

John Baltrus

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Sent: Monday, October 07, 2013 3:00 AM
To: jonaspb@comcast.net
Subject: News from A.P.P.L.E. (American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education)

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(American Professional Partnership
for
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E-Zine

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Dear John,



Karl Janowitz

Message from the President

It is autumn, the school year is in full swing on both sides of the Atlantic again, and

this summer is a wonderful memory. I would like to extend best wishes to all in recognition of International Teachers Day on Sunday, October 6th.

The Call for Proposals for A.P.P.L.E.'s 24th Summer Program will be posted shortly. It is exciting to have already received interest in next summer's program.

My best wishes for a wonderful October. Enjoy this terrific time of the year.

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. Member Profile - Carol Smiglin



Carol & Peter Smiglin

In 1991 I received an invitation to participate in a People to People Program, *Project Assist to Education in the Baltic States*. At first I put it aside thinking that I would be unable to go during a school year. However, I kept thinking about how wonderful it would be to finally see the homeland of my husband Peter's grandparents. I only knew his Grandmother Eva Kasaitis Smiglin, and I had always loved her stories about Lithuania and her town of Marijampole. She came to America in 1878 when she was 15 years old, moved to Hudson, NY where she met her husband Peter Smiglin. Peter had arrived a few years earlier from the northern part of Lithuania. Finally I met with my principal and she was excited that I had been chosen for this experience and helped me gain permission to be absent from my classroom for 3 weeks. Little did I know at that time what a life changing experience it would be. Those 3 weeks were just the pathway to A.P.P.L.E., for upon my return, I wrote an article for the A.P.P.L.E. newsletter and a year or so later Vaiva asked me to consider being a part of the Summer Institute. This was the first of the many summers I spent in beautiful Lithuania.

My teaching career had been mainly with second graders, happy to spend their day in an exciting learning environment. I worried whether I would be able to motivate the same enthusiasm and confidence with adults, teachers, to whom I would have to

communicate with through an interpreter. I decided to offer my material from different approaches, tapping into the many strengths and learning modalities that would exist in this group of teachers, just as I did every day at Hollis Elementary School. Keeping all this in mind I developed my plan for the summer program.

The most exciting part of these summers was always the "students". I have never met more dedicated and enthusiastic teachers with such a thirst for learning. They came every day to class with the most wonderful smiles and faces that seemed to say "What are we going to learn today?" They brought their ideas and marvelous creativity and shared with each other. Our meetings were filled with wonderful conversations as they worked in groups on various projects, all the while sharing and teaching each other, just what I had hoped would occur as it did in my classroom. Key to all this was finding a classroom at the Institute that had movable desks. That was my first challenge. I learned so much that summer from my students and I came home energized and anxious to start my own school year. The very special part of that first summer will always be the first day when the students filed into the room and I recognized many faces from my first visit in 1992. To see them again was incredible and they continued to sign up several years after that when the Institute was offered in Vilnius.

Over the years I was to teach in Naujoji Akmene, Moletai, Salcininkai, and several times in Vilnius. My friendships have endured with many of the Lithuanian and American teachers and to this day I continue to correspond with them. My second grade students became pen pals with one classroom and when they were in tenth grade, the Zylonis Trust Fund in my town funded the money necessary to bring two of the students to Hollis for a short stay. I then returned to Lithuania with those two students and their American pen pals for another week of school in Vilnius. Those two Lithuanian students arranged a reunion of the grown up second graders from 1992. It was a party I will never forget. The Zylonis Fund also enabled me to bring a Lithuanian teacher to Hollis for a three week visit and to purchase a computer, modem and other computer parts for the Radvilu High School in Vilnius.

A humorous moment occurred one summer when the American teachers were invited to the Government Palace for a reception to meet President Adamkus. As we were awaiting his arrival, the door opened and very quietly in walked the President. At first glance I thought it was my husband and nearly fainted that he had surprised me by flying over. On a second glance I realized my mistake, but if you look at the picture above I do think you will see the resemblance.

In 2011, my husband and I returned to Lithuania for a visit. I am happy to say that we were able to meet several of the teachers, their children and some of my interpreters. It was so wonderful to return to beautiful Lietuva. I walked around Vilnius marveling at the changes and smiling all the while. The memories came floating back and I thought, I did it Grandma Eva. I hope you are proud of me and your grandson who always encouraged me with words, supplies, financing and partnership. We both love your native country as you did and our lives have been enriched by the beauty of the land, the culture and the wonderful people.

