House of Lithuania

House of Pacific Relations, International Cottages, Inc., Balboa Park, San Diego, California

December 9, 2006 – Gruodis 9, 2006 ***Newsletter –Žinios*** Volume 4, Issue 12

KUCIOS!! TRADITION!!

The Kucios meal is a gathering of family and strengthens family ties. The table is set in the traditional way of a handful! of fine hay is spread evenly on the table, which is then covered with a pure white tablecloth, set with plates and decorated with candles and fir boughs. In the beginning the main dish was Kucia—a porridge made of a mixture of various cooked grains: wheat, barley, oats, peas and beans, eaten with honey diluted with warm boiled water. The word comes from the Belorussian.

Twelve different dishes are served on the table because Jesus had twelve apostles. All the dishes are strictly meatless: fish, herring, slizikai with poppy seed milk, kisielius (cranberry pudding), a dried fruit soup or compote, a salad of winter and dried vegetables, mushrooms, boiled or baked potatoes, sauerkraut (cooked, of course, without meat) and bread. In keeping with Lithuanian Christmas tradition, only the dishes as they were prepared in Lithuania for this meal should be eaten. Alcoholic beverages are not served. If anyone needs to drink, water, homemade cider or fruit juice is served.

Christmas presents and Santa Claus (Kaledu senelis) were relatively new things in Lithuania during the period of independence. Even when Christmas trees were decorated and gifts expected in Lithuania, the children had to "earn" those gifts. When he arrived, Santa Claus required the children to perform. Every child did what he could: some recited poems, others sang, danced or played an instrument. If Santa Claus did not come in person, the children still had to perform, because Santa "sees all" and will see them also. After presents were exchanged, the children usually went to bed while the adults went to Midnight Mass which is still called the Shepherds' Mass).

Excerpted from:
http://lietuviu-bendruomene.org/educat/tradicijos/index.html

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KUCIOS IS COMING!!!

Lithuanians and Lithuanian-Americans are invited to join the members, family and friends of the House of Lithuania in celebration of the traditional Lithuanian Christmas Eve meal

1 p.m.
Saturday, December 9th
The Garden Room
Allied Gardens Recreation Center
5155 Greenbriar Ave., San Diego

A NO HOST POTLUCK
Kuciu Valgiu

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For information and directions call 858-277-6039

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Lithuanian Word for December

Gruodis (December). The rains of autumn and the mud finally end. The ground freezes with the cold, it becomes hard and coarse. Every clod of soil hardens, ice covers the puddles. Country roads, a mire of mud in the fall, are now bumpy and lumpy, wheels shake and jump as they turn unevenly. Soil that has frozen into such lumps is called "gruodas". Hence the month's name. From:http://lietuviu-bendruomene.org/educat/tradicijos/months.html

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