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NEO

1.03 DECEMBER 2005/JANUARY 2006

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Holiday memories

❖ I don't remember Christmas in Greece, when I was growing up there spoiled by my grandparents on Chios. I don't remember it in Montreal where my yiayia brought me to join my parents—and then left for Greece broken-hearted. I remember it first in Chicago, where my father was the principal of Plato School, and he was full of energy and ambition, and our house was warm and bustling around the holidays.

❖ Chris Spanos was a friend from school and I remember him working at one of those bone-cold outdoor yards that sold trees and my family making an outing of it one night to select our tree. Chris followed us with a grin on his face (how he could grin perpetually and keep his teeth from freezing was a wonder to me) and we brushed the branches as we walked down the rows and it released the smell all around us of Christmas trees in full bloom. I remember the fire blazing in a garbage can to keep the hands of the handlers warm (and perhaps Chris' teeth) and I remember how it gave the scene a ruddy glow. I remember the excited face of my father, like a little boy, I remember my excitement, I remember him teasing Chris and Chris grinning even more and then bundling our tree with some twine by the fire. I remember him packing it on the roof of the car while I helped him, and then my hands smelling of resin as we drove home through the streets glowing with Christmas lights, and we listened to Christmas carols on the radio, and I pressed my nose to the cold glass and watched the Columbus Park golf course sail past the window under a blanket of snow.

❖ And then, for some reason, I don't remember our Christmas' after that. I don't remember decorating a tree, or spending the night sorting out our presents, and I'm sure we did, but I don't remember it, at all. I think we stopped buying real trees, and our remaining years in Chicago we spent our Christmas' at Kyria Sakellariou's house out in the suburbs (she was the Greek teacher). She had a silver tree in the window, silver hair that seemed to match it and she was a wonderful host. (I still remember the biscuits she baked, the pearls she fancied and the silk dress she wore that was her signature outfit and that shimmered like expensive Christmas paper.)

❖ I now enjoy Christmas with my wife and kids, this year in our new house, and I hope the Christmas memories I give my children will have their joys, along with the special poignancy that always seems to accompany the season.

Enjoy.

Dimitri C. Michalakis

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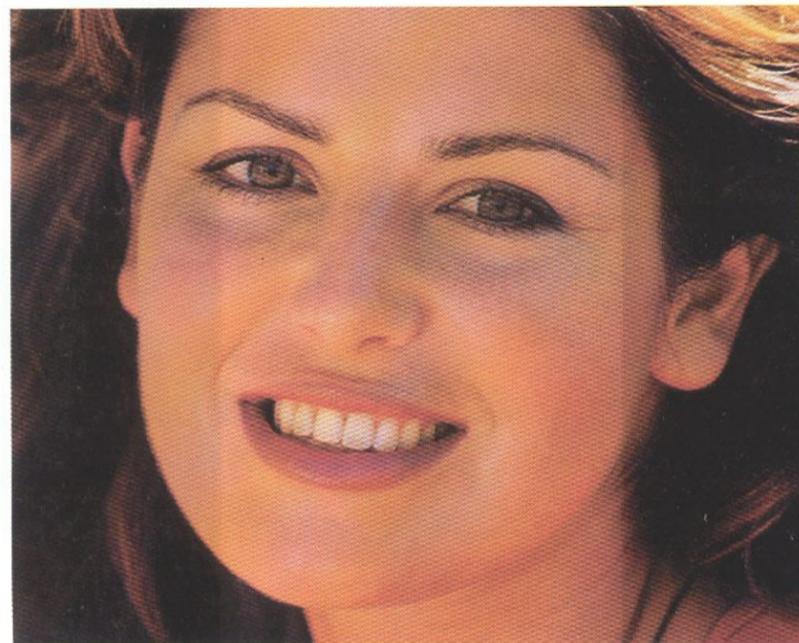
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COOKIE QUEEN

Eleni Gianopulos has made cookies of the Oscar nominees, and cookies shaped like Oscar de la Renta gowns and Kate Spade bags, cookies for the producers of *The Producers* of 800 miniature dancing legs, and a gingerbread version of Elton John's English manor house ("I had to peer in every tiny window to make sure the candy was in place") and of the Empire State Building—so what's next? "I want to create a cookie empire," says the 40-year-old cookie maven. "Willy Wonka is my inspiration."

The daughter of California real-estate developer Dan Christopoulos, Gianopulos got her cookie-baking inspiration from her mother Jeanie, and baked up a storm when she came to New York, trying out her mother's oatmeal cookie recipe and soon expanding the line and selling it to gourmet stores, before Martha Stewart featured her in *Martha Stewart Living* and celebrities came knocking at her shop in New York's Chelsea Market (75 Ninth Avenue, 888-4-ELENIS). Her hand-iced shapes made to order soon became known as "Conversation Cookies" and were the buzz at occasions everywhere, including the wedding of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones.



jolly gingerbread ding of Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones. "Gianopulos takes an ordinary dessert and turns it into eye candy," says her friend, designer Kate Spade.

"My cookies make people smile," says the ever-baking cookie queen.



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Phil ANGELIDES

Terminating the Terminator

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's special November election to ram through changes in teacher tenure, limit political fundraising by unions, cap state spending and alter legislative redistricting rules proved the election from hell for the "Governator," but State Treasurer Phil Angelides told him so.

"Governor Schwarzenegger is counting on a low turnout," Angelides told a pre-election rally in San Francisco. But "dozens of San Francisco's seniors and working families concerned about ensuring quality education, superior health care, and well-funded public safety services, are here today to vote NO against the Schwarzenegger-backed initiatives."

And they did, after a grueling campaign Angelides called "an entire year of missed opportunities—a year in which we could have improved our schools, started to climb out of the mountain of debt that will burden our kids, started a real debate about how we can build a better future for the generations to come."

Is he running for governor? "Like so many Californians, I come from a family of immigrants. And like so many of my generation, I was given a hand up...So I'm running for Governor to stand for a set of ideals; to put California's government back on the side of working families; to be a Governor who actually wants to do the job of governing."

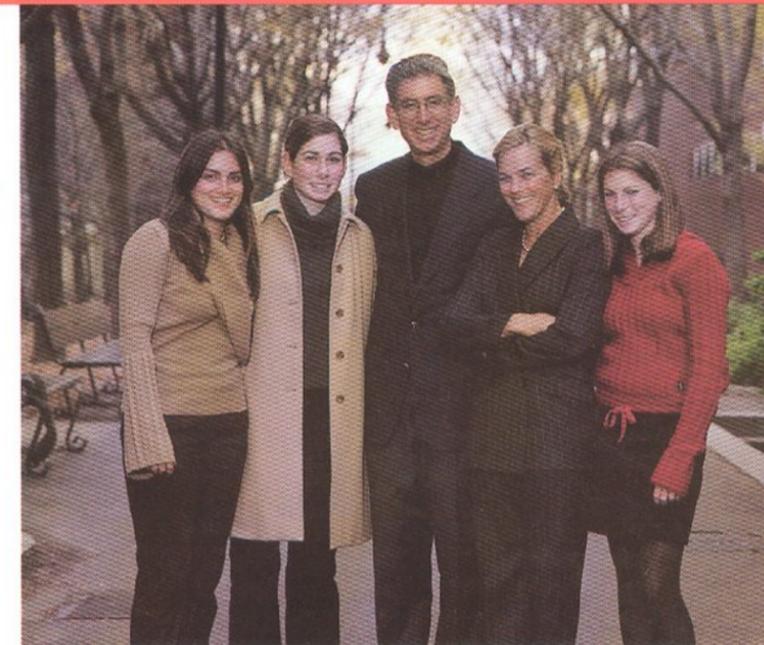
The Democrats look like a juggernaut in California right now next to the Republicans and Angelides is leading all Democrat candidates handily and also Schwarzenegger in a general election. He's hammered Schwarzenegger hard since the "Governator" was elected and proudly calls himself the "anti-Arnold." Right after the November election, in fact, the *LA Weekly* said, "State Treasurer Phil Angelides, who's already received contributions from 16,000 supporters, emerges from Tuesday's election as the front-runner to replace the Governorator."

In typical fashion, the 52-year-old Harvard graduate and former land developer has been running hard since he announced his candidacy last March at Spring Valley Elementary School and in typical fashion he honored his heritage: "For my family, Spring Valley was the start of a different kind of dream. My father first set foot in this school nearly eighty years ago. And, he's back here with us today. My grandparents--his parents--came to this country from Greece--and not in search of the easy life. My grandmother never really learned English, and never took a moment for herself. Hers was a deeper purpose. She worked as a seamstress--long hours, into the night--so my dad could go to college. She knew what that free education could mean--and she meant for my dad to have it."

"He didn't go to the University of California at Berkeley, one of the great universities in the world, to glorify himself; my mom and dad didn't work hard all their lives, like their parents before them, to drive fancy cars or see their names on a marquee. They simply wanted their kids to have even more chances than they'd had. That was their dream--that we'd do better than they had done, that they'd keep the faith with the next generation. And they did. And I'd like to dedicate this day to my parents and grandparents. They gave me all they had to give, and taught me to give it too."

Which is why Angelides has stumped for public education ("We're the richest state in the wealthiest nation in human history. Yet we're 48th out of 50 states in student achievement, and we have a governor who wants to cut \$15,000 dollars out of every public school classroom"); for fiscal responsibility ("We are the richest state in the wealthiest nation in human history. Yet we have a Governor who has embarked on an unbridled borrowing spree...Why has this Governor refused to close the hundreds of millions, some say billions, in corporate loopholes and tax boondoggles"); and why he accuses the Governor of betraying his own immigrant past ("It's ironic, if you think about it; California now has a Governor who's not merely descended from immigrants, he's an immigrant himself").

Angelides was elected state treasurer in 1988 and re-elected in 2002. He worked a number of years for California's Housing and Community Development



agency and later in the private sector as president of AKT Development Corp. (a company owned by political and business mentor Angelo Tsakopoulos) before starting his own development company, River West: "I spent fifteen years building a business, meeting a payroll and creating jobs. I built a place called Laguna West, near Sacramento, that remains a model of livable, walkable, environmentally-sustainable community, good for families and good for business."

He began his political career in 1973 as a college student running a losing race for the Sacramento City Council against a popular incumbent, another in 1977, then became chairman of the California Democratic Party in 1991. "I became chair of the California Democratic Party back when the first President Bush had stratospheric approval ratings—when there seemed to be more Spotted Owls than Democratic office-holders. So I did what I wish more Democrats would do today; I insisted we could win; I refused to give up or turn back or stand down." Bill Clinton not only won the state but California sent two Democratic women to the senate (Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer).

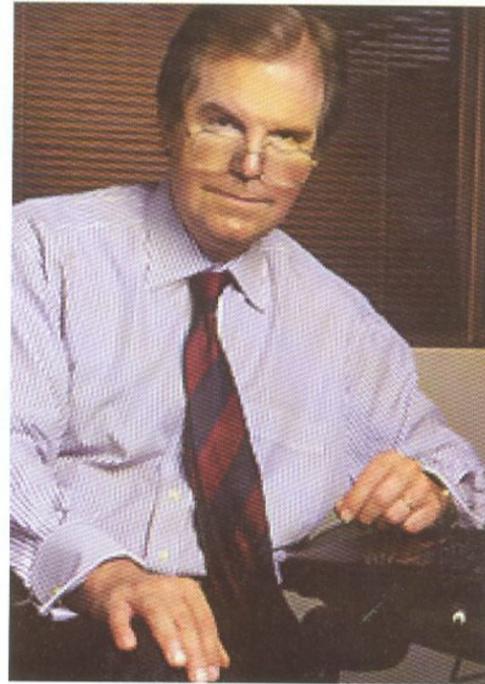
As Treasurer, he's led the pitch for corporate reform by increasing standards for disclosure and financial reporting. He's also led initiatives to spur economic growth in California communities through targeted investments, to increase investments in environmentally clean technologies, and to pressure corporate America to address global warming. "As State Treasurer, I've taken an office that probably did have a few shoeboxes in it, and used it not just to manage your tax dollars better, but to improve the lives of ordinary Californians."

"My father always told me: for every advantage you have been given, remember there are people who work fifteen hours a day just to survive, people who never get a break from anyone," says the Sacramento native, who still lives there with his wife Julie and three daughters, Megan, Christina and Arianna. "He always told me: don't ever forget them."



A laptop for all

Imagine a computer so simple that even a child can use it? Imagine it being so portable that even a child in an African village can use it? Imagine making it a laptop costing no more than \$100? Imagine making it Kermit the Frog green?



The impossible has been done with the unveiling last month in Tunisia at the World Summit on the Information Society of a low-cost, full-featured computer meant to "dramatically enhance children's primary and secondary education worldwide," according to MIT's Media Lab, which developed the laptop together with the nonprofit One Laptop per Child (OLPC) association. Standing next to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan that day was the driving force behind the project—Nicholas Negroponte, chairman and co-founder of the Lab and OLPC.

