



Lets Chat

Summer 2026

LABDARA residents' news is published four times a year

5 Resurrection Rd.,
Toronto, ON M9A 5G1



HAPPY CANADA DAY FROM THE LABDARA FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The new Board of Directors of the LABDARA Foundation, from L to R:

Algimantas Nakrošius, Rasa Šiaučiūnas, Ramunė Pleinys-Čygas, Treasurer Audronė Butrimas, Board Chair Zita Bersėnas-Cers, Vice-Chair Daina Kalendra, Secretary Virginia Kuras. Absent is Zita Semeniuk.

LABDARA FOUNDATION's ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING

The annual members' meeting of the LABDARA Foundation took place at LABDARA on June 18th, 2026. The Foundation Chair, Zita Bersėnas-Cers and Executive Director/Administrator of the home, Laura Puteris presented their annual reports. Other reports were presented by Audronė Butrimas, the Foundation's Treasurer; Matthew Chaplin, the external auditor; and Stacey Vaillancourt, Director of Operations for Universal Care – our management oversight agency. After six years of service on the Foundation's Board of Directors, Dalia Rocca relinquished her role as Secretary. Dalia will be missed and was sent off with sincere thanks for her contribution to LABDARA.

Elections to the Board of Directors were held. Our new Board of Directors consists of: Zita Bersėnas-Cers, Chair; Daina Kalendra, Vice-Chair; Virginija Kuras, Secretary; Audronė Butrimas, Treasurer; and members: Algimantas Nakrošius, Ramunė Pleinys-Čygas, Rasa Šiaučiūnas and Zita Semeniuk. LABDARA is in good hands.



Zita Bersėnas-Cers,
Chair of the
LABDARA Foundation
and Laura Puteris,
Executive Director of
the LABDARA
Nursing Home give
their reports.



Outgoing Secretary
Dalia Rocca and Board
Member Ramunė
Pleinys-Čygas
registered everyone.



Laura Puteris,
Executive Director of
LABDARA Nursing
Home and Universal
Care Agency Director of
Operations, Stacey
Vaillancourt, prepare to
present their reports



Attendees wait for the meeting to begin.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

LABDARA Lithuanian Nursing Home's 25th Anniversary Celebration will take place on June 12, 2027. You won't want to miss it!!! Stay tuned for details.

LITHUANIAN KIBINAI



Kibinai, crescent-shaped hand pies stuffed with mutton, cheese, spinach, mushrooms, and other fillings, are a popular dish in Lithuania. The golden pastries trace their origins back to the country's tiny Turkic Karaim, or Karaite minority which is concentrated in the lakeside town of Trakai, a former capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.



According to Karaim legend, Grand Duke Vytautas the Great brought close to 400 Karaim families to Lithuania from the Crimean peninsula at the end of the 14th century to become castle guards and royal servants. This was done in order to thank them for their help during his fight against the Golden Horde (Mongols) during his campaign to expand the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Eventually the Karaims established themselves as farmers, artisans, and tradespeople in Trakai. The community was later granted self-governing status.



Karaim houses are wooden structures with gabled roofs and 3 windows facing the street. One window is dedicated to God, the second to Grand Duke Vytautas and the third to family



The Karaims are a small ethnoreligious group of Turkic origin who practice Karaite Judaism, a faith adhering solely to the literal text of the Hebrew Bible. Numbering only about eight thousand globally, their historic centers include Crimea and Lithuania.



The view to the lake and Trakai Peninsula Castle Museum on the island.
Trakai village of Karaites, Lithuania, Europe.

The recipe for kibinai is several hundred years old.

These pastries are made with a dough that is enriched with butter, eggs and either kefir or sour cream. The dough is hand rolled and filled with minced mutton flavoured with onions and herbs. It is then firmly pinch-sealed into crescent-shaped pockets. While traditional mutton remains the classic choice of filling, modern fillings often include cheese, spinach, mushrooms or chicken.



A KIBININĖ - Kibinas cafe in the village of Trakai beside Lake Galvė and the Castle of Trakai in Lithuania.

LIFE AT LABDARA

(prepared by our staff member Nerijus Augutis)

THREE SISTERS CONCERT: On Saturday, June 6th, the sisters Alexa, Tessa and Jacintha Dirmantas Groen in't Woud performed for us at LABDARA. This was their long-awaited return to our Nursing Home. The pure music produced by the strings of kanklės, recited Lithuanian verses and the sound of the piano simply "enchanted" our souls and eased bodies. We simply "drank in" the performance of these three talented young ladies. We will wait for the sisters' return to us once again with great anticipation.



LIFE AT LABDARA

(prepared by our staff member Nerijus Augutis)

AFTERNOON FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS: On April 22nd. a party and tribute took place at Labdara to honour our volunteers. Ten volunteers received a Certificate of honor - a Circle of Excellence certificate issued by the OLTCA. From the 25 who were invited, 13 volunteers came out in spite of the bad weather.

