



American Legion Lithuanian Post 154
For God and Country



Legionnaire

January & February 2012

Commander's Message

Best wishes to you and your families for a safe, happy and healthy New Year.

We begin this year with 87% of our members having renewed. This is good, but we have done better. Thanks to all who have renewed. If you have not yet renewed, please do so today by sending a \$21 check to Adjutant Vince Dulys.

Once again we have a full slate of officers. Thanks to our Adjutant and our Finance Officer, all of our financial matters are in good shape and our filing obligations have been fulfilled.

Our commitments to veterans, community and youth will continue in 2012. We plan to continue participation in District, Department and National American Legion programs and affairs.

Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded in 2012. Please contact me for an application if you have a youth in your family who is graduating from High School this year.

The next major Post event will be the Baltimore District Four Chaplains Service on Sunday, February 5 at Saint Alphonsus Church at 10 AM. After Mass, the Post will be providing coffee and donuts in the church basement. I urge you to attend the service, and enjoy the refreshments as well as the opportunity to socialize with fellow Post members and Department and District Legionnaires.

The American Legion is a non-political organization and cannot endorse any political party or candidate. However, this does not mean that we as individuals are not to express our political views on local, state and federal events or proposed legislation. As citizens, it is our obligation to stay informed and vote. Once more we see that we need wise leaders to deal with national and foreign events. We need men and women who will do what is best for our country and not what is best for themselves or their political party. As the Preamble to the American Legion Constitution states, and our Post's motto reminds us, as Legionnaires, we do what we do "For God and Country," not for personal gain. And right now, our Country is in desperate need of informed voters.

Though this year is going to have a very important national election, pay attention to local elections as well. Stay alert; get involved, it is time for the silent majority to be heard.

Be safe and be happy in 2012.

John F. Maskavich

Back to God Mass



Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard marching in with the Colors prior to the Back to God Mass at St. Alphonsus Church.

Members of Lithuanian Post 154 participated in the annual Back to God Mass at St. Alphonsus Church on November 7, 2011.

The Back to God Mass was started by Father Dranginis when he was Lithuanian

Post 154 Chaplain and has become an annual tradition.

Our sincere "Thank you" to Monsignor Bastress for allowing us to continue this service at St. Alphonsus Church.

Children's Christmas Party

The annual Lithuanian Post 154 Children's Christmas party was held at Lithuanian Hall on Sunday, December 11th. The Post has been sponsoring this popular event for over 50 years.

Lithuanian Hall hosted a Christmas Bazaar in the adjacent room with crafts, jewelry, books and food available for purchase.

Santa's Elves Nomedas and Gabriela Silgalis occupied the children with food,



games and face painting while waiting for Santa to arrive.

So here's a big "Thanks!" to these fine Lithuanian ladies for helping make our Children's Christmas party a resounding success.

Membership

Department has set Lithuanian Post 154 membership goal for fiscal year 2012 at 115. Your membership is current if "2012" appears at the top of your membership card, otherwise you are delinquent. According to my records we have 18 members who have not sent in their renewals. If membership is not renewed for 2 consecutive years. that member will be removed from the Department roster.

Listed below are initials, city and American Legion identification number of individuals who have not yet renewed. If your Legion ID is listed, please renew by sending me a \$21 check made out to The American Legion.

- A.D.H. Jr. - Baltimore, MD - 203541034
- A.J.S. - North Port, FL - 203595231
- C.H. - Baltimore, MD - 202966464
- C.L.K. - Baltimore, MD - 203369703
- D.A.N. - Pineville, LA - 200448860
- G.A.D. - Redmond, WA - 200594600
- G.B. - Baltimore, MD - 101737194
- H.W.C. - Hampstead, MD - 203957851
- I.M.S. - Woodbridge, VA - 203781552
- J.E. M - Fallston, MD - 101716920
- J.M.K. Jr. - Jensen Beach, FL - 101744097
- J.T.G. - Baltimore, MD - 202680011
- P.W.P. - Baltimore, MD - 101741946
- R.E.P. - Odenton, MD - 101725914
- R.H. - Baltimore, MD - 201772031
- S.H.C. - Hampstead, MD - 203957850
- V.J.R. - Hazlet, NJ - 203795966
- W.D.W. Sr. - Baltimore, MD - 201921928

Please contact me if you notice any discrepancies or have any questions about your membership. My contact information is on page 4 of this newsletter.

Vincent Dulys
Membership Chairman

Pope Honors Monsignor Bastress

Pope Benedict XVI has recognized the stellar ministry of Monsignor Arthur Bastress by raising him to the highest rank of monsignor.



