



American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 For God and Country



Legionnaire

September & October 2010

Commander's Message

The end of the Department Convention signaled the beginning of a new year for Legion activities. We commence our Post activities on September 19 with the Installation of Post Officers, recognition of community safety officers, scholarship and student achievement awards.

The dissolution of Post 297 has significant consequences for the Department as well as for some Posts. Once this issue has been cleared up we will inform you of its ramifications.

In the meantime, be assured that Lithuanian Post 154 remains strong and viable, and will continue to flourish as it has since its inception. Send your dues to the Adjutant as you have in the past. Don't forget to attend the Installation of Officers on September 19 and be sure to inform Vince Dulys if you are attending.

On a health note: make sure that you are drinking a sufficient amount of WATER! Other stuff may make you feel good but the body needs WATER and not the other stuff. September and October have a significant number of very hot days.

However, the "heat" of the next few months is not of the Fahrenheit kind but political. Much will be "aired" by candidates seeking office but we will need to be ever alert to the Whole story. Much hurrying and scurrying will take place and INTEGRITY will give way to "the end justifies the means". We need to encourage our elected officials to embrace "the sense of individual obligation."

May I also suggest that in these perilous times, it behooves us all to cast our ballots as informed voters. The stakes are too high to do anything less. Oh, and please drive carefully. Remember, school is back in session.

John Maskavich
Commander
Lithuanian Post 154

American Legion Department of Maryland Convention

Lithuanian Post 154 convention delegates Balys Brasauskas, Gintaras Buivys, Vincent Dulys and John Maskavich attended the 2010 American Legion Department of Maryland Convention in Ocean City. Our Adjutant, Vince Dulys, was again the Master of Ceremonies for the Post Everlasting Service. Our Commander, John Maskavich, was also a participant.

Lithuanian Post 154 received the Three Star Award for exceeding last year's membership count.

A Good Guy

Lithuanian Post 154 Chaplain Fred Kaminski has been awarded a citation from the Disabled American Veterans thanking him for volunteering 1,000 hours of service to the organization. Fred has been volunteering one day per week for the past several years. Most frequently, Fred's duties have been the transporting of veterans to and from the VA clinic in Glen Burnie for medical treatment.

Congratulations Fred!



Stolen Valor

"This week we learn that an appeals court in California has ruled the three-year-old Federal Stolen Valor Act, which makes it a crime to falsely claim to have received a medal from the US military, is unconstitutional.

A panel of the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the defendant in a 2-1 decision, agreeing that the law was a violation of his free-speech rights and that because there is no evidence lies such as those told harm anyone, there is no compelling reason for those kinds of lies to be banned by the government.

The decision involves the case of Xavier Alvarez of Pomona, California, a water district board member who said at a public meeting in 2007 that he was a retired Marine who received the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military decoration."

In his Dissenting Opinion, Judge Jay Bybee of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals stated, "Alvarez's statements dishonor every Congressional Medal of Honor winner, every service member who has been decorated in any way, and every American now serving."

Source: National Association for Uniformed Services weekly update Aug 20, 2010.

It will be interesting to see if ousted Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich will use the above Stolen Valor case as judicial precedent in his appeal of his conviction for lying to the FBI.

Membership

The 2011 membership fiscal year started July 01, 2010. Everyone should have received renewal notices from National. Lithuanian Post 154 annual dues are still only \$21. Please send me your check made out to "The American Legion" if you have not yet paid your dues. Your new 2011 card will be honored through December 31, 2011.

The Department has set our Post goal at 118 members for the 2011 fiscal year. We currently have 89 members who have paid their 2011 dues, which is 75% of our goal. We still are awaiting final confirmation of eligibility for a few prospects who have recently filled out applications.

Department has transferred 27 members from Post 297 to Lithuanian Post 154. Thus far, none of them have submitted their DD214 or, if they were discharged prior to 1950, other official military discharge documents. Membership eligibility requirements to The American Legion were established by Congress. We must verify eligibility prior to voting in any new members into Lithuanian Post 154.

If you have any questions about your membership or questions about The American Legion or our Post, contact me or any other elected Post officer.

Vincent Dulys
Membership Chairman

Taps

Lithuanian Post 154 wishes to extend our sympathy to the family of Legionnaire Anthony S. Snipas, 89, who passed away Friday, May 14, 2010. He was a Lithuanian Post 154 member for over 18 years. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a wheeled vehicle mechanic in the 7th Armored Division landing on Omaha Beach, and he attained the rank of Motor Sergeant. He participated in key operations including the Holland Invasion, and was awarded the Bronze Star as well as decorations for Meritorious Conduct. In addition to being a member of The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154, he was affiliated with the Catholic War Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the 7th Armored Division Association and the Disabled War Vets.



