



*American Legion Lithuanian Post 154
For God and Country*



Legionnaire

March & April 2009

Commander's Message

Once again the Post hosted the Four Chaplains Service on the first Sunday in February. The service - in Post tradition - was carried out with dignity and honor. It was good to see increased attendance by Legionnaires and other worshipers at the service. A time for camaraderie with donuts and coffee was held after the service.

Over the next two months we are looking forward to participating in the Lithuanian Independence Day celebration; the National Commander's dinner and District Reception honoring the Maryland Department Commander. In addition, there will be religious holidays celebrated by various faiths. Along with these events, it is time to be aware of the Post Scholarship awards. The eligibility requirements are posted below. And before you know it, the time for nomination and election of Post officers will be here in May.

Yet during this time of economic turmoil and uncertainty, political wrongdoings, finger pointing and all kinds of posturing, we stand fast for one hundred percent Americanism, and to inculcate a sense of individual obligation — to oneself — for his/her own right to pursue a life within the limits of his/her natural ability. We stand by and are waiting to assist where a worthwhile situation exists. The result of the present plans to set the economy on its feet for the long term remains to be seen. But in the meantime we need to have faith and trust that those in charge here on earth, will occasionally invoke a higher power for divine guidance in their deliberations.

So life is good. Can't report on the alternative: no experience there. In the meantime there are many things to enjoy. One of which is to attend a Post meeting. Be a "doer" and not a "next timer." See you on the second Wednesday of March, April, May, June, August, etc.

John Maskavich
Commander

Scholarship

Lithuanian Post 154 will be awarding two \$500 scholarships to students graduating from high school in 2009 and entering college this fall. Application forms may be picked up at Post meetings held every second Wednesday of the month except for July. Applications are also available by contacting Commander John Maskavich.

Scholarships are open to children, grandchildren, stepchildren, step grandchildren, nephews, nieces or adopted children of an active member in good standing or a deceased member who had paid dues within the past year.

Lithuanian Post 154 will consider other achievements from grades Kindergarten through 12 for recognition.

Commander John Maskavich must receive scholarship applications by July 20, 2009.

Lithuanian Post 154 Achieved 3-Star Status



Lithuanian Post 154 Membership Chairman Vincent Dulys, Baltimore District Vice Commander Marlin B. Johnson and Baltimore District Commander Reginald T. Jordan presented a Membership Jacket to Lithuanian Post 154 Commander John Maskavich at the February Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting.

American Legion 3-Star Status is achieved by exceeding the prior year's membership count. The Commander alone did not achieve this award. Everybody in the Post can be proud of this accomplishment. Some for actively recruiting, others by just responding to their dues request promptly. It recognizes each member's part in achieving this goal.

Much time-consuming effort went into reaching this membership award by many in our Post. If you look at your membership card, you'll see a signature above the "Authorized Post Officer" line. This individual has kept records of every Post member's status - active, deceased or withdrawn; sends out your membership card; advises you if your dues are delinquent and above all encourages all to seek new members. He handles the paperwork for new members and membership transfers. Most importantly, he forwards your dues and address changes to Department and National to keep your American Legion mailings arriving at your current address. So he is not only a "Secretary" but also a "Banker" of integrity.

You have read articles about membership in our newsletter. Our editor sends out complimentary copies of the "Legionnaire" with membership applications to prospects. The volunteers who man our table at the Lithuanian Festival recruit by providing membership information and an application to anyone who requests it. To name names would require the publishing of the Post's entire membership roster.

A BIG RIGHT HAND SALUTE to Lithuanian Post 154 for having achieved 3-Star Status, as well as being the first Department of Maryland American Legion Post to do so in fiscal year "2009."

Members, the honor of this recognition is YOURS!

John Maskavich
Commander

Membership

I would like to thank all of our Post members who have sent in their fiscal year "2009" dues. Your card should have "2009" at the top and is honored through December 31, 2009. This year we increased our membership to 98 members and received 3-Star Status at Department. Commander John Maskavich accepted a Membership Jacket for our Post reaching 3-Star Status. He gave credit to a combined Post effort. When accepting the jacket, John stated "The 3-Star Status was not attained by one individual, it is a result of all Post members putting forth extra effort."

If anyone knows any membership prospects or potential transfers to Post 154, please let me know. I will send them an application and verify their eligibility. Our dues are only \$21 per year whereas other Posts dues are \$28 or higher.

Your Post 154 card is honored at all the other Posts. You can drop by any Post for a social visit. Most large Posts have dining rooms and lounges with good food at reasonable prices that you can enjoy after showing your Lithuanian Post 154 card. Next time you are out of town and looking for a restaurant, try an American Legion Post.

