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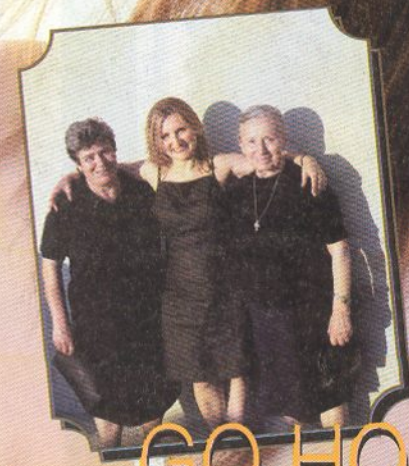
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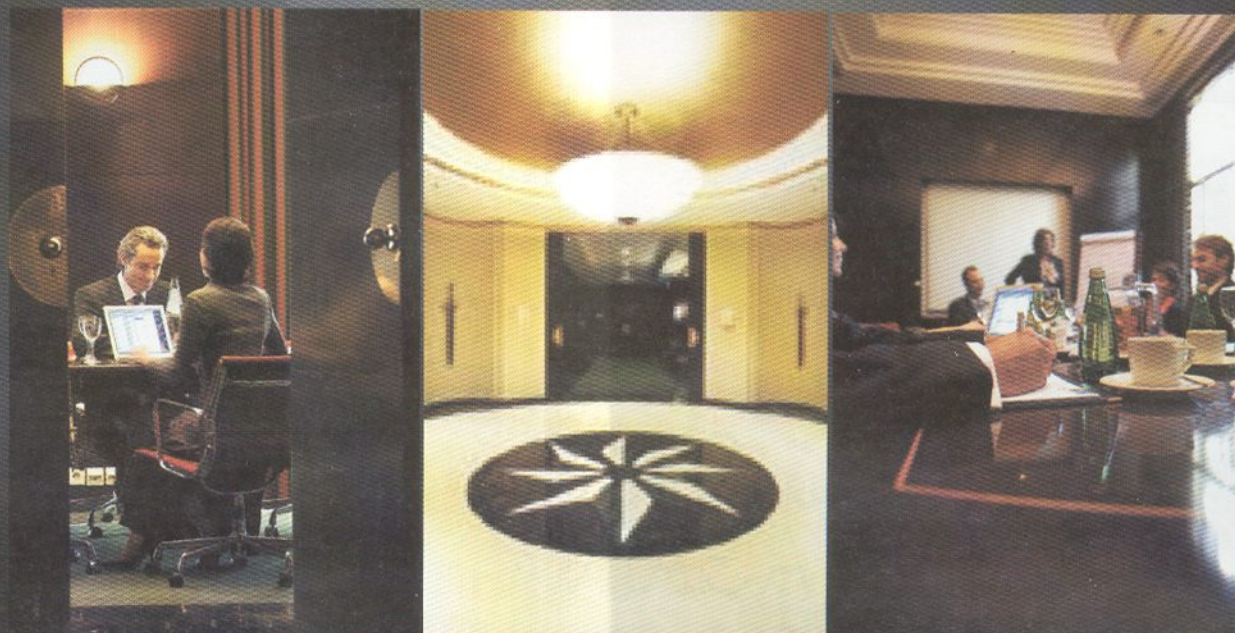


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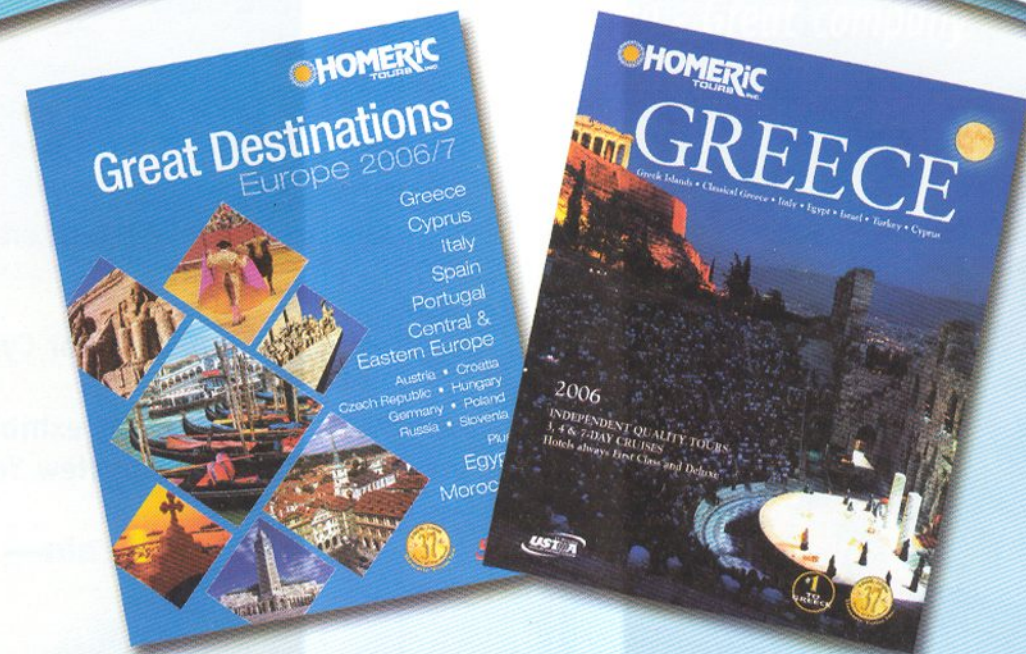
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1.07 JUNE 2006

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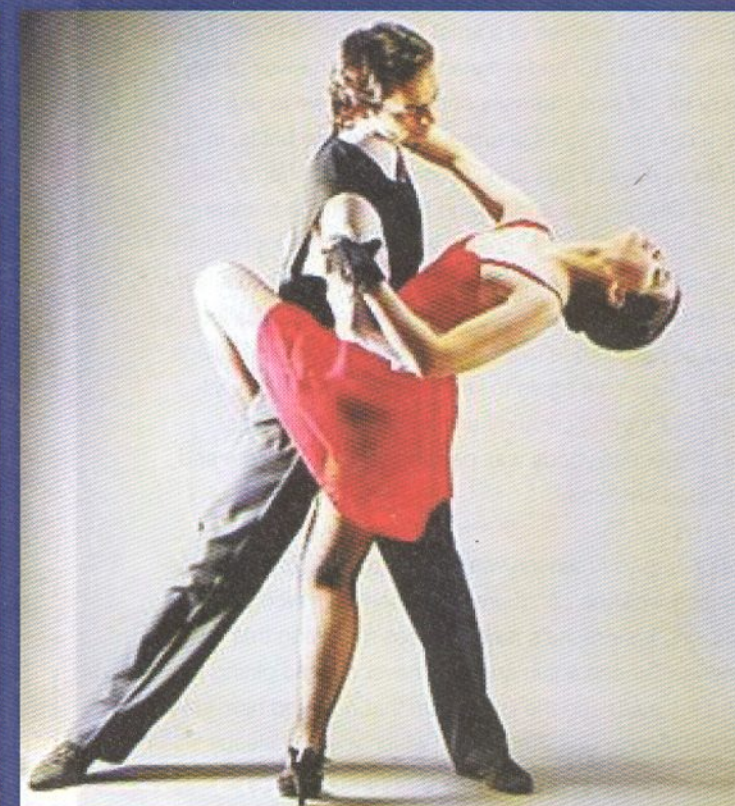
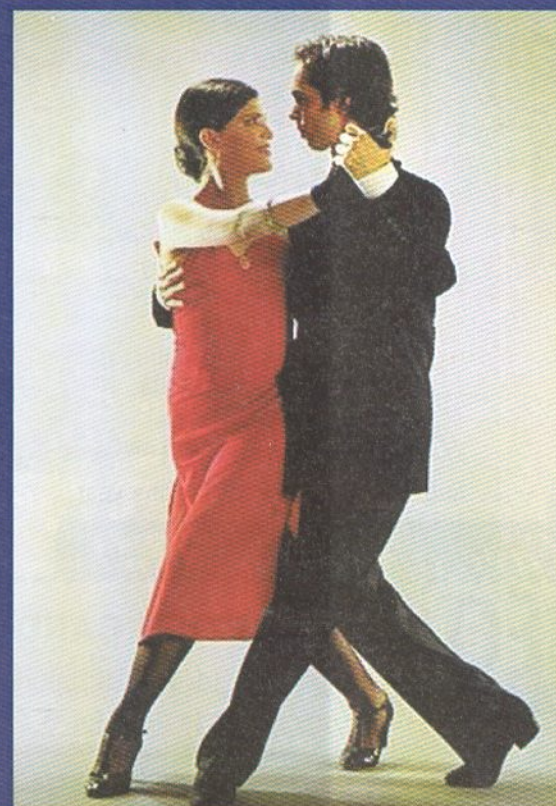
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Going Home

:: The inevitable heartache over Cyprus goes on, but travel to Cyprus is booming. The island is beautiful (considered by Europeans one of the most beautiful in the Aegean) and everybody wants to visit—the Greek sector, of course—where the economy is thriving and the population is both authentic and cosmopolitan.

:: Everybody wants to go home, and Eleni Gage in this issue proves that you can go home again, even if it was a home only in your imagination, and perhaps one you had feared. What's the allure to a cosmopolitan woman of a small village and a house of rooms hauntingly-beautiful and resonant of a bygone way of life, but stripped of all the paraphernalia of modern life we're use to carrying every day like knights in armor clanging into battle, including cell phones and iPods and DVDs and Tivo at home that makes sure we can stop life and rewind it and watch it back any time we're in the mood. Maybe that's the beauty of going back to these little villages, the sense of community they provide that is the tradeoff we made when we plunged into the melee of so-called civilization. Gage says she felt very alone when she left the village and returned to New York again to write her book about the village. "If I had died, nobody would have known," she mourns. "Back in the village, everybody was passing by every minute and asking if I needed anything."

:: My father came to American when he was a brash young doctoral student and while he conquered his brave new world and got his doctorate with honors, he's never ceased regretting that he never returned to Greece again and he's never ceased pining for the fields and the earth and the Greek sun that nurtured him. I feel the same way, I long to go home again, which was the sleepy little farm on Chios where I grew up with my grandparents.

:: Of course, the farm is in ruins now and my grandparents are gone. The way of life I knew is gone forever, and my father and I have never ceased mourning it. But it lives in us, in our longing, and in the desire of our children to visit our first and only home, and in our longing and desire to show it to them.

:: You can go home again, and maybe it won't be the same as you remember it (my kids will learn that, too), but as the old song goes, you can go home again, if only in your dreams.

Dimitri C. Michalakos

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NEO Magazine
is published monthly by:
Neocorp Media Inc.
P. O. Box 560105
College Point, NY 11356
Phone: (718) 554-0308
e-Fax: (240) 384-8681
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Score one for Greece— Getty museum agrees to return artifacts



Greece scored one victory in the age-long effort to get Greek artifacts returned to Greece when the director of the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles recently met with the Greek culture minister in Greece and agreed to press for the return of a number of artifacts in the Getty collection, reports Anthee Carassava in *The New York Times*.

Greece filed claims to four ancient treasures in the Getty's collection ten years ago and most recently renewed its claim, which led Getty director Michael Brand to meet with Greece Culture Minister George Voulgarakis last month at the Greek Culture Ministry. The two men would not specify which artifacts would be returned, but Brand said he would "recommend to the board of trustees of the museum the return of some of the claimed antiquities in the near future." He also said, "Talks are ongoing, and representatives will be appointed to seek resolution of the matter within the next two to three months." He said he expects a "fruitful cooperation" that "could include long-term loans" of artworks.

Greece is seeking from the Getty the return of a rare gold funerary wreath, a tombstone and a stone torso of a young woman, bought by the Getty in the 1990's. It also seeks a votive relief acquired in 1955 by museum founder J. Paul Getty. Vivi Vassilopoulou, head of antiquities at the Greek Culture Ministry, said of the Getty artifacts that, "Their Greek provenance is undisputable...We made that very clear to Mr. Brand. We showed

him the hard evidence." George Gligoris, head of a Greek police unit investigating the smuggling of antiquities, said the most incriminating evidence concerned a gold wreath bought by the Getty's former antiquities curator, Marion True, in 1993. "Just last month we managed to trace the wreath's sale from the Greek antiquities smuggler, who corresponded and sent pictures of the wreath to an antiquities collector in Europe," he said. The wreath is on the cover of the Getty's antiquities catalog and on display on the second floor of the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades, California, which reopened to the public in January as the home of the Getty's antiquities holdings.

