

ICASSI 1998 Vilnius, Lithuania

The thirty-first Adlerian International Summer Institute, founded by Rudolf Dreikurs, was held at one of the oldest universities in Europe, the University of Vilnius in Lithuania. ICASSI participants were treated to sights and tours of Vilnius, one of the most beautiful of the Baltic capitals with its Baroque architecture and winding, cobblestoned roads. Effort was begun to reclaim and restore buildings left in poor condition after years of occupation by the Soviet Union. Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia were held for more than a half-century under both Soviet and Nazi German domination, with Lithuania being the first of the Baltic States to declare independence in 1990.

Gordon Millar, Administrator, and Betty Haeussler, Administrative Assistant, along with the Board of Directors and many others, not only prepared the way but were always available to help out in any emergency.

The morning lectures, demonstrations, announcements, and also the evening events which included Opening Ceremonies, Appreciation, Farewells, and entertainment (Blocs I and IV) were held in the Radvilu Rumai Halls in the heart of the old town of Vilnius. The ten morning lectures and demonstrations for all participants were given by Eva Dreikurs Ferguson (USA), an introduction to Individual Psychology; Oscar Christensen (USA), open family counseling; Nani Wirth, (Germany) aging; Clair Hawes (Canada), couple relationships; Rasa Bieliauskaite (Lithuania), children with problems; Marion Balla (Canada), gender issues; Rachel Shifron (Israel), addictions; Tim Evans (USA); encouragement for children or youth; Gerhard Baumer (Germany and England), overcoming depression; and Eva Dreikurs Ferguson (USA), solving problems in the workplace.



Always, there was so much to be learned from the Bloc I lectures and demonstrations and also from the Blocs II and III Sessions which were held in the nearby University classrooms. An amazing selection of courses was taught by instructors very knowledgeable in Adlerian-Dreikursian theory and practice, some in English, some in German. Along with the weekly coursework, this year the ICASSI Institute of Leadership and Management also offered a three day program designed for individuals who supervise, manage, or lead others within organizations. It was led by Roy Kern (in English) one week and Helmut Heuschen (in German) the second week. Participants from many countries were able to experience and learn how the methods and principles of Individual Psychology such as the role of family constellation, lifestyle, coming to an agreement, cooperation in working for solutions, and establishing a feeling of belonging through social interest (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*), can be used to encourage leadership potential in their organizations at home. Social interest can be understood as a measure of one's willingness to contribute to and cooperate with the social order of life in the spirit of social equality without losing individual identity.

Children and youth attending ICASSI found themselves in an encouraging atmosphere created by their instructors where they could learn about themselves, play games, and have the opportunity to make friends with young people from other cultures and nations around the world.

Many gifts from home countries were brought to the International Bazaar and Auction for the benefit of the ICASSI Scholarship Fund. Over thirty persons were able to be assisted to attend ICASSI in 1997 through scholarships and we were equally successful this year as well.

The Lithuanians were happy to have us there with them, and they did much to make us feel welcome in their land. We celebrated in song and dance with them. Our deepest thanks go to all those who volunteered many hours to help make the various activities of ICASSI successful.

Historic note: The new president of Lithuania, Valdas Adamkus, had long ago escaped communist Lithuania and made a new home in the USA. After fifty years, he decided to go home and won the presidential election in January 1998 by campaigning on his connection to America. He was elected and served two five-year presidential terms which ended in 2009, the most allowed by the Lithuanian constitution.