



The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154
For God and Country



1st Quarter 2016

Legionnaire

Commander's Message

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas. Unfortunately, this year the festive season was victimized by cowardly attacks by Islamic terrorists. I doubt the families of the victims of terrorist attacks in San Bernardino and Paris enjoyed their Christmas. There is a dark cloud over the free world. The highway signs "If you see something, say something." are a reminder of potential terrorist dangers.

President Bush declared the War on Terror after 9-11; President Obama declared the end of the War on Terror in 2013. They were both wrong. Muslim terrorists have been at war with the US since its founding and they still are. The *Marine Hymn* line "To the shores of Tripoli" reminds us of the first Barbary War. Muslim pirates were capturing American ships and holding the ships and sailors for ransom. They demanded tribute to allow America use of the seas; and the US paid the Barbary States (Tunis, Algiers, and Tripoli) millions of dollars. When Thomas Jefferson became President he refused to pay tribute and sent a United States Naval fleet to the Mediterranean; they bombarded the various fortified pirate cities, ultimately exacting concessions of fair passage from their rulers. President Jefferson's decision to use overwhelming force against the Muslim terrorists of his time was a smashing success. And hopefully will inspire our current President to mount a similar effort against ISIS and the other Muslim terrorists of our time.

I wish to congratulate Henry Gaidis on being awarded the Lithuanian *National Defense Service of the Republic of Lithuania Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service*. It is a huge honor. Among the recent recipients of the Medal have been Vytatuas Landsbergis, the modern day Lithuanian national patriarch, and former United State Ambassadors to Lithuania Anne E. Derse and Stephen D. Mull.

Don't forget to attend the Baltimore District Four Chaplains Service on Sunday, February 7, 2016 at St. Alphonsus Church at 10 AM.

On behalf of the officers of Lithuanian Post 154, I wish you and your family a safe, happy and healthy 2016.

Joe Jankevicius
Commander

Wounded Warriors Get to Play in Snow

Lithuanian Post 154 member Kirk Bauer, a wounded warrior who lost his left leg to a grenade in Vietnam, has been the Executive Director of Disabled Sports USA (DSUSA) for over 30 years. For a week starting November 30, he accompanied 800 participants to the 28th annual *Hartford Ski Spectacular* at Breckenridge Ski Resort in Colorado. The week-long event is the nation's largest winter sports festival for individuals with physical disabilities.

DSUSA serves over 100 community-based chapters in 37 states that participate in over 30 different sports. Disabled Sports USA's mission is to provide national leadership and opportunities for individuals with disabilities to develop independence, confidence, and fitness through participation in community sports, recreation and educational programs.

"Among nearly 800 participants were more than 150 wounded warriors and their families, many of which tried snow sports for the first time. Wounded warriors came directly from Walter Reed National Medical Center, Brooke Army Medical Center, Naval Medical Center in San Diego, Tampa VA, and all across the country. All military participants and family members participated at no cost through DSUSA's Warfighter Sports program that has served more than 9,300 severely wounded warriors and family members since 2003."

Source: Disabled Sports USA

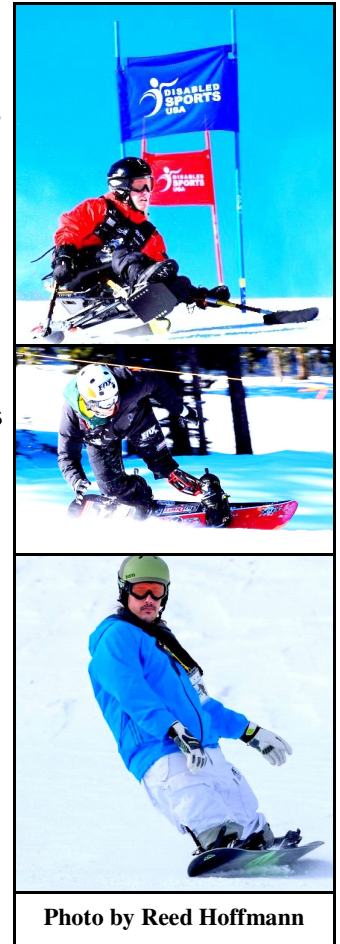


Photo by Reed Hoffmann

Membership

As of December 22, we had 90 paid members. Our goal set by Department is 98. We can reach this goal if all current members pay their dues and we get one new member this year.