Greece had taken heart in its own efforts by Italy's recent success in negotiating the return of 21 of its own antiquities from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. That agreement, signed last February, provides for the long-term loan of the artifacts to the Met.

Meanwhile, *The Times* reports that Greece has put the screw on the Getty and on True by raiding a vacation villa owned by True on the island of Paros and claiming that the artifacts it contains were not registered properly with the government. True's lawyers said the objects were already in the villa when she bought it in 1995, that she had alerted local officials to their presence, and that they had only nominal value. But Vassilopoulou said that True would not be exempt from prosecution in Greece. "That was not part of the agreement," she said.

Eurovision rocks Europe —this year from Greece

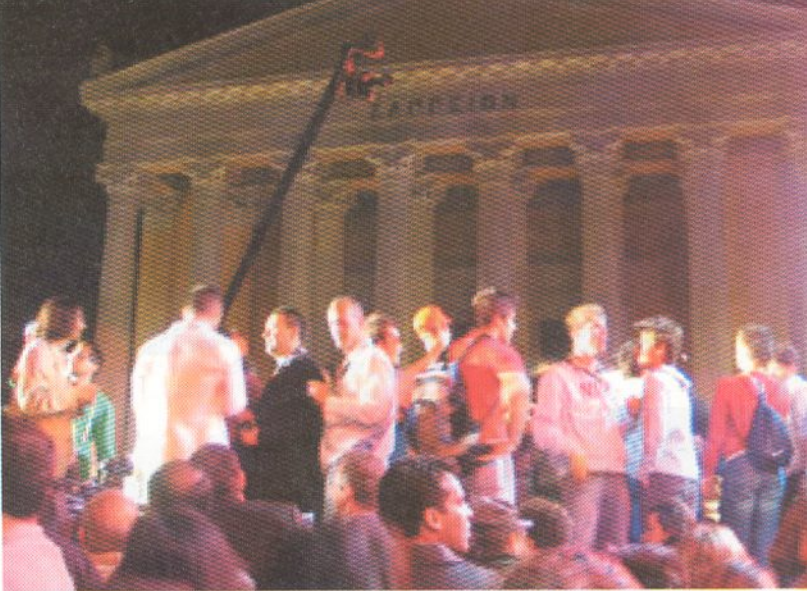
American Idol might be big in America but it's a flash-in-the-pan compared to Europe's 50-year-old annual and all-consuming televised songfest known as *Eurovision*, hosted in a different country each year. This year is staged for the first time in Athens, Greece with hosts Maria Menounos and Sakis Rouvas descending from the heavens to introduce last year's winner Eleni Paparizou belting her number one hit "My Number One" and Anna Vissi dropping to her knees to represent Greece.

The eventual winner was the Finnish band Lordi, fronted by a lead singer (Mr. Lordi—"I am a great fan of Greek food. We had a big dinner



with the delegations on Friday night in a traditional Greek restaurant. That was nice. But they didn't have these meatballs that I love. You know the ones?") with miniature skulls on his kneecaps whose eyes light up red, singing into a microphone attached to the handle of a battleaxe and with devil horns sticking out from his head. It wasn't exactly Abba, which won in 1974, but the heavy-metal band beat out entries from 24 other countries as varied as Moldova and Latvia (in televoting from all over Europe) and the winning Finland will now host next year's event.

But Greece had the last word. The *Eurovision* Grand Prix award this year was an ancient column mounted with a treble clef symbol designed by Serkos Jewelers which claimed, "It was our goal to create an award that combined elegance and the beauty of music, expressing timeless Greek ideals."



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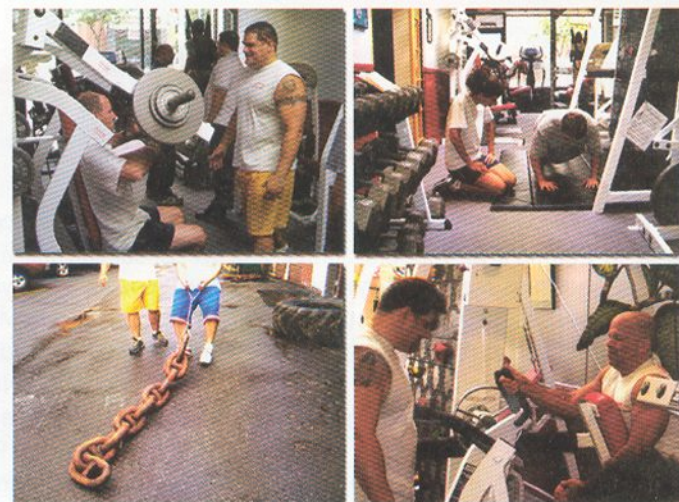
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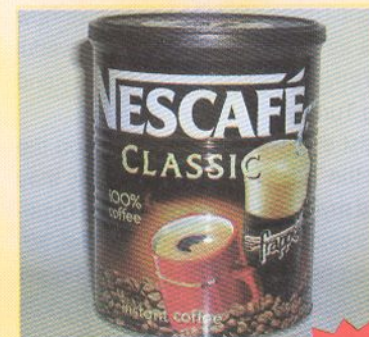
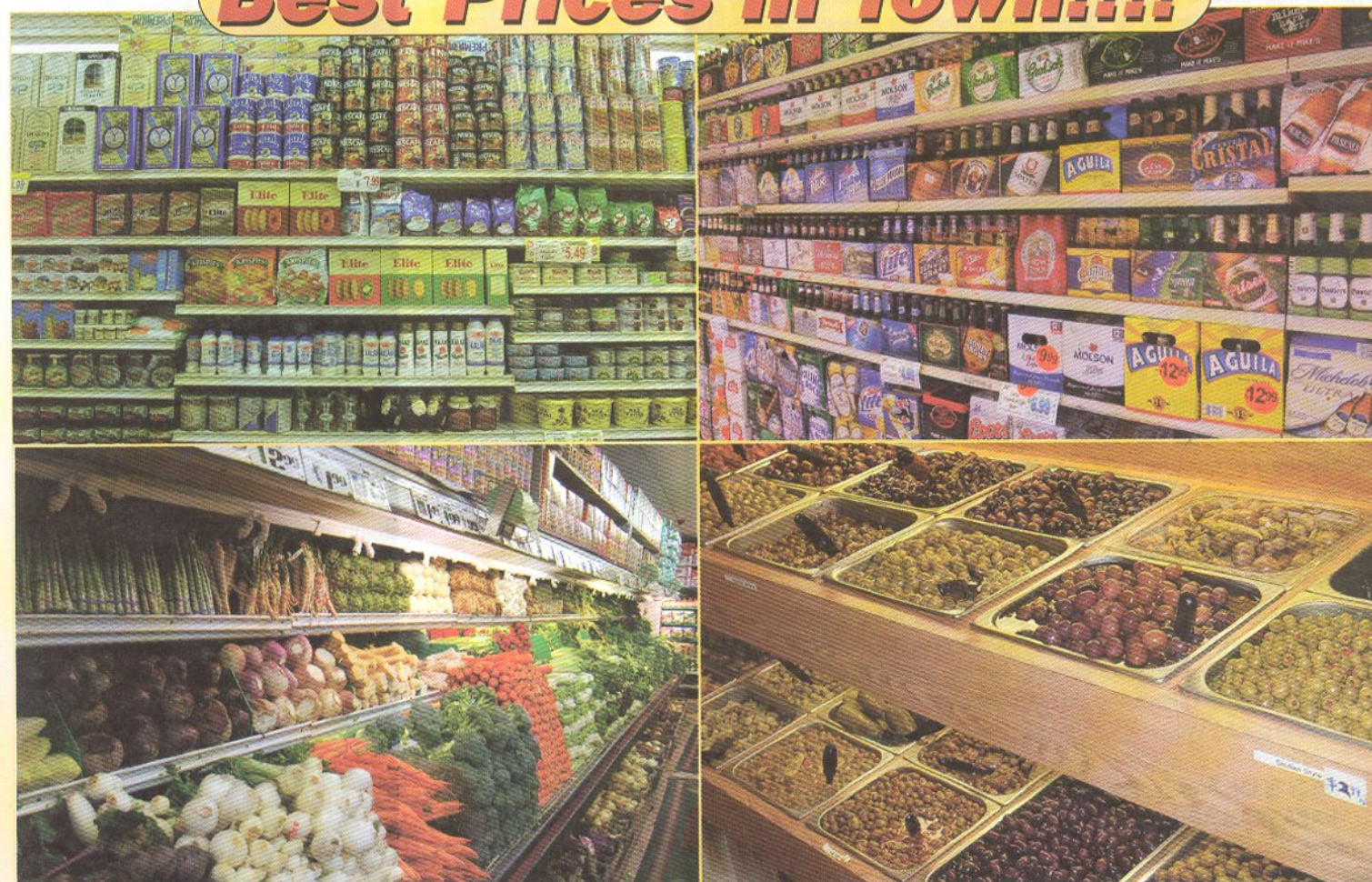
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A "fresh start" possible for Cyprus?

The 17th Annual Cyprus Conference will gather together Greeks and Cypriots from around the world from June 7-9 to Washington, DC to discuss the issues and lobby for Cyprus with the highest American government officials, including over 30 key U.S. senators and members of Congress who serve on committees and subcommittees that play a major role in formulating public policy towards Cyprus. The conference is hosted by PSEKA, SAE, UHAC and CEH. NEO spoke with Philip Christopher, the president of PSEKA and the Pancyprian Association of America and Panicos Papanicolaou, supreme president of the Cyprus Federation of America.

NEO: What is the agenda this year?

CHRISTOPHER: The purpose of the conference is one. To keep the pressure on the State Department, to visit with public officials and members of Congress, and to stop them from what they're trying to do behind our back. After the 2004 vote we found a cold reception in Washington, but in the last two years the work we've done has been substantial. This year we hope to meet with Nicholas Burns, the under secretary of political affairs at the State Department, because we met with him before and we had a good meeting. But after the visit of Secretary Rice to Greece we had to face new obstacles.

PAPANICOLAOU: It's another chance for us to meet the key people from the administration and the State Department who are involved with foreign policy and the Cyprus issue, including the political officials who are on the committees that concern our issues. We'd like to keep up the dialogue with the Congress and the Administration and to keep the Cyprus issue in the public eye.

NEO: Is the Annan plan dead?

PAPANICOLAOU: I don't think anybody considers the Annan Plan anymore. It has no public support. But we might see it in a new form. The plan showed that the U.S. was willing to make concessions to Turkey at the cost of the Greek Cypriots. It was designed to favor Turkey and to help it get into the EU and show a new face to the Europeans. But Cyprus still has close ties with the UN, and the UN has almost daily talks with both the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, as well as with Greece and Turkey. The committees formed after the Annan-Papadopoulos talks will soon get to work, as well.

CHRISTOPHER: We had a lot of problems since Annan. This Administration supported Annan, the members of its State Department had helped design it, which means it was actually the Administration's plan and the whole push to implement it was to help Turkey get into the EU. It wasn't an effort to find a solution, but to rush through something that would let the Turkish Cypriots vote yes, and lose nothing, because they had nothing to lose, and for Turkey to show it was voting yes, and that the Turks were the good guys and the Greeks didn't want a solution. But they forgot that these hundreds of thousands of refugees could not vote for something that didn't safeguard their human rights, that didn't safeguard their democratic rights in Cyprus. We're hoping to find a better political climate this year, as Mr. Nicholas Burns said, we need a "fresh start."

NEO: Do Turkey's hopes of getting into the EU provide the Greeks



any leverage?

PAPANICOLAOU: Turkey will need to show its books and show that it's interested in finding a solution to the Cyprus issue that is satisfactory to both parties. Cyprus' membership in the EU has given new momentum to the talks, absolutely, and a new set of criteria that must be met.

CHRISTOPHER: Without question it helps that we're in the EU. We can go to court, we can go anywhere. Membership in the EU will be influential only if Turkey truly wants to get into the EU. For it to get into the EU the decision must go through Athens and Nicosia. But the Europeans don't want Turkey in the EU. The French, the Germans, the Dutch do they want Turkey in the EU? Just England and America are lobbying for Turkey to get in.

