

Apple

REPORT TO THE CORPS

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A GRAND DAME

Dr. Meile Luksiene recently was described as a “grand dame” in a presentation about her person and her work given (in French) at the International Conference for Education held in Geneva. The slightly different and racier connotations of the English phrase would suit her just as well. A most extraordinary woman, she was recently granted UNESCO’s Comenius medal – the prestigious award honoring outstanding achievements in education research and innovation.

Dr. Luksiene was not able to fly to Geneva, so the Lithuanian delegation at the Conference accepted the medal on her behalf. The day before the ceremony, we couldn’t stop talking about her and finally gathered after dinner to write the brief (two-minute time limit!) acceptance statement.

Context is everything. That’s what we understood as soon as we started to write. Over a hundred ministers of education from around the world were in attendance at the Conference. Every sort of country, every

sort of history and every sort of understanding of society was represented. One of the delegates from Gambia had chatted with us during a coffee break. A bit embarrassed to reveal our nearly nonexistent knowledge of Gambia, we gladly responded to his questions, giving our new friend a thumbnail version of Lithuania’s past, present and imagined future.

There wasn’t time to say very much about Dr. Luksiene in two minutes. We tried to communicate the context in which she has lived and worked. Over time she herself has become an innate part of that context, of history and circumstance. Although she was long ago dismissed from teaching at the university because of her nonconformist (non-Communist) beliefs, she continued to draw young education reformers to her side – just like a magnet. She encouraged and led them to create an education system that is viewed as a beacon by many other post-Communist countries.

Her “four principles for the National school,” enumerated in 1988, were:

- humanism;
- democracy;
- the fostering of national culture as well as that of national minorities;
- finally (but most essentially!), ongoing renewal of education.

Although the rhetoric and the means of education reform have, 14 years after independence, evolved in Lithuania, the four principles have not changed. They hold fast.

A.P.P.L.E. had its own role in ensuring this result. Every summer since 1991, A.P.P.L.E. came back, steady, willing and able. The ethos of A.P.P.L.E. meshed with Dr. Luksiene’s principles (and, therefore, with the principles guiding systemic policy changes). A.P.P.L.E. persistently sought new strategies to keep the relevance and professionalism of its in-service work high—and succeeded. A.P.P.L.E.’s unique quality, to my



mind, has been its acceptance of context, its sense of place and of what will be needed by Lithuania's teachers next. Dr. Luksiene's ideas for education have come vibrantly alive throughout the country since 1988 – and A.P.P.L.E. has been one of the bridges crossed, back and forth, from the idea to its realization.

Later this week President Valdas Adamkus will present the Comenius medal to the elderly "Mother of Reform" (as she is called by virtually all educators, almost always affectionately!) in a reception in her honor at the Old City Town Hall in Vilnius.

The two-minute statement:

Honored ministers, esteemed colleagues, dear friends,

"Responsibility is the basic characteristic of a citizen. If responsibility is engendered in the life of a school, then children will become citizens." These words, spoken by Doctor Meile Luksiene, became a lodestone for the ideas of education reform in Lithuania.

Last week Dr. Luksiene celebrated her ninety-first birthday. Her personal history is a prism through which we may view the twentieth-century history of Lithuania. She lived through six occupations and endured repressive regimes. Under all circumstances she was a person of integrity and a person of learning, a patriot of ideas, a patriot of education and a patriot of children.

The education reform of which Dr. Meile Luksiene was a moving force became a catalyst for the freedom movement culminating in the reestablishment of an independent democratic Republic of Lithuania in 1990. It is crystal clear that the reform has been from its very start a model for philosophic consistency in developing and pursuing humanistic principles for education systems as well as for a country.

We all consider her our beloved teacher. We are greatly privileged to have a hand in furthering her work.

Next Wednesday, the Comenius award bestowed upon her will be handed to Dr. Meile Luksiene in Vilnius by The President of the Republic of Lithuania, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Valdas Adamkus. Upon learning of the award, Dr. Luksiene asked us to convey that she accepts this great honor on behalf of everyone with whom she worked in the creation of education for our reborn country.

Thank you for recognizing this great lady.