Anthony Snipas was involved in the community and helped establish the Stanton Hill Playground Association, of which he served as president for several years. He was also a member of the Wilkes-Barre Township Lions Club. Tony was a 50-year member, as well as three-term president, and 20-year coordinator of the Wyoming Valley Laymen's Retreat League. He belonged to the Knights of Columbus and was a 4th Degree Knight in Council 302 of the Bishop Hafey Assembly. Tony was a longtime editor of the Retreat Newsletter and Council Bulletin. He received many citations, including "Man of the Year."

Installation of Officers

Lithuanian Post 154 Installation of Officers for 2010 - 2011 will take place on Sunday, September 19 at Lithuanian Hall. Refreshments will be served from 1 PM until 2 PM and immediately after the program. The program normally lasts about an hour. There will be no drinks served during the program. After the program our guests are welcome to stay for a complimentary hot buffet catered by Aldona Buda. The Installation program is scheduled to start promptly at 2 PM with a remembrance of our POW / MIA's followed by recognition of Police Officers, Firefighters and Teachers in our community. Several other awards will be presented. Department of Maryland 3rd Vice Commander Gary Vogt will install our newly elected officers.

There will be a short Memorial Service in remembrance of our departed comrades after the installation.

All Post members are welcome to attend the installation. It is essential that Post members with guests RSVP no later than Wednesday, September 8 to Chairman Vincent Dulys or Commander John Maskavich so that enough tables are set up. If you do not RSVP there might not be enough seats for everyone. I will have reserved tables for Department and special invited guests. Any special requests for table reservations must go through the chairman, otherwise there will be open seating - first come, first served.

Vincent Dulys
Installation Chairman

Happy Birthday



September

Vincentas Dulys
Robert Liupaeter
Gordon Matulonis
Dena Norton
Joseph Saurusaitis
Vitas Siaurusaitis
Carl Thomas

October

Charles Crovo
Valentinas Drazdys
Stanley Eringis
Henry Gaidis
Michael Jackonis
James Laucht
Robert Leonavicius
Gerald Smith
Vincent Velzis

Sick Call



Edmond Bartas
8 Robins Nest Court
Randallstown, MD 21133

Paul Salvetti
867 Hollins Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Vincent Velzis
1015 SE 15th Street
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316

If you become aware of any Lithuanian Post 154 member getting sick or passing away, please notify one of the Post officers listed on the last page of this newsletter.

The American Legion for DP Immigration - 1947

Past Lithuanian Post 154 Commander Vacys Laukaitis gave me a copy of a November 15, 1947 issue of *Žiburiai*, a Lithuanian DP Camp newspaper. In the newspaper are several articles dealing with DP immigration, one of which he thought would be of interest to our Post members. The article states that The American Legion National in Indianapolis reversed its position on DP immigration. The American Legion and most Americans were concerned that many of the Displaced Persons in DP camps in Germany, Austria and Italy were Communists. They were also concerned that if admitted, the DPs would take jobs from veterans and be a burden on the country.

The Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons was formed in 1946 to promote support for DP immigration among the American public and to lobby Congress. The Committee sponsored an inspection tour of the camps by Commander Paul Griffith of The American Legion, who thereafter changed his position and endorsed emergency legislation to aid DPs. In the fall of 1947, the House of Representatives and the Senate sent committees to investigate the DP camps. Both the House and Senate committees also reached the conclusion that something should be done for these people. They found that the DPs were fleeing Communism and deeply anti-Communist. The Soviet Union had shipped hundreds of thousands of people from occupied territories to Siberia. If the DPs would be forced to return to their native countries, they would end up in prisons or slave labor camps.

In June 25, 1948, Congress passed Public Law 774, the Displaced Persons Act which provided for more than 200,000 DPs to enter the US over the next two years. In 1950, the law was amended to allow an additional 200,000 to enter the US.

Displaced Persons had fled from their homelands into Germany, Austria and Italy ahead of the Soviet Army as it pushed westward in 1944. After walking a thousand miles, most Lithuanian DPs had to wait 5 or 6 years in DP camps for resettlement.

Source:

Translated from *Žiburiai*, November 15, 1947 Lithuanian DP Newspaper and the Internet.

Joe Jankevicius



Two Lithuanian boys in a DP camp wearing their Sunday best.