All paid up members should be receiving the "The American Legion" magazine each month, and the bi-monthly "Free State Warrior," the official publication of The American Legion, Department of Maryland. If not, please let me know and I will have the address discrepancy at National or Department corrected. In some cases members were not receiving renewal notices from National; please let me know of any discrepancies.

Our bi-monthly newsletter is published by Joe Jankevicius. If you have a prospect who would like to receive our newsletter, please contact Joe or me.

Vincent Dulys
Membership Chairman

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir:

I find it disturbing that President Barack Obama found time to make appearances at ten inaugural Balls, but was a "no show" at the Salute to Heroes Inaugural Ball sponsored by The American Legion, and co-sponsored by fourteen other veterans' service organizations.

Our new Commander-in-Chief thus became the first president to skip the event since its inception in 1953.

The Ball was created to honor recipients of the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest military award. Over forty of the still-living recipients of the award attended the event.

Richard Seymour
Lithuanian Post 154 member since 1946

100 Club



Our Lithuanian Post 154 annual 100 Club fundraiser started on January 14. The winning numbers drawn to date are:

Kenny Smith - 55
Gail Ludwig - 11
Edmond Bartas - 36
John Maskavich - 87
Evelyn Smith - 10
James Stein - 85
Loy Vogel - 44
Rasa Meeks - 59
Ramune Buivys - 74
Zita Uleckas - 94
Kendra - 71
Tom Savin - 09
Toivo Tagamets - 79
Frank Giannino - 23

The 100 Club fundraiser party will take place Sunday, March 22 at J-Ray's Café from 1 PM - 4 PM.

Complimentary refreshments (Draft beer, mixed drinks, viryta, wine, soda) and hot buffet will be served. There will be a drawing for \$300, \$200, and \$100. The first door prize is \$50. Ticket holders need not be present for the drawings but must be present to be eligible for door prizes. Ticket holder (name on master list) must be present for all door prizes. Guest fee is \$10 for those who have not purchased a 100 Club ticket.

The last 3 week's and main prize winners will be posted in the May - June newsletter.

If you need more information or have any questions please contact Chairman Vincent Dulys.

Epilepsy Fund Drive



Lithuanian Post 154 is supporting the Department's annual 2009 Epilepsy Fund Drive by selling pins for \$3. Pins are available at all Post meetings and gatherings - just ask one of the officers.

Sick Call



Edmond Bartas
8 Robins Nest Ct
Randallstown, MD 21133

Gilbert Miller
3606 Menlo Dr.
Baltimore, MD 21215

Paul Salvetti
867 Hollins St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

Happy Birthday

March

George Adams
Joseph Antoniak
Fred Kaminski
Joseph Mueller
Gediminas Naujokaitis
Olgard Rackus
Augustinas Uleckas



April

Edmond Bartas
Michael Keiser
Errol Markowitz
John Maskavich Jr.
Algirdas Paplonskis
Robert Parks
Vilius Ramunas
Richard Raul
Algirdas Siaurusaitis

Four Chaplains Service



Parkville Post 183 Balladiers

The American Legion Department of Maryland Four Chaplains Service was started by Rev. Anthony Dranginis in 1963. Father Dranginis was a Lithuanian Post 154 member, Commander of our Post from 1949 – 1951 and American Legion Department of Maryland Chaplain for many years.

This remembrance was the 46th consecutive year that the Baltimore District has held this service. Rev. Anthony Dranginis initially held the service at The War Memorial in Baltimore. In 1978, when he was Pastor of St. Alphonsus Church, the services were transferred to St. Alphonsus Church and a Holy Mass was added.

Many people have contributed their time and talent over the years to continue this tradition. Past Lithuanian Post 154 Commanders John Stefura, Gintaras Buivys and Vincent Dulys have served as Chairman for the Baltimore District.



Past Baltimore District Commander Marian James and Lithuanian Post 154 Commander John Maskavich presenting water and wine to Monsignor Arthur Bastress and Deacon Hugh Mills.

The Balladiers from Parkville Post 183 have participated and supported this remembrance for 31 years. Lee Burlage has given the history of the Four Chaplains for 23 years. A special “thank you” to Balladiers Henry King - chairman, Gene Balcerak - director and Walter Sobus - lector, for their continuous support.

I would like to thank the Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion and guests who attended the service. The support and input from Pastor Monsignor Arthur Bastress, Deacon Hugh Mills and St. Alphonsus staff is greatly appreciated. And a sincere “thank you” to everyone who lent a helping hand.

Vincent Dulys
Baltimore District Four Chaplains Service Chairman

VA Relaxes Priority Group 8 Enrollment Restrictions

Public Law 110-329 provides VA additional funding to allow expanded enrollment opportunity for certain Priority 8 veterans who may have been previously denied enrollment in VA's health care system because their income exceeded VA's means tests thresholds. The new provision allows veterans whose incomes do not exceed these thresholds by more than 10 percent to enroll in VA's health care system. These changes do not open enrollment to all Priority 8 veterans.