"The \$100 laptop is inspiring in many respects," said Annan. "It is an impressive technical achievement, able to do almost everything that larger, more expensive computers can do. It holds the promise of major advances in economic and social development. But perhaps most important is the true meaning of 'one laptop per child.'"

Negroponte hopes in the next couple of years to crank up the production of the laptops and reach all the children that need it, regardless of their circumstances, regardless of where they are.

"Children are the greatest natural resource of any country, and educating these children is at the root of solving our largest and most complex problems," he says. "Yet the best education may not come from sitting in a traditional classroom, but rather through independent interaction and exploration. The development of the \$100 laptop will now make this possible for all kids—especially those in developing nations. It will redefine how we're learning."



The little laptop is Linux-based, full-color, full-screen and though it has a plug, it can be powered for several minutes by simply cranking it up (ten minutes of juice for every minute of cranking). It has a Wi-Fi radio transmitter (to tie in with other machines and share a Net connection from one computer to the next) and USB ports galore, 500 MHz, 1GB and 1 Megapixel.

Why not a desktop? The Lab says mobility is key, so kids can take the computer home at night: "Recent work with schools in Maine has shown the huge value of using a laptop across all of one's studies, as well as for play. Bringing the laptop home engages the family. In one Cambodian village where we have been working, there is no electricity, thus the laptop is, among other things, the brightest light source in the home."

Why not a recycled desktop? With 100 million available and each needing an average of one hour of refurbishing, "that is forty-five thousand work years."

How are the costs kept so low? In large part, by lowering the cost of the display. The new machine will have a new, dual-mode display similar to DVD players which can be used in high-resolution black and white even in bright sunlight. Then, "we will get the fat out of the system. Today's laptops have become obese. Two-thirds of their software is used to manage the other third, which mostly does the same function nine different ways." Finally, the laptop will be marketed in the millions (minimum of one million units per order) directly to ministries of education, which can then distribute it like textbooks.

Negroponte has logged thousands of miles to apply his legendary powers of persuasion, talks have been held in China, Brazil, Argentina, Thailand and Egypt, Brazil has agreed to buy one million units, and closer to home, Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney has ordered half a million laptops. Manufacturing will begin when 5 to 10 million laptops have been ordered and been paid for in advance.

Another key to cutting costs

is luring the innovators to the project. Negroponte convinced Intel display division chief technology officer Mary Lou Jepsen to join OLPC and she was responsible for the new display. Xerox Parc veteran Alan Kay joined MIT mathematician and educational theorist Seymour Papert to build software that helps children learn through trial and error.

Why does every child need a computer? "One does not think of community pencils—kids have their own," says the Lab. "They are tools to think with, sufficiently inexpensive to be used for work and play, drawing, writing, and mathematics. A computer can be the same, but far more powerful."

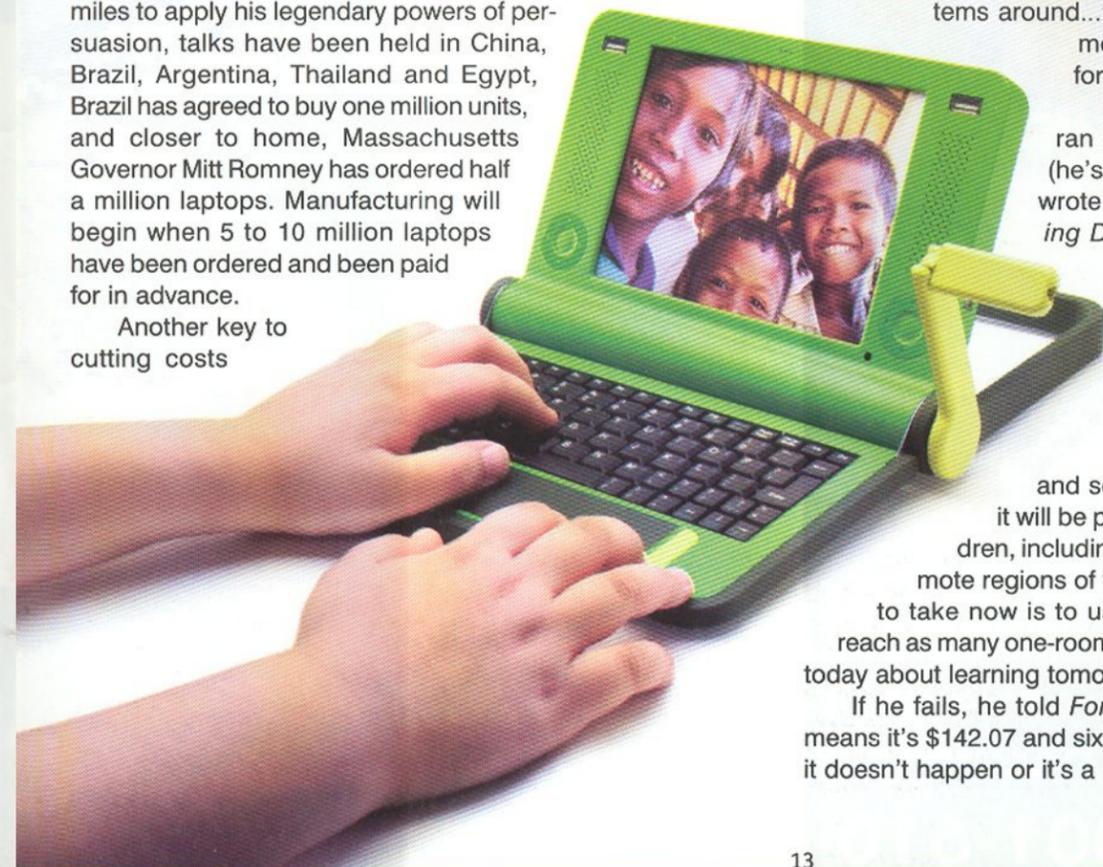
Among the backers and boosters of the project are business titans Rupert Murdoch, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs and Michael Dell. "Nick's endeavor has the prospect of potentially transforming the lives of millions of children in the developing world," said Murdoch. As for the support of the others, Negroponte says, "You have to remember I've known Steve since he was very young. I've known Michael forever. I've known Bill forever." Jobs once dismissed the laptop as a "science project" but is now contributing suggestions, Dell has volunteered his staff to crunch the numbers and Gates wants Negroponte to use his Microsoft software.

"One laptop per child: Children are your most precious resource, and they can do a lot of self-learning and peer-to-peer teaching. Bingo. End of story," says Negroponte of his sales pitch, which, however, still faces formidable obstacles. "How the heck are they going to pay for Internet access?" says AMD CEO Hector Ruiz, who nevertheless donated \$2 million to the project. He argues it's going to take "larger ecosystems around...tech support, application development, training, and business models for the Internet service providers."

But Negroponte, who founded and ran MIT's Media Lab for twenty years (he's been at the university since 1966), wrote a seminal book on the Internet, *Being Digital*, which has been translated into 40 languages, started *Wired* magazine and together with his wife once bought laptops for all the kids in a Cambodian village, is a visionary on a mission.

"With very low cost computers and some boldness in education policy, it will be possible to touch the lives of all children, including those in the poorest and most remote regions of the world," he says. "The right step to take now is to use whatever means necessary to reach as many one-room rural schools as possible --to learn today about learning tomorrow."

If he fails, he told *Fortune*, he won't go away: "Failure means it's \$142.07 and six months late. Failure doesn't mean it doesn't happen or it's a bad idea."



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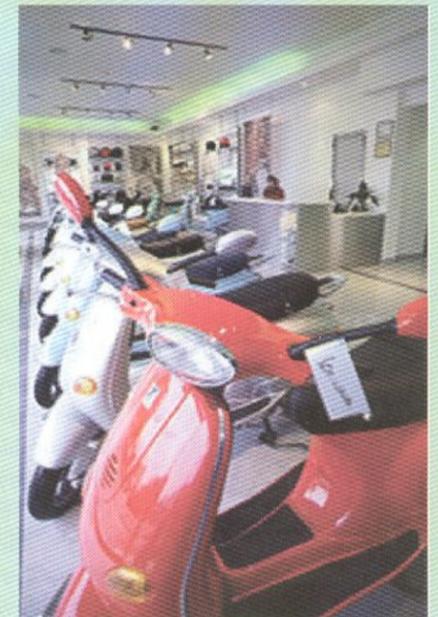
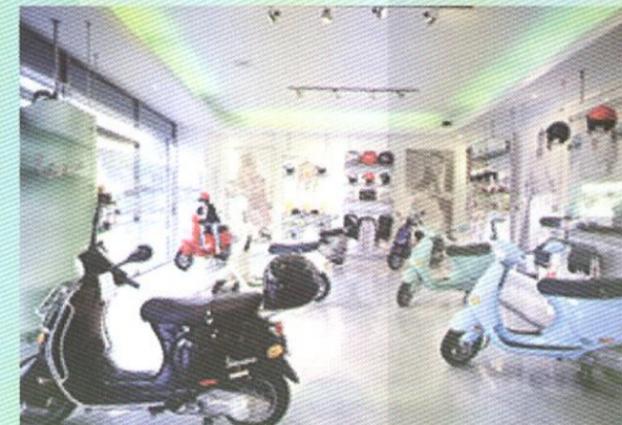
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The 11th Day

The MTV generation discovers the heroes of the Cretan resistance

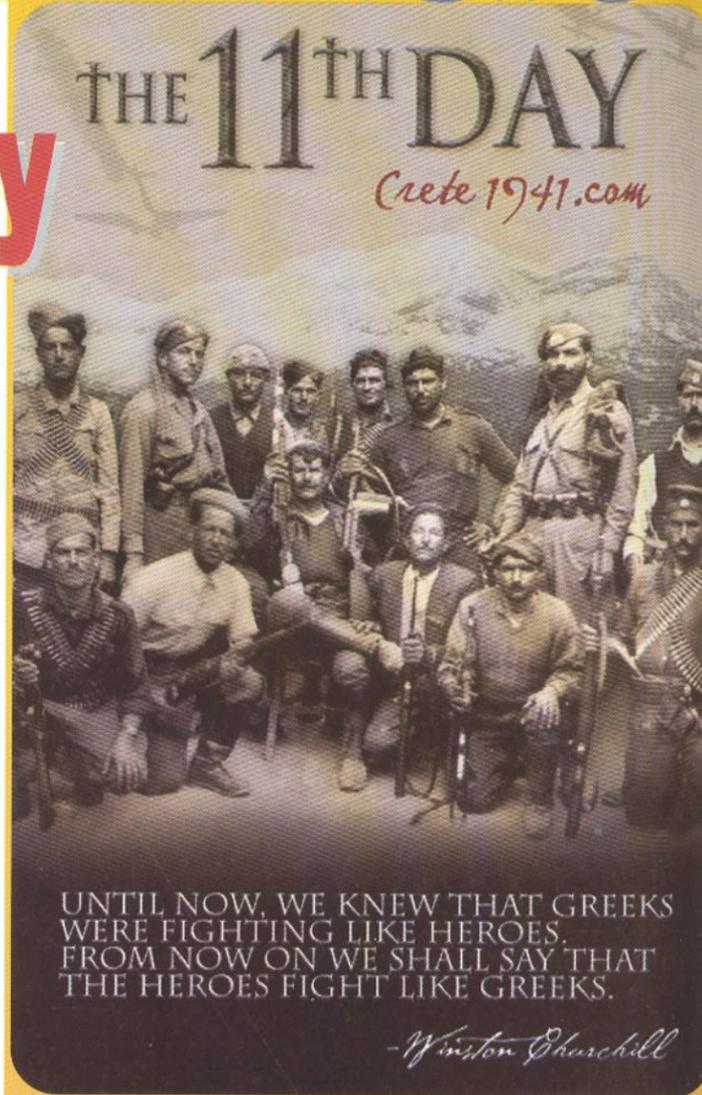
The documentary *The 11th Day* has been screened for Congress, acquired for exhibition by The National D-Day Museum, and its story of the Cretan resistance to the German occupation during World War II has been called "one of the greatest untold stories of World War II." And it was all produced, written and shot on location improbably by two filmmaking brothers from Sacramento, California who normally shoot commercials and videos for MTV.

"But most amazing," says film backer Alex Spanos (with Pancretan Association of America past president Stavros Semanderes), "is that these two Greek brothers, these two young guys are hocking their cars, maxing their credit cards and living on junk food to finish and tour this film, all to preserve the memories of people generations older than them."

But writer-producer Michael Epperson doesn't find it unusual. "These people whose stories we're telling—Leigh Fermor, who kidnapped General Kreipe, or George Tzikas, who continually threw himself into impossible battles with little hope for survival—these guys were our age when they did these things. That heroism and sacrifice should have as much meaning for our generation as for theirs. Unfortunately, though, in the case of the Cretan resistance movement, these stories have gone largely untold."

