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POLITICS 2008

The youth vote: Will the millenials decide our next president?

Arianna Huffington on Sarah Palin

Dina Titus rolling lucky sevens in Nevada

Republican rising star Charlie Crist



John Sarbanes



Shelley Berkley



Jane Mitakides



Gus Bilirakis

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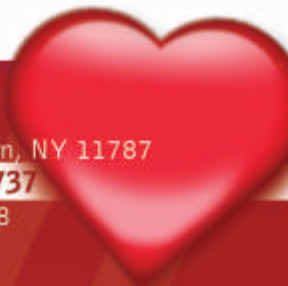


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FROM THE EDITOR

An Anniversary

Three years ago we had a dream—to publish a magazine that would bridge the generation gap in Greek America. A new magazine, appropriately called NEO, that would acknowledge the accomplishments of the older generation and at the same time be a forum for the dreams and hopes of a new generation and acknowledge its accomplishments.

A friend said to us at the start of this venture, “It’s not easy; you’re not going to get rich. It’s a tough business.” And it is. But the reward is that you shine the spotlight on people who richly deserve it—the superstars of the previous generation such as Brademas and Sarbanes—and show how the new generation has taken up the torch and carried on the tradition of service and accomplishment: John Sarbanes is the spitting image of the young Paul Sarbanes, who TIME Magazine once called one of the up-and-coming public figures of his generation.

John Sarbanes was our first annual NEO Person of the Year and there was no more worthy recipient. As we said in our tribute, “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 to him by his famous name.” Instead, he chaired committees on health care, worked part-time in public education, and did pro bono work for years to help community organizations throughout Maryland. “That’s because I cared about those issues, and frankly, I was willing to forego some compensation in order to do that,” says the freshman congressman, who is leaving his mark on the Congress as his father once did.

Ike Gulas, the dynamic young head of AHEPA, was our most recent Person of the Year and another of the figures that we spotlighted for bridging the generation gap. A skilled lawyer who grew up in Alabama from a large extended family that ranged over the South, he has made his mark defending ordinary citizens in the largest civil litigation cases in the country. “It is hard not to become affected by someone’s catastrophic loss,” he says. But he’s also embraced his parent’s commitment to his community and to organizations like AHEPA. “I would travel with my parents to most of the AHEPA conventions around the country where I would meet other Greek American youth from other cities,” he remembers. “Seeing how they embraced their heritage and the common similarities we shared made me that much prouder to be Greek American.”

In our own small measure in the past three years, we have tried to acknowledge the continuing ties of the generation and their common believe in our heritage and public service. In our next three years, and hopefully beyond that, we intend to continue the NEO tradition of bridging the generation gap and ask you to join us to make the magazine your forum. A magazine is a living extension of its readers and without you we have no voice. We made the brave attempt, you joined us on this journey, the road is very long, but the people along the way are fascinating, and these people are just like you. They are both an inspiration and a challenge to our own dreams.

Thank you for sharing the journey with us these past three years—you’ve been wonderful company—and we can’t wait for our future adventures together.

Dimitri C. Michalakis

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By James Hansel
Special for NEO magazine

The Great Credit Crisis of 2008:

Why Does It Matter to Me?

Questions about today's financial crisis are haunting every dinner conversation. How can we understand it? We have a global credit crisis, not merely a problem for banks or Wall Street tycoons.

Let's say you own a diner. You have employees and utility bills to pay every week. You have perishable inventory. One day, your customers start to worry about their own finances, thinking, "I can't afford to eat out. I will cook at home to save money."

Suddenly, there are no customers in your fine restaurant. What can you do? If it lasts a day, you can survive. If it lasts a month, you have a problem. With no money coming in, you lose money every day. Soon enough, your perishable food spoils. You have no money to buy fresh food. Do you shut down, lay off your employees, and close the doors? How will you stay in business? If your customers are afraid to spend money, it doesn't matter if you cut prices, no one will come. When customers vanish, your employees and vendors are also in trouble.

The mere fear of economic disaster can create an economic disaster. That fear, which we can see as simply as a family deciding not to eat in a restaurant, is the same fear that stops a young couple from buying a house, a businessman from expanding his business, or a bank from lending money.

In economic terms, the velocity of money has dropped. The velocity of money is how fast money changes hands, from a family paying for a meal in the restaurant, to the restaurant paying salaries and buying supplies, to the bank lending money to a businessman or a young couple.

Even with plenty of money around, if it doesn't change hands, the economy grinds to a halt, just as your car stops if you jump on the brake. Starting the economy again takes faith in the future. Faith in the future improves the velocity of money, because when you believe that more money will be coming to you in the future, you are willing to spend, lend, and invest.

How did we go from a subprime mortgage problem to a global credit crisis?

Let's clarify a few terms for those who are not bankers. Over a year ago, we began to hear about a "subprime mortgage crisis" and later about a "mortgage bond" crisis. As everyone knows, a home mortgage is a loan to a homeowner, where the home is pledged as security for the loan. The wide availability of 30-year home mortgages in the U.S. has boosted home ownership. Home ownership builds stable neighborhoods, because home owners maintain their own property and care about their neighborhoods. Middle-class home ownership across the United States has created great social stability.

Over the decades, tax and fiscal incentives such as the mortgage interest deduction and government-sponsored lending agencies (Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac), have encouraged home ownership.

Under the old model, your local bank would lend you money to buy a home. Your bank would hold the loan on its own books, collecting interest and principal until you paid it off. Under the new mortgage bond model the bank or mortgage company merely arranges the loan. Your loan is packaged with a number of others into a trust. The trust issues a bond backed by the mortgages and the properties subject to those mortgages. The bank then sells the bond into the open market, collecting a fee.

Subprime mortgage loans for borrowers with less-than-ideal credit became widely

available in the 1990s under programs designed to increase low-income and minority home ownership. Like other mortgages, subprime loans were packaged and traded among banks and others. Insurance companies issued guarantees on the subprime bonds in case those less-credit-worthy borrowers failed to pay the interest or principal on the mortgages backing up the bonds.

Over the past two years, many subprime borrowers failed to make their mortgage payments. As the nonpayment problem grew, the market prices of bonds backed up by those mortgages began to fall. As houses were seized and auctioned off by lenders, house prices fell, making it more difficult for buyers to get financing, and creating a vicious cycle in which house prices fell even more. Many insurance guarantees became worthless because the insurers did not have enough capital. The loss of guarantees further reduced the value of mortgage bonds. Trading ceased because many wanted to sell and few wanted to buy.

Recently, rules have required banks to calculate the market value of their mortgage bond holdings in a process known as "mark to market." In a disorderly "fire sale" market, where offers to buy mortgage bonds might be only 5% to 10% of their face value, the impact on a bank's balance sheet is crippling. A bank might suddenly appear insolvent because of "mark to market" accounting.

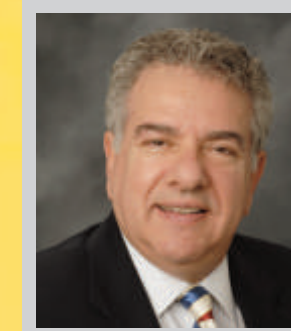
The government is implementing a number of actions to resolve the crisis. Mark to market accounting rules are being adjusted to put less weight on market value when the markets are disorderly. The rescue plan passed by Congress and signed into law on October 3rd allows the US Treasury to purchase troubled assets, in order to restart trading in frozen markets. Their goal is to reassure the public, investors, and bankers in order to restart the flow of credit and spending.

The most important issue is the restoration of confidence in the future. If real estate markets rise from today's panic levels, the value of the mortgage bonds that nobody appears to value today will be restored.

Do you have faith in the future? Then hold a steady course through this storm.

James C. Hansel is president of the Hellenic American Bankers Association, Inc., which represents the many Greek Americans in the financial services industry. He is managing director at Eight Winds Capital Management, LLC, a private investment advisory firm registered with the Connecticut Department of Banking, Securities Division.

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The Millennials and the 2008 Presidential Election



By Maria Athanasopoulos

Young people are visibly fired up about the 2008 US Presidential election. Barack Obama t-shirts and celebrity infused John McCain TV commercials can be seen everywhere. We know who Paris Hilton and Britney Spears want to vote for, but do we really care who a troubled singer and a socialite who is famous for, well, being famous are going to vote for? How about America's young people and more specifically young Greek-Americans, who are they going to select for president?

There are an equal amount of blogs and websites dedicated to both McCain and Obama that are run by young people voicing their opinions. One website in particular, Scoop08, is the first ever interactive web-based news project run by US college students providing coverage of the US presidential race. The interest it has generated on high school and college campuses across America is phenomenal and unexpected.

According to multiple exit polls, more than six million people between the ages of 18-29 actually voted in this year's presidential primaries. This clearly marks a record especially since the turnout is more than double of both the 2000 and 2004 primaries. Young voters are engaged and involved in the 2008 election like never before. Not only are they very excited for the election, young voters are also very excited with the candidates and have been very vocal and adamant in voicing their opinions. Stathis Theodoropoulos, a 22 year old Business Economics major from Rutgers University, will be voting for Obama due to his solid plan on how to get our economy growing again and create more jobs. He thinks most college students will vote for Obama as well, because of his views and promise for change which has inspired many students to register to vote. "I believe the young vote will play an important role this election and has the power to make a major impact. Simply from walking around my college campus, I see more organizations pushing for

voter registration. Also, many of my friends that were never into politics actually care this year. They are more educated on issues and they understand what each candidate has to offer and this will play a huge role in making a difference in votes this year."

Like Theodoropoulos, many other students and young voters want change and are heavily involved. It has even come to the point where it is "cool" to be interested in politics and going to various political fundraisers where movie stars are rumored to make an appearance. Mary Ziotas, a 25 year old registered dietitian from Minneapolis, MN, was one of the young voters Theodoropoulos mentioned. "I won't lie, the prior years I foolishly neglected to place my vote and I too like most spent the past 4 years complaining. However, it was properly said that 'Eight is Enough!' Ziotas is undecided on who she will vote for but felt strongly about the direction the race has taken for evident reasons. "I find it ironic that the Republicans have achieved what the Democrats have been trying accomplish throughout this election: placing a women in office. Let's face it, in modern day society 'sex sells'."

