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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:

What a winter! I hope that you are doing your best to survive the winter blah's and are looking forward eagerly to the coming of Spring. It can't come fast enough for most of us!

With Spring, comes our Annual Meeting, which will be held in Milan, Michigan on April 10th. Information appears further in The A.P.P.L.E. Seed.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Vida R. 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."

Organizational Development Message

In response to last month's e-zine, the editors received an unsolicited, yet welcomed response to the article about the Lithuanian Scholars Fund:

What a beautiful program! Okay I looked at two projects, one in particular on water. (I used my Google translator program to read what they accomplished) What impressed me was the organization of the overall program. Their utilization of simple experimental strategies was innovative, especially in how they combined their project (2006-2007) not only to the classroom but also to the community. I am impressed with the students' observations and apparent conclusion. I would like to suggest this website which is international: <http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org/eblasts>. I hope that they are continuing their research with a different focus. I created an afterschool enrichment program using this sight/program. I am sorry I get excited when I hear that others understand the need to train our students to engage, enhance, empower their learning experiences. Have a good time. It is wonderful project. The learning framework appears to mimic problem/project based inquiry. Great experience.... Praying for your continued success.
- Mary J. Berger BS. MAEED. EdD, Adjunct FDU University, mberger@fdu.edu

Your contribution to A.P.P.L.E. can be directed to the Lithuanian Scholars Fund and continue to support teacher innovations that support learning. Visit www.applequest.org to make a donation to support A.P.P.L.E.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

With so many critical issues requiring resolution at this point in time, this year's Board of Directors meeting in April will require the best efforts of all our leaders to ensure the goals and objectives proclaimed in the A.P.P.L.E. mission statement be pursued with vigor and commitment by each and every member.

We invite our newer members who may have an interest in becoming involved with leadership activities to learn more about how A.P.P.L.E. functions and what opportunities may exist to participate in those capacities as we begin our twentieth year in support of Lithuania's educational needs. For more details contact Ed Topar at edtopar@gmail.com.

NEW READERS

It was very encouraging to learn that last month The A.P.P.L.E. Seed added **Fifteen (15) new readers** to our mailing list for this, our fourth edition. As you are probably aware, you can add friends, relatives and anyone who has an interest in A.P.P.L.E.'s activities both here and in Lithuania, simply by forwarding

your copy to them. We will automatically add them to our mailing list, and they will receive all subsequent issues directly.

ARTICLES

Additionally, we want to remind you that **you are encouraged to send articles** to us that you feel would be of interest to our readers. They can be items that you have authored or articles from others, including photos, from whom you have received permission to duplicate and publish.

