



American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 For God and Country



Legionnaire

July & August 2010

Commander's Message

Another first for Lithuanian Post 154. We were invited to participate in the 7th annual conference commemorating General Thaddeus Kosciuszko at the US Military Academy, West Point, NY. This year's event coincided with the 600th Anniversary of the Battle of Zalgiris, Grunwald, Tannenburg (same battle, 3 national names). The Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard carried American and Lithuanian flags during the observance ceremonies. And I was given the privilege of placing a wreath (which displayed a banner inscribed "American Legion Lithuanian Post 154, Baltimore, Maryland") at the Kosciuszko Monument. This was the first time Lithuanians had been accorded the honor of playing an active part in the observance.

Also, this was not the only activity of distinction for the Post. Once again we reached Three-Star status in membership and have elected a full slate of Officers for the coming year. We can achieve goals like these because members like you payour dues on time, and are willing to become Post Officers and pitch in and help out. Thanks, again. It is good to be a member of an active and proud American Legion Post.

Several Post members attended the Baltimore District Memorial Day Service at the National Cemetery in Catonsville, MD. Vincent Dulys and I took part in the POW/MIA service. After the Memorial Service, we visited the grave of William Lacs who served as Lithuanian Post 154 Commander, 1958-1959.



Lithuanian Post 154 Commander John Maskavich, Past Commander Vacys Laukaitis and Adjutant Vincent Dulys visiting the grave of Past Commander William Lacs.

We now look forward to the Department Convention in Ocean City, Maryland July 12 to 16. Then comes the Installation of Officers September 19 at Lithuanian Hall. Be sure to be there! As a Post member you are automatically invited, BUT be sure you contact Adjutant Vince Dulys if you are planning to attend so that enough tables are set up. His contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

Much is happening around us on the national and local scene. One cannot help but wonder what will be the final outcomes of the disastrous oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the Fall elections, unemployment and the recession.

There is an attempt by atheists to remove "IN GOD WE TRUST" from our currency, ignoring the fact that the United States was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. The ACLU's attempt to remove the cross in the Mojave Desert failed. The Supreme Court decided to let the cross stand.

Lithuanian Festival



Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard preparing to post Colors during the Opening Ceremony at Lithuanian Festival. From left: Toivo Tagaments, Vincent Dulys, Gintaras Buivys, John Maskavich, Balys Brasauskas, Joseph Astasauskas and Fred Kaminski. Mrs. Maskavich is standing front right.

Lithuanian Post 154 participated in the 2010 Lithuanian Festival. Thanks to Fred Kaminski and Toivo Tagaments for setting up and manning our information table. Our Lithuanian Post 154 Historian, Henry Gaidis, had some of his collection of old armaments and military medals on display.

Children were given toys, flag pins, pencils, pens, patriotic pictures and coloring books. Adults picked up brochures about The American Legion and the Lithuanian Post 154 History flier written by Henry Gaidis several years ago. Several visitors expressed interest in joining Lithuanian Post 154. They took applications and promised to return them with copies of their DD214 military discharge form.

The cross, located in the Mojave National Preserve, had been covered by a wooden box during a 10-year legal battle. At stake was whether erecting a religious symbol on Government-owned land violated the First Amendment of the US Constitution. (The cross was torn down two weeks after the court decision by vandals. However, it has been replaced and is still standing).

What next? The insidious attempt to remove our longstanding values goes on. So it behooves us to bear in mind the American Legion motto, "FOR GOD AND COUNTRY SINCE 1919" printed on the front cover of "Legion" magazine, just above your address label. It is through example and active participation in traditional activities that we remain strong in our efforts to see that these values remain in force in our democratic Republic.

So in spite of all the disasters and uncertain economic times, be thankful for all that we have and enjoy the hazy, lazy days of summer.

