



20 years of Personal & Corporate
Wireless Solutions

Inquire about our current Promotions

28-21 Astoria Blvd.
Astoria, New York 11102

718.728.1888

3432-03 East Tremont Ave.
Bronx, New York 10465

718.822.0303

T-Mobile®
authorized dealer



NEO

PERSON OF THE YEAR

FEbruary 2006 \$2.95

BALTIMORE
Big names
in the big city

**The Face of a New
Generation
John P. Sarbanes**

**A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS:
SENATOR PAUL SARBANES ON RETIREMENT AND HIS LEGACY**

PERSONAL MONEY MARKET PLUS

Rain or Shine
WE always
protect your
investments

*Annual Percentage Yield (APY) accurate as of 01/1/06. At our discretion, we may change the interest rate on the account. 4.00% APY-\$2,500 or more. Fees may reduce earnings. Certain restrictions apply. Please refer to our Personal and Business Banking Disclosures for details.

4.00%
APY*

Ask your Branch Representative
for more details about applicable
rates, products, fees and terms.



"BANKING AT THE SPEED OF BUSINESS"

800.721.9516

www.mnbny.com



Greek Islands The Honeymoon Paradise

Create memories to Last a Lifetime
Romance • Relaxation • Leisure • Excitement

Romantic Island Stays
Classical Tours & Greek Island Cruises
First Class & Deluxe Hotels
Extensions to Italy, Turkey, Egypt, Israel & Cyprus

Independent Packages from \$1099

Deluxe Romancing the Islands Package from \$2499

Includes the finest deluxe hotels, most romantic islands, honeymoon extras

We can design the honeymoon of your dreams

Call the Honeymoon Specialists



HOMERIC
TOURS INC.

55 East 59th Street, NY, NY 10022

Toll-Free: 800-223-5570

Tel: 212-753-1100 • Fax: 212-753-0319

www.homerictours.com • info@homerictours.com



NEO

1.04 FEBRUARY 2006

features

8. **NEWS & NOTES**
Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis wows tennis fans down under
10. **BALTIMORE**
Big names in the big city
Aris Melissaratos and the business of Maryland
12. Steve Mavronis and democracy on parade
13. The Annunciation's Very Rev. Constantine Moralis
14. P.R. Queen Gayle Economos
15. Kyriakos Marudas cooks at the Pizza Palace
16. **NEO PERSON OF THE YEAR**
The face of a new generation: John P. Sarbanes
18. A man for all seasons: Senator Paul Sarbanes
22. **The Thieves of Baghdad**
How one Marine tried to save the treasures of the Iraq museum

departments

24. **POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT:**
Markos Moulitsas Zuniga of the Daily Kos/
Chrys Kefalas makes a difference
28. **ARTS:** Russian-born Greek actress Larisa Antypas
30. **TRAVEL:** Splendor in Mykonos:
The San Marco Hotel
32. **EDUCATION:** Modern Greek studies
par excellence at the University of Michigan
38. **Nick Vavas:** An actor
with a "Cary Grant edge"

Lafayette Grill & Bar

LUNCH, DINNER, SPECIAL EVENTS

Come and enjoy the best Greek food in the best environment

F R I D A Y S : Live Greek entertainment starting at 10 p.m.

S A T U R D A Y S : Tango & salsa (for rookies and experts!)

M O N D A Y S : Tango Night



NOW, WITH NEW EXPANDED SPACE

Lafayette Grill is located on next to the Court House,
54-56 Franklin St
New York, NY 10013

3 blocks from West Broadway, in the heart of Manhattan's Downtown!

Tel: 212-732-4449
212-732-5600

www.lafgrill.com

Baltimore Renaissance

My cousin Georgia Vavas, a transplanted New Yorker and now fervent Baltimorean, says some people take Baltimore for granted as a way stop between New York and Washington D.C.. But Baltimore is the equal of any city in America (its Inner Harbor, Chesapeake Bay, the Orioles, who will prevail) and it certainly has one of the most vibrant Greek communities in America. The annual Greek Parade is among the tops in the country thanks to the people skills and enthusiasm of people like Steve Mavronis, Gayle Economos is a soft touch with her time and media skills and she might even wear her Macedonian costume if you ask her, Father Dean Moralis brings a youthful energy and a computer savvy to inform his flock at the city's oldest Greek Orthodox church, a young Chrys Kefalas advises the governor on matters of life and death, a seasoned Aris Melissaratos might be the next governor, Kyriakos Marudas sets his film parable about growing up Greek in a pizza parlor, Nick Vavas (of the fabled Vavas') comes to New York and conquers the Great White Way, one legendary Sarbanes might retire soon, but another might soon take his place in politics and start a legend of his own.



We chose as our Person of the Year John P. Sarbanes because he represents not only the new face of a city like Baltimore, but a new face in Greek America, with all the boldness and work ethic of the old generation, but with a personal commitment and selflessness that makes John Sarbanes stand out, and with a dedication to what his father famously calls "the substance" of politics, which the Senator embodied so well and made all Greeks and all Americans proud. Senator Sarbanes will be missed when he retires, but good people will fill his shoes, it seems.

As for my cousin Georgia, she single-handedly put Baltimore on the map for me, I thank her, and from now on I will never again take the city for granted. She is the unofficial ambassador to the city and Baltimore is very lucky to have her.

Dimitri C. Michalakos

NEO ::magazine

Editor in Chief:
Dimitri C. Michalakos

Publishing Committee Chairman:
Demetrios Rhompotis

Marketing and Advertising Director:
Kyprianos Bazenikas

Photo/Fashion Director:
Alexandros Giannakis

Photographers:
Christos Kavvadas
ETA Press

Legal Advisor:
Esq. Jimmy Solomos

Graphic Design:
Vassos Protopapas
output.visual design

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
neomagazine@earthlink.net

Subscriptions: \$29.95 for one year

Give a Gift of NEO

NEO SUBSCRIPTION CARD
::magazine ☐ 1 Year Subscription
12 Issues for \$ 29.95

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone # _____

☐ Check (payable to NEOCORP MEDIA)

Mail To: NEOCORP MEDIA,
4809 Avenue N, Suite 131,
Brooklyn, NY 11234

☐ Visa Name _____

☐ Master Card Card # _____

☐ AMEX Expiration Date: _____ / _____

Signature: _____



Ammos New York is available for catered luncheons, private events and corporate meetings. Private room available. Please contact us for your specific function so we can assist you in planning your next event. Open for Lunch and Dinner daily. Menu Available upon request.

ASTORIA:
20-30 Steinway Street
Astoria, NY 11105
Phone: 718-726-7900

NEW YORK CITY:
52 Vanderbilt Ave
New York, NY 10017
Phone: 212-922-9999

www.ammosnewyork.com
events@ammosnewyork.com



VESPA QUEENS
40-34 Crescent Street, LIC, NY
Tel: 718-786-7772
www.vespaqueens.com

Sparkling! Inviting! Euro-chic on wheels has arrived in metro New York! Our showroom sports New York State's largest Vespa boutique, featuring a full array of the world's most stylish scooters.



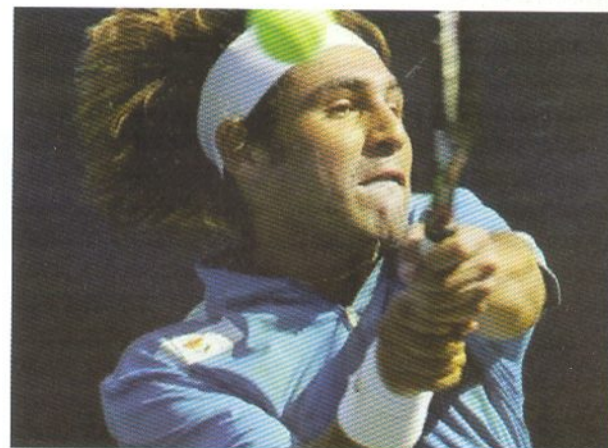
Marco the Magnificent

He lost to Roger Federer in the Australian Open last month, but Marcos Baghdatis (a Greek Cypriot whose father is Lebanese) set the tennis world on fire by coming out of nowhere (he was ranked 54th coming into the match) to battle the Swiss Watch and he won the hearts of all Greeks in Australia, most of whom packed his rooting section for each match. (He has nine uncles and 21 cousins living in Australia—mostly Lebanese from his father's side of the family. His father, Christos, is from Lebanon but moved to Cyprus where he met wife Andry, a Greek Cypriot.) "It's a dream come true," Baghdatis said after having to playfully shush his cheering fans. "It's just amazing. I love everybody watching in Cyprus. Kisses." So who is Marcos Baghdatis?

By Suzi Petkovski

A budding showman, Baghdatis, the world No.1 junior in 2003 and the best player to emerge from Cyprus, competes without fear. A smooth talent in a swarthy, hirsute package, Baghdatis superficially resembles a heftier Marcelo Rios. But unlike the prickly Rios, Marcos is as sunny as Cyprus. An engaging crowd-pleaser, he jumps for joy after landing his favorite running forehand, bounces the ball between his legs as part of his pre-serve ritual, and crosses himself after missing easy over-heads. Plonking himself in an outdoor chair under the eucalypts at Melbourne Park, Baghdatis, who speaks Greek, English and his adopted French, looks every bit the tennis gypsy: pierced left lobe, three-day growth, and long thick hair with silver streaks. He has twinkling eyes and a mobile face that regularly breaks into laughter. Like when I ask if he has any friends or relations among Melbourne's large Cypriot community. "That's pretty funny," he chortles. "I have 21 cousins in Sydney, three or four in Melbourne, three or four in Perth also. My father's Lebanese and I have Lebanese cousins here. It's a big family!"

Baghdatis was also supported in Australia by a loud Greek chorus which so delighted in their man's efforts that, as Federer put it: "I had to check the score and make sure that I was actually winning. They sang along like they were winning."



"That's the heart that Cypriots have," Marcos says proudly. "We never stop fighting and that's important. I wanna thank them because they've been really, really fantastic. I've been (this far) because I came through qualies, they helped me a lot and I want to thank them very much."

Cyprus (population 800,000), in the eastern Mediterranean, has produced very few players of world standard, although the Baghdatis family can boast three of them. Marcos's older brothers Marinos and Petros both played Davis Cup so it was inevitable that the third son would start very young. As Marcos remembers it: "Since I was born I was at the club." He began at age 5 on artificial grass, quit tennis at age 8 in favour of football (soccer) and at 10, having already exhausted the pool of practice partners in his hometown of Limassol, on the south coast, moved to the national federation in the divided capital, Nicosia, and lived with his coach. Another wrenching move followed. Marcos was 13 and didn't speak a word of French when he moved to Paris to train at the Mauratoglu academy. Leaving his family and island nation is the toughest breakpoint he's faced. "That was hard, really hard," Marcos recalls. "I had to go and live a different life to start playing professionally. But I am really lucky to be the person that I am now." Reprinted from DEUCE, the Official Magazine of the ATP.



Best Prices in Town!!!!



LOIN LAMB CHOPS \$5.99 LB
Family Pack



LEG OF LAMB
Whole & Butthalf \$2.69LB



NESCAFE FRAPE 200g \$7.99
NEA FYTINI 800g \$4.99
HORIO EXTRA VIRGIN \$24.99
MISKO \$0.99

LOCATIONS:

Trade Fair Corporate Offices
30-12 30th Avenue
Astoria, NY 11102
(718) 721-2437

30-08 30th Avenue
Astoria, NY 11102

110-44 Queens Blvd
Forest Hills, NY 11375

49-11 30th Avenue
Woodside, NY 11377

37-11 Ditmars Blvd
Astoria, NY 11105

99-10 Astoria Blvd
East Elmhurst, NY 11369

23-55 Broadway
LIC, NY 11106

22-20 36th Avenue
LIC, NY 11106

89-02 37th Avenue
Jackson Heights, NY 11372

75-07 37th Avenue
Jackson Heights, NY 11372

130-10 Metropolitan Ave
Richmond Hill, NY 11418

BALTIMORE

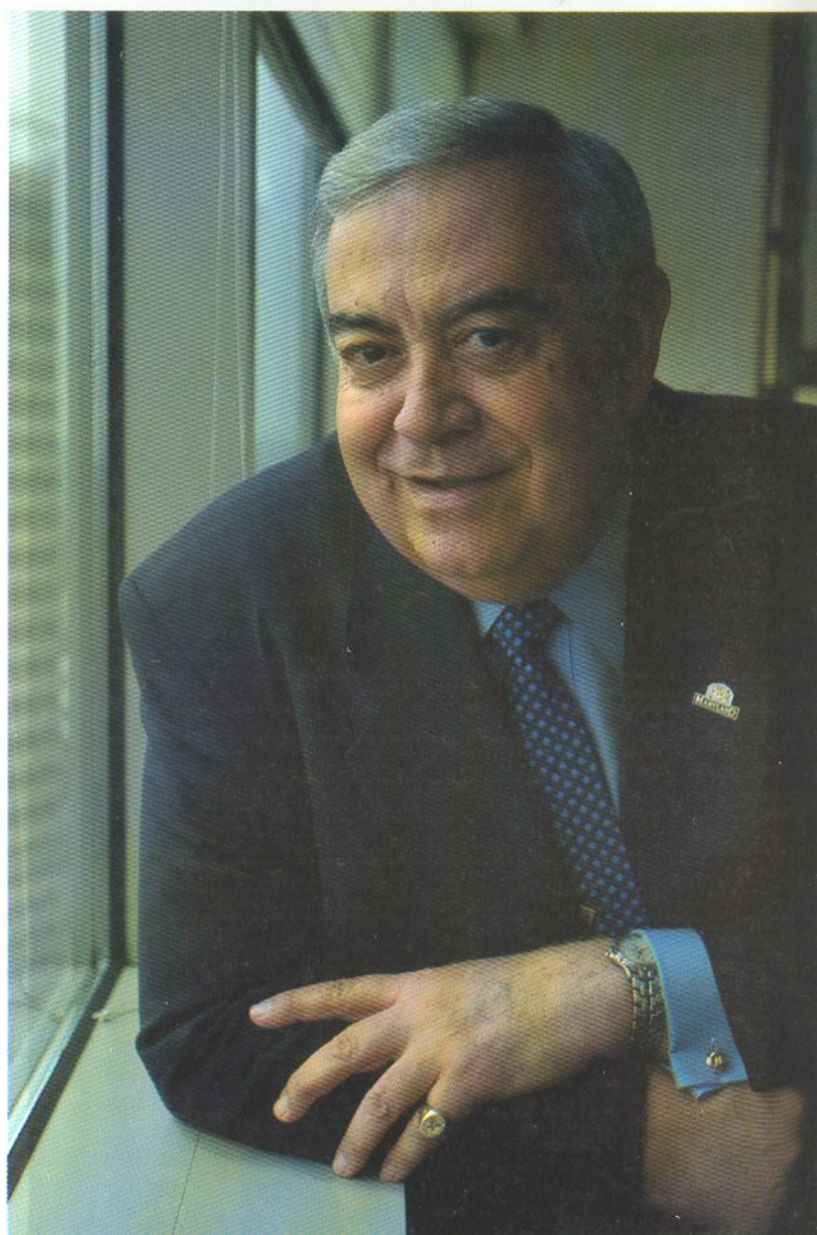
They say it's the big city with the small-town feel. Greeks have made it their own and none more so than our gallery of notables.

by Dimitri C. Michalakos

Maryland—The best is yet to come, says Aris Melissaratos

It was a marriage made in heaven. When Maryland needed a powerhouse businessman who also knew the state's technology sector cold to run the Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) first-term Governor Robert L. Ehrlich chose the man with 40 years in business and 32 of them charting new frontiers at Westinghouse: Aris Melissaratos.

