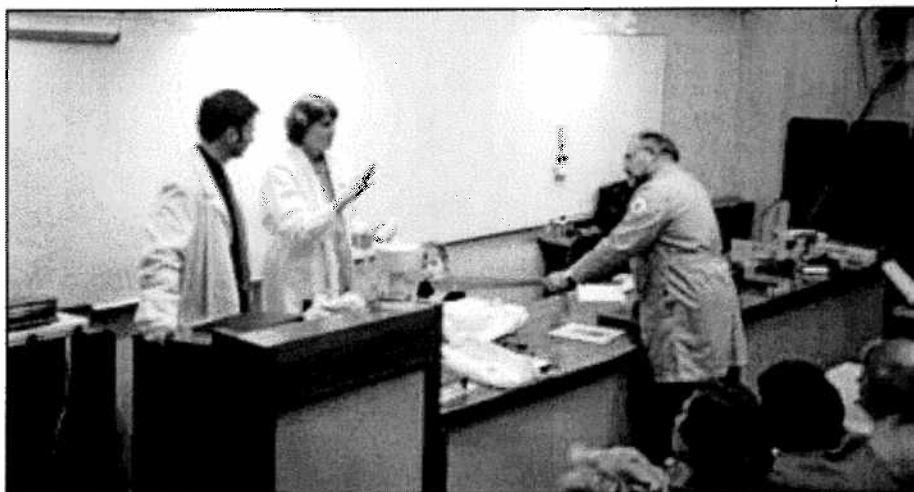
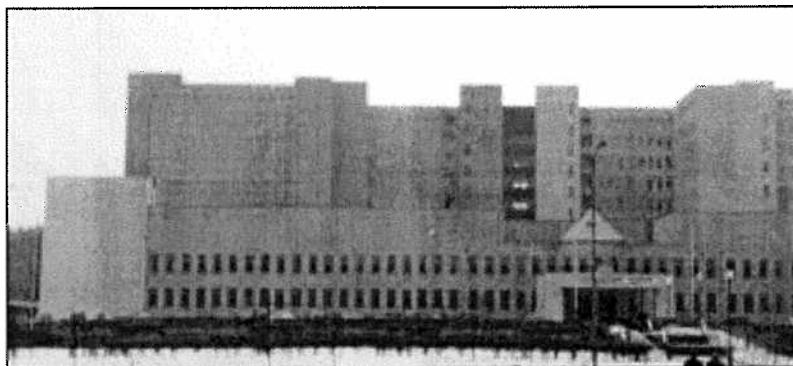


hands and they too had that same hard working, life spent in the field appearance.

As I continued to tour Italy, I visited many museums, gazing at all the wonderful works of art. The works of Michelangelo astounded me, and left me breathless. How he was able to depict the function of the hand with such grace and power. From the Statue of David to the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, these masterpieces not only show the power that can come from a single touch of the hand, as in God giving life to Adam, but also how he portrayed the beauty and poise of the hand of David after slaying Goliath.

I'm certainly not qualified to interpret the works of Michelangelo, but judging from what I saw, I could see how influential the function of the hand was to him in these two works of art. The hand is truly a beautiful structure; there is nothing that can come close to reproducing it. The configuration of bone, muscle, tendon and nerve all working in harmony to provide us with enough power and strength to crush or lift heavy objects, and then, in a split second, provide us with the elegance to play a musical instrument. It is this grace and beauty that Michelangelo captured more 500 years ago that keeps me fascinated with the hand today. **H**

Emergency Hospital, Vilnius, Lithuania



A splinting demonstration, case study, was conducted by (left to right) Dr. Darius Radzevicius, Karen Henehan and Dr. Terry Light.

New Therapy, Old Destination

Vargas Hand Therapy International Teaching Award 2000: Vilnius, Lithuania

Karen Henehan, OTR, CHT

My adventure to this charming Baltic country started soon after I knew I was selected to go. Each year a therapist travels to a part of the world that has different resources, knowledge and supplies; so each trip is unique unto itself. I soon began the process of deciding what to bring in the way of supplies and educational material. My creative abilities were really challenged to discover materials which were easy

to acquire and inexpensive—an HMO's dream. Once I had everything organized: donated supplies shipped, lecture materials prepared and teaching spirit in hand, I was ready to go—destination Vilnius, Lithuania.