Monsignor Arthur Bastress, longtime pastor of St. Alphonsus in Baltimore and enthusiastic supporter of Lithuanian Post 154 and the Lithuanian community, was named protonotary apostolic supernumery - one of just two monsignors in the Baltimore archdiocese to attain the highest ranking of monsignor.

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien surprised Monsignor Bastress about his honor when he visited St. Alphonsus after the 8:30 AM Mass on Oct. 23. The 84-year-old pastor, the oldest active pastor in the archdiocese, became emotional at the archbishop's generosity.

"There are very few times I've been speechless," Monsignor Bastress said, "but that was one of them. I was flustered. I'm having a hard time having it register."

After his ordination in 1951, Monsignor Bastress served as associate pastor of St. Dominic in Hamilton and St. Patrick in Cumberland. He moved on to Holy Trinity Parish in Glen Burnie, and also served as temporary administrator of St. Andrew by the Bay, Annapolis, and St. Mary's, Pylesville. He was appointed pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Baynesville in 1970.

Monsignor Bastress led the archdiocesan office for the diaconate for 10 years, and was named pastor of St. Jerome in Baltimore in 1990. When Auxiliary Bishop John H. Ricard was named the head of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee in 1997, Monsignor Bastress was asked to serve as interim delegate of what was then the urban vicariate. He was named pastor of St. Alphonsus in 1998.

"God's been good to me," Monsignor Bastress said. "The people have been very good and understanding of me. I have no plans for retirement, unless the new archbishop thinks I've had enough."

Monsignor Bastress and several other papal honorees were recognized for the importance of their assignments during a 4 PM prayer service at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland, MD on November 20.

Congratulations Monsignor Bastress!

Source: George P. Matysek Jr., Catholic Review

Happy Birthday

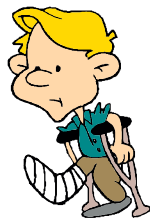
January

- Heath Cherneski
- Grant Dillon
- Patrick Dohlus
- Charles Gross
- Bernard Milosavich
- Stephen Mueller
- Ronald Price
- Stanley Ruby
- Kenneth Shillenn

February

- Joseph Cherneski
- Jeffrey Burton
- Richard Jacobs

Sick Call



Paul Salvetti
867 Hollins Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 History

The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 is unique. Typical American Legion Posts are neighborhood organizations with post members living within a few miles of the post. This was true for Lithuanian Post 154 when it was started, but not true anymore. Only 18% of Lithuanian Post 154 members live within Baltimore, 27% live outside Maryland and the remainder are scattered throughout Maryland from Westminster to the Eastern Shore. Due to their ethnic heritage and desire to keep connections with their old neighborhood and friends, most post members continue their Lithuanian Post 154 membership when they move out of Baltimore.

The roots of Lithuanian Post 154 are also unique. They can be traced to Lithuanian American World War I veterans who upon returning home from Europe found their ancestral homeland, Lithuania, trying to gain its independence and in a continuing three way war with Czarist Russian White forces, Communist Russian forces and the Poles. These Lithuanian American war veterans began to seek ways to help their ancestral homeland. As a result, most Lithuanian American veterans chose to avoid joining the newly established American Legion in favor of forming their own veteran organizations with the objective of not only caring for their fellow veteran comrades, but helping Lithuania in its struggle for independence.

Initial small groups of Lithuanian veterans such as the Freedom Guards, the American Lithuanian Legion and the Alliance of American Lithuanian Soldiers, began to unite in major US cities. Although these veterans anticipated full support from the American government, the administration hesitated in favor of establishing a joint allied military policy for Eastern Europe forcing these veterans to find ways of directly aiding their ancestral homeland. By early 1919, a Lithuanian American Brigade with an estimated 10,000 volunteers had been formed in the US ready to go to Lithuania to fight for its independence, but the US government would not authorize such action. As a result, individual Lithuanian American volunteers traveled to Canada and then to Lithuania in a clandestine manner. Over 500 Lithuanian American volunteers reached Lithuania and took an active part in the 1918 - 1920 struggle for the nation's independence.