Yes, when the Republicans selected a female, interest immediately rose. More females have started to side with McCain's team, however is it simply due to support of feminism? Do young voters really know the issues at hand and policies each candidate holds or have they fallen victim to the media hype and popularity contests? This has been proven in various studies by trusty news sources, such as CNN, that today's young Americans read newspapers and watch TV news at much lower rates than all previous generations. This has caused many to question the knowledge and views our country's young voters possess. Sources such as the Internet and television have proved to influence young voters more than the actual views of the presidential candidates. Millennials, as many have started to call today's young people, are

very distinct from the generations of young people before them. They live their lives on social networks like YouTube and Facebook and can be content with only virtual interaction for days at a time. Therefore, a YouTube video featuring a president candidate is 100 times more effective in communicating with today's young people than a big smile and a 2 million dollar 30 second commercial. Foti Agelopoulos a 33 year old commercial real estate salesman from the Bronx, NY, agrees, "As a young voter, I know I am personally swayed by new technology such as the Internet and text messaging. Obama is the candidate that has used these means to communicate with America's young generation and has really reached us and captured our attention."

Technology's strong influence on Millennials has helped make Obama more likable than McCain who has publicly stated he does not check email nor own a blackberry. According to a New York Times/CBS News poll, young voters lean toward Obama and are identifying more with the Democratic Party and embracing more liberal positions on issues such as immigration, global warming and healthcare. Although many Millennials have declared themselves as being more liberal and wanting to see change, many continue to vote the way their parents do. Therefore if one grew up in a Republican home, he is more likely to vote Republican.

This naturally causes confusion in predicting the Millennial's stance as a whole and brings us back to the same question: how will our young voters vote and why? Will the Millennials have the power to sway the election this year? The media's guess is as good as ours. The only thing we can do is wait and see what happens. Therefore, if you aren't home, make sure you program your Tivo because this race will be better than any reality TV show out there!





Democratic congressional challenger Dina Titus has gained ground and taken a healthy lead in her matchup with Republican Jon Porter, according to a poll conducted by Titus' campaign.

Titus, a state senator hoping to unseat incumbent Rep. Porter in November, leads by 9 percentage points, 46 percent to 37 percent, in the poll of 500 likely voters conducted by telephone this week. "I think this is a good sign that Dina Titus' campaign is picking up momentum and her message of change is resonating with voters," Titus spokesman Andrew Stoddard said. The poll by Anzalone Liszt Research carries a margin of error of plus or minus 4.4 percentage points.

Six percent of poll respondents chose a third-party candidate -- Independent American Floyd Fitzgibbons, Green Bob Giaquinta, independent Jeffrey Reeves or Libertarian Joseph Silvestri -- while 10

percent were undecided. A July poll conducted for Titus' campaign put her ahead 43 percent to 39 percent. Since then, Porter and Titus have won their primaries, and both have started airing TV ads. "After weeks of television communication from both sides ... Titus appears to be getting the better of the exchange," the pollster wrote in a memo with the survey. "Her personal popularity is stronger than Porter's, and the district is trending Democratic. She is in a strong position to win." A Porter spokesman disputed that notion, saying any poll taken now is preliminary.

"House races are won in October," Matt Leffingwell said. "As the economy continues to struggle, the prospect of having another tax-and-spend liberal in Washington voting with the Democrats will not sit well with Nevadans on Nov. 4."

DINA TITUS LEADING HER OPPONENT IN NEVADA'S 3RD CD

Porter has always anticipated a tough race, Leffingwell said. "We're in this race to win it, and we're confident that our message will bring us across the finish line." The poll found Porter viewed favorably by 44 percent in the 3rd Congressional District, which includes mostly suburban and rural areas of Clark County; 41 percent viewed Porter unfavorably. Since July, Porter's favorable rating has dropped 4 points, while his unfavorable rating rose 7 points. Titus was viewed favorably by 50 percent, up 4 points from the July survey; 37 percent viewed her unfavorably. Nevertheless, a recent Porter poll by Glen Bolger put Porter ahead of Titus 41 percent to 39 percent, with 7 percent choosing third party candidates and 11 percent undecided. The poll of 400 likely voters carried a margin of error of 4.9 percentage points.

Porter's poll found the congressman was viewed favorably by 40 percent and unfavorably by 31 percent. Titus was viewed favorably by 36 percent and unfavorably by 39 percent. Pollster Jeff Liszt said most challengers face difficulty introducing themselves to voters familiar

with the incumbent. Titus, who ran for governor in 2006, is different. Although she lost that race to Gov. Jim Gibbons, Titus got more votes in Southern Nevada. Meanwhile, Liszt noted, commercials attacking Titus aired by Porter and by Freedom's Watch, a conservative group, have largely centered on the idea that she is a tax-hiker, a familiar line from the gubernatorial campaign. Although a poll conducted by a campaign might seem suspect, he said pollsters give candidates a realistic idea of how they're doing.

University of Nevada, Reno, political scientist Eric Herzik said he's not surprised to see the results of the Titus poll. "This is not a good year to be running as a Republican, particularly in Southern Nevada, given the economy, the housing market, the job outlook. He's (Porter) been

in trouble from Day 1." Three factors are working against Porter, said Herzik, a registered Republican. First, Democrats had huge numbers of voters sign up. The 3rd District now has more than 29,000 more Democrats than Republicans registered, according to the Clark County Election Department. Second, he said, Democrats have a base that is well organized and engaged this year, while Republicans do not. Plus, Titus is a strong candidate. In the past, Herzik said, Porter faced neophyte candidates who could be counted on to "crumble." "Dina is an experienced candidate who has run well in that area. A lot of Republicans are going to find this year that the same old message isn't going to work."

Titus grew up in the small community of Tifton, Georgia, where her Greek grandfather ran a restaurant. There was no Greek school or church, however, and the family had to drive 125 miles away to Jacksonville, Florida, to get feta and olives.

Titus learned from a close-knit family the value of community involvement and was

introduced to politics at an early age. On the Titus side, her uncle served in the Georgia Legislature as a Republican and her father ran for a seat on the Tifton City Council. He went on to serve as the Head of the Building and Safety Departments for both Tifton and Henderson, NV. Additionally, the "coffee table" in her Papu's downtown restaurant was always occupied by local politicians arguing about current issues.

Titus' high school years included cheerleading and tap dancing, in addition to her studies. A dedicated student, Titus attended a summer program at the historic College of William and Mary and did so well that she was admitted full time for the fall - without a high school diploma. Attending school in the heartland of American democracy during the height of the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War inspired Titus to study Political Science and engage others in the critical issues of a changing world.

After earning her Bachelor's degree from William and Mary, Titus went on to earn a Master's degree from the University of Georgia and a Doctorate from Florida State University.

She taught for a year at North Texas State University in Denton and then moved to Nevada to accept a faculty position at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Over the past 30 years, a virtual who's-who in government, public service, and legal circles has studied with Professor Titus, whose classes consistently rank among the most popular offerings on the campus.

In 1987, Titus decided to put theory into practice and run for elected office. Her 20 years in the State Senate have brought the richness of first-hand experience to her classroom. Titus also created and continues to coordinate the Legislative Internship Program at UNLV, which each session affords the opportunity for a group of students to work at the Legislature in Carson City.



Titus has been married to Professor Thomas C. Wright for over 28 years. Wright's studies in his field of expertise - Latin American History - have taken the couple on extended journeys to Costa Rica, Chile, Argentina, Mexico and Spain. Tom received the prestigious UNLV Distinguished Professor award in 2008. John Wright Hall on campus is named for his father, a Civil War historian and early pioneer at UNLV.

Dina and Tom share a love of travel, global culture and folklore - and include among their favorite destinations Spain and France. She has visited Taiwan and Siberia as a legislative liaison.

And as a scholar and legislator, Titus has particularly enjoyed visits to Greece - the birthplace of democracy as well as the source of her personal lineage as a Greek-American. Her grandfather, Arthur Costandinos Cathones, after whom she is named, came to America in 1911, landing at Ellis Island. Titus honored the life and memory of her grandfather by purchasing a brick with his name on it at the restored Ellis Island. Fully embracing her Hellenic heritage, she has visited Athens, Meteora, Delphi, and many of the beautiful islands, gaining a deeper understanding of the country's regions, ruins, museums, and cuisine. As a proud Greek, Titus has spoken out in favor of Hellenism in the classroom and in the Nevada legislature where she has sponsored resolutions honoring the consecration of the new Greek church in Las Vegas and recognizing that Macedonia is Greek. She is committed to reunifying Cyprus, protecting the ecumenical patriarchate in Constantinople and maintaining the Greek sanctity of the name and symbols of Macedonia. Titus attends the St. John the Baptist Church in Las Vegas and keeps in close touch with her fellow

members of the Greek community.

Titus' travels have not only brought unforgettable personal experiences, but have also informed her research and teaching with the perspective of numerous cultural viewpoints and political systems.

A noted non-fiction writer, Dina is the author of Bombs in the Backyard: Atomic Testing and American Politics (University of Nevada Press, Revised Edition 2001) and Battle Born: Federal-State Relations in Nevada During the Twentieth Century (Kendall-Hunt, 1989). She has also published numerous scholarly articles on American, Nevada, and atomic politics.

Titus is internationally known for her expertise in the history and policies related to nuclear power, weaponry, and waste - as well as her knowledge of the popular lore of "Atomic culture." This unique area of study extends to a wide-ranging personal collection of atomic memorabilia. She appeared in the 2006 PBS documentary, The American Experience: Las Vegas - an Unconventional History by acclaimed director Steven Ives, and is a favorite source on all things nuclear for the media. She was honored to give a guest lecture to the Los Alamos Historical Society and present an academic paper at the International War and Peace Conference at Sokendai University in Tokyo.