Churchill did acknowledge the resistance of the Greeks to the initial invasion of Greece by the Italians in 1940: "Until now, we knew that Greeks were fighting like heroes; from now on we shall say that heroes fight like Greeks." But the more brutal and ruthless assault and occupation of Crete, where the remaining British allies had fled and which consumed thousands of Hitler's troops because the Cretans put up among the most ferocious resistance in history, has been only the stuff of legend.

"Yes, (these stories have been) recorded in the official records," says Epperson, "but they haven't been



widely shared with younger generations. Now we're at a point where as these people begin to pass away, the chance to hear their stories in their voices is passing away with them. That's the real fuel driving this project."

And also the personal memories of the brothers, including Christos, who was only a teenager when he first noticed Uncle Mimi's tattoo on his arm. Then he visited Crete for the first time and saw the bomb craters and the bullet holes still in the walls. And he also heard the stories about Thia Eleftheria who was caught, tortured and killed by the Germans for being a spy. He also did learn, finally, that Uncle Mimi's tattoo was his number from the Dachau concentration camp, where the family had been sent for their resistance to the Germans.

After becoming a filmmaker, Christos went back to the story and decided to record the history of the resistance in the words of the surviving veterans. But the memories were painful for many (the Germans had vowed to kill ten Cretans for every soldier they lost) and it wasn't until family friend George Tzikas, one of the battle-scarred resistance fighters, finally agreed to help that the project got



underway.

"They started ringing the bells," recounts Tzikas in the film about the desperate first days of the German paratrooper invasion. "The church bells. Freedom! Save the city! Stop the Germans! And men and women, children, we stopped the advance, with no equipment, we stopped the advance."

A white-bearded Manolis Paterakis remembers, "We did not have many guns. Still we went to fight. Women and men, children, young and old. They went with hoes. They went with stakes. With anything they could find."

But then the Germans settled in, with reprisals that decimated whole villages, and it fueled a resistance that became even fiercer. "There was fear, no question about that," says Tzikas, who had nightmares for 65 years about the bullet that dropped from his gun as a German approached him (the crew found the original bullet on location). "But that fear brought anger. Let me tell you: The iron that was coming down, and the fire made the Cretan heart harder than the German steel and the Cretan spirit hotter than the German fire."

Thirty-five veterans were eventually interviewed, providing 400 hours of their memories, including Patrick Leigh Fermor, the British intelligence agent who broke his silence after half a century to recount how he and his Cretan resistance fighters captured German General Karl Kreipe. Footage was shot in five countries and over 400 actors were involved in the reenactments, including the children and grandchildren of the original resistance fighters.

"Producers and studio executives have asked us whether our budget was closer to \$1.5 million or \$2 million," says Christos, who directed the film. "I tell them it was around \$500,000. Their eyes bug out. They ask what editing companies we used, how we managed these big battle scenes, what marketing firm does our website and promo and film tour...I reply, 'Me, my brother Mike, Ian, and Jordan, and Eric who runs the office. And Mom, of course.'"

The film will tour this winter and spring throughout the United States and Canada (For info: (917) 973-1120 or tour@archangelfilms.com) and private screenings are available.

"This is one of the most important and yet least commemorated stories of World War II," says Spanos, a WW II veteran himself. "The scope and artistry of the film—it just blows away so many films that cost four or five times as much, with ten times the crew. They really pulled off something magical."



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The men, women, and children who took on Hitler's most elite soldiers... and won.

It's a film that Chase Brandon, a 30-year veteran operative of the CIA, has proclaimed "one of the greatest untold stories of World War II." Columnist John Kass of the Chicago Tribune and Newsday rallied his readers to the Chicago premiere of this "stirring documentary," telling them, "if you're interested in what ticks an insurgency, and the news is full of that today...you'll want to see this film."

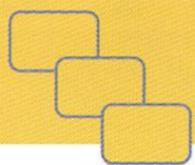
U.S. Congressman Michael Bilirakis has hailed it as "an extraordinary film," moved by the story that he invited director-producer Christos Epperson and writer-producer Michael Epperson to present a special preview to fellow members of Congress in Washington D.C. last year. It has since been acquired for exhibition by America's national World War II museum, The National D-Day Museum, and is currently on a worldwide tour in theaters across America, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

The 11th Day chronicles the story of the men, women, and children of Cretan civilian resistance movement and their relentless battle against Nazi occupation forces from 1940-1945—a battle which inspired Churchill to proclaim, "Until now we knew that Greeks were fighting like heroes; from now on we shall say that the heroes fight like Greeks."

Their stories are told first hand, and on location, through exclusive interviews with the resistance fighters themselves. Some were just child recruits at the time, boys and girls; others were seasoned veterans, and still others were the Allied soldiers and British intelligence operatives who fought alongside them. Together, they would inflict upon Germany its first major defeat of the war, decimating half of Hitler's 8,000 elite airborne assault troops in the first 48 hours. Cretan civilians fought alongside their comrades from England, Australia, and New Zealand throughout 10 fateful days in May 1941. Once the Germans took over the island, the Cretan people rallied to their first acts of resistance the following day: they risked and gave their lives to help the Allied soldiers escape. Help us celebrate this historic film.

The 11th Day is an independent documentary film, so our resources are limited. We're a small crew of 3 people, so please add your voices to our own and help us spread the word! This is our opportunity as Greeks to stand up and honor the sacrifices made by our elders, unjustly ignored by history, and to preserve their incredible stories for future generations. It is time for us to celebrate their more significant contribution to the defeat of Nazi tyranny, and to make sure that it is we Greeks who preserve our history, lest it be forgotten or written by others.

Please tell your family and friends to visit www.crete1941.com for the film's tour schedule, preview clips, photo galleries, recent media coverage, t-shirts & hats, and more. Check out our on-line postcards, which let you email small clips of the film to family and friends. It's a great way to tell people about the film. Help us keep



Film review: Valantis Stamelos

Hard Goodbyes: My Father

(Diskoli Apocheretismi: O Babasmou)

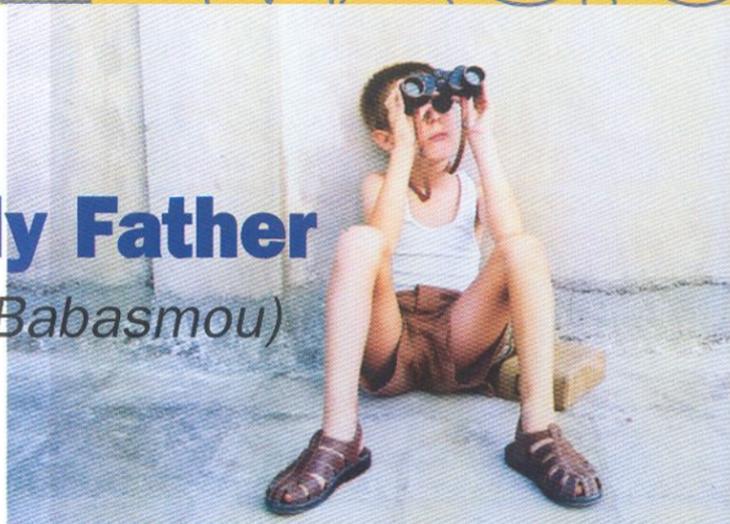
(Sipapu Films, Directed and written by Penny Panayotopoulou, Starring Giorgos Karayannis, Ioanna Tsirigouli, Stelios Mainas, Despo Diamantidou, Christos Stergioglou, Christos Bougiotas, Official Website: HardGoodbyes.com)

Hard Goodbyes: My Father is easily one of the best films to come out of Greece in several years. Director Penny Panayotopoulou creates a dramatic masterpiece, which utilizes its actors (particularly Giorgos Karayannis) not as characters pushing an agenda, but as realistic people in realistic situations. The film, if given enough exposure, could be a candidate for an Academy Award.

Hard Goodbyes: My Father takes place in 1969 and centers on Elias, a lonely boy who loves and obsesses over the time he spends with his father. His father, a traveling salesman, is an absentee parent gone for long periods of time on business. One day, Elias and his father make a pact to watch the first moon landing on television. To pass the time, they both recite the stories of Jules Verne, who a century earlier visualized a moon landing. "The mind travels faster than actions," are the words the father whispers to Elias as they wonder about the anticipated event. However, Elias's father doesn't return from work one day, and the promise between father and son goes unfulfilled, forcing Elias to obsess over his father's absence and the promise that was made.

Walking into the film, I didn't know what to expect. I have seen only a few of the current films from Greece, the last being *Politiki Kouzina* (aka *A Touch of Spice*). Although I enjoyed *Kouzina's* cultural discussion of Greek/Turkish relations and history, the film fell flat on several levels, due to its low-tech cinematography and many didactic messages of love and heartache.

Hard Goodbyes was different. Panayotopoulou manages to show the action from an objective point of view, allowing the viewer to digest the scene as is, and interpret it in a per-



sonal way. There is no trick photography to force the viewer to see a certain way, nor any manipulative technical trickery such as glow lighting or extreme close-ups. *Hard Goodbyes* was shot in a more documentary style, creating an environment that invites the viewer in, rather than forcing him into the story. From beginning to end, we witness a young boy's transformation from innocence to adulthood, without ever losing sight of imagination or hope.

What is even more amazing is the performance by Giorgos Karayannis. At such a young age, the actor was able to carry a dark, drama-burdened film on his physically small, yet emotionally large, shoulders. His range of emotions, from happiness to depression, become almost haunting and not once seem like a performance. I look forward to seeing him in future films.

The supporting cast should not go unnoticed, either. The storyline between husband and wife and their struggle of intimacy is well orchestrated through the performances of Ioanna Tsirigouli and Stelios Mainas. And Christos Bougiotas as Aris, the older brother to Elias, who struggles with Elias's refusal to believe that their father is gone, is captivating in its own right.

As someone who lost their father at a relatively young age, I felt the film understood the subject matter, and did not manipulate or simplify the plight of the characters. Rather, the film gives insight into the lives of these characters as they come to terms with the loss of a loved one--in this case, the patriarchal figure that rings true for many Greek families, "O Babas."

Unfortunately, because the film was distributed in 2002 and doesn't have the budget for promotion, the chance of it getting recognition in the States is unlikely. And it's a hard sell in the U.S. It's completely in Greek, it's a drama about a little boy and his father, there's not much action and the humor is pretty dry. But it's no different than several of the foreign films that have already hit U.S. screens. It would be a shame for this film to go unnoticed, especially among the Greek-American community. Also, a Greek female director is not common in the movie world. Often a male-dominated industry worldwide, it's a delight to see a Greek woman outdo the work of Greek male directors of the past 10 years. Keep an eye on Penny—I'm sure this is just the first of many great works from her.

"Spirit of the Chicago Greeks" celebrates Greeks everywhere

By Rob Buikema

"Spirit of the Chicago Greeks: Alive in 05" follows Greek culture from Socrates' frog pond in 450 B.C. to the present day Greek Independence Day Parade on Halsted Street in Chicago. Writer, director, producer and narrator Dr. Jenna Constantine wanted to "convey a spirit that goes way back. A spirit of passion, pride, excellence and perseverance that still lives today – and you can touch it," she says.

Constantine's intent of the documentary is to educate people on a culture that lives strong in Chicago and around the world, while also finding her own voice and heritage. The documentary is about "your own spirit and embracing freedom," she says.

She also wanted to add politics into the film because they play such a large part around the world and in the past of Greek ethnicity. Constantine wanted to make something that was visual, something that would confront the viewer because of what they would see and hear coming from her piece.

Though she understands that some people may say she has a prejudice toward the Greek culture and that this may be the reason she chose the topic, she says the film is really about "embracing diversity." She feels that people should celebrate the uniqueness of their differences. "Here and now there are beings that contribute greatly that can be from different backgrounds."

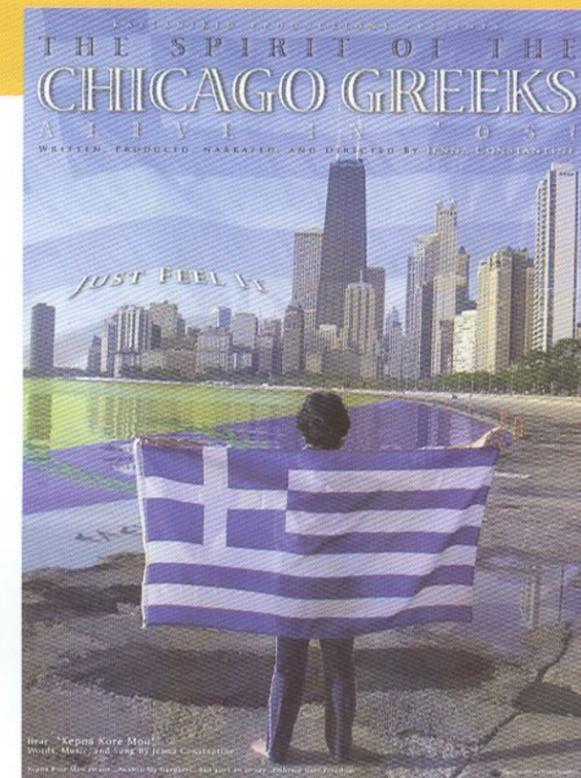
Constantine is now celebrating the success of her piece, which is being shown in film festivals in Los Angeles and New York. But the most exciting part of this experience is her trip to Cannes in May of 2006. She looks forward to showing Europeans her culture and celebrating what her heritage means to so many others.