NEO: What about the upcoming American midterm elections?

PAPANICOLAOU: The midterm elections it seems right now will favor the Democrats. If the Democrats do get into the majority the committee chairmanships will change and we might have more officials responsive to our issues. The only thing that Turkey has to win over the American public is the money it spends on lobbyists. But Greece has a different image. There are generations of philhellenes who respect its history and civilization and it's a lot easier to win over Americans when you talk about Greece than when you talk about Turkey. But Turkey knows how to play the game because it spends a lot of money and it has powerful lobbyists. So sometimes we have the Turkish lobby blocking our way and Congress passing resolutions favoring Turkey.

CHRISTOPHER: We need to insist still (whoever comes in) on the withdrawal of Turkish troops, because the Turkish Cypriots who say they are isolated are perpetuating the biggest myth in history. The Turkish Cypriot who lives in my own house in Cyprus said to me when I visited him, Mr. Christopher, I'm sorry, but I have it good here. I live in the house, I don't pay rent, I don't pay taxes, I have health insurance because I am a Cyprus citizen, I can go to the hospital in Nicosia, and I have a Cyprus passport, which means I can travel anywhere in Europe I want. The economy is better because of the tourism and our access to the Greek sector, why should I want a solution? There is no longer the incentive for the Turkish Cypriot to want union. The impression that the Turkish Cypriot is isolated is a myth. The ones who come from Turkey to Cyprus find it a paradise. I was born in Kyrenia but I can't return to Kyrenia. But every Italian or Frenchman or Englishman and every European has the right to go and buy and build houses on property that is not hi; that is the human injustice that we must show.

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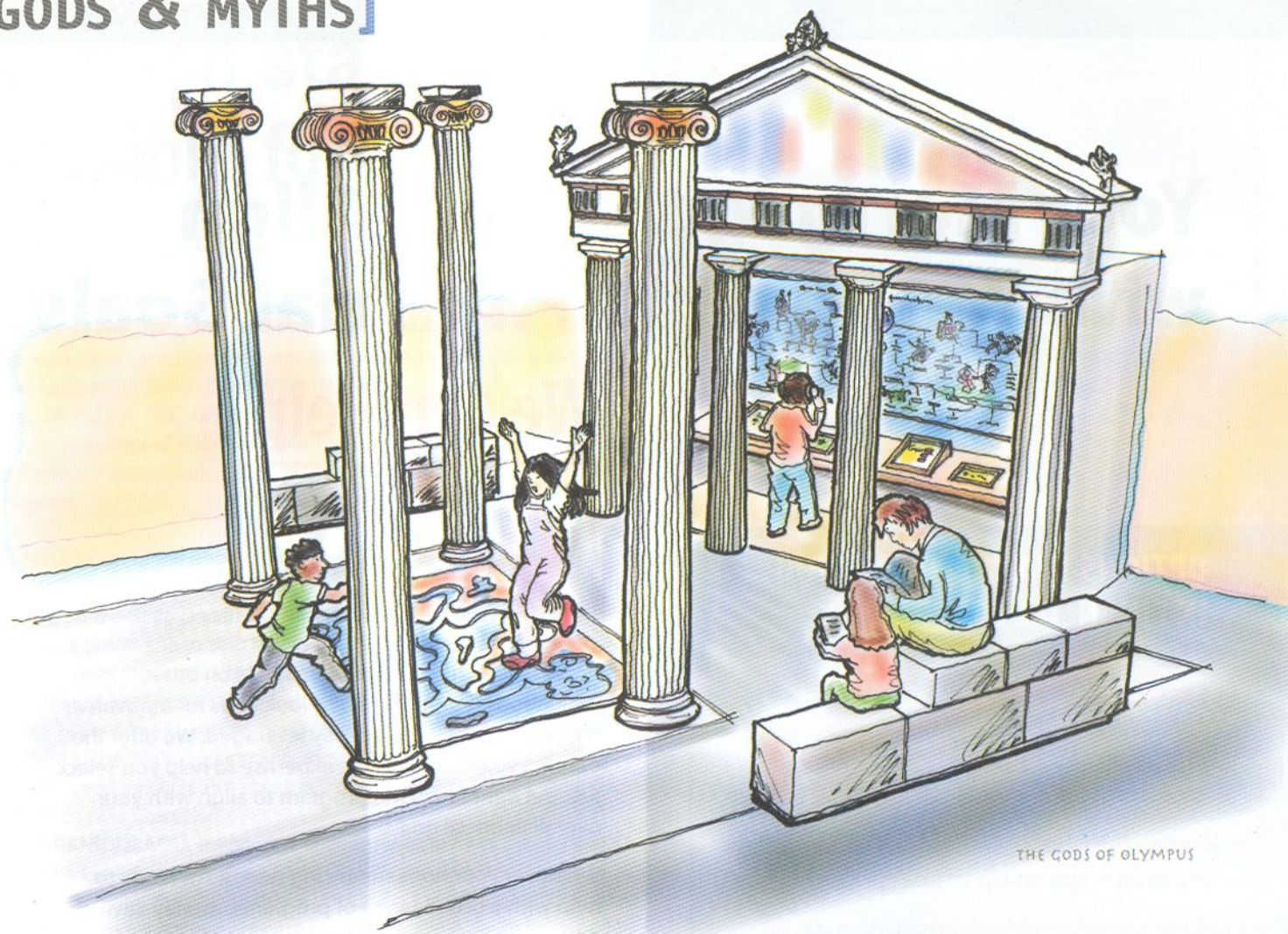
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Ancient Greece exhibit for children planned for New York and a nationwide tour

Over 100 adults and children from the Greek-American community in New York attended an exclusive preview recently of the upcoming national exhibit, **Gods, Myths and Mortals: Discover Ancient Greece**, at the Children's Museum of Manhattan (CMOM). The event was chaired by Kathryn Jaharis and co-chair Kallia Filippaki Yannopoulou.

Scheduled to open in February 2007, the 4,000 sq. ft. exhibition will introduce children in New York and around the United States to the world of ancient Greece through a dynamic interactive environment that will engage them intellectually and emotionally. Just as Odysseus traveled on his epic journey to finally arrive home, **Gods, Myths and Mortals: Discover Ancient Greece** will take children on a journey home to the roots of Western culture.

"I have been actively involved with the CMOM Board for over 17 years and Monday night was one of my most memorable CMOM events," said Mark Pearlman, Chair of the CMOM Board. "The level of enthusiasm, warmth and great feeling in the room was unmatched. This will be an important exhibit for the New York community to celebrate ancient Greek culture, its contributions to western civilization and to a child's education."

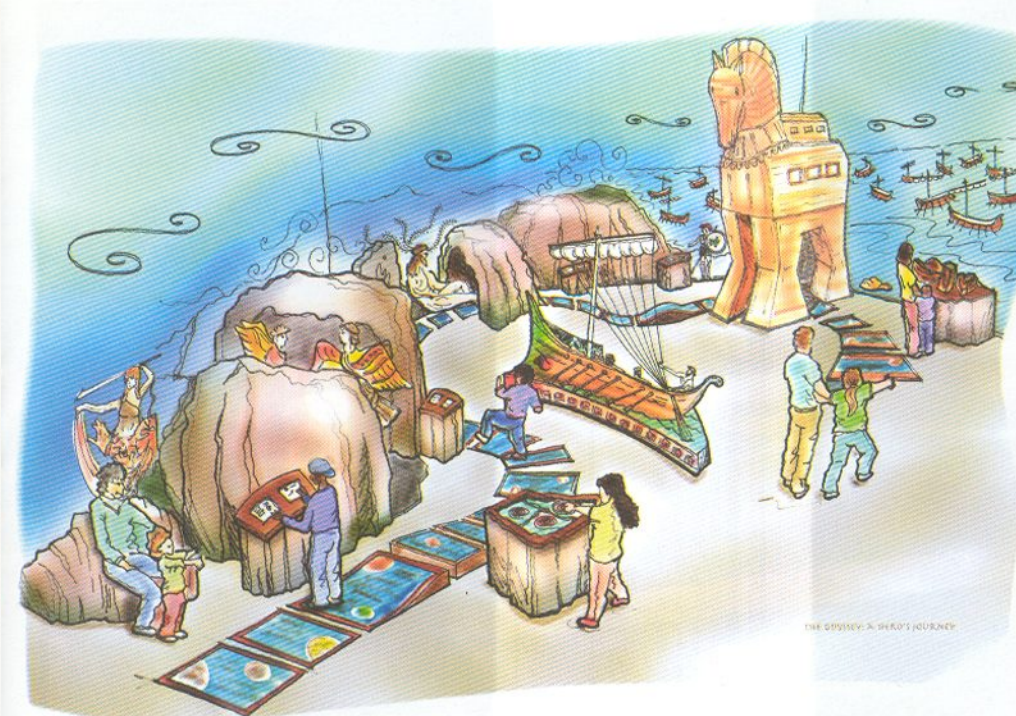
Andrew Ackerman, the executive director of the museum, said that opportunities for children to gain knowledge about the Classics and Hel-

lenic culture in a formal education setting have declined. "The decline is not mirrored by the disinterest of school-aged children; focus groups conducted for this exhibition demonstrated that children are fascinated by the stories of Greek mythology. So this is why we have decided to do something about it."

"The museum is returning children and families to the roots of western civilization," noted Kathryn Jaharis, chair of the museum reception. "I suggest we do what we can to help make that happen." Added Kallia Filippaki Yannopoulou: "The most important thing we can do is educate our children, who will go on to be the next generation of businessmen, governors, educators. And Greek civilization is very important to the basis of that education."

Planning efforts have received support from members of the Greek community in New York, private foundations (Stavros S. Niarchos Foundation and Jaharis Foundation) and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The goal is to raise \$1.7 million, of which nearly \$480,000 has already been committed.

In their welcome remarks, both Consul General of Greece Catherine Boura and Consul General of the Republic of Cyprus Martha Mavromatis in New York emphasized the important scope of this project and shared



Karen Snider (center), CMOM's Deputy Director for Exhibits and Project Co-Director, and Megan Cifarelli, Project Co-Director and Curator, spend time with Antigone, one of the younger guests at the preview event, while she interacts and discovers the exhibit model.

their personal enthusiasm to see it come to complete fruition. Guests at the museum reception included Mr. and Mrs. Michael Jaharis, Mr. and Mrs. John Catsimatidis, Fr. Alex Karloutsos of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, Fr. Dimitrios Antokas of Leadership 100, and Mr. Frank Dicopoulos of CBS' Guiding Light and his family.

Special features of the evening included conversations with the project's co-directors and curators including Karen Snider (Deputy Director for Exhibits and Project Co-Director) and Megan Cifarelli (Project Co-Director and Curator), staff and scholarly advisors; a simulated walk through the planned Odyssey experience; a slide presentation and viewing of the exhibition model. Children's activities included wax tablet (write your name in Greek) transliteration, finding Greece, and pottery painting. A reception followed with in-kind donations from Onera, Kellari Taverna, Amerikus, Artopolis Bakery and MAKE.

The new national exhibit will introduce six to ten year-old children and their families to the exciting world of ancient Greece; challenge them

to reconstruct the ancient past, and encourage them to find traces of Hellenic culture in their own lives and the world around them. The format of the proposed exhibition will include original artifacts, replicas, theatrical experiences, multimedia games and hands-on interactive stations to create varied ways for museum visitors to learn about ancient Greek culture.

The exhibition is based on five themes relevant to ancient Greece and its impact on present day life: the relationship between the human and divine; rational inquiry of self and the world; transmission of values and ideals in ancient Greece; how we learn about the past; and Hellenic contributions to the modern society, including the arts, democracy, history, and scientific thought and process. Public programs and educational programming accompanying the exhibition will include extensive school-based programs, teachers' guides, performance series, public lectures for adults and an interactive website.

Information about the museum is available at (212) 721-1223 or www.cmom.org.

