



### Commander's Message

I hope you have stayed well and had an enjoyable Thanksgiving and Christmas.

I wish to thank the regular attendees to our Post 154 meetings for their support. We have 75 members in our Post and only a couple of them live in Baltimore where we have our meetings. We usually have about 8 "regulars" at our meetings. Not bad considering 27 of our members live outside Maryland and some of our older legionnaires no longer drive, and if they do, they limit their travels to the grocery store, doctor's office or the pharmacy.

I wish to especially thank our Adjutant Vincent Dulys and Vice Commander Gintaras Buivys. Vince is the hardest worker in our Post. He keeps our Post in good standing by representing our Post at Department Executive Committee Meetings, participating in various Department Committees and maintaining Post records.

I have nicknamed Gintaras Buivys the "Eveready Bunny" that never stops. Regardless of the task or event at Post 154 or in Baltimore's Lithuanian Community, you can be certain that Gintaras is involved or leading it. Thank you!

Baltimore Lithuanian Community's Lithuanian Independence Celebration will take place at Lithuanian Hall on March 12 at 2 PM. Post 154 has been invited to present The Colors. Please arrive 30 minutes early wearing your Post 154 uniform and participate.

Last quarter I had two Legionnaire newsletters returned by the Post Office. Please send Vincent Dulys or me your changes of address, phone number or email.

On behalf of the officers of Lithuanian Post 154, I wish you and your family a safe, happy, healthy and prosperous 2023.

Joe Jankevicius  
Commander

### Record pay increase for Veterans receiving VA compensation benefits

New Cost of Living rates for VA compensation are the largest increase in over 30 years. Beginning January 1, 2023, Veterans and beneficiaries who receive VA compensation benefits will see an 8.7% increase in their monthly payments.

### Back to God Mass

Since the Covid pandemic has subsided, Lithuanian Post 154 has reinstated its annual Back to God Mass program. Due to reluctance of some Post members to travel into Baltimore and the difficulty finding parking near St.



Our Lady of Victory Church

Alphonsus Shrine, Post 154 obtained permission from Our Lady of Victory Church in Arbutus to host the Back to God Mass on Sunday, November 6, 2022. Lithuanian Post 154 members and their families were joined by Legionnaires from Dewey Lowman Post 109 and Southwest Post 332 at the Back to God Mass.

How did the Back to God Mass get started? American Legion in the 1950s took a strong McCarthyist stance. There was an anti-Communist "crusade" to discourage Communist influence and bring the American people closer to God. The American Legion, consistent with the Legion's purpose as stated in its Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion that begins with "For God and Country..." at its 1951 convention in Miami, Florida, formally endorsed a "Back to God" movement in a resolution. Prompted by the American Legion's endorsement, Lithuanian Post 154's "Back to God Mass" was started by Father Dranginis in 1953. With only a few exceptions, it has been held every year since.

During his radio broadcast on February 7, 1954, President Eisenhower made the nation aware and strongly endorsed the American Legion "Back to God" program. He said "As a former soldier, I am delighted that our veterans are sponsoring a movement to increase our awareness of God in our daily lives. In battle, they learned a great truth—that there are no atheists in the foxholes. They know that in time of test and trial, we instinctively turn to God for new courage and peace of mind. All the history of America bears witness to this truth."

The American Legion's National Commander in 1952, Lewis K. Gough, promoted "regular church attendance, daily family prayer, and the religious training of children." Also, The American Legion endorsed the passage of state bills requiring U.S. loyalty oaths of school teachers. Something that would certainly be challenged in our courts today. We are living in a different country.

## Membership

If you have not yet paid your 2023 dues, please do so now. The old 2022 membership card became invalid on December 31, 2022.

You can renew your membership by going to the Lithuanian Post 154 website <http://www.lietuvis.net> and clicking on "Online Membership Renewal." If you wish to renew by mail, make a \$30 check payable to "The American Legion Lithuanian Post 154" and mail it to my address that is on the last page of this newsletter.

Vincent Dulys,  
Membership Chairman

## Baltimore VA Medical Center Construction

Repair of the VA Medical Center garage ramp has been completed so you no longer have to park at the Metro garage two blocks away.

The Medical Center's next construction project is the Canteen kitchen that will start on January 23 and is planned to take about 3 months. The Canteen Cafeteria and Coffee Bar will remain operational throughout the construction period with limited hot food options, sandwiches, salads and snacks.