Today, the Atomic Testing Museum on the Las Vegas campus of the Desert Research Institute features the Dina Titus Reading Room in recognition of her scholarly achievement in the field.

With reporting by MOLLY BALL
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL



Greek-Americans for Pallone

Congressman Frank Pallone Jr. has been a consistent friend and champion of Hellenic issues. He has supported Greek-Americans at every opportunity, co-sponsoring and signing all resolutions and letters regarding Cyprus, the FYROM issue, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Recently, during a fundraising reception at the renovated Pancyprian Sports Lounge, a well known venue of political activity for the last 30 years, leading figures from community gathered to support Congressman's Pallone re-election campaign and to express their appreciation.



From left are, Dino Rallis, Nikos Mouyiaris, Philip Christopher, Savvas Tsivikos, Congressman Frank Pallone and Zenon Christodoulou.



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Charlie Crist's rising star in the Republican party

John McCain didn't pick Florida Governor Charlie Crist as his running mate, but as this Florida newspaper account from February shows, Charlie Crist is a rising star in the Republican party.

Tony Allen-Mills



Three days before the pivotal Republican presidential primary in Florida last month, Rich Heffley was examining the latest opinion poll numbers when he heard that Senator John McCain had won a public endorsement from the most popular and influential figure in the state - Governor Charlie Crist. Heffley was stunned. The Republican consultant looked at his numbers again. They clearly showed McCain slumping badly behind a late surge by Mitt Romney, the former Massachusetts governor, who on the Saturday before the Tuesday vote had shot into an 11-point lead.

"It was like, 'Oh my God, what was Charlie thinking?'" Heffley recalled. The governor seemed to be betting his authority and political reputation on a loser. By Tuesday night, the seemingly ill-judged bet had



turned into a political jackpot. Crist's support turned the tide for McCain, who swept Romney aside and is now on the brink of formally securing the Republican presidential nomination.

That remarkable turnabout has also created a new Republican star. In an interview at his Tallahassee office last week, Crist, 51, modestly deflected speculation that McCain may reward him by choosing him as his

vice-presidential running mate. Yet other Florida Republicans were less reticent. "Charlie would give Elvis a run for his money," said Ken Pruitt, the Republican leader in the Florida state Senate. "That's how popular he is in Florida. If McCain wants to win this state in November, Charlie Crist is a no-brainer [as running mate]." The unforeseen emergence of a youthful, dynamic, and hugely popular Republican governor - think of a skinnier Arnold Schwarzenegger, without the Austrian accent - has added a tantalising twist to the 2008 White House race. Whether McCain chooses Crist or not - and much may depend on who wins the Democratic battle - Republicans believe they may have found a candidate with the glamour, charisma and political substance to challenge Barack Obama in 2012 or beyond.

After only a year in office as the successor to Jeb Bush, the president's brother, Crist has rocketed to unheard of approval ratings despite a slumping state economy. He is admired by 77% of Florida voters, many of whom followed his advice and voted for McCain last month. It is not hard to see why Crist is being talked about in heroic terms. There is a touch of JFK about his yachtsman's tan and his prematurely silver hair. He tells a lovely story about his Greek Cypriot grandfather sneaking on a boat to America, where he started his working life as a shoe-shine boy. While McCain has been pilloried for betraying conservative Republican principles, Crist has flourished as a flexible, pragmatic governor who appeals to both rightwing Christians and moderate independents - both of which groups McCain must carry in November. It did not hurt Crist's rightwing credentials when, in a previous job as Florida's attorney general, he became known as "chain gang Charlie" for allowing convicts to be used as road-workers. Yet he also moved to restore voting rights for prisoners convicted of minor crimes.

Like McCain, he tends to base his political judgments on a gut instinct untainted by ideology. Crist noted last week that he endorsed McCain even though the Arizona senator is opposed to a national catastrophe fund that would ease insurance costs for hurricane-plagued Florida homeowners. "John McCain is not someone who appeases people's political views to gain their support," said Crist. "We disagree about the catastrophe fund, but I endorsed him anyway. I never think it's wise to judge a man on a single issue." McCain now has the luxury of delaying his choice as vice-president until after the Democratic team is announced - the Republican convention follows the Democrats in late summer.

Numerous names have surfaced on his likely shortlist, notably Mike Huckabee, the conservative former Arkansas governor who has remained in the nomination race despite warnings that he is hurting party unity in a contest he is certain to lose. Huckabee could encourage reluctant rightwingers to support McCain, as would Mark Sanford, the South Carolina governor who helped McCain to victory in a key southern primary.

Yet many Republicans believe that an overtly conservative running mate may alienate moderate voters play into Obama's hands. They also believe that a key issue in the autumn campaign may be McCain's age - he would be, at 72, the oldest first-term president to take office. Voters may be more inclined than usual to scrutinise a McCain running mate's qualifications to govern. "It's very flattering to be mentioned," said Crist in time-honoured reluctant candidate style. "But my focus is really on Florida. I've got a lot on my plate as it is." That did not prevent him from appearing at McCain's side after the Virginia primary last Tuesday, nor is it likely to stop him from increasing his national and international profile over the summer. He is leading a Florida trade mission to London in July and recently chatted to Tony Blair when the former prime minister was visiting Miami. Crist's Republican allies in Florida make all the right noises about how sad they would be to lose him to Washington, but how worthy a national leader he would be. "If he goes, he will be the next president of the United States after John McCain," Pruitt predicted.

Yet if Crist sometimes sounds too good to be true, he is far from a certainty as vice-president. He has somehow failed, over his 25-year political career, to acquire a trophy wife and a couple of photogenic kids. He got married in law school, yet divorced after only seven months. He has repeatedly been obliged to deny he is gay. "There will never be a single man elected president?" Heffley asked scornfully. "I agree with that. Just like I agree there will never be a black man or a woman elected." Like all prospective vice-presidential candidates, Crist would be obliged to submit to an intensive background grilling. Yet there has never been a trace of scandal attached to his name, and his supporters point out that his marital status has never troubled Florida voters, evangelical Christians among them.

McCain's calculation seem likely to depend on the balance he needs between conservatives and independent voters as well as whether Obama or Hillary Clinton is the Democratic nominee. Most Republicans are still praying Clinton will stage a

miraculous comeback. They believe she is so divisive that McCain could beat her with Britney Spears as his running mate. Obama, because of his race and youth, presents McCain with a trick-ier challenge. "There's no question that Obama is a very gifted, talented politician and he speaks in a very inspiring way," said Crist. "So the case that Republicans have to make is: do you want inspirational words, or do you want to be inspired by policies that are good for America?" Crist confirmed that Republicans will primarily take aim at Obama's lack of executive experience, but Heffley believes their best chance of slowing Obama may actually come from Clinton: "Now Hillary's in trouble, I think they are going to pull out the long knives," he said. "She may go negative and try to make life as miserable for Obama as possible."



Yet the McCain camp already seems to be gearing up for a generational clash against the glamorous black senator from Illinois. After years of war in Iraq, with the economy now faltering, said Heffley, "people are desperate to feel good about something". He added: "Barack Obama makes people feel good. And Charlie Crist makes them feel good too."

From The Sunday Times



Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ)



Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME)

MACEDONIAN ISSUE: CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS OFFER A WAY TO SOLUTION

By Andy Manatos
Special for NEO magazine

Efforts to expose America's diplomatic mistreatment of Greece on the "Macedonian issue" were recently helped by one of Washington's most effective techniques to change American policy – a commentary in a major Washington, D.C. publication – the Washington Times. In this article, the bipartisan team of Senators Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) exposed the damaging shortcomings of American policy, described previously unconsidered consequences, and offered a new path to solving the name dispute.

The Senators explained the complex "Macedonian issue" through a simple international principle with which few disagree: A country cannot choose a name for itself that describes neighboring territory that its people want to annex. Menendez and Snowe described how FYROM has demonstrated a desire to annex the territory of ancient "Macedonia", the majority of which is in northern Greece, and they exposed FYROM's unwillingness to accept names that describe only territory within their borders such as Upper Macedonia and Northern Macedonia.

The piece also exposed our State Department's attempt to cover up the net effect of America recognizing FYROM as "Macedonia" -- encouragement of FYROM's intransigence on the name issue and irredentism (efforts to acquire neighboring territory). Each time the U.S. Senate or House of Representatives makes reference to this country as FYROM instead of Macedonia, it demonstrates the Legislative Branch's disagreement with this policy.

For the first time, this article opened the possibility of the U.S. withdrawing its recognition of FYROM as "Macedonia". Prior to this article no one in the U.S. government, the UN or any others involved realized that this is a possibility that could have a profound effect on solving the problem.

The article also planted in the mind of FYROM's inexperienced 32-year-old Foreign Minister that the new U.S. Administration is unlikely to continue the current policy towards FYROM. Menendez and Snowe are each personally very close with their respective party's presidential candidates, Senators Barack Obama and John McCain, and their opinions will be heavily taken into consideration.

In writing an article on this subject, Menendez and Snowe went way out of their way for this issue, selecting this issue from among the literally hundreds of issues clamoring for their attention. The average Senator receives 15,000 written communications each week. Such advocacy was a bold move given the risk of negative reactions from the State Department and the "foreign policy establishment."

Only time will tell if Menendez and Snowe's article is enough to immediately alter such ingrained U.S. policy. However, there is no doubt that they exposed to thousands of people in the Washington, D.C.'s establishment and potentially millions of people around the county wayward American policies. As well, the State Department officials handling the FYROM issue and the key officials in FYROM will learn about compelling arguments as to why from their perspective the issue should be settled soon. There is no question but that their efforts will positively change the debate.

Little-Known but Crucial Information about – the Ecumenical Patriarchate

Few realize that Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew: (1) is the 269th direct successor of the Apostle Andrew whose brother the Apostle Peter has as his 271st direct successor Pope

Benedict XVI; (2) was selected Time Magazine's 11th most influential person among the 100 most influential people in the world; (3) is the spiritual head of the second largest Christian church in the world and the largest headquartered in the Muslim world; and (4) will be the last or next-to-last Ecumenical Patriarch located in St. Andrew's Sacred Sea and unchallenged head of world Orthodox Christians for nearly 2,000 years unless Turkey stops requiring that Ecumenical Patriarchs must be Turkish citizens, a disappearing group, and returns the 95% of its property that has been taken.