Kathryn Jaharis (second from left), chair of the preview event of "Gods, Myths and Mortals: Discover Ancient Greece" flanked by honored guests following the slide presentation of "Gods, Myths and Mortals: Discover Ancient Greece." Pictured (from left) are Fr. Alex Karloutsos, executive director of Public Affairs at the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese; Fr. Dimitrios Antokas, Executive Director of Leadership 100; John Catsimatidis, Chairman and CEO of the Red Apple Group; David Slackman, President of NY Commerce Bank; Kallia C. Filippaki Yannopoulou, Co-chair of the event and VP at Putnam Trust Division; Andrew Ackerman, Executive Director of Children's Museum of Manhattan; Hon. Catherine Boura, Consul General of Greece, and Mrs. Mary Jaharis.



COVER STORY

You can go home again

Last year Eleni Gage published North of Ithaka (St. Martin's Press) about the year she spent rebuilding her family's home in Epirus where her grandmother had suffered and died during the Greek civil war famously chronicled in her father's own book, Eleni. North of Ithaka has now been issued as a paperback and Gage talks about her own memorable pilgrimage to the village of Lia.

by Dimitri C. Michalakis

Eleni Gage is walking through Central Park and talking on her cell phone about the little village nestled in the mountains of Epirus, Greece that has changed her life.

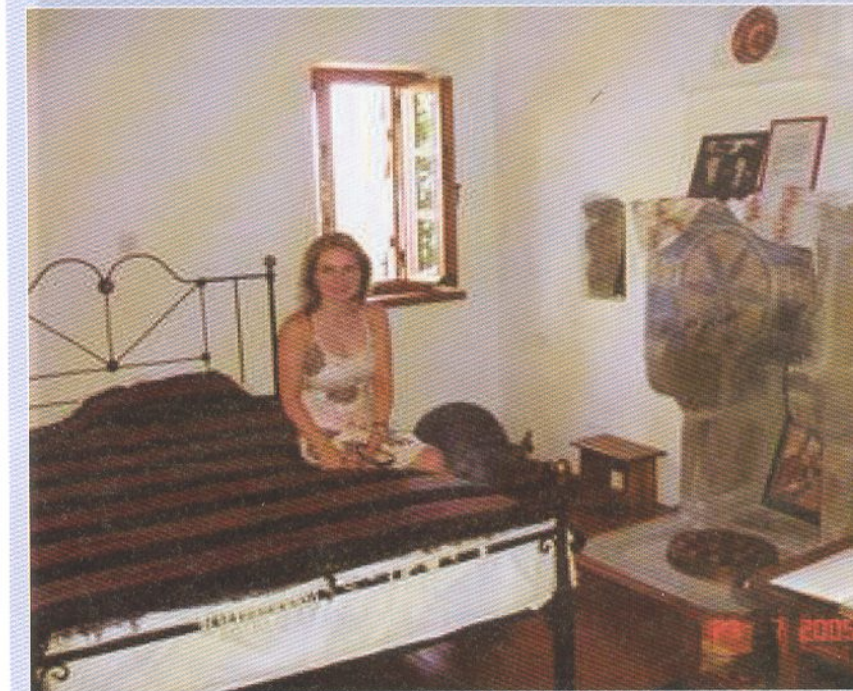
"I always thought it was beautiful and the people were always very nice because they were always smothering us with kisses," she says, winded from her walk and with the noises of New York in the background. "But the house always seemed sort of sinister and spooky because there was a big hole in the ground and then some piles of rocks with ivy on them. You'd be tempted to get closer—like one of the pile of rocks had an iron window frame in it and it was freestanding and you wanted to get closer because you were curious and you wanted to look at it. But there was too much overgrowth and too many holes you can fall in. And it was sort of scary."

As the oldest daughter of Nicholas Gage, and the new generation of Eleni Gatzoyiannis, she had lived since birth with the legacy of her grandmother's story which her father had transformed into a personal tribute with the research and writing of his book. The circumstances of that history had been talked about endlessly in the family by Eleni's aunts and her father and Eleni knew every detail of her grandmother's harrowing ordeal. But though she had often visited Lia and seen the wreck of the house that had once imprisoned her grandmother before her execution for being "the Amerikanida," she was 27 years old and still had never read the book about her namesake and she had seen only snatches of the movie based on the book.

"I felt that I always knew the story and I didn't want to face it until I had to," she admits. "When the book came out, I was only seven and I thought that it would be too upsetting. When the movie came out, I didn't watch it. I saw a few parts of the movie, but I've never seen the whole thing."

Perhaps, she says, she tried to avoid the trauma. "Not so much of our story because there wasn't a choice to be made," she says, "But I did grow up feeling that life can be difficult and traumatic and dramatic; it wasn't in my case but I did grow up thinking that life can be that way. So I never watched war movies, I liked to focus on life's happier side; I liked to watch old musicals and things like that. And, for example, when I was grown up and my parents were researching the book and my dad did and still does a lot of work for the ethnic Greek minority in Albania, we'd go to dinner at a restaurant and the head waiter would have family in Albania and he would be telling my parents some terrible story about their suffering. And eventually it got to the point that in middle school I would tell my parents, well, I'll come with you to dinner, but not if anyone is going to talk about concentration camps."

She did study folklore and mythology at Harvard, she worked as a writer and magazine editor in New York (*Allure*, *Elle*, *InStyle* and most recently as the first beauty editor of *People*) and in 2001 when she decided to freelance





as a travel writer she dipped into the family archives. "I loved my job, it was really fun, I got to interview celebrities, and I got to go to the Golden Globes and dance with Kevin Spacey, but I wanted to do something else," she says. The proposal she wrote for a book was the idea of her going back to her family's old village and rebuilding the house of her grandmother, the ruin that had once scared her: "I was home for Thanksgiving in 2001 and I saw a photo of my dad standing in front of the house during a visit in 1963, and the house in the photo was still standing. I had never seen it that way; I only knew it as a bunch of ruins, and that's when I realized emotionally that it was a house once and I thought that it should be a house again."

ENTERING LIA. WELCOME TO OUR HOSPITABLE VILLAGE read the sign in 2002 as she pulled up in her rental car and she writes in *North of Ithaka*, "as the sun began to set, softening the sharp contrast between the blue of the sky, the dark green of the mountains, and the ear-



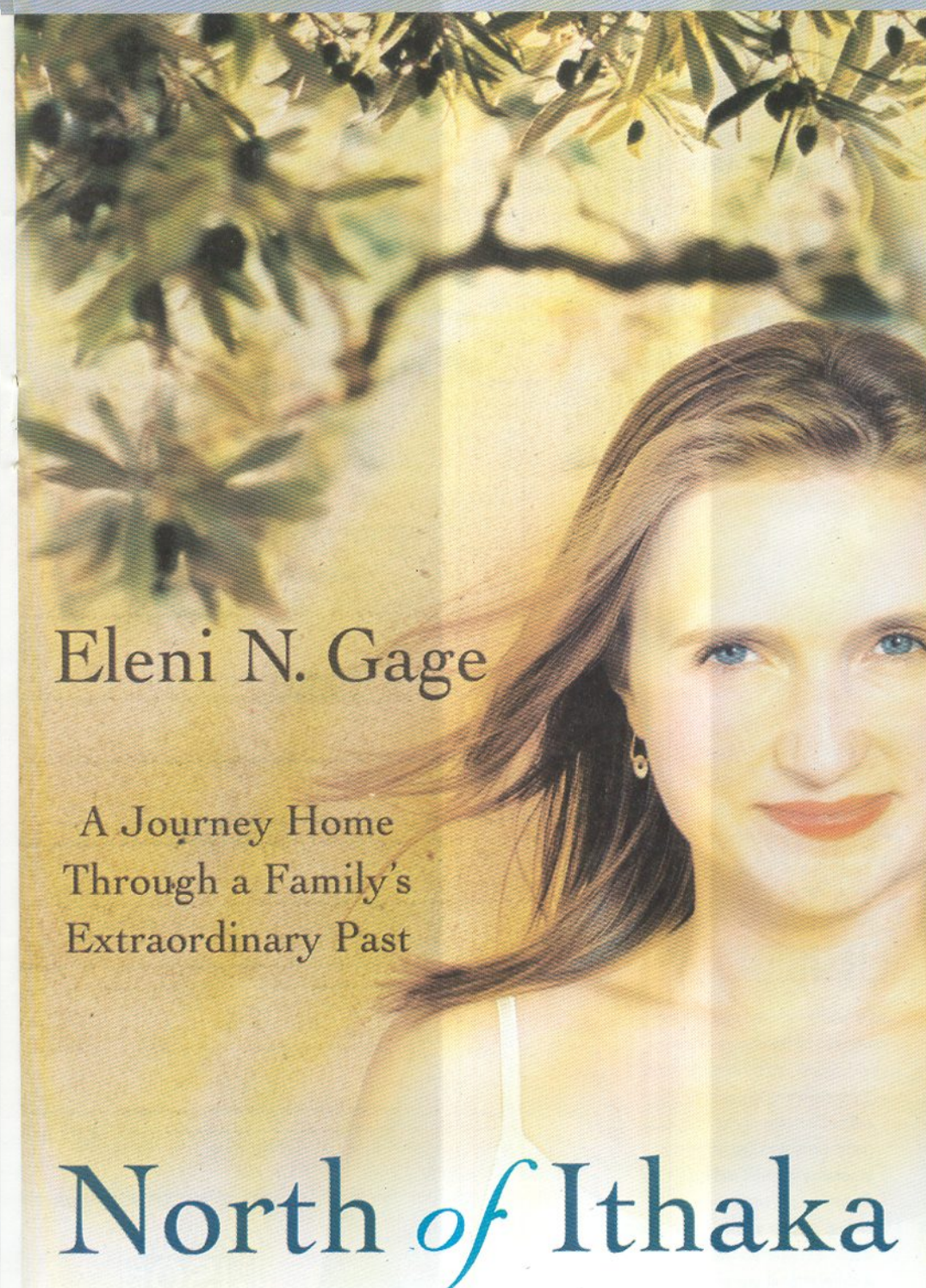
ly, lime green leaves of the trees. As I passed the playground and the Xenona Inn, which had not yet opened for the season, I rolled down the window to smell the village air, a scent I associated with woodsmoke, fragrant dirt, and herbs we didn't have back in the United States."

She passed the church of Agia Triada, the stone building where her father had gone to school and was now used as offices for the village and the border police. "My aunts had told me that during the civil war, a man had been tortured to death in that building; I remembered and sped on, through the heavy mist, turning past the Goura, a spring covered by a plane tree so old that it has been declared a national monument. Then I arrived at the road that ran along the hillside just above my great-grandfather Kicho Haidis's home, where I would live while rebuilding the Gatzoyiannis house." She parked under a walnut tree, behind an old van used by the neighbors who were traveling fabric salesmen and their sign in block letters advertising, "Dowry supplies"; everything a woman needs to get set up in her new life. A good omen, I told myself, trying to forget about the haunted schoolhouse and the fact that I'd be living in the house below all alone."

"Much against everybody's advice" she moved to Lia for nearly a year and supported herself writing travel articles while she launched the restoration, and kept the journals for the book she would write about her journey. She also, finally, sat down to read *Eleni*: "It was much less traumatic than I thought, because you know how you fear something when it's abstract, and then when you experience it you say, well, that's no so bad? I was glad to have read it. I didn't read it sitting alone in the house; I read it when I went down to Yannina to visit some family friends of ours, so that was helpful. And it's a difficult book to read, I think, for lots of people but for me it was mainly sort of a relief."

She negotiated the restoration of the house with her philosopher-architect George Zervas ("Time is just a construct," he instructed her when she asked him how long it would take. "I've been able break the boundary of time, like scientists are always trying to do. It's easy—just don't wear a watch!"), the hiring of the work crews that make up the new fabric of Lia (her Albanian neighbor Vlad and his son Net) and the ministrations of the village's extended family of "thitses and thious," including Foti Tsandinis, related to her aunt by marriage and former shepherd boy who had once herded her grandmother's flock and now assumed the task of herding Eleni through the vicissitudes of village life. "I thought I'd see how you're doing," he said in welcome, kissing her hello. "I promised your aunt I'd keep an eye on you."

Her aunts had warned her about returning ("Scared of the house—you should be scared of the whole village," Thia Kanta had told her), but they returned during her stay and approved of her progress ("By the end of their stays they were leading tourists around the house to see it"), and her parents and sister came also. "He was pleased," she says of her father, though his visit provided a scare when he totaled her car. "It was a miracle," said Foti. "The saint saved him."