John Maskavich
Commander
Lithuanian Post 154

Membership

Lithuanian Post 154 closed out Fiscal year 2010 with 118 members and reached Three-Star status. Department Headquarters Post 297 has been disbanded and we were assigned 28 members by Department of which 17 members paid their FY 2010 dues to Department prior to the transfer. One member transferred to Post 213 and 10 members have not paid their FY 2010 dues as of this date. In order to complete any of these transfers, the members from Post 297 must verify their eligibility with a copy of their DD214 and get voted into American Legion Lithuanian Post 154. Copies of the DD214 are to be mailed to me. My address is listed on the last page of this newsletter.

Everyone should be receiving notices from National for their fiscal year 2011 dues. Lithuanian Post 154 dues are still only \$21. Please make your checks payable to American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 and mail them to me. Fiscal Year 2011 starts July 01, 2010 and ends June 30, 2011.

We have 16 Paid Up For Life (PUFL) members in our Post and it may be beneficial for some members to consider a Paid Up For Life membership. If interested contact me.

I would like to recognize seven members who have 50+ years as continuous members.

Balys J. Brasauskas	58
Edward D. Daniels	67
Frank V. Giannino	53
Vaclovas Laukaitis	52
Algis A. Paplonskis	54
Olgard Rackus	66
Richard T. Seymour	64

Vincent Dulys
Membership Chairman
Lithuanian Post 154

Lithuanian Cadets Receive Scholarships at US Military Service Academies

Three cadets of the Lithuanian Military Academy were granted scholarships at US Military Academies. Third year cadet Vytautas Drejeris will study at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, second year cadet Saulius Gauronskis will study at the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY and second year cadet Giedrius Mikalauskas will study at the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT. Lithuanian cadets are among the 32 international students who have been selected for scholarships in the prestigious US military education institutions.



After studies in the United States, the cadets will begin their service in the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

This is the twelfth time Lithuanian cadets have been selected to study at the US Military Service Academies. During the past sixteen years, over twenty cadets from Lithuania have participated in the program.

Source: Ministry of National Defense
Republic of Lithuania

Scholarship

Lithuanian Post 154 will be awarding two \$1,000 scholarships to students graduating from high school in 2010 and entering college this fall.

standing or of a deceased member who was in good standing at time of death.

Scholarships are open to children, grandchildren, stepchildren, nephews, nieces and adopted children of an active member in good

Applications are available by contacting Commander John Maskavich. He must receive completed scholarship applications by July 20. Applications will not be considered if they are incomplete or late.

2010 - 2011 Lithuanian Post 154 Officers

Election of Lithuanian Post 154 Officers took place at the June General Meeting. The elected officers are:

Commander	John Maskavich
Vice Commander	Joseph Astasauskas
Adjutant	Vincent Dulys
Finance Officer	Gintaras Buivys
Service Officer	Patrick Dohlus
Chaplain	Fred Kaminski
Judge Advocate	Joseph Jankevicius
Historian	Henry Gaidis
Sergeant At Arms	Toivo Tagamets
Executive Committee	Algis Paplonskis
	Vito Siaurusaitis

Sick Call

Edmond Bartas
8 Robins Nest Ct
Randallstown, MD 21133



Happy Birthday



July

Raymond W. Beares Jr.
Gintaras Buivys
Joseph Gaila
Anthony J. Kasulen
Algirdas Skudzinskas

August

Algimantas K. Grintelis
Victor A. Kareiva
Thomas Allen Keane Jr.
Roy W. Kemmer
Joseph Keydash
Joseph Lazaravich
Hugh H. Mills Jr.
Mark Nauyalis
Toivo Tagaments
Algirdas M. Veliuona

2010 Convention Delegates

John Maskavich, Vincent Dulys, Balys Brasauskas and Gintaras Buivys were elected Lithuanian Post 154 delegates to the Maryland American Legion Convention in Ocean City. All members are welcome to stop by the Lithuanian Post 154 Hospitality Suite. A Schedule of Events and address of our Hospitality Suite are shown in "Calendar & Reminders."