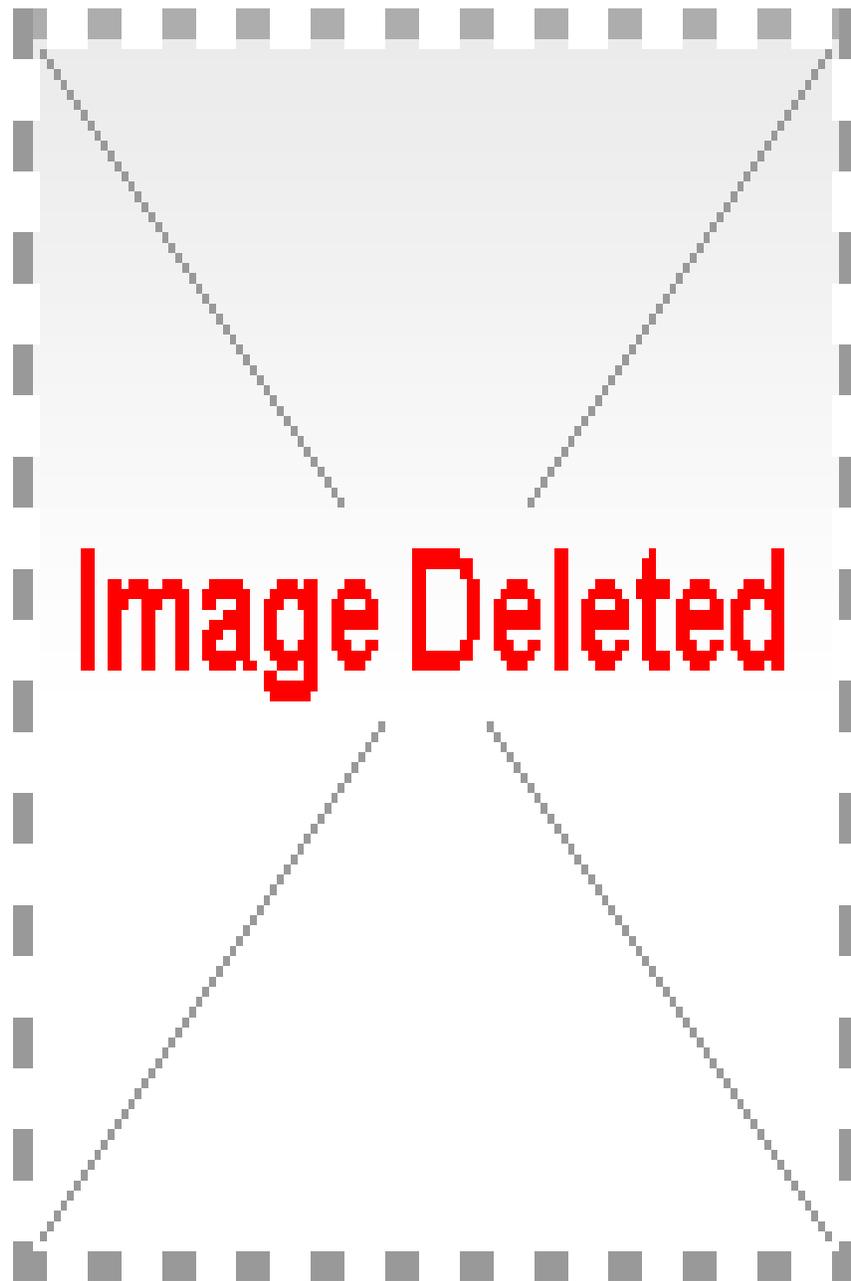
Heard in Lithuania

Political cartoonists had a rich source of material recently when Lithuanian President Grybauskaite, who is a Master in Karate, met with Russian Prime Minister Putin, who is a Master in Judo. The two leaders met at a summit in Helsinki and was the first meeting between the leaders of the two countries since 2001.

Team Lithuania's sculpture

A team of artists from Lithuania edged out teams from Canada and Mexico for the gold medal in the 20th annual Budweiser International Snow Sculpture Championships on Sunday in Breckenridge.

Team Lithuania's sculpture, "Milite Est Vita," depicts a gloved hand holding up the "V" sign, "symbolizing the fragility and temporary nature of victory," organizers said in a statement.



The sculpture will remain on display through next Sunday, alongside the work of 11 other teams representing six countries, at Breckenridge's Riverwalk Center.

The sculptures were each carved from 20-ton blocks of snow. *The Denver Post*.

Submitted by Giedre Stankunas

A Celebration of Independence



Picture by Zenonas Silinskas

On February 16, 1918, Lithuania declared itself free and independent, only to be occupied again in 1940. After 50 years of occupation, Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare independence on March 11, 1990. As Lithuania celebrates 20 years of independence, the A.P.P.L.E. organization celebrates 20 years of work partnering with Lithuanian educators to "foster the implementation of innovative educational approaches that contribute to the development of a democratic society."

Congratulations to Lithuania for all of the progress it has made towards a democratic society. A.P.P.L.E. looks forward to another twenty years of sharing educational philosophy, information and techniques with Lithuanian colleagues.

Submitted by Vitas Underys

As reported in Baltic News this week, RyanAir has chosen to enter the Central Europe travel market by opening a base in Lithuania. RyanAir will open 18 routes from Kaunas airport and invest \$140M in its new base. This will be a tremendous boost to the Kaunas economy by sustaining approximately 1,000 jobs in the immediate area.

This should also make life a bit easier for our own Karl Janowitz on his frequent travels to Kaunas in support of Special Education programs there.

Summer Program Activities

The approved agenda for the summer programs includes the following strands:

VILNIUS

- Computer and Information Science
- Administration
- Action Research
- Biology
- Language Arts
- Library Science

KAUNAS and CAMP VILTIS

- Special Education

REGIONAL LOCATIONS

- Social Work

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

Dr. Karl P. Janowitz



Karl Janowitz has an undergraduate degree in mathematics from Ohio Wesleyan University, a master's in education from Temple University in Educational Psychology and a doctoral degree from Temple University in Special Education.

When I look back at my professional life, I recognize the truth in the old adage "timing is everything." My work with special education began prior to 1975, the year the US federal law now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed. As a result, I have the perspective of "before" and "after" IDEA, the greatest influence in special education. Throughout my work in the Philadelphia public schools and at Temple University, I am able to continue to view the evolution of public education and special education from both the perspective of a classroom teacher and university faculty.

This unique vantage point probably influenced my candidacy to be part of a "fact finding mission" to Lithuania under the auspices of the US Information Agency (USIA) in April, 1992, to assess and provide feedback regarding practices in special education and practices affecting both children and adults with disabilities in Lithuania. I was a member of a 4-person team from Pennsylvania which included Jurate Krokys (a founder of APPLE).