Little-Known but Crucial Information about – Cyprus

Few realize that the most recent U.S. plan (the Annan Plan) to settle Cyprus' would have required:

- A – Apartheid – Greek-Cypriots would be prohibited from buying property or voting in one third of their country;
- B – Bolshevism – Like the Bolsheviks who took over Russia in 1917, the Turks that militarily took over the northern third of Cyprus could keep, as sort of a gift, the tens-of-thousands of homes, hotels and other businesses they took;
- C – Colonialism – Foreign citizens will permanently serve on the Cyprus Supreme Court and foreign (Turkish) troops will be constitutionally authorized to remain in the country;
- D – Discrimination – Only Turkish-Cypriots could run for president in one out of every three Presidential elections.

Andy Manatos is Former Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Former U.S. Senate Committee Associate Staff Director, President, Manatos & Manatos, President, National Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH), Regional Commander, Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and Member of the Archdiocesan Council of the Greek Orthodox Church of America.

By Nicholas Gage

When Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and his Islamic-rooted party came under fierce fire this summer from secularists, who came close to persuading the country's supreme court to bar both from politics, he called the campaign an attack against religious freedom and a threat to Turkey's efforts to join the European Union.

community of Istanbul. Last year 42 of the 50 members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives sent a letter to Erdogan urging his government to "end all restrictions" on the religious freedom of the Patriarchate, described by Tom Lantos, who then chaired the committee, as "one of the world's oldest and greatest treasures."

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I

combined troop strength of 1.1 million overwhelms the armed forces of even the biggest European nations. If Turkey becomes a full member of the European Union, will it accommodate to Europe's liberal traditions or will it use its demographic and military prowess to bend Europe to its will? The EU has already ruled that Turkey must allow the ships of Cyprus,

Orthodox Christianity under threat

Yet in nearly six years in power, Erdogan has shown no inclination to extend even a modicum of religious freedom to the most revered Christian institution in Turkey - the Patriarchate of Constantinople, the spiritual center of 300 million Orthodox Christians throughout the world. As a result, Turkey's persecution of the Patriarchate looms as a major obstacle to its European aspirations, and rightly so.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate, which was established in the fourth century and once possessed holdings as vast as those of the Vatican, has been reduced to a small, besieged enclave in a decaying corner of Istanbul called the Phanar, or Lighthouse. Almost all of its property has been seized by successive Turkish governments, its schools have been closed and its prelates are taunted by extremists who demonstrate almost daily outside the Patriarchate, calling for its ouster from Turkey.

The Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, is often jeered and threatened when he ventures outside his walled enclave. He is periodically burned in effigy by Turkish chauvinists and Muslim fanatics. Government bureaucrats take pleasure in harassing him, summoning him to their offices to question and berate him about irrelevant issues, blocking his efforts to make repairs in the few buildings still under his control, and issuing veiled threats about what he says and does when he travels abroad.

Successive Turkish governments have followed policies that deliberately belittle the patriarch, refusing to recognize his ecumenical status as the spiritual leader of a major religious faith but viewing him only as the head of the small Greek Orthodox

The congressmen urged the Turkish government to join the rest of the world in recognizing the ecumenical standing of the Patriarchate, to return expropriated property, to reopen its schools, including the renowned theological seminary on the island of Halki, and to end all interference in the process of selecting the patriarch, particularly the "continued insistence that he be a Turkish citizen."

As Orthodox Christians have been systematically persecuted in Turkey and there are now less than 2,500 of them left in the country, the congressmen wrote, the Patriarchate will soon cease to exist if future patriarchs have to be Turkish citizens. "It is the church, not the Turkish state, that should determine who becomes ecumenical patriarch," their chairman declared. Despite their letter and other efforts by statesmen from many countries to try to persuade the Turkish government to liberalize their policies toward the Patriarchate, its leaders have not budged - even though they know their stand may harm their chances of entering the European Union.

Their intransigence clearly demonstrates that while they want to enter Europe for its economic advantages, they are not prepared to liberalize their policies enough to alleviate Western concerns about allowing them to join. Until Turkey moves to make the fundamental changes necessary, starting with its policies toward the Patriarchate, admission of the country into the EU will pose major risks.

When I was covering Turkey for The New York Times in the late 1970s, its population was 34 million. Today it is 71 million and growing, while the birthrate in Europe is falling precipitously. In addition, Turkey's

an EU member, to use Turkish ports, but Turkey has completely ignored the ruling despite its eagerness to join Europe. So the key question is whether Turkey is willing to adapt to Europe or wants only to join the EU on its own terms. It is crucial for Europe to know Turkey's real intentions before opening its doors to the country.

Turkey's treatment of the Patriarchate, therefore, must remain a litmus test of its readiness to join the European Union. If Turkey cannot recognize the value of "one of the world's oldest and greatest treasures" in its own midst, how can it be expected to appreciate and respect the liberal values and traditions that define Europe? If Turkey insists on entering Europe on its own inflexible terms, the danger that it will overwhelm Europe, engulf it and change it radically cannot be underestimated.

The Patriarch of Constantinople himself has said that he believes the risk is worth taking and that he strongly supports Turkey's admission. I, too, believe that Turkish membership holds great benefits for all concerned, especially the Turkish people, but not as Turkey is constituted today - intolerant, suspicious, inflexible.

For Turkey to join Europe, it must show that it is ready to take great strides in adopting a European outlook, not the baby steps it has taken until now. The best way to begin is with the Patriarchate at the Phanar, "the Lighthouse," which can become a beacon to light a path for Turkey into Europe, if only the country's leaders find the wisdom to see it.

This article first appeared at the International Herald Tribune on Monday, September 8, 2008. Greek-American author and former New York Times reporter Nicholas Gage writes often about the Eastern Mediterranean.



Friends and Hellenes, but politics is different:
Peter Pappas, Republican and Angelo Tsakopoulos,
Democrat.



Members of the organizing committee:
Christina Liviakis Gianopoulos, Effie Lekas, Jeff Kurzon, Emily Scaros, Dean Sirigos, Olga Alexakos,
Dimitra Dimopoulos and Minas Tsulis.



Greek American Grassroots Fundraiser Effort for Obama-Biden

Greek and Greek Cypriot Americans recently held a fundraiser reception in support of Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama and running mate Joe Biden at the Olympic Tower Atrium Café in New York City, with special guest speaker Assemblyman Michael Gianaris (D-NY). More than 120 people joined the grassroots effort "New York Greek Americans and Friends for Obama-Biden '08" making it an astounding success. Featured speakers were introduced by Mistress of Ceremonies Dorothy Poli.

The event's highlights included greetings from noted Greek American developer, philanthropist, and Democratic Party activist Angelo Tsakopoulos, who said he was very happy and encouraged to see young Greek Americans taking an interest in public affairs. Assemblyman Gianaris told guests that he had spoken to Senator Obama about the event and that Obama was very pleased that this evening was another element in the multicultural foundation of his presidential campaign. Obama acknowledged the gifts of Hellenes to mankind and the contributions of Greek Americans in making America the greatest country in the world.

Gianaris stressed the importance of political activism both for the Greek American community and for America. He shared his personal story of his involvement in the 1988 Michael Dukakis presidential campaign and how that became the springboard for his life in politics. He strongly encouraged supporters to go to key battleground states like Pennsylvania and Florida to campaign for Obama-Biden.

Speaker Dr. Dean Lomis, former Chairman of the American Hellenic Institute (AHI) and friend of Senator Biden, highlighted the Obama-Biden support of Greece and Cyprus stressing how as a member of the United States Senate Barack Obama has supported Greek American community positions on the issues. Dr. Lomis detailed Joseph Biden support and leadership on vital issues for more than

30 years. An Obama campaign field organizer in New Jersey, Ted E. Anastasiou also addressed the guests. "I don't think it any small coincidence that Greek Americans, whose heritage has contributed so much throughout history and brought about such positive change in this country and the world, are openly receptive to Senator Obama's campaign for change," Anastasiou declared.

Fundraiser event hosts Dean Sirigos, Olga Alexakos, co-hosts and chairpersons are leaders and members of numerous Greek American organizations. Event host Jeff Kurzon is affiliated with Armenians for Obama and Obama NYC. Sirigos stated that their purpose was "to show our support for Obama-Biden and their promises of change to make our government more responsive to the needs of its people, to make our people truly secure through a harmony of power and principle, and to better project our values and ideals around the world, especially the bedrock principles of our support for Greece and Cyprus: the rule of law, democracy based on majority rule with minority rights guaranteed, and the peaceful settlement of disputes."

Olga Alexakos thanked the guests for attending "the wonderful and important opportunity for New York area Greek Americans to rally for an Obama-Biden ticket and to make a vital contribution to this important campaign." The event's benefactors included Dr. Ana Maria Trilliouris, Sultana Glyptis Rehnberg, the Lekas family, Michael and Alice Halkias of the Grand Prospect Hall, Nick Tsoulos and Nick Pashalis of Avra Estiatorio, Dino and Vasilios Bakakos of the Lafayette Grill and Bar, Stella and Sam Catechis of Stellar Importing, and Gus Theodoro of Gus's Place. The evening concluded with a musical performance by Blue Note recording guitarist Spiros Exaras accompanied by vocalist Fay.

The group's future events will be announced on the web site: nygreekamericansforobama.com.

Arianna Huffington on Sarah Palin:

Sarah Palin: A Trojan Moose Concealing Four More Years of George Bush



By Arianna Huffington

Did Sarah Palin wrongfully push to have her ex-brother-in law fired? Was she really against the "Bridge to Nowhere?" Did she really sell Alaska's plane on eBay, or just list it on eBay? Did she actually have any substantial duties commanding the Alaska National Guard?

