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**Vol. 3, Issue 7**

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



(American Professional Partnership

for

Lithuanian Education)

## E-Zine

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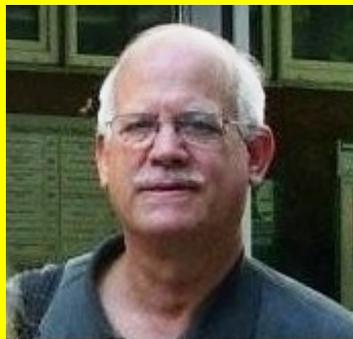
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### Greetings!



**Karl Janowitz**

### Message from the President

It is November, and we have completed the second month of school both here and in Lithuania. This

time of year is always one of anticipation for me - anticipating the transition from fall to winter, and planting the seeds that will become APPLE 2012.

We are already beginning to receive [applications for APPLE 2012](#). As you probably know, the theme for next summer is

*Building Educational Communities in Our Schools*

Watch for more details about APPLE 2012 in upcoming issues of the e-zine.

We anticipate receiving applications for the Lithuanian Scholars' Fund from last summer's participants. The Fund provides opportunities for people who participated in APPLE 2011 to undertake a project related to topics and ideas gleaned from the summer seminars in which they participated. This is another exciting example of how we put the resources from our generous donors to work in Lithuania.

On a sad note, I want to mention the passing of Roger Folstrom, an early APPLE supporter and lecturer. Roger, along with Walter Serbent, who passed away in late August, will be sorely missed.

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 - Ilona Balys Laucius**



**Ilona Laucius**

I have lived in the U.S. since I was 13 years old. I was born in Kaunas and lived there for 6 years. I attended pre-school with Sisters of St. Casimir. Then we moved to Mazeikiai, so that my mother could finish her dentistry studies in peace. In Mazeikiai I finished 2 years of grammar school. During WWII in 1944 my parents, myself and my little sister escaped to Germany. As refugees we were moved from one temporary refugee camp to another. When WWII ended our family, along with other refugees, were placed in displaced persons camps. There we established our own schools and was

able to finish my 6th year of school. In the U.S. it means 6th grade, but according to our system it meant 2 years of gymnasium. We lived in Hanau until 1949, when we were able to immigrate to Chicago, because of the sponsorship of relatives. In the fall I, and 100 other Lithuanian girls, enrolled in St. Casimir's Academy, which was run by Sisters of St. Casimir, the same convent as my pre-school in Kaunas. Then my studies continued at University of Illinois at Navy Pier. At the end of the 2 year program I continued at DePaul University acquiring BA in Sociology. Ten years later, due to family responsibilities, I got a Masters in Library Science at Rosary College (now Dominican University) in River Forest IL.

Growing up in Chicago I had a strong sense of cultural heritage and often dreamed of seeing the countryside of my childhood once again. This finally happened in 1977 when, by myself, I made my first trip to Lithuania. After that trip I returned to Lithuania every two years, except for a period of four years of 1985-9 when the Soviet State of Lithuania denied me a visa, reportedly because of my bringing unauthorized materials.

My work with A.P.P.L.E. started in 1995 when I was recruited by Vida Anton to serve as program administrator for session held in Kedainiai. With Vida's assurances of my abilities, I agreed to volunteer, and put my Lithuanian heritage to work. I learned the ropes of setting up sessions from the first program administrator Joe Karmuza, who was recruited by founder Vaiva Vebraite, a few years earlier when A.P.P.L.E. sessions first began. An obvious skill required for successful program administration was familiarity with Lithuania and an ability to communicate with local agencies and administrators. However, though I knew the language there were cultural differences beyond language, not surprising given that Lithuania had been under Soviet control for 50 years. Internal politics at the time were in flux, moving from communist systems to democratic ones. There were challenges dealing with local administrators accustomed to Soviet protocol for conducting business, and even some who questioned the intent of this American organization, and why we were trying to influence teacher practice. The concept of what constituted best teaching practice presented from an American perspective was quite different than the Lithuanian practice of the time. Some Lithuanian teachers expressed concern regarding their ability to vary their teaching practice from the system expectations they had always worked under.

