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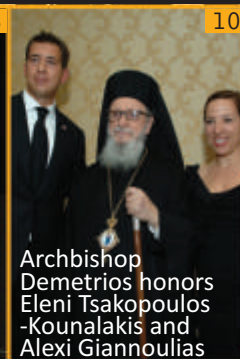
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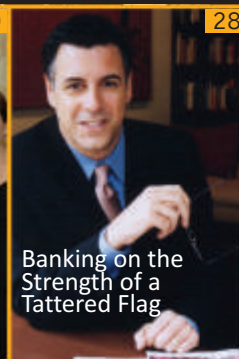
Leadership 100 Membership at Record Level for 25th Anniversary Conference



Leadership 100 Chairman Stephen G. Yeonas on his goals for the organization and on a life well spent



Archbishop Demetrios honors Eleni Tsakopoulos-Kounalakis and Alexi Giannoulas



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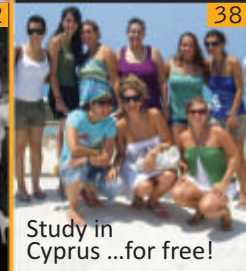
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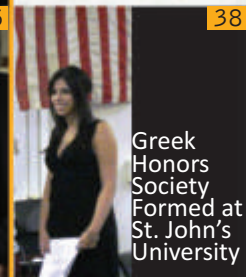
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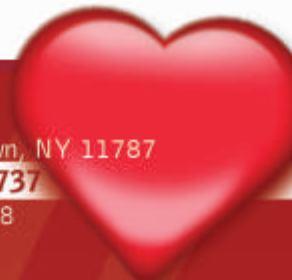
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On Leadership

Mr. Yeonas, the chairman of the Leadership 100 featured in this issue, by all standards a successful man, says his fellow members, all successful, have a major responsibility to show leadership that includes “philanthropy in support of our Church, our clergy, our community and our heritage.” The ancient Greeks themselves considered any man who didn’t perform these acts of public service as not quite a man. So the eminent men and women of Leadership 100 are carrying on a proud tradition by giving back and it’s to their credit and honor.



FROM THE EDITOR

I remember being involved with my own Chian Federation here in New York more than thirty years ago and meeting with George P. Livanos, who at the time was one of the leading ship owners in the world, with interests around the world, and who had no business spending his nights sitting in our-then makeshift offices with the folding table upstairs that served as our conference table and the folding chairs that served as stadium seating. Over paper cups of coffee with the omnipresent Parthenon logo we all sat a little stunned and listened to the great man talk about the efforts we could all make and he would support to establish our organization and help the Greek cause and how each of us could contribute. His Greek was halting, his oratory wasn’t very inspiring, but the great man was sitting right there in our converted storefront in Astoria and talking to us (the air conditioning and refrigeration repairmen, the short order cooks, the donut men and painters and counter men (and students, like me), when he could have been anywhere in the world taking care of business, and we felt flattered and energized. He even offered my father and me a ride home to Brooklyn after our meeting, but we were too proud (and we had heard rumors about his suspended license and numerous speeding tickets, the one flaw in the great man). He did extend an invitation to us to meet him at his offices at the World Trade Center, which we accepted, and where we sat around a table which might have been the biggest slab of marble in the world and where the building shook in the wind as we talked. “You have been wonderful,” he said to me directly, because I had written him a letter detailing how in my seasoned judgment (I was barely in college) we could recruit the young people to get more involved with the organization and its causes. “Keep it up, tell me more,” he said eagerly, and I couldn’t believe my ears that the great man was actually listening to me. He even offered berths on his ships to any youths who wanted to spend the summer experiencing the seafaring life that was their ancestry.

Mr. Livanos was an inspiration and he put his money where his mouth was. We worked very hard in the Chian Federation in those years and I never felt more proud to be a Chian or a Greek. It was part of my heritage and of the values that my parents and grandparents had taught me. But it was also from the simple motivating act of a man who wanted to give back and who provided the example of his own commitment, which is the true mark of leadership.

Dimitri C. Michalakakis

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AHI welcomes the Greek American Delegation in Congress



PHOTO: C.F. ECONOMIDES

From left to right: Nick Larigakis, Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD), Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV), Rep. Zack Space (D-OH), Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV), Gene Rossides, Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-MA), and Rep. Suzanne Kosmas (D-FL).



PHOTO: C.F. ECONOMIDES

From left to right: Rep. John Sarbanes (D-MD), Gene Rossides, Rep. Niki Tsongas (D-MA), U.S. Regional Coordinator for the Council of Hellens Abroad (SAE) Ted Spyropoulos.

The American Hellenic Institute (AHI) hosted recently a dinner in honor of the Greek American delegation of the 111th Congress, Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Shelley Berkley (D-NV), Suzanne Kosmas (D-FL), John Sarbanes (D-MD), Zack Space (D-OH), Dina Titus (D-NV), and Niki Tsongas (D-MA) at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC. Senator Olympia Snowe (R-MA) was unable to attend the event do to a prior engagement. Opening the evening's program, AHI Executive Director Nick Larigakis said: "As Greek Americans, we always take great joy and pride when someone in our community achieves a high pinnacle of success in their chosen field of endeavor. Tonight, the joy and pride is seven-fold as we welcome to Washington the two new members who are joining the other five."

"It is from my heart and I have a duty and obligation...to discuss and explain to senior members how important the FYROM issue is to us, how important the Patriarchate issue is and Cyprus, and how these things have not been resolved for so many years," stated Congressman Gus Bilirakis. "I appreciate the opportunity to visit with you and to be part of this great community of Greek leaders and look forward to working with you on the issues that are important to you in Congress," said in turn Suzanne Kosmas, newly elected this past November.

Congresswoman Shelley Berkley told a

heartfelt story regarding her Jewish family in Thessaloniki during WWII. "I am technically not Greek. My family comes from the Jewish community in Thessaloniki ...By the time the Nazis finished with us, there were 1,000 Jews left. If it had not been for our Greek neighbors, there would have been no Jews left. And I am very mindful of the sacrifice that our Greek neighbors made in order to keep some of their neighbors alive."

For Zack Space "it is fitting that the Greek American community would be so responsible for my victory and my ability to hang on to my seat ...We all learned growing up in Greek families the value of hard work, oikogenia (family), and personal responsibility ...I look forward to working with you all in the future on these issues that are of such importance to all of us."

Dina Titus, also a newcomer, said to have entered "this Congress with a strong Greek heart and I am looking forward to working with John, Zack, and Gus as my mentors as we face some of the issues that I know you have been working on for so long."

"One of the things that prompted me to run for Congress was the fact that it had been 25 years since a woman had been elected to Congress from Massachusetts," Niki Tsongas stated. "As I look around this table, I think we Greek Americans have done very well in sending women to Congress."

According to John Sarbanes, "with respect to the issues that are of particular concern to our community you have to have a certain peripheral vision as you embark on these important issues. We understand what an important ally Greece is for the United States and how that relationship has to be cherished and cultivated and what a strategic ally a unified Cyprus can be for the United States."