## Happy Birthday

### January

Patrick Dohlus  
William Morrison  
Stephen Mueller  
Ronald Price  
John Potts  
Vytautas Ramunas

### February

Kirk Bauer  
Jeffrey Burton  
**March**  
George Adams  
Richard Leffler  
Gediminas Naujokaitis  
Augustinas Uleckas

## Two \$1,000 College Scholarships

Lithuanian Post 154 will grant two \$1,000 scholarships in 2023. 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 2023. Contact Joe Jankevicius at (410) 259-5032 or email Joe at [joejankevicius@gmail.com](mailto:joejankevicius@gmail.com) for an application. Completed applications must be received by July 15, 2023.

## TAPS

I am sorry to inform you that Isabelle Slifer, 75, a PUFL member of Lithuanian Post 154, passed away August 22, 2022. Lithuanian Post 154 offers her family our deepest condolences.

Her husband and fellow Post 154 Legionnaire, Gediminas Naujokaitis, invited Lithuanian Post 154 members to a Celebration of Life event for Isabelle at the National Museum of the

United States Army, Fort Belvoir VA, on Sunday, October 23, 2022. Post 154 members Gintaras Buivys, Henry Gaidis and Thomas Sadauskas attended and presented The Colors at the gathering.

Below is Isabelle Slifer's biography written by her husband Gediminas Naujokaitis.

*My spouse, Isabelle Slifer, Life Member of Lithuanian Post 154, succumbed to ravages of Alzheimer's on August 25, 2022, a week after her 75th birthday.*

*She had survived the 9/11/2001 attack on the Pentagon, a bout with breast cancer in 2009, but in 2022 Alzheimer's finally killed her.*

*She had a 13 year career as a High School Social Studies teacher, before starting her US Army Reserve on Active Duty career of 30 years. After retirement she joined the Association of the US Army as the Deputy Director for Reserve Affairs for the next 10 years. Then in 2015, for six years, she was appointed as the Army Reserve Ambassador for Virginia (by Protocol, a two star equivalent position).*

*Her remains were cremated on 8/31. Burial will take place, after a Mass of Christian Burial, at the Massachusetts National Cemetery on Cape Cod in May 2023, next to her mother and her father, a retired WWII Coast Guard Master Chief.*

May Isabelle rest in peace.



Isabelle Slifer



Lithuanian Post 154 Legionnaires Gintaras Buivys, Henry Gaidis and Thomas Sadauskas presenting The Colors.

## Exploring Options for The Next Phase in Life - Charlotte Hall

The average age of Lithuanian Post 154 members is 75. Many of us are starting to have difficulty performing normal day to day tasks and need to make plans for the next phase of our lives. Perhaps moving to single floor house or an apartment building with an elevator can prolong our ability for independent living. Other options for obtaining help as we age typically involve moving in with children or finding an assisted living facility. If an assisted living facility is in the plans, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home is worth considering. Charlotte Hall is operated by The Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs and provides Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing care for veterans and their spouses.

The facility opened in 1985 and is situated in a beautiful park-like setting on 126 tranquil acres in St Mary's County in Southern Maryland. It is on the grounds of the former Charlotte Hall School that was established in 1774 by Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III of England.

The cost of residents' care at Charlotte Hall is comparable to that of similar facilities and is based on the level of care required by a resident. The difference at Charlotte Hall is that the VA subsidizes this cost for veterans. Charlotte Hall is Medicare and Medicaid certified, and also accepts private payments made by the resident, and payments made by some third party medical insurance plans.

Below is a Fact Sheet from Charlotte Hall web site.

### Charlotte Hall Veteran Home November 2022 Quick Fact Sheet

- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home is a program under the Maryland State Department of Veterans Affairs
- Opened in 1985- Celebrating 37 years of "Serving Those Who Served"
- US Dept. of Veterans Affairs funding through a grant program called "State Veteran Home and Construction Grant Program" 65% US Dept. of Veterans Affairs funding- 35% State of Maryland Funding
- 318 Skilled Nursing Beds + 126 Assisted Living Beds = 444 total beds
- Room Rates: Assisted Living \$177.00-\$180.00 per day, Skilled Nursing Facility \$286.00-\$290.00 per day depends on private room, semi-private room or memory care room
- Number of Rooms: Assisted Living - 30 single & 100 double, Skilled Nursing Facility - 86 single, & 100 double rooms
- 2021 Average Occupancy: 67%
- November 1 - November 31, 2022: 8 Admissions, 1 Discharged, 12 Expired
- 32% of population are between the ages of 80-89
- Population includes 10 female veterans & 28 female spouses



- 86% of veteran population served during war time
- 53% of veteran population served in the U.S. Army
- Distinguished Medal Recipients:
  - 2 Bronze Star
  - 4 Purple Heart