Eleni N. Gage

A Journey Home
Through a Family's
Extraordinary Past

North of Ithaka

"But the only way Thitsa Kanta and assorted other Liotes of Lia and Worcester would believe that NickGage (as Thia Kanta called him) was all right was if they heard he danced at the panegyric as he had the night before. That was what it meant to live in Lia; the entire village became your meddling extended family, relatives who love you too much to leave you in peace. As I watched my father dance opposite the clarinetist, I realized that I knew what the skeptics who had studied the Anas-tenarides hadn't been able to figure out. Life is risky, and people get burned. So you'd better pray you have saints—or even civilians—looking out for you."

return."

Back in her apartment now and still on her cell phone, she talks about the other self she discovered those thousands of miles away in a little village she thought was miles away from home. "It was definitely a turning point in my life," she says. "I had a great time. I realized what I wanted to focus on, writing books. And I now have this new anchor in the village and have created a new home for myself and I'll keep going back. Which even though it makes me sad that I can't be there all the time and I'm divided, I think overall that's a good thing. I'm really lucky that I have my two homes."



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NIKOLAKI designer becomes Project Runway star

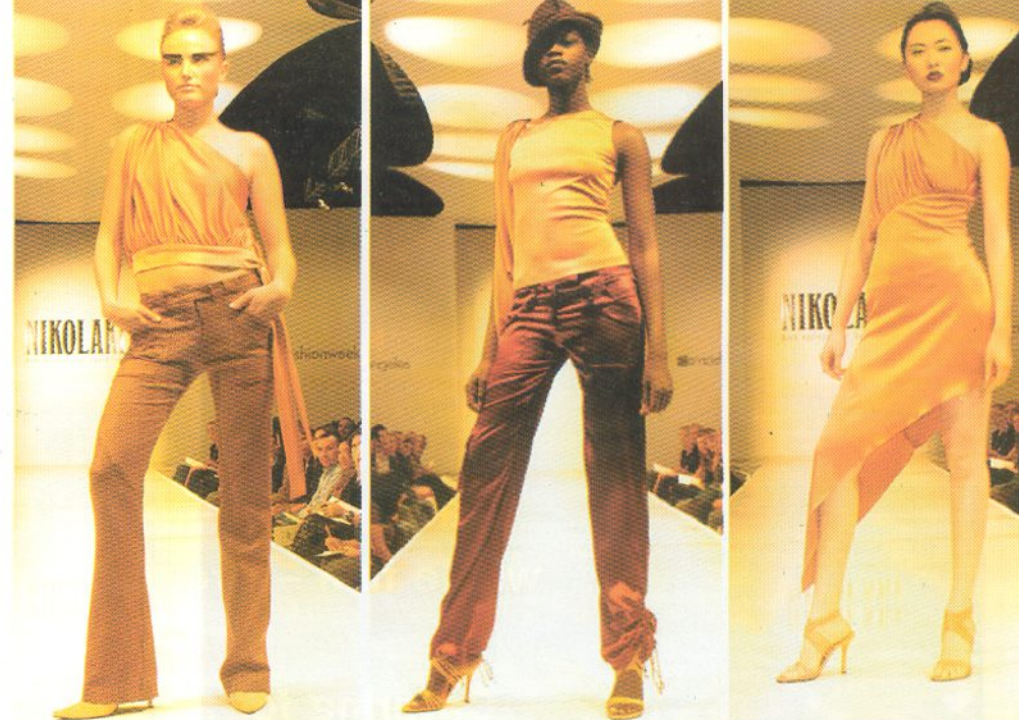
On a dare last year, Los Angeles-based designer Nick Verreos decided to audition for the hot cable show *Project Runway*, which pits sixteen up-and-coming designers in feats of couture all for a chance to win \$100,000 in seed money, a Saturn and a spread in *Elle* Magazine. Verreos already had his own clothing line (NIKOLAKI) and a loyal following on both coasts and he was also an established teacher at LA's The Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM). "But all that being said I still felt, well, why not?" says the always-candid Verreos, 39 ("That's our Nick, my family says"). "And then I said, if I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it 110 %, which means I'm going to go and show up with a live six foot tall beautiful woman wearing one of my designs and sell it and that's it."

So he took his favorite model and showed up for his audition early one morning ("because I knew fashion people wouldn't be up that early and there would be less chance that I would run into somebody I might know!") before Tim Gunn of the Parsons The New School for Design in New York City and several other judges. "It literally took two minutes and then the next thing I know Tim Gunn looks up at me and says, well, we love you, you're in," he remembers. "And I was like, you're kidding, right? Oh, shoot, now what do I tell my parents? This was supposed to be a dare."

Instead, he flew to New York for a month of shooting while he roomed

with fellow-contestants Andrae, Daniel V. and the ever-formidable Santino, whom he knew from the LA fashion scene ("I get off the elevator and there he was. I'm like, Santino, what are you doing here? And he looks at me like, Oh, shoot"). But their apartment was near Times Square and had a view of the Empire State Building ("For a California, LA kid, that's cool") and even Santino was supportive in the beginning—in his way. "He sort of took me aside and he's like, Nick, forget about all these other losers, we're the one," says Verreos, with a laugh. "He was cocky and immediately he was it from the beginning. Yeah, all right, Santino, I thought, you keep on telling yourself that."

Meanwhile, they were pitted against each other in weekly design challenges ("In TV time," he says, "but it was actually, literally, every other day") for the run to the face off by the final three on New York Fashion Week in February. Along the way Verreos had his model appropriated by fellow contestant Zulema—"I knew Zulema couldn't finish an outfit for her life," he says, still smarting. "At the same time I had to move on. I said, okay, well, Rachel isn't that bad of a replacement, I'll turn her into a fabulous model. I said to her forget anything Zulema said to you, now you're with Nikos and I'm going to make you fabulous and sexy. And she went on the runway and did her thing."



There was also the infamous design challenge that led him to declare his inspiration was the improbable combination of Mykonos and Paris Hilton.

"Yeah, they got me on that!" he laughs. "But we had to find an inspiration for that challenge and my choice was this fabric, a navy blue and white fabric, which reminded me of the Greek flag. It also had almost a Byzantine cross, similar to the Orthodox Church cross. So I created an outfit, this beautiful silk couture, and I started having visions of Mykonos, and the women there, and the windmills, the Mediterranean Sea, and I thought of that vision of those fabulous Swedish models, or a Paris Hilton, hanging out in Mykonos and being inspired by the buildings, the Orthodox churches. And they just made fun of me. Why does everything have to be about Mykonos—and why Paris Hilton? But that's what women fantasize about! They fantasize about being in Mykonos and having a cocktail, with this fabulous silk dress on, and a hot Greek man next to them, and that's what's going to make them go out and purchase that \$1,000 dollar skirt from NIKOLAKI!"

He also, inevitably, ran afoul of Santino. "I thought (in the beginning) he was actually cool and funny," he says. "But all that changed when I actually had to work with him. He played psychological warfare on all of us. It was fine when there were other people around to buffer it, but when it got down and there were only five of us, it was just too much, I felt dirty around him and I wanted to get out. I thought if I stayed another week the virus would infiltrate me. Get me outta here!"

He left with some regrets ("I really wanted to be in the top 3—but it was a great, fun ride"), but soon discovered the ride wasn't over just yet. He was scooped up by NBC to do the fashion commentary that summer for the Torino Olympics, including outfitting the U.S. Lady's Hockey team ("To my surprise they were girlie-girls and all of them wanted to put on dresses and high heels"). He also designed a dress for *Desperate Housewives* actress Brenda Strong. And as soon as he got back to LA he got inundated with messages from a feeding frenzy of agents and production companies ("There were about 800 e-mails") interested in him doing a show and more fashion commentary. Also, his NIKOLAKI line has since become de rigueur.

"Before I would get calls saying, I know someone who saw a Vera Wang dress, can you make it, but for a thousand?" he recalls. "Or the bridal thing, I saw this wonderful \$4,000 gown at Barney's, can you make it for two? Now people want a Nick Verreos original—and I don't really do knockoffs for people!"

He says he's hoping to concentrate more on NIKOLAKI (the childhood nickname given to him by his father, a career diplomat who initially bankrolled his son's line) and to continue with his teaching at FIDM. "I thought I'd maybe tone it down and not teach, but they wouldn't allow it. They said, no, we can't do that, your classes get filled up the minute the computer terminals go on. And, at the same time, I enjoy doing it."

And being an overnight media and fashion star hasn't gone to his head yet. He still remembers the sting of trying to sell a dress for \$1,500 pre-fame and how the buyers balked then. "And now I can't keep it on the rack. And it's the same damn dress!"

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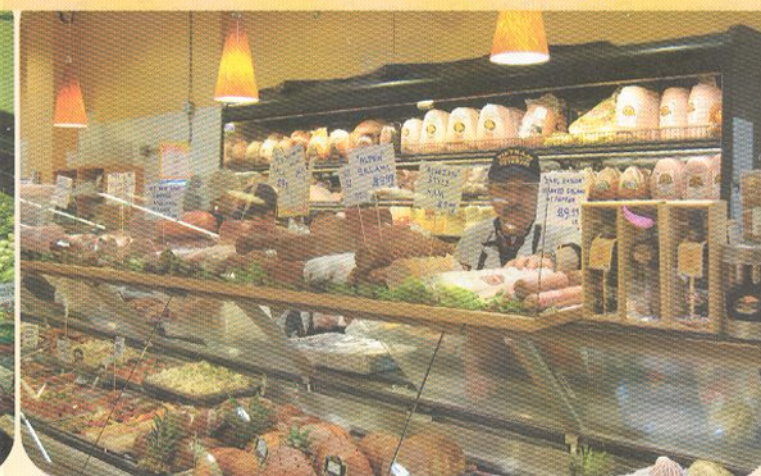
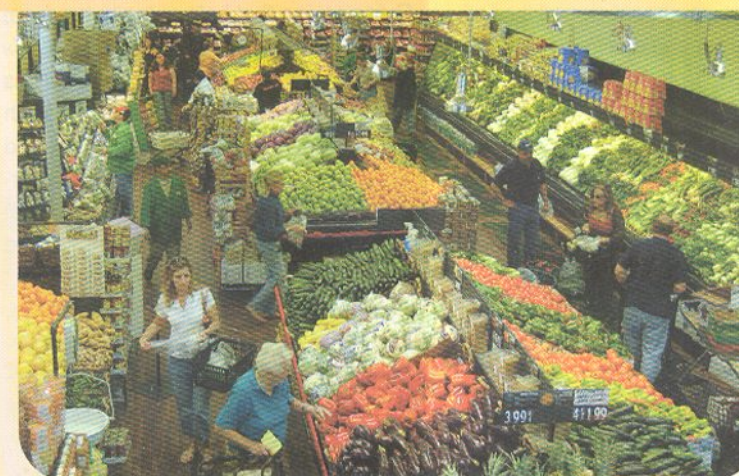
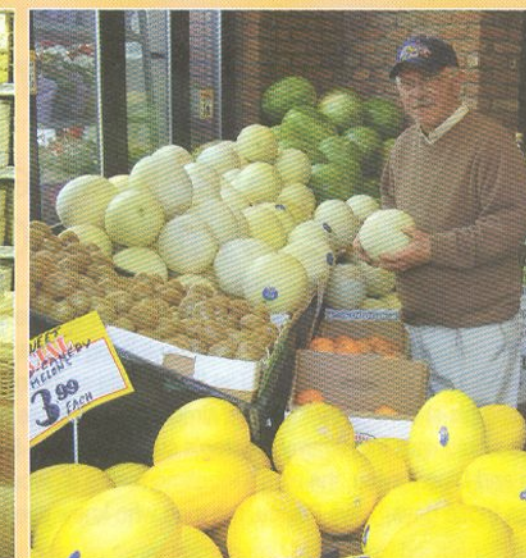
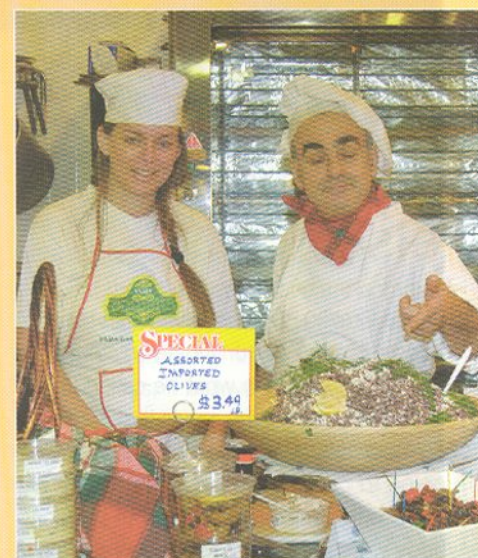
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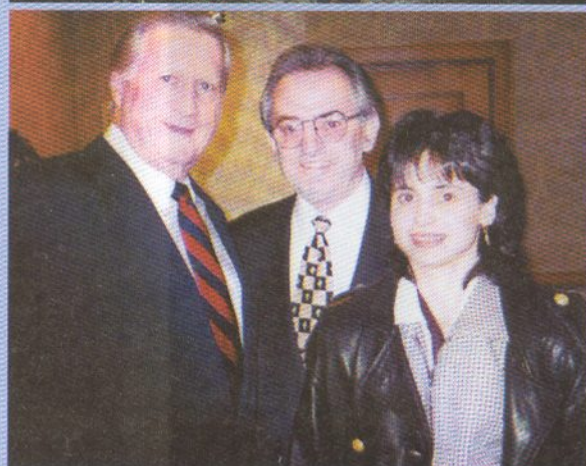
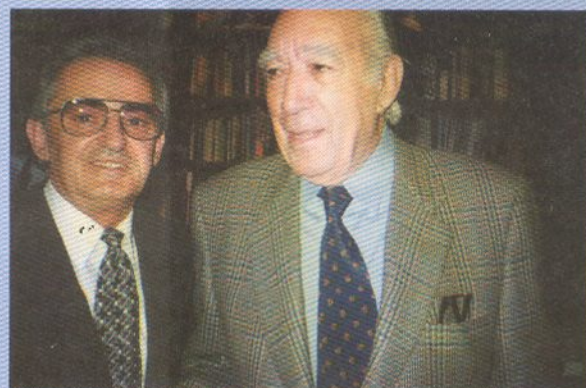
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ALL GREEK PRODUCTS AVAILABLE