Over 100 persons attended the dinner, including: Ambassador of Greece to the United States Alexandros Mallias and Mrs. Mallias, Ambassador of Cyprus to the United States Andreas Kakouris and Mrs. Kakouris, U.S. Regional Coordinator for the Council of Hellens Abroad (SAE) Ted Spyropoulos and Mrs. Spyropoulos, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Greek Embassy Karolos Gadis, AHEPA Executive Director Basil Mossaidis, President of the Hellenic American Women's Council Maria Stamoulas, Next Generation Executive Director Leon Stavrou, Thalia Assuras from CBS News, former Deputy Chief of Mission in Athens, Tom Countryman, Executive Director of the National Hellenic Society Tim Maniatis, AHI Advisory Committee member Kostas Alexakis, James Marketos, Peter Pappas and numerous Congressional staffers.



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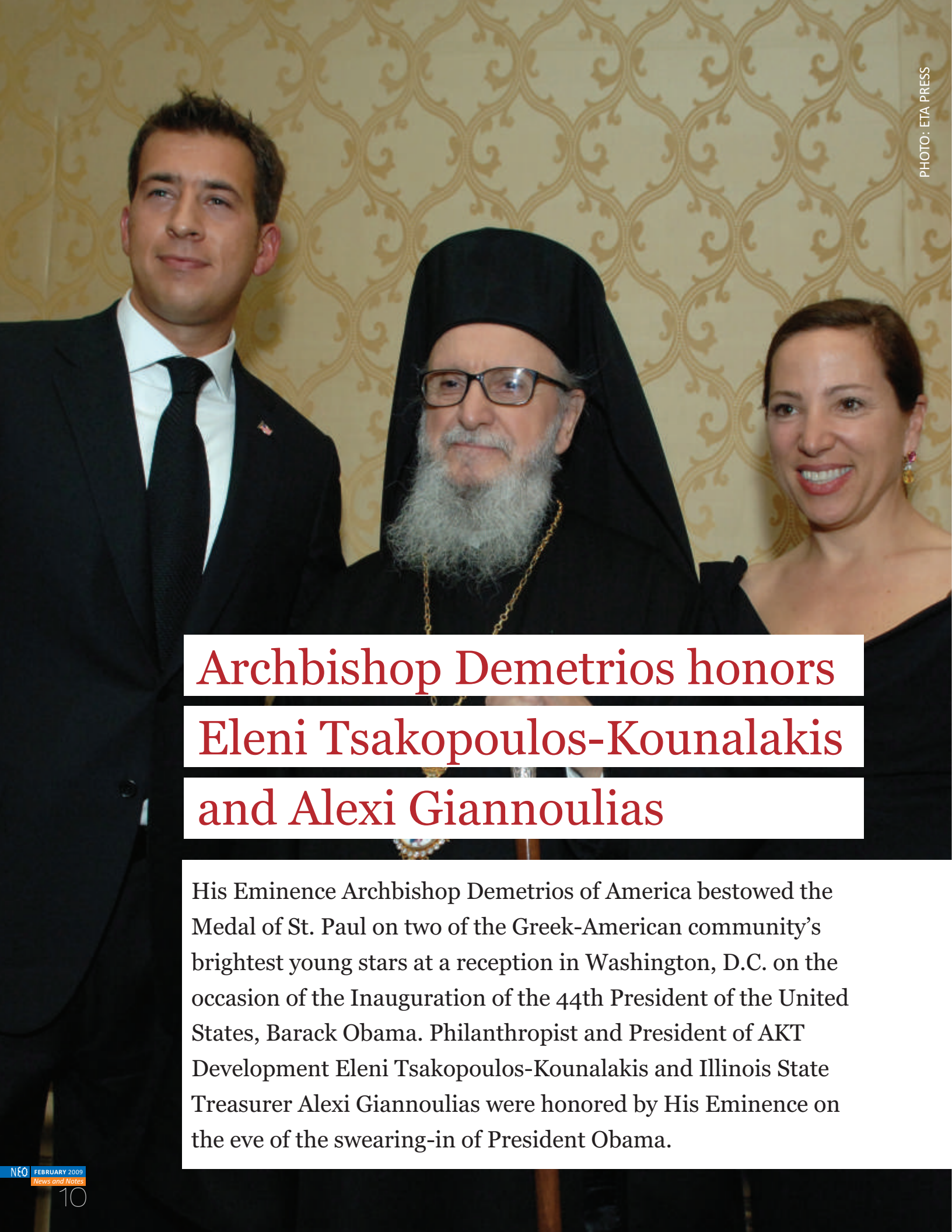


PHOTO: ETA PRESS

Archbishop Demetrios honors Eleni Tsakopoulos-Kounalakis and Alexi Giannoulias

His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America bestowed the Medal of St. Paul on two of the Greek-American community's brightest young stars at a reception in Washington, D.C. on the occasion of the Inauguration of the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama. Philanthropist and President of AKT Development Eleni Tsakopoulos-Kounalakis and Illinois State Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias were honored by His Eminence on the eve of the swearing-in of President Obama.

This took place at a reception in honor of His Eminence and celebrating Greek-Americans in public service, hosted by the Cyprus Federation of America, PSEKA and the Coordinated Effort of Hellenes. Archbishop Demetrios was invited to sit on the Presidential platform during the Inauguration of President Obama. As well, the next day he was with President Obama and Vice President Biden when he was one of very few religious leaders to participate in the National Prayer Service.

Some of the Greek-Americans of very significant accomplishment who participated in this celebration included: Deputy Secretary of State, our country's first Director of National Intelligence, former U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and former U.S. Ambassador to the UN, John Negroponte, Member of the Leadership of the U.S. Senate (as Chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee) and Senate European Affairs Subcommittee Member, Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ), the Ranking Member on the House Europe Subcommittee, Congressman Elton Gallegly (R-CA), New House Foreign Affairs Committee Member, Congressman Michael McMahon (D-NY), Former U.S. Ambassador to Greece, Tom Miller, President George W. Bush's envoy to Darfur, former head of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and former Chairman of the Massachusetts Republican Party, Andrew Natsios, Gates Foundation Executive Director, President Bill Clinton's Former Deputy Chief of Staff, and former White House Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director, Sylvia Matthews, Former Democratic Nominee for Governor of California and former California State Treasurer, Phil Angelides, House Europe Subcommittee Member (one of only 14 of the 435 Members), Congressmen Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Congressman and possible candidate for the U.S. Senate, Zack Space (D-OH), Brookings Institute Managing Director and former White House National Security Council staffer in the Clinton Administration, Bill Antholis, President Bill Clinton's former Special Assistant and Senior Speechwriter and current Editor in Chief of The Washington Monthly magazine, Paul Glastris, President Lyndon Johnson's Associate White House Press Secretary, Harold Pachios, Former long-time Chief of Staff for then-Senator Paul Sarbanes, Peter Marudas, Former Newsweek Magazine reporter and bureau head and current President of The Washington Monthly magazine, Markos Kounalakis, FOX News Channel White House correspondent, Mike Emanuel, FOX 5 News (Washington, D.C.) Anchor Laura Evans Manatos, Former Associate Counsel to President Bill Clinton and current partner at the Howrey law firm, Dimitri Nionakis, Former Clinton Administration Associate Chief of the FCC's International Bureau and former State Department Director of Communications for Economic Affairs, Peter C. Pappas, Former White House Office of Public Liaison Associate Director, Dana Edwards Manatos, State Department Deputy Director for European and Eurasian Public Affairs, Athena Katsoulos and Then-Presidential Candidate Barack Obama's Political Director in Connecticut, Nicholas Paindiris CEH (Coordinated Effort of Hellenes) members who co-hosted and attended this event included: World Council of Hellenes (SAE) Honorary Chairman, Andrew A. Athens; PSEKA President and Pancyprian Association of America President, Philip Christopher; Cyprus Federation of America President, Panicos Papanicolaou; PSEKA Executive Vice President Nikos Mouyiaris; PSEKA Alternate President Tasos Zambas; Hellenic American Leadership Council Founding President and Alexi Giannoulias' Political Director, Endy Zemenides; and New Jersey Greek-American Chamber of Commerce President, Zenon Christodoulou.