"There's no industry they can throw at me where I'm not comfortable in consulting with the chairman, the CEO, the CFO," says the 61-year-old former Westinghouse VP of Science and Technology and Chief Technology officer who's been the state's DBED secretary since 2003—and likes public office. "They said you like this politics? I said, it's a piece of cake, it's natural. I go around the state and make as many as seven speeches a day, and I have been all over that state, from one end to the other. I love the interaction with people, I love motivating people, I love inspiring them, I love pointing out to them the strengths of Maryland, of the assets that we have."



He says Maryland was at one-time the heart of traditional industry with major plants and thousands of jobs at Bethlehem Steel, Western Electric and General Motors. "But they shut down, so we managed this transition from the manufacturing economy to the knowledge economy. We now have the number one work force for four years running, from the standpoint of the percentage of professional and technical workers, and the number of degrees, like PhD's.

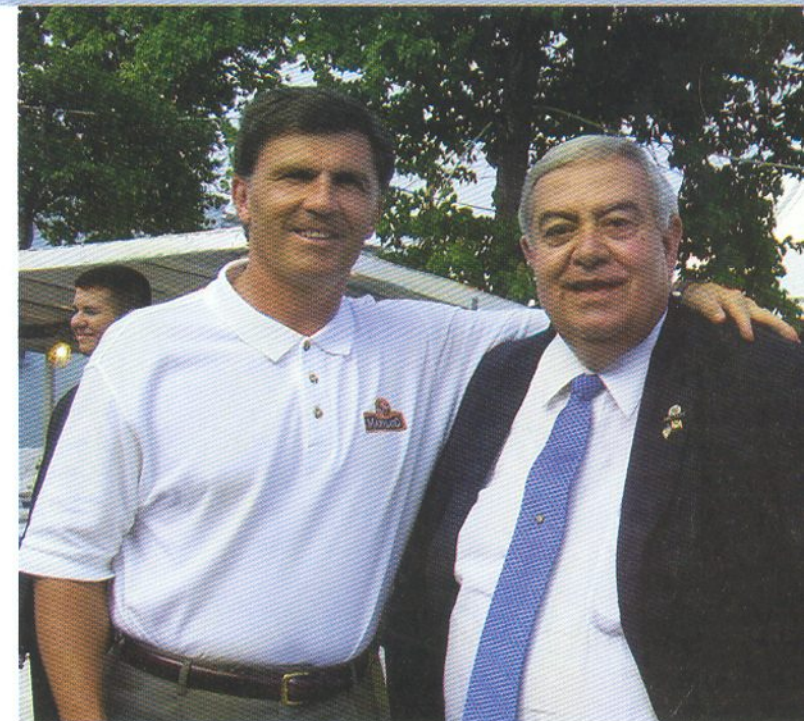
"When Governor Ehrlich took office in 2003, he brought a renewed focus to growing Maryland's economy and developing the state into an international player striving for technology dominance. He asked me to help transition the Maryland from a state reliant upon traditional industry to a leader in the knowledge economy." He waxes eloquent on the more than "50 federal laboratories and military installations in the state and all of them are targeted toward research development, planning how the next generation of soldiers will operate in the anti-terror war. They come here because we have the number one work force in the country, for this technical base. For instance, both the National Institute of Health and the Food and Drug Administration are located in our state. We have Johns Hopkins University, the number two medical school in the country, the number one hospital in the country. On the military side, we have Fort Detrick, which is the base for all the military services on infectious disease analysis and biotechnology and vaccine development. And it's also now becoming the center for the war on terror, for the chemical and biological analysis."

He admits being near Washington D.C. doesn't hurt, either. Besides housing Ft. Meade and the National Security Agency, Maryland is benefiting, not hurting from base realignment: "We are going to pick up about 11,000 new jobs, all in this high-tech area. And we'll further consolidate our position as the nation's technology hub."

And though he's new to public office, he says he wouldn't mind sticking around a little bit longer to oversee the further transformation of the state, and perhaps run for the governor's job himself when Governor Ehrlich's mandated two-terms run out in 2010. "I told the governor I wouldn't mind running for governor in 2010," he says. "It's one of the beauties of coming into public service, I enjoyed working with Governor Ehrlich and members of all parties to achieve success for Marylanders. It's been a real positive experience."

A progressive in a Democratic state like Maryland is not unusual, but the path he took to get there was unique. He was born to wealth in Rumania (his grandparents had moved there from Greece), but the family lost its fortune to the Communists and moved back to Greece, found no opportunities, and set sail for America when he was 13. "I think that communism was the best thing that ever happened to me," he says. "If not for communism, I'd be a spoiled guy in Rumania, never having to work."

The family settled in Maryland (a cousin of his mother's was already

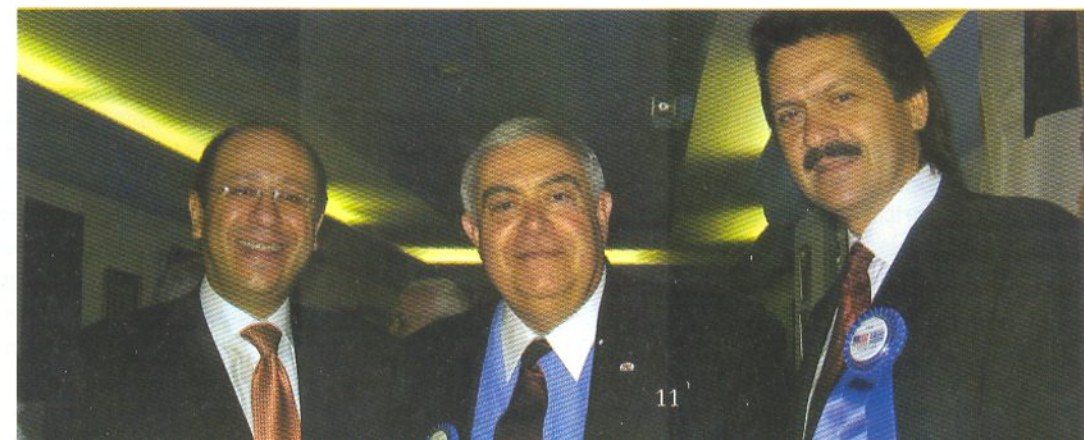


With Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich

there) and he took to math and science from the start. "You know, Greeks are ambitious and adept at technology and math, and it was kind of the thing to do," he says. He got an electrical engineering degree from Johns Hopkins, a master's in engineering management from George Washington University (and feeling he missed out on liberal arts, in the middle of his career he went back and did the coursework for a doctorate International Politics at the Catholic University of America).

But it was business that fired his soul. "Every day that I worked at Westinghouse seemed like a vacation day to me. I enjoyed what I did, I worked with smart people. I would tell my bosses, Gee, I would work here for nothing to rub elbows with these brilliant engineers. And then I ended up having 9,000 of them working for me. If you looked at the movie, *The Hunt for Red October*, everything they discussed in that movie, all those technologies were either designed or built by our people at Westinghouse. Incredible experience. When I was a kid in Greece I read *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* and my first job at Westinghouse was the laboratory getting ready to ship the first nuclear propulsion system for the Nautilus. Jules Verne's dream, Captain Nemo's dream come alive."

And he's eager to see what else the future brings: "We need to create, we need to spend more on research on the jobs of tomorrow. I think technology will move much faster than the incredible pace that we've seen unfold over the last two or three decades. And we always think we're finished, but we're going to see changes like we never dreamed of. Just bring it on, no matter what it is, no matter how difficult a task, we'll get it done."



With Cyprus Ambassador Euripides L. Evriviades and Kostas Alexakis, 2004 Congressional candidate at the Maryland Greek Independence Day Parade

BALTIMORE

Baltimore's Greek Independence Day Mid Atlantic Parade is a growing phenomenon that every year seems to attract more and more people (over 30,000 in 2000 and over 100 marching groups), but the year 2000 is also when parade juggernaut Steve Mavronis says, "we actually took a five block parade and made it a worldwide event."



Baltimore on the march

"Some of us said, it would be nice to get television involved in our parade," remembers the 42-year-old civil engineer and community planner. So with the can-do attitude that seems to infect the 12-person parade organizing committee every year and Mavronis in particular ("You focus on the positive and eventually people start focusing on the positive"), the committee got in touch with Antenna Greek television in New York, were rebuffed, got Peter Angelos and Maryland Public Television to sign off on letters of recommendation, eventually got an invitation to a meeting and made sure they made an impression.

"We built almost an eight-foot Parthenon with balloons and we had every *yiyia* in Greektown bake all these different types of pastries and we went around to all the businesses and we put together a press package," remembers Mavronis, still excited. "And this press package was about eight feet tall. It had to go in two separate taxicabs." It made the necessary impression, their meeting lasted most of the day, and they were sent back to Maryland to hook up the technical feed Antenna needed to make the shoot feasible. They did it through Maryland Public Television (for which the group had raised over \$100,000 with their Greek programming during the station's fundraiser) and the parade became televised worldwide. Even Mavronis' seaman cousin saw it on his cruise ship in the Bahamas. "We did about \$200,000 worth of television for just \$2,997," he still enthuses.

"Really nice things happen when you don't have gatekeepers, when you don't have one way of doing things, because that one way grows old," he says. "That's what we maintained through this. We've always welcomed anybody who wanted to attend our meetings. We've put together PowerPoint presentations and gone around to different churches. These young kids are com-

ing out of their own professions to assist in such a beautiful way and this parade is one example."

(The parade organizing committee he says, by the way, includes everybody from *yiyiades* to priests to someone who works at the White House and trains the parade *evzones*.)

And the "young kids" like Mavronis who are the driving force behind the parade, were also the driving force behind the designation of Highlandtown in East Baltimore as the Greektown of the city and of its business resurgence. "We were talking about our community as being a 'Greektown,' like it had a character," he says. "Nobody has had done it. It was just understood that this was the place that Greeks were. But it was this young group of Greek people that started calling it Greektown, as though the city had recognized it." And Mavronis gave an interview at the parade in which he said the Greeks of Baltimore were "the most viable Greek American business community between Tarpon Springs and New York City, and bang," he remembers, "the politicians started saying it. People started courting our neighborhood for big businesses. And we had big Greek import-export companies looking in our area."

"Greektown" now is a destination, the parade is the biggest event of the year (with the proud title of The Spirit of America, Legacy of Greece, Freedom and Democracy for All) and this year there will be a first annual beauty pageant to kickoff the formal proceedings the month before. "Sometimes you put a uniform on and go down to Washington to promote the parade," says Mavronis. "And I'll find myself doing it, you'll find some of the other members doing it. You do what you have to do. It means a lot to our community and it means a lot when people show up." And, he adds, "the parade is what I do. I love it."

A youth movement in a venerable church

The Cathedral of the Annunciation is Maryland's oldest Greek Orthodox church and this year is celebrating its centennial, but its pastor is among the youngest and while he emphasizes the personal touch and is affectionately known as "Father Dean," his e-mail server list is 1200 strong and a few years ago he instituted a telephone service that contacts every parishioner's home with updated information and greetings.

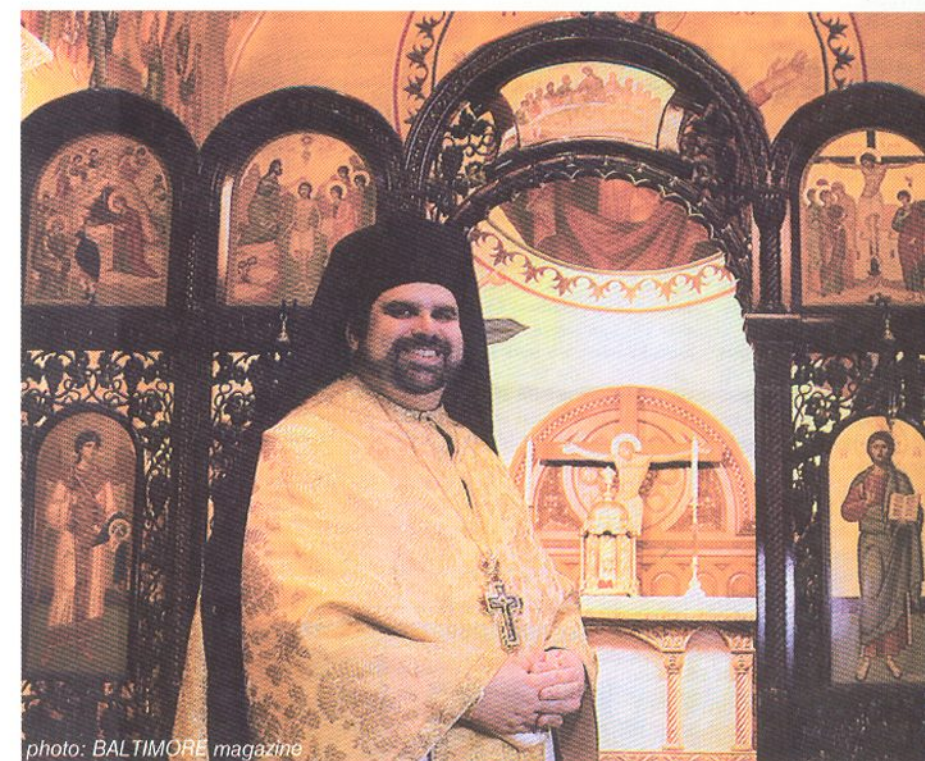
"I like technology and it seems to have caught on with everyone else, too," admits The Very Reverend Constantine Moralis, 39, who grew up in the parish and became the dean of the church four years ago. "Communication is key. We're very web-based."

And just as his predecessor Rev. Constantine Monios mentored him, he tries to mentor the young people of his congregation (he was the former youth director) and to make sure the church provides them with a wealth of activities. "You have to do things for them," he says. "We do have a very good summer camp, Young Adult League, GOYA, Joy Program, Little Angels."

The summer camp in the third week of August hosts kids from three parishes in Baltimore. The teen programs try to be more than sports and games. "We try to offer things that they are not able to get elsewhere," says Fr. Dean. "Meaning, even though we have basketball and other sports programs here at the church, we also have a youth service program, which allows them to make food for the homeless shelters; we are constantly collecting things that we send to the shelters as well."

The church is located downtown and is a short commute, but it enjoys good company, including the nearby Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall and the University of Baltimore, and its congregation is both devoted and distinguished. "We have a good mixture of people here, young and young at heart, as well," says the pastor. "It is a very vital parish. I think it's one of the largest parishes surviving in a downtown area. The Philoptochos is extremely active, and our senior citizen group travels to different areas of the country. We have even gone to different areas of the world and enjoyed the camaraderie and everything that accompanies that."

The church is in a year-long celebration of its 1906-2006



centennial (which included a procession from the original church on Homewood Avenue to the Cathedral on West Preston Street and a concert last May by Mario Frangoulis at the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall) and also a celebration of its continued evolution and growth. The original Romanesque church building was refurbished in the 1980s by a team of interior designers, iconographers and historians to more closely resemble a Byzantine church. Its Annunciation Orthodox Center across the street houses the largest parish library in the Archdiocese and a temperature-controlled archives.

And Fr. Dean has lived through much of the parish's history. He was born and baptized there, his parents worshipped there ("No one in the family was a priest, but we were always very active in the church"), and Fr. Monios was a role model: "He was a very active part of my life. He encouraged me with a lot of things, even with studying to be a priest, as an altar boy and everything. He was a very steady influence in my life."

After graduating Hellenic College in Brookline and Holy Cross Seminary, he had the "exhilarating feeling" of being ordained and soon coming to work in his home parish. "The fulfillment of a lifetime," he says. "It's just been a wonderful experience."

He says the challenges to the church are many, particularly keeping the young people involved, but the parish is tackling them head-on. The newly-acquired property across the street includes "an education building, and the future plans are to update that, as well, and to make the buildings as multimedia as possible, so we're able to do things that are web-based upstairs, able to have our Sunday school students and Greek school students be able to see things on different level."