US Military Academy Invitation

The American Association of the Friends of Kosciuszko at West Point invited Lithuanian Post 154 to participate in their 7th annual conference commemorating General Thaddeus Kosciuszko at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. Although traditionally a Polish-American event, this year representatives of the Lithuanian-American community were invited to take part in the two-day ceremonies starting April 30, 2010.



American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 Legionnaires Gintaras Buivys, Henry Gaidis, John Maskavich and Vincent Dulys at West Point preparing to participate in a parade.



Commander John Maskavich placing wreath at Kosciuszko Monument.

The year 2010 is also the 600th Anniversary of the famous Polish-Lithuanian victory over the Order of Teutonic Knights at the Battle of Zalgiris. The honored attendees included Audrius Bruzga, the Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania, Wlodzimierz Sulgostowski, the First Counselor of the Polish Embassy and leaders of many Lithuanian and Polish groups from America including Lithuanian Post 154. The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard was led by Commander John F. Maskavich and included Vincent T. Dulys, Gintaras Bulivys, and Henry L. Gaidis.

The two-day event focused on the contributions made by Kosciuszko to America, Poland and Lithuania and the significance of the Battle of Zalgiris. After Sunday Mass at the Catholic Chapel of the Holy Trinity on the grounds of West Point, the Color Guards of Lithuanian Post 154 and the Polish Sea League of New York led a parade to the famous Plains of West Point. Here, attendees watched a Cadet Drill Team and Parachute presentations, followed by a full dress Cadet Review Ceremony. The Legionnaires then marched to the nearby Kosciuszko Monument overlooking the beautiful Hudson River valley. Following the Posting of Colors at the Monument, the American, Lithuanian and Polish national anthems were sung. Wreaths were placed at the Monument, and a US Army Honor Guard fired volleys in honor of the General. Taps were then sounded by a US Military Academy bugler. The ceremonies concluded with attendees singing *Marsz, Marsz Polonia, Kur Lugus Laukai*, and *God Bless America*, followed by the retiring of the Color Guards from the area.

Source: Press Release by Henry Gaidis

General Thaddeus Kosciuszko

Andrew Thaddeus Bonaventure Kosciuszko was born on February 12, 1746, in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Thaddeus studied at the Polish-Lithuanian Military Academy in Warsaw from 1765-1769. He subsequently spent several years studying engineering, painting, military and political science in France, Germany and Italy.

Kosciuszko became enthusiastic about the cause of American freedom and offered his services in their struggle for independence. In 1776, Kosciuszko sailed for America. On October 30, 1776 the Continental Congress granted Kosciuszko a brevet commission as Colonel of Engineers. Kosciuszko's engineering skills proved invaluable to the American war effort. The fortifications he built at Bemis Heights proved crucial in winning the Battle of Saratoga. This battle is considered to have been the turning point in the War of Independence and directly led to France joining in the conflict. General Washington considered West Point, the plateau overlooking the Hudson River, an important strategic position and in 1778 sent Kosciuszko to that location to design fortifications to defend it. On this plateau Kosciuszko built a series of forts that prevented the British from taking control of the river and dividing New York from New England. Had the British been able to seize control of the river, they would have been able to freely obtain reinforcements and supplies from Canada. It was on this same plateau at West Point that the United States established its military academy in 1802 which today is the oldest continuously garrisoned military post in the country.

For his service, Kosciuszko was belatedly promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. He returned to Poland to continue his struggle of expanding freedom to his homeland. Although Kosciuszko won great honor and glory leading Poles and Lithuanians against the Russians who threatened the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the so-called Kosciuszko Insurrection of 1794, he was unable to overcome the insurmountable odds. Kosciuszko died in exile on October 15, 1817, in Solothurn, Switzerland while still dreaming of the liberation of his homeland.