Those from Greece and Cyprus participating included: Ambassador of Greece to the U.S. Alexandros Mallias; Ambassador of Cyprus to the US Andreas Kakouris; Mayor of Piraeus, Panayotis Fassoulas; Former Athens City Councilor Yvette Jarvis; and Kyriakos Mitsotakis.

Heads of the major Greek-American Organizations participating included: Archon National Commander Anthony Limberakis; Archon Spiritual Advisor Father Alexander Karloutsos; Leadership 100 Vice Chairman Constantine G. Caras; Philoptochos President Aphrodite Skeadas; and AHEPA Supreme President Ike Gulas.

NEO's Demetrios Rhompotis spoke with former California Treasurer Phil Angelides, former Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte and with Yvette Jarvis, a New Yorker who went to Athens as a model and singer and became the first ever African American elected official. Today a Member of the Municipal Council of Athens, she serves as Special Advisor to the Mayor on Immigration issues.

PHOTO: ETA PRESS



Former California Treasurer Phil Angelides

Phil Angelides: "The era of financial manipulation is over, now is the time to start making real wealth"

Your thoughts on the upcoming Obama administration.

It's thrilling, I mean, America is about to pass into a new era of change and opportunity. These are extraordinary times, the country faces enormous challenges, the economic challenge, national security challenges, challenges to our climate. But I'm excited about this turn and I think it's a fundamental turn to a country that can make itself real moral leadership to the world, a country that is the leader not the lagger. So it's a big moment, I believe.

You served as Treasurer of California and you also are a successful businessman. If you were to offer a piece of advice on the economy to the new president, what that would be?

Invest in our people, in their education and their skills. The foundation of a strong economy is good schools. That is transportation to the 21st century. Use the power of government to strengthen our economy and our people and give a foundation to growth. That's what Roosevelt did and it's what made America the strongest and most prosperous country. And we've forgotten that. Too many people said the government is the enemy, now it's an opportunity again to do the things that matter: Educating children, laying down infrastructure are the priorities.

What do you make up of the current crisis? Have we hit bottom yet?

They're gonna be tough times ahead of us. I think it will require building a new economy. And that takes a lot of work. The era of financial manipulation is over, now is the time to start making real wealth and that doesn't happen overnight.

On the state of the Greek American community what is your estimate?

We've got a lot of talent, a lot of energy, we need to be the best citizens we can possibly be, engage in the political process, help our new president and commit ourselves to strengthening our communities. I'm sorry, I gotta run...

When are you running for office again?

Time will tell. I've been always active politically and I have the passion of public service hoping to make a difference.



PHOTO: ETA PRESS

Senator Bob Menendez (left) and former Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte.



PHOTO: ETA PRESS

(L to R) Andy Manatos, John Negroponte, Congressman Gus Bilirakis, Congressman Zack Space, Nikos Mouyiariis, Philip Christopher, Alexi Giannoulis, Archbishop Demetrios, Eleni Tsakopoulos-Kounalakis, Senator Bob Menendez, Congressman Elton Gallegly, Peter Papanicolaou, Cyprus Ambassador Andreas Kakouris, Greek Ambassador Alexandros Mallias



PHOTO: ETA PRESS

Yvette Jarvis

SAE leader appeals to Obama on Greek American issues



SAE (Council of Hellenes Abroad) USA Coordinator Theodore G. Spyropoulos appealed to President Barack Obama to review all U.S. policies and practices relating to Hellenic issues. America's Hellenic community looks forward to a change in US policies involving issues of interest to Americans of Hellenic heritage, "a review by your administration of the U.S. foreign policy that has demonstrated ignorance of history, has continued to fan the fires of conflict in the Balkans and is destabilizing Southeastern Europe."

The letter goes as follows:

Americans of Hellenic heritage, SAE USA Region and myself proudly congratulate you on the solemn occasion of your Inauguration as the 44th President of this great country, the United States of America.

We listened to your inspiring inaugural speech with renewed hope for our nation and a strengthened resolution about the principled role America should play internationally as it follows the rule of law and seeks justice when conflicts rise. We have also been following with awe the positive response your election and speeches have drawn in Greece and in Europe in general. We have been very pleased and honored on your behalf to receive praising remarks about our new President from sources that have been critical in the past. It is obvious that the world is ready to embrace American leadership with admiration and hope.

Therefore, even at this early date in your consideration of international issues, we, Americans of Hellenic descent, wish to bring to you a number of issues in American foreign policy that are of interest to us as a community:

The island of Cyprus remains largely occupied by Turkish invasion armies while Turkish fighter planes routinely violate the Aegean airspace of Greece, a member of NATO and of the European Union. At the same time, basic religious and human rights are violated constantly as in the paradigmatic case of the Greek Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople accentuated by the continued forcible closure of the Theological School of Halki.

Under previous and in fact the most recent administrations, American foreign policy has sidestepped the issues of human and minority rights for Greeks in Northern Epirus in Albania and has 'jumped the gun' as it ignored history and dismissed Greek peaceful attempts to resolve differences with the government of FYROM. The U.S. administration, by acting unilaterally and in a very undeserved way against Greece and in opposition to the practice of almost every other nation in Europe, officially recognized a new FYROM name that is the basis for indefinite conflict.

Mr. President, as America's Hellenic community we look forward to a review by your administration of the U.S. foreign policy that has demonstrated ignorance of history, has continued to fan the fires of conflict in the Balkans and is destabilizing Southeastern Europe.

With much anticipation for new beginnings that will be based on the principles of truth and understanding, I am,

Respectfully Yours,
Theodore G. Spyropoulos
Coordinator SAE USA.

John Negroponte:
Greek-American issues are American issues

Your feelings about this change of administrations.

This is a moment of great hope, political transition, first African American President. Even though personally I'm a Republican and I've served this administration (Bush), I think I speak for a lot of people when I say I'm really excited about the message we send to the world! And obviously, even though this administration is in its final day in office, we certainly wish the new team well. We only have one president at the time, we want him to succeed and I think, as the Archbishop said tonight, we all pray for Barack Obama, we pray for success and wisdom in leading our country.