Lithuania, largest of the three Baltic countries, is slightly smaller than Ireland with a population of about 3.5 million. It has had a very turbulent history since the 1200's following many centuries of occupation by various countries. In 1991 Lithuania regained independence following nearly 40 years of Soviet occupation. The capital, Vilnius, a beautiful city with about 600,000 inhabitants, has all the charm and beauty of old Europe. Many buildings in Vilnius are under construction because of prolonged neglect and changes made during the Soviet occupation. There are areas in town that have been revitalized with shops and street merchants while just down the road there are buildings in significant disrepair and people begging on the street. The economic contrasts in this country are vast and it is obvious the road to independence and democracy is a challenging one.

A medical team from Shriners' Hospital in Chicago go to Vilnius every year on a medical mission.

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Hand Surgery
Quarterly

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**Summer
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HAND THERAPY CORNER

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Initially, children were brought over to the US for surgeries, follow-up medical care and rehabilitation. This later developed into a group traveling to Lithuania to teach surgical and medical techniques as well as to bring much needed supplies. Norene



Minister of Health Reception. L to r: Darius Radzevicius, MD, Monica Sweat, RN, Karen Henahan, OTR, CHT, Mike Forseth, MD, Terry Light, MD.

Jamieson RN, organizes this trip, as well as one to Colombia, every year. Dr. John Lubicky, leader of this great team, asked if the second prize for the Vargas Award was 2 weeks in Vilnius in February. Humor aside, this group has been making this truly amazing and inspiring trip for the last 10 years.

I had the privilege of joining this group and an amazing hand surgeon, Dr. Terry Light, who started traveling to Vilnius in 1995. Dr. Light has mentored, both in the US and Lithuania, Dr. Darius Radzevicius who is a dynamic young hand surgeon from Vilnius. During his more recent visits to Lithuania, Dr. Light could see hand surgery techniques improving while hand rehabilitation was basically non-existent. He thought this venue would be excellent for the Vargas Award. The medical team for 2000 consisted of 2 surgeons, a hand surgery resident, 5 nurses, 2 translators and for the first time, a hand therapist.

On Saturday, Feb. 5th, I was greeted at the airport by Dr.'s Light and Radzevicius and was briefed on

the weeks upcoming schedule. Shortly after we headed to the Children's hospital and were greeted by their medical staff with a lovely luncheon and serenaded by a four string quartet from the Vilnius symphony orchestra. It was obvious from this initial meeting that these two groups had developed some good personal friendships along with great working relationships.

Sunday was a full day of clinics where Drs. Light, Radzevicius and Mike Forseth, the hand surgery resident, consulted with parents and evaluated the children. The weeks surgical candidates were selected here and some of the children who had been seen in previous years returned for check-ups. It was quite amazing to see the hallway so packed with families waiting for the clinic to start early on a Sunday morning.

On Monday, I began my tour of visits to different hospitals and clinics. My first stop was to the Emergency Hospital, a huge facility that is only partially completed, and has been for the last 20 years. The economic contrasts were apparent in the hospitals too, where the surgical suites were clean and had some sophisticated equipment and supplies, while the wards were sparsely furnished with paint peeling, and the electricity turned off in sections to save energy. I met with the physicians and nurses who are the current providers of rehabilitation at this facility, to discuss treatment techniques and review cases. Until recently the nurses had extra training in rehabilitation and performed the service of therapist. They have just started to develop educational programs for therapists and I believe the year 2000 was the first graduating class for OT, while the PT's graduated their first class in 1998.

Tuesday was a full day of lectures on rehabilitation techniques for different hand injuries and diseases at the children's hospital. There were about 100 attendees, mostly physicians and nurses, who came from all over the country. Dr. Light lectured on anatomy and biomechanics; and I on treatment tech-

niques for various injuries and diseases. Together we reviewed four complex cases, several of whom had had successful surgeries but were suffering from severe contractures due of lack of therapy. Dr. Light, having traveled there for the last 5 years, knew that sometimes the projector worked and sometimes not; there may be patients for a case study—wait and see. He is quite an amazing person, with incredible knowledge and skills, and very able to go with the flow. What seemed a bit unorganized at first became a wonderful, open exchange of information, learning and sharing.