The documentary began shooting in April and was finished by the beginning of July. She was able to shoot both in Chicago and Greece and felt fortunate that she had a cameraman, Jeff Haddick, who would go with the flow of her ideas.

For post-production, she used VideoOne Productions in Chicago. "It seemed like [it took] 100 years," Constantine said of the end process. "But the people at Video One were great [and understanding]."

Financing the documentary herself allowed Constantine to go at her own pace and cover the topics she felt were important. She says her children – Demetra, Evelyenia and Athanasios (who was also the production assistant) – were very involved in making sure the film was completed. She also says the community was extremely giving in sending out press releases. The community was also accommodating in providing financial support once the documentary was finished, she notes.

As for financing her own documentary, Constantine says, "I recommend everyone with a dollar in their pocket...to just go out there and do it." Not only is the experience



liberating but it allows for a person to grow and express ideas any way they would like. "If you set up barriers you'll never start," she says. "Once you start you find a way to get through it."

This is Constantine's debut documentary, but not her first time in front of the camera. She used to have her own talk show and did a small documentary on Habitat for Humanity. She also started Baby Face Productions during her time as a social psychologist. During that time, she taped her subjects to allow them to see what she saw. This also helped get her comfortable and prepared her for the narrative parts in the documentary.

Aside from documentaries, Constantine is also an author, singer and songwriter. Thanks to her days in school choir, she wrote and sang the closing song of the documentary, "Xepna Kore Mou."

Constantine hopes to premiere her film in Chicago sometime after the Cannes Film Festival. Her hope is to have it at Oak Street Beach in Chicago, the location in which her documentary begins and ends.

She dedicated the film to her grandfather, Kostas Demetrios Gliarmis, and says her grandparents played a large part in her decision to make the film and show others the past and present of her culture. They represent the "human spirit that happens to be cradled by Greek-Americans," she says.

Copies of the DVD can be ordered online at www.chicagogreekspirit.com or by calling KaplaniKid Productions at 312.399.4860.

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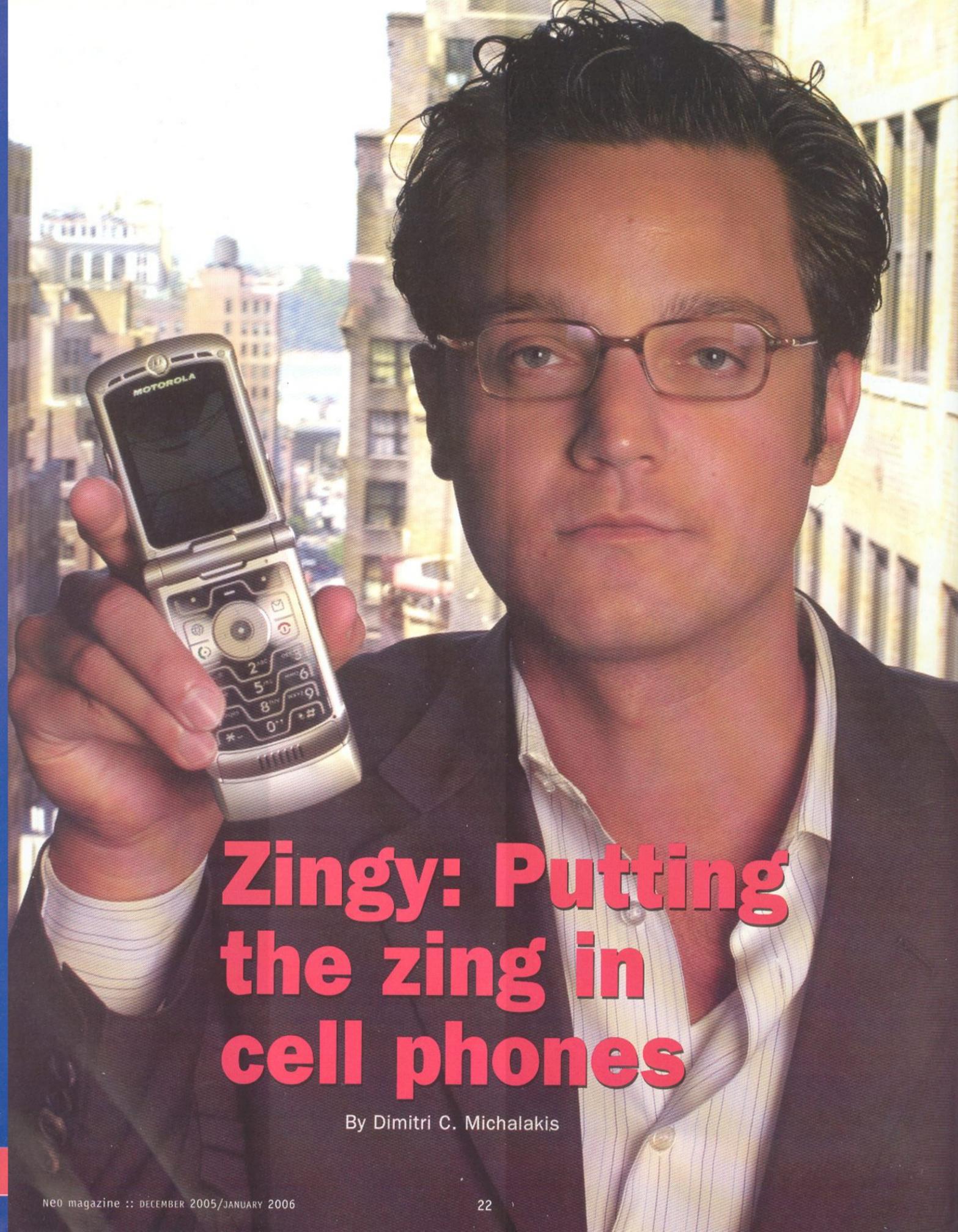
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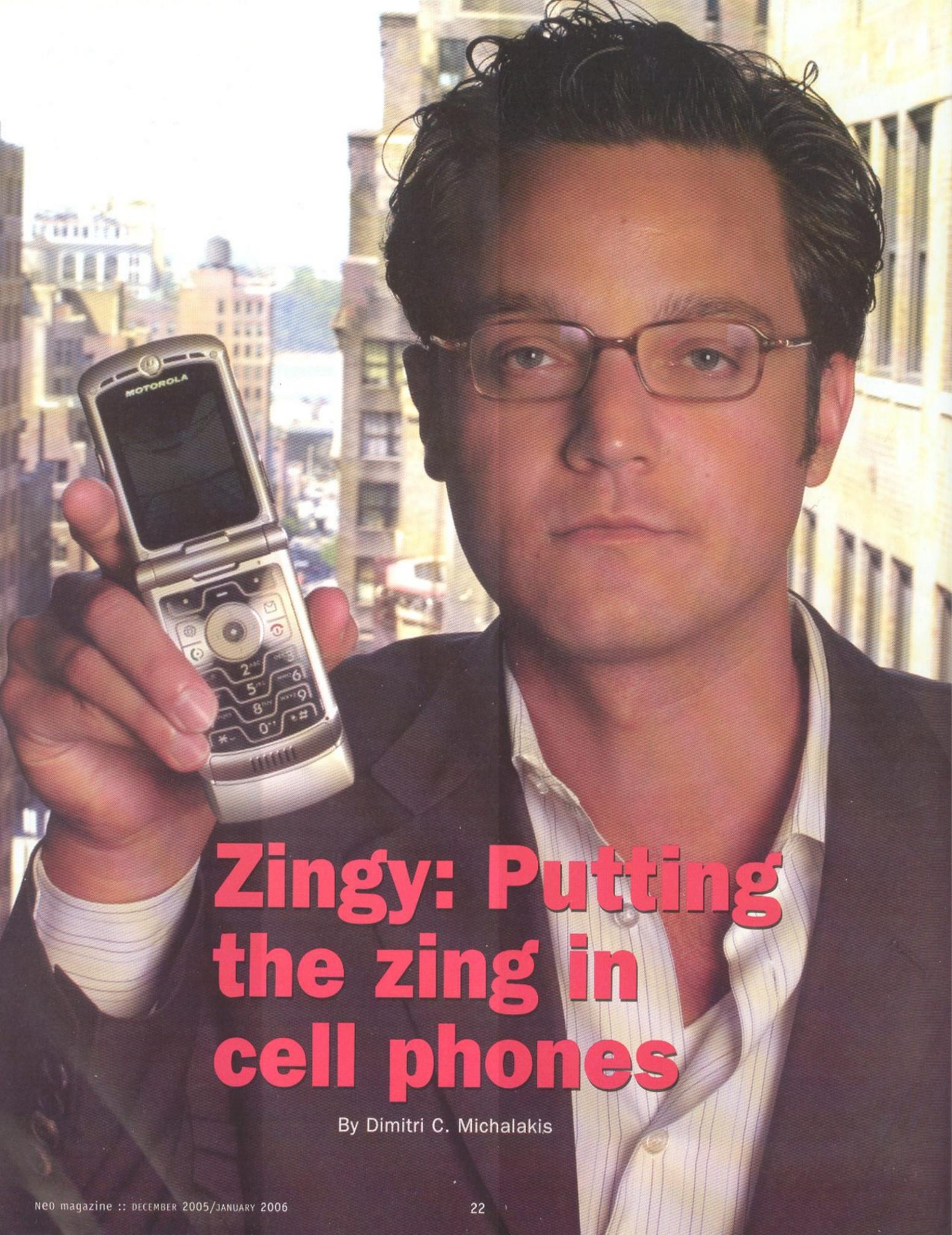
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Zingy: Putting the zing in cell phones

By Dimitri C. Michalakis



Zingy: Putting the zing in cell phones

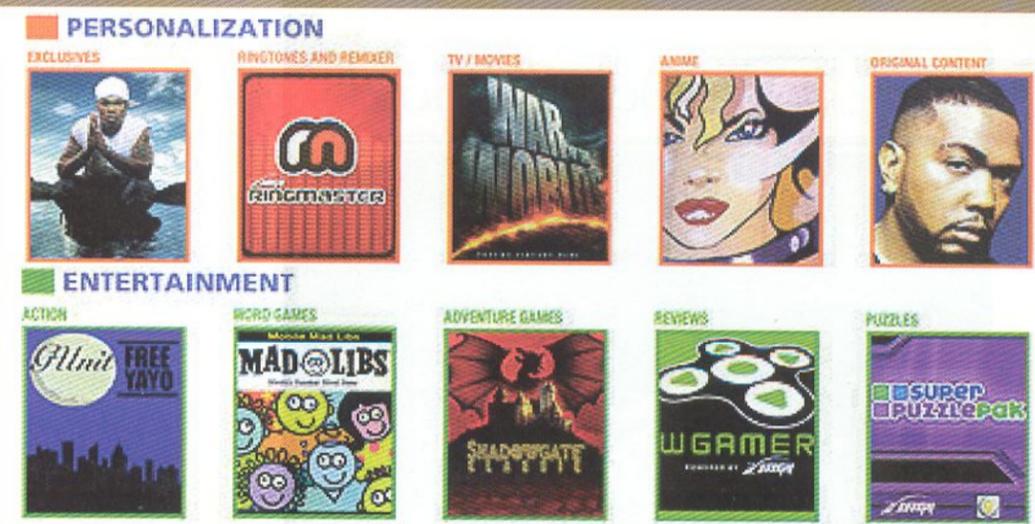
By Dimitri C. Michalakis

Andy Volanakis remembers not too long ago having to explain just what a mobile media company like Zingy does: "I would pick up a phone to—insert major media company here—and explain what a ring tone was. More times than not you would then get, 'Why would anybody want to buy that?'"

Those days are gone; there are 180 million customers and a \$500 million market in the U.S. alone for things like ring tones, wallpaper and games added to cell phones and Zingy, started just four years ago and a pioneer in the field, is the giant in the U.S. and the Americas, in general. (Not bad for a company whose average employee hasn't yet cracked 30; Volanakis, the president and COO, admits he's the old man at 30.) And unlike the early days, he no longer has trouble getting anybody on the phone or closing deals with some of the hottest entertainment

on the market. "We have hundreds and hundreds of licensing deals," Volanakis says from Zingy corporate offices in New York (with others in Los Angeles, Mexico City and Montreal). "We own content, we develop content in-house, and we are really a partner that people want to work with, because this is a real business and we definitely have proven ourselves in the last couple of years."