#### How is Charlotte Hall Veterans Home different than other nursing home facilities or assisted living facilities?

- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home serves veterans and their eligible spouses
- On-Site Medical Services: Attending Physicians, Nursing Practitioners, Dental, Optometry, Podiatry, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy
- On-Site Pharmacy, Pharmacist and Pharm Techs
- On-Site Barber and Beauty Shop, Massage Therapy/Pain Management Practitioner
- On-Site Veterans Service Officer - Certified by US Dept. of Veterans Affairs
- Robust Volunteer Program
- More affordable - current USDVA Per Diem Rates:
  - \$127.17 per day for Nursing Home Care = \$3,878.85 per month savings
  - \$54.89 per day for Assistant Living Care = \$1,674.15 per month savings
  - A VP1- 70% or greater Service Connected Veteran may be entitled to the full cost of nursing home care.

MDVA 12-6-2022

[www.charhall.org](http://www.charhall.org)

(301) 884-8171

Net Monthly Cost for Assisted Living

30 x \$180 = \$5,400 less subsidy \$1,674 = \$3,726

Net Monthly Cost for Skilled Nursing Care

30 x \$290 = \$8,700 less subsidy \$3,878 = \$4,822

**Contact Information****COMMANDER**

Joe Jankevicius  
624 Oak Tree Rd  
Westminster, MD 21157  
(410) 259-5032  
JoeJankevicius@gmail.com

**ADJUTANT**

Vincent T. Dulys  
616 Cedarwood Lane  
Crownsville, MD 21032  
(410) 960-7874  
Vincentas@verizon.net

**SERVICE OFFICER**

Patrick Dohlus  
1920 Nipmuck Path  
Hanover, MD 21076  
(410) 551-2369  
Sulbud@comcast.net

**EDITOR**

Joe Jankevicius  
624 Oak Tree Rd  
Westminster, MD 21157  
(410) 259-5032  
JoeJankevicius@gmail.com

**Meeting Information****Post General Meeting**

are scheduled to be held at  
Lithuanian Hall,  
851 Hollins Street,  
Baltimore, MD 21201 at  
11 AM on the 2nd  
Wednesday of January,  
March, May, June, August,  
September and November.

**Exec. Committee Meeting**

are scheduled for last  
Wednesday of every  
month except  
December at 1 PM at  
Spirits West Country Club,  
2601 Wilkens Avenue,  
Baltimore, MD 21223

**Calendar & Reminders****January, 2023**

Sun	01	New Year's Day
Wed	11	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 11 AM
Mon	16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Tue	17	Persian Gulf War Began (1991)
Sat	21	"Vytautas Kernagis: Nepakeiciamu Yra" - Lithuanian Documentary film with English subtitles will be shown at Hollywood Cinema in Arbutus at 4:30 PM Call 410 802-0001 for tickets - \$10.50
Wed	25	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM
Fri	27	Signing of Vietnam Peace Accord (1973)
Sat	28	US - Vietnam Cease Fire (1973)

**February**

Wed	01	National Freedom Day
Thu	02	Groundhog Day
Mon	08	Boy Scouts of America founded (1910)
Sun	12	Lincoln's Birthday
Tue	14	St. Valentine's Day
Sun	19	Department Executive Committee Meeting - Laurel Post 60 2 Main Street, Laurel, MD 20707 - 1 PM
Mon	20	Presidents' Day
Wed	22	Ash Wednesday
Wed	22	George Washington's Birthday
Wed	22	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM

**March**

Fri	03	"The Star Spangled Banner" made US National Anthem (1931)
Wed	08	Lithuanian Post 154 General Meeting - Lithuanian Hall - 11 AM
Sat	11	National Commander's Banquet - Laurel Post 60 2 Main Street, Laurel, MD 20707, 5 -9 PM
Sun	12	Girl Scouts of America founded (1912)
Sun	12	Lithuanian Independence Celebration Lithuanian Hall - 2 PM
Sun	12	Daylight Saving Time Begins - Set clock ahead one hour
Fri	17	St. Patrick's Day
Sun	19	Iraq War began (2003)
Mon	20	Spring begins
Wed	29	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM

**April**

Sat	01	April Fools' Day
Sun	02	Palm Sunday
Thu	06	US entered WW I (1917)
Wed	05	Passover begins at sundown
Fri	07	Good Friday
Sun	09	Easter Sunday
Thu	13	Passover ends at sundown
Tue	15	Income Tax Returns due
Wed	26	Lithuanian Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting - Spirits West Country Club - 1 PM
Sun	30	Vietnam War ended (1975)