Dino Pavlou and his friends

The Greek American in the life of Frank Sinatra, Anthony Quinn—and everybody else.

He's writing a book now called *Set 'em up, Joe* and he's also an independent producer. Gary Anthony has made a living in Las Vegas impersonating Frank Sinatra and bringing the Rat Pack to life and Dino Pavlou will be producing his show in New York. It's almost like old times when Sinatra and his pals would walk into Jimmy Weston's supper club on 54th Street in Manhattan and Dino Pavlou, the club's longtime maitre d', would be their host. "I miss those days," says Pavlou, the man who knew everybody.

There was Sinatra at Table 17, Johnny Carson playing the drums, Reggie Jackson answering the phone, Muhammad Ali shadowboxing, the Apollo astronauts getting a standing ovation for walking in, Richard Nixon kidding that he was getting a standing ovation for walking out, Gregory Peck waiting for a table like a gentleman, Alan King's son demanding one—with Dino Pavlou the host for them all.

"One night Anthony Quinn came in with Frank Sinatra," says Pavlou, still smiling at the memory. "And the first thing Sinatra would do is give you a hug, a kiss, and talk to you by the desk. 'Tony, one of the best Greeks you'd ever want to know,' he says to Quinn. (By the way, that hug cost me a lot. The wise guys all wanted to imitate Sinatra. Every time they'd come in they'd say, Hey, buddy—and they'd grab you, hug you, and the next day you needed a chiropractor.)"

With Sinatra, Pavlou went to Patsy's in Harlem for pizza after hours ("Hey, Greek, you still got that old Chevy outside?") With Quinn, Pavlou planned the sequel to *Zorba the Greek* (and Quinn visited the Greek nightclub next

door to Weston's—"He loved to dance Greek"). "I got involved with his son, Lorenzo, who wanted to produce *Zorba*," says Pavlou. "Quinn wanted to do *Zorba* independently. He wanted nothing to do with what he called 'those traffic cops.' The up-and-coming directors. 'If I take the movie that made me famous and do a sequel I'm not going to have any traffic cop directing it, he said. I'm going to direct it, I'm going to produce it, I'm going to buy the rights from 20th Century Fox. My job with Lorenzo was to scout locations and to scout investors. And anybody we approached said if you show me the document signed by Anthony Quinn saying that he's going to produce, direct and star in the film, you just tell me how much you need."

Unfortunately, Quinn's last divorce got in the way and the movie was never made. But Dino Pavlou has a lifetime of memories like that, with both the famous and infamous (John Gotti was another patron of Weston's) and *Set 'em up, Joe* will set the record straight. Not bad for a kid who barely survived the Greek civil war and came to America wearing a sheepskin coat borrowed from a shepherd ("Where's your sheep?" his Uncle George said when he saw him).

"We lived in a town called Valtasinicon, in the middle of Peloponnesos, and it was nice, peaceful, beautiful," says Pavlou, now 72, of those years before the war. "We had a beautiful life, before everything happened." What happened is that the Allies won the war against the Germans and Italians, but then the Greek communists took over. And the same guerillas who had been bunked in the Pavlou home became the overlords. One morning they drove the whole town into the square. "We are communists and we want to

bring communism to Greece," they proclaimed. Among their first acts was to knock down the door of the Pavlou home (Pavlopoulos)—their former hosts—and kill Pavlou's father in the street. "Because he had been to America," says Pavlou. "He had worked at the steel mills in Pittsburgh." They took Pavlou and his sister in the *pedomazoma* and used them as human shields in the raid on Tripoli. They machine gunned everybody in the nearby town of Meligala and threw them into wells.

But then the army drove the communists into the hills and what were left behind were devastated villages and devastated families. Dino Pavlou was not yet eleven when he decided to take his revenge. "I found a machine gun," he says, "I believe it was English, and I strapped it to the bottom of a sheep. And one day I grazed my flock and got closer and closer to the mouth of the cave where the guerillas were hiding, and the man who had stayed at our house and had killed my father. One day I got close enough."

He crawled under the sheep, unstrapped the machine gun, and started firing into the cave. "You could hear the screaming," he says. When his clip ran out, he walked into the cave and found one guerilla dead and the one who killed his father pleading for his life. Pavlou had a fresh magazine in the machine gun, but he merely turned and walked away. "I'm no killer," he told

him. The guerilla later died, and Pavlou says he felt "like you found something that was stolen from your family and you put it back where it belongs."

At eighteen he came to America, wearing Mitso the shepherd's borrowed sheepskin coat, and he started working at a pie factory in New Jersey. "They didn't pay you by check then," he remembers. "They put the cash in an envelope. I was getting sixty five cents an hour, and when I got my first envelope I locked myself in my room to count it. I counted \$46 and something cents for six days of work and then I calculated what it was worth in Greece and, I said, I'm rich!"

He soon got drafted in the army during the Korean War, but he welcomed the opportunity. "I remember the Allied soldiers when they came to liberate Greece, they were our heroes. When I got my draft notice I said, now I'm going to be one of them!" He was barely eighteen, but commanded a tank that won the prize as the best in the battalion. His squad groused as soldiers do, but Pavlou couldn't wait to fight the communists. "They never saw their liberty being taken away from them," he says of his men. "They never saw their father being executed. They never saw people being killed and dumped down wells. They never saw any of that."

Unfortunately, the war ended before Pavlou's unit could be shipped overseas, but he soon made the first of his famous acquaintances. "There's a movie company coming down to film some war scenes," his commander told him one day. "And they can't have an actor driving a tank. You're going to be the driver of this movie star." The movie star turned out to be Audie Murphy, the most decorated soldier of World War II, who after their scenes were shot for the movie invited Pavlou to look him up in Hollywood. Pavlou did after he got out of the army, a friendship ensued, the first of many, and the rest is history.

"I often wonder how lucky this kid from a war-torn Greek village was to have the friendship of some of the most famous people in the world," says Pavlou, still marveling as he stands in the room of his home decorated with photos of his "friends" and their letters and tributes to him. "I feel fortunate to have called them my friends."



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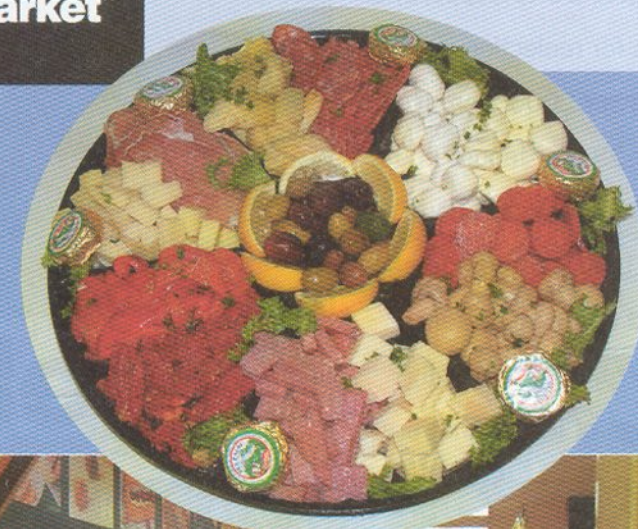
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ALL GREEK PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

The Greek American Friends of Senator Olympia Snowe recently hosted a cocktail reception and fundraiser at Ozio Restaurant in Washington, DC to support her run for reelection in November 2006. Throughout her 28-year tenure in the U.S. Congress, Snowe (R-ME) has been a strong and vocal supporter of the rule of law and the range of issues that are important to the Greek American community.



Greeks rally for Olympia Snowe

In welcoming remarks, event chairman Gene Rosides congratulated the senator on leading the way in upholding consistent democratic ideals in U.S. domestic and foreign policy. Because of her strong and principled positions and consistent leadership throughout her tenure, Rosides said, *TIME Magazine* in an April, 24, 2006 article listed her as one of the top ten U.S. senators.



"Snowe's formula of being clued into the center and into home have made her very popular in Maine," said *TIME*. "In a March poll by Survey USA, 71% of Snowe's constituents approved of her performance, a rating only a handful of Senators ever score. And voters often show their support more directly. In 2003, after one of her numerous disagreements with the Bush administration, she almost single-handedly forced Bush to lower a tax-cut proposal from \$700 billion to \$350 billion. Republicans in Washington were furious. But a few days later in Portland, a driver saw Snowe on the street from his car window and shouted to the sur-



prised Senator: 'You go, Olympia. You stand strong.'"

Addressing event attendees, Senator Snowe commented on her reelection campaign, on the importance of building bipartisan dialogue in what is currently a very polarized Congress and country, and discussed the rule of law as it applies to the long-standing illegal occupation of Cyprus by Turkey. "In my almost 30 years, the country had never faced such a confluence of historic challenges as we face today," she said. "I have tried to work across party lines, and build those political bridges because I think that's the only way you can get anything done. I believe in solving problems, at the end of the day. That's what it's all about."

Senator Snowe also emphasized her commitment to supporting issues important to the Greek American community. "We will do everything we can to work on the issues, whether it's on Cyprus, on Macedonia, the Ecumenical Patriarchate and what they are facing there and all the discrimination that's been perpetrated by the Turkish government. The list goes on and on, but it's cementing and building that relationship with all of you but also with other, because there is strong support for our positions."

Specifically related to Cyprus, the senator strongly condemned the status quo asserting that, "You never can rationalize an illegal occupation. It's as simple as that. In that sense, it's a basic matter of human rights."

The event host committee included: Kostas Alexakis, Gus Andy, Thanos Basdekis, Nick Chimicles, Nick Karambelas, Jim Lagos, Nick Larigakis, James Marketos, Jim Pedas, Ted Pedas, Andreas Pericli, Manny Rouvelas, Marilyn Rouvelas, Savvas Savopoulos, Ted G. Spyropoulos, Christine Warnke.

For additional information on the Greek American Friends of Senator Olympia Snowe contact Chrysoula Economopoulos at (202) 285-7726 or ChrysoulaE@hotmail.com and www.olympiasnowe.com.