This trip was one of the most interesting and profound professional experiences I have ever had. For almost 2 weeks, I visited numerous and diverse special education settings - kindergartens, schools, residential facilities - and met and consulted with professors, teachers, principals, and government officials. This experience culminated in our team's participation and presentation in the Baltic Conference on Education held in Vilnius that year. Each and every person I met contributed to a once in a lifetime experience that made a monumental impact on me, and 18 years later, I am still involved in Lithuanian education.

I met Professor Algirdas Grigonis during this trip, one of the most influential figures in the field of special education in Lithuania and a true luminary. I first heard from Jurate about a young organization with which she was involved, and she invited me to be with the Special Education strand of APPLE in Vilnius that summer. I did so, and was again privileged to able to work with fascinating

people, and strengthened my relationship with Professor Grigonis. The following Spring, I again went to Lithuania to continue my work. April 1993 was particularly harsh, with difficult living conditions. There were many frozen evenings during which Dr. Grigonis and I had deep discussions about education and psychology, pouring over bilingual dictionaries to advance our dialogue. He became both a friend and a mentor, and ultimately one of the most influential people in my life. Subsequently, most springs I would spend about 2 weeks in Lithuania, lecturing in varying locales and to various audiences (teachers, university students, school psychologists, parents, administrators, and government representatives). In the summers, I would return as a part of APPLE. Ten years ago, the APPLE special education strand moved to Kaunas where Professor Grigonis (who was integrally involved with APPLE's special education work from the beginning) was based. APPLE would also go to regional sites for 1-2 weeks each summer. It is amazing to see in how many locations on the map of Lithuania we have worked!

I became a member of the Board of Directors of APPLE, eventually becoming President. A highlight of that term of office was the opportunity to increase APPLE's involvement with University students and teacher preparation programs. I am currently President-elect and looking forward to my second term as President beginning in 2011.

Through APPLE, I have made wonderful friends both in Lithuania and in North America, and have been profoundly influenced by these people and my APPLE experiences. It has been an honor to contribute to the educational changes in Lithuania. I know of no other organization like APPLE.

A Perspective on Special Education

A Lithuanian Champion



Irena Perminiene's Shot Put Competition

A.P.P.L.E. is honored to work in Lithuania with many leaders of their respective fields. Some leaders work at the ministry or in politics; others are directors, teachers or parents. This article is about a special leader who leads by example, and in a very quiet way. Her name is Irena Perminiene.

I first met Irena Perminiene six years ago. She attended an A.P.P.L.E. regional in the town of Silale. We would talk intensely during the sessions, but when we invited Irena to continue the conversation downstairs during the coffee breaks or lunch, she respectfully declined our invitation and patiently waited for us to return. She arrived early every day and never missed a lecture. During the lectures I could tell that she was very involved and interested in our discussions, especially when we discussed staying positive and seeing new possibilities for our students.

Over the next few years, as our relationship grew, it became apparent that Irena was an expert in her ability to stay positive and see new possibilities in every aspect of her life.

What I neglected to tell you is that Irena happens to use a wheelchair for mobility.

In the year 1970, when Irena was 12 years old, she was told that she would never walk again and would the use of a wheelchair for the rest of her life. Irena was a girl who loved school and was especially gifted at a variety of sports. Even at this early age, she demonstrated her positive outlook on life. When told she would not walk again, she replied in typical fashion, "So now what?" She then answered her own question, "If I am unable to participate in running races or playing basketball, then I will focus my attention on throwing skills."

At the lectures in Silale, Irena never complained that the coffee breaks were down two flights of stairs, that the lunchroom was also down those same two flights of stairs, or that she had to get help to get up the stairs. Without complaining or soliciting help from others, she managed to develop the skills necessary to balance her chair while bouncing down the stairs. I began to understand that accessibility in most facilities in Lithuania was an issue, but not one that would stop her or change her outlook on life.

Years later, Irena came to the Vilnius A.P.P.L.E. seminars to help raise the awareness of teachers to the issues she and others confronted every day relative to accessibility. She and others like her certainly had a variety of physical and environmental obstacles to overcome. Finding special entrances, ensuring that those doors were unlocked and available when needed were just a few of the variables that needed to be foreseen to accommodate those in wheelchairs each day and evening.

After a few days, I realized that I was getting frustrated and oftentimes angry with the lack of accessibility, but Irena never showed any frustration. That was

just the way it was. Irene had grown up learning to deal with all of these obstacles, and anger made no sense to her.

Irena is the embodiment of an individual with a positive attitude. She sees her disability not as an obstacle or a challenge, but as a temporary nuisance. When she was diagnosed with paraplegia, she was sent to a special, segregated school away from her friends. Inclusion was not an option. She finished her secondary school studies, went on to University and graduated with a social work degree.