A.P.P.L.E. enabled me to become a better teacher and person and I will never forget the days I spent in Lithuania. Thank you to all the Lithuanian teachers, citizens, students and Summer Institute professionals who enriched my life. It was a priceless experience.

A.P.P.L.E. Summer Program - Special Education

I had the pleasure of being an A.P.P.L.E. lecturer this summer for both the University

and Special Education strands in Kaunas and Prienai. My topic was Healthy Lifestyle Issues for Adolescents and Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities (ID). This topic, while necessarily broad, was both timely and relevant for all three of the workshops. Many of the issues that we are facing in the U.S. are clearly shared by our Lithuanian colleagues.

Our first stop was in Kaunas where I met with University students, faculty and special education personnel for 2 separate workshops focusing on key healthy lifestyle issues facing young adults and adolescents with ID, their families, and caregivers. These topics included exercise and weight reduction, bullying, the need for self-determination, feelings of inclusion, and employment. Thanks to the outstanding efforts of our translator, Ausra Budriene, and the participants, we had many lively discussions both formally and informally.

It was then on to Birstonas and Prienai for the weeklong workshop with participants working directly with adolescents and young adults with ID. While much of the material was similar to that of Kaunas, we focused especially on community inclusion, employment, bullying, and staff burnout. Ausra was there once again to help facilitate the discussions. I especially appreciated both Karl's and Linda's willingness to share with the group their experiences related to burnout and bullying. One highlight was the interview that we (Karl, Audre and I) had with the husband of one of the participants, a reporter for the local weekly newspaper in Prienai. It's not often (thank goodness!) that I find myself on the front page of a newspaper. The article was a very fair and thorough and included an interview and photo with Marilyn, her son Jack, and father Ed. I would say that we are a pretty photogenic group!

It had been 10 years since I had last been in Lithuania. This visit was not just about giving workshops but also renewing friendships with families in both Vilnius and Varena whom we had met during our last visit. Both my husband Art and I marveled at the many changes that had occurred since that time. What has not changed, however, is the generosity, thoughtfulness, and friendship of the many Lithuanian people we have met. We look forward to our continued relationship both with A.P.P.L.E. and with the friends we have made.

Marge Pett

Editors note: Additional related articles will follow in future EZines.

A.P.P.L.E. Summer 2014 Call for Proposals

A.P.P.L.E., in partnership with the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science, is planning the 24th summer of in-service programs for Lithuanian educators, school social workers, administrators, and other school personnel. We invite you to consider joining us in this challenging and rewarding endeavor in sharing educational ideas with our Lithuanian colleagues.

The Mission Statement of our organization states: 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.

Summer 2014 Seminars, two, one-week sessions, are designed for teachers and other educational personnel, June 25- 28, 2014 and June 30 - July 4, 2014.

At the completion of the 2013 Seminars, members of the Educational Development Center of Lithuania and A.P.P.L.E. considered a number of topics for the theme for 2014. Because of the importance and timeliness of last summer's theme, it was decided that, once again, we will address ***Real World Applications of What We Teach***. This topic encourages teachers, administrators, staff, families, and others involved in the educational process to ensure that what we teach has relevance beyond the classroom. We will address strategies for translating what is presented in the classroom into practical outcomes for 21st century learners.

Needs assessment from Lithuania highlighted interest in the following topics for 2014: preschool and kindergarten (ages 2-3 through 6-7), elementary education, teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (one group for elementary school educators and one for those at middle and high school levels), information technologies, school administration, and teaching creativity for teachers of various subjects. Other creative and innovative proposals relevant to current educational issues may also be considered.

Participating lecturers in ***Real World Applications of What We Teach*** must utilize best practices in content methodology; differentiation of instruction; administrative methodologies; teaching strategies that reach all students ("universal design for learning"); inquiry-based science; etc. Teaching should be grounded in evidence-based methods that promote teaching in diverse educational communities and success for all learners.

Additional information and an application can be found on the [A.P.P.L.E. website](#) in a few days. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2014.

Fundraising Corner

Would you like to support A.P.P.L.E. and its programs? An easy way to do so is through an application iGive. Every time you shop on the Internet at one of the over 1300 stores participating in the **iGive program**, a percentage of your spending will be donated to A.P.P.L.E. by the participating store. So far, A.P.P.L.E. has received almost \$1,000 in donations through the iGive program.

Instructions for signing up for the iGive program are available on the [A.P.P.L.E. website](#). Just scroll down the right side of the home page.



You may also make a direct donation to AS.P.P.L.E. by clicking on the button below to make a donation 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.

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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