Last fall the company signed a deal with Nickelodeon and Viacom Consumer Products Inc. to develop voice ring tones and wallpaper among other mobile content from a premiere selection of Paramount films, including The Godfather trilogy, Airplane!, Ferris Bueller's Day Off, and Get Rich or Die Tryin' starring 50 Cent. Consumers could have their phone ring with nos-



talgie movie lines such as, "I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse" from The Godfather, decorate their screen with Marlon Brando as Don Corleone wallpaper, or download a game based on Get Rich or Die Tryin'.

Zingy also recently bought Vindigo, best known for information and subscription services such as the award-winning Vindigo CityGuide, and in partnership with Verizon Wireless, the nation's leading wireless service provider, it provides the content for Verizon Wireless Mobile Web 2.0SM

mobile content is still relatively untapped (only 15-20% download games or ring tones here, as opposed to 50-70% in Europe) and the global industry is in the multi-billions. But the U.S. is now the fastest area of growth (Canada is slower, but deals are cooking) and major carriers like Verizon and Sprint are hot on the bandwagon.

"It's largely driven by the telecommunications carriers," says Volanakis, who pioneered Sprint's carrier-based mobile content business before joining Zingy two years ago. "I knew there was something in



customers who want to locate the best restaurants, get local show times for all the latest blockbusters and find any new DVD release from FilmFan, the ultimate DVD rental and film database.

"Mobile customers are increasingly interested in using their wireless phones to find local information and entertainment services," says Volanakis. And also to play games—Zingy offers Mad Libs and Shadowgate for addicted gamers (an increasing number of them women) and just recently signed a game publishing agreement with G-Unit. "We've been quite aggressive and quite innovative," he says. "We're obviously looking to be as diversified and differentiated as possible."

Which might seem like brava-do for a new industry except that the North American market for

mobile, to be really candid, I didn't know what, but I knew I wanted to be a part of it. I knew I could be one of the people to help figure it out."

He originally came from advertising (BBDO Worldwide and Grey Global Group), he graduated Georgetown University and studied at the London School of Economics, and he grew up in L.A. and went to high school in Dubuque. (His father George was in the toy business and with consolidation in the business traveled a lot.) In high school and college he played in a band (he still hopes rock will make a comeback), he doesn't play much guitar anymore, but he still keeps up with musical trends. What's on his cell phone for the moment? 50 Cent.

"Music has been the common thread in my life," he says, "which is why this is fun for me. This is music. This is popular culture. It's great fun."



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(11) Room cap. - cocktail reception	425	(25) Terrace	Yes
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(13) Cuisine	Continental	(27) Live music / DJ allowed	Yes
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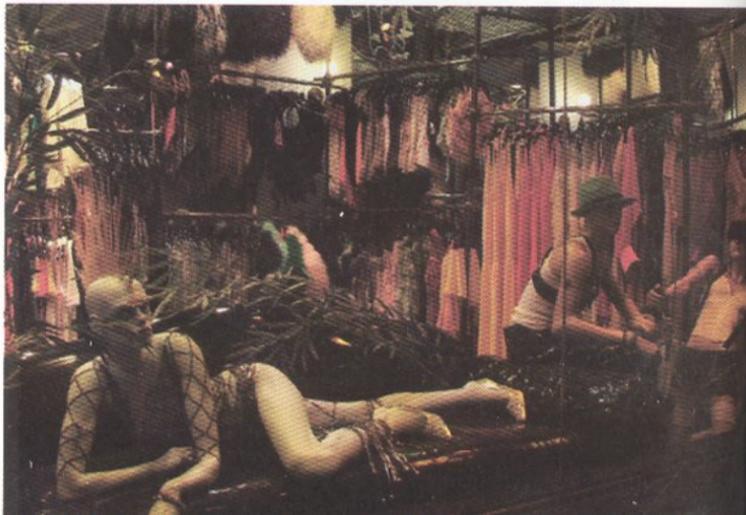
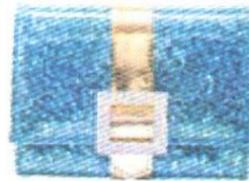
[FASHION] :: :: ::



Fashionista

Patricia Field has been the queen bee of the downtown fashion scene in New York since she opened her now-legendary Greenwich Village boutique in 1966 that catered to hipsters and scenesters. And she did it again in 1996 when she opened her Hotel Venus boutique in Soho that features everything from butt-bearing trousers to Sixties-style clutches. Her signature flaming locks are a fixture at most downtown scenes and she has worked with the stars of every era. She has dressed Britney Spears and Shakira and now she has teamed with Damon Dash in a "Patricia Field for House of Roca Wear" that features 31 pieces with her sexy-glam look allied to his hot street style for everything from motorcycle jackets with hot-pink stitching to fitted pencil skirts with a corset-style waist that will be sold through Bloomingdale's and Macy's.

Her sexy-glam became the signature of an era during her Emmy-winning turn on *Sex and the City*, but she's designed for a variety of TV shows and movies, for the musical *The Opposite of Sex* on Broadway and *Barbarella* in Vienna, and most recently for Candies her "Vintage Candies by Patricia Field." "Life is a party," says the perennial fashionista. "Enjoy it—because it ends."



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THALASSA

BIG CITY connection

By Dimitri C. Michalakos

Valantis Stamelos came to New York fresh out of Syracuse University to look for a job and conquer the big city. He soon found himself all alone, without a job, and wondering if the big city had conquered him. Joanna Malandrenias came from New Jersey to study at Columbia University and found herself equally isolated. "I didn't know anybody," she says. "I knew acquaintances from school, but there was no bond."



Philippe Danielides comes from New York but was thinking the same thing. Erik Stamelos is also a native New Yorker, but he sympathized with the plight of his cousin Valantis. And Erik knew Doretta Mistras, who was born in Salonika and studied in the U.S., and they all got together to commiserate and brainstorm.

"My cousin Erik was saying, wouldn't it be great if there was a Greek community in NYC that kind of eased the burden of moving in, professionally and socially speaking?" Valantis, 25, remembers. "Like I go to Astoria, but I don't feel like there's any connection. I love Astoria, it's great to look at, I love partaking in the cafés, but there's no connection, I'm not building any social connection there. The funny thing is, with everything going on, everybody says New York City is a very lonely place."

Particularly with young people from traditional homes pursuing untraditional careers. "Someone like me in the entertainment business," says Valantis (a production assistant at Nickelodeon), "where was I going to find support? Even after I graduated, I was told to come back, own a restaurant, get into the business, and you'll be fine."

So the friends decided to form a new support group for people like them and called it The Hellenic Professional Association. "We wanted an organization that would serve a social function, so that it would bring com-

munities together," says Philippe, a litigation legal assistant and law student. "But to create a sense of solidarity in the community, as well, that we felt was lacking. Also, to help with professional advancement, because there are so many talented Greeks, older Greeks, in all the industries in NYC and it was a shame there was no way to connect them with those of us who were starting out and looking to break into the industries. Whenever you meet older Greeks there is an altruistic desire to help out. You go to a diner, you mention a word in Greek and all of a sudden you've got three plates of French fries, and they love you, so you want to tap into that."

One of their early mentors was Rev. Dimitrios Antokas, the former pastor of the Westfield, New Jersey parish. "He's a very nice guy, he's been very supportive with us and introduced us to new people who might help us out as well," says Philippe. "He's been a great facilitator." The group also started canvassing on their own. "We started with the Greek parade last year," says Joanna. "We made flyers and just walked up and down the sidewalks handing them out to people." And the buzz grew. "I remember within the first couple of weeks it was 30-40 people heard about it, and then it spread,



and then we had our first event, and slowly people started joining," she says.

Their event a few months ago at Tonic in Manhattan raised \$1400, which was matched by an executive at Citigroup, for a total donation of \$3000 by the group to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. "That was pretty much through the Internet and our mailing list (now at close to 300 members)," says Valantis. Last summer they had a "Picnic in the Park" and there was a wine tasting that featured Greek wines.

"We want to offer different kinds of events than would

normally be offered in the Greek-American community," says Joanna. "To make a really successful ethnic group you have to open up your mind to what else there is in the world. What else is America but a mix of many cultures?"

The group has a website (hpanyc.org), which Philippe calls not only "a kind of hub" for the listing of interesting events but a potential "on-line database with people's names, an on-line network where people could put up their business cards and look for jobs openings. Let's say I'm interested in being a lawyer and I want to speak to someone who went to a specific law school or who works in a specific field within law, you could look them up, and if they choose to give you their contact information, you could contact that person."

It's a way, he says, of building "some momentum, but also allowing some younger Greeks to take advantage of the resources that are out there. In the Greek communities there are pockets of random organizations, doing this and this, but there's nothing to tie it all together. You have a lot of really talented, disenfranchised Greeks who feel that the Greek community is kind of out of date--older, more traditional, not really connected with what is going on in the mainstream right now, and so it drives a lot of us away, and that's a shame."

Memberships range from Young Professionals to Corporate (businesses that want to sponsor or be affiliated with HPA) and events are usually held monthly in New York. The connections made through HPA have enhanced the lives of many of its members, including the HPA board.

"I've met interesting people in the city, like the board itself," says Joanna. "That's four new friends I didn't have when I moved to Manhattan. It also gives me a lot of hope that I can make a connection with other people that are interested in my field."

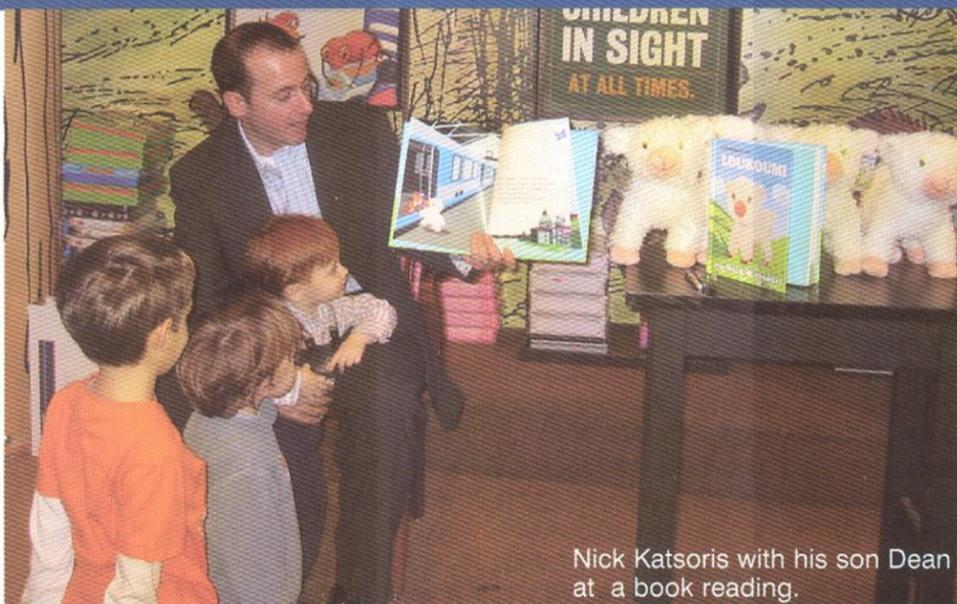
AGNANTI RESTAURANT IN BROOKLYN

Imagine sampling the cuisine of old Constantinople in the very heart of Queens, New York. Agnanti (19-06 Ditmars Boulevard, 718-545-455) has been doing that for three years and won raves from diners and Zagat (which gave it a 27 out of 30 rating) for Chef Spiros Sidorakis' menu, including tender charred octopus, rooster pasta and oat-rusk salad. And now Agnanti has opened in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn as well, with Chef Eleni presiding, and as in Astoria, with old black-and-white photos of Constantinople on the wall and other relics of the city to conjure up the past and were specially chosen from the faded thrift shops of Monastiraki in Athens.

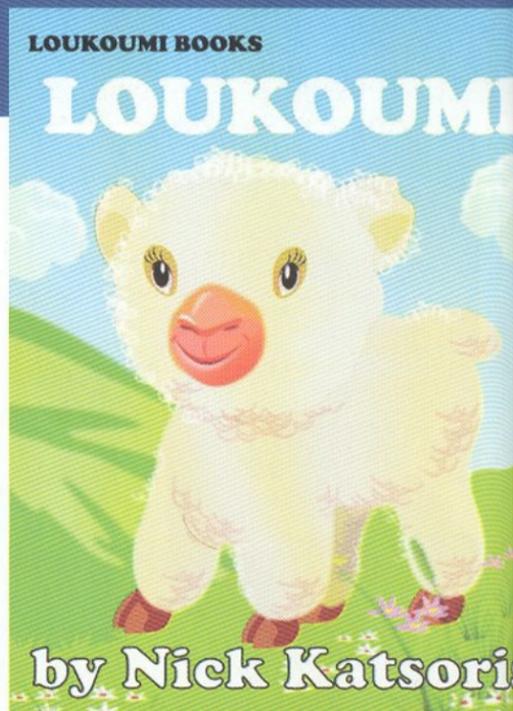
"Everything is from Greece, from the tablecloths to the pictures," says Fay Lambrianidis, whose mother Maria established the Agnanti restaurants with Chef Sidorakis. As for the new Brooklyn location, Fay says, "Brooklyn has a good Greek population, as well as other ethnic groups, and we thought there would be a demand for a good Greek restaurant." Agnanti Brooklyn is located at 78-02 Fifth Avenue (718-833-7033).

