

John Baltrus

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Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2015 7:01 AM
To: jonaspb@comcast.net
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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

The school year is nearing its midpoint and we are certainly in the midst of Winter. Some of us are digging out from major snow storms, but others have been luckier. The days certainly are getting longer and the beautiful Winter landscape will be gradually changing to Spring.

This is a wonderful time to reflect on A.P.P.L.E.'s 25th (and final) year as well as on its mission and accomplishments.

The "Call for Proposals" has been posted and plans are being made for A.P.P.L.E.'s 2015 events in Lithuania and the United States. Look for details in the next few months.

Thank you for your involvement and dedication to APPLE.

Have a wonderful February.

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. Reflection - Irena Gedris



Rita Balys, Danguole Vodapolas and Irena Gedris at the first A.P.P.L.E. fundraising event in Cleveland. Amanda Muliolis learned about and joined A.P.P.L.E. at the event.

Remembering 1991

That first year, as we planned our trip to Lithuania, Mikhail Gorbachev was threatening "We will teach you". So we traveled with fear and trepidation, but with determination to help Lithuania's teachers. When in Vilnius, we heard explosions, Russian soldiers patrolled the streets, and two weeks after arriving the Medininkai border station attendants were massacred. The nation was in mourning - freedom was going to cost lives.

Meile Luksiene, the Mother of Lithuanian Education, who was 85 at that time, met us with these words: "Teach us western co-operation methods, teach us about unconditional friendships." The teachers said: "We know that the methods we used were wrong, but we did not know any better methods."

This type of problem developed for teachers, when the Ministry refused to use lesson plans supplied by Moscow. They now had to make their own plans, and they had received permission from the Ministry of Education to do so. They had no non-soviet educational literature to base their plans on, they were not aware of the western methods of teaching and planning. This caused a period of stagnation, until doors began to open and information began to flow from the west.

That first year the main focus of the A.P.P.L.E. lectures was special education. Children with mild to severe physical and mental disorders had been placed in Children's Homes (Internatai) where their basic needs were met, but practically no teaching was done. We had to present them with ideas, how to teach and integrate such children. When visiting in Aviliai town near Zarasai, an eighty-year old priest asked us: "Are you the ones, who say that all these children should be taught in regular schools?" Many children with mild physical disorders were in the Internatas in that town.

There were 7 strands with 30 lecturers that first year. We expected about 200-250 attendees. We met about 500 waiting to join the seminars. This presented space and hand-out problems, but we managed to overcome them.

As we worked closely with our students, we began to learn about some of their

personal problems, as well. One of their questions was about illnesses and cures. One mother, whose young daughter had come down with scleroderma, wanted to know if there was a cure for this illness. As I looked for information about scleroderma, I discovered that there is no cure, not even medicines for it, neither in United States nor anywhere else. In the US, families with someone suffering this illness get together into support groups and help each other to manage the illness and its effects on the family. Our lecturers often helped with such non-educational side issues.

The teachers really enjoyed the psychological discussions, especially those that dealt with behavioral issues. They wanted to know what to do with wife-beating husbands when bad economic conditions do not allow for divorce. In small towns there are families where both mother and father are alcoholics and their children have no supervision. Many times the teachers feed these children and sometimes take them to their own homes. Discipline in the classroom is also an important topic for discussion.

We were asked by participants if we will come again and how long will we help - our answer - while we see the need and Lithuanian teachers continue to attend our lectures.

Article written by Irena Gedris (Giedraitienė) a few years after the seminars.
Translated by Amanda Mulioliene

Save the Dates - A.P.P.L.E.'s 25th Anniversary Celebrations

A special reception recognizing A.P.P.L.E.'s 25th anniversary will be held at the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington, D.C. on **Friday, April 24th. Attendance is by invitation only.** For additional details and to secure an invitation, please contact Vida Anton at celebrateapple25@gmail.com. A.P.P.L.E.'s Spring Board Meeting will follow on Saturday. Another celebration with our friends in Lithuania is also being planned for this Summer. We will publish more information as soon as it is available. We hope you will be able to join us for one of these events.

Lithuanian Scholars' Fund Winning Project

The Lithuanian Scholars' Fund (Lietuvos Mokytoju Fondas - LMF) is in its ninth year of existence in Lithuania. A total of 170 projects have been financed by the LMF from 2006 to 2015. This year, 19 proposals will be funded for a total amount of 20,077 LTL. The winners were recently selected and can be found on the [A.P.P.L.E. website](#).

In this issue, we are featuring another of the top-rated proposals. This one was submitted by Saturna Sporisiene. The details are as follows:

Project Title: "Green Classroom"

School: Kaunas, kindergarten "Rokutis" (3-6 year old children)

Occupation: Speech Therapy

Participated in the 2014 A.P.P.L.E. Summer Seminar - Special Education Seminar "Real-life application of theoretical knowledge acquired at school".