Whatever your enrollment determination, VA encourages all veterans to apply for enrollment as this will help them in their future planning and budget efforts as well as allow them to be in a better position to identify necessary funding levels to Congress.

Veterans are encouraged to contact the VA's Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-8387 for more information.

Source:
Veterans Administration.

American Legion Boys State Program

The American Legion believes there is no better way to assure the survival of our republic than to train our young people in the ideals and objectives of American government. American Legion Boys State is among the most respected and selective citizenship educational programs for boys. Boys State is a unique summertime educational program that focuses on participation and personal experience in a model state, complete with governing bodies and elected public officials. It is designed to mirror the structure and operation of its respective state government.

Only males who have successfully completed their junior year of high school and have not yet entered their senior year of high school are eligible to attend. Any boy who has previously attended Boys State is not eligible.

The Maryland Boys State typically begins on Father's Day and runs through the following Friday at McDaniel College in Westminster.

If you know of a boy who would be interested in attending Boys State, contact Vincent Dulys for more information and an application.

COMMANDER
John F. Maskavich
19 Locust Drive
Baltimore, MD 21228
(410) 747-9628

ADJUTANT
Vincent T. Dulys
616 Cedarwood Lane
Crownsville, MD 21032
(410) 987-5275
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 on the 4th
Wednesday of the month at
J-Ray's Café
900 S. Carey Street
Baltimore, MD 21223

Please send your comments,
suggestions and articles to :

Joe Jankevicius
624 Oak Tree Rd
Westminster, MD 21157
JJankevicius@Comcast.net

War and Freedom

"War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made so and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

John Stuart Mill
(1806–1873)

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

Calendar & Reminders

March

Sun	01	Lithuanian Independence Day Celebration - Lithuanian Hall - 2 PM
Mon	02	Vietnam War began (1965)
Tue	03	"Star Spangled Banner" made U.S. National Anthem (1931)
Sun	08	Clocks spring forward for DST
Wed	11	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu	12	Baltimore District Meeting hosted by Lithuanian Post 154 - Lithuanian Hall - 7:30 PM
Fri	13	Jurate Milauskaite Concert - Lithuanian Hall - 9 PM
Sat	14	National Commander's Banquet - Francis Scott Key Post 11 - Frederick, Md.
Sun	15	The American Legion Birthday
Tue	17	St. Patrick's Day
Thu	19	Operation Iraqi Freedom began (2003)
Fri	20	First Day of Spring
Sun	22	Lithuanian Post 154 fundraiser (100 Club party) - J-Ray's Café - 1 PM
Wed	25	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Meeting - J-Ray's Café - 7:30 PM
Sun	29	Baltimore District Reception honoring Department Commander Gail Murdock; American Legion Auxiliary Department President Meredith Beeg; Sons of The American Legion Detachment Commander Michael Gray - Morrell Park Post 137 - 2 PM

April

Wed	01	April Fool's Day
Wed	08	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu	09	Passover
Fri	10	Good Friday
Sat	11	Persian Gulf War Official Cease Fire (1991)
Sun	12	Easter
Wed	15	Income Tax Day
Wed	22	Earth Day
Wed	22	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Meeting - J-Ray's Café - 7:30 PM
Fri	24	Arbor Day

May

Thu	07	National Day of Prayer
Thu	07	Unconditional surrender of all German forces signed (1945)
Fri	08	V-E Day declared (1945)
Fri	08	Military Spouses Day
Sun	10	Mother's Day
Mon	11	Postage rate first class stamp increase to \$.44 (get "forever" stamps early)
Wed	13	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu	14	Baltimore District Meeting hosted by Federal Post 19 - 7:30 PM
Sat	16	Armed Forces Day
Sat	16	Mountain District Reception Post 71 - for Dept. Commander Gail Murdock
Sun	17	Dept. Executive Meeting hosted by Proctor Kildow Post 71 - Oakland, Md.
Fri	22	National Maritime Day
Mon	25	Memorial Day (Observed)
Wed	27	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Meeting - J-Ray's Café - 7:30 PM
Sat	30	Memorial Day - American Legion Baltimore District Service at National Cemetery - Frederick Ave. - Catonsville, Md. 10:45 AM
Sat	30	Lithuanian Festival at Catonsville Armory - 11 AM to 6 PM
Sun	31	Lithuanian Festival at Catonsville Armory - 11 AM to 6 PM Official Opening Ceremony at 1 PM with Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard

"Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spirits of others are stiffened."
Billy Graham