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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,



Message from the President:

I hope that all of you had a wonderful Christmas holiday with family and friends, and I wish to all of you a healthy and prosperous New Year!

I have recently heard from Maryte Speciene, the Ministry's liason to A.P.P.L.E. There have been many changes within the Ministry. Many of the departments have merged into one, i.e. The Educational Center, which remains housed at the old PPRC. The Director of the Center is Giedrius Vaidelis. She informed me that the Ministry is very interested in A.P.P.L.E.'s return for the 20th summer, but the allocations for all programs will not be distributed until sometime in January. We remain hopeful and optimistic that all three programs will be funded, i.e. Vilnius, Kaunas, and Camp Viltis, but we will not know this until later this month.

The deadline for proposals for the Summer of 2010 has come and gone. Thirteen proposals have come in, and the chair of the Recruiting Committee, Shirley Sabo, recently met with Barbara Henriques and Karl Janowitz to review the proposals. Shirley will work on recruiting some additional staff to round out the offerings.

As of today, we have anticipated strands in Administration, Technology, Library Science, Language Arts, Social Work, and Special Education.

Laimingu Nauju Metu!
Vida Gavin

Organizational Development Message

A.P.P.L.E. MEMBERSHIP FOR LITHUANIAN NATIONALS

BASIC GUIDELINES

Following are the basic guidelines for Lithuanian Nationals to become official members of A.P.P.L.E. The format is designed to anticipate the most frequently asked questions and to answer them along with providing procedural guidelines to assist the reader with a basic understanding of the entire process.

Who is eligible?this will be a two part process to accommodate feasibility issues and anticipated growing pains. Initially, selected individuals will be invited to become members based on the recommendations of Board Members, Officers and those members participating in the summer programs beginning July 2010. This first group of eligible Lithuanians is expected to be, but not limited to, those who will be working with our U.S. based participants in support of our 2010 summer programs in Lithuania ie, Guest Lecturers, Team Teachers, etc. as well as the members of our Lithuanian Advisory Board. These Lithuanian participants will be eligible to become members prior to participating in those capacities under the same guidelines as our U.S. based teachers and lecturers. During our initial summer discussions in July, 2010 with our Lithuanian Advisory Board, we will finalize our process to include all Lithuanian nationals who wish to become members.

What is the application process?....the initial contacts will be made by a Board Member, Officer or member participating in the 2010 summer programs. Application guidelines are: a) the initiating A.P.P.L.E. member will personally contact their candidate(s) to confirm that they will accept the invitation, b) ensure that the candidate(s) understand that they are responsible for paying their dues prior to being considered a member, and c) send that person's name and contact information to Ramute who will finalize the membership process by extending the official invitation and collecting the membership dues. Initial contact information will not be processed prior to February 1st. Please do not contact Ramute before that date. All inquiries prior to February 1st can be sent to [Ed Topar](mailto:edtopar@gmail.com), edtopar@gmail.com. After that date, you can send the candidate names and all confirmed contact information to: [Ramute Zemioniene](mailto:Ramute.Zemioniene@obuolys.lt) at obuolys_lt@yahoo.com.

What are the dues for Lithuanian members?....we do not want the severe

economic conditions in Lithuania to negatively impact the desire to become members on the part of any individuals that you may want to invite. With that in mind, we have determined by consensus that 25 litas would be a manageable amount for their annual dues.

Do they receive the same benefits as U.S. members?....Yes ! There is no difference between the memberships. The only accommodation to the inconvenient travel distance between the U.S. and Lt. will be the creation of an Advisory Board in Lithuania to coordinate their activities and provide a local governing structure for them. The Advisory Board will, initially, be chosen by the Organizational Development Committee with considered input from the President, the President Elect, the Past President and Ramute Zemioniene our Primary Contact in Lithuania for this program.

Though our Lithuanian members are eligible to attend our Annual Meeting in the U.S., it may be more feasible and effective to hold an Annual Meeting for Lithuanian members in Lithuania coordinated by their Advisory Board and coincident with the timing of our summer programs in Vilnius.

Will they be eligible to be elected A.P.P.L.E. Officers and/or Board Members?....this question will be referred to the Board of Directors for discussion and resolution at our Annual Meeting in April, 2010, because it potentially involves the creation of new voting positions which is governed by our By-Laws.

All questions, suggestions or comments relative to these guidelines should be sent to the Organizational Development Committee for inclusion or clarification: [Ed Topar](mailto:EdTopar@gmail.com) edtopar@gmail.com, [Gail Cassidy](mailto:gail@coachability.com) gail@coachability.com, [Vitas Underys](mailto:VitasU@msn.com) Vitasu@msn.com.

By-Laws Study Team.....Will have a first draft of our suggested revisions and additions to the current By-Laws in February. This first draft will be available to members of our leadership team for review and discussion during the months of February and March. It will also include the addition of an official Election Policy for use in time for our Annual Meeting in April.

By-Laws Study Team includes Ed Topar, Anita Scarborough, and Vida Anton.

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 newest Board Members, Vida Anton.

The schedule for A.P.P.L.E. Profiles in the upcoming issues is:

- February, Blanche Woolls
- March, Karl Janowitz
- April, Amanda and Algirdis Muliolis
- May, Giedre Stankunas

- June, Ramute Zemioniene.

Heard in Lithuania

The current recession and high rate of unemployment have created a potentially untenable rate of emigration from Lithuania. According to the Interior Ministry, the number of persons who have left the country was 15,738 from January through November of this year. The old record for persons leaving the country was 17,015 in 2007. With the numbers for December not in as yet, it is possible that 2009 will set a new record for emigration.

According to a quote in *Respublica* by Valdemara Razumas, President of the Academy of Sciences the number one reason for people leaving Lithuania is "Quality of Life."

