



American Legion Lithuanian Post 154
For God and Country



Legionnaire

September & October 2009

Commander's Message

The hazy, lazy summer days are just about over and the fall season will shortly be upon us. Schools will be opening, Labor Day weekend is just around the corner and September 20 will be here before you know it. In case you have forgotten, September 20 is the date for installation of Post Officers. How time does fly. Post members are invited to attend this ceremony, but please RSVP to the Adjutant or Commander.

The Post has had a successful year in Legion and Community activities. We received three awards at the Department Convention in Ocean City in July. Two of these were for membership: a Three Star Award for exceeding last year's membership count; and a Three Star Department Commander Trophy for being the first post in the Baltimore District to do it. Congratulations to Post members for renewing your memberships promptly and to those who actively recruited new members. Congratulations to Joe Jankevicius and Richard Seymour for receiving the John Sloan Newsletter Award. This is the fourth consecutive year our Post received this award. Lithuanian Post 154 has supported the Lithuanian Community and St. Alphonus Church; and has raised money for several worthwhile charities over the last year. Thanks to all who so generously and sincerely took part in Post activities. None of these accomplishments would be possible without you.

It is hoped that all are weathering these uncertain economic times and the latest political hullabaloo. If you need assistance from the Legion or the VA, call our Service Officer Patrick Dohlus; his phone number is listed on the back page of this newsletter.

We look forward to another successful year helping our members, the American Legion and the community.

Stay healthy and be happy!

John Maskavich
Commander
Lithuanian Post 154

"Tears shed for self are tears of weakness, but tears shed for others are a sign of strength."

Billy Graham

2009 Maryland Department Convention



Lithuanian Post 154 Convention Delegates Vincent Dulys, John Maskavich, Balys Brasauskas, and Joe Jankevicius, holding Lithuanian Post 154 awards received at the convention.

Lithuanian Post 154 was well represented at the 2009 American Legion Department of Maryland Convention. We had four delegates to the convention. Our Adjutant, Vince Dulys, was the Master of Ceremonies for the Post Everlasting Service. Our Commander, John Maskavich, was also a participant.

Lithuanian Post 154 received three awards. We received the Three Star Award for exceeding last year's membership count. We received the Three Star Department Commander Trophy for being the first Post in the Baltimore District to exceed the prior year's membership. And for the fourth consecutive year, Lithuanian Post 154 won the John Sloan Newsletter Trophy.

Dozens of committees reported their accomplishments. They reported that Legionnaires volunteered hundreds of hours at VA hospitals comforting our wounded soldiers.



Vincent Dulys was the Master of Ceremonies at the Post Everlasting Service.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars were raised and distributed to charities, veterans' homes and children's programs. The American Legion gave scholarships, supported Scouting, Boys State, Special Olympics, Children's Miracle Network, Epilepsy Fund, Oratorical Contests, baseball programs, etc. These programs provided kids with a positive environment to learn Americanism, leadership and sportsmanship.

You can be proud to belong to this generous, caring organization.

Membership

The new Fiscal Year 2010 started July 01, 2009 and renewals have been coming in very steadily. Department of Maryland has set a goal for our Post at 99 paid up members this fiscal year. I am confident that we will meet that goal. By the end of August over 85% of our members have renewed their memberships.

National has sent out new PUFL (Paid-Up-For-Life) rates that will be effective October 1, 2009. Members who have been pondering becoming a PUFL member should commit now since rates will go up significantly in October. PUFL membership can be paid in installments and if you already paid your Fiscal Year 2010 dues, that amount can be deducted from the PUFL rate. The charts below reflect old and new PUFL rates. The rate is based on your age.

PUFL rate in effect until September 30, 2009.

Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54
\$732	\$696	\$657	\$614	\$567	\$517	\$463

55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	Over 84
\$407	\$351	\$296	\$244	\$195	\$152	\$123

PUFL rate effective October 1, 2009.

Under 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54
\$959	\$924	\$886	\$845	\$801	\$752	\$700

55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	Over 84
\$642	\$583	\$524	\$466	\$410	\$359	\$323

If you are interested, contact me for more information.

The Department of Maryland needs to make cuts in their budget. As a result, the Department newsletter "Warrior" will be cut back from 6 issues to 4 issues annually.

Those members that belong to the holdover Post 297 at Department will have their dues increased from \$25 to \$35 annually. If you have friends belonging to Post 297, suggest to them to transfer to an active Post. The dues will most likely be less and one will be more aware of what goes on in The American Legion. If you need to find any information about the American Legion, visit www.legion.org on the Internet.