And the older generation? "The older generation is happy when they see their children here," he says. "And I do receive the support of the parish council and the parish council president and do my best to be as active in ministering to our people." Which is a job-and-a-half. "But that's okay," he says, "because I really enjoy what I'm doing."

Aris Melissaratos, Steve Mavronis

Personal profit from nonprofits

A few days before the annual Greek Independence Day Mid Atlantic Parade in Baltimore, Gayle Economos will don her *Makedonia* outfit bought in Athens ("My yiayia from Thessaloniki always told us Alexander the Great stories") and start personally blitzing television stations and bringing *likismata*.

"And because I know most of these people, they wait for me," says the bubbly 51-year-old public relations doyenne who's been a big part of making the parade one of the largest in the country. "The other times of the year when I'm not wearing my *Makedonia* outfit, my clients say, So, when you coming back with the pastries?"

She brought Mario Frangoulis to Baltimore to celebrate the centennial of the Cathedral of the Annunciation on Maryland Public Television ("MPT made money for the evening, we got to promote the centennial, and we gave tickets on the air to the Mario Frangoulis concert," she cites as an example of P.R. synergy), she helped International Orthodox Christian Charities celebrate its tenth anniversary, and she's on the Baltimore-Piraeus Sister City Committee.

"I really enjoy doing things in the Greek community," she says. "I can help with publicity for anything. Almost all the work I do in the Greek community I do pro bono, not all of it, but most of it. But I treat all the programs and projects as if they're paying clients."

She's also helped the NAACP turn out the vote, needy families get a break on their fuel bills through the Fuel Fund of Maryland, the Walters Art Museum promote its Egyptian exhibit ("I think I was the only person who offered a proposal that quoted from the Egyptian Book of the Dead!") and nonprofit organizations from Catholic Relief Services to the March of Dimes get the word out. Most of her clients are nonprofits. "Nonprofits need people like me," she says. "Many of them are so focused on their mission that they forget or they don't have the money to hire someone full time to talk about what they do. And it's all about awareness. If people know what a nonprofit does, then when that nonprofit goes asking for money they're more likely to give."

In fact she won't take on a client unless they give something back to the community: "When we work for a business, we will only work on behalf of a business if they will link to nonprofit organizations. We image them in the communities they serve by showing businesses to be good neighbors and good corporate citizens." She calls Balti-



Mario Frangoulis with Gayle Economos
(Photo by Art Wachter)

more "nonprofit heaven," because the rents are reasonable, the workforce is there, the need is there, and it's a shout from Washington D.C.. "In Baltimore City itself 21 percent of the people who work there are employed by nonprofits, and almost ten percent in the state," she says. "It's the one employment sector that always grows every year. And I know this because one of my clients is the Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations, the largest state association of nonprofit organizations in the country and they work with Johns Hopkins every year to conduct a survey and get these facts."

She found Baltimore heaven (she grew up in Boston and Milwaukee) when she attended Goucher College (and became its first communications major) and found media heaven when she did an internship at a local television station. "I walked in the door and that was it. I must be here. I must do this!" she recalls. So she asked for a job. And she got a laugh. But four weeks later, she got the job: "And I researched and wrote bicentennial announcements for credit. It was the first time I was able to meld my love of history with communications."

She's been in Baltimore ever since, hosting on television and radio, as well, lecturing at Goucher, and for eleven years running her own P.R. firm, GVE Media/Public Relations. She was married but never changed her maiden name ("Because I'm Greek and I would never do that. I'm very proud of my name—Economopoulos, actually. *Evgenia Economopoulos*") and she lives with her daughter, Zoe, 17, in what she calls "a little creek off the Chesapeake Bay in a very modest neighborhood, but it's very lovely and I have a pier and I have my sailboat and that's my front yard."

"I really love what I do," she says. "And my basic philosophy of life is that the more you give, the more is given to you. I try to live my life that way—it seems that the more I do things to help people, whether it's in the Greek community, nonprofits, or my students at Goucher, the more good things happen to me."

Pizza pie in the sky dreams

Kyriakos Marudas had a dream back in 1991—about a sheltered teenager who one summer learns all about being Greek, and learns about working hard for your dreams from the owner of a pizzeria. Marudas was in law school at the time, but he always dreamed about becoming a writer, so "instead of studying for my final exam, I wrote the first draft of the script," he recalls. The script eventually became the 2004 independent film *Pizza Palace* filmed entirely in Baltimore, mostly in its Greektown, and it was the inaugural effort of the newly-minted Arete Films.

"I didn't think the subject matter had been addressed in any way, let alone any substantive way," admits the 38-year-old veteran trial attorney, who also played the stuffy father of the teenager in the film ("I am a trial attorney, so I suppose in some respects, I am an actor"). "And in 2004 conditions presented themselves that made it a viable option. We had some good cooperation with the merchants of Greektown, who were very helpful—some of the restaurants there and the coffeehouses. It's a process that involves a lot of people, it's very ambitious, but, fortunately, the people I was working with had the vision, stamina and temperament to see it through."

George Kardulias, co-executive producer with Marudas and also an actor, played the part of pizza owner George Stamakos and Rod Lopez directed the film. Senator Barbara Mikulski had a cameo because "she's a friend of the Greek community," says Marudas, and the



interiors for the pizzeria were also shot in Samos, one of the senator's favorite restaurants. The shoot took 14 days and ranged over a dozen locations, and the film premiere to benefit Alzheimer's research was held at Baltimore's Senator Theatre. It was submitted to Sundance and DVDs and screenings are now available nationwide.

"I think that the movie will appeal to a variety of ethnic groups, particularly Greeks, but anyone who appreciates the idea of struggle and assimilation, because that is a current that runs through the movie," says Marudas, citing one scene where the pizza owner confesses to the teen his own ambition that his children not have to work in a pizzeria but wear a suit and work in an office.

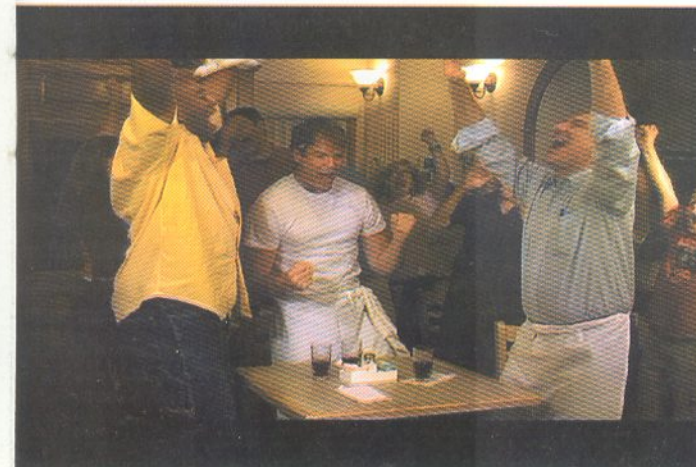
The summer for the teen becomes a coming-of-age, where he discovers his work ethic, his heritage, and even romance with a Greek girl.

Marudas, a bachelor, grew up in Baltimore and is passionate about its charms:

"Baltimore is home. It's a city of neighborhoods. Baltimore has been classified as a big small town. It's the type of place that has the cultural amenities and sports teams that one equates with a big city, but it has a small feel to it, meaning if I went to dinner, the likelihood of my running into someone I know is fairly high, which is certainly the case here." He started writing short stories when he was six or seven (his father is journalist Peter Marudas), but he got hooked on the law, graduated law school from the University of Maryland, and when his father became chief of staff to Sen. Paul Sarbanes, also got exposed to politics.

"I grew up sort of at the footstool of politics," he says. "As a child I would go often to political events and I had some interest in politics, but my father wisely advised that if you want to enter politics a law degree was very important and I am a people person. I like dealing with people. So law is very people-oriented, particularly trial work." He now works as an assistant city solicitor for Baltimore City and maintains a private practice.

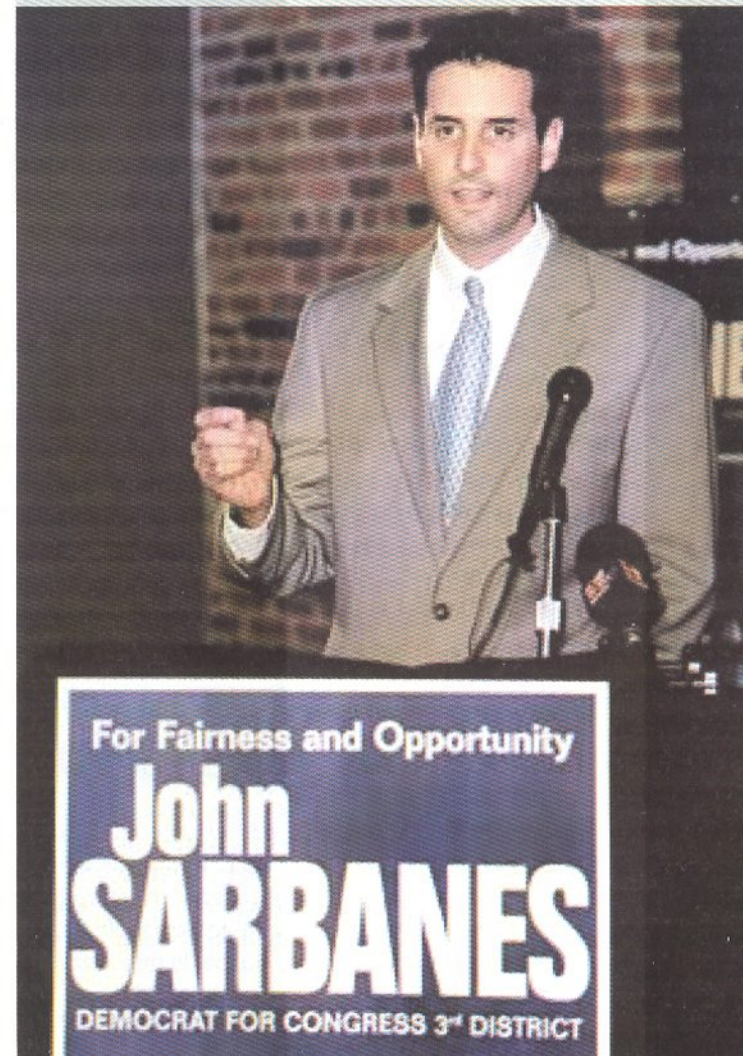
But would he run if Hollywood beckoned? He has another script written on a different subject (but won't talk about it, "at this point") and while passionate about his second vocation, he's also practical about it. "I'd like to combine the passion with an economic opportunity," he admits. "I think most people hope to do that in their lives. Whether that will turn out or not that remains to be seen."



JOHN P. SARBANES Charting his own course

By Dimitri C. Michalakos

After an Ivy League education and a job at a powerhouse law firm, John Sarbanes could have settled into the fast track to a partnership and the advantages provided by his famous name. But for the past four years he's chaired the health care group at his firm wrestling with the dismal state of health care in this country, for the past eight years he's worked part-time in public education wrestling with the monumental problems of streamlining and funding public schools and for the past fifteen years he's done pro bono work with an assortment of community organizations and boards.



"Few have done that kind of split, where you're part time in the private sector and part time in the public sector, but that's because I cared about those issues, and frankly I was willing to forego some compensation in order to do that," says the 43-year-old Baltimore native. "I see these things as all part of who I am."

And last October he announced he was running for Congress from Baltimore's 3rd District, but in typical fashion he saw it not as an opportunity to advance himself but as a more effective way to legislate for the causes he's always worked for.

"It was an open seat and the issues I've been involved with and cared about for 20 years can benefit from an advocacy in Washington," he states frankly. "And so, I thought, well, here's an opportunity and maybe I ought to give it a hard look, which is what I did."

He's already leading his Democratic rivals in fundraising and has been barnstorming the district, which cuts a wide swathe through four different counties and includes Baltimore City, Baltimore County, the state capital of Annapolis, but also wildlife preserves and public land.

"I think the electorate gets a little frustrated that it's been carved up in these pieces with the congressional redistricting that occurred in 2000," he says. "But I think the basic message can be very consistent...Education and health care and the infrastructure, the environment, obviously, is very important because of the Chesapeake Bay. These are all issues these communities can agree on and if you can put forward creative ideas about how to deal with them, I think that that will be resonant."

His creative ideas are backed by his own experience in the field, in health care, for example: "I've worked with numerous community hospitals in Maryland and I've seen firsthand the burden they shoulder with the fact that we have 46 million Americans who have no health care insurance. And often it's the hospitals that provide care for the uninsured because they seek treatment in hospital emergency rooms, which is the highest cost part of our health care system, and that uncompensated care has to be paid for somehow and it winds up getting picked up by everybody else who has insurance."

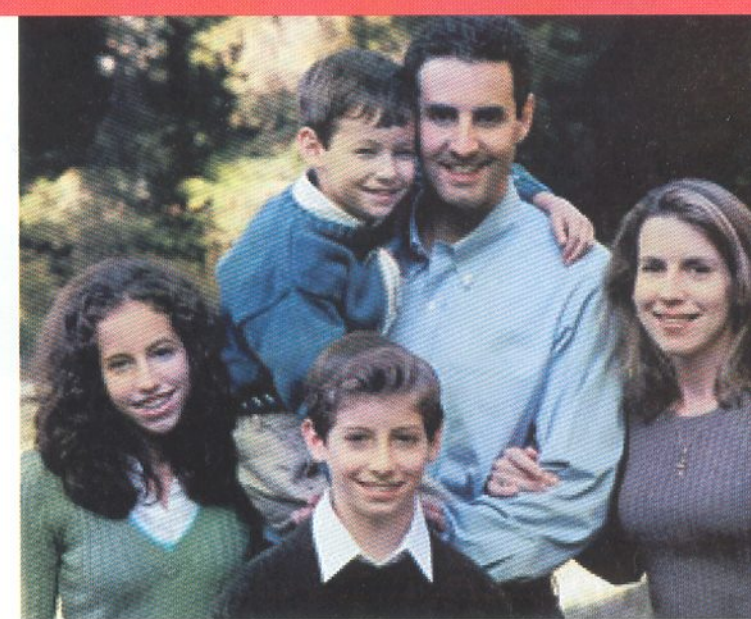
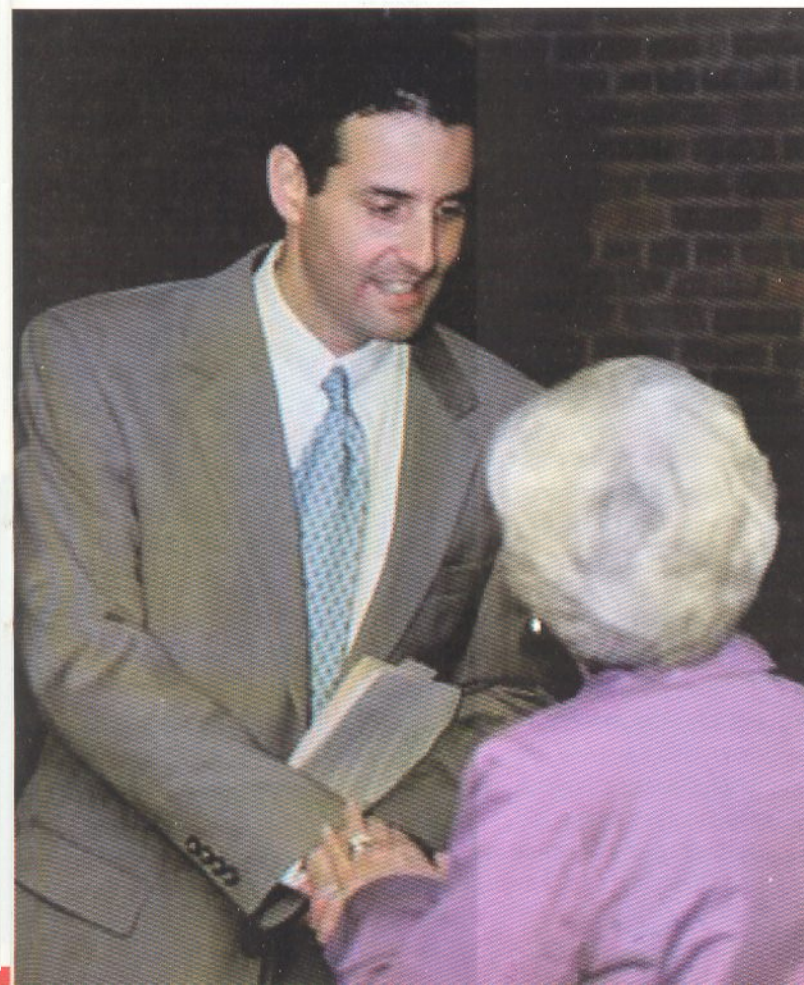
He says one in seven Americans don't have health insurance, but universal coverage is doable with the right priorities: "You look at the things that are already working if they were properly funded and try to strengthen them and perhaps increase the number of people that they cover."