I visited the University Hospital Rehabilitation facility on Wednesday and was quite impressed with the size and scope of this facility. Newly renovated, there were 2 swimming pools, a large PT gym, OT rehabilitation rooms, recreational therapy, counseling rooms, and a large section devoted to passive electrical modalities. One could see the previous focus of passive therapy modalities, an influence of the former Soviet Union. The physician in charge of



Presidential Reception, President Valdas Adamakus

the facility, was very interested in advancing the therapy treatment techniques and moving patients into a more active role. We reviewed treatment material and discussed the design of therapy education in the US. In the afternoon I lectured


on several topics to the staff and students.

Thursday I went a bit out of town to a day treatment facility for children with cerebral palsy. This facility was well staffed and fairly well equipped, though they reported difficulty getting supplies due to lack of funds. I was able to give them a wonderful book called 'Disabled Village Children' which is a great resource for treatment techniques and making equipment out of "what's available".

We were able to do some sight seeing and provide some economic stimulation to the local economy on Friday. In the afternoon we were

invited to a thank you meeting with the Minister of Health and the Director of the hospital. The weeks accomplishments were toasted to with a glass of champagne and we were each given a handmade ceramic piece and a formal thank you letter from the Minister of Health. In the evening we were invited to the Presidential Palace for a reception and a meeting with the current president (and previous Chicago resident), Mr. Valdas Adamakus. The palace was quite beautiful and the President very charming. We had an interesting discussion about therapy in the US and he was interested to know about the state of rehabilita-

tion in Lithuania. I was taken by a comment he made in his thank you speech to us when he said he "looked forward to the day when Lithuania would be able to do the same for other countries in need."

The world can be a better place when we step up to the responsibilities of being privileged and share with those in need. At the end of the week I felt I had gained more than I'd given, which I guess is how this wonderful exchange works. I look forward to a continued correspondence with the hand surgeon and rehabilitation specialists in Vilnius to assist them in their desire to further the profession of hand therapy. 

HAND THERAPY PROFILE

Kim Buchstaber-Haberman, OTR/L, CHT

Personal: My husband and I have a son, a lovely daughter-in-law and a soon to be year old grandson! We moved to south central Missouri about four and a half years ago. Along the way, four dogs and two cats became members of our family. We live rural on a small farm and the land is primarily wooded. For relaxation, I enjoy indoor and outdoor gardening, and now I am learning to cook various cuisines.

Education: Graduated in December 1981. Received a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from the University of Kansas located in Lawrence, KS.

Employer: Currently, a new position closer to home has been secured. However, employment for the past 10 years has been in a private outpatient orthopedic clinic. Working for a Hand Fellowship trained, Board Certified Orthopedic Hand Surgeon has certainly been interesting. The practice encompassed trauma, elective surgeries and general orthopedics. The educational advantages of exposure to clinic x-rays, and viewing surgeries has been phenomenal.

AAHS Involvement: I have been a member since October 1985. This year I've been recruited to serve a three-year term on the Hand Therapy Committee for AAHS. This opportunity is exciting and I am looking forward to my new duties.

Best Part of My Job: The enjoyment of watching a difficult injury improve has become very meaningful. Sometimes in the acute phase of care, the client can become depressed over their injury. It is such a "joy"

to watch the patient regain control over their life.

Major

Accomplishments:

Becoming a certified hand therapist! The recognition it brings to our professions has long been overdue. In addition, I started the first Missouri state newsletter for the Missouri ASHT chapter. Presently, I am the state Secretary and the Newsletter Editor. This is my second year serving these positions. I can only serve three terms. So, I will be venturing on to other endeavors.

Clinical Specialties: The injuries I most enjoy treating are finger fractures, tendon trauma, and various wrist disorders. I really love to create a splint that fits the patient's need, and at the same time promotes function. Splinting has always brought out my creativity.

Greatest Challenge: Struggling to keep current with the ongoing changes affecting reimbursement and coding is certainly a challenge for anyone. Recently, I had the opportunity to code some of my own work. This gave me a greater appreciation for this area!

Three Words That Describe Me: Compassionate, dedicated, and perfectionist. 



**KIM BUCHSTABER-HABERMAN,
OTR/L, CHT**