In an effort to increase membership, permission has been granted to The American Legion Department of Maryland by the Stadium Authority to hand out membership applications at all 8 of the Ravens home football games. Also joint ventures with the VFW are being contemplated in order to increase membership in both organizations.

If you have any questions about your membership status or have an interest in becoming a PUFL member, please give me a call on my home phone (410) 987-5275, cell (410) 960-7874 or e-mail vincentas@verizon.net.

Vincent Dulys
Membership Chairman

Installation of Officers

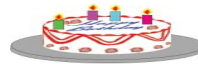
Lithuanian Post 154 Installation of Officers for 2009 - 2010 will take place on Sunday, September 20 at Lithuanian Hall. Refreshments will be served from 1 PM until 2 PM and immediately after the program. The program normally lasts about an hour. There will be no drinks served during the program. After 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. Past National Executive Committeeman from the Department of Maryland, William Proctor, 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 10 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

Gordon Matulonis
119 Queen Eugenia Court
Fort Pierce, FL 34949

The 10 Commandments

The real reason that we can't have the Ten Commandments posted in a courthouse is this - you cannot post 'Thou Shalt Not Steal', 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery' and 'Thou Shall Not Lie' in a building full of lawyers, judges and politicians ... it creates a hostile work environment.

VA Category 8 Care

"The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which now has nearly 8 million Veterans enrolled in its health care system, is poised to welcome nearly 266,000 more Veterans into its medical centers and clinics across the country by expanding access to health care enrollment for certain Veterans who had been excluded due to their income. Dr. Gerald Cross, VA's Acting Under Secretary for Health, said, 'This incremental approach to expanding enrollment ensures that access to VA health care for a greater number of beneficiaries does not sacrifice timely access or quality medical care for those Veterans already enrolled in VA's health care system. Over the next four years, we hope to provide enrollment to more than 500,000 Veterans.' Under a new regulation effective 15 JUN, VA will enroll Veterans whose income exceeds current means-tested thresholds by up to 10%. These Veterans were excluded from VA health care enrollment when income limits were imposed in 2003 on Veterans with no service-connected disabilities or other special eligibility for care. There is no income limit for Veterans with compensable service-connected disabilities or for Veterans being seen for their service-connected disabilities.

Veterans who have applied for VA health care but were rejected due to income at any point in 2009 will have their applications reconsidered under the new income threshold formula. Those who applied before 2009, but were rejected due to income, must reapply. VA will contact these Veterans through a direct-mail campaign, Veterans service organizations, and a national and regional marketing campaign. Information about enrollment and an income and assets calculator are available at www.va.gov/healtheligibility. The calculator provides a format in which Veterans enter their household income, number of dependents, and zip codes to see if they may qualify for VA health care enrollment. In addition to applying online, Veterans may also contact VA's Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222 VETS (1-877-222-8387)."

[Source: VA News Release - June 19, 2009]

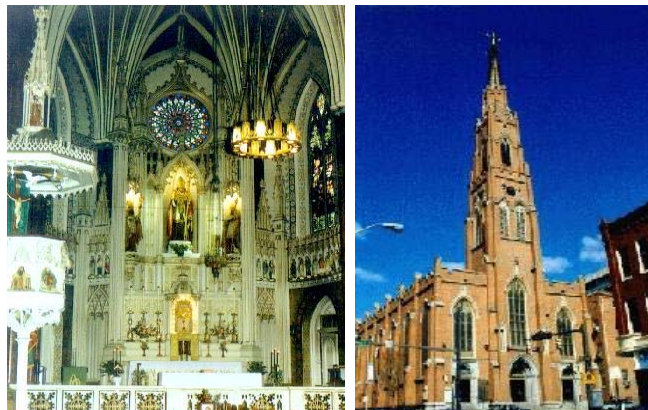
Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act

The Post 9/11 GI Bill became effective August 3, 2009. The newly enacted law provides veterans and family members the most extensive educational assistance opportunity since President Franklin Roosevelt signed the GI Bill of 1944 during World War II.

"Under provisions of the law, veterans who served in active duty since Sept. 10, 2001, can receive in-State tuition for an undergraduate education at a public college or university. In addition, veterans can receive a monthly housing allowance, annual book allowance and related fees as an earned benefit. The law also allows veterans to transfer benefits to one or more dependents."

[Source: Department of Veterans Affairs]

Don't Forget St. Alphonsus



Many of us have fond memories of our formative years at St Alphonsus School and Church. There we made lifelong friends and learned right from wrong - lessons occasionally reinforced with the aid of a ruler across the knuckles.