You held many key positions in this administration and you experienced things first hand. Regarding the Greek-American issues, we haven't done much, have we?

This is something that's going to continue. I think I heard a lot of sentiment this evening about the effort made and continues to be made in order to bring Greek-American issues on the forefront. They are also American issues. We care about Cyprus as a nation, we care about religious liberty and we care about the issues the Greek American community cares about. So, I'm hopeful that progress can be made in the years ahead.



PHOTO: ETA PRESS

Dennis Mehiel with George Marcus

Yvette Jarvis: Restore belief in the American dream

This must have been a very emotional time for you...

My emotions are abundant. I'm a black American and also the first to be elected in Greece...

You are kind of a Greek Obama...

(Laughs) Yeah, I'm the Greek Obama! Well, in all seriousness, Barack Obama has been for the last 11 months a continuous source of inspiration. He managed to restore belief in the American dream. Living in Europe was very difficult for all Americans, no matter where they lived, for the last eight years. He is giving me hope that Americans will find again values, black Americans will understand what is necessary and what it takes to become a family unit again. We have so many children that are born out of wedlock, men that don't take care of their children and so many other problems in the inner cities. But now I see that children are interested again in studying history, in learning about their roots, they see that the American dream is a reality, because it was lost. And I think he (Obama) brought that dream back for America and for the rest of the world. Everybody is waiting for Barack Obama, he has such Herculean job to do!

He's also extremely popular in Europe, even in the more emotionally reserved countries.

This guy is blessed, he has a light! I was in Berlin, I saw the 325,000 people cheering "Yes, we can!" chanting his name, crying. I think everybody wants to believe in the American dream. And when you see expressions of anti-Americanism, I think deep down inside they envy America and they would like to be part of that dream. The US has always been the leader and has always played the leadership role. The American people have always given so much of themselves for others. And I think people internationally missed the America that is righteous. I've been to five or six countries in the last two months and everywhere Barack was in everybody's lips and in everybody's prayers.

On a different subject now, what's your take on the December riots in Athens?

People are disenchanted, people feel marginalized. People study hard, they get two and three degrees, because that is the Greek way, education has always been important to Greeks, and they can't find jobs at all! Not only they can't find jobs in their professions, but it's very difficult to find a job. And if you find a job it will be a temporary situation, with low pay, they call them now the "Generation of 700" (700 Euros a month pay, about \$1,000). So, you have this generation growing up not knowing what their future will be. When they move out of mom's house, how can they get married, how can they raise a family if this all they have to offer. We don't have the infrastructure we need. So you have all those brained people, with fantastic degrees who when they go to London or Germany they can do well, to expect to live with 700 Euros a month, if they are lucky!

Would you run for higher office in Greece? What about running in the US?

I think I would like to come back and work for a big non-for-profit organization and help people. I'd like to follow Obama's steps. I'd also like to go back to public schools and talk to children about learning how to be real citizens. Think outside the box and that America is not the end of the world and that there is a whole world out there that respects and admires their culture.

How did you feel when you visited that Harlem Public School the other day?

I loved it! It was beautiful to see little black and Spanish kids learning how to speak Greek and talking about (Greek) Mythology and the Parthenon. And I tried to make them feel how special they are!

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Paulette Poulos, Executive Director (Interim) addresses Leadership 100 General Assembly.



L100 co-founder Michael Jaharis with George Sakellaris



The late Archbishop Iakovos presiding over one of the first L100 board meetings

Leadership 100 Membership at Record Level for 25th Anniversary Conference

Founding members to be honored

On the eve of the Leadership 100 25th Anniversary Celebration Conference, February 5-8, in Puerto Rico, membership has increased to a record 814 with 64 new members joining in 2008 and 374 members fulfilling their pledges of \$100,000 each. An estimated 324 members and their guests will gather at The Ritz-Carlton San Juan Hotel in Carolina, Puerto Rico to celebrate 25 years of the Leadership 100 mission to advance Orthodoxy and Hellenism in America. In addition, despite the economic downturn, a special grant fund, the Leadership 100 Grant Fund, under the chairmanship of Charles H. Cotros, has raised \$1,060,350 in cash and pledges from Leadership 100 members to continue support of scholarships for seminarians studying for the priesthood at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and the critical ministries of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Stephen G. Yeonas, Chairman of Leadership 100, said all the indicators look positive at the momentous historical occasion. He said conferees will gather primarily to honor the Founders who have contributed to the success of Leadership 100 by presenting them with the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Award for Excellence at the

Grand Banquet, named for the visionary Archbishop Iakovos who initiated the organization, on Saturday night, February 7.

"Our Spiritual Leader, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America, and our esteemed Metropolitan Athenagoras of Mexico and Metropolitan Alexios of Atlanta will join us to commemorate the historic founding of the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund, Incorporated, and our 25th Anniversary Celebration Conference Chairpersons, George D. and Margo Behrakis and conference sponsors, have given their untiring efforts and personal financial support to design this conference as a true celebration," Yeonas said.

The Conference program will feature leading members and speakers from all fields of endeavor who exemplify the pursuit of excellence and the achievements of Greek Orthodox Americans, including a business panel discussion on important economic issues moderated by George D. Behrakis and including Charles H. Cotros and John G. Pappajohn at the Opening Breakfast and a Forum led by the legendary lawyer, Plato Cacheris, also a member of Leadership 100. A

special Saturday Brunch and Spouse program will be addressed by the Emmy Award winning broadcast journalist, Deborah Norville, host of Inside Edition for more than a decade and the entertainment will be highlighted by the preeminent country soul singer, Ronnie Milsap, winner of seven Grammy Awards, as well as the Alpha Band, the best in Greek music.

New members and fulfilled members will receive special recognition and Leadership 100 Partners, the young professionals and future leaders, now numbering 74, will orient young adults at the conference to the purpose and goals of Leadership 100. There will also be a Welcome Reception on Thursday night and the Hellenic Festival on Friday night.

The hallmark of Leadership 100, since its founding in 1984 under the inspired leadership of Archbishop Iakovos, has been to define leadership as excellence and commitment to the Orthodox faith and the Hellenic heritage, exemplified by its outstanding Founders, Officers and Members and over 25 years of advancing Orthodoxy and Hellenism in America.

In honoring Leadership 100's Founding Members, Arthur C. Anton, Sr., Andrew A. Athens, George K. Chimples, Peter M. Dion, Michael Jaharis and, posthumously, Thomas A. Athens and George P. Kokalis, with the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Award for Excellence, Leadership 100 will recognize their vision and zeal as well as their dedication to service and determination to pass the torch of leadership to the next generation. Previous recipients were Senator Paul S. Sarbanes, George J. Tenet, and Yanni in 2003; Melina Kanakaredes and John D. Negroponte in 2004; Senator Olympia J. Snowe in 2005; Dimitris L. Avramopoulos in 2006; Rudolph W. Giuliani in 2007; and Theodore Angelopoulos and Ambassador Gianna Angelopoulos Daskalaki in 2008.