The correct answer to all these questions is: who cares? Which isn't to say these aren't valid questions, or that Palin and the McCain camp aren't playing it fast, loose, and coy with each of them. The point is that Palin, and the circus she's brought to town, are simply a bountiful collection of small lies deliberately designed to distract the country from one big truth: the havoc that George Bush and the Republican Party have wrought, and that John McCain is committed to continuing.

Every second of this campaign not spent talking about the Republican Party's record, and John McCain's role in that record, is a victory for John McCain. Her critics like to say that Palin hasn't accomplished anything. I disagree: in the space of ten days she's succeeded in distracting the entire country from the horrific Bush record -- and McCain's complicity in it. My friends, that's accomplishment we can believe in.

Just look at the problem John McCain faced. George Bush has a disastrous record, and the country knows it. John McCain -- the current one, not the one who vanished eight years ago -- has no major disagreements with George Bush (and I'm sorry, wanting to fire Donald Rumsfeld a bit sooner doesn't qualify) and wants to continue his incredibly unpopular policies for another four years. The solution? Enter Sarah Palin, a Trojan Moose carrying four more years of disaster.

And the plan has worked beautifully. Just look at what's being discussed just 57 days before the election. Is it the highest unemployment rate in five years? The bailout of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac? The suicide bombing yesterday in Iraq that killed six people and wounded 54 -- in the same market where last month a bomb killed 28 people and wounded 72? That the political reconciliation that was

supposedly the point of "the surge" is nowhere near happening? That Iraq's Shiite government is now rounding up the American-backed Sunni leaders of the Awakening? That the reason 8,000 soldiers may be leaving Iraq soon is so more can be deployed to Afghanistan where the Taliban is steadily retaking the country?

No. We're talking about whether Sarah Palin was or was not a good mayor, whether she was or was not a good mother, whether her skirts are too short and her zingers too sarcastic. Contrary to what we're hearing 24/7 in the media, the next few weeks are not a test of Sarah Palin. The next few weeks are a test of Barack Obama.

He needs to dramatically redirect this election back to a discussion over the issues that really matter -- the issues that will impact the future of this country. A presidential campaign is a battle and this is the time for Obama to show some commander-in-chief skills. I'm not talking about calling Palin out for lying about his record and demeaning community organizing. I'm talking about grabbing the political debate by the throat. The country is already angry about what's happened over the last seven-plus years -- he shouldn't be afraid to give voice to that anger. Obama has spent years adopting a non-threatening persona; but he can't let his fear that appearing like an "angry Black man" (a stereotype not-too-subtly fueled by Fox News) will turn off swing voters keep him from channeling the disgust and outrage felt by so many voters -- swing and otherwise. McCain's team, in an effort to distract, is going to keep doing what they're doing -- diverting voters and the media with a tantalizing combination of personal trivia and small lies. It doesn't matter if they're caught in them -- in fact, all the better. Because they know there is no way in hell they can win if this election is about the big truth of the Bush years.

McCain's real running mate is George Bush and the failed policies of the Republican Party. Even if they are dressed up in a skirt, lipstick, and Tina Fey glasses.

Arianna Huffington is co-founder and editor-in-chief of *The Huffington Post*.





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By Katerina Georgiou

When James DeMetro was a boy he spent most weekends at The Cameo, a quirky theater on the southwest corner of 44th and 8th Avenue in Manhattan. A popular venue for "girlie" films, it doubled as a foreign film house on weekends. It was the 1950's and he hadn't yet discovered literature and the path that would lead to his 39-year career as an English professor. Instead, it was in this darkened theater, beneath the sculpted cameos of women draped in diaphanous robes - one holding a spool of film, the other a camera - that he discovered the magic of storytelling and connected with his Greek roots.

Dr. James DeMetro



"There's no difference to me between a good novel and a good film," said DeMetro, Director of the second annual New York City Greek Film Festival opening on October 3rd in Manhattan. "Film is as vital as literature," he says. "It deals with issues and ideas of a culture or people. It reveals concerns, life issues."

Screenings will take place at Cinema Village, Manhattan (October 3-9) and Cinemat Forest Hills (October 10-16). The festival, sponsored by the Hellenic American

Chamber of Commerce, is being overseen by its President John Stratakis and Executive Secretary, Stamatis Ghikas. Following in the footsteps of The New York Film Festival at Lincoln Center, The New York City Greek Film Festival is non-competitive. This design suits the organizer's simple philosophy: to pair worthwhile Greek filmmakers with New York audiences.

"More than anything else we want to show the audience movies that are worth seeing—that will make them think," said DeMetro. "We have a nice balance from light, commercial films to serious, provocative ones. People are going to be very surprised at the selection, especially those who haven't seen Greek films before." Even seasoned enthusiasts of Greek cinema will find the slate of new and award-winning films refreshing. "Many people have recollections of older films that are very different from what we're showing today," said DeMetro.

This year's roster includes: "Eduart"—a Dostoevskian tale of crime and punishment that was Greece's submission to The Academy Awards last year; "I Epistrofi" (The Homecoming) a film about marital infidelity and betrayal which won the International Film Critics award at The Thessaloniki Film Festival in 2007; and the family oriented "Proti Fora Nonos" (Little Greek Godfather) based on an autobiographical short story by Nicholas Papandreaou, son of the former Greek Prime Minister, about a Greek-American boy sent to Crete to baptize a baby in order to win votes for his father's political party. Two award-winning documentaries are also in the lineup: "The Lovers from Axos", detailing the enduring romance of a septuagenarian couple in the mountains of Crete; and "Resurface," a portrait of a quadriplegic competitive swimmer.

Adding a retrospective touch, this year's programmers have unearthed a cinematic gem, Michael Papas' "The Private Right"

(1967) an independent film about a Cypriot EOKA fighter who travels to London seeking vengeance on the collaborator who betrayed him. A special tribute is also planned for recently departed director, Jules Dassin, featuring a screening of his classic, "Never on Sunday" using an original archival print provided by MGM. Another tribute is scheduled for Greek American filmmaker Richard Ledes, whose neo-noir thriller "The Caller," starring Frank Langella and Elliott Gould premiered in April at the Tribeca Film Festival. Despite the strong selection of films, given the challenges of distribution it's harder than ever for foreign films, particularly those from Greece, to surface this side of the Atlantic. In the last seven years only two Greek films were commercially released in New York: Theo Angelopoulos' "The Weeping Meadow" and Penny Panayotopoulou's "Hard Goodbyes: My Father."

The New York City Greek Film Festival is hoping to fill this void by giving artists of Hellenic descent the opportunity to depict the evolving landscape of Greek cinema. At the same time, festival organizers are hoping audiences will connect with Greece through pictures and words.

"Watching films in a shared communal experience is important," said DeMetro. "Greek movies can stand on their own and appeal to any audience. But for us Greeks, these films are a statement of our ethnicity."

For more information on the New York City Greek Film Festival, including a complete screening schedule visit: <http://www.hellenicamerican.cc/FilmFest2008.htm>

We all know the wonders and health benefits of the Mediterranean diet. Growing up in a Greek home gave me the advantage of learning to cook at a very young age and indulging in healthy Greek cuisine daily. Although cooking and baking come naturally to me, I completely understand the perils many Greek-Americans face when attempting to recreate Yiayia's pastichio. Not only are most Greek recipes difficult to prepare, they are also very time consuming. Who has the time to cook a well rounded meal from scratch after an 8 or 10 hour work day? Hardly anyone!



By Maria Athanasopoulos

bread & honey

A COLUMN DEVOTED TO MAKING GREEK FOOD EASY

Today's fast paced life style even left me, the "natural foodie" asking the same question and fearing that Subway would be my only healthy meal option for dinner on weeknights. My extreme yearning for good home-cooked meals inspired me to reinvent Yiayia's recipes and make them "user-friendly". The best part is that you don't have to be an experienced chef or even know how to boil an egg to follow my recipes and make your own simple yet delicious meal!

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Here is an easy and succulent classic Greek recipe that is delectable served with a crisp green salad, black olives and plenty of crusty bread for mopping up the sauce.

Preparation: 15 minutes
Cook: 35 minutes
Servings: 4 to 6

Ingredients:
1 1/2 pounds peeled and deveined large frozen shrimp (thawed)
3 T. fresh lemon juice
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup scallions, thinly sliced
1/2 c. chopped celery
1/2 c. parsley, minced
2 cloves garlic crushed
2 c. plum tomatoes, chopped
1/2 c. dry white wine
Salt & pepper to taste
2 tsp oregano
1 c. feta cheese crumbled



1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place shrimp in a bowl, sprinkle with lemon juice and set aside. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add scallions, celery, parsley, oregano and garlic, sauté for about 2 minutes or until tender.
2. Add tomatoes and bring to a boil. Simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add wine, salt and pepper and simmer for an additional 5 minutes.
4. Spoon 1/2 the sauce into a shallow ovenproof casserole dish. Add shrimp, sprinkle with oregano and spoon over remaining sauce.
5. Lastly, generously crumble feta cheese over top.
6. Bake for 15 minutes or until liquid is bubbling and the cheese melts.

Enjoy with a glass of chilled Sauvignon Blanc. Now is that a well rounded, healthy and easy meal or what? **Kali Orexi!!!**

Calories: 290, Fat: 14 g, Cholesterol: 195 mg, Calcium 211mg, Carbohydrate 10g, Sodium 749mg, Protein 28 mg, Fiber 2g, Iron 4mg.



MARIA'S SLATE

"I am woman, hear me roar
In numbers too big to ignore
And I know too much to go back an' pretend
'Cause I've heard it all before
And I've been down there on the floor
No one's ever gonna keep me down again"

With the powerful words of Helen Reddy's classic, I kick off the start of my new column "Maria's Slate". As most of you have already guessed, this will be a column featuring topics and events that concern today's Greek-American women. As a young Hellene born and raised in America, I am often frustrated to find that very few internet sites, books and magazines exist that cater to my needs and interests. More specifically, this will be an outlet that speaks directly to Greek women and addresses current events, serious topics and of course the essentials: fashion, health and entertainment. For example, do you know how many Greeks are involved in the media industry and are considered apart of Hollywood's upper echelon? Or that a huge Greek movement is now occurring in fashion and Greece's top male model Marios Lekkas, is now gracing the pages of international fashion magazines and the runway shows of Versace, Dolce & Gabbana, Valentino, and Gucci?