A wonderful event that happened after I got involved with A.P.P.L.E. was teaming up with Giedre Stankunas, Aldona Marijosius and Amanda Muliolis. We knew each other from working as scout leaders with the Lithuanian Scouts Assoc. at camps and conferences. Having the opportunity to see my friends every summer, and work toward the same Lithuanian educational goal made my A.P.P.L.E. experience more meaningful, linking it in another way to my personal history.

In 2001 I became administrator for A.P.P.L.E. activities at Camp Viltis at Pasaka in Giruliai and Sventoji on the Baltic Sea. The camp, sponsored and organized by the Viltis organization, is attended by children with disabilities and their families, and teachers wanting to learn about providing services for these children. My experience at camp was also linked to my life experience. Our first child, Henry, was born with profound disabilities. Like these families, my family and I experienced

times of stress and grief and joy that come with having a child with a disabilities. I was overwhelmed by many emotions the first time I entered the camp dining hall. Even though initially I wasn't sure I could do this, working at camp was particularly rewarding because I had the opportunity to use what I had learned from Henry to support others.

In the years that I have worked with A.P.P.L.E. I am pleased to have witnessed positive change in the Lithuanian educational system and that I am able to continue my work with A.P.P.L.E. in my position on the Board of Directors.

### **A.P.P.L.E. Participates in Knights of Lithuania National Convention**

This year's Knights of Lithuania National Convention was held in late July in Michigan City, IN. The Convention featured a panel on the state of children with disabilities in Lithuania that was organized by members of the Board of Directors of the American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education (A.P.P.L.E.). Children with disabilities and "special needs" have become more visible in Lithuanian Society since the reestablishment of Lithuania's independence. Laws and programs have been developed in an attempt to bring them more fully into the mainstream of society. Since its inception, A.P.P.L.E. has devoted a portion of its efforts to passing knowledge and techniques from American educators who work with such children to their Lithuanian counterparts. The panel's main presenter, Vitas Underys, recounted some of the successes of those efforts and described the needs going forward. An appeal was made to the Knights to assist where possible. The other panel member was Ilona Laucius and the panel was moderated by John Baltrus.

Vitas gave an informative and touching presentation based on his ten years of working with A.P.P.L.E. in Lithuania while Ilona shared photographs from her travels to Lithuania with A.P.P.L.E. to work with special needs children. Both fielded the many questions that were asked by a very receptive audience. It was surprising to learn that several of those in attendance had never heard of A.P.P.L.E. or were not certain what it does. The Knights of Lithuania Foundation once again made a very generous donation to support A.P.P.L.E. and several members of the Knights who were in attendance also made personal donations. Overall, it can be said that the panel was a huge success.



Vitas, Ilona and John at the Knights of Lithuania Convention

photo by Regina Juska Svoba

### **In Memorium**

The Board of A.P.P.L.E. was saddened to hear of the recent passing of Dr. Roger Folstrom. Roger first came to Lithuania in 1992 with A.P.P.L.E.'s first music strand. He visited Lithuania several times after that and did much to strengthen the first reform efforts in music education. He encouraged our friends in Klaipėda to form the Lithuanian music teachers' association. Upon retirement, he dedicated much of his library to Lithuania. Students at Klaipėda University, Vilnius Pedagogical University and the Lithuanian Academy of Theatre and Dance are now using the resources he donated. We all enjoyed his rehearsals, his choral clinics, his wonderful choral arrangements. But most of all, we loved him for his way with people, his sense of humor, his unflappable temperament. Facilitator might well have been his middle name.

(testimonial by Emilija Sakadolskis)

[Washington Post News Obituary](#)

### **Fundraising Corner**

Do you know that you can help raise money to support A.P.P.L.E. when you shop online? It is painless and best of all, it costs you nothing!

To help us in our endeavors, please [join iGive](#).

Every time you shop on the Internet at one of the over 800 stores participating in the iGive program, a percentage of your spending will be donated to A.P.P.L.E. by the participating store.

To date, over \$850 has been raised for A.P.P.L.E. through the iGive program. Why not give it a try and sign up before the busy holiday shopping period?

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.

Consider passing this email along to a friend who you think might be interested in hearing about us.

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