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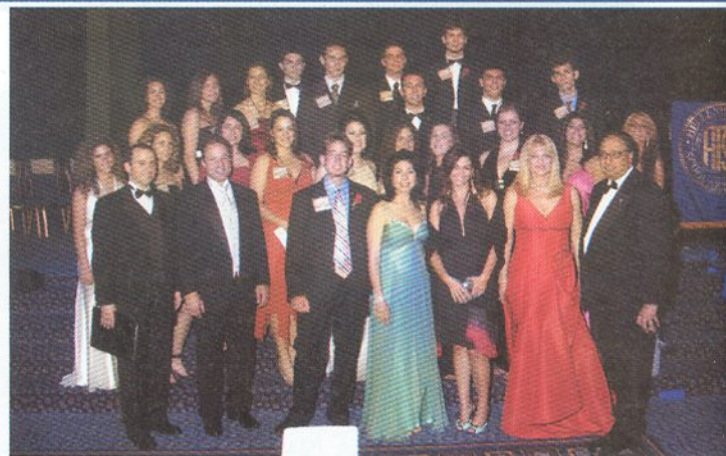
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Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund celebrates 15th Anniversary gala

More than 1400 guests and celebrities attended the 15th Annual Hellenic Times Scholarship Fund Anniversary Gala at the New York Marriott Marquis honoring CBS National Correspondent and *MarketWatch* anchor Alexis Christoforou and FOX-5 meteorologist Nick Gregory. *American Idol* star Constantine Maroulis also served as guest host (and sang impromptu) of a spectacular concert featuring Greek singing sensation Elli Kokkinou and the legendary Drifters. This year the HTSF awarded 35 scholarships to students across the United States and with this year's awards the organization has granted more than 500 scholarships since its inception. Many celebrities presented scholarships to some of the students that night: *CSI:NY* star Melina Kanakaredes a scholarship for the arts to Christina Skleros. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* star Nia Vardalos a scholarship for the arts to Nicholas Wells. Tennis legend Pete Sampras to Gregory Damalas. The Ernie Anastos Scholarship for Journalism to Grant Potter. Judge Nicholas Tsoucalas awarded a scholarship for legal studies to Alice Schukla and *Guiding Light* star Frank Dicopoulos presented a \$5,000 scholarship to Jason Varounis.

Nick Katsoris, President and Founder of the HTSF also served as Dinner Chairman and presented a video highlighting the Fund's 15 years narrated by NBC sportscaster Bob Costas, including clips from past honorees and performers: Olympia Dukakis, Anna Vissi, Melina Kanakaredes, Tina Fey, Marilu Henner, Natassa Theodoridou, Gloria Gaynor, Ernie Anastos, Bob Costas, John Aniston and others. Fund co-founders, General Chairs Margo and John Catsimatidis respectively presented the 2006 HTSF Scholarships, and thanked the contributors of the HTSF for their support.

The recipients of this year's scholarships are: Jackie Christakos - (Colorado), Peter James Christakos - (Iowa), Lindsey Colman - (New York), Andreas Costea - (New York), Marilena Fallaris - (Washington), Elias Gatoulis - (New Jersey), Nicolette Georgacakis - (Texas), Katerina Kalaitzidis - (California), Eleni Kanakis - (Virginia), Stavroula Kotrotsios - (Pennsylvania), Stephan P. Kouris - (New York), Yuriy Ksenidi - (Wisconsin), Zoe Laird - (New York), Anastasia Leventopoulos - (Illinois), Steven M. Markos - (New Jersey), Vasiliki Papanikolaw - (New Jersey), Thalia Roussos - (California), Alice Shukla - (Michigan), Christina Skleros - (New Jersey), Christopher Sotiropoulos - (California), Niki Stamos - (Ohio), Eleni Stavrou - (New Jersey), David Trotter - (Washington), Jason Varounis - (Florida), Nicholas Wells - (New York), Avery Berge - (Colorado), Gregory Damalas - (Connecticut), Alexander Georgiadis - (New York), Potter Grant - (Texas), Constantinos Katevatis - (Connecticut), George Kiamos - (New York), Margarita Lolis - (New York), Corinna Morris - (Ohio), Evelyn Pihakis - (Pennsylvania), Stelios Viazis - (North Carolina).



The 2006 Hellenic Times Scholarship Recipients with HTSF President and Dinner Chairman Nick Katsoris, Honoree Nick Gregory, Honoree Alexis Christoforou, Co-chairs John & Margo Catsimatidis and Elli Kokkinou



Nick Katsoris presents Alexis Christoforou with her Humanitarian Award



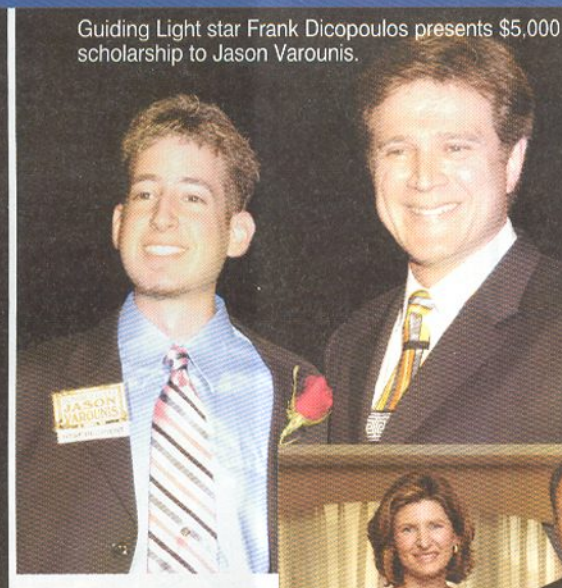
John Catsimatidis, Karl Kilb, Alexis Christoforou, Nick Katsoris, Elli Kokkinou, Margo Catsimatidis, His Grace Bishop Dimitrios, Nick & Athena Gregory, Voula Katsoris



Nick Katsoris leads the dance with Margo Catsimatidis, Alexis Christoforou and Ernie Anastos



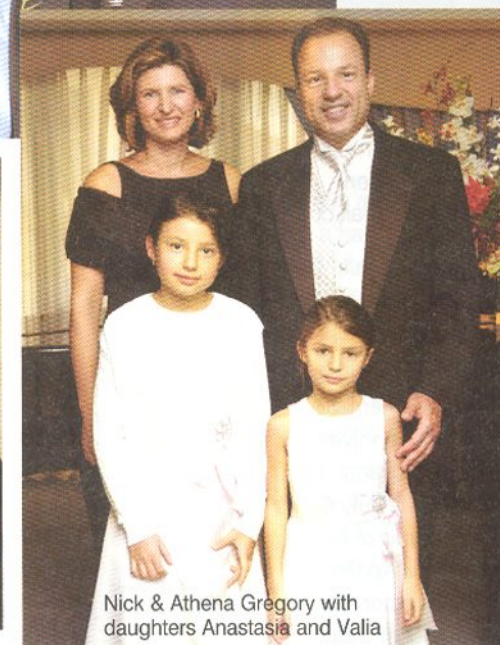
Constantine Maroulis sings



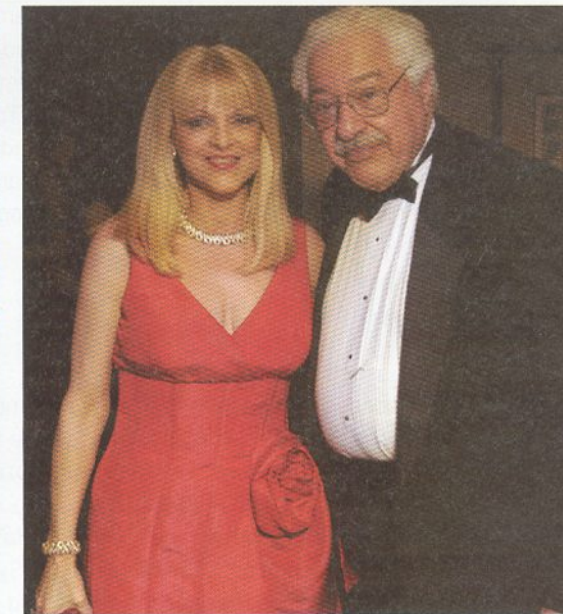
Guiding Light star Frank Dicopoulos presents \$5,000 scholarship to Jason Varounis.



The Drifters



Nick & Athena Gregory with daughters Anastasia and Valia



Margo Catsimatidis with Judge Nicholas Tsoucalas



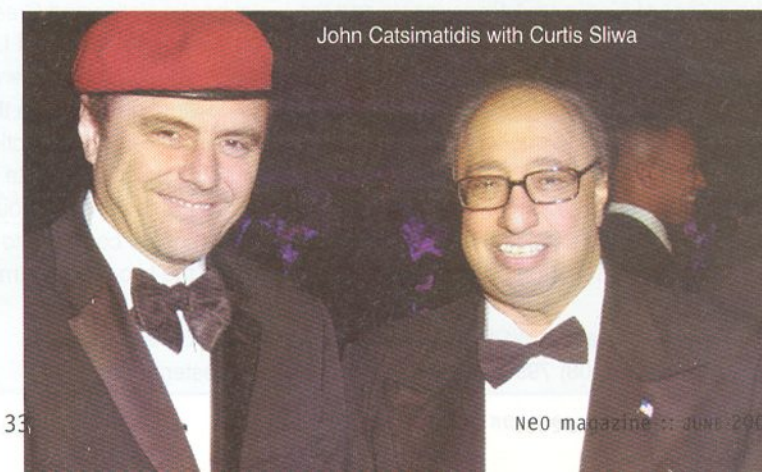
Nick Gregory, Constantine Maroulis, Margo Catsimatidis, Alexis Christoforou, husband Karl Kilb and Nick Katsoris



Elli Kokkinou



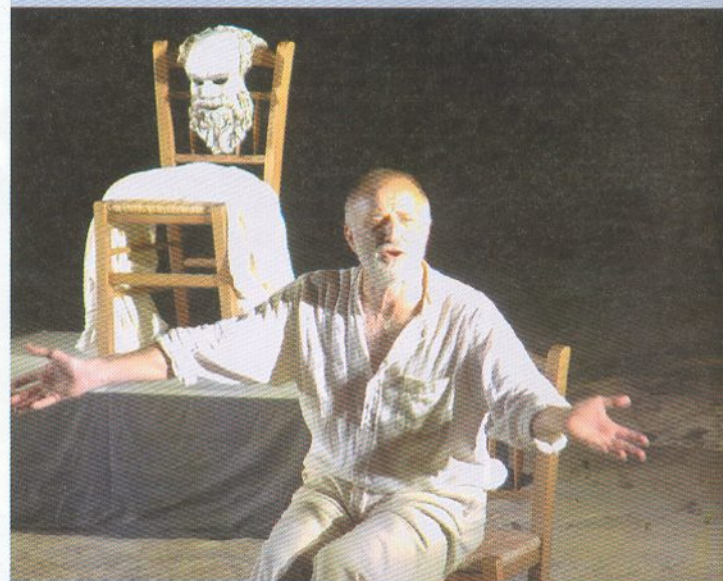
Elli Kokkinou



John Catsimatidis with Curtis Sliwa

The Apology in Crete

Mythic Media International and Theatron Inc. recently presented Plato's *The Apology of Socrates* at the First International Philosophy Conference on Ethics and Politics in the old city center of Heraklion, Crete. *The Apology* features a solo performance by the Emmy Award winner Yannis Simonides and is directed by the Broadway and television veteran Loukas Skipitaris. It premiered in New York in 2003 and has since been performed to great acclaim at the United Nations, the Athens Agora, the NBC *Today Show*, and in theatres, schools, universities, libraries and festivals across the United States and Greece. This summer and fall it will be seen in Athens and across the Aegean in Ephesos, Delphi and Dodona, in Greek and in English. On September 8, two thousand Columbia University freshmen and sophomores will see it performed on campus, sponsored by the Columbia Core Curriculum Department. Tours in the U.S., Canada, England, Germany and Cyprus will follow, and a limited Off Broadway run is contemplated, along with a publication of the performance text, in Ancient Greek and in English. For further information: theapologyproject@hotmail.com