Maria and Fay Lambrianidis with Chef Eleni (center) and the staff of the new Agnanti in Brooklyn.





Nick Katsoris with his son Dean at a book reading.



Loukoumi a treat for kids of all ages

by Dimitri C. Michalakos

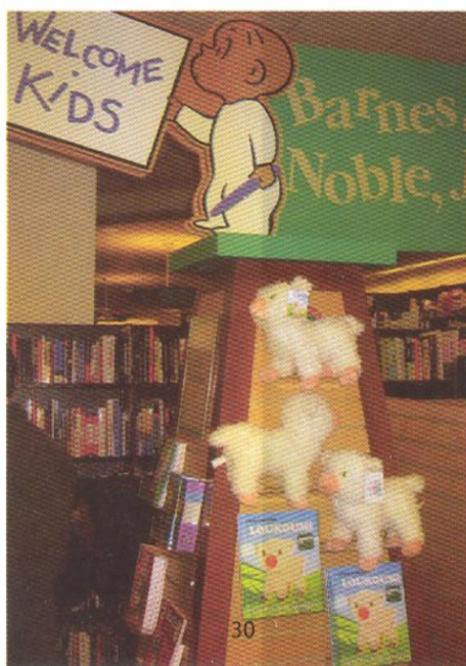
It started with a box of loukoumia. Nick Katsoris asked his wife Voula to pass it over and then said to himself, "That's an interesting name. Wouldn't that make a great name for a children's book character?"

That was five years ago. This year Loukoumi, the adventures of Loukoumi the lamb getting lost on his way to America and finding his way with the help of an international bevy of friends, was published and the sequel is on its way next year. There is a Loukoumi plush toy, there is a T-shirt, a clothing line is being discussed and there are talks of publishing the book in Greece. "Loukoumi can be a character that Greek kids can relate to," says Katsoris, 39, a New York attorney and General Counsel of the Red Apple Group.

American kids relate to the plight of Loukoumi just as well—three-quarters of the audience at the book readings is non-Greek and the book was profiled in The New York Times book section. "A lot of American kids are curious about the name," says Katsoris. But they soon get a lesson in self-reliance from the trials of

Loukoumi and a geography lesson as well as he treks through Greece, France, Italy and Morocco and meets international friends Fistiki the cat, Dean the dog and Marika the monkey on his way to America. "I'm actually amazed how many of the kids know the Eiffel Tower and the Leaning Tower of Pisa—how much knowledge they do have," says Katsoris.

Katsoris himself finds writing Louk-



oumi a respite from the "trials" of the law ("You're constantly negotiating and litigating and it's nice to do something more simple") and a change from the writing of his adult crime fiction. Crimes of Fire was a thriller he published five years ago and a story of organized crime and arson ranging over an international landscape from America, to the Greek isles, to Italy's Amalfi Coast. The first draft was written during a six-week spell in Florida and the sequel is on the way.

His readers might get confused, laughs Katsoris, "because I write crime novels and now I write children's books." But writing, like the law, has its own rewards, he says, even if he has to write at night after a full day at the office. "When you enjoy something, it's not work," he explains. "To create something, to create a story that people will love—that's very rewarding."

And his son Dean, 20 months old, whose birth inspired Katsoris to sit down and write Loukoumi, apparently likes it. "Even at that age," says his father, "you can tell whether he likes a book or not."

(There is more information at www.Loukoumi.com or 212-397-2804)

The death recently of Dimitri "Mimis" Kourtakis marks the passing of an era. Renowned oenologist, wine marketing genius and statesman, he was the heart and soul of modern Greek wine-making during its formative years. It was Mimis Kourtakis, son of the founder Vassilis, who catapulted the Kourtakis Winery into the modern age.

Dimitris Kourtakis (1908 – 2005)

For the first fifty years of its existence, the Kourtakis winery was famous for its bulk wine products distributed in casks throughout Attica and the nearby Greek Islands. Mimis was among the first in Greece to earn an oenology degree from Dijon University in France, but his genius went beyond wine production, glass bottles and steel tanks. He created new packaging for Kourtaki Retsina with its bright yellow label that still stands the test of time, and by the early 1970's, he was selling 50 million bottles of Kourtaki Retsina, out-producing the next three wineries combined and making Kourtaki a household name in Greece and one of the leading brands in the world.

He was also a visionary. In the mid-seventies, when Greece emerged from the grip of the Colonels as a modern democracy, Mimis widened his horizons and took aim at the greater European market. He invested the profits from the huge success of Retsina and built "the steel cathedral" in Ritsona, still regarded as one of the top wineries in Europe. By this time, he had been joined by son, Vassilis, the current managing director of the winery. Armed with an oenology degree from Dijon, and a marketing genius of his own, Vassilis worked side-by-side with



his father to create a line of award-winning value priced wines crafted for the international market and today the top-selling brand of Greek wines in the U.S.

Mimis Kourtakis was a beloved statesman, as well, and the host to many foreign dignitaries over the years, including Pierre Trudeau and Charles de Gaulle, who on one state visit told the Greek Prime Minister that he thought he was being greeted by a winemaker, but instead was meeting with Greece's finest diplomat.

Always with a smile and a twinkle in his eye, Mimis Kourtakis lit up the room with his very presence and will be dearly missed and fondly remembered.

Chilean Sea Bass Spetsiota

- 8 oz. of Sea Bass Filet
- 1 Onion cut inch thick
- 1 Tomato cut inch thick
- 2 Pieces of Fingerling Potatoes cut in half
- 1 Tbsp. Shallots
- 1 Tbsp. Capers
- 1 Tbsp. Fresh Oregano
- 1 Tsp. Salt
- 1 Tsp. Pepper
- 1 Cup White Wine
- 2 Tbsp. Butter

Sear the Bass in Olive Oil. Add in onion, tomato, potatoes, shallots, capers, oregano, salt & pepper. Then add White Wine and Butter and bake, for 15-20 minutes in a clay vessel pot, at 350 degrees.

Galaktobouriko - Citrus Custard Dessert

Ingredients

- 1 Quarts Whole Milk
- 1 Cup Semolina
- 1 Cup Granulated Sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract (powdered or liquid)
- Zest of One Lemon

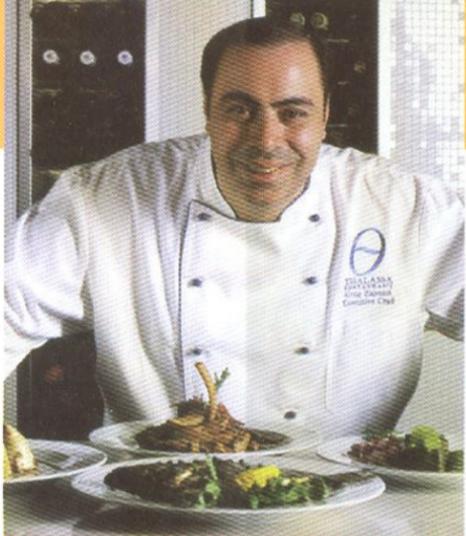
- 2oz Butter, Unsalted, melted
- 1lb. Fillo Pastry Dough

Syrup

- 2 Cups Water
- 2 Cups Granulated Sugar
- Cup Freshly Squeezed Orange Juice
- 6 Cloves

Procedure

1. Beat eggs and combine with sugar, semolina, lemon zest and vanilla
2. Simmer milk in a large saucepan and then slowly add the mixture to the saucepan, stirring constantly until thickened
3. Prepare a 9"x12" baking pan by buttering the pan and then layering 5 sheets of the fillo pastry in the pan and over the sides. Brush in between each layer with the melted butter. Leave enough fillo outside the pan to fold over and cover the contents of the pan.
4. Place mixture into the pan, and fold over the fillo. Layer another 5 sheets of fillo dough over the top of the pan, brushing in between each layer with more butter.
5. Score the fillo to desired shape and



HOLIDAY TREATS

EXECUTIVE CHEF
Gregory Zapantis
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- size and bake in a 350 degree oven for one hour.
- 6. While the Galaktobouriko is baking, prepare the syrup by combining all ingredients in a saucepan, bringing to a boil for ten minutes while it thickens.
- 7. Finish by pouring COLD syrup onto the dessert when it is removed from the oven.

Mini Pumpkin stuffed with Lobster and Hilopites Pasta

Serves 4

Ingredients:

- 4 lb small pumpkins
- 1 cup water
- 4 tsp butter
- Salt and fresh ground white pepper to taste

Pumpkin Preparation:

Cut the top of the each pumpkin and spoon out all the seeds. Rub the inside of pumpkin with room temperature butter and salt and white pepper. Place the pumpkins upside down in a 6"x10" pan with one cup of water. Bake in a 450 degree oven for 15 minutes. Remove and set aside.

Lobster and Pasta Stuffing Ingredients:

- 2 lobsters (2 - 3 lb each)
- _ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 pc shallots, peeled and diced
- 2 pc garlic cloves, sliced
- _ cup sun dried tomatoes cut into strips
- 1 cup white wine
- 2 cups water
- salt and fresh ground white pepper to taste
- 1lb hilopites pasta

Preparation:

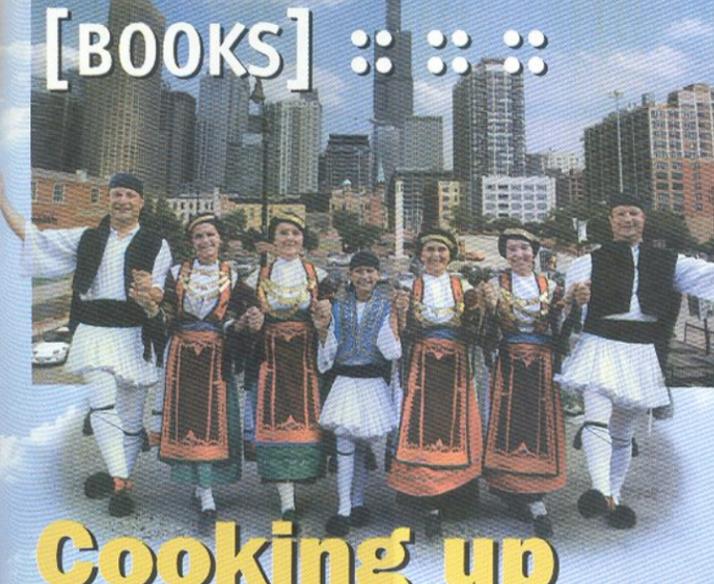
Cut your two lobsters lengthwise and remove the grain sack. Snap and twist off the claws where they join the lobster body. In a roasting pan, sauté the lobster in the extra virgin olive oil for 4-5 minutes. Add the diced shallots and sliced garlic. Stir for an additional 3-4 minutes. Deglaze the roasting pan with the wine and add the water and sun dried tomato strips. Bring to boil. Adjust the seasoning with salt and freshly ground white pepper. Add the hilopites pasta and place the roasting pan in a 400 degree oven for 25-30 minutes. After removing the pan from the oven, put it aside for 10 minutes. Remove the lobster meat from its shell and cut into chunks. Fill the mini pumpkins with the lobster meat and pasta and serve.
 Kali Orexi

Tsoureki Pudding

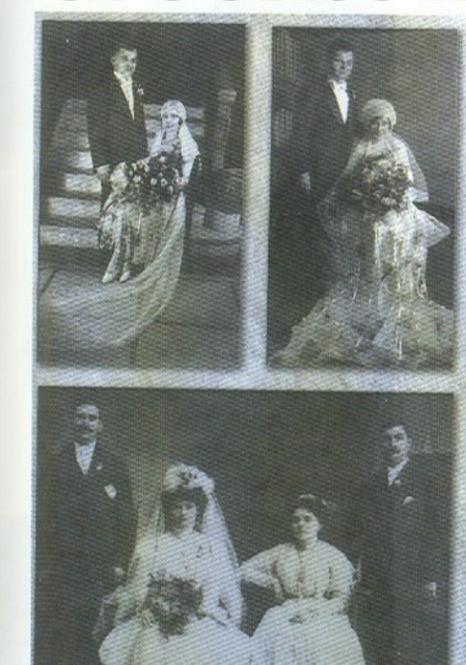
- 4 main course servings
- 8oz Byssino Preserves
- 4oz Metaxa Brandy
- 2oz Butter, Unsalted
- 24oz Tsoureki style bread crusts removed
- 2qt Heavy Cream
- 6 Eggs
- 1lb Sugar
- 2oz Vanilla Extract