In addition to topics that I care about, I want to hear about what you care about. Feel free to email me at maria.athanasopoulos@gmail.com voicing your opinions and concerns about any topic, any person and anything! I will take your interest one step further by doing some research and providing you with deeper insight.

Therefore, get ready for some hot topics in NEO's November issue and also don't forget to VOTE! The election is days away and your vote plays a much larger vote than you may think.



Laaris pays tribute to Tsontakis

Renowned classical pianist Nikolaos Laaris pays tribute to composer George Tsontakis and performs his epic "Ghost Variations" on Tuesday, October 21, 7:00 p.m. at the Onassis Center (Olympic Tower, 645 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan). Inspired by a Mozart theme, this work is followed by two pieces of the great Viennese master: a duo for violin and viola and a piano trio. Nikolaos Laaris is joined by Alexandros Sakarellos, violin, and Krystalia Gaitanou, viola.



Nikolaos Laaris (right), Krystalia Gaitanou and Alexandros Sakarellos

"I decided to work on Tsontakis' 'Ghost Variations' in 2002, when I first listened to it in Wigmore Hall, London," says Laaris in an interview with NEO. "The British pianist Stephen Hough, dedicatee of the work, performed it in a most compelling way. I was really astonished that a modern (composed in 1991) solo piano piece of thirty-two minutes would hold my attention so well and would end in such an astonishing and theatrical way: with knockings on piano's wood frame." It was then and there that the idea about the upcoming concert was born. "I wanted to reproduce and convey Tsontakis' musical

messages to my audience and speak Tsontakis' language: a language deeply rooted in tradition – the 'ghost' element of the piece is in fact a number of variations on a theme of a piano concerto by Mozart. Moreover, Tsontakis uses beautiful sounds, evokes theatricality and has vivid musical content. Stephen Hough even sees a Greek-disguised dance in the final pages of the work. I perceive this moment as a santouri solo."

Not only music-lovers, but also music-experts are thrilled with Tsontakis' compositions. According to Laaris, "no other American composer has indeed won so many prestigious awards in such a small time-frame: Last year George Tsontakis received the Charles Ives Living by the American Academy of Arts and Letters and two years before he had won the prestigious Grawemeyer Award by the University of Louisville."

Nikolaos Laaris, who was singled out by the leading London critic Stephen Pettitt of The Times, as "a fine artist, incapable of making an ugly sound," studied piano, violin, and theory at the Athens Conservatory, obtained his Master's Degree at the Royal College of Music, London, and his Doctorate at the Manhattan School of Music, where he is the coordinator of Aural Skills. He has performed throughout Europe and at Carnegie Hall here, in New York. He has also appeared with orchestras in Greece, Germany, the UK, and the US. His piano teachers include Nina Svetlanova, Chun-Yee Yu and Martino Tirimo. Laaris has also worked with Tatiana Nikolayeva, Murray Perahia and Pierre Boulez.

Violinist Alexandros Sakarellos has performed as a soloist, recitalist, chamber



and orchestral musician all over the world and in some of the most important venues, such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Wiener Musikverein and Sydney Opera House. Since 2006 he has been a leading violinist of the highly acclaimed Verbier Festival Orchestra and the same festival's Chamber Orchestra, working with artists such as James Levine, Kurt Masur, Valery Gergiev, Zubin Mehta, Charles Dutoit, Martha Argerich, Maxim Vengerov and Renee Fleming.

Born into a family of musicians in 1982, Greek violist Krystalia Gaitanou started playing the violin under the tutelage of Dimitri Semsis. At the age of 16 she switched over to viola, studying with Natassa Anana at the Musical Horizons Conservatory in Athens. Upon her graduation she received a Viola Diploma and a First Prize, while at the same time she was honored with a Gold Medal for excellence (a superior distinction awarded for the first time to a violinist.) At the same time, she holds a Bachelor's Degree in Musicology from the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. Ms. Gaitanou earned the "Alexandra Trianti" Scholarship from the Athens Megaron Concert Hall and pursued further studies in Paris with Vincent Aucante and Isabelle Lequien. She is currently pursuing her Master's Degree in the prestigious Orchestral Performance Program of The Manhattan School of Music, in the studio of Karen Dreyfus.

AN OPEN LETTER TO GREEK-AMERICANS



Dear Greek-American Voter:

Election 2008 is upon us during an important and challenging moment in our nation's history. America must restore our economy's health, secure the home-front and lead the democracies of the free world. Barack Obama and Joe Biden have the qualities – the good judgment and intelligence – to meet this challenge. In choosing Joe Biden, Senator Obama has demonstrated his excellent judgment because Senator Biden is one of America's leading policy experts, someone with a clear knowledge of the issues facing America throughout the world. In the United States Senate, Joe Biden and Barack Obama have worked with both parties to bring about progress for the American people.

Barack Obama and Joe Biden are friends of the Greek American community, championing causes that are important to us all. Senator Obama has demanded that Turkey honor the religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which includes ending the seizure of Greek Orthodox Church property and the reopening of the school of theology in Istanbul. Senator Obama supports a solution in Cyprus based on the rule of law and his selection of Joe Biden ensures a White House that will be well-versed on the Cyprus question. Senator Biden has stood for justice on Cyprus since 1974. Senator Obama is an original co-sponsor of Senate Resolution 300 which calls on FYROM to stop its hostile activities and work with the United Nations and Greece to find a mutually acceptable name for FYROM.

We need a President who will act prudently to ensure that the democracies of the world cooperate to meet the economic challenges and security threats that face America and her allies. And we need a Vice-President who has the demonstrated skills and experience to lead and if necessary - step into the Oval Office. Senators Barack Obama and Joe Biden are able leaders who can lead America in the 21st Century. This November we urge you to vote for Obama-Biden as the right choice for America.

Sincerely,
Presidential Nominee
Governor Michael S. Dukakis
Senator Paul S. Sarbanes
Congressman John Brademas
Congressman John P. Sarbanes
Congresswoman Niki Tsongas
Illinois Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias
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This election message is sponsored by Greek-Americans for Obama

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Baby Rocket Salad
with Halloumi Croutons
in Citrus Olive Oil
Vinaigrette

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

Salad

- 5 oz package baby rocket (arugula), washed
- 5 oz Halloumi cheese cut into ½ inch cubes
- ¼ cup fine corn meal
- 2 tablespoon grape seed oil for frying
- 1 beet, thinly sliced on a mandolin and shallow fried until crisp.

Citrus Dressing

- 2 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoon fresh orange juice
- Grated zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon vin cotto or balsamic vinegar
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper, to taste
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. Wash and dry the arugula and place in a medium bowl.
2. To make the dressing, combine the citrus juices and zests, mustard, vin cotto or balsamic with salt and pepper and whisk well. While whisking slowly pour in the oil and combine well. Set aside.
3. Dust the Halloumi cubes in fine corn meal, tossing gently in a bowl. Transfer to a plate and discard remaining corn meal.
4. In a medium skillet, heat grape seed oil over medium high temperature. Fry the Halloumi for about 5 minutes, turning often to get a dark golden crust.
5. Remove from heat and transfer back to plate.
6. Toss the greens with the vinaigrette and cheese gently to coat. Sprinkle with beet chips and serve immediately.

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Dimitri Apostolos
In Memoriam



Dimitri (Jim) Apostolos, a long-time friend and participant in the Greek Community of Southern California passed away on Monday, September 1, 2008. He was a teacher of Greek language and Greek studies at several universities and colleges in Southern California, including UCLA and Santa Monica College.

James Peter Apostolos was born to Peter and Margaret Apostolos in Birmingham Alabama on March 19, 1934. He spent his formative boyhood years in Alabama and attended Greek school where he learned about his culture, language, and history. Jim served in the U. S. Army reserves. He graduated with honors and received the Bachelor's Degree from the University of Alabama. Then he attended the University of Colorado in Boulder where he received his Master's in Russian literature. There he met Carmen Menendez of Manati, Puerto Rico, and they were married in 1961. The young couple moved to Los Angeles to attend UCLA. Jim started teaching there and continued doing that for many years. He spent the rest of his life teaching many subjects including Modern Greek, Ancient Greek, Russian and English as a Foreign Language. At the same time he continued learning and teaching himself as many as 7 languages.

Jim embraced diversity and was genuinely interested in learning about other cultures. This was his attraction to teaching ESL and he learned at least as much from his students as they did from him. He had a friendly and outgoing nature and his passions were teaching, the outdoors, philosophy, sports, and politics. He enjoyed spending his summers in Greece with friends and relatives. He had a self-described "book-buying" disorder but his remedy was book-giving.

According to friend, Dr. Theo Kolovos, "Jim was one of the original founders and a president of the Save Cyprus Council, now called American Hellenic Council, whose original mission was to support freedom and sovereignty of the Mediterranean island of Cyprus after the 1974 invasion by Turkey. He was very active and never missed a meeting of the Hellenic University Club of Southern California whose purpose is to promote the study and understanding of Hellenic culture in Southern California. He was also an active representative and lobbyist to Washington D.C., working on behalf of the Greek issues."

James Apostolos is survived by his sister Stella, son Peter, daughter Natalia and his grandchildren Nicole, Alicia, and Liam.

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Aris Melissaratos hosted Baltimore's "Aegean Evening"

By Georgia Vavas



From left, Margarita Vartholomeou, Aris Melissaratos and State Senator Lou Raptakis.