As new generations arise, Leadership 100 is passing on its legacy of leadership as excellence, engaging Greek Orthodox American leaders from throughout the country to join a unique network of dedication and mutual respect that has an enormous impact on the Greek Orthodox Church, the Greek American Community and the Country.

From its initial 100 members at its historic beginning, Leadership 100 now counts in excess of 814 members toward a goal of 1,000 members prior to its 30th Anniversary.

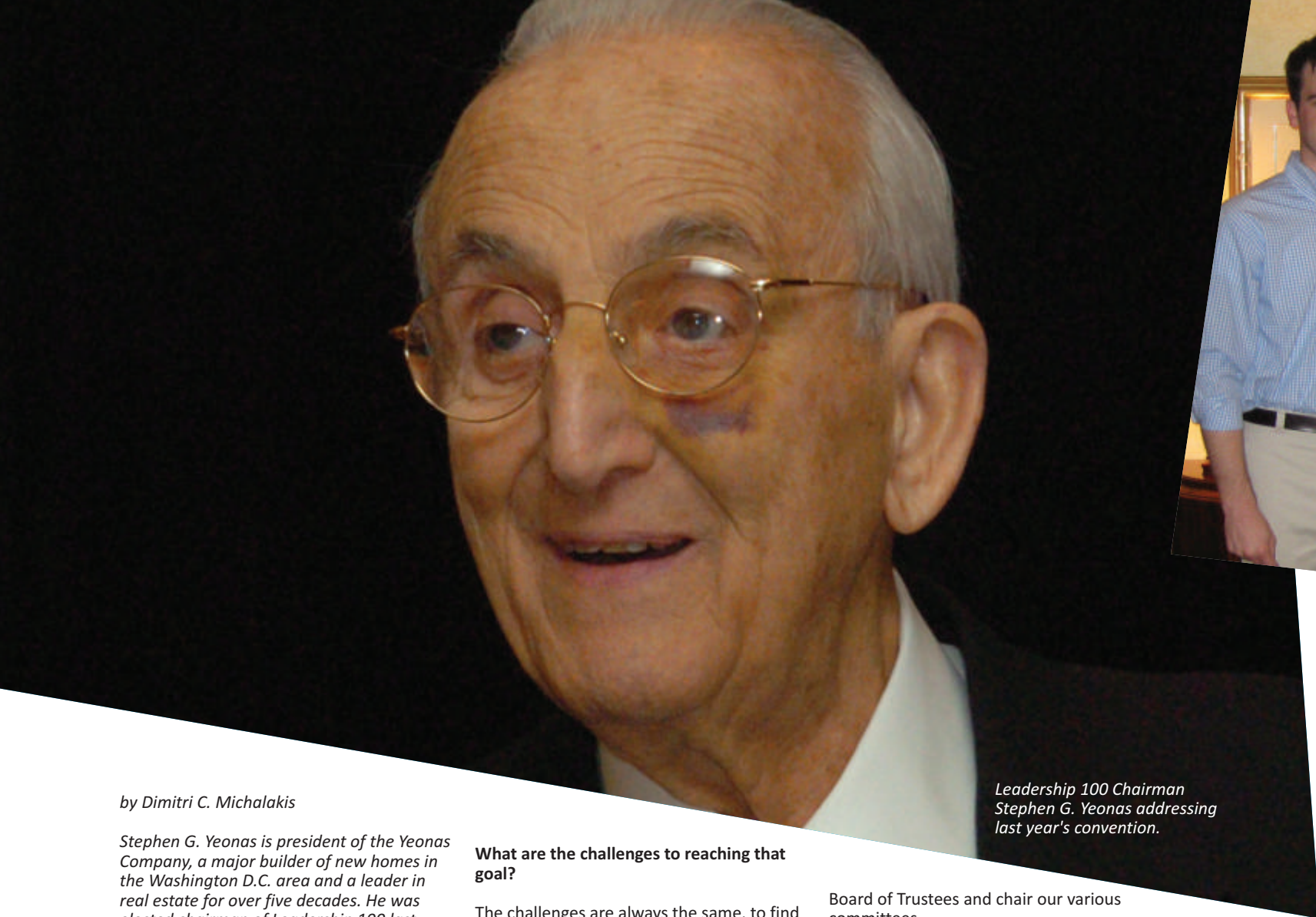
More significantly, Leadership 100 has led the way over two and a half decades in demonstrating support for such programs Internet Ministries, Information Technologies, Parish Development and Interfaith Marriage and Family Ministry, while continuing support for Home Mission Parishes, Greek Education, Religious Education, Youth Ministry and Outreach and Evangelism, providing a \$12 million commitment for scholarships for seminarians, \$1 million to eliminate the student loan debts of clergy, and \$1 million to ease the financial burdens of retired clergy and presbyteres and clergy in need of assistance.

Leadership 100 has always adjusted to the realities of the world and the needs of the Church in good times and bad, giving start-up funding when Orthodox Christians banded together to provide international assistance, initiating International Orthodox Christian Charities, which was on hand for the crises in Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the tsunami in the Indian Ocean and the devastating fires in Greece. When missionaries were needed in Africa and Asia, Leadership 100 supported the Orthodox Christian Mission Center. When the tragedy of September 11 beset New York, Washington and Pennsylvania and traumatized all Americans, Leadership 100 established relief centers and raised funds for

assistance to those who suffered loss and provided support for the rebuilding of the Greek Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas which was destroyed by the collapse of the World Trade Towers.

Total grants since the inception of Leadership 100 will exceed \$28 million in 2009. This is because Leadership 100, in response to the current economic crisis and its effect on its Endowment Fund, has raised the additional \$1,060,350 for the special Leadership 100 Grant Fund, which was formed by the Executive Committee in October of 2008 to continue its grant program until such time as the earnings from the Endowment Fund allow the organization to resume grant distributions.

Paulette Poulos, the Executive Director (Interim) of Leadership 100 said, "the story of Leadership 100 – its successes in membership, contributions and primarily in grants – its support of our Church, and its influence in our Community - is not complete without the untold story of how Greek Orthodox American men and women from all walks of life have come together to renew their faith and their commitment to the Church in America to insure that the legacy of their forbears is passed on to their children and their children's children."



Patriarch Stephen Yeonas
with family

Leadership 100 Chairman
Stephen G. Yeonas addressing
last year's convention.

by Dimitri C. Michalakos

Stephen G. Yeonas is president of the Yeonas Company, a major builder of new homes in the Washington D.C. area and a leader in real estate for over five decades. He was elected chairman of Leadership 100 last year, but has been a force in the organization for many years and has ambitious plans for the future of the organization, starting with its stated goal of reaching 1000 members and an endowment of \$100 million by its thirtieth anniversary. And he says, as always, the goal for Leadership members is to inspire others by their example: "So many Greek Americans have achieved high levels of education and affluence, but it is their faith and Hellenic ideals that have formed their character and progress. It is our responsibility at Leadership 100 to demonstrate these ideals in our families and fellowship as well as the importance of leadership that includes philanthropy in support of our Church, our clergy, our community and our heritage."

Are you on track to reach the Leadership 25th Anniversary Fund goal?