Thanks to the untiring efforts of Monsignor Arthur Bastress, St. Alphonsus Church continues to serve the Lithuanian Community and Lithuanian Post 154. For 11 years he has led the massive efforts to restore the 163 year old building so that it could serve future generations. The steeple, roof, masonry, water damage and heating system were repaired. His current project is to repair the beautiful windows. The cost to remove, restore, and replace the 32 windows of the Church is \$893,000. Monsignor Bastress will be extremely grateful for whatever you can do to accomplish the goal. You can make your tax deductible contribution to:

St. Alphonsus Church
114 Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

Agent Orange

"As most Vietnam-era veterans know presumption for Agent Orange related health conditions are based upon the member having actually had "boots on the ground" for at least one day. Those serving aboard ships have been divided into two groups. In the Blue Water groups are those individuals who were considered not to have been in country and among the Brown Water group are those who worked primarily on the rivers and are already considered to qualify.

A question by a veterans organization representative, at a previous quarterly meeting, has led the VA to slightly change the rule. Now if a service member can prove that he was aboard a ship that actually tied up to a pier in Vietnam and that can be proved, the member will be considered as being in country and the presumptive conditions can apply.

If you or someone you know meets these qualifications and has previously been turned down for Agent Orange related conditions, now is the time to re-open your case with the VA."

[Source: National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) May 29, 2009 Weekly update]

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
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
JJankevicius@Comcast.net

J Ray's Café has changed
ownership and changed the
name to Cockeyed Cow Sa-
loon. Lithuanian Post 154
will continue to hold it's Ex-
ecutive Committee Meetings
at the same location.

Poppy Service Available for Transferees to Post Everlasting.

In response to requests con-
cerning information about
the Post's Poppy Service at a
Funeral Parlor, Post mem-
bers are advised to tell family
members to call our Post
Service Officer or Com-
mander to make arrange-
ments.

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

Calendar & Reminders

September

Birthstone: Sapphire Flower: Aster
Wed 02 VJ Day - Japan Signed Formal Surrender (1945)
Mon 07 Labor Day
Wed 09 Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu 10 Baltimore District Meeting - Northeastern Post 285 - 7:30 PM
Fri 11 Patriot Day
Sun 13 Grandparents Day
Mon 14 "The Star-Spangled Banner" written by Francis Scott Key (1814)
Thu 17 U.S. Constitution Approved (1787)
Fri 18 U.S. Air Force established (1947)
Fri 18 POW/MIA Recognition Day
Sat 19 Rosh Hashanah
Sun 20 Lithuanian Post 154 Installation of Officers - Lithuanian Hall - 1 PM
Please inform Vincent Dulys or John Maskavich if you plan to attend.
Tue 22 First day of autumn
Wed 23 Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting -
Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
Mon 28 Yom Kippur
Tue 29 VFW Established (1899)

October

Birthstone: Opal Flower: Calendula
Wed 07 War on Terror Began (2001)
Mon 12 Columbus Day
Tue 13 U.S. Navy Established (1775)
Wed 14 Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Sat 24 United Nations Day
Tue 27 Navy Day
Wed 28 Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting -
Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
Sat 31 Happy Halloween

November

Birthstone: Topaz Flower: Chrysanthemum
Sun 01 Lithuanian Post 154 - Back to God Mass
St. Alphonsus Church - 8:30 AM
Sun 01 Daylight Saving Time ends - set clocks back one hour
Tue 03 Election Day - Get out and VOTE
Sat 07 Baltimore District 4 Frenchmen Service - St. Mary's Cemetery - 10 AM
Tue 10 U.S. Marine Corps Established (1775)
Wed 11 Signing of WWI Armistice (1918)
Wed 11 Veterans Day - Baltimore District Service - time and place TBA
Wed 11 Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu 12 Baltimore District Meeting - General Haller Post 95
1746 Fleet Street - 7:30 PM
Sun 15 Department Executive Committee Meeting -
Stallings - Williams Post 206 - Chesapeake Beach - Southern Maryland
Wed 25 Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting -
Cockeyed Cow Saloon - 7:30 PM
Thu 26 Happy Thanksgiving
Sun 29 First Day of Advent

Upcoming dates to reserve - details will be provided as dates approach.

Pearl Harbor Day Service - Baltimore District - Monday, December 07, 2009

Four Chaplains Service - St Alphonsus Church - 10 AM - Sunday, February 07, 2010

National Commander's Banquet - Saturday, March 13, 2010

If it weren't for the United States military, there'd be no United States of America.