Medicare administrative costs are comparably low, "but we have to properly fund it, and if we do that we could take the eligibility down to say 55 years, 55 and up, and that would bring in a significant number of uninsured people and it would broaden the insurance pool that Medicare has access to."

Politics might stand in the way, he admits, "but frankly nothing could be friendlier to the business community than an administration that could figure out the way to get us to universal health care coverage, because the fact of the matter is that what the business community wants is a healthy, educated work force and we're not investing on the health side and we're not investing on the education side, either. I think this administration distributes candy to the business community in the form of tax cuts but isn't investing in the long term in the things that are really going to benefit the business community. If we invest up front in health care we would save so much money in the long run."

On education, his eight years working part-time in the Baltimore City public schools have taught him that, "the number one issue in public education is the quality of the teachers and the quality of the principals. If we focus on that issue obsessively we can begin to turn around some of these low performing schools, in urban areas in particular, where they have been failing for years. But to do it we have to be creative." He says public schools throughout the country will need 2 million new teachers over the next ten years and one way to find motivated candidates is to think outside the box by considering those taking early retirement from the aerospace and defense industries, for example. "We need to find a way to take those people by the hand and escort them across into public education so that resource doesn't go out to pasture. They have tremendous knowledge and many of them have the desire to pursue some kind of capstone career in which they can impart their knowledge and skill set to the next generation."

Vouchers, he says, are not the answer ("I think it's a mistake to take public money and give it to people in the form of vouchers so they can



With wife Dina and his children Stephanie, Leo and Nico

purchase services, as it were, in the private sector. I am receptive however to the movement around public charter schools") and he says unions, often portrayed as resisting change, are often the most receptive to new ideas. "I don't think a public education system that is efficiently run and properly resourced is one in which you're going to end up in these clashes with the unions, even if you're trying to bring innovative and creative ideas to bear. In fact, some of the unions, nationally, have been quite cutting-edge in some of the experimentation that they're willing to do."

Being a civil man, he believes the current name-calling in politics is uncivil ("It's a disservice to our citizens to simply attack the proposals or platform or agenda of the other side; I think that what people want to hear is what are the affirmative ideas that you have about where the country should be headed"), and he was against the Iraq war and is against its continuing cost in lives and money, but says a hasty withdrawal, "smacks of the same kind of impulsiveness that got us there in the first place. We ought to push the administration to lay out two or three withdrawal scenarios."

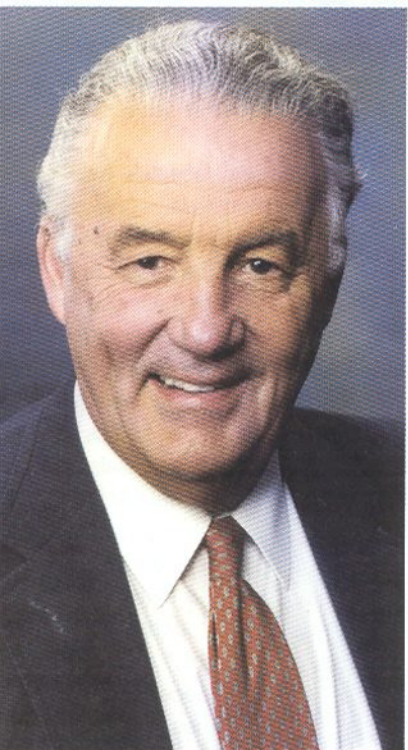
Born and raised in Baltimore, he spent a year in Greece as a Fulbright scholar and discovering his relatives (his family comes from Peloponnesus), but it was his grandmother Matina (who died five years ago at age 91) who made Greece a living presence at her home in Salisbury, where the kids usually spent their summers. "Right until the end she was the matriarch," he says. "Her house is where we would gather for Thanksgiving and for Easter. She was our principal connection to our Greek heritage. We learned our first Greek from her and we listened to stories about Greece from her time there. I think it had a very great influence in terms of our own interest in our ethnic heritage."

As for growing up in a political family, "obviously, it's always in the back of your mind," he says. But he chose his own path, very much in the mold of his father. "His legacy in politics is one of public service, because I think that's a high calling and he obviously got into that very early in his career (Paul Sarbanes ran for the Maryland House of Delegates in 1966 at the age of 33). What I've been most impressed with and has inspired me and my siblings is the integrity with which he served, the high standard, and the fact that he was always more interested in getting things done and building good legislation than he was getting a lot of attention for himself. Some people would say he was a workhorse, not a showboat, but that kind of humility is something we need more of in public life and the thing that his children respect and value highly."

In that sense, John Sarbanes is a chip off the old block, and as the face of a new generation of Greek Americans, our choice for Person of the Year.

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS: Senator Paul Sarbanes on a career and a life

By Dimitri C. Michalakos



He is 73 now and will be 74 when he retires next January from the Senate after an illustrious 30 years and an unprecedented five terms as Maryland's senator. The son of Spyros and Matina Sarbanes of Salisbury, Maryland, who ran the Mayflower Restaurant on Salisbury's Main Street, he got a scholarship to Princeton, a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford, and graduated Harvard Law School. He ran for the Maryland House of Delegates in 1966, and in 1970 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives for the first of three terms. He was the one chosen by his House Watergate Committee colleagues to introduce the first Article of Impeachment against Richard Nixon. He was elected to the Senate in 1976, where as chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, he co-sponsored the Sarbanes-Oxley bill to re-

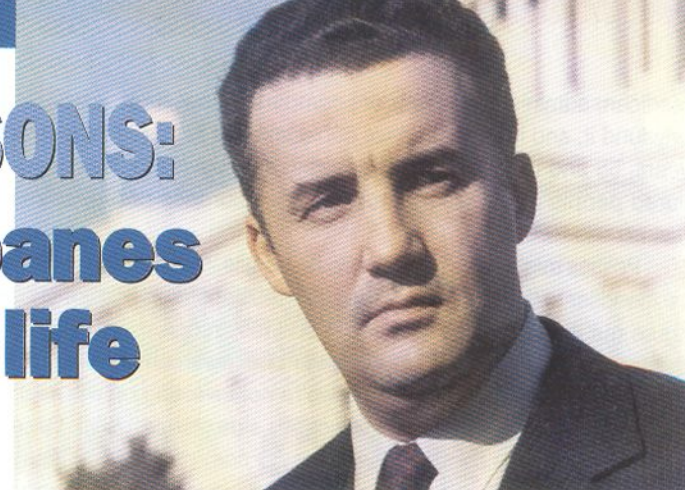
form the accounting industry and restore investor confidence after the collapse of Enron and WorldCom. He was married in 1960 to Christine Dunbar of Brighton, England, a graduate of St. Hugh's College, Oxford University; Lecturer in Classics at Goucher College, 1960-1973; and teacher of Latin and Classical Greek at the Gilman School in Baltimore, Maryland. They are the parents of three children and the grandparents of six.

How will the Senate survive without you, Senator?

SEN. SARBANES: The Senate's a longstanding institution; it'll keep right on going. It'll do just fine, but we've been here thirty years at the end of this year, so it's a long stretch. I never anticipated staying until the very end and we've been at it for five terms and it seems the right time to go ahead and step down. I'll miss some of it. But most people retire well before the age where I am. It's an appropriate thing to do here.

In what shape do you leave the Senate?

SEN. SARBANES: The Congress, the House and Senate, are suffering under this Republican leadership, which doesn't perceive the institution as a check and balance in the workings of our governmental system. The Republican leadership tends very much to see its role as a carrying out whatever it is the president wants to do and that's not my vision of the Congress and how it's supposed to work or what the founding fathers established.



Is compromise possible any longer in the Senate, or the House?

SEN. SARBANES: You are getting people elected in both the House and the Senate who are highly ideological. They know what they think before they even get here and then they don't want to be confused by the facts. So it takes away the nature of the dialogue that takes place in the Senate. It's less analytical, less connected with the facts, less common sense, less pragmatic and practical, and so positions are being pushed because they fit an ideological framework.

What will you miss the most about politics?

SEN. SARBANES: The fact that I'm leaving the Senate doesn't mean I won't still be involved in politics in one way or another. I hope to do some speaking and then teaching, so we'll exercise some influence there. My son, of course, is running for Congress so that's a challenge.

How do you feel about his run?

SEN. SARBANES: I'm excited about it. He's a very dedicated, very able young man and he's got a very strong sense of values and I think he would be an extremely effective representative. We're trying to be helpful in any way we can, it's his effort to run and I very much recognize and respect that.

What are the pros and cons of public office?

SEN. SARBANES: The cons are the tremendous demands it places on your personal life and the stresses connected with that. And also there can be a lot of frustrations, particularly nowadays, because you're up against having all of the branches of government dominated by the other party. But you can serve the public interest, you can do a lot of good and that's what your attention is on every day.

Your proudest moment?

SEN. SARBANES: The most significant moment I think was when I worked on the impeachment of Richard Nixon back when I was in the House on the House Judiciary Committee. And I guess at the other end of my career now, we've just done Sarbanes-Oxley, which is having a very profound effect on corporate practices and honesty and integrity and transparency on the business world in the aftermath of Enron and WorldCom.

Why were you targeted by the conservatives in 1982?

SEN. SARBANES: The National Conservative Political Action Committee. They started running ads against me early in 1981 with the election not until the fall of 82. They had elected Ronald Reagan and they were presuming they were going to have a huge conservative tide. And apparently they figured that if they could come after me they could run these radio and television ads on Washington media, which means all the other members of the Congress would see them, and therefore they could get the benefit of trying to intimidate other members of the Congress in the course of attacking me. But we stood up to them and fought them back and I don't think that worked.

Where do we stand with Cyprus?

SEN. SARBANES: We got Cyprus into the EU, which was a very important objective and I think is very significant. But we still haven't resolved the situation, although Turkey's efforts to eventually go into the EU may serve as an important catalyst for bringing about a just resolution on Cyprus. We just have to see. We keep working on it. But for the life of me I can't understand why Turkey doesn't appreciate that it would serve its own interests to get a just resolution of Cyprus.

Has the passion of the Greek American community waned over Cyprus?

SEN. SARBANES: You're not going to have a passion equivalent to what you had in reaction to the brutal invasion because that was very immediate at the time and very strongly felt. And of course on the island itself there are efforts now to improve the relationships. They have now opened up these crossing points, very substantial numbers are moving back and forth. If you could get the Turkish military and the settlers who were brought in from Anatolia out of this situation I think probably the Turkish and the Greek Cypriots could work out their situation.

How would you describe yourself as a public servant?

SEN. SARBANES: I think it's important if you're an elected representative to do all you can to sustain people's confidence in how you go about doing your work. This is separate and apart from particular substantive positions you may take on issues. People ought to have a sense that you're making honest judgments, that there's an integrity in how you do your work, and that you consider the issues carefully in trying to reach your judgment, that you're here to serve the public interest and not the private interest. Making democracy work is not an easy proposition and those of us that are given these responsibilities have to very sensitive in how we carry them out.

What about your parents?

SEN. SARBANES: (His mother passed away five years ago, his father just before he entered law school) They ran a restaurant all their lives, in Salisbury, Maryland, which is a small town on Maryland's eastern shore, and they called it the Mayflower Grill. Charlie Moskos in his book writes how it was another example of how the Greeks sought to become a part of America and he cited how my parents and my father in particular would name the restaurant the Mayflower as a demonstration of that. But I worked in that restaurant all my life until we finally closed it up after my mother's death. My mother ran it for a few years. But all through high school and into college and into law school I worked in the restaurant. And I often say at the dinners now, you know, sometimes the toastmaster will say to you, Senator we're really running behind schedule here, he says, do you mind starting to speak while people are still eating? And I say, no, I grew up working in the restaurant, I'm used to working while people are eating.

What was your parents' influence on you?

SEN. SARBANES: They put a tremendous emphasis on education. I remember once when I was in high school saying, you know how high school kids get, sort of in a rebellious mood, saying to my father, well, I'm not going to go to college. And he rarely got angry at me, but he really got very angry at me and he sort of



shook me and said, you may grow up to be a good for nothing, but you're going to go to college, you're going to be an educated good for nothing. I went to the public high school, Micomico, and a Princeton alumnus showed up in my principal's office and he said to my high school principal, he said, Princeton is trying to diversify its student body and nobody from this high school has ever gone to Princeton and do you have anyone who ought to apply? So the principal called me in the next day and told me this conversation. But that was way beyond our horizons at the time, but I went ahead and applied. And they took me and gave me a financial aide package that made it possible to go. So when they talk about diversity, I'm always sensitive and responsive to it because I was in a sense a product of diversity, although it meant a different thing back then.

Did you ever consider running for president?

SEN. SARBANES: That's a very hit or miss proposition. The Senate is where I felt I could do a good job and that's what I focused on for these thirty years. I think we have done a good job.

Did Greeks look at you as the torchbearer for the whole community?

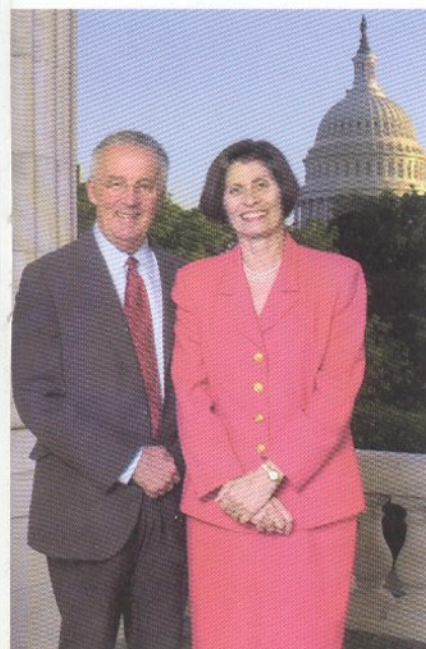
SEN. SARBANES: I felt an obligation to the community which has been enormous supportive of me over the years. I've tried to articulate the best of our values as a community. You know, as I say in a lot of my speeches, the ancient Athenians felt that you had a responsibility to serve your community and someone who focused on their own private interests was falling short of what was required. They used to call such a person an *idiot*, and that's where the word idiot comes from. We were brought up on this notion of serving and on democracy and of making it work and so forth. My mother was a woman of very strong religious faith, so all of that family and education and hard work and a strong faith all came together in our family.

The future of Greeks in America?

SEN. SARBANES: Of all the communities, we're the one that is the strongest in having the next generation obtain an education and move into business and the professions and the arts and into politics. We do it within one or two generations. We go from a generation that is the immigrant generation, and often the very next generation, in other words the children of the immigrants, not even the grandchildren, the children of the immigrants are going to the best universities and professional schools, are leading members in the business community, all professions, and the artistic and literary world.

Will you "spend more time with your family" when you retire?