Paulette Poulos, Leadership 100 Executive Director (Interim) and the Membership Committee are on track and we are confident we will achieve our goal of 1000 members and \$100 million in the Endowment prior to our 30th Anniversary celebration.

What are the challenges to reaching that goal?

The challenges are always the same, to find committed members to join us in our unique mission to advance Orthodoxy and Hellenism in America. So many Greek Americans have achieved high levels of education and affluence but it is their faith and Hellenic ideals that have formed their character and progress. It is our responsibility at Leadership 100 to demonstrate these ideals in our families and fellowship as well as the importance of leadership that includes philanthropy in support of our Church, our clergy, our community and our heritage. Paulette and her dedicated staff are the outstanding team that makes it possible to reach our goals.

What do you consider your achievements as chairman of Leadership?

- 1) We reached our goal of 64 new members by the 2009 conference.
- 2) We set a goal to have fellowship luncheons in each Metropolis for our members. The first was held this past year in Washington, DC.
- 3) We selected an outstanding group of members to serve on our Exec. Comm.,

Board of Trustees and chair our various committees.

4) With the guidance of Paulette Poulos, we have put programs in place to ensure we reach our goal of 1000 members.

5) By designating specific responsibilities under the excellent leadership of Paulette Poulos, we have ensured that the staff is effective in carrying out their respective responsibilities.

What were the challenges you faced?

We established a plan that would enable us to reach our goal of 64 new members by our 2009 conference. During our economic downturn we focused on our long term interest to avoid making decisions based on short term circumstances.

What do you think are the future challenges for any new leadership?

We have put in place a strategy that will enable us to achieve our long term goals. Developing the future leaders of the organization and recruiting more young members as well as having them assume leadership roles.

Leadership 100

CHAIRMAN STEPHEN G. YEONAS

ON HIS GOALS FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND ON A LIFE WELL SPENT

How did you get into the building business?

Necessity is the mother of invention. I was a salesman of a pre-manufactured product to builders. I guess I wasn't a good salesman because I couldn't get a builder on board so I bought three lots myself and became my own customer. After that I realized that pre-manufactured homes are limited and I went to hand built and designed homes. I bought lots in Northern Virginia, sold them quickly and just kept going!

What was the housing market like when you first started? What was the average price of a home? How much did it cost to build an average home then?

Very strong! All veterans returning from WWII were ready to purchase new homes. You could purchase a new home for under \$15,000 - approx. \$12 per square foot.

How many homes would you say your company has built over the decades?

Probably close to 10,000.

What were the toughest times? Does today's housing market compare?

1973-75. The tough times may be for different reasons, (i.e. excess inventory, speculation, or a credit crunch) but they

share the same emotion: the fear that things will never be good again. This is fear you have to fight because each time the housing market has come back and always stronger. The same is true again. Believe me, housing will come back and be better than ever!

What is the excitement of the homebuilding business?

It is basic to the American dream, to the security of our families, to the building of our communities and ultimately, to the strength as a people and a nation. It has also been about innovation, giving the consumer a better home life, a better product or a better community to live in. For example, we were the first builder in the DC area to offer central air conditioning as a standard in all Yeonas homes. That's right, believe it or not, air conditioning used to be an option. We were also the first builder to design a community with townhouses in Fairfax County, Virginia. In fact, we had to help the county draft the zoning ordinance necessary to be able to build a townhouse. These are the things that excited me.

Do you think today's home market will recover?

As I said before, yes, of course. In fact now is the time to consider buying. Think about it. During boom times houses are often bid

up and in the fever buyers make rash decisions, but eventually the tide turns. However, now, a buyer can walk into a builder and carefully consider all their choices and buy at near bottom and with many incentives. On top of that, at interest rates that are remarkable in my lifetime.

How does a builder compete in today's market?

I feel the way to compete has always been the same, be first, act quickly and have plenty of ammunition. To compete, a builder has to be ahead of his competition by being the first to offer the most innovative products, have the best pricing, financing and locations.

What were your strengths as a builder? Were you a hands-on executive?

For me, it is to be a leader in the industry in providing better home at better values. Develop a strategy for building multiple communities at the same time and a goal of continuous improvement each year and a true adherence to customer service was the highest priority of the Yeonas Company. Yes, I was always hands on. I think my particular strength though was in understanding the talents and contributions of those I worked with, demanding the most from them and by giving my best to every project.



Thelma and Stephen Yeonas

What made you get a law degree?

Law trains one to understand the very workings of society as a whole, of government and of business. I realized I needed broader training after my business education.

Where were you born and what was your first job?

I was born in Washington, DC and after school, I went into the Army.

What made you settle in Washington, DC? What part of Greece is your family from?

It was my father that settled in Washington, DC. He and my mother were from the town of Tripolis

How and where did you meet your wife? Is she in the business? Are your children?

Her family was a neighbor of ours and I played basketball with her brother. She is such a big part of my success – her support and encouragement is always there! She chose to build a family while I built houses.

Now the home building business is owned by my son, son-in-law and daughter – Yeonas & Ellis LLC. I am very proud of them and proud of their children - our 5 grandchildren.

What made you spend so much of your life in community service, such as the Leadership 100?

We felt we were very fortunate to have the success in business that we wanted to take leadership roles in various community organizations to make a difference – not only through the Church with Leadership 100, but also with the Boy Scouts of America, United Way and various other service organizations.

Do you consider yourself a man of strong faith?

Yes. I am devoted to the Greek Orthodox Church but like everyone else it developed over time, seeing the examples of great men and women of faith, clergy and lay alike. It is one of the three treasures in life – faith, family and friends.

How much should religion be a part of a person's life today?

Religion, or rather, faith in God and love of the neighbor is central to our humanity. This life will end but we have an eternal home. Our religion and our heritage are all about eternal values.

How do you transmit that faith to your grandchildren, for example?

To lead by example and encourage participation in church and church activities.

Do you now consider yourself retired?

Quite the contrary. I'm involved with my children in their homebuilding business and make various investments in real estate and the stock market in addition to my responsibilities at Leadership 100.

What are your hobbies?

I love to read, audit classes, travel, as well as being with good friends and family.

Do you visit Greece often?

At least once a year.

Being in Washington, DC, do you consider yourself political?

I do! Politics are fascinating and worthy of great discussions. It will be interesting to watch the next 4 years unfold.

What do you want to be your legacy to your family and your community?

I want my children and grandchildren to appreciate their Greek heritage, find something that they feel passionate about and remember to always give back as well as maintain a reputation of the highest integrity with strong family values and desire to make a difference in the community and live a meaningful life.