Mozart in Syros

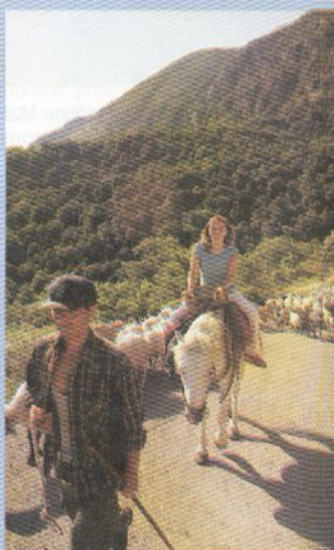
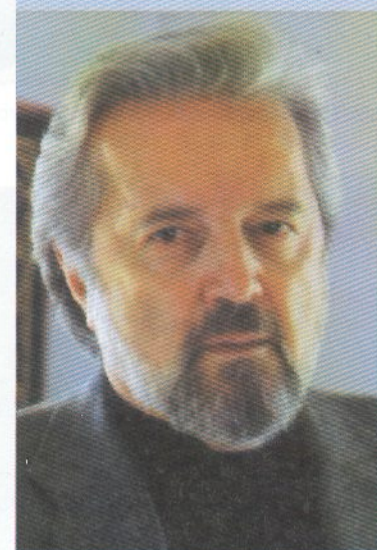
Peter Tiboris will conduct the Bosulav Martinu Philharmony and an international cast of soloists as the Opera Aegean 2006 pays tribute to the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth with a fully staged presentation of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, an all Mozart program, and an evening of opera and Broadway favorites July 6 and 8 at the Apollo Municipal Theater "La Piccola Scala" on the island of Syros. "This season's Mozart celebration is ideally suited for Syros and the Apollo Theater," says Tiboris, MidAmerica Productions artistic and general director. "I have long thought of Syros as the 'Salzberg of the Aegean' and what better tribute than to present the work of Salzberg's greatest son." The Apollo Theater was modeled after Milan's famed La Scala and is well known as a tourist destination and to residents of Syros Island alike for its opera and theatrical presentations. MidAmerica has produced over 800 concerts worldwide, featuring 2500 American ensembles and nearly 100 international ensembles—more than 100,000 performers in all. For more information about Opera Aegean or MidAmerica Productions, contact Kathleen Drohan at (212) 239-0205 or Kdrohan@midamerica-music.com.



Travel Writing in Greece with Nicholas Gage

The author of *Eleni* and *A Place for Us* and the travel books *Hellas* and *Greece: Land of Light* will teach a class in travel writing this fall in his hometown of Lia, Epiros. Classes will cover how to pick a subject to write about that will interest travel editors, how to research the site selected, how to write an article on the site, and how to write queries to travel editors to sell the articles. Each section of the course will begin with one day of research and discussion of the site to be visited, a day exploring the site, a day devoted to writing the article about the site, and a day critiquing the articles written. The aim of the course is to produce at least three publishable articles by the end of the two-week journey to Epiros.

For further information: WORCESTER ART MUSEUM 55 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA, (508) 799.4406 ext. 3129 or www.worcesterart.org.

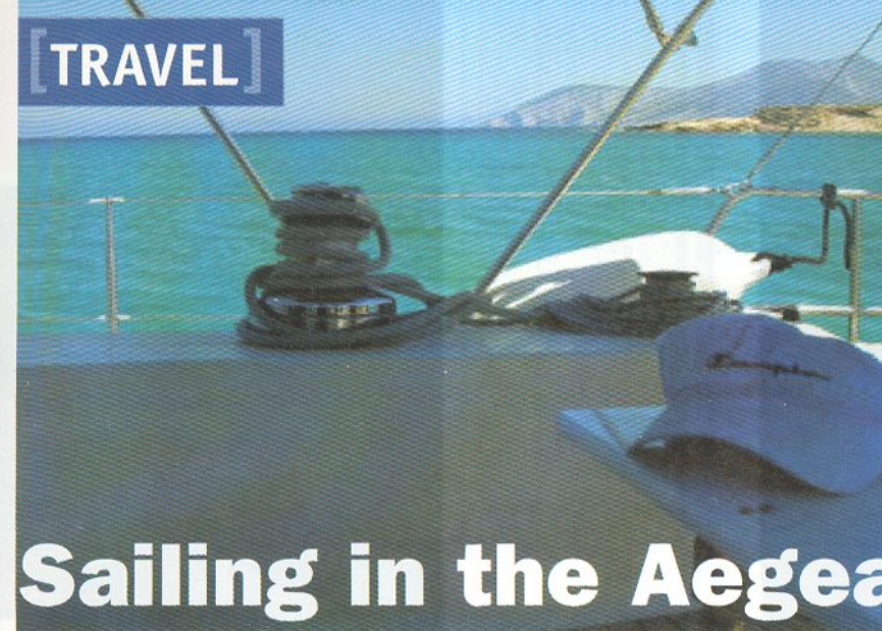


Sailing in the Aegean

by Claire Stephens

Our departure point was Samos—a large Greek island facing the famous archaeological site of Ephesus on the Turkish coast, and itself the site of two and a half thousand years of Greek civilization. Our 47-foot Beneteau—the *Paralos* (named after a figure in Greek mythology)—turned out to be a handsome white and green sailing yacht with four streamlined cabins, two tiny bathrooms, as well as a galley and saloon, capable of sleeping two when the saloon table was converted into a bed. Our skipper, a co-resident of Greece and Los Angeles, fluent in English, joined us in Samos, and after dealing with all of the administrative formalities, stocking up on food supplies, and getting to know the other crew members, we were off! Our crew numbered four Europeans (Greek, German and Belgian) as well as this Canadian, and included one person who had never sailed before. Some of us met for the first time on the boat—this kind of encounter can pose short-term personality challenges or lead to lifelong friendships.

And so our ten-day adventure began. The pleasures of a sailing holiday at sea are innumerable: the sensation of the warm wind and salty spray on your skin as the boat races through the water; the freedom to move from one place to another, discovering uncharted beauty as you go; the pleasure of drinks on board at sunset, before you walk onto "terra firma" for dinner in a taverna; coming back after dinner and gazing at a star-filled sky with galaxies that you have never seen before; and being gently rocked to sleep by the waves lapping at the boat, all your cares left behind on shore.



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Getting ready for November...

• Elections are only a few months away and Greek Americans across the country are rolling up their sleeves to help both incumbents and newcomers win the privilege of serving us--the public! Boston, with its long tradition of politics in an even longer tradition by Greeks, jumped early into the race by organizing fund raisers. Such an event was held recently at the prestigious "Dionysos" Greek restaurant in Cambridge (walking distance from both Harvard and MIT) for Rhode Island State Senator Lou (Leonidas) Raptakis (District #33) and for Connecticut State Representative Demetrios Giannaros (21st Assembly District). Tina Papadopoulos welcomed the guests on behalf of the Host Committee and urged Greek Americans to rally behind the two politicians whose service she commended and praised.

• Senator Raptakis, echoing Assemblyman Giannaros, outlined his efforts to promote at the state and interstate level the issues of major concern to Greek Americans, such as the occupation of Cyprus, the Turkish provocations in the Aegean, etc. "There are so many things that can be accomplished in these and many other areas and the more Greek Americans we elect, the better," he said. Demetrios Giannaros noted that for Greeks being involved in politics has always been a duty and not just a matter of choice. "In classical Athens, those indifferent in public affairs they were called 'idiotes.' That's where the word idiot in English comes from," he pointed out.

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Natalie Bassil, Barbara Lazaris, Helen Rokas, Stella Saih, Stacey Agretelis, & Peter Kirkiris



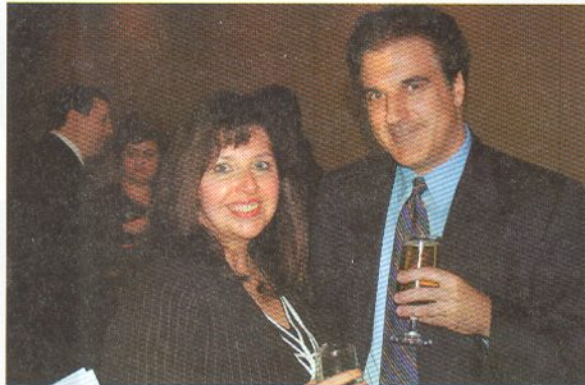
Louis Raptakis, Tina Papadopoulos, Demetrios Giannaros



Tina Papadopoulos, Anna Minos, Elizabeth Papaslis



Louis Raptakis, Carol Travayiakis, Marina Travayiakis, George Frangiadakis



Tina Papadopoulos & Peter Kirkiris



George Demeter, Stella Gogou-Papadopoulos

Chris Spiro



Stacey Agretelis & Demetrios Giannaros



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On Father's Day

My father, Dr. Constantine Michalakakis, came from Greece to educate himself and he got a PhD from Columbia University. He became the principal of several Greek parochial schools in Canada and the United States in a career in education that spanned more than fifty years. The trials he endured along the way are pictured in this account of his first job in his new world—in Montreal, Canada.

by Dimitri C. Michalakakis

Queen Elizabeth visited Canada in 1960, and so did a young man and recent graduate of Columbia University's Teacher's College in New York, who was being interviewed for the post of principal of Socrates Canadian School of the Holy Trinity community. The interview took place in an old three-story building on Sherbrooke Street that had stood since 1912 as the rectory of the church and was now being used as the school, the first Greek day school in North America and the only Greek day school in Canada at the time.

"It looked old and narrow and I wondered why I had come here," says Dr. Constantine Michalakakis, now in his eighties, then 38, a veteran of



the Greek civil war and a recent doctoral graduate of Columbia, who had been recommended to the community by Archbishop Iakovos.

Conducting the interview in the first floor office of the school was Spiros Kolivas, a former wrestler who had made his fortune running the café atop the city's Mount Royal and was nicknamed "Khrushchev" for his resemblance to the Russian leader. Around the table sat the fourteen members of the board of trustee, all early immigrants, all self-made men now wealthy through investments in nightclubs, restaurants, food markets,

and most of them uneducated.

"And they saw a young man with an education and probably thought, 'Who can trust you?'" recalls Michalakakis. "They peppered me with questions. What do you want to do with the school? What do you want to do that for? If you're so qualified, what are you doing here?"

"I wondered that myself," Michalakakis now says, the memory still vivid. "After that first day, I walked out to Sherbrooke Street to grab a cab to my hotel, and it was raining hard and there were no taxis available and nobody had offered me a ride, and I said to myself again, What am I doing here?"

He was called back the next day and his conditions reviewed. He wanted the school used only as a school (the board of trustees used it for meetings) and he wanted the right to hire qualified teachers, not the usual ladies moonlighting as Greek teachers. The board decided to deliberate longer and Michalakakis went next door to have a *kataifi* (Sherbrooke then was full of Greek shops). He was called back to the meeting by Aristotle Mavros, a transplanted Egyptian Greek, who spoke several languages and he remembers "dressed like an ambassador." The board had made a decision.

"We like you," Kolivas told Michalakakis. "We'll hire you for \$300 a month."

But Michalakakis' optimism quickly faded as the school year began: "The old immigrants who ran the school did it only for the prestige of the community having a school. Their kids were grown and didn't attend the school, anyway. The new immigrants whose kids did attend were very poor and struggling to survive."

That first school day in September, Michalakakis arrived by bus from his home in the Park Extension neighborhood (he had brought his family meanwhile from New York) and he was the first that morning in the old building: "There was no custodian, the place was very cold, and I went around switching on the lights."

Then the teachers arrived, and since there was no faculty lounge, they went directly to their classrooms. Mrs. Wilson, who taught the two first grades, was very old and went up the stairs to her classroom only once and down again the end of the day. The remaining grades ran till sixth and were taught by the school's eight teachers, including two Greek teachers, Mrs. Apostolidou from Salonika, who towered over the kids, and Mrs. Kontzias, a recent widow. After Michalakakis toured the school that first day to see that the kids were seated and the teachers present, he returned to his office (the former first floor office of the board of trustees) and rang the bell by hand to start the first day of classes.

"The ten kids of the sixth grade sat on the other side of the partition that separated my office from their class," he remembers. "There was no yard for recess, and the kids ate their lunch at their desks." One little boy brought a daily lunch of a crust of bread dipped in oil. "These people were very poor," says Michalakakis. "Desperately poor." Of the 260 kids that first year, many were late with the \$2-3 a month tuition. "What do you want me to do?" one parent late with his payment told Michalakakis. "Feed my family or pay you?"

Michalakakis stayed for two years, then moved to Chicago. He left behind a school with a new name, Socrates Hellenic Canadian School, and the hope that a new and proper school be built.

It was, a few years later, in the suburban parish of St. George.



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