Zydrunas Savickas a winner of the World's Strongest Man title is a strong (no pun intended) candidate to fill a recently vacated seat in the Seimas. Good luck voting against anything he is in favor of.

Anyone have any money they want to invest? Finance Minister Simonyte has announced that the Ministry is issuing Savings Notes (similar to CDs) with an interest rate of 7.10%. The notes carry a one-year term, but can be redeemed after six months with no penalty.

On Monday, 12/21, the first Education Quality Forum was held at the Presidential Palace. This forum of education experts, politicians, scientists and educators was organized to discuss amendments to the laws on education and their impact on the quality, administration and control of the Lithuanian Education System.

The resulting conclusions, comments and any recommendations should be of great interest to A.P.P.L.E. as we develop our support programs for the continued improvement of the Lithuanian Education System. Let's stay tuned in to that activity and please report any updates to us that may come to your attention, and we will report it here.

Summer Program Activities

Our 20th. Anniversary Year in Lithuania is a go!....As reported in the President's message, we recently received word that our basic Summer Program of support activities has been approved and included in the 2010 budget for the Ministry of Education & Science. While details have not yet been made available, the issue of that critical support from our partner has been confirmed. We are awaiting word, with crossed fingers, on the specific available support for our work in Camp Viltis and Kaunas.

SAS will resume flights between Copenhagen and Vilnius....As of 1/11/2010, two flights a day, seven days a week will be available to and from these cities for

those of you who may want to travel through Copenhagen this coming summer.

Money Saving Suggestion....For those going to Lithuania next summer, consider this program offered by a currency exchange company called Travelex Currency Services. According to their customer service department, if a customer exchanges \$500 for Litas in their initial transaction, Travelex will waive the commission fee on the purchase and buy back any leftover paper currency, with no fee, when you return.

Not going to spend \$500?.....buddy up with another person going to Lithuania and split the amount at \$250 each. Still too much?.....get a 3rd person involved and split the amount at \$166.66 each. Check out the details at www.travelex.com.

A.P.P.L.E. Member Profile

Vida Lanys Anton was born in Vilnius and came to the U.S. (New Jersey) at the age of six. This is her story.....

In the early 70's I made my first trip to Lithuania, searching my roots (it was the 'in' thing to do at that time). It was a harrowing but enlightening five-day stay. It peaked my interest and instilled in me the obligation and responsibility to help "my country" in some way - any way. The opportunity finally presented itself in the late 80's with my membership in AIL (Americans for an Independent Lithuania) One of the organization's projects was working with the orphanages.

In 1989, we collected, packed and shipped Christmas gifts for 400 orphans in Vilnius. I visited the orphanage to distribute the gifts (no Santa Claus outfit). The children prepared a program and a few gifts BUT our shipment had not arrived. Imagine how ridiculous I felt with nothing for the kids. Not a very good start in my humanitarian career!!

I personally worked closely with an orphanage in Alytus for infants and very young children. On one of my many "surprise" visits, a little girl about 2 years old, grabbed my hand when we arrived and refused to let go through the entire visit. As we got ready to leave, I asked about her and was informed about her family and that her name was Vida. (I still get goosebumps remembering the incident.)

Then on to the "pleasure" of welcoming the three yachts that sailed from Klaipeda to Sandy Hook, NJ: the Daile, Audra, and Lietuva. They arrived a week earlier than the planned reception at South Street Seaport, and I was cajoled into making arrangements "to show them around" for a week - very interesting!!

Then in November, 1989, the first Lithuanian basketball team arrived to play a series of games throughout the US. As their first game was at Monmouth College (my alma mater), I felt compelled to act as their hostess upon their arrival.

As the team was leaving, I was left a gift.....Arturas Karnisovas. I became his "American mother" as I was known in Lithuania. He became part of our family through his four successful years at Seton Hall University.

Upon his arrival there were many questions in the sports worldif a young man from the then USSR (sorry) could ever adapt to the American lifestyle and be a good student, as well as play basketball for a Big East school. He was VERY successful at both and opened the door for the flood of players who followed him to the US. He also opened the door of my home to every basketball team, every player and coach who was visiting America at that time.

Then followed the band and musician phase! That's a story for another time.

Then A.P.P.L.E. came into existence, and I found another way to express my support for Lithuania. I participated in each of the first ten years of Summer Programs in Lithuania and had the honor of planting the traditional apple tree that 10th anniversary year. I still maintain an apartment in Kaunas and revisit my native Lithuania as often as possible. It has been quite a ride, and we have much to be proud of as members of A.P.P.L.E.

Now, as a member of the Board of Directors, I feel as motivated, if not more at this time, because I feel we have so much more we can do and so much more is needed to be done.

Quotables and Quizzes

"Quality is never an accident. It is the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution--the wise choice of many alternatives."

- Willa A. Foster

Reminders

4th Quarter Committee Reports are due to President Vida Gavin prior to January 15th, 2010, for inclusion in the February issue of **The A.P.P.L.E. Seed**. Those Committee Chairs that missed the 3rd quarter deadlines for their committee reports are to combine both their 3rd & 4th Quarter Reports and submit one report to President Vida Gavin prior to January 15 for inclusion in the February issue.

Flights to Lithuania for the July Summer Programs are usually less expensive when reserved/purchased early during the 1st quarter of the year. The airlines tend to begin to spike their fares as passenger volumes increase for those planning summer vacations. Check out a newer carrier between London and Vilnius, Star 1 Airlines. They will add an additional five (5) flights a week beginning in January and will also begin direct flights from Vilnius to Dublin and Milan if your travel plans call for stops in those cities.

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, 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.

**We wish you all a very happy, healthy,
and prosperous New Year!!**

Organizational Development Committee
A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education)

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