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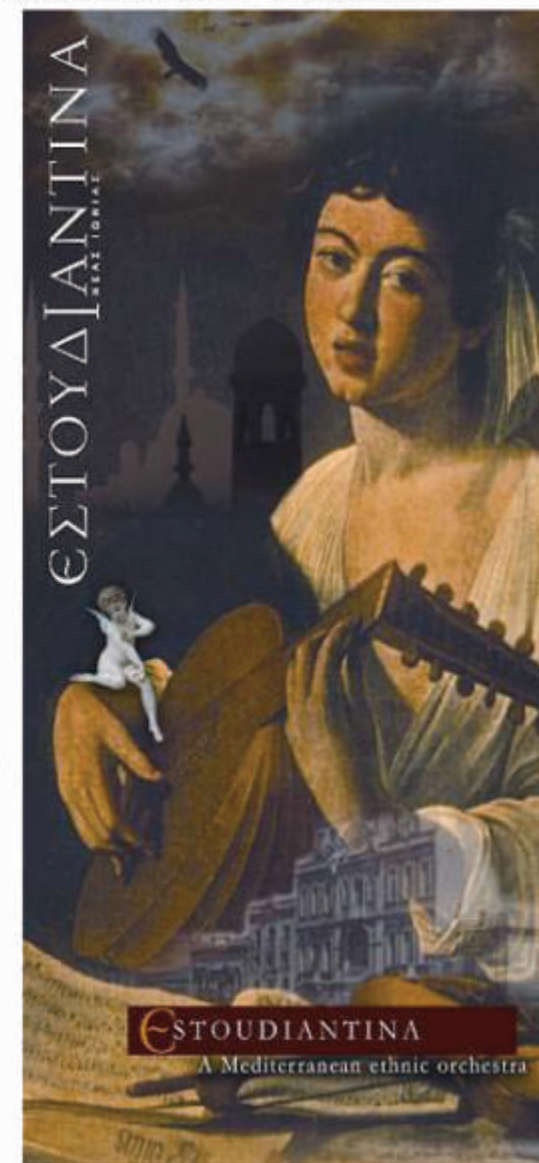
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AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE D. BEHRAKIS

Mr. Behrakis is the former chairman of Leadership 100 and chairman of this year's convention

How is the 25th Anniversary Fund drive going?

We're doing extremely well. We brought in 64 new members this year. We have over 300 right now, 331 in fact, and we might get as many as 340 or 350.

And you have another five years to reach your goal?

I think we're going to reach our goal in about two or two and a half years. I think if we accelerate the pace we can bring in the desired members.

How do you bring in these members, what is the pitch?

I think the pitch is very simple: the goal of this organization is to promote Hellenism and Orthodoxy. We support the work of the Church but would also like to do a lot of work in promoting Hellenism. Surprisingly the 64 new members are between the ages of 40 and 55. These are the ones we want. We want to capture the young people who

are willing to extend themselves whether they're professionals, workers, executives, we don't care what they are as long as they want to promote the Hellenism and Orthodoxy in America before we lose it.

How do you appeal to people with busy careers?

The way we do it is we structure the scale so that someone who is 25-30 can come in with dues of \$2,500-\$3,000 a year. Once they hit 30 to 35 it's \$3,500. Once they reach 35-40 it's \$4,000. And it comes up to the age of 55 when it's \$10,000 a year. So by the time they've reached 50 they've already paid their dues. So we restructured it to bring in the youth. What we've done in the cities like Boston is we had a reception and brought in 40 people who are not members and 10 of them became members. We can do that in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, New Jersey, Long Island, New York and I think we can sign up another 70-80 people.

How do you find potential members?

A lot of it is word of mouth. A lot of it is knowing one person who says I know three other Greeks, and we say, give us their address, give us their telephone number so we can talk to them. A person in Boston might say, well, I have a friend in New York, I have a friend in Cleveland, I have a friend in Kansas City. We usually go there and have a reception or party and sit there and discuss the membership and bring in the chairman and bring in Paulette and the chairman of development for that area and explain that over 25 years we've given out over \$25 to \$30 million to various programs and we'd like to continue this and if we can get to a high of 1,000 members we can start giving out \$5 million. And we want to create other programs beyond what we're doing, to promote elementary and secondary education, for example. We have so many schools in the country, day schools and afternoon schools. We want to be able to get grants out to them.

Do you do that now?

Yes. We don't want to lose the language or the culture. Because what's happening today is that 80 percent of new marriages among Greeks are mixed marriages. If we want people to adopt Greek Orthodoxy we need to educate them. We want to do that job. We have a day school here in Lowell, it's the oldest in the country, and I can tell you of the 150 students, possibly three quarters come from mixed marriages and the other 15 to 20 percent are non-Greek. The non-Greeks like the way the schools is run and surprisingly you might have the Polish kids speaking Greek. You may have a Cambodian kid speaking Greek and singing the Greek songs and dancing. It's just incredible what can happen when they're young.

How do you fight what seems to be a prevalent social trend?

I think society is steering in that direction because we're not a country like Greece, which is all Greek, or 90 percent, anyway. In this country we're multicultural and multiethnic and when the kids go to school the classroom might have only one Greek. When I went to school we had twenty Greeks in the classroom, but we grew up in a Greek area. Today we're living in the suburbs and the kids are going to suburban schools and you may have thirty Greek kids, but they're all spread out. In the old days if you lived in a Greek area you might have had a conglomeration of 20-25 percent Greeks in the school system. We don't have it today. So I think we need to spend the money in the right place rather than send it out and hope it's going to happen. We're going to lose our language if we don't do that.

You think language is key and has to be preserved?

I think communication is key. The grammar and the spelling are difficult, but if kids can communicate and learn something about the Greek language, that's good. I don't think they can become as fluent as we were, because for example I had my mother, my grandmother, who came from Greece and spoke Greek to us. If the parents are not speaking Greek in the home and the kids are not going to Greek school the language is lost.

The traditional view is visiting Greece will motivate kids to learn the language and culture. Is the Leadership involved in some way to provide these junkets for the kids?

Not yet. But we're thinking about it. I think that's important, but a lot of kids don't have that opportunity. I went to Greece as a student at the end of the '50s, early '60s, and I went to Greece and met my relatives and I sent my kids and they went to the Ionian Village. That's important. And for the priests: we need to send the priests to Greece to learn about the culture and the language. This way they'll know the language and the culture more directly. But

as for the kids, they have to go over there to see the museums, the archeological sites, and see where their parents and grandparents came from.

How do you motivate younger people to be a part of the Church?

I think the most important thing is that you need to have an outreach program. You have to get them; they're not going to come to you. Nobody's going to come to you to buy your product, you have to go out and sell your product. We need to do a better job of cultivating the youth. We know that 30-50 percent are not going to come to church. But we want at least 20 percent of them to want to come by finding out word of mouth about the Church and its activities and saying, We should do that. We had some Leadership programs that had 300 youth attending and I went and spoke and they came from all over the country and they wanted to be involved. But you need to have follow-up and you need to let them get involved more in the community. Leadership 100 is not the answer fully, I think the Church has to work harder to bring the youth in. Priests have to make the phone calls and meet these people and the various organizations need to do more.

How does someone like you find the time to get involved with Leadership and its activities?

I worked with Johnson & Johnson when I started out and we learned a lot about time management. If you can put the time and effort into it you can do it. I try to prioritize. When I travel across the country, I try to call people, whether it's in Oklahoma City or Kansas City, and I go out to dinner with them to promote the organization.



From last year's convention: Ambassador Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki hoists Leadership 100 Award for Excellence "Eagle" awarded to her and husband, Theodore P. Angelopoulos, to immediate left with twin Eagle. George D. Behrakis, left, outgoing Chairman, presented the award with newly-elected Chairman, Stephen G. Yeonas, background to right, and Archbishop Demetrios of America.