SEN. SARBANES: It'll be a plus spending more time with them. But when people say that, it always seems to me they should have been spending time with them all along, which we have tried very hard to do.



Saturday & Sunday (12 Noon -6 PM)

April 8-9, 2006

Trump Marina, Atlantic City, NJ

THE ONE AND ONLY

GREEK AMERICAN TRADE SHOW

- Arts, Humanities and Crafts
- Computers and Technology
- Finance and Banking
- Food Products and Services
- Government and Municipalities
- Telecommunications
- Travel and Tourism
- Imports and Exports
- National Pavilions

**HERMES
EXP
INTERNATIONAL**

Hellenic Exhibitions Since 1992

**FREE
ADMISSION**

Register now and participate in a
drawing for a FREE R/T air ticket to
Greece - courtesy of Alitalia

Let's fly **Alitalia**
alitaliausa.com

BOOTH EXHIBITS (120) - SYMPOSIUM Sat. 10AM-1PM
NETWORKING EVENTS Sunday Brunch 10-12 PM
DINNER AWARD PRESENTATIONS Sat. Night 6 PM
Business-to-Business Meetings (Partenariat method)

www.HermesExpo.com

001-610-446-1463

NOW WITH ITS OWN **PARKING** FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE!

CHRISTOS GROCERY in the heart of ASTORIA!



Photos: ETA PRESS

The highest quality at the lowest prices!



**Parking
across the street**

Shopping at "CHRISTOS", always a pleasure,
now easier than ever!

All Greek
specialties

29-19, 23RD AVE., ASTORIA, NEW YORK
TEL: (718) 545-3931

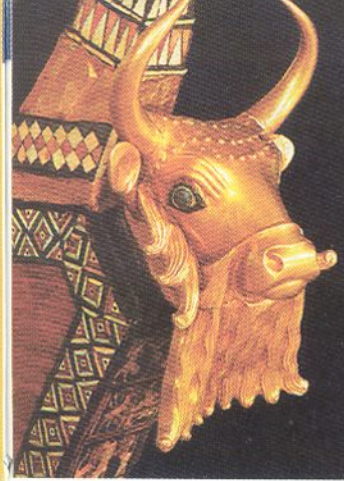
Thieves of Baghdad

How a Marine and classical scholar helped recover the antiquities of Iraq



By Dimitri C. Michalakos

Matthew Bogdanos remembers what he was doing on September 11. He was kissing his kids goodbye for the day before going to work as a Manhattan prosecutor when the sound of an explosion rocked the apartment. "Daddy, look at the big fire!" his three-year-old son Michael yelled looking out the window at the World Trade Center burning only a block away.



"In my mind, the fact that two airplanes had just flown into the World Trade Center did not mean that everything else had stopped," he writes in his new book *Thieves of Baghdad* (with William Patrick, Bloomsbury, 2005). But the world did change that day for many people, and for the reservist Marine officer

it meant everything else in his life would stop and he would undertake the mission of a lifetime. In the process, he would track down terrorists from Afghanistan to Iraq to the Horn of Africa, and he would spend over two years hunting down the thousands of priceless treasures stolen from the Iraq museum after the fall of Baghdad.

The book, he says, "is not about me. It is about an Iraqi people whose warmth and hospitality in inviting me into their homes and hearts will stay with me always...and about why a bunch of old rocks with funny writing matter so damn much." A classicist, as well as a veteran homicide prosecutor and Marine officer,

Bogdanos led a team of specialists from agencies as varied as the CIA and Customs on the hunt for the antiquities in a culture that both venerated the artifacts and looted them through the ages for easy cash, in the present day, often to buy guns and bomb-making equipment for the insurgency.

He had "almost seventeen years as a prosecutor, specializing in homicides and serial violent crimes," he says. "As a result, I had the 'flesh under the fingernails' routines you see on *NYPD Blue* down pretty cold...It was actually quite a surprise, then, when I realized just how naïve I could be. It wasn't until I came to Baghdad that I got to see the real knife work."

With his team of counterterrorism experts, he was tracking down both the terrorists and their facilitators in Iraq (after a tour in Afghanistan doing the same) when one day in Basra an embedded journalist walked over and started yelling at him. "Not knowing my classics background she just started screaming," he remembers, "about how you macho a--holes are down here and you're all happy with yourselves because you're finding all these weapons and all this evidence (in the Oil for Food program)—and we were pretty pleased with ourselves—while she said

the finest museum in the world had just been looted. Because of my background I knew what she was talking about. I knew she was talking about the Iraq museum."

His intelligence officer set up a satellite dish and tracked the frenzied news reports of "170,000 items from the very cradle of civilization looted from the museum by looters in 48 hours." So he put together a team of 14, including himself, left the remainder of his unit to continue its mission, "and I just decided that this was going to be another job." He thought "it would take me 3-5 days—I wound up living at the museum close to six months and I was still not done."

When he got there, he found every office trashed by vengeful mobs (the museum had once belonged to the government), he found shelves bare and thousands of artifacts missing (some later discovered stored for safekeeping by museum staff) and he found the media in a swirl of rumors over the quantity of the theft. "The most fundamental distortion about the looting," he says, "was the scope of what had occurred. Launching reporters off into the ozone was an initial report that 170,000 items had been stolen—an estimate, we quickly determined, that overshot the mark by a factor of more than ten."

If a vase was found in 14 pieces, for example, it was recorded as 14 pieces and it was soon determined that only about 14,000 artifacts were missing, though some of them were the most celebrated in the archaeological record. And as Bogdanos and his team took up residence for a job they knew would take not days, but months and even years, he sometimes put the noise of the modern world behind him and strolled through the halls and back in time.

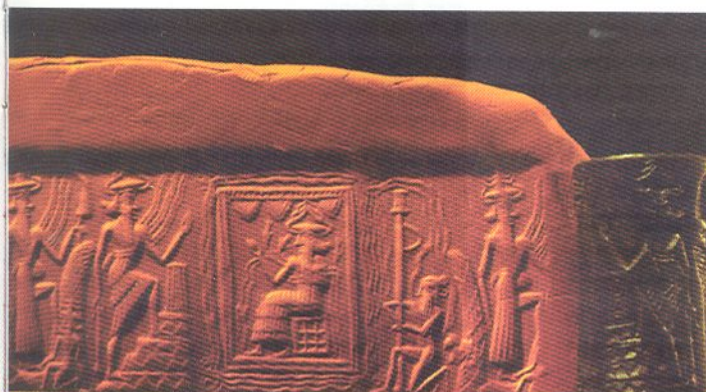
"I loved every minute of it there," he says. "It did, however, take a few days to appreciate fully where I was, and to grasp that the objects I was seeing were not images in an oversize art book, but the real thing. One of the first eureka moments was when I came across a black basalt stela

from Uruk depicting the king as lion hunter—I vaguely remembered that it was the oldest stone carving of its size ever recovered in Iraq and the first known attempt at indicating perspective in bas-relief."

He was eventually rotated out of Iraq after his team recovered over 5,000 of the missing artifacts, and getting shot at, but now back in the reserves he vents his frustration over the quick condemnation of the international community to the looting of the museum but its continuing apathy to protecting the remaining treasures and the thousands of sites across Iraq. "My response to any country that refuses to assist in stopping the continuing cultural catastrophe that is the rape and looting of the Iraqi archaeological sites is, go to hell. Either do something, or shut up and get out of my way. You weren't in favor of the war and you didn't want to stop the mass executions uncovered, fine, we're talking about something completely different now. We're talking about our shared cultural heritage; we're talking about the patrimony of an entire country. I spent the last two and a half years in many cases getting shot at in order to protect these."

The book, he says, was written to inform the public and honor the people he met on his missions, all proceeds will go to the Iraq museum, and Bogdanos makes it passionately clear that his warrior's role is very much in line with his classical education.

"Aeschylus is known today as one of the finest dramatists the world has ever seen," he says. "But that's not how Aeschylus saw himself. He wrote the epitaph for his own gravestone and on it he wrote, Here lies Aeschylus, whose bravery on the field of battle is well known to the Persian. He viewed himself as a warrior first. As did Socrates, the father of Western thought, who was actually as well known in his world for his bravery at Amphipolis. No one likes war, we hate it. Anyone who has ever been in combat thinks it's awful, but it's not the worst awful, and it's not the worst evil. There is nothing to commend it other than its better than the alternative, which is to allow the murderers, which they are, to succeed, and that I won't do, and anyone who has children shouldn't do. It's that simple."



He offends the Republicans on a regular basis, he offends the Democrats on a regular basis (he dressed them down in person at the Capitol after their 2004 electoral drubbing), Markos Moulitsas Zuniga even offends himself ("Everybody says I'm an a-hole, and they're right"), but they keep coming back for more. His **Daily Kos** blog (DailyKos.com), ranting at political timidity of all stripes, registers almost a million hits a day and is the biggest forum of like-minded souls—political gadflies who use the Internet to shoot their barbs at pompous politicians and pundits of all persuasions.

Equal opportunity offender



"I hate Washington," the slender, hyper Zuniga, 35, told *The Washington Times* and so he rails at the Beltway from afar, from California, where he lives with his wife and son, Aristotle. But like it or not, his clout has made him a Washington power-broker. His site plays to an audience larger than ten opinion magazines combined and he raised \$500,000 for the Democrats in the last election. He was also an early backer of Howard Dean and made him an Internet phenomenon. Which is why a guy who sits at his laptop in California gets to talk regularly with Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid and gets to dress down the troops at the Capitol.

"The party had just lost its third election in a row, and his audience, a self-flagellatory group at the best of times, was feeling glum and a little bit desperate," reported *The Washington Times* of the meeting. "Moulitsas told the assembled crowd that they, the establishment, had mismanaged party strategy for too long and that he, Markos, had a better plan." In fact, he took on the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) and stormed out of a party thrown in his honor. "They want to make me into the latest Jesse Jackson, but I'm not ideological at all," Moulitsas says. "I'm just all about winning."

He came to his political shining path the hard way. He was born in Chicago to a Greek family from El Salvador (his uncle was briefly the country's education minister) that moved back to El Salvador when Moulitsas was four. He talks about stepping over bodies in the street during the civil war that gave him a right-wing bent, before the family returned to Chicago and he grew up "a loudmouthed nerd." He also grew up a Reagan Republican (because Reagan supported the Salvadorean government) and he joined the Army as a scout, serving mostly in Germany. But in college he got into left wing politics, then earned a law degree from Boston University, and moved to Silicon Valley to strike it rich.

"Maybe at some time, Silicon Valley really was this democratic ideal where the guy with the best idea made a billion dollars, but by the time I got there at least, it was just like anything else—a bunch of rich kids who knew each other running around and it all depended on who you knew," Moulitsas told *The Washington Times*.

So he started posting comments on a liberal site called MyDD.com, and by 2002 he had a following and launched his own blog, Daily Kos ("Named after my Army nickname, rhymes with 'prose'"). It took off the following year when he allowed readers to register their own weblogs, or diaries, through a technology called Scoop. "Suddenly, Moulitsas had transformed his site from something that looked kind of like a newspaper column into a genuinely new, complex community filled not with readers but with writers," said *The Washington Times*. Those writers—Billmon, DavidNYC, Bill in Portland, Maine—joined the crusade and the wishful thinking that Democrats were going to win in the next round. They didn't, but then Moulitsas and others in the blogger universe had a battle plan for the next round and, anyway, they were intent on perpetuating their own "noise machine" to rival the Republicans'.

And Moulitsas has been at it ever since, with the Daily Kos blasting the Bush administration over the war, blasting Democrats over their meekness and lack of tactical sense (To win back the red states he advises Democrats to avoid talking about gun-control—which they have adopted, in some cases), and rallying the blogger masses with doses of his own credo: "Be noticed. Make a stir. Don't regurgitate the contents of a news story, but provide perspective or additional insight...Be clever, funny, original...Have attitude...I don't care whether you like me or not."

Making a difference

By Dimitri C. Michalakis

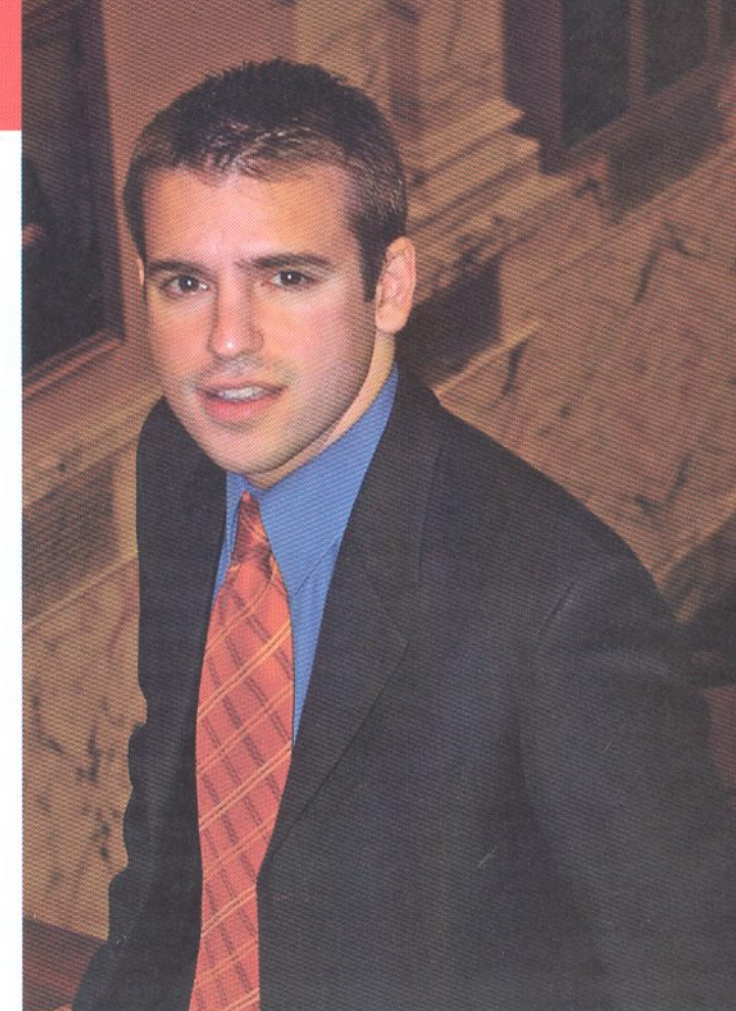
When Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich needs to decide who to pardon from the average list of 20 prisoners a month suggested to him by the state's parole commission, his counsel's office must vet the choices and his young deputy counsel must do the legwork to let the governor make an informed choice.

"We seek a lot of detailed information about the applicant," says Chrys Kefalas, 26, who's considered over 200 cases since he joined the governor's staff in 2004. "Since the offense, how has their behavior been, have they had any additional encounters with the law, what have they been doing with their life, have they been taking the initiative to improve their lives? We try to get the full range of factors to give the governor everything he needs to make the right decision."

Most of the offenses are what Kefalas calls "garden-variety crimes" by offenders "looking to clear their records and try to access some type of employment and, basically, begin life again. And Governor Ehrlich, to his credit, takes a very personal interest in these cases and decides, when appropriate, to give individuals a second chance in life and, in effect, to offer mercy on behalf of the state."

There was the case of Mary Washington Brown, who was only 12 when she saw her mother beaten to death by her stepfather, then got a life sentence at 16 for stabbing a woman during a robbery attempt. She spent thirty years in jail before the case was brought to the governor's office. "She had attained her GED, taken college courses in the system, and we talked to the victim's family in the case and they were very supportive of clemency for Mary Brown," says Kefalas. The governor pardoned her last year. "And that's what's great about working for Governor Ehrlich and having this specific duty," says his young counsel. "This individual, but for the governor's courageous act, would be spending the rest of her life in jail, with no hope, nothing to look forward to, and now she has a chance to give back and change more lives outside the bars of prison. She has the opportunity to stop more deaths from occurring. And it makes me feel that a job was done right."

