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E-Zine

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Dear John,



Karl Janowitz

Message from the President

It is June! The school year is almost over and we are finalizing preparations for our

Summer A.P.P.L.E. seminars. The main Summer seminars will be held in Palanga, near the Baltic Sea, this year. Our sessions will run from June 25 through July 5.

Our topic: "Building Educational Communities in our Schools" seems to be more relevant than ever given the debate that countries around the world are addressing this year concerning the role and direction of their schools/educational policies.

Our strands for this summer include administration, teaching English as a foreign language, science (biology), and technology.

This Summer's schedule includes a university-based component scheduled for Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas), and Siauliai University. Topics include Neuropsychology and Special Education/Disabilities Studies.

I am sure I share your enthusiasm for a wonderful Summer.

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 - Irena Zemaitaitis



Irena Zemaitaitis

In 1990 Lithuania re-established its independence. On January 13th 1991 the Soviets retaliated using force against unarmed civilians. Fourteen innocent lives were lost. In May of that same year, my husband and I, with our adult son and daughter, visited our birth country Lithuania after 47 years. While there I realized that I could secure a teaching position and thus have the opportunity to know my country better. In January of 1995 I arrived in Kaunas, the city of my birth. The new semester would start at Vytautas Magnus University and I would begin teaching English and German.

In the summer of 1995 I was part of the A.P.P.L.E. program in Vilnius. I was a discussion leader for a group of Lithuanian teachers. I translated excerpts of human interest stories which were discussed in the context of teachers' lives. This was a

gratifying experience for both the teachers and me. Ten years later in Kaunas, I came across one of these teachers, and we have remained in contact.

In the fall of 1995 my husband joined me, having secured a position as Finance Director at Liteksas, a large wool mill. We thought we might stay about 4 years, but we remained for 14! Seven of these years I was a visiting lecturer at VMU and concurrently 4 years at the Kaunas Seminary. I found Lithuanian students to be polite and well behaved. They dressed neatly and had no outlandish hair styles. Most of the time, they handed homework in neatly and on time, and were prepared to participate in discussions.

Most semesters, besides two lower courses, I taught the top level English course. Some students confessed that they had difficulty understanding my English. It turned out that their previous teachers had learned English with the British pronunciation; however, they soon adjusted to my American speech. Another difficulty for many was voicing an opinion. One student explained that in the past no teacher had asked for their opinion. Through discussion and my teaching segment on "How to give a speech", students gained confidence and became more comfortable with expressing their thoughts.

In the 1990's the public face of Lithuanian citizens was not very welcoming-there were no smiles or friendly greetings. Perhaps this can be attributed to the Soviet era when you didn't know if the stranger was a friend or foe. If, however, you were introduced, the relationship was friendly. In order to provide a friendly atmosphere for socializing, I organized an English Club which I supervised from 1996-2000. I also held a "fini semestri" get-together in my home. Lecturers of the English Department at VMU had no friendly place to gather either, so I created "Irena's Café" and invited colleagues to my home. I made a curious discovery; if there was a sign-up sheet posted, few signed up. If a personal invitation was extended, the attendance rate was better. My husband and I also organized a coffee hour after Mass. Our intention was for parishioners to get better acquainted. Whenever I organized a program (three times a year; February 16th, March 11th and Mother's Day) the hall was filled to capacity. I arrived at the conclusion that when people attend a program, they get coffee, cake, and listen to the program-there is no need to socialize. Lithuanians seem reticent to talk to someone they don't know.

Another concept not understood in Lithuanian society was Volunteerism. My husband and I volunteered for VTN Children's Home in Marijampole and Kaunas. We had two Godchildren there (twins-boy and girl). Each November we tried to instill in them and another child from the Home, as well as other Lithuanian family, the meaning of American Thanksgiving. We collected funds from friends in Kaunas and in the U.S. to fix up living rooms at VTN and to provide desks, computer tables and shelves for the library, as well as books. Packages were sent by St. Joseph's Ladies Guild, Waterbury, CT which were dispersed to Children's Homes in Kaunas, Panevezys and Alytus. The Senior Citizens of the Prienai Home knitted hats, mittens, and socks with wool which we supplied. Parents with disabilities received holiday packages and gifts for their children. All of these recipients were sincerely appreciative, and it made us happy to have been able to help.