If you have not yet paid your 2016 membership dues, please send a \$30 check made out to The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 to me. My address is on page 4.

Vincent Dulys
Membership
Chairman

Happy Birthday

January

Patrick Dohlus
Charles Gross
Bernard Milosavich
William Morrison
Stephen Mueller
Ronald Price
John Potts
Vytautas Ramunas
Stanley Ruby
Kenneth Shillenn

February

Kirk Bauer
Jeffrey Burton
Richard Jacobs

March

George Adams
Fred Kaminski
Richard Leffler
Gediminas Naujokaitis
Augustinas Uleckas

Boys State Applications Available Now

Maryland Boys State 2016 will be held at McDaniel College, Westminster, Maryland from Sunday, June 19 thru Saturday, June 25.

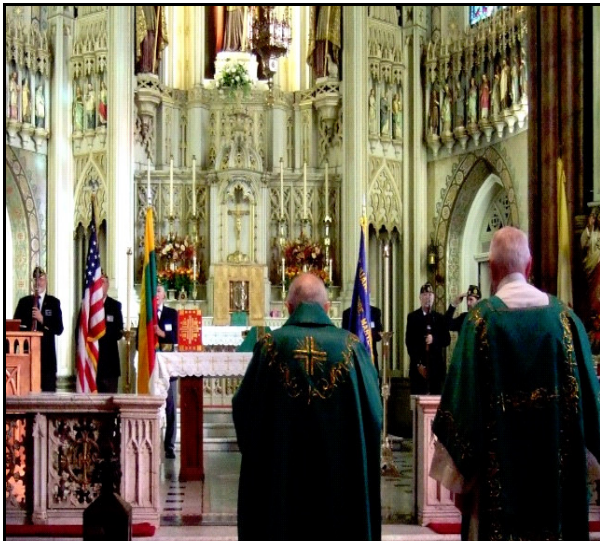
The American Legion Boys State is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students. To be eligible for Boys State, a youth must be a male who has successfully completed his junior year in high school by the beginning of Boys State. Participants learn how a democratic government should work, through classroom instruction and by becoming a part of the operation of their Boys State local, county and state governments. The boys will hold elections to determine where participants will serve in various offices in Boys State governments. During the week-long event, attendees will reside in a McDaniel College dormitory. In some respects, it will be like a mini basic training experience that we went through when we joined the US military. Participant activities will include exercise, classroom lessons, legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, and assemblies...as well as band, chorus and recreational programs.

The student Lithuanian Post 154 sponsored in 2015 told us he learned more Civics during that one week at Boys State than he had in 11 years of school.

If you know of a boy who will finish his junior year of high school this summer who would like to attend, contact Vince Dulys or Joe Jankevicius by April 6th.

More information and applications can be found on The American Legion Department of Maryland website <http://www.mdlegion.org/boysstate.htm>. Applications have to be submitted by Friday, May 15th.

Back to God Mass



Lithuanian Post 154 Color Guard stands at attention during the playing of the National Anthems.

Lithuanian Post 154's annual Back to God Mass was held Sunday, November 8, 2015 at St. Alphonsus Church. Post members who were unable to join fellow comrades at this year's Mass should plan now to attend this inspiring event next year.

TWO \$1,000 College Scholarships

Lithuanian Post 154 will grant two \$1,000 scholarships in 2016. The scholarships will be available to children, grandchildren, stepchildren, step grandchildren, nephews, nieces and adopted children of Lithuanian Post 154 members in good standing or deceased members who were in good standing at time of death.

The students must be graduating from high school in 2016 and entering college this fall. Application forms are available at Post General Meetings or can be mailed to you. Contact Education Chairman John Maskavich at (410) 747-9628 or email John at jmaskavich@gmail.com. Completed applications must be received by July 16, 2016.

Henry Gaidis Awarded Lithuanian Military's Highest Civilian Medal

The formal establishment of Lithuania's modern armed forces on November 23, 1918 is now celebrated as a notional holiday in Lithuania. Because the Lithuanian Minister of Defense, Juozas Olekas, was in Washington for meetings with US defense officials, the Lithuanian Embassy chose to celebrate the establishment of Lithuanian Armed Forces Day this year on November 17th. Over a hundred guests including diplomats from other embassies and US officials were invited. The Lithuanian Embassy also invited Henry Gaidis, American Legion Lithuanian Post 154 Historian, who frequently submits articles about events in the Baltimore-Washington Lithuanian community to Lithuanian newspapers and magazines. Henry was asked to attend the establishment of Lithuanian Military celebration and write an article for *Draugas*, an English language Lithuanian newspaper.