Why do you think being involved is important?

First of all, I have four children and nine grandchildren. They're all Greek, they all go to the Greek church, and basically I try to teach them the values, my wife will teach them the values of the Greek church, but you also have to teach them the history of the Greek church and not only that, but about our history and the beginnings of Western civilization, which started with the Greeks. And once you give them a complete history of Greece, from the philosophers to Alexander the Great and on, you will make them proud of where they came from. Some people would kill to have what we have, to be Greek. I think we have a birthright that we sometimes forget about: it's the best-kept secret in town. We have to show these kids where we came from.

You're a successful person; does that give you a special influence with young career people?

I spoke to my high school graduation and I said, Listen, fellas, I grew up six, seven blocks from here. My parents came from Greece, couldn't speak English, but they forced their children to learn English, knowing this was the language of this land of opportunity. And you have an opportunity here to be responsible if you want to be. I came from immigrant parents and we worked hard, if you don't want to work hard, good luck to you. As Greeks, we're very proud people and we should be even more proud and spread the word.

By Katherine Giokas

Chef Ninamarie, a culinary goddess, is a vivacious new face of the Hellenic community. Ninamarie Bojekian, a Greek-Armenian American, has been inspired by her strong heritage to follow her love for cooking. Infusing the distinct flavors of the Mediterranean with a unique style and flare, there is no denying why Chef Ninamarie was chosen for this year's "People to Watch in 2009" by a premier New Jersey publication, (201) Magazine.

Already predisposed to be hospitable and knowing her way around the kitchen (like most Greeks!), Ninamarie realized her talents soon after throwing her own lavish dinner parties and wakening the palates of many. The inspired chef knew she could take her passion and show many what it really means to be absolutely fabulous!

Ninamarie's journey towards her dream of starting her own catering company began after gaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology and receiving a Grand Diploma from the French Culinary Institute in New York City, for Classic Culinary Arts. She then had the privilege of working under several notable chefs in New York City, including those of the very well-respected Aquavit.

After putting in her time in someone else's kitchen, she knew it was time to have her own! It was then that she decided to launch Ooh La La Catering Co., a full-service boutique catering and events company. Today, you can find Ninamarie, hard at work tailoring menus for her diverse weekly clientele or planning exquisite events that clearly reflects her zest, dedication and attention to detail.

The enthusiastic chef describes her style of cooking as a "Mediterranean, French and fruity fusion." Ninamarie explains: "the most important thing for me is that the host is gleaming with pride and that their guests are loving every bite of something fresh and fun."

Haute Hellenic Cuisine;
So Greek, So Chic

Close your eyes. Imagine indulging in a mouth-watering combination of shrimp ceviche over pickled apple. Get lost in a fig-stuffed gnocchi. Then end with chilled basil-infused poached fruit, topped with sweetened crème fraîche while sipping on a tart-rosemary gin martini. These are the flavors of Chef Ninamarie Bojekian.

Not ever forgetting where her knack for the flavors of food and the joy of entertaining began, Ninamarie has her strong heritage, community and namesake, founder of Nina Records, to thank for her inspiration. Ninamarie continues the Greek tradition of hospitality and mixes it up with her congeniality!

For more information on Ooh La La's catering and private chef services, visit www.OohLaLaCateringCo.com.

Did you know...

Did you know that the cancer-fighting pomegranate is one of the oldest fruits on record and has been considered a symbol of immortality, fertility and abundance?



bread & honey

By Maria Athanasopoulos

A COLUMN DEVOTED TO MAKING GREEK FOOD EASY

As I'm sure you've heard before, "the way to your lover's heart is through the stomach". Lucky for you I have a very romantic, very Greek and very easy recipe for you to make on Valentine's Day this year. No need to spend an obscene amount of money to go to an ultra expensive restaurant in order to have an intimate and impressive meal with your valentine. A nice quiet dinner chez vous by candle light is much more romantic and thoughtful than simply going to a restaurant that is destined to be overcrowded and loud especially since Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday this year.

This gourmet meal will surely make an impression and make it seem as though you slaved over your stove for hours. Also, I ensured to feature a meal that was rich in aphrodisiacs such as saffron and walnuts. Garlic is also said to fire the flames of passion, of course you will need a strong mint to ensure that flame continues to burn throughout the night.

This recipe serves four, however you can halve it if you don't want leftovers.

Ingredients:

1 pound lamb filet, cut into small pieces
1 chopped onion
1/5 tsp ground red pepper
1/2 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp pepper
1/4 tsp salt
1/4 tsp saffron threads, crushed
2 garlic cloves, minced
Extra virgin olive oil
12 oz uncooked basmati rice
3 cups fat free chicken broth
1/3 cup feta cheese, crumbled
3 tbsp dried cranberries or dried cherries
8 to 10 dried figs
2 tbsp chopped mint
1/3 cup chopped walnuts
Half a large pomegranate

Greek Lamb Pilaf with Saffron Rice, Feta, Figs & Pomegranate

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 40 minutes

Serves 4



Preparation:

1. In a large frying pan, heat 2 tbsps of olive oil and garlic. Add the lamb pieces and saute until they lightly brown if you like your lamb rare to medium or let them cook a bit more if you prefer them a bit more well done. However be careful to not overcook, since the lamb may get very tough.

2. Take the lamb out of the pan and place into a dish. Next add the onion in the same pan and saute until it get a nice golden brown color. Stir in the saffron, walnuts and the rest of your spices. Add a tablespoon more olive oil if the mixture is dry and let cook for about a minute.

3. Slowly stir in the basmati rice, then transfer the rice mixture into a deep medium sized pot. Add the stock, dried fruit and mint. Bring to the boil then immediately turn down to a simmer and cover. Cook for 15-20 minutes or until the liquid has been absorbed. Once the liquid is absorbed, check to see if your rice is fully cooked, if not then add a little more water, cover and let cook for another 5 minutes or until the liquid is fully absorbed.

4. Stir in the herbs and lamb pieces, then transfer onto your dinner plates. Generously sprinkle the crumbled feta cheese and pomegranate seeds over the rice and lamb mixture and add a dollop of plain Greek yogurt such as Total or Chobani. Lastly pair this scrumptious meal with toasted bread and your favorite bottle of red wine, such as an Australian shiraz which is fantastic with lamb.

And voila! A gourmet and romantic meal to enjoy in the comfort of your home. Kali Orexi & Happy Valentine's Day!



MARIA'S SLATE

Valentine's Day is a time full of love, heart shaped boxes filled with decadent chocolates, red roses and of course, the uber romantic candle lit dinner. It is the one day of the year when you want to feel loved and special. If you're single or trying to get over a heart break, this can be a severely nauseating and horrendous holiday. One that might be important enough to have you call into work sick in order to avoid hearing your co-workers gush about their romantic plans for the evening, or even worse, having everyone ask you why you don't have plans. However, do not call out sick just yet since staying home may not spare you this anguish. Family members can be the worst of offenders of guilt and trying to survive them can be the hardest part of it all.