Her early career was in the area of social work in a local school district. Today, she is a highly respected member of the staff at a vocation rehabilitation center, and her love of sports continues to be an integral part of her life.

Irena was instrumental in organizing a yearly, week-long canoe trip that teams at-risk students with people with disabilities. She has also personally competed in a number of wheelchair marathons. She won gold in a number of European arm wrestling championships, and she traveled to Beijing for the Paralympics, bringing back a silver medal in the shot put.

Recently, I was able to convince Irena to join the A.P.P.L.E. team at Camp Viltis. She came for a day and demonstrated how to adapt games for all levels as one of her topics. Her energy and positive attitude were contagious and spread throughout the camp. The eyes of the children and the parents lit up as Irena opened the doors of possibility for so many, relative to acquiring new skills. When she had time to consult with parents and students regarding wheelchair adjustments and mobility exercises, I could see that she was spreading hope and her indomitable spirit.

Facilitating hope is one of the goals of educators and certainly that of the A.P.P.L.E. organization. One of our objectives in pursuit of that goal should be to prepare all our students for membership in their community-at-large. With that as a base, the ultimate goal for any educational system should be to prepare all its students, special needs as well as traditional, to be productive members of that community.

As we move from benevolence to community, we have to give a stronger voice to those who truly understand what it means to be disabled. People with disabilities and their families need to be heard. We, as "temporarily abled," can talk about best practices in education and research-based practice, but it is those who have lived in the disability culture who can best advise what changes are needed for the future. "No decision about us, without us!" could be the rallying cry that helps create a true community where everyone belongs.

Irena's positive attitude is a beacon of light for the future of people with disabilities in Lithuania. She sees her disability as a temporary nuisance that is just another obstacle to clear as she deals with the realities of her life. She has gained the respect of everyone and has become a totally credible spokesperson for people with disabilities. She is leading by example. She refuses to let her life's challenges bring her down. She perseveres and becomes stronger as a result

of meeting and defeating those challenges.

A.P.P.L.E. is blessed to have Irena and others like her to help them in the pursuit of their mission to support the needs of Lithuania's disadvantaged. I hope that in some small way, we can help Irena present a positive vision of the future for people with disabilities to those Lithuanian educators who participate in the A.P.P.L.E. Summer Programs.

Submitted by Vitas Underys

Quotables and Quizzes

QUIZ

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW LITHUANIA ?

FILL IN THE BLANKS IF YOU CAN
(ANSWERS: IN THE REMINDERS BLOCK AT THE END)

The highest point in Lithuania is_____.

The _____river is the longest river in Lithuania.

_____is the largest lake in Lithuania.

The Hill of Witches is located in _____.

The city of _____was formerly known as Memel.

For the answers, go to the end of the Reminders Section.

Reminders

Our annual spring meeting will take place this year on April 10 and 11 in Milan, Michigan. This year, the Saturday meeting will be divided into two sessions with the morning session being devoted to planning discussions. All members are invited to this open meeting, and we welcome your participation in helping our leadership team prepare A.P.P.L.E. for the challenges of 2010.

The Saturday afternoon session will open the first half of the Board of Directors meeting. This meeting, open only to Board Members and Officers, will carry over into Sunday morning and focus on those issues requiring Board action. The addressing of initiatives, any necessary correction of actions, the election of Board Members/Officers, and any other A.P.P.L.E. business that requires the action of the Board of Directors will be addressed during this meeting.

Those planning on attending can make **hotel reservations** by calling The Sleep inn at 734) 439-1400. A block of rooms have been reserved for A.P.P.L.E. attendees.

To learn more about **specific details or for questions** related to the A.P.P.L.E. annual spring meeting contact Jim Brousseau at 734) 232-6589.

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

This year we mark our 20th Anniversary of working in Lithuania in support of the needs of the Lithuanian education system in partnership with the Ministry of Education & Science. In celebration of this landmark year, we have planned a 20th Anniversary Cruise and invite all of you who have participated in our summer programs to come together and share your fondest memories of working with A.P.P.L.E. during those twenty years.

Briefly, the details are:

The cruise dates are from August 23rd through August 28th.

The cruise of five (5) nights on the Carnival Line's Inspiration is round-trip from Orlando, Florida to Grand Cayman and Cozumel, Mexico.

You can reserve a cabin for only \$429 each, and your deposit is only \$50.

For complete details contact Vida Anton at applecelebration20@gmail.com

If you would like a relative or a friend to receive their copy of **The A.P.P.L.E. Seed directly, go to the last line of this e-zine and click "Join Our Mailing List."**

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ:

1. JUOZAPINES HILL (294m)
2. NEMUNAS RIVER (937km)
3. DRUKSIAI (44.5 sq.km)
4. NIDA
5. KLAIPEDA

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.

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

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