After Lithuania achieved its independence, members of the Lithuanian American Brigade and other Lithuanian World War I veterans established the Lithuanian American Legion. By 1938, the Lithuanian American Legion had nine posts with hundreds of members. The largest and most active posts could be found in New York, Chicago, Boston, and Baltimore. With their rich cultural and historical background the Lithuanian American Legion posts prospered.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 quickly changed the independent way of thinking by Lithuanian Americans veterans. Although all the Legion members continued to be very proud of their ancestral heritage, they were Americans first and foremost. As a result, these Lithuanian American Legion post members immediately gathered



Members of the Lithuanian American Brigade in Kaunas, Lithuania 1920.

together to support the American war effort and decided to dissolve its posts and apply for membership in The American Legion. On March 19, 1943, the Baltimore Lithuanian American veterans received a temporary American Legion charter. All of the charter members of The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 were World War I veterans and former members of the Lithuanian American Legion. To their added joy, these old veterans were delighted to learn that their Post would be authorized to retain "Lithuanian" in its post name in honor of their nationality and former Lithuanian American Legion association and to carry the Lithuanian National Flag. It is believed that Lithuanian Post 154 is the only American Legion Post authorized to bear an ethnic designation in its official name. The new post members worked diligently and within a year their membership increased from fifteen members to fifty two and received its permanent Charter on June 19, 1944.

As the years passed, those who chartered the post began to fade away. New and younger legionnaires who served in World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, Bosnia and the most recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have taken their place. These younger veterans continue the post's work with the same dedication as the founding legionnaires. They promote religion without bigotry, charity without prejudice, and are always prepared to defend the ideals and freedoms of America.

Today, Lithuanian Post 154 members remain dedicated and determined to keep the tradition of "For God and Country" foremost in their hearts and minds, worthy successor to their forefathers in the Lithuanian American Legion.

Source: Henry Gaidis,
Lithuanian Post 154 Historian

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 Vincentas@verizon.net

SERVICE OFFICER
 Patrick M. Dohlus
 1920 Nipmuck Path
 Hanover, MD 21076
 (410) 551-2369

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 every 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

**Government
 Central Planning
 Did Not Work**

“In 1940, independent
 Lithuania produced per cap-
 ita 1.9 times more meat, 2.8
 times more milk, had 1.9
 times more cattle and 2.7
 times more pigs than Soviet
 Union. After 50 years of al-
 legedly astounding eco-
 nomic progress, Soviet
 Lithuania had become de-
 pendent on subsidies from
 Moscow”.

Source: Valdas Samonis,
 VilNews.com

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

Calendar & Reminders

January

- Sun 01 New Year's Day
- Wed 04 Third week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Wed 11 Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
- Wed 11 Fourth week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Thu 12 Baltimore District Meeting - Brooklyn - Curtis Bay Post 187 - 7 PM
- Mon 16 Persian Gulf War Began (1991)
- Mon 16 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (Observed)
- Wed 18 Fifth week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Wed 25 Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting -
Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
- Wed 25 Sixth week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Thu 26 Signing of Vietnam Peace Accord (1973)

February

- Wed 01 Seventh week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Thu 02 Groundhog Day
- Sun 05 Baltimore District Four Chaplains Service - St. Alphonus Church - 10 AM
- Wed 08 Eighth week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Wed 08 Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
- Sun 12 Lincoln's Birthday
- Tue 14 Valentine's Day
- Wed 15 Ninth week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Sun 19 Department Executive Committee Meeting -
Cambridge Post 91 - 1 PM
- Mon 20 Presidents' Day
- Wed 22 Ash Wednesday
- Wed 22 George Washington's Birthday
- Wed 22 Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting -
Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
- Wed 22 Tenth week drawing of 100 Club fundraiser
- Sun 26 100 Club fundraiser Party - Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 1 PM

March

- Fri 02 Vietnam War began (1965)
- Thu 08 Baltimore District Meeting - Morrell Park Post 137 - 7 PM
- Sat 10 National Commander's Banquet - Kent Island Post - 5:30 PM
- Sun 11 Daylight Saving Time begins
- Wed 14 Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
- Sat 17 St. Patrick's Day
- Mon 19 Operation Iraqi Freedom began (2003)
- Tue 20 Spring begins
- Wed 21 Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting -
Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM

100 Club

As Chairman of the Post's
 annual 100 Club fundraiser
 which started on December
 21. I want to thank everyone
 who purchased a ticket.

Two winning numbers will be
 drawn every Wednesday for
 a total of ten weeks. Winning
 numbers to date are:

- 36 - Joana Buivys
- 27 - Rich Cole
- 84 - Richard Rekenis
- 95 - Antanas Uleckas

The final drawings will be
 held on Feb. 22, 2012. Our
 annual fundraiser party will
 follow on Feb. 26, 1 to 4 PM,
 at the Cockeyed Cow Saloon,
 900 S. Carey St. The party is

free to 100 Club ticket hold-
 ers and \$10 for ticket holder
 guests. Great food and re-
 freshments will be served.
 PLUS – additional prizes!

Got questions? Call me, at
 (410) 987-5275.

Vincent Dulys
 Chairman