Procedure:

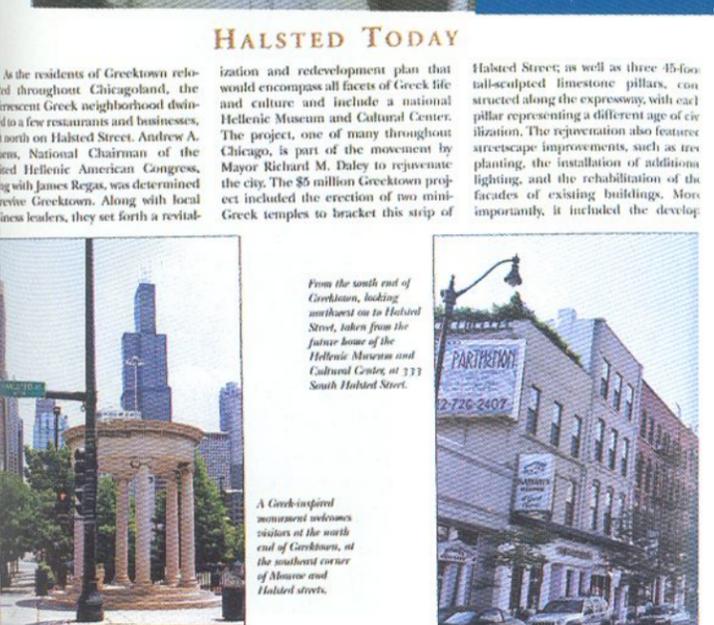
1. Soak Cherries in Brandy in a small sauce pan, simmer and set aside
2. 2" deep hotel pan coat with butter, reserve rest of butter
3. Pour cream over the bread and set aside until soft.
4. Beat eggs and sugar until smooth and thick add vanilla remaining butter, raisins and brandy.
5. Toss egg mixture with brad gently blend. Pour into pan and bake at 350 degrees until brown and almost set
6. Bake for approximately 45 minutes



Cooking up Greektown Chicago



Greeks started arriving in Chicago in the mid-1800s and by the 1920s were one of the largest Greek populations outside of Greece. They also cooked up a storm and their history, and cooking, is now given glorious display in Greektown Chicago, It's History-Its Recipes (G. Bradley Publishing, \$35) a sumptuous illustrated book by Alexa Ganakos, a publisher of Chicago's Greek Circle magazine and city native, with food photos by Katherine Bish and a wealth of local lore and recipes from Chicago Greeks and their eateries, and from the archival treasury of the city's Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center. "Every church service, wedding, baptism, festival we attend and celebrate now is haunted by the ghosts of those who came before us, strangers into a strange, often hostile land, struggling to make a place for themselves and for those generations that followed," writes native son Harry Mark Petrakis in his foreword.



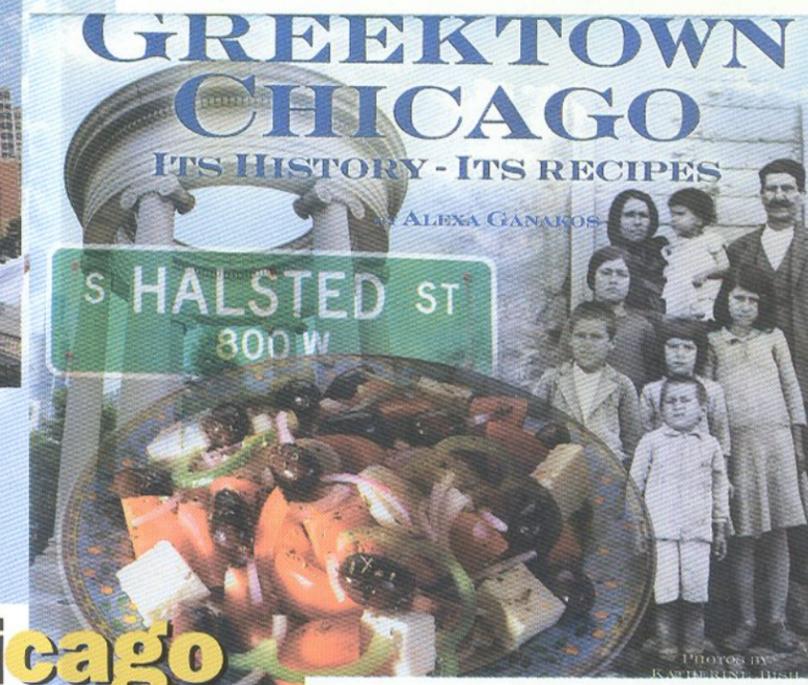
HALSTED TODAY

As the residents of Greektown related throughout ChicagoLand, the present Greek neighborhood defined by a few restaurants and businesses, north on Halsted Street. Andrew A. Jones, National Chairman of the Hellenic American Congress, along with James Regas, was determined to revive Greektown. Along with local business leaders, they set forth a revitalization and redevelopment plan that would encompass all facets of Greek life and culture and include a national Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center. The project, one of many throughout Chicago, is part of the movement by Mayor Richard M. Daley to rejuvenate the city. The \$5 million Greektown project included the erection of two mini-Greek temples to bracket this strip of

Halsted Street; as well as three 45-foot-tall-sculpted limestone pillars, constructed along the expressway, with each pillar representing a different age of civilization. The rejuvenation also featured streetscape improvements, such as tree planting, the installation of additional lighting, and the rehabilitation of the facades of existing buildings. More importantly, it included the develop-

From the south end of Cook County, looking southwest on to Halsted Street, taken from the future home of the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center, at 333 South Halsted Street.

A Greek-inspired monument welcomes visitors at the south end of Greektown, at the southwest corner of Abouss and Halsted streets.



PASTITSIO
 Make this first as it has ample time to cool. In a 2-quart milk to a boil. In a separate 2-quart saucepan, melt butter in a large skillet, cook onions in 1/8 cup water until ground meat and 2 sticks cinnamon. Cook until meat is browned. Add diluted tomato paste, and stir well. Add cinnamon sticks (one of these), then add meat mixture. Cook slowly until the meat is cooked and most of the fat is absorbed. Remove from heat. In a separate bowl, beat 10 egg whites with 3 egg yolks. Stir in 1/2 cup sugar. Slowly mix well (use your hands for best results) and continue to mix. In a large bowl, mix the meat/macaroni mixture into an 11-1/2" x 16-1/2" pan. Sprinkle 1 cup of grated cheese and some cinnamon. Beat the remaining 7 egg yolks in a large bowl. Slowly add the beaten yolks. If it's too thick, add a little water. Spread evenly over the meat/macaroni mixture. Bake for 1 hour. Test center with a knife. Let stand for 10 minutes. Serve hot. *Tip: This recipe is easily cut in half. Also, you can use a smaller pan, but bake when you're ready.*

PAXIMATHIA (TEA BISCUITS)
 After a funeral in Greece, it is customary to serve brandy, coffee, and pastimathia. Since rich desserts are not appropriate to this occasion, this is a cookie that is dry in texture and not too sweet. In America, it is served as part of the funeral meal (makaria). Now it is a popular treat throughout the year since it freezes well. Think of it as Greek biscotti.

INGREDIENTS
 1 lb. butter
 4 eggs
 1 1/2 cups sugar
 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
 1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
 6-7 cups flour (measure before sifting)
 1 tsp. vanilla
 1/4 tsp. salt
 2 tsp. anise seed, crushed
 1 egg, beaten
 anise seeds

Cream butter and sugar, well. Add four eggs, one at a time, beating well with each addition. Add vanilla, then stir in flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and anise seed. Shape into 8 or 9 loaves and place on greased cookie sheets. Loaves should measure 3-4 inches wide and with a height of approximately 1/2 inch. Beat the final egg, and then brush on each loaf. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, then bake for 15 minutes, in a 350-degree oven. Remove from the oven, and immediately slice into 1/2-inch thick slices. When cooled, place pastimathia on their sides on cookie sheets. Return to the oven for about 10 to 15 minutes, until slightly browned. Yields approximately 150 cookies.

MARY T. KOULOGEORGE

[MUSIC] :: :: ::

Fiery Furnaces siblings Matt and Eleanor Friedberger power a band that rocks its own way—including the recent debut of a concept album called *Rehearsing My Choir* with their grandmother Olga Sarantos providing the backup and the album's concept inspiration.

"She was an organist and choir director at her Greek Orthodox church in the 40s in Chicago, so some of the stories revolve around that," says Eleanor. The tracks include "Candyman's Knife in My Handbag," about "the night she was supposed to meet her father-in-law for the first time," says her granddaughter. "She goes to a tiki bar," Matt takes over the story, "and gets far too drunk on sweet tropical drinks and throws up on a



Rocking Grandma

stoop when she meets him." And "Seven Silver Curses" is about "going to a gypsy and getting some curses to get rid of your husband's mistress," Matt laughs. The siblings hope to release an expanded version of *Choir* with a self-produced documentary of their *yiayia* narrating a tour of the album's Chicago backdrop. They've already toured North America this fall and are due to release their next album, *Bitter Tea*, this winter. "I'd like to get on a normal schedule of releasing albums—every four months," says Matt of an opus that covers the spectrum of musical styles (past releases include everything from 10-minute song collages to epic song narratives). The duo describe *Choir* as Randy Newman, crossed with the Small Faces, crossed with 60's girl groups and disco beats, crossed with their grandmother's "Dylan-esque talk-singing." It's "late 40s adventure stories," Matt explains it.



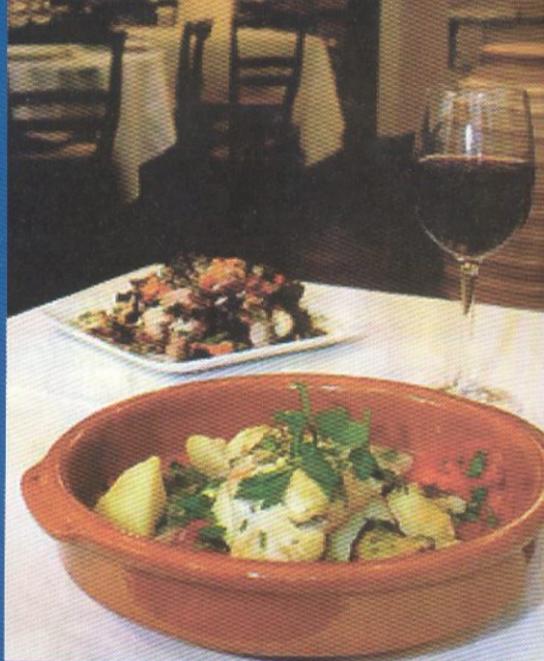
THE FIERY FURNACES
RECORDING NEW ALBUM—
WITH THEIR GRANDMOTHER!
ADDITIONAL ALBUM SET TO RECORD IN EARLY '06
SINGLES & SIDES COMPILATION DUE IN JANUARY
TOUR ONLY EPs IN THE WORKS FOR NEXT YEAR

THE FIERY FURNACE

[SOCIETY BUZZ]

Members of the Mitsotakis family, in America for the establishment of the Mitsotakis chair at Stanford University, were the honored guests recently at a reception and dinner gala held at the Grand Ballroom of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Guests were entertained by Greek dancers and listened to a series of speakers, including Constantine Mitsotakis, who spoke first in English then in Greek. The hosts for the event were Markos Kounalakis and Eleni Tsakopoulos-Kounalakis. The family was also feted at the city's renowned Kokkari Estiatorio. (Photos by Tom Gibbons)

San Francisco honors Mitsotakis



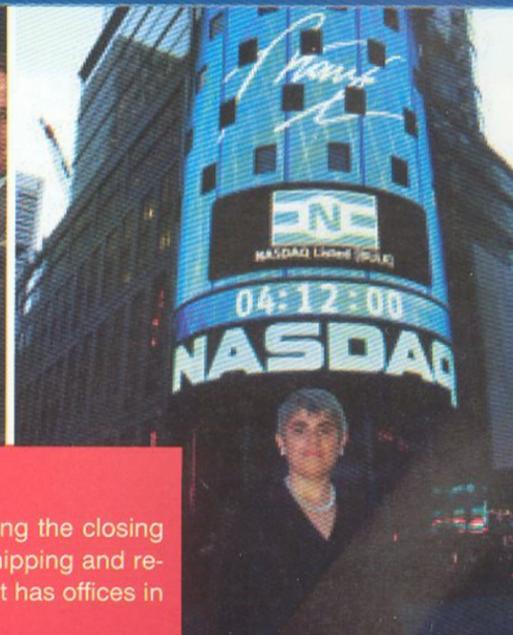
Correction

A VIP reception was held recently for the opening of the new *Ammos Estiatoria* in Manhattan located at 52 Vanderbilt Avenue at 45th Street, (212) 922-9999 (www.ammosnewyork.com), which *The New York Times* says, "breaks the mold of the *estiatorio*." The owners are Jack, George and Charlie Trantides and Nick Neocleous, with Executive Chef Christos Christou. The general manager is Anthony Pilarinos and the designer Demetris Charalambous. International singing star Anna Vissi performed for the guests. The original *Ammos Astoria* is located at 20-30 Steinway Street (718) 726-7900, next to the jointly-owned *Central Lounge* (718) 726-1600 (www.centrallounge.com).