As always, a special thank you to the head of our Catering Department Tamara and Chef Danutė and all the service staff who contributed to the success of this event. We enjoyed delicious snacks and refreshing drinks, coffee and tea, listened to live music performed by volunteer John Fertadoi, and most importantly, felt a good mood that warmed our hearts the whole day.

See you next year's awards, dear Volunteers! Sincere thanks for your tireless love and time dedicated to our elders!



LIFE AT LABDARA

VISITORS FROM LITHUANIA: A few months ago, LABDARA had the pleasure of receiving visitors from Lithuania. In April of this year, representatives of Lithuania's Ministry of Economy and Innovation visited the only Lithuanian nursing home in Canada – LABDARA.



In the photo from left to right: Egidijus Meilūnas Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to Canada; Paulius Kuras, Lithuania's Honorary Consul General in Toronto and President of the Canada-Lithuania Chamber of Commerce; Paulius Petrauskas, Vice-Minister of Economy and Innovation; Edvinas Grikšas, Minister of Economy and Innovation; Vida Staškonienė, Director of the Department of Investments, Invest Lithuania Agency; Ingrida Darasaitė, Economic Counsellor of the Embassy of Lithuania to Canada; Zita Bersėnas-Cers, Chair of the LABDARA Foundation; Sigita Sležienė, Senior Counsellor for International Affairs of the Ministry

Garden Beautification Project

The garden beautification project at Labdara Lithuanian Nursing Home is moving full speed ahead! Thank you to all who have donated their time and money to this wonderful cause.

To date, we have raised more than \$2500. Your contributions were used to purchase soil, mulch, flowers and planters. Our team of volunteers has been working skillfully and creatively to spruce up the front gardens and balconies. Thank you to all for contributing to the happiness and well- being of our residents.

We continue to accept donations as we beautify other parts of the property. We hope to bring in some fruit trees and berry bushes! Donations are still being accepted at Labdara's reception, or via Canada Helps at www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/labdara-foundation (please select the 2026 Garden Beautification Project). And please email lfeenrichment@labdara.ca to find out how to volunteer.



Our Garden Volunteers

WHAT IS THE WORLD'S LONGEST???

1 The world's longest Wall is:
the Wall of China

2 The longest canal in the
world is: the Grand Canal of
China

3 The longest railway line in
the world is: the Trans-
Siberian Railway

4 The longest rail tunnel in
the world is: the Seikan
(Japan)

5 The longest river in the
world is: the Nile

6 The longest mountain range
in the world is: the Andes in
South America

7 The longest day on the
earth is: June 21st

8 The longest river in the Asia
is: the Yangtze in China

9 The longest Coastline in the
world is: in Canada



the Wall of China



the Seikan (Japan)



in Canada

WHAT IS THE WORLD'S LONGEST???

10 The longest cave of the world is: the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, USA

11 The longest strait in the world is: the Strait of Malacca in Southeast Asia

12 The longest street in the world is: Yonge Street in Canada

13 The longest Bridge in the world: the Danyang-Kunshan Grand Bridge in Eastern China

14 The longest Road Tunnel is: Laedal Tunnel in Norway

15 The longest Railway Platform of the world is: Gorakhpur, India

16 The longest Ship Canal of the world is: the St. Lawrence Seaway in Canada

17 The world's longest River Dam is: the Hirakud Dam, India

(from the internet)



Yonge Street in Canada



Laedal Tunnel in Norway



The St. Lawrence Seaway in Canada

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

OUR JOURNEY TO HOLINESS AND WHOLENESS



Many things block or hamper our journey to holiness and wholeness. Our lives become crowded by the clutter and noise of our secular world. Success is measured not only by the pursuit of status and attainment of pleasure, but also, by acquiring as many material goods as we can. The focus is not sharing or giving but rather on individual prowess which is most often achieved at the expense of the downtrodden and marginalized.

Our calling, as members of our Church, is not only to heal physical wounds; but especially our inner wounds.

Not long ago I had the pleasure and privilege of attending an excellent “Public Speaking Competition” at our granddaughter’s school. She chose to speak about Carrie Fisher who portrays Princess Leia of the *Star Wars* saga.

But she did not speak about Carrie’s career - her fame and fortune in Hollywood. Rather, she addressed Carrie’s long struggle with bipolar depression, her struggles with addiction and, especially, about the stigma that Hollywood attached to her mental illness, because she did not fit the perfect image and mold of the “perfect” Hollywood star.

Many people are emotionally wounded and scarred by past events and circumstances of their lives; whether young or old. Many remain in that wounded condition not knowing where to turn for help to heal their inner wounds. Our mission is to help restore their holiness and wholeness.

That is our greatest Gospel legacy that we can gift to others.

(by Deacon Kazys Ambrozaitis)



HAPPY CANADA DAY and HAVE A GOOD SUMMER