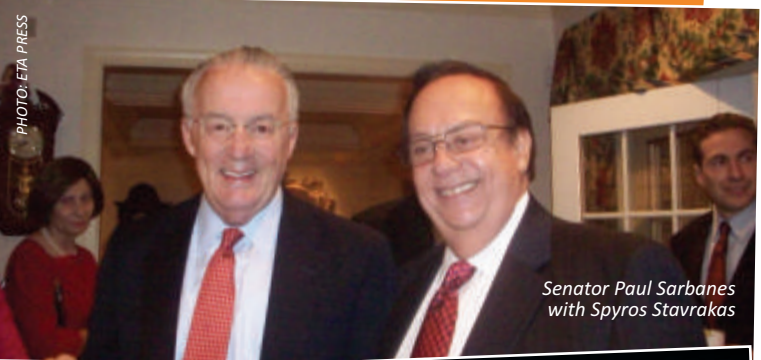
Greek food and Greek-American music and conversation were about the evening of Saturday, September 20th within Aris Melissaratos' Greenmount Farm Estate, as the Baltimore-Piraeus Sister City Committee hosted their second annual "Aegean Evening" benefitting Cooley's Anemia Research at Johns Hopkins Children Center, the World War II-era Liberty Ship, SS John W. Brown and other philanthropic works of the Committee.

Hazelwood Inn catered a fabulous assortment of Greek mezzedes and delicacies as guests were entertained by the fabulous Greek-American band "Bouzouki Nights." Live and silent auctions made available a variety of gifts, trips, art, clothing, specialty goods and wines to bidders. Top live auction items included a one week stay at a Napa Valley Resort for up to eight people and a one week stay in a private home on the Greek island of Lefkada.

Among the notables attending Aegean Evening II were former Senator Paul Sarbanes, Maryland Congressmen Dutch Ruppensberger and John Sarbanes, Rhode Island State Senator Lou Raptakis, Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Gadis and Baltimore City Council President Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. The Committee and guests were honored by the presence of Margarita Vartholomeou from the Island of Andros, who represented Greek shipping interests and the local newspapers Andriaki and Kykladikon Fos.

The Baltimore-Piraeus Sister City is a volunteer program under the Baltimore Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs. This and the other nine Sister City programs are operated in cooperation with Sister Cities International, an organization that was created by President Dwight D. Eisenhower after World War II to promote good will, economic development, cultural understanding and respect among U.S. and international cities around the world.

Congratulations to the Baltimore-Piraeus Sister City Committee for their hard work and leadership in making this event successful and a big thank to Mr. Aris Melissaratos and his family for graciously hosting the event at their home.



Senator Paul Sarbanes with Spyros Stavrakas



Kali Maherides with her mother Evangelia Maheridis and Congressman John Sarbanes



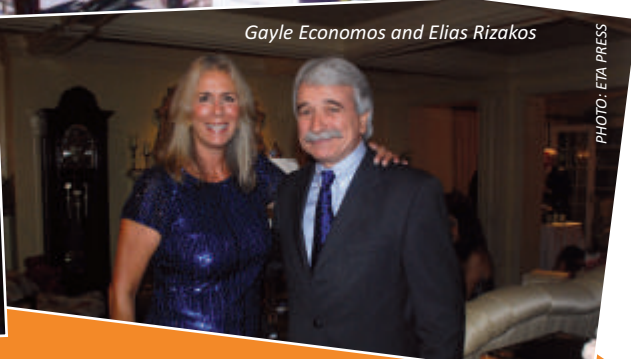
Paula Kosmakos, Joanne Zoulis, Kyriakos Marudas and Alexis Kosmas.



Spyros Stavrakas, Spero Demetrides, Georgette Stavrakas, Eleni Peltseles, sitting Diane Homberg, Georgia Vasi Karas



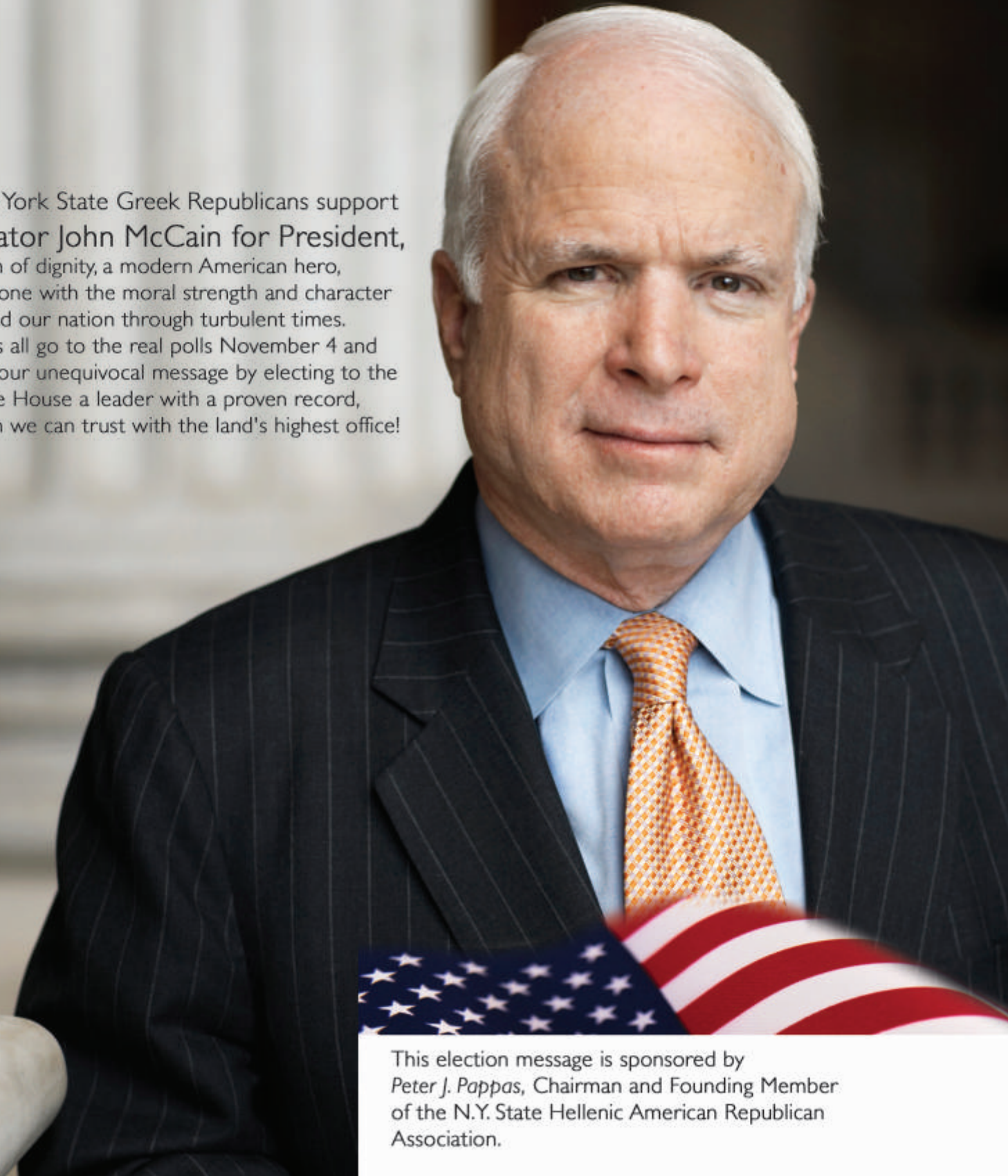
Congressman Dutch Ruppensberger, Senator Lou Raptakis and Kostas Alexakis



Gayle Economos and Elias Rizakos



New York State Greek Republicans support Senator John McCain for President, a man of dignity, a modern American hero, someone with the moral strength and character to lead our nation through turbulent times. Let us all go to the real polls November 4 and send our unequivocal message by electing to the White House a leader with a proven record, a man we can trust with the land's highest office!



This election message is sponsored by Peter J. Pappas, Chairman and Founding Member of the N.Y. State Hellenic American Republican Association.



Greek Minister of Economy & Finance,
Mr. George Alogoskoufis

Annual Capital Link Forum on Greece

"Greece: The new Reform Agenda – Investment & Business Opportunities in Greece today," will be the theme of the upcoming, 10th Annual Capital Link Forum, to take place on Thursday, October 30th, 2008 at the Metropolitan Club in New York City, under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Greece.

Luncheon Keynote Speaker will be the Minister of Economy and Finance of Greece, Mr. George Alogoskoufis.

Topics of the forum this year will cover the Government Economic Policy and Objectives, the Framework of Investing in Greece, the Greek Stock Market and Investment and Business Opportunities in Greece.

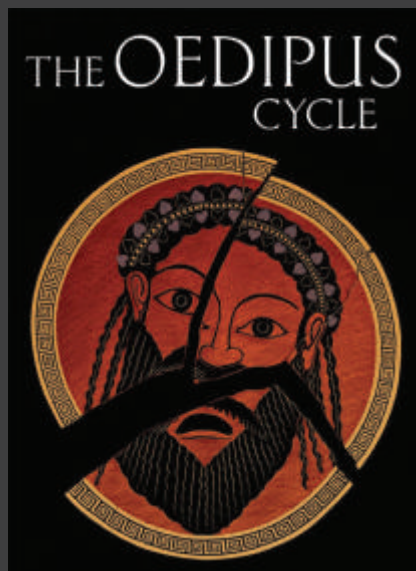
More information and registration forms can be obtained online at:

<http://www.capitallinkforum.com/greece/2008/signup.html>

World premiere translation of The Oedipus Cycle

A world premiere translation of Sophocles' The Oedipus Cycle by award-winning translator Peter Constantine, will mark the inaugural production of The Pearl Theatre Company's (Shepard Sobel, Artistic Director; Shira Beckerman, Managing Director) 2008/2009 Silver Anniversary Season. Performances will begin Monday, October 27, and go on until Sunday, November 16.

This groundbreaking production offers a once in a lifetime chance to experience the complete story of Oedipus and his family's struggle for grace and wisdom through suffering and loss. Peter Constantine's raw, bold translation of Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, and Antigone has been specially adapted for this unique three-hour Pearl event, directed by The Pearl Theatre Company's founder and artistic director Shepard Sobel.