Troopships were used to transport DPs from Bremerhaven, Germany to New York. The trip took nearly two weeks. Women and children were bunked forward and men aft.



First sight of their new homeland.

Economics of Socialism

With the upcoming election approaching, we have been hearing continuous political arguments and name-calling in the media. We have heard the Republican Party labeled "the party of no" because they did not vote for the Stimulus Bill, the Health Care Bill, Cap and Trade and for more federal borrowing to pay for the last Jobs Bill. The Democrats don't want to be called "Liberals" any more and have decided to call themselves "Progressives." The actions of the Administration have been labeled "Socialist."

One of our Post members sent me a e-mail with a short story explaining the effects of Socialism on human behavior. I do not know if the story is true or not, but the story does explain socialism in understandable terms.

"An economics professor at a local college made a statement that he had never failed a single student before, but had once failed an entire class. That class had insisted that socialism was good since no one would be poor and no one would be rich, a great equalizer.

The professor then said, 'OK, we will have an experiment in this class based on Socialist ideals.'

All grades would be averaged and everyone would receive the same grade so no one would fail and no one would receive an A.

After the first test, the grades were averaged and everyone got a B. The students who studied hard were upset and the students who studied little were happy. As the second test rolled around, the students who studied little had studied even less and the ones who studied hard decided they wanted a free ride too so they studied little.

The second test average was a D! No one was happy.

When the 3rd test rolled around, the average was an F.

As the tests proceeded, the scores never increased as bickering, blame and name-calling all resulted in hard feelings and no one would study for the benefit of anyone else.

All failed, to their great surprise, and the professor told them that Socialism would also ultimately fail because when the reward is great, the effort to succeed is great but when government takes all the reward away, no one will try or want to succeed.

Could not be any simpler than that."

Joe Jankevicius

"The trouble with Socialism is that eventually you run out of other people's money."

Margaret Thatcher

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

Executive Comm. 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 :

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Press Release

Henry Gaidis' press release
describing the trip several
members from Lithuanian
Post 154 took to West Point
to honor General Thaddeus
Kosciuszko was translated by
Joe Gaila into Lithuanian and
published in the Lithuanian
newspaper *Draugas*. The
internet address to the news-
paper web page is :

<http://www.draugas.org/05-26-10gaidas-kos-zalgiris.html>

Congratulations Henry and
Joe!

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

Calendar & Reminders

September

		Birthstone: Sapphire	Flower: Aster
Thu	02	VJ Day - 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 - Northeastern Post 285 - 7 PM	
Sat	11	Patriot Day	
Sun	12	Grandparents Day	
Tue	14	"The Star-Spangled Banner" written by Francis Scott Key (1814)	
Fri	17	US Constitution Approved (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 Please inform Vincent Dulys or John Maskavich if you plan to attend.	
Wed	22	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM	
Thu	23	First day of autumn	
Wed	29	VFW Established (1899)	

October

		Birthstone: Opal	Flower: Calendula
Thu	07	War on Terror Began (2001)	
Tue	12	Columbus Day	
Wed	13	US Navy Established (1775)	
Wed	13	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM	
Sun	24	United Nations Day	
Wed	27	Navy Day	
Wed	27	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM	
Sun	31	Happy Halloween	

November

		Birthstone: Topaz	Flower: Chrysanthemum
Tue	02	Election Day - Get out and VOTE	
Sat	06	Baltimore District 4 Frenchmen Service - St. Mary's Cemetery - 10 AM	
Sun	07	Lithuanian Post 154 - Back to God Mass St. Alphonsus Church - 8:30 AM	
Sun	07	Daylight Saving Time ends - set clocks back one hour	
Wed	10	US Marine Corps Established (1775)	
Wed	10	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM	
Thu	11	Signing of WWI Armistice (1918)	
Thu	11	Veterans Day - Baltimore District Service - time and place TBA	
Thu	11	Baltimore District Meeting - Morrell Park Post 137 - 7:30 PM	
Sun	21	Department Executive Committee Meeting - Ocean City Post 166 - 9 AM	
Wed	24	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM	
Thu	25	Happy Thanksgiving	
Sun	28	First Day of Advent	

Upcoming dates - details will be provided as dates approach.

Pearl Harbor Day Service - Baltimore District - Tuesday, December 07, 2010

Four Chaplains Service - Sunday, February 06, 2011 - St Alphonsus Church - 10 AM

National Commander's Reception - Saturday, March 12, 2011 - Post 278 - Kent Island