*Lithuanian delegation at the UNESCO
International Conference on Education,
Geneva, September 8-11, 2004*

VILNIUS SEMINAR IMPRESSIONS

Monday, July 5. Getting-to-know-you day. After breakfast, we gather in the smaller auditorium for an orientation session by Dr. Gudynas, the Ministry of

Education and Science representative. After lunch we all burrow into our designated classrooms in order to unpack our materials and prepare for our specific tasks and task-sharing with our colleagues, beginning Wednesday.

Tuesday, July 6. What a treat of sights, sounds and tastes! Anele Biliunaite, our cultural liaison from the Pedagogical Centre, has organized a bus excursion to Kernave. July 6th is King Mindaugas Day, Lithuania's celebration of medieval statehood. The town of Kernave (about a 50 minute drive away) is also an archeological site of a former capital city, recently declared a UNESCO Heritage Site. The town's annual festival and country fair was ending its last day with a bang; entertaining huge crowds of enthusiastic Lithuanians. We spent this day getting a lingering glimpse of a geographically beautiful and historically significant part of Lithuania.

Wednesday, July 7. Opening ceremony. We, the lecturers and administrative team, arrive at 9 a.m. at the front of the main auditorium filled with over 350 Lithuanian educators eager to begin their two-week seminar. Lithuania's Minister of Education and Science, Algirdas Monkevicius, slips in quietly and is the first invited speaker, followed by Mr. Anthony Pahigian, First Secretary of the U.S. Embassy, and several other speakers and a children's group performance. Following the opening ceremony, we all spill outside to observe the annual tradition of planting the marker—this time the 14th—an apple tree on the Centre's front lawn. As president, I am helped by Dr. Phil Taylor and Dr. Karl Janowitz, recipients of this year's honorary lifetime membership awards. Finally, we all hurry back inside to begin our seminar work. Today, as all days, except Saturday, will end at 6 p.m., with only an hour off for lunch in the Kavine.

Saturday, July 10. This is an unusual year. Rather than starting on a Monday, we started on a Wednesday, the day after King Mindaugas Day. To compensate for a late start, we are running classes on a Saturday this year. We work right through without lunch and do not schedule any choice lectures in the afternoon. This experimental approach turned out to be quite successful.

Tuesday, July 13. Another innovation - a change in the choice lecture format. Whereas on other days, the seminar registrants get to select one topic from a menu of about ten different possible topics offered by our American lecturers during the final hour of the academic day, today we all gather in the auditorium to take in one specifically scheduled event instead. We are to be entertained by our Creative Arts strand members under the direction of playwright and director Rasa Varniene. She and lecturer Greg Strom direct an excerpt from a play relating to the centennial commemoration of Lithuania's return to the use of the Latin alphabet in the press and in book publishing. The well-received play



Jo Ann Hammer holds presentation bouquets for guest speakers at the 2004 General Lectures.

is meant to be a vehicle for imparting historical information. That evening, we host our hundreds of “students” with an American-style wiener roast followed by apple pie. The day ends with both spiritual and calorie-rich food.

Thursday, July 15—Strand Night. After the evening meal, each of the 15 classes/strands is expected to present a short skit exemplifying a theme, and including audience involvement. Most skits are humorous. Many include singing and dancing. The finale, performed by the American faculty, is the brainchild of Katie Hoyle. It is very humorous, well-acted and appreciated by our audience. Following a late evening, some hurry off to bed; some, to the in-house coffee shop to share a beer and impressions.

Friday, July 16. The closing of the seminar has arrived. It begins formally and ends informally, family style. There are farewell speeches in the auditorium; the formal on-stage signing of the contract for 2005 between the Ministry of Education and Science and A.P.P.L.E.; a closing prayer recited by our Program Director, Sister Cathy Campbell, S.P.; the traditional, emotional song - “Azuolai zaliuos” - sung by all, holding hands and bursting with feeling; and then it’s party time and farewell time in each of the 15 classrooms. Accompanied by Sister Cathy and our administrator, Juozas Karmuza, who hands out the scholarships, I go to all 15 classrooms in turn to hand out the diplomas to almost 350 successful recipients. Each of us closes this last A.P.P.L.E. seminar day in our own personally meaningful way - with firmly embedded memories leading to resolutions about future possibilities.

Irena Ross, Immediate Past President

DR. JOANN HAMMER RECEIVES AWARD FROM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Dr. Jo Ann Hammer received the prestigious Professorate Award in a special presentation at Chancellor Dr. Jerry Lee’s home in San Diego last spring. She was one of 14 National University system winners and only one of three regional campus winners to receive the award. The Professorate Award was created in recognition of faculty teaching, scholarship, and service and in celebration of Dr. Lee’s 13 years of service to National University in San Diego, California.