And that he made a difference. "My goal in life has always been to make a difference," he says. "It's how people take advantage of the gifts that we have in this great country, that were offered to my grandparents, to my parents, and to me." His Great Aunt Mary, for example, who for many years ran the Nick Seafood Pavilion in Yorktown, Virginia, one of the most famous restaurants on the East Coast, fed the ser-



vicemen who flocked to her place for free. "I would go up there during my summers and spend some time with them and they had such a love for this country," remembers Kefalas. "What leads me to lead the life I live is seeing how appreciative they were for the gifts this country had, for the freedom we had to succeed and to lead our lives the way we choose to lead our lives in this great country. That, more than anything else, is why I choose to do what I do today."

His father Michael (who studied to be a chemical engineer but gave it up to raise a family and is now manager of Costas Inn seafood restaurant in Baltimore owned by Chrys' godfather Costas) was initially skeptical of his son's decision to enter politics. (The governor's office, though, had enough faith in him to print his official stationery even while he awaited the results of his bar exam.) But Kefalas says he wanted to be a lawyer since he was 12 (he took English Lit. in college to become a better writer as a lawyer), and though he enjoys working behind the scenes, running for office himself might be something he would consider. He testified on Witness Intimidation Reform before Congress without breaking a sweat ("I do well under pressure"), surprises legislators who misjudge his youth for inexperience, and remembers the words of his father.

"My dad has always emphasized public service as a fundamental part of citizenship and indeed life," he says. "We are blessed to live in this country and we have an obligation to give back so I certainly at some point may find that seeking public office is something I want to do. Right now, though, it's about serving Governor Ehrlich. I can't say enough about his ethnics and his integrity."

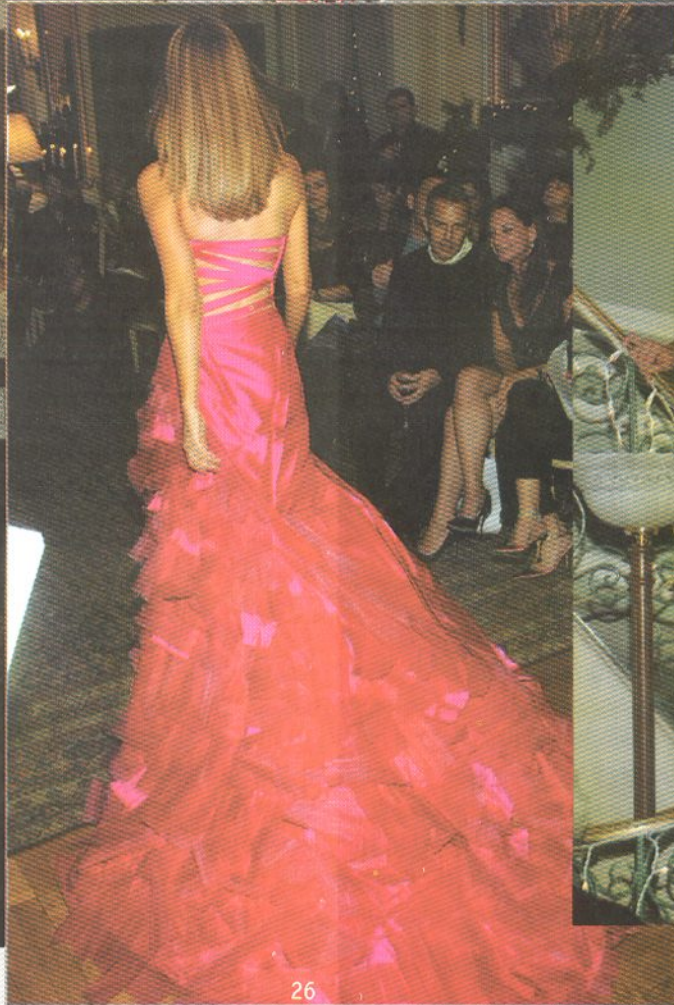
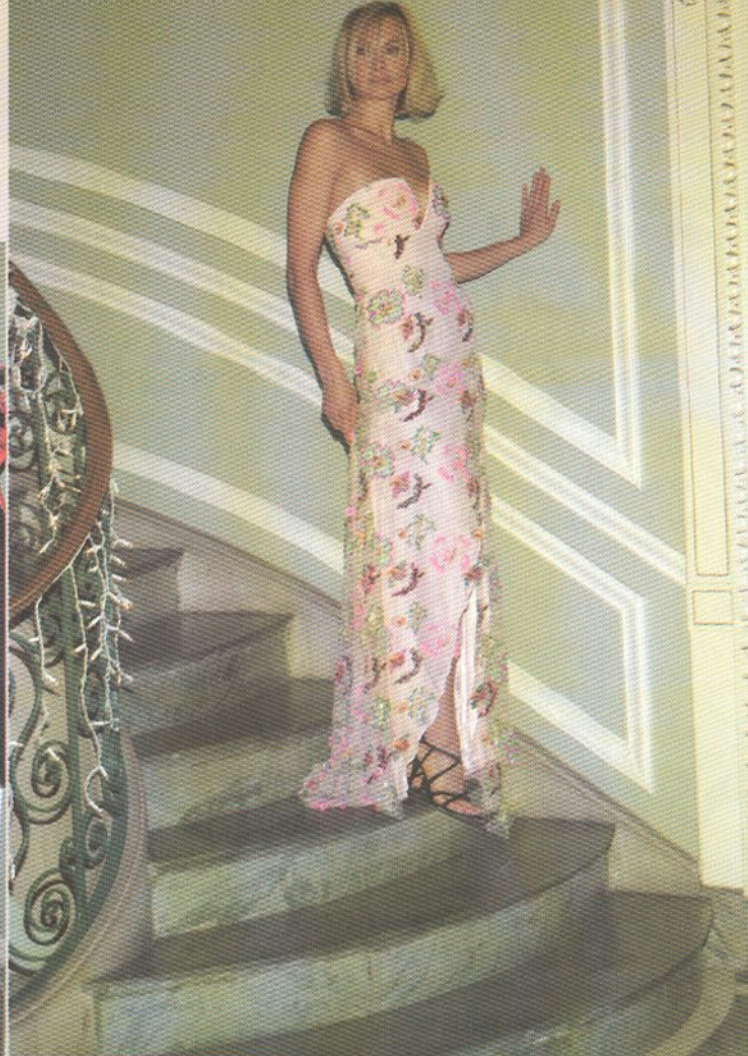
Spoken like a natural.

fashion

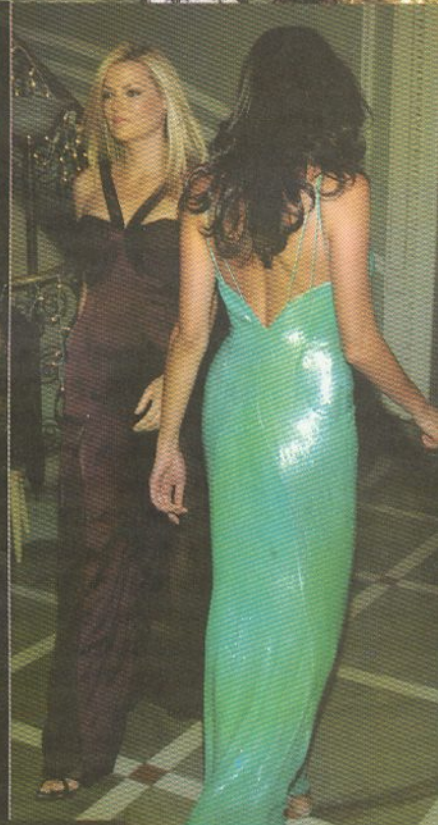
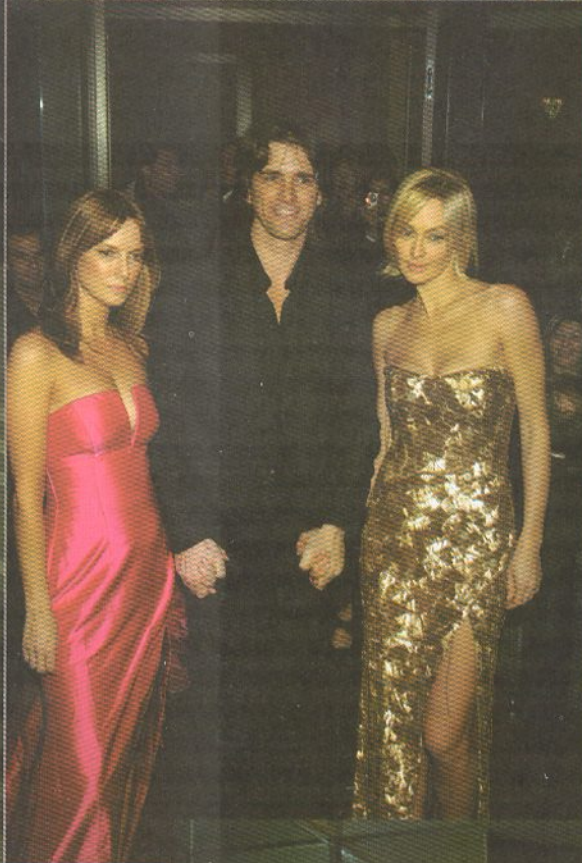
Vlassis Holevas, an acclaimed Kolonaki-Athens based fashion designer, returned to New York recently to present a special collection of his for this past Holiday season. Evangelia Liana Makkos and Fay Malouf Vassilakis were the hostesses of the first presentation at the Adamtios Vassilakis' - Permanent Representative of Greece to the UN - residence. Frederick's club was the venue of the next and final exhibition. It was the second time in the same year, that the Austrian born designer showed his work in New York, becoming one of Greece's most important representatives in the magic world of high fashion.



Fashion designer Vlassis Holevas.



Evangelia Liana Makkos (left) and Fay Malouf Vassilakis.

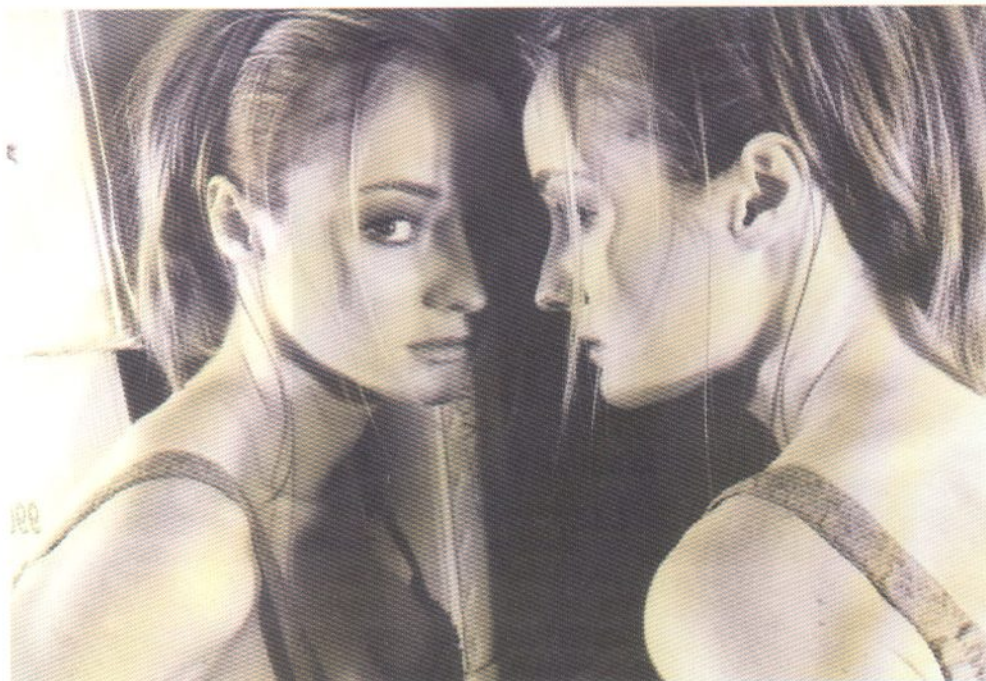


Dimitris Gelos (left) and Chrysanthos Petsilas from the Greek Tourist Organization's office in New York.



Greek-Russian actress to perform in New York

Larisa Antypa a talented and rising star in the Greek theater scene, is starring in a new play scheduled to premiere on February 17th at Astoria's Hellenic Cultural Center. Born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and raised in Greece, Larisa started singing and acting at the age of ...five! Her restless talent brought her to TV and other kinds of artistic endeavors such as modeling, where she managed to get immediately noticed. "Her spirit and commitment is amazing," said director Stavros Zervakis.



However, living a very busy life between television, modeling and school wasn't enough, since her dream had always been across the Atlantic, at a magic place called New York. It didn't take long before she packed, took a plane and came here, found an acting school and started to look for a new stage (besides New York itself, of course) where her talent could be tried again. By the end of her studies, she auditioned for "Theatron," under director Loukas Skipitaris, and got the lead part in a Greek comedy that became a hit. "Larisa proved that she can play anything," *Greek News of New York*, exclaimed after the performance.

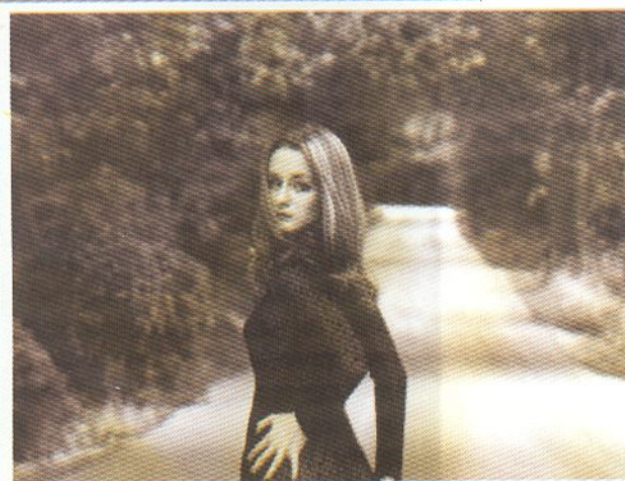
Currently, she is also hosting a variety daily live radio show at the Hellas FM station (Mon-Fri 5-7PM.)

Her upcoming appearance in the Greek comedy "The Miser" will be her fifth in New York. The play, adapted and directed by Loukas Skipitaris, involves a rich husband who hates to spend or give money to his wife. It also involves a Greek American relative whose unexpected arrival leads to an amusing situation of hilarious misunderstandings, deception and irresistible laughs. Also starting in the play are Manos Pantelidis, Angelo Niakas, John Kallianiotis, Kayafas Stan, Palombis Elena, Koundi Eleni and Kosmidis Vaso.

The production is by "THEATRON," the GREEK AMERICAN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, an organization which aims to promote the rich Thespian tradition of ancient and contemporary Greece to the American public.

Performances will start on February 17 to March 19, Fridays & Saturdays at 8PM and Sundays at 2:30 PM and 7:30PM.

For information and tickets call (718) 721-7610.