To Henry's surprise, in the midst of the formal proceedings, Henry was called to the podium and was presented with the National Defense Service of the Republic of Lithuania Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service (Lietuvos Respublikos krašto apsaugos sistemos medalis civiliams "Už nuopelnus"). This medal is the highest decoration bestowed by the Lithuanian National Defense Service to civilians for extraordinary merit and exceptional performance in strengthening Lithuanian national defense over the period of many years and for dedication while conducting civilian service.

Henry Gaidis has been active in Baltimore's Lithuanian Community all his life. He is on the Board of Directors of Lithuanian Hall and is the Curator of the Lithuanian Museum on the 3rd floor of Baltimore's Lithuanian Hall. He is a collector of Lithuanian military armaments, historic documents and medals. Annually, he displays his collection and shares his knowledge of Lithuanian and European history with attendees of Baltimore's Lithuanian Festival.



Lithuanian Minister of Defense Juozas Olekas pins National Defense Service of the Republic of Lithuania Medal for Meritorious Civilian Service on Henry Gaidis as Lithuanian Defense Attaché Colonel Juozas Kačergius and Lithuanian Ambassador to the United States Rolandas Kriščiūnas watch.
(Photo by Peter Alunans)

Henry also serves on the Board of Directors of the Joint Baltic American National Committee (JBANC) representing the Lithuanian American Council. The Joint Baltic American National Committee has, with one voice since 1961, been advocating the interests of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian American communities to US legislators and administrations. JBANC played a significant role in obtaining support in the US Congress for the independence of the Baltic States and their admittance into NATO. Due to Russian aggression in Georgia and Ukraine, all three of the Baltic States have requested increased NATO presence in their nations. Henry's long association with the JBANC was a significant factor in selecting him for this prestigious decoration.



Congratulations Henry!

Contact Information

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Meeting Information

Post General Meeting

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

Exec. Committee Meeting

Fourth Wednesday of the
month at 1 PM
Spirits West Country Club
2601 Wilkens Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21223

Calendar & Reminders

January

Fri	01	New Year's Day
Wed	06	Baltimore District Oratorical Contest - 6 PM War Memorial Building, 101 N. Gay Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
Wed	13	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Thu	14	Baltimore District Meeting - Joseph Haller Post 95 - 7 PM
Sun	17	Persian Gulf War Began (1991)
Mon	18	Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (Observed)
Wed	27	Signing of Vietnam Peace Accord (1973)
Wed	27	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM

February

Mon	01	National Freedom Day
Tue	02	Groundhog Day
Sun	07	Baltimore District Four Chaplains Service - St. Alphonsus Church - 10 AM
Mon	08	Boy Scouts of America founded (1910)
Wed	10	Ash Wednesday
Wed	10	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Fri	12	Lincoln's Birthday
Sun	14	St. Valentine's Day
Mon	15	Presidents' Day, George Washington's Birthday Observed
Sun	21	Department Executive Committee Meeting - Edwin C. Creeger Post 168 8 Park Lane, Thurmont - 1 PM
Mon	22	George Washington's Birthday
Wed	24	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM
Sun	28	Department Oratorical Contest - Towson University - 6 PM

March

Thu	03	"The Star Spangled Banner" made US National Anthem (1931)
Wed	09	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Sat	12	Girl Scouts of America founded (1912)
Sun	13	Daylight Saving Time Begins - Set clock ahead one hour
Thu	17	St. Patrick's Day
Sat	19	Iraq War began (2003)
Sat	19	National Commander's Banquet - Kent Island Post 278 - 800 Romancoke Rd. - Stevensville, MD - 5 PM
Sun	20	Spring begins
Sun	20	Palm Sunday
Wed	23	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM
Fri	25	Good Friday
Sun	27	Easter Sunday

April

Fri	01	April Fools' Day
Wed	06	US entered WW I (1917)
Wed	13	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 8 PM
Fri	15	Emancipation Day
Mon	18	Income Tax Returns due
Fri	22	Passover begins in the evening
Wed	27	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM
Sat	30	Passover ends in the evening
Sat	30	Vietnam War ended (1975)