Requesting: 1,000 - Lt (approx. \$340 USD)

Project participants: preschool and preschool-age pupils (including 46 children with special needs), children's families (including 14 social risk families), educators and professionals, and the Roku community.

Need for and objectives of the project:

Modern outdoor playgrounds promote only a child's physical development, and no other areas of development (social, cognitive, artistic). But their consideration during design or inclusion in an existing grounds' surroundings allows children to broaden

their personal reach, which leads to beneficial changes in their overall development.

Environment is a key factor in a child's education, because education also occurs when a child interacts with the environment. The child must be in harmony with the natural and social environment, with themselves, and with others around them. He needs to feel safe and be protected from noise and pollution. The outdoor environment should be comfortable and beautiful - as a medium for life. It must be designed for a child's creativity, exploration, and learning. Only by interacting with surrounding natural spaces will children learn to understand the complex, interconnected natural world. Neither books, films, museums, zoos nor parks can give a child as much experience as he can get on his own by exploring the environment.

"Green classroom" children will be able to monitor the growth of plants, their flowering, seed, and fruit maturation. Using auxiliary instruments (magnifying glasses, binoculars, ...) they will be able to monitor insects, birds, their behavior, and lifestyle. A variety of tests and experiments will take place. They will become familiar with medicinal plants and their uses. They will learn how to use a "natural clock" to determine the time of day. From natural materials they will create compositions, paintings. By feeling only, using sensory boxes they will learn to determine a material's type by way of massaging with their feet. Through questioning, reasoning and exploring the children will gain knowledge about insects and their characteristics: words (short poems or stories), motion (imitating the motion of small bugs), images (painting, molding, stamping); practical activities (e.g. butterfly forms when baking cookies) will help consolidate and enrich the information received. It will balance and deepen the acquired theoretical knowledge with practical experience.

Objectives:

- To create environmental education incentives, corresponding to the needs of the community.
- To facilitate a natural interaction between the child and the environment in order to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.
- To integrate into the overall activities socially at risk and children with special needs families.
- To encourage and enable parents to assume their responsibilities in creating a friendly and safe environment, caring for the conservation of the "Green classes" inventory and promoting education.
- To inject a love of the environment, to improve nature conservation skills.

What are the expected changes, if your proposed project is executed? Who will benefit?

Therefore, how we change the outdoor environment will be focused on:

- A wide variety of children's game activities;
 - Cognition, investigation, depending upon the situation;
 - A pleasant experience in learning;
 - Joy in creativity;
 - Growth in self-confidence.
-
- Education will take place naturally, as the child interacts with nature.
 - Children will have the opportunity to practice theoretical knowledge.
 - Children will perceive causal relationships existing in nature.
 - Strengthening of child and family, community relationships.
 - Socially at risk and children with special needs, family integration will create conditions for them to survive in fellowship, creative joy, success, self-confidence, and it will help them to relax from daily stress, and promote successful socialization.
 - It will improve the quality of child education, not only by including parents in

activities, but also the entire community.

What products will be produced?

Installation of herbal patches, a living natural clock, planted "green maze", purchased boxes for children's sensory education and to store creative expression devices. An equipped sensory education corner. The devices required for nature observation (magnifying glasses, binoculars, microscopes). An equipped "Butterfly Garden". The purchased equipment will be institutional property and will be able to be used by the whole community.

The project will run through June.

Fundraising Corner

You still have an opportunity to make a donation to honor A.P.P.L.E. and the many volunteers who have served A.P.P.L.E. over 25 years. All donations will be expended towards 2015 programs including A.P.P.L.E. Scholar's Fund. You can make a direct donation to A.P.P.L.E. by [clicking here](#) and using PayPal. Make sure to add a note if you wish that your donation be specifically used for a Lithuanian Scholars' Fund grant.

What will different levels of donations accomplish?

- For \$100, you can provide an ink cartridge and paper so that A.P.P.L.E. can distribute lesson notes to teachers.
- For \$200, you can provide a stipend for a translator.
- For \$450, you can underwrite the distribution of our newsletter.
- For \$500, you can sponsor a Scholar's Fund Grant. Lesser amounts will be combined to fund a grant.

A minimum donation of \$25-individual or \$40-family will enroll you as a member of A.P.P.L.E. for one year. Of course, donations are still welcome by mail: A.P.P.L.E., 105 Sturbridge Lane, Chapel Hill, NC 27516

A.P.P.L.E. is a 501(3)c organization, which means that your gifts are tax-deductible. Our tax-exempt number is 23-2682202. Because of strict IRS regulations, we cannot accept donations intended for specific people. If you would like to support relatives or friends, please do so directly. The A.P.P.L.E. scholar grants are intended for Lithuanian educators who do not have contacts in the United States.

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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