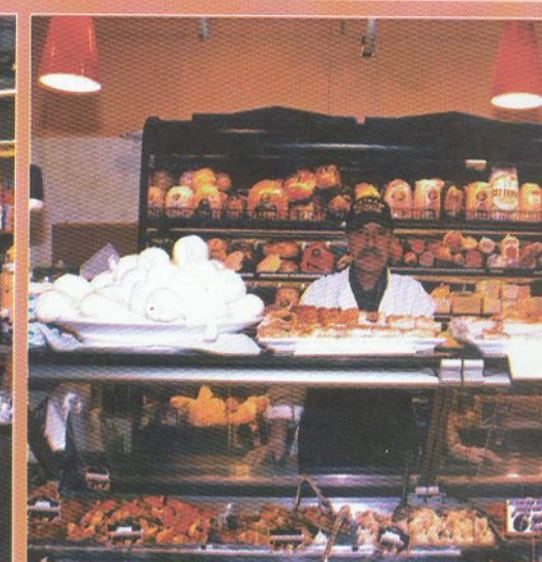
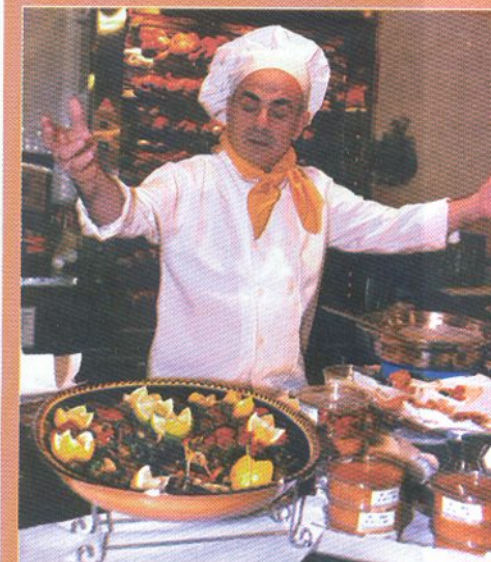


North Shore Farms

Experience the Art of Gourmet!



**770 Port Washington Blvd
Port Washington, NY 11050
Phone: 516-767-9050**



ALL GREEK PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

[TRAVEL] :: :: ::

Mykonos San Marco Hotel

Situated in the exclusive Mykonian area of Houlakia Bay 4.5 km north of the Town of Mykonos and 1.5 km from the new harbor of Tourlos, the San Marco Hotel is in tune with the authentic Cycladic architecture of the island. The hotel features 4 independently-designed buildings that house the 86 newly-renovated rooms, maisonettes and suites. All rooms are individually air-conditioned and equipped with direct telephone, satellite TV, radio or piped music, mini bar, safe box, bath or shower with a hair dryer and amenities.

Right on a beach which is a preserved archaeological site, the hotel hugs the gently-sloping hill that overlooks the bay and the small island of Delos. All rooms have a balcony or terrace overlooking the



sea, the mountains or the courtyards and the landscaped gardens. The Pythari restaurant by the pool, offers a rich buffet breakfast as well as traditional Greek cuisine for lunch and dinner. The Veranda Gourmet restaurant features an international cuisine and a view of the Mediterranean.

The sea water swimming pool is located so that guests can enjoy the sun from morning until sunset, while the beach is just across the small lane separating the sea from the hotel. Conference rooms host up to 130 delegates and offer the latest AV equipment.

San Marco Hotel:
www.sanmarcomykonos.com
E-mai: sanmarco@sanmarco.gr
Tel: +30 22890 27172
+30 22890 25375
Fax: +30 22890 25376



The only true Greek Restaurant in Long Island,
with authentic recipes and a contemporary atmosphere

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED
FULL BAR

CATERING AVAILABLE ON AND OFF THE PREMISES
WE WELCOME PRIVATE PARTIES FOR ALL OCCASIONS



323 Merrick Road
Lynbrook, NY 11563

RESERVATIONS: 516-568-0200

Modern Greek Program par excellence

By Demetrios Rhompotis

If the notion of a "popular" Modern Greek Chair can exist in the U.S., then surely it is the C.P. Cavafy Chair at the University of Michigan which deserves the title, by setting the standards of its defining framework. Less than ten years ago, a group of Greek Americans in the greater Detroit area (which for the sake of our story encompasses several neighboring and not-so-neighboring states) managed to sow the seeds of what became a sort of a grassroots movement to create in perpetuity a Modern Greek Chair at the University of Michigan (the Cavafy Chair), subsequently to establish a complete Center for the study of Hellenism at the same institution, and finally to create a wider network all over North America that would do the same at other universities.

This coming April 1st (it is Protophilia, but the event will take place nevertheless), at the International Center in Detroit, the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies, as the organization came to be officially known, will hold a Gala event with the proceeds sowing the seeds for step number two: the creation of a new chair in Modern Greek History and Culture, that in turn will serve as the organizing nucleus of a major Center for Modern Greek Culture and Policy in cooperation with the existing Cavafy Chair at the University of Michigan. Student scholarships, annual lectures, conferences, panels, library and internet resources, special research projects, studies abroad, and global collaboration will be basic components of the Center which "will revolve around the existing Modern Greek Program, consisting of a series of undergraduate and graduate classes in language, literature and culture where students can complete an undergraduate minor or major, Master's degree and Ph.D.," says Dr. Dimitri Pallas, a retired surgeon who serves as President and has been one of the founding fathers of the Foundation.

Moreover, and according to Prof. Vassilis Lambropoulos, who holds the Cavafy Chair since its inception, "the Center will function as a Greek-American think tank focusing on issues of general interest with which other institutions cannot deal. Greek American media, the Hellenic diasporic identity in the U.S., the promotion of contemporary Greek and of Greek American studies are only a few fields

on which no comprehensive study has taken place so far. An academic institution has a much more enhanced ability and freedom to discuss things that for others might be taboo or even unthinkable to do so."

The Foundation aims to collect more than \$2 million in the near future in order to proceed with the creation of the second Modern Greek Chair. "We have the right experience and we are very optimistic," says Dr. Pallas. "We start with some affluent Greek Americans who hopefully will contribute the bulk of the amount, as they did with the Cavafy Chair. But then it is up to every Greek American individual and institution to do their share, according to their abilities. During our previous fundraisers thousands of people contributed from \$100,000 to \$20 and all were equally important to us."

The Foundation for Modern Greek Studies was officially established in 1997, and less than three years later a major gift to the University of Michigan made possible the establishment of the Cavafy Chair, which will exist in perpetuity, according to the agreement negotiated and signed by both sides. "We have a specific strategy, unlike other individuals or organizations," Pallas explains. "We don't just make donations so that our names are eulogized, we rather make sure that a set of conditions are met which will guarantee the existence and the function of the Chair for generations."

The idea of the Foundation and its triple mission came up as a sort of reaction to a series of events in the '90s that brought about the urgent necessity of such Programs.



Pictured from left to right. Front row: Chris Tomaras, SAE President of N & S America Region; Dr. Dimitri Pallas, President of Foundation for Modern Greek Studies; Lee C. Bollinger, President of University of Michigan; Sharon Herbert, Professor and Chair of Classical Archeology and Greek at University of Michigan, a catalyst that made it happen; Kalliope Resh; John Kaounas, Treasurer; Professor Artemis Leontis, Modern Greek and Program Coordinator.

Back row: Professor Traianos Gagos, Pioneered the teaching of Modern Greek; George Keros; Vassilios Lambropoulos, Professor and Chair of Modern Greek; Dr. Denny Stavros, former director; Dr. Anthony Kales; George Dimopoulos; Professor Ludwig Koenen, former Chair of Classics and strong supporter of the Modern Greek Program; Martha Luckham, Regional Director of development office at LS & A and invaluable advisor to FMGS; Sam Roumanis, Vice-President; Stavros Semanderes; George Reganis; Gus Kaounas, Secretary.

In Pallas' words, what made him and his colleagues mobilize was the effort of the Turkish government to establish Chairs of Turkish Studies in order to rewrite modern history in a way that would exonerate Turkey from her role in the genocides of the Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks of Asia Minor in the beginning of the 20th Century.

On October 27, 1995, The Chronicle of Higher Education, in a report by Amy Magaro Rubin, stated that a petition was being circulated by American scholars that accused the Turkish government of funding endowments at United States colleges and universities to manipulate its history by excluding reference to the genocide of the Armenians. The Boston Globe followed suit on November 25, 1995, affirming that gifts with strings attached from foreign governments were causing great concern in US colleges. On November 30, 1995, The Philadelphia Inquirer reported on Princeton University's article on May 22, 1996 stating that Princeton was "fronting for the Turkish government." And on Sunday, November 30, 1997, The Los Angeles Times reported an offer of \$1 million endowment to UCLA by the Turkish government, which UCLA rejected in the aftermath of Princeton's scandal.

"The idea that a publicly funded university, such as the one of Michigan, would promote Turkish propaganda was appalling," Pallas explains. His group immediately started lobbying and in a direct letter to the university's President warned against the dangers that the acceptance of such a "gift" would entail, especially given the fact that in Turkey itself there is limited academic freedom. The entreaties proved successful and the university, one of the ten largest in the U.S., declined the Turkish offer.

"To rest on that temporary success, though, wouldn't not have been wise. We had to come up with a chair of our own," says Pallas, describing the first so far effective reaction to the Turkish academic plans by any Greek American entity. So, it was in 1996 that a group of Greek American entrepreneurs with Dr. Dimitri S. Pallas, then President of the American Hellenic Congress, as unofficial chairman, started a campaign of soliciting active participation and donations from affluent members of the community in order to create the Foundation. In July 1997, the initial band of friends became the incorporators and elected officers: President Dr. Dimitri S. Pallas, 1st Vice President Sam Roumanis, 2nd Vice President Larry Stassinis, Treasurer John Kaounas and Secretary Dr. Denny Stavros. The rest is history.

Today the Foundation comprises hundreds of members and supporters not only in the state of Michigan but in the rest of the US and Greece. Moreover, the Greek government and several institutions such as the Onassis Foundation have come to appreciate and support its goals. Beyond the partnership with the University of Michigan, the Foundation also supports efforts to promote and establish Modern Greek studies at other universities in states such as Illinois, Missouri and Georgia.

It still maintains its grassroots character, however. "We want the Foundation's mission to be part of a greater effort, something from the people to the people," Pallas explains. It is exactly that spirit that has made the C.P. Cavafy Chair—one of only five or so fully endowed Modern Greek Chairs in the U.S.—so special. Not only hundreds of students attend the offered courses each year but thousands of Greeks and Philhellenes from the greater Detroit area—some even from neighboring states—come to Ann Arbor to enjoy about 30 cultural events that the Chair sponsors annually. Movies, lectures, concerts, conferences form the cultural backbone of the Program, offering a wide range of themes and issues. Recently, Prof. Costas Cartalis, General Secretary of Athens Olympic Games, delivered a speech on globalization. Earlier, Prof. Louis Ruprecht, all the way from California, devoted part of a lecture to a popular upheaval in England during the medieval times, when Her Majesty's government decided to tax a certain kind of Cretan wine that was

The Greek Studies Program in Prof. Lambropoulos' words



Q. How strong is the study of Greece at Michigan?

A. For almost two centuries the University of Michigan has been a major center for Greek studies in North America. For example, right now its Department of Classical Studies is among the top five departments in terms of both quality and size (number of professors and students). Since 1990, its Greek offerings have expanded to include courses in Modern Greek. Today, Michigan is one of the few universities whose faculty covers the entire history of Hellenism, from its ancient origins to its present manifestations, from prehistoric Crete to the Greek diaspora of Detroit.

Q. What is a Modern Greek Program?

A. A Modern Greek Program offers courses in Greek language, literature, culture, history and society, since the end of Byzantium, with an emphasis on the last two centuries. Such a program usually offers a certificate or an undergraduate degree—in our case, a Modern Greek minor and a major. We have not called our Program "Hellenic" because this designation can be confusing. In most cases "Hellenic" is used by universities that have not had Greek studies and are trying to establish it now. In the case of Michigan, our Hellenic studies tradition goes back to 1817. The recent step forward, which we want to highlight, is that we have now taken Hellenism into the 21st Century.

Q. Who benefits from the presence of Modern Greek at Michigan?

A. Two very large constituencies: First, our students. In a public university like ours, with some 40,000 students, young people with the most diverse interests can take a number of courses on the Modern Greek achievements. At any given semester, as many as 150 students register for our Modern Greek courses, not to mention of course the thousands who take ancient Greek courses. Second, the general public benefits from attending our numerous free cultural activities. Our Modern Greek Program operates as a cultural center in the region as well, presenting as many as 30 events each year. People drive for hours, even from neighboring states like Ohio, Illinois and Pennsylvania to attend our concerts, visit our exhibits and hear our speakers. Here, too, most of our audience is not Greek but appreciates the opportunity to learn more about contemporary Hellenism.

Q. Who supports the Modern Greek Program?

A. All those who benefit from it, either by taking courses or by attending events. The Foundation for Modern Greek Studies, a grassroots organization in the major Detroit area and beyond, offers a great example. In three years time, they raised nearly a million dollars to help endow the C.P. Cavafy Chair in Modern Greek, a Chair which guarantees the future of Modern Greek teaching at the University of Michigan. During this campaign, Greeks and Philhellenes gave as much as they could afford to make sure that not ancient, not medieval, not Renaissance but modern Hellenism, including its world-wide diaspora, has a legitimate place at a major American university.

A Greek view on globalization

Costas Cartalis, Assistant Professor at the University of Athens and President of the Andreas Papandreou Center for the Study of Policy, a major Greek think tank, was re-



cently invited to the University of Michigan, his alma mater, by the Cavafy Chair and the European Studies Center to lecture on globalization. Prof. Cartalis, who also served as General Secretary for the Athens Olympic Games, gave an exclusive interview to NEO, upon completing his lecture.

Q. Could you outline the major points of your lecture on globalization with respect to the country of Greece?

A. Globalization will be supportive of some parts of the economy but will be having negative impact on others, especially when the subsidies policy of the European Union on certain products will eventually stop. At that time agriculture production won't be able to compete with products from South America or South East Asia or the African countries, because they will be much more expensive. In addition to that, there will be some difficulties in the metallurgical sector.

On the other hand, globalization has been good for the shipping industry because it has opened the provisions to transport goods to different parts of the world. Since a great number of commercial ships are in the hands of Greek companies, that meant a lot of benefits to them and to the country's economy in general. Additionally, this opening in policies, gave rise to demands for more vessels and by no surprise in the years 2003 and 2004 there had been 70 new orders by the Greek industry.

Q. What about tourism?

A. A lot has been done already, but the need exists for a more effective framework in promoting our country's cultural wealth, both with respect to the ancient part of it, but also with respect to the modern. Because I think modern Greece has been underestimated.

Q. Changing subjects, how would you evaluate US-Greek relations, especially after the unexpected recognition of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) as "Republic of Macedonia" by President Bush?

A. The understanding of Greece and the United States coincides in promoting peace in the regions of the Balkans and of the Middle East. Of course, there are some differences. The war in Iraq was such a case, because a lot of Greeks did not share the views on the necessity of such a war. In general, Greek-US relations I think are becoming better; there is a lot of space to cooperate efficiently. It is also very important to underline the role of the Greek American community in smoothing any difficulties or differences that exist. Greek Americans have also been contributing so that the Greek voice can be more powerful in the United States, in critical political moments. Recognizing FYROM as "Macedonia," is one of the cases that the US has surprised negatively Greece. It is a minor issue, but one that demonstrates a lack of clarity in the collaboration between the two countries. However, we expect from the United States to have a very active role with respect to the peace process in the overall area of the Southeastern Europe.

Q. Sometimes, one has the feeling that Greece is giving too much and gets almost nothing in return.

A. I feel that international diplomacy is a very complicated pattern of collaborations, relations and compromises. My understanding is that the current Greek government has decided something which politically doesn't sound very solid. It has decided to open the Greek-Atlantic collaboration at the expense of the Greek - Brussels collaboration.

Q. Greece has embarked on a seemingly contradictory effort to promote Turkey's accession to the European Union, while the latter doesn't show any significant change of stance on the issue of the occupation of Cyprus - another EU country - or on its claims with respect to the Greek islands and territorial waters in the Aegean. How do you explain this policy?