This is Mr. Constantine's second season at The Pearl Theatre Company. He adapted and translated last season's The Mandrake. In 1998 he received the PEN Translation Prize for his translation of Thomas Mann's Six Early Stories, chosen by the New York Times as a Notable Book of the Year. He was also awarded the National Translation Award for The Undiscovered Chekhov: Thirty-Eight New Stories (1999). Mr. Constantine received a Koret Jewish Book Award and a National Jewish Book Award citation for his translation

of The Complete Works of Isaac Babel, edited by Nathalie Babel. The cast of The Oedipus Cycle is a remarkable lineup including Resident Acting Company members Jolly Abraham (Coram Boy, Bombay Dreams), Dominic Cuskern (Inherit the Wind, A Perfect Ganesh), TJ Edwards (Lincoln Center Theatre's King Lear) and guest actors John Livingstone Rolle (Measure for Measure at the The Public/New York Shakespeare Festival), Susan Heyward (I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to me by a Young Lady from Rwanda at St Peter's Theatre), and Jay Stratton.

The Oedipus Cycle production and design team is a collection of world-class artists whose work has been seen at venues all over the city and regionally. The scenic design is by Harry Feiner; costume design is by Devon Painter; lighting design is by Stephen Petrilli; sound design is by Mark Huang; Dancespace Resler is the stage manager; Kate Farrington is the dramaturge; and it is helmed by The Pearl's founder and artistic director Shepard Sobel.

Founded in 1984, The Pearl Theatre Company is an Off-Broadway classical theatre that nurtures an on-going resident company of actors, a structure which is both important and rare. Tickets could be obtained by contacting the box office at 212-598-9802 or in person at The Pearl Theatre Company located at the historic Theatre 80 on the corner of 1st Avenue and St. Marks Place in New York's vibrant East Village.

SPOT JWT

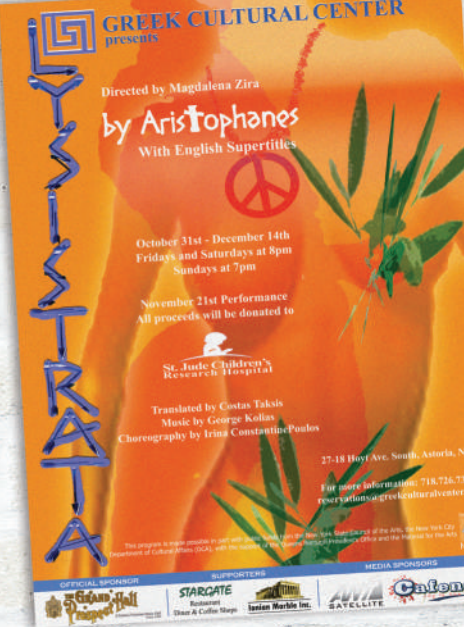


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Our own game is a game of values that are genuinely Greek: Culture, Education, Health Care, Sports. These are values that make our lives more beautiful, more creative. These are values that we have supported practically, with an increased sense of social responsibility, with devotion and passion: like a big team. Together we are laying the foundation for more humane, more optimistic and happier future.

Because the most beautiful game is life itself





Lysistrata by Aristophanes in New York

The Greek Cultural Center in New York opens this year's season with Lysistrata by Aristophanes (October 31st, 2008, at 8 pm until December 14th, 2008), an all times masterpiece with special pertinence to our turbulent times.

Under the leadership of Lysistrata, the women of Athens take action to stop the war on two levels: they go on sex strike, leaving their husbands unsatisfied, and secondly they occupy the Acropolis, blocking the men's access to the treasury and thus withholding the necessary funds for the war. The plan works, as the women from the Peloponnesian alliance, under the guidance of Lampito, have also joined in the strike. This leaves both Athenians and Spartans frustrated and desperately seeking peace. The play ends with the successive resolution of both the sex strike and the occupation of the treasury. The men are admitted into the Acropolis, a highly symbolic coup de theatre, which foreshadows their impending reunion with their wives. Representatives of rival cities from all over Greece share in a feast of reconciliation cutting across both political and gender boundaries.

This production, in the intimate but versatile space of the Greek

Cultural Center, will be performed by an ensemble of five men and five women, sharing all the roles, including the chorus. In alphabetical order Yiannis Amouris, Larisa Antypa, Antonis Armeftis, Georgia Giannakouris, Tereza Grimani, Alexandros Malaos, Diodoros Pagoudis, Louiza Papazaharia, Anastasios Samaras. It is a staging with emphasis on theatricality, collaboration and group work which will explore the theme of gender stereotypes, whose subversion can lead to a more harmonious society and a more successful political life. The setting will be contemporary, with echoes from the 60s and 70s, the decades that saw the flourishing of the women's movement as well as the civil rights movement. In those years young people united all over the world fought against unjust war and civil inequality.

This production is Directed by Magdalena Zira, Original Music by George Kolias, Choreography by Irina Constantine Poulos, Voçal Coach Christos Alexandrou, Set Designer Elisha Schaefer, Costume Designer Jennifer Rascopt and Lighting Designer Jason Teague.

The Greek Cultural Center is located at 27-18 Hoyt Avenue South, Astoria, tel: (718) 726-7329.

HAWC Annual Conference in Miami

The Hellenic American Women's Council (HAWC), the leading secular Greek women organization in the country, will be hosting its 15th Annual two day Conference, October 24-25, in Miami, Florida. "Finding Your Path to Health and Wellness," will be this year's theme, featuring an impressive lineup of experts. James Cosmides, M.D. Dermatologist, Anthony Panos, M.D. Associate Professor of Surgery, and Seth Thaller, M.D. Professor and Chief of Plastic Surgery Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami, will cover the first half of the main conference day, Saturday, October 25.



Dr. Artemis P. Simopoulos

During the luncheon following the morning speakers, Panagiota Caralis, M.D. J.D., renowned expert on bioethics, health law, elder care, domestic violence and women's advocacy, will present the keynote address.

In line with the theme of the conference, HAWC will also pay tribute to the groundbreaking work of world renowned author of The Omega Diet Dr. Artemis P. Simopoulos, conferring upon her the Aristeon Award during the conference luncheon.

Dr. Simopoulos' The Omega Diet, which has been published in ten languages, is significant because of the headway it made in the recognition by the scientific community and the public of the importance of the balanced ratio of Omega-6/Omega-3 fatty acids. Dr. Simopoulos is founder and president of The Center for Genetics, Nutrition and Health, president and founding member of the International Society of Nutrigenetics/Nutrigenomics (ISNN), and one of the first researchers to discover the virtues of Omega-3 fatty acids through her studies of the Mediterranean peoples.

HAWC's 15th Annual Conference will conclude with its annual business meeting and biennial election, open to all HAWC members.

Additional information and registration material are available on HAWC's web site at <http://www.hawcnet.org> or by contacting Mina Savvides at (305) 528-3381 or Maria Stamoulas at (703) 528-8464.

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Bill Spilka, *The International Trombone Association Journal*,
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For more details about this concert and the Latin-Jazz Coalition on the internet go to their extensive tri-lingual web site at www.latinjazzcoalition.com

Photos by Jerry Lacay

AWT
SATELLITE

TINA FEY "ROCKS" AT THE EMMYS

Isn't it just like Tina Fey to have something go haywire on the night she's recognized for her many talents?

"If anyone's seen my purse," Fey announced to reporters backstage after winning three Emmys, "I left it under my seat." It might have been the first thing the "30 Rock" mastermind did wrong all night, after picking up trophies for outstanding comedy writing, comedy series and lead actress in a comedy.

When prodded by reporters, she humbly dodged praise and questions about her contributions. "I think our cast is diverse and talented," she said in one breath. "We've had the greatest guest stars," she said in another. "Alec (Baldwin) elevates the show to another level with his abilities," she said.

She even shrugged off her resemblance to Gov. Sarah Palin, whom she won raves for portraying on the season premiere of NBC's "Saturday Night Live." "But then my kid saw her on TV and said, 'That's Mommy!'" she said.

She was more open about her thoughts on reprising the "SNL" role. As in, she'd prefer not to. "I want to be done playing this lady Nov. 5," she said. "So if anybody can help me be done playing this lady Nov. 5, that would be good for me."

Television comedy's Jill-of-all-trades has always been self-deprecating, mining her apparent struggle with life's chaos for her character on "30 Rock," her self-portrayal in a new series of American Express commercials and the persona she presents to the public.

But to win TV's top honours for creating, writing and starring in her own television show might've been more than even Fey can deflect. When cornered to say how she felt about the different Emmys, she finally turned off the modesty. Kinda.

"They look identical," Fey quipped. "Alec was just saying to me backstage that maybe this means I can now stop apologizing for being an actor and writing on the show. The one for the show, that really belongs to everybody, so I don't like it as much."

During his acceptance speech for lead comedy actor for "30 Rock," Baldwin noted that Fey was this generation's Elaine May, the director, screenwriter and actress who famously partnered with Mike Nichols onstage.

"We have the greatest writers, but the show was created by one woman," Baldwin said backstage. "This was Tina's idea. This was Tina's thing. She is the head writer. She is there every day, even when she's not shooting as an actress. She goes back and forth between acting and writing. We're very, very lucky."

From The Associated Press



Thank you...

To the 130 Members of Congress Who Have Cosponsored S. Res. 300 / H. Res. 356

Introduced by:

Senate European Affairs Subcommittee Chairman, Senator Barack Obama, with Senators Robert Menendez and Olympia Snowe
House Europe Subc. Chairman & Ranking Member, Reps. Robert Wexler and Elton Gallegly, with Reps. Carolyn Maloney and Gus Bilirakis

Expressing the sense of the [Senate / House of Representatives] that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) should stop the utilization of materials that violate provisions of the United Nations-brokered Interim Agreement between FYROM and Greece regarding "hostile activities or propaganda" and should work with the United Nations and Greece to achieve long-standing United States and United Nations policy goals of finding a mutually-acceptable official name for FYROM.

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