



Knights of Lithuania Council 7 Waterbury

June 2022 Newsletter

Hello, Labas, Happy Father's Day, *Su Joniném*, Dear Members and Friends,

How quickly the calendar has just about reached the halfway point of the year! It never ceases to amaze me how fast time goes by, and how it seems to keep speeding up. We certainly hope everyone has been enjoying the weather so far, as other than a few hotter days, it has been very tolerable and just about downright enjoyable compared to other Junes in past recent memory.

We shall reiterate yet again with our upcoming **Flag Raising and Mayor for the Day**. Our honoree this year shall be **Eleanor Barkauskas**, who joyfully accepted the honor. I can't think of anyone more deserving. A long time member of our Council, having served as an officer for countless years, and helping in many ways at numerous events. Eleanor is a 4th Degree recipient, and a lifelong parishioner of St. Joseph's, where she also served as an Ecumenical Minister for many years. Now it is up to everyone to do one's best to promote it to friends, fellow Lithuanians, and post the event on social media. If everyone does a little, a lot will get done! The date of this will be **Friday, July 8th, 10 AM**, the day closest to **King Mindaugas Day**, or Lithuanian Statehood Day, taking place at Waterbury City Hall, on Grand Street. Rain date is Friday July 15th.

In an on going update, the Revitalization Sub Committee, which is the group discussing and proposing changes to the Knights of Lithuania organization nationally, has been meeting via Zoom. **Christian Allyn, Marlene Warren, Linas Venclauskas** and **Fran Stiklus** have been hard at work. The task of creating an internet web page for our Council has been undertaken by our illustrious and tireless secretary Marlene Warren and Christian Allyn. They will be presenting a preview at the Spring Fling, and are continuing to build it as we write this. We will begin work on a Facebook page shortly, and yours truly will be trying to his best to put that together, Why, you ask, is it necessary for both? Simply put, for quick informational updates, FB is more readily accessible, whereas the website will contain a lot more information pertinent to our Council. More explanations and updates will be forthcoming as we continue this work for the future of the K of L.

Just over a week ago, we received very shocking news; The altar in the former convent was removed, and even worse, the statue of St. Joseph on the outside wall was removed and either damaged or destroyed. At first we thought the city reneged upon their promise to keep everything in place. Soon enough, we found out that the Archdiocese ordered their removal and destruction. I can understand the altar, as this is done any time a place of Catholic worship is desanctified. But the statue's removal and destruction is incomprehensible. That was to be saved for the eventual museum that is being planned. We, the Lithuanian and parish community as a whole, are deeply saddened, angered and dismayed. Keep your eyes peeled for an article that is to appear in the Waterbury Republican- American, written by none other than Tracey O' Shaughnessy, which ought to be an enlightening read. Many of us were interviewed, so we shall see what will come of it all. Otherwise, it appears that the statues built in to the school will remain and won't be chiseled out and destroyed. Even so, we must remain ever vigilant, should anything be attempted. We need not yet lose another vestige of our Lithuanian and parochial heritage and history, never to be able to retrieve it again.

This past Tuesday, a good but bittersweet chapter was added to the rich history of Brooklyn. The park that Lisa Stokes Velez fought so hard for was finally dedicated and officially opened. It bears her name and that of Waterbury Police officer Vincent Riddick. Since it was done in the middle of a work day, we were unable to attend, but the TV news outlets carried it, one that I know of for sure is News 8 out of New Haven. Let hope this is just another step in the right direction for the revitalization of the Brooklyn neighborhood. Many thanks goes out to the City of Waterbury and Mayor Neal O' Leary for seeing this come to fruition.

A couple of Sundays ago, several of us went to our former club rooms to begin the process of removing valuable historic artifacts for safe keeping, temporarily in the basement of St. Joseph's church. We can report that all the photographs and pictures have been removed, along with other items. More remains to be done. Christian Allyn will be sending out audio reel to reel tapes to have the contents preserved digitally. These are from historical recordings of events at the St. Joseph's School Hall that were part of the legacy left by Antanas Paliulis, late host of Memories of Lithuania radio program that aired here in Waterbury. We still have the filing cabinet to empty out and various other items too.

As one can see, there is much to do, wherever you look! God willing, little by little, it will be done. It is said that you eat an elephant not all at once, but a bite at a time!

The Hartford Lithuanian Radio program "Tėvynės Garsai" or "Sounds of the Homeland" is heard Sundays from **5 to 6 PM** over **WWUH 91.3 FM**, or the internet at www.wwuh.org. Since the pandemic, the show has been only music. By the way, you can have **Alexa** play the program just by stating the call letters. **Tune in and stay entertained!**

Another **Lithuanian** radio program you may wish to tune in to is broadcast every Tuesday on **WPAT 930 AM** from **9 till 10 PM**. This is greater New York's weekly program and only in Lithuanian. It can be heard via **Alexa** or the internet also.

Thanks to our member **Julija Minkunas**, here is yet another great **Lithuanian** program to listen to; **Sundays** from **8 till 10 AM**, over **WJCU** in Cleveland. Some parts are in English. Look for it on the internet or ask **Alexa** to play it.

The **Brooklyn Neighborhood Association** is now finally meeting in person again. The meetings are on the second **Thursday** of every month at **6:30 PM**. They are now on break until September. Contact **Jerry Covino** or myself for further information. Also, please follow **Riverside Cemetery** on Facebook or other sources. They are sincerely doing their best to turn things around at the cemetery and are actively seeking donations to restore the bronze sculpture that was cut up and almost lost to vandalism and theft. Estimates are in the range of thirty thousand dollars to complete this task and save it for posterity. As an aside, they just had a tour of the various trees and birds that call the cemetery home, along with a ceremonial tree planting.

Birthdays for June: Betty Albert, Jennifer Kasinskas, Laima Reiss, Violets Stasonis, Jenny Wunder. July: Peter Gervickas, Ruta Kazakaitis, Al Ulozas. Happy Birthday!! Many Happy Returns! Ilgiausią Metų !! I will do my best to keep everyone mentioned in the newsletters as we go along. If I missed someone or erred, please let me know! I have no way of keeping track unless someone corrects me!

Please pray for the souls of our deceased members. Pray for all members who are sick or infirm for a speedy recovery. Pray to Blessed George Matulaitis for an end to this Covid pandemic and for peace in the world. Pray for the people of Ukraine and for the people of Russia. Pray for the end of the insanity that seems to have overtaken the entire planet.

If there is anything you would like to see in our newsletter or know of anything we missed or erred on **please let us know!** **Follow your email for updates on all matters! Ačiū Labai !** Our next meeting will be on Sunday, September 18th at 10:15 AM, God willing at the former St. Joseph's school, after the K of L National Convention, which takes place September 8th – 11th, in Washington D.C.

Last but not least, enjoy the summer! It is fleeting! My sincere thanks to our officers and members for their dedication, hard work, attendance, and for sticking with us. The journey and the fun never ends!

Vytiškai,

Linas Balsys

Linas Balsys
President
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"Overcome evil with good" Blessed Archbishop George Matulaitis

P.S. We are in our 107th season!! Let's keep a good thing going!!