The last three years in Lithuania, I volunteered to teach English at TAU (Third Age University) which brought enrichment lectures to senior citizens. Having the opportunity to work with older citizens, my peers, was a pleasant experience. After each lesson, we would have coffee. This time together bonded the class into a unit and we shared life stories, current events and holiday celebrations. It must be mentioned that not enough is available for the older generation to keep them intellectually stimulated. The outlook of Lithuanian society toward the older generation must change

for they have experienced life, are knowledgeable and capable of learning. Many commercial institutions do not present a positive public relations image. It is sad to see how people, especially senior citizens, struggle when they have to deal with SODRA- the health insurance agency, or when they have to register something or even pay utility bills.

We decided to return to Connecticut in December of 2008 where our children and grandsons live. We look upon the 14 years spent in Kaunas as a wonderful gift and the experiences we enjoyed will always remain in our heart and in our memory.

A.P.P.L.E. Flashback - Solved!



Last month's flashback brought this response from Phil Taylor:

Yes, I recognized the picture immediately as our group gathered at the hotel entrance in Mazeikiai. I must admit I had to go to my journal to figure out the date, July, 1999. I was the Program Director but must admit that Vida and Elona did most of the work. My journal entry mentioned that JFK, Jr and his wife were killed in a plane accident. A highlight of the Mazeikiai program was a weekend trip for several of us to Riga. And the International dinner featured lime jello, chocolate chip cookies, onion soup dips and chili. Vida had decorated the room in red, white, and blue. All had a jolly time. Thanks for the memory.

A.P.P.L.E.'s 2012 Summer Program

In a few weeks, A.P.P.L.E.'s Summer Program will commence. The topics that will be addressed include:

Administration - Led by Dr. Kristin Ross and Ed Topar - Developing an understanding of the relationship that exists between meaningful performance planning, effective appraisals and future conflict resolution is one of the key points of focus for this year's administration strand. The use of case studies, individual and group exercises along with open discussions will provided the participants with effective models for use within their respective organizations.

Neuropsychology and Education

Neuropsychology: The Unique Teenage Brain - Led by Jackie M. Allen, MFT, NCC, Ed.D. and Leslie Young, Ed.D. - This is an introductory to intermediate course for

classroom teachers, special education teachers, and counselors and school psychologists. Participants will study the basic parts of the brain, their functions, and how that affects behavior. Emphasis will be on the teenage brain, the development of the frontal lobe functions, and resultant teenage cognitive and social/emotional behavior. Participants will learn brain-based strategies for working with adolescents.

Education: Led by Leslie Anne Young, Ed.D. CCLS, M.S. - This is a basic, introductory course for classroom teachers, special education teachers and other school personnel focusing on understanding how traumatic experiences can impact children's and teen's overall cognitive, social, emotional, physical and behavioral development therefore affecting their ability to learn.

Special Education - Led by Anita Yuskauskas - This strand will provide both didactic and experimental education opportunities to students in a university classroom. The curriculum will include a history of the treatment of persons with disabilities, present educational and residential treatment practices, and international policies supporting persons with disabilities. If possible, the sessions will include conversations with individuals with disabilities in Lithuania and their families, and visits to places where individuals with disabilities are educated and reside.

Science - Best Practices: The Art and Science of Teaching in the Biology Classroom - Led by John Trimble, Ph.D. - Educational best practices for effective instruction, as espoused by Robert Marzano, require students to demonstrate and practice the scientific method as well as challenge them to learn scientific knowledge. Best practices of science education will be considered, including inquiry and research, real-life situations, problem solving and issue-based learning.

Technology - Led by Sue Kohfeldt - This strand focuses on the implementation of "Lit Trips", which is used to mark the journeys of characters from famous literature on the surface of Google Earth. In any class (when a novel or biography is used in class - this works across curriculum) a lit trip can be built to illustrate the journey, be it global or around the village, of the characters or events. The teacher can build the trip with background info, illustrations, discussion questions, etc. or the students can build it as a project. It can be very simple for younger students or more complicated as students are able to interpret more kinds of information.

Fundraising Corner

With A.P.P.L.E.'s Summer Program just a few weeks away, now is the perfect time to make a donation to help support A.P.P.L.E. and its worthwhile programs. You may click on the button below to make a donation using PayPal. Your donation will get to A.P.P.L.E. through a link to our Treasurer's email address. After you donate on PayPal, [send Jack an email](#) and he will email you a receipt for tax purposes.

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.

A minimum donation of \$25-individual or \$40-family will enroll you as a member of A.P.P.L.E. for one year.



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.

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.

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