Navios at the NASDAQ

Navios Maritime Holdings, Inc. Chairman and CEO Angeliki Frangou recently rang the closing bell at the NASDAQ. Navios is one of the leading brands in seaborne dry bulk shipping and recently entered into contract for three long-term charter vessels to add to its fleet. It has offices in Norwalk, Connecticut, Piraeus, Greece and Montevideo, Uruguay.



::[periXscope]

Seasoned Greetings

⚡ Before we noticed, it's the end of the year and the time for new—revolutions-- has arrived! I don't know about you, but I've decided to make a promise, actually a package of promises, that go contrary to what most people would expect. First of all, I will struggle to make time to enjoy my extra large cigars even longer, so I can savor even the last centimeter without the guilt of wasting precious time that could rather be put to more productive things. Second, I will make sure that not a single drink will be left half-drunk on the table (unless its quality justifies such a treatment.) Third, I won't compromise on my seven-hour sleep, especially after I heard from some specialists that even if you oversleep a day or two you won't make up for the lost Morpheus and the damage that your system has suffered. Fourth, I will stop eating standing, even sometimes during dinner, and I will honor it as one of life's greatest ceremonies. And so on and so forth.

⚡ Because, if we forget how to enjoy our routine's pleasant aspects, then it becomes too much of a routine and our system is led to catastrophe. This is a very interesting Greek work. Although we tend to understand it as "destruction" or "disaster," it has a finer quality that makes it special--besides its aesthetic

value, of course. It's made up by two words, "kata" which means "against" and "strophe" which means "turn." Catastrophe, thus, is when somebody or something turns against himself or itself!--while destruction from its Latin components (de - struct) means to fall apart. So destruction is the result of catastrophe but not necessarily catastrophe itself!

⚡ Anyway, I don't mean to sound like Photoula's father in My Big Fat Greek Wedding, although that's what I accomplished so far. I rather wanted to warn you against the dangers of overdoing it, because I myself am a victim of it and I am looking for potential comrades in the new year's resolutions that I plainly set forth in the beginning of this revolutionary statement, which I hope will serve as a real manifesto for the masses! On top of all this, I had to debate with myself whether I should call Christmas trees as such, or something else, as some super intelligent people have proposed!

⚡ In a more serious tone, though, besides that "innocent" secularism, totalitarianism lurks, as is the case with the total banning of smoking in public places and other measures for our benefit that begin by curtailing certain freedoms or choices. And OK, smoking is somehow a health-related issue, but in what ways will the Christmas tree serve our well-being if it's called holiday tree or something else?

That's what happens when people have too much free time, they create problems for themselves and others.

⚡ Now, this is a point that contradicts my earliest assumption, which led to my revolutionary resolutions for this new year. Unwillingly, I led the course of this column to a catastrophe, because beginning and end turns one against the other. And before I drive it to complete destruction, I'd rather leave it the way it is, as a half-prepared food for thought that might develop to a full course dinner through your contribution. In the meantime, Happy and Seasoned Holidays to each and every one of you and may the new year 2006 make all your wishes come true!

⚡ At this point, last but not least, as a "seasoned" speaker would say, allow me to express my gratitude to all those friends--known and unknown--who have actively and generously supported NEO in its critical first steps. Each day that goes by confirms what we've stated time and again about the necessity for such a magazine in the extended Greek American community. Your support is both an act of generosity and a good investment the fruits of which you are already harvesting!

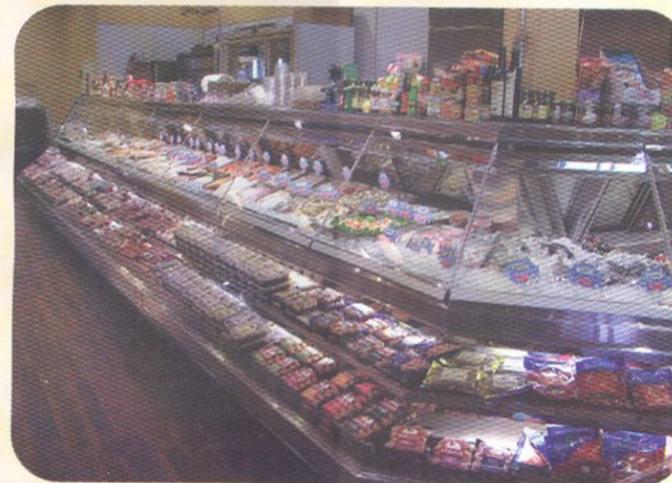
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It's hip to be Greek

By Dimitri C. Michalakis

My reasons why:

1. People think Dimitri sounds exotic, and you can get away with using one name (*a la* Yanni and various hairdressers).

2. People think you come from a magical island (I come from Chios), where the sky and sea are always blue, and never the people.

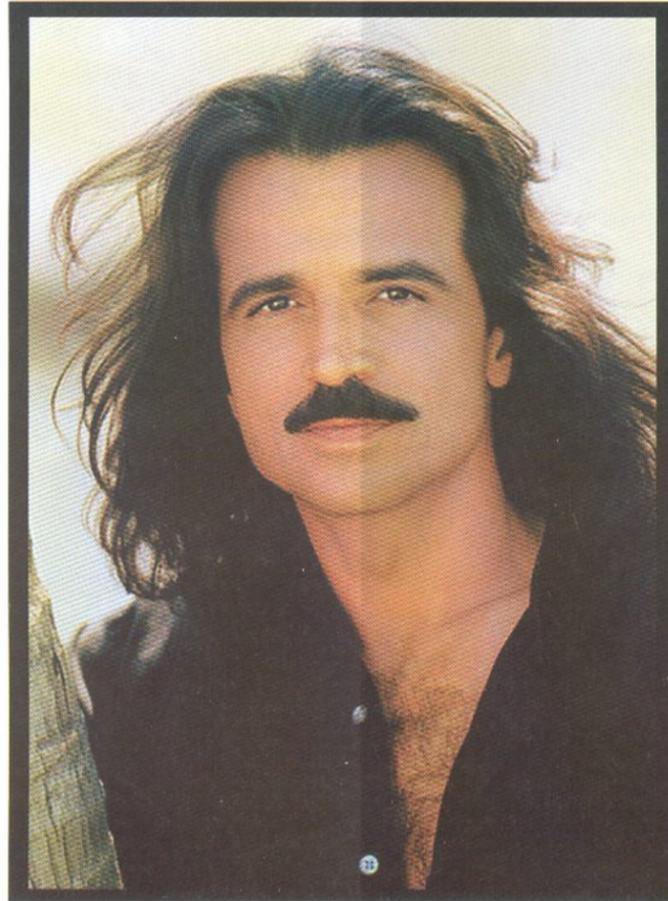
3. People think you eat Greek salad at every meal and wash it down with *retsina*, instead of a hamburger and a Dr. Pepper on the run.

4. People think you never have to wash the dishes because you break them in celebration after every meal.

5. People think you have "a big fat Greek family" serving heaping platters of lemon potatoes and lamb and your cheeks are always red from the smothering affection.

6. People think your father is Zorba and your distant cousin was Socrates and all things wise come from Greece and all things bothering you can be solved with a song and a dance.

7. People think you're rich because the corner has a diner (which is Greek) and the next corner has a diner (which is Greek) and every corner diner is Greek (which it is) and you can eat for free from here to California because you're Greek and everybody who owns a diner is related and if you speak Greek they might ask you where you're from and who your relatives are and you might get a free plate of French fries.



8. People think your last name is "Papadopoulos" no matter what you tell them, so you never have to bother spelling it and (refer to number one) you can always use just your first name (no one will remember your last name, anyway).

9. People think you invented the Olympics and should be great in track and field, and nobody has to know you stink because people don't throw the discus around much, anymore.

10. People think your olive skin matches the olive oil your mother always cooks with, and nobody knows my mother usually cooks with Mazola and my olive skin comes naturally from the mongrel genes I inherited from all the conquerors of Greece.

11. People think your uncle Pericles (who is their accountant) is somehow related to the Pericles who ruled Athens (unless he botches their tax returns), and your aunt Aphrodite (who sells houses) is related to the goddess of beauty (unless she forgot to whip down the visor in the car and put on her makeup that day).

12. People think you only love bouzouki (and not Bono) and dance in line after every meal and your house is one big party every day.

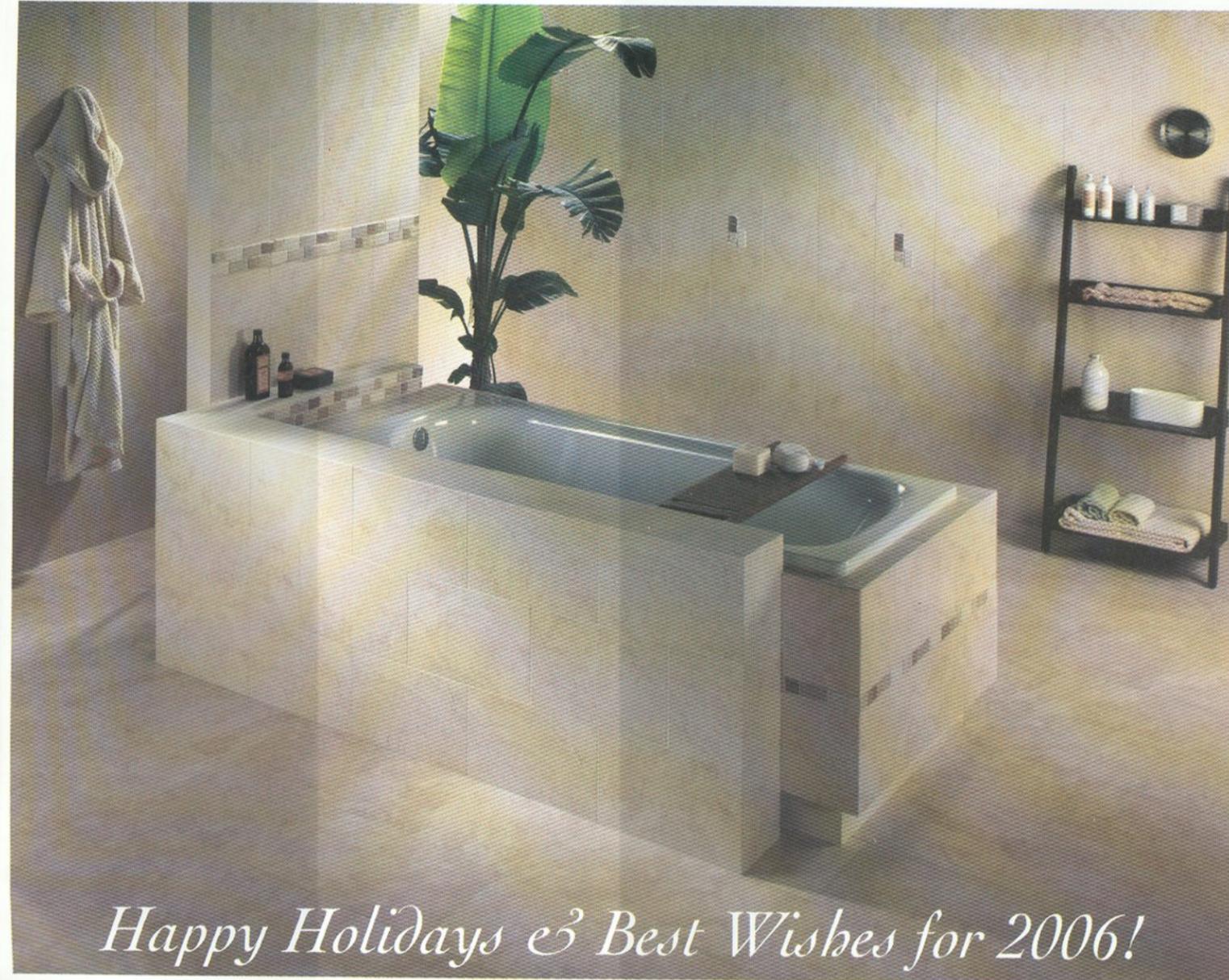
Let them think.

(Send us your essays at neomagazine@earthlink.net, both funny or serious, on why you think it's hip to be Greek—or not—and if we like them we'll publish them. Make them about 1000 words. Send us a picture, too. The best essay will be announced in May and the winner will receive a special prize.)



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Happy Holidays & Best Wishes for 2006!

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