A. There is no doubt that Turkey has been posing a number of territorial claims on Greece. There is no doubt that Turkey has taken a quite negative stance with respect to the issue of the occupied part of Cyprus. There are two options to deal with this. Option number one is to keep Turkey away from the European Union and give Turkey the space to continue this kind of claims and such kind of behavior. The other option is to allow her to become part of the European Union and that way to force her to comply with the international standards, the very standards of the European Union. By doing so, Turks have to democratize their system, to drop the territorial claims, to accept international treaties which have been the pillar of the European treaties themselves, and they have to combine their efforts with the Greek government for the resolution of the Cyprus issue. This will be done according to the European Union regulations and principles. I think that for many years there going to be hard feelings between Greece and Turkey, but overall in 15 years or so the improvements if she succeeds in the accession process will be beneficial for Greece as well. I also believe that back in the '50s, people in France and Great Britain must had been furious at their governments when they realized that there was going to be a collaboration with Germany (in forming the European Union.) But it was obvious, if it were for peace to be established in the region, Germany had to be included in the new partnership. In the same spirit, we need to integrate Turkey, not to keep it away.

Q. About 60% of Greeks and an equal or bigger percentage of the people in the rest of the European Union countries oppose, for various reasons, the full accession of Turkey. On the other hand, their governments along with the US are trying to drag Turkey towards it. Even if we agree 100% on the merits of the arguments that favor Turkey's accession, don't we

have already a flagrant undermining of democracy? Do really the possible benefits justify such a sacrifice?

A. This view of the European public has to do with the participation of Turkey in the EU today. The decision that was taken in Brussels is that we start the negotiation process which will probably last for more than 15 years. If Turkey is successful in complying with a number of very strict requirements in the areas of democracy, respect of human rights, economic and social development, respect of her European Union neighbors, etc. then it can become a member. I'm pretty sure that if 15 years from today, Turkey has fulfilled these criteria, the attitude of the European public will be different. However, if the answer is still no, I think the European Union leaders will have to reconsider. In that case referenda might take place.

Q. Do you believe that 15 years will be enough for Turkey to transform herself?

A. There is a specific road map and it's up to Turkey to comply. Recognizing the Republic of Cyprus, as the Turkish government is obliged to do, would be a good start and a specific indication of good will.

page 33 ←

Modern Greek Program par excellence

extremely--as the disturbances proved --popular. A favorite of Martin Luther himself, the consumption of that Cretan wine might have induced him to protest the abuses of the papacy, becoming the first official Protestant! Even tsikoudia, a Cretan spirit similar to ouzo but without the aniseed, was unofficially introduced during a recent symposium on Cretan culture that also featured other delicacies, music and dance.

The aim of both the Chair and the Foundation is for modern Hellenism to come to the fore in the academic and cultural fields because, despite its great achievements and its continuous importance, it has been greatly underestimated. "For centuries now, Classics Departments have been fully-funded by every major American university," notes Pallas. "The Foundation proposes that Greek Americans have the responsibility to support specifically Modern Greek positions and courses to promote a fuller understanding of the past five centuries. The exclusive attachment to figures and symbols of the ancient past has often created the dangerous impression that Hellenism ended long ago."

Indeed the study of Hellenism at the Uni-

versity of Michigan has been as old as the institution itself. In 1817, Judge Augustus B. Woodward, Judge John Griffin and William Woodgridge (then secretary of the Michigan territory) adopted a law to establish "a Catholepistemiad, or university, of Michigania"! Its first 13 professorships all had Greek names and roots. Judge Woodward in 1825 named the neighboring village "Ypsilanti" to commemorate the struggle for freedom from the Ottoman rule of Alexandros Ypsilantis and the other Greeks.

The Foundation for Modern Greek Studies' official headquarters is located at 188894 Valencia, Northville Twp. MI 48167. For general information on the Cavafy Chair a website, www.lsa.umich.edu/modgreek, is available. For tickets on the upcoming April Gala there is direct telephone line at (248) 596-9667. Calliope Balatsouka is public relations coordinator and in charge of the event. Financial contributions are tax-deductible. "The shared journey of all of us who made it happen has been very rewarding," notes Pallas, evaluating the effort so far. "The Board of Directors of the Foundation who provided the seed money and countless hours of volunteer work deserve special thanks. The community at large responded with enthusiasm and made it all possible." □ □ □

Making coffee, snacks or a drink,
a TREmendous experience!

34-02 Broadway, Astoria, New York
Tel: (718) 204-1291

"Not even my name"

It took me almost six years to get to it, but last week I decided to sit down and read it, something that I accomplished in a surprising—for my standards—short amount of time. Within a few reading "sessions," Thea Halo's book, *Not Even my Name* (Picador, USA, 2000), an account of her mother's death march in Turkey that brought her as a 14-year-old bride, after years of the cruelest hardships and the loss of almost all her immediate family, to New York was lying on the table face down.

The title means what it says, literally. Uprooted, without family or other relatives, a 10-year-old refugee in her own country, Sano did not even own her name (Themia) but accepted, albeit reluctantly, the one imposed on her by her adoptive Assyrian family. The story is important in two basic ways, I think: It proves the unimaginable capacity of the human being to endure suffering and to inflict suffering on others in bestial ways. It also comes to describe the hardships of three very ancient ethnic groups, the Armenians, the Assyrians and the Pontic Greeks, at the hands of the Young Turks, who in the beginning of the 20th Century designed and implemented a policy of total extermination against them, in what became the first systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing in modern times (almost three million perished as a result.) Besides the mass executions, people were forced to leave their homes within hours and to march in the thousands through the inhospitable terrain and deserts of what is today eastern Turkey, until they

died. Some managed to survive, as Sano Themia Halo did, after witnessing most of her family members collapse from exhaustion and be unable to do anything to help them. At the same time, the military regiment that was escorting them, would stop four (or more) times a day for Muslim prayers, the same way that some Nazis a couple of decades later, would take a few days off to celebrate Christmas before they resumed their "duty" at exterminating another ancient group of people. And while the Germans later confronted their crimes, accepted responsibility and managed to realize the extent of the horrors that they caused, Turks never did so and in today's Turkey to even mention this brutal past is considered a crime against the state, calling for severe punishment. A few weeks ago, Orhan Pamuk, the renowned Turkish novelist, was finally acquitted of having done exactly that, after an international outcry. His acquittal though, was based on technicalities and reflects no change in the official Turkish policy, which denies that horrible things as those described in Halo's book, ever happened. This continued negation of the obvious, won't allow Turkish society to mature and by the same token no real friendship with Turkey's neighbors will be achieved. Moreover, the systematic campaign against any Greek even as we speak (confiscation of Greek property, abuses against the Ecumenical Patriarchate, to name just a couple of cases) and the hopeless effort to deny the existence of the 15 million Kurdish minority within her borders, condemns Turkey to a path that entails more tragedies and destruction of which she herself might not be able to escape.

It was Pamuk's case that made me think of the relevance that this part of recent history holds on today's reality and "forced" me to finally sit down and read Halo's book, which a Turkish journalist suggested that all Turks should read, too. I saw it as a real tragedy the katharsis of which contains healing and helps the reader realize that hope and kindness exist even in the harshest of conditions. It's a remarkable story of strength, sensitivity and ability to build on experiences that look at first sight as rubble of immutable destruction. On the other hand, I didn't want to see this book through a utilitarian perspective, at least not only. Thea Halo's writing (the daughter of Sano Halo) flows page after page, making the reader follow it almost without breath until the end is reached on the shores of the Black Sea, where the story begins and concludes in a circular way. The feeling of "charmolype" (joy and sorrow) is prevalent throughout the story, making it, as I said before, an account that shocks in its horrific details, but leaves enough glimpses of hope to reassure us, as human beings, of our capacity to overcome. In Sano Halo's words, "even in my darkest hours, I need only watch a flower tilt its lovely face to drink the rain, or hear my children laughing, to know that life is good. Breath is God's gift. Life is our reward. The rest is up to us."

It's up to you to read this book and appreciate it on your own. I hope that my early-morning, caffeine-free attempt at presenting it to you, will induce you to do so.

DEMETRIOS RHOMPOTIS

[SOCIETY BUZZ]

Vasilopita for-bankers

The HABA (Hellenic American Bankers Association) recently held its annual *Vasilopita* event at the New York City's prestigious Avra Restaurant, bringing together hundreds of members and friends to celebrate officially the beginning of a new year's activities. Rev. Demetrios Antokas officiated in the *vasilopita*-cutting ceremony. "We organize five to six events each year," Anthony Kontomichalos, HABA's president explained. "Among other things we hold panel discussions on various topics and every year we honor a personality who's been distinguished in his career. Senator Paul Sarbanes will be the 2006 honoree." About 200 members and an additional mailing list of about a 1000 comprise this organization of Greek American professionals in the banking and finance sectors, founded almost 25 years ago. "Being of Hellenic extraction, working in the bank industry, and holding a university degree are the three prerequisites for membership," according to Mr. Kontomichalos, who joined HABA when he came to New York in 1986 and has served on the board since the early 90's.

Although HABA focuses on the banking sector, people from a wide range of professions have come to enjoy its various events because of their quality and the opportunity they offer to network on a business and personal level. For more information there is a website at www.haba.org



From left to right: Emmanuel Caravanos, Arab Bank USA, Peggy Delfinopoulos, Prudential Financial, James Hansel, Eight Winds Capital, Anthony Contomichalos, MacArthur Capital, Georgia Mouzakis Tavlarios, Citigroup Private Bank, Emmanuel Russon, St. John's University, Manny Argerakis, Tri-State Capital, and Nicholas Agrotis, Laiki Group.



From left to right: Anthony Contomichalos, HABA president, Stathis Valiotis and Renos Kourtides of the coming soon Alma Bank.

Photos: ETA PRESS

FOR ALL YOUR LEGAL NEEDS

Solomos & Associates Attorneys at Law



ACCIDENTS

- Auto Accidents
- Slip & Fall
- Medical Malpractice

REAL ESTATE

- Commercial & Private Properties
- Buy & Sell Agreements

PARTNERSHIPS - CORPORATIONS

FAMILY LAW

- Wills, Trusts, Estates
- Divorces - Child Support

CRIMINAL LAW

- DWI - All Criminal Matters

31-14 Broadway, Astoria, NY 11106

FREE CONSULTATION

PERSONALLY AVAILABLE 24h/DAY

Office Telephone: 718-278-5900

Direct Line Attorney: **1-888-777-8785**

e-mail: solomosesq@aol.com

LEFKAS CONTRACTING CORP.

The Lefkas Contracting Corp.

and its President Jimmy Karidis

*extend the most sincere message of peace and happiness
for the New Year 2006!*

Tel: (718) 274-4568

Fax: (718) 721-4075

**34-19 31st St.
Astoria, New York 11106**

NICK VAVAS

An actor with "a Cary Grant edge"

By Dimitri C. Michalakos

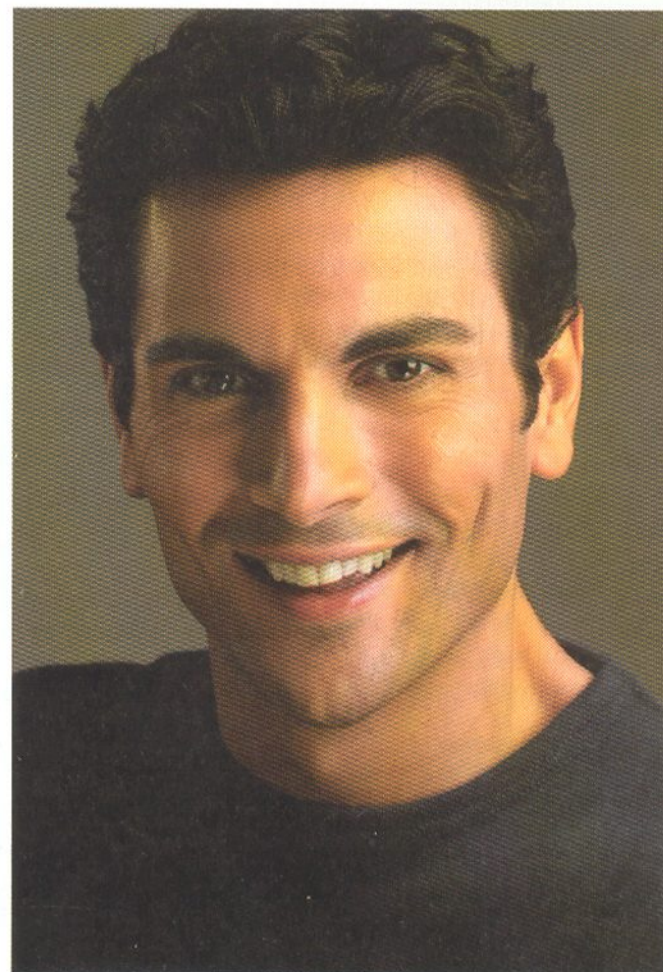
He doesn't fight the typecasting, anymore. "I do get cast a lot in the romantic lead," says Nick Vavas, who casting directors say has a "suave Cary Grant edge." "It's not tedious, but it's not as challenging. It's welcome, because I believe you have to get work when you can." And the 36-year-old actor who's been in soap operas and Sprint commercials and theater, also doesn't mind being typecast as the generic ethnic, either: "Now it sorts of help me eliminate the stuff that I'm not trying to be. I'm not trying to be the kid next door or the All-American boy or anything that's not my type. I think after years in the business I kind of realized there are types and it's going to happen...It's okay to be ethnic, it's okay to be Greek or Italian or Latin, that's okay."

And he's done more than okay. Last fall he completed a film with Whoopi Goldberg for New York Fashion Week, done lots of guest shots on *All My Children*, a commercial in Italy, a commercial for Sony, a national Sprint campaign and three others on the way for other companies, and he almost filmed a commercial for Robert Altman with Harry Connick, Jr.: "He had cast me, Robert Altman, and the day before my shoot, it was a commercial for a cell phone, the client saw my Sprint ad in a magazine and they said it conflicts, and so they replaced me last minute for that. I was definitely irritated, but that's the business, you just get used to it."

He's been used to it since he got the acting bug at 10 when he played one of the kids in a dinner theater production of *Damn Yankees* back at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Baltimore, where he grew up after moving from New York. "I wanted to be involved," he remembers. "I knew another kid who did it, and I was always drawn to that, I always thought that it was fun, I definitely wanted to be on stage and in front of people." He continued through junior high, then Du-laney High School, where his English teacher, Barbara Desmond, "trained me, pushed me, and to

this day still does. She was the one person who pushed me and kind of gave me that, yes, you can do this professionally."

After college in New York, he set out for Los Angeles, worked in soaps ("Guy fighting in the bar with somebody, stuff like that"), got his union cards and set out to conquer Broadway. "To be a real actor, a stage actor," he says. "And I pretty much got my butt kicked the first year. The talent was very competitive. The New York street



guy type that set me apart in LA was not so unique in New York." So he did summer stock and dinner theater from New York to Florida to Pennsylvania (*Dracula*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Evita*, *Man of La Mancha*—"I had to leave New York to find work") before he decided on a break from acting and he took a seven year hiatus and went back to Baltimore to become a computer programmer.

"I spent time with the family and I learned a trade and figured out could I come back to New York and support myself and do this," he explains. He enjoyed the break, enjoyed the family, and got a boost from his parents' support. His father told him to do what he loved, his mother Georgia was his most star struck fan. "She was very encouraging, supportive, always interested," he says. "She got a kick out of it, totally. She taped all the shows I was on and she stockpiled them."

He got the courage to return to New York two years ago and he hasn't looked back since. "My approach now to acting and auditioning is no longer life or death," he says. "I always want myself to ask what am I doing this for? And if the answer is not, I like to be challenged or excited or passionate, then I'm doing the wrong thing. So now I just enjoy it and I've worked a lot the last two years."



INTERNATIONAL TILE DESIGN

*Importers of:
Ceramic, Marble & Granite*



CUSTOM FABRICATED
COUNTER TOPS ~ SHOWER DOORS

Address: 30-50 21st Street, Astoria, NY 11102
Phone: 718-728-3100