Source: Press Release by Henry Gaidis

Battle of Zalgiris

The Battle of Zalgiris (Lithuanian), also called the Battle of Grunwald in Poland and Battle of Tannenburg in Germany, was fought on July 15, 1410 between the Polish-Lithuanian forces under the command of Polish King Jogaila and his cousin Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytautas-the-Great against the Prussian military and religious Order of Teutonic Knights under the command of its Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen which sought to occupy the entire Baltic Sea area. Most historians consider the bloody Battle of Zalgiris to have been one of the ten most historically important European battles. In this battle, the combined Polish and Lithuanian forces so decisively defeated the Order of Teutonic Knights that they soon ceased to exist and their demise curtailed the German expansion into Eastern Europe for the next 500 years.

Source: Press Release by Henry Gaidis

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SERVICE OFFICER
Patrick M. Dohlus
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Hanover, MD 21076
(410) 551-2369

Post General Meeting
8 PM every 2nd Wednesday
of the month at
Lithuanian Hall
851 Hollins Street.
Baltimore, MD 21201

Executive Meeting
7:30 PM on the 4th
Wednesday of the month at
Cockeyed Cow Saloon
900 S. Carey Street
Baltimore, MD 21223

Please send your comments,
suggestions and articles to :

Joe Jankevicius
624 Oak Tree Rd
Westminster, MD 21157
JoeJankevicius@gmail.com

"Most bad government has
grown out of too much
government."
Thomas Jefferson

Lithuanian Post 154 web page is on: <http://www.lietuvlis.net> - click on Lithuanian Post 154.

Calendar & Reminders

July

Thu	01	FY 2011 Membership starts - send in your Lithuanian Post 154 dues
Fri	02	US Army Air Corps established (1926)
Sun	04	Independence Day
Mon-Fri	12-16	American Legion Department of Maryland Convention - Ocean City, MD Lithuanian Post 154 Hospitality Suite at Bradley on the Bay - Bldg A - 304 Located on Ocean Highway next to southeast corner of Convention Center parking lot. All members are welcome to stop by. Convention Itinerary:
Mon	12	Fish Fry behind Convention Hall - everyone welcome - 4 PM - 6 PM
Tue	13	Legion College classes at Convention Center - 8 AM -12 Noon Official opening of Convention - 8 PM
Wed	14	Convention meetings - 8 AM Memorial Service - 8 PM
Thu	15	Convention meetings - 8 AM
Fri	16	Convention meetings - 8 AM Election of Department Officers for 2010 - 2011
Wed	14	No Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting in July
Tue	27	National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
Wed	28	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Meeting - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
Wed	28	World War I began (1914)

August

Sun	01	Air Force Day
Wed	04	United States Coast Guard Established (1790)
Wed	11	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu	19	National Aviation Day
Wed	25	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Meeting - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM

September

Thu	02	Japan Signed Formal Surrender (1945)
Mon	06	Labor Day
Wed	08	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu	09	Rosh Hashanah
Thu	09	Baltimore District Meeting - host: Northeastern Post 285
Fri	17	Constitution Day (text of Constitution approved by Congress in 1787)
Fri	17	POW/MIA Recognition Day
Sat	18	US Air Force established (1947)
Sat	18	Yom Kippur
Sun	19	Lithuanian Post 154 Installation of Officers - Lithuanian Hall - 1 PM
Wed	22	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Meeting - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
Thu	23	First day of autumn

Letter to the Editor

The CONSTITUTION of the United States says, in part, "Treason against the United States, shall consist...in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort."

What do you call statements made and actions taken by a President & Commander in Chief of our military forces that give "Aid & Comfort" to our enemies?

What do you call a President's announcement that he will sue a State for doing something about the hordes of illegal aliens who have invaded that State?

What do you call imposing life-threatening "Rules of Engagement" on our troops fighting abroad?

According to our CONSTITUTION: Treason.

And so, again, I ask you, and all of the members of our Post, to think about Edmund Burke's admonishment: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

Richard Seymour
Lithuanian Post 154 member since 1946