Nominated as an outstanding faculty member in the Department of Teacher Education in the School of Education by the provost, Dr. Cathleen Greiner, head of National University’s academic affairs, Dr. Hammer was one of the first National University faculty members to receive the recognition. Her award included an attractive trophy of recognition and a stipend of \$1,500. JoAnn has used her money for travel abroad to the A.P.P.L.E. Summer Institute in Vilnius, Lithuania, and in October her stipend will help finance her trip to Japan to present a paper on “Building Classroom Climate.”

In addition to her teaching and research, Associate Professor Dr. Hammer serves on the Chancellor’s Faculty Advisory Committee as a representative of the School of Education. She worked on the Western Association of Schools and Colleges review process and documents and is in her third year on the University Faculty Personnel Committee, which makes recommendations to the provost for promotion and extension of contracts.

Dr. Hammer has worked with the American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education for the last six summers, teaching a strand in the Vilnius Seminars and also in regionals, as well as serving as a general lecturer for five of those six years. She is known for sharing her creative and fun activities to motivate both teachers and students.

Dr. Jackie Allen

HONORS FOR A LIFETIME

The A.P.P.L.E. Board of Directors has honored three of its members with the distinction of “Lifetime Member.” This recognition acknowledges their years of outstanding service to the organization. This year’s recipients are: Dr. Katherine Dunlap; Dr. Karl P. Janowitz and Dr. K. Phillip Taylor.

Katie Dunlap, resident of Star, North Carolina, is a clinical associate professor of social work with the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She specializes in parent training, adult education, and evidence-based practice. She was

President of A.P.P.L.E. during the academic year of 2002 - 2003. Katie has been lecturing in Lithuania since 1994 and is considered a knowledgeable and valued contributor to the betterment of education in Lithuania. She has also been instrumental in obtaining funding and recruiting many creative lecturers in various specialties for A.P.P.L.E. seminars in Lithuania.



Karl Janowitz, Phil Taylor and Irena Ross plant apple tree no. 14 in front of PPRC in Vilnius.

Dr. Karl P. Janowitz resides in Philadelphia, Penn., where as both school psychologist and professor/coordinator of school programs at Temple University he contributes his expertise. Karl is a member of several American educational associations relating to both gifted and special needs children. He has been chosen A.P.P.L.E.' President-elect for the term beginning in 2005. During the past 13 years, Karl has been a faithful contributor to Lithuania's evolution in the field of education for students with special needs. As a close associate of Professor Algirdas Grigonis in Kaunas, Karl has worked and lectured in various towns throughout Lithuania where special needs education is a particular challenge. Through his generous donations, he also has significantly enriched the library in the Kaunas Teachers' Centre—accessible to those working with special needs students—with many books and relevant items in various media.

Dr. K. Phillip Taylor, of Orlando, Fla., is a professor of communication at the University of Central Florida and a member of the National Communication Association. Phil has been a constant contributor to A.P.P.L.E. as lecturer and strand Coordinator for the Administration Strand. During his 13 years of service to A.P.P.L.E., he has made many friends among Lithuania's educators. During the summer of 2004, he

recruited two educators from Klaipeda to be a part of the A.P.P.L.E. team for presentation of general lectures in Vilnius. During 2001-2002, Phil served as President of A.P.P.L.E. Currently, he is editor of the A.P.P.L.E. newsletter. His unique contributions are highly appreciated by all.

ROSS WELCOMES VEBRAITE AS A.P.P.L.E.'s 2004-05 PRESIDENT

It gives me enormous pleasure to congratulate Vaiva Vebraite on this day, August 15th, 2004, the day of her official re-acquisition of the presidency of A.P.P.L.E. after a seven-year "sabbatical." As one of the founders of this organization and its president during the first seven years, Vaiva takes hold of the helm today with an ever broader understanding of the context of education within Lithuania and of its most pressing needs.

I am grateful to the Board of Directors for having entrusted to me the responsibility during the academic year 2003-2004. A.P.P.L.E. continues to be a miracle getting by on a shoestring (in relative terms). All of the American personnel consists entirely of devoted volunteers. While some eventually retire, new ones join the ranks and thus go on keeping the organization alive and thriving. We do have some paid help in Lithuania: a few instructors, the translators, and one on-site A.P.P.L.E. representative - as well as the cooperation of certain Ministry and Pedagogical Centre personnel. This combination has made for a truly viable team during the past 14 years.



An A.P.P.L.E. information table was set up in Putnam, Conn., at the annual Lithuanian picnic on July 25th. Almost 100 brochures in either Lithuanian or English were handed out and questions answered by Walter Serbent, Vice-President of Public Relations; Shirley Sabo, vice-president of Personnel and Recruiting; and Jane Serbent, Treasurer.

May I end by expressing my hope and wish that you will be as generous and creative on Vaiva's team in A.P.P.L.E.'s 15th Jubilee Year, 2005.

Aciu labai,

Irena Ross, Immediate Past President

MY FIRST A.P.P.L.E. EXPERIENCE

I have so many thoughts and feelings about my first experience that it is difficult to put them into words. Bear with me as I share my first adventure in Lithuania. It began with a suggestion in November 2003 from my sister, Kim Strom-Gottfried (a professor at UNC and A.P.P.L.E. lecturer the previous two years). She suggested that I go to Lithuania to teach for the summer. The last time I left the country was as a high school AFS exchange student in France the summer of 1979. I was due for more travel. I have taught photography and theater in western Maine for 18 years. I thought the fine arts (Menai) strand would be a perfect way for me to share my experience.

Fast forward to July 1, 2004, a rainy day brightened by Pranas meeting me at the Vilnius airport with a hug followed by a wide-eyed ride to PPRC. I received my key to room 807 from the efficient woman at the desk. She soon memorized each person's room number. Upon moving in, I met my roommate Phil Taylor. He gave me some words of wisdom that his 12 years at A.P.P.L.E. had taught him. "Take it all in, ask me for help if you need, but I won't tell you what to do or where to go... it is your experience." I then checked out room 216, met Joe, who, I immediately discovered, was a fellow fan of my home town of Camden, Maine. He and assistant Darius were more than helpful to the clueless newcomer, Who knew one taxi was better than another? Aldona (mother of the interpreters) was more than helpful in my need to have an 11-page play written by a Lithuanian playwright translated to English. I met Marvin Bienstock, my partner in the fine arts strand, a talented musician with a world of experiences. I had packed and repacked several times and worried about not having the right material to teach my students. It has been said that the only growth comes from stepping into the unknown. I was about to grow in ways that I never could have imagined.

After amazing trips to the city, the Akropolis (loved the gelatos) and Kernave (Sorry about my tardiness. I really did lose the bus!), we met our interpreters and marched in proper order to the opening ceremony. I could not get over the beauty of the welcoming pageant by the Lithuanian children. The care, time and talent needed to create those costumes left a great impression on me.



Marvin Bienstock and Greg Strom discuss activities for the Performance Arts strand.

I had 23 teachers in the Fine Arts strand. The class was composed of teachers of music, art, crafts, and theater for students of all ages. I had never worked with an interpreter before. Simone proved to be a relaxed and confident assistant to this anxious instructor. We spent the first week learning about photography, focusing on using digital cameras, and finding cameras for the 23 students to use.

We celebrated a birthday in the strand and discovered that our students could sing in perfect harmony. The beauty of the singing made me wish that it was my birthday. Marvin taught the students some American folk songs, and they were ready for the next adventure, the play. I remember someone saying how excited he was to see the play. He thought that a touring group was coming in to perform. I replied, "Yeah, I will be excited to see it too, since I only have one day to prepare with the freshly translated script." I promised my students I would never put them in a situation that I definitely would not go into myself. So they trusted my direction and performed admirably. The rest of the week was a whirlwind of sharing stories, skit practice and photo selection. The seminar culminated with a fine celebration on the final day. I learned as much from my appreciative and talented students as I taught them. They taught me that though I had a lot of resources, all I really needed was already inside me. Thanks to all who made my experience so amazing. Yes, you could say my first Lithuanian experience was a positive one!

Greg Strom, Fine Arts Strand

HAPPY 70TH BIRTHDAY TO ALGIRDAS GRIGONIS!

Dr. Algirdas Grigonis, honorary lifetime member of A.P.P.L.E., celebrated his 70th birthday on October 1. Dr. Grigonis has recruited more than 500 members for the Kaunas Chapter of A.P.P.L.E. Every summer he runs three one-week summer seminars as well as seminars throughout the year. This summer he and his team held sessions in Skaudas, Venta, Kedainiai, Kaunas, Simnas and Alytus. More than 400 participants attended this summer's sessions. Happy birthday, Dr. Grigonis from all your A.P.P.L.E. friends!

LETTERS

Here is sampling of letters signed by teachers of the various strands to organizations that are major contributors to A.P.P.L.E., such as the American Cultural Center; Lithuanian Citizens Society of Western Pennsylvania; Lithuanian Foundation; Lithuanian National Foundation (Tautos Fondas); Daughters of Lithuania, Seattle Chapter; MBNA Foundation; Ruple Memorial Presbyterian Church of Blowing Rock, N.C.; School of Social Work, University of North Carolina; Society of Analytical Chemists of Pittsburgh; and the Vydunas Youth Fund:

1. We are the group of Lithuanian school librarians from different towns in Lithuania. We have enjoyed the A.P.P.L.E. summer courses this July. We are grateful for material support from you that let us attend A.P.P.L.E. courses this summer. We gained a lot of new experience which will be very useful for us in the future. Our lecturers, Blanche Woolls and Barbara Immroth provided us with practical material and advice for questions about library work.

We hope this is not the last A.P.P.L.E. course in Lithuania.

(signed) Librarians of Lithuanian Schools

2. Our group of administration would like to thank A.P.P.L.E. courses for methodological and learning material which will help to raise our working quality and

will help to spread gained experience in our schools and societies. We must not forget that "a teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

Thank you very much.

(signed) The group of administrators

3. We, the teachers of English in the A.P.P.L.E. summer course, would like to express our gratitude for your support organizing the courses. Due to your generosity and the creativity of the A.P.P.L.E. president, Irena Ross, and all the lecturers, we enriched our knowledge in English teaching methodology and communication. We had a great opportunity to communicate with native speakers and we learned about cooperative learning activities. Our lecturers shared with us a lot of handouts to be used in our classes. Our sincere thanks for your good will. The quality of the teaching process and relationships will improve in Lithuanian schools, which will help us to join the modern world much faster.

We hope that we will have an opportunity to participate in the A.P.P.L.E. courses again some time in the future. Many thanks for your help, generosity, and good will.

God bless you!

(signed) Teachers of English

WHAT CAN YOU BUY FOR \$40 IN 2005?

YOU CAN CHANGE THE LIFE OF A LITHUANIAN TEACHER!

A \$40 scholarship helps defray the cost of board and room for Lithuanian participants. The cost to underwrite an interpreter is \$200. Those who receive scholarships or an interpreters stipend will write personal letters to their sponsors, providing a firsthand account of the influence that the Seminar experience has on their lives and professional development.

If you sponsored a teacher or an interpreter last year, you know the value that was received. If you didn't, this is your chance to find out. Consider honoring a friend with this special gift, giving a scholarship in his or her name. You will be making a difference! *Please send scholarship and stipend donations to: A.P.P.L.E., Box 617, Durham, CT 06422. We can reach so many more people with your help.*

PS. We would like to remind you that because of strict Internal Revenue Service regulations, we cannot accept scholarships intended for specific persons. If you would like to support your relatives or friends, please do so directly.

Reminder: A.P.P.L.E. regular membership remains a bargain at \$25 per year, because all this work is still handled by volunteers. If you haven't sent in your renewal, please include it with your scholarship donation.

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Our Internet address is: <http://www.applequest.org/index.html>. Please check it out, sign our guestbook, and offer your comments and suggestions. Please send information that you would like included on the Web site to: amanda@applequest.org or Amanda Muliolis, 1725 Sherwood Blvd, Euclid, OH 44117.

YES! I would like to join in your efforts toward educational reform in Lithuania.

I would like to make a contribution to:

The Scholarship Fund. (\$40 supports one teacher. You will receive a personal letter from the teacher who receives your donation.)

The Stipend Fund. (\$200 supports an interpreter or Lithuanian lecturer.)

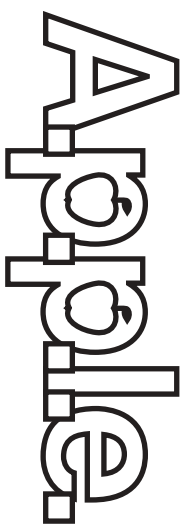
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