling Dr. Karl Janowitz, A.P.P.L.E. President-Elect.

## Vaiva Vebra Remembered

Lithuanians and Lithuanian-Americans have preserved the custom of a memorial mass and gathering one year after the death of a family member. Vaiva Vebra, co-founder of A.P.P.L.E. with Jurate Krokys-Stirbys, died December 13, 2008, so her commemoration ceremonies occurred in December, 2009, both in Hartford, Connecticut, and in Vilnius, Lithuania. Vaiva is buried next to her father in Antakalnio Cemetery, along with many other notable Lithuanians. Vaiva served as President of A.P.P.L.E. for the first eight years of the organization (1990-1998), again for one term in 2004-2005, and provided the essential vision for the organization during its critical formative years.

Vaiva's U.S. memorial mass was celebrated at the Holy Trinity Church in Hartford, CT, on December 6, 2009. Roughly 100 or so were in attendance, including husband Jim Gust and their twins, Liepa and Lokys. For the A.P.P.L.E. connection, co-founder of the organization, Jurate Krokys-Stirbys, and former A.P.P.L.E. President Gita Kupcinskas spoke at the memorial program following the mass. Her husband, Jim, the creator and uncredited publisher of A.P.P.L.E.'s newsletter, "Report to the Corps," contributed a 35-minute photo and video montage of Vaiva. The film consisted of nine meditations about Vaiva's life: Remembrance, The Immigrants, M.I.T., First Contact, Twins Arrive, Vaiva's C.V., In Country, At Home, and finally, Life After Cancer-One More Moment.

Vaiva's memorial mass in Vilnius on December 14 was attended by her siblings, her son Aras and his family (including granddaughters Adrija and Dagne). President Adamkus was in attendance, as were Vaiva's colleagues from the Education Ministry and A.P.P.L.E. participants. Jim Gust's film was also shown to those commemorating Vaiva's life at the Vilnius proceedings. Following the mass, those in attendance visited her gravesite on that snowy day bringing along flowers for the grave.

Draugas, the Lithuanian language daily newspaper in Chicago, covered the memorials in its December 26 edition. The article also mentions that the Lithuanian-American Community, an organization in which Vaiva served a term as President from 2003 through 2006, plans to publish a book about Vaiva's life. Her speeches and addresses will be included, along with memories and memorial testimonials submitted by people who wish to share the experiences they had with Vaiva. Those interested are asked to contact: [ssimkute@comcast.net](mailto:ssimkute@comcast.net)

Submitted by Irena Ross

"What is the difference between an obstacle and an opportunity? Our attitude toward it. Every opportunity has a difficulty, and every difficulty has an opportunity."

J. Sidlow Baxter  
1903-1999, Author and Theologian

## Reminders

**The Annual Meeting for all members** is scheduled for Saturday, April 10, 2010, in Milan, Michigan. Details will be available in the March issue.

### **Look for details on our 20th Anniversary Summer Celebration . . .**

In our March issue, we will provide details regarding your opportunities for participation in our all-inclusive celebration of A.P.P.L.E.'s 20th Anniversary partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science in support of the Lithuanian education system in a democratic society.

### **If you would like a relative or a friend to receive their copy of **The A.P.P.L.E.****

**Seed** directly, you have three ways to get this issue to them: 1) send their email address to [edtopar@gmail.com](mailto:edtopar@gmail.com), 2) click on the link for that purpose in the margin to the right, or 3) click on "please forward" at the bottom of this issue. To receive issues every month, the easiest way is to click on the link in the top right-hand column.

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.

Editing for grammar, punctuation, and spelling of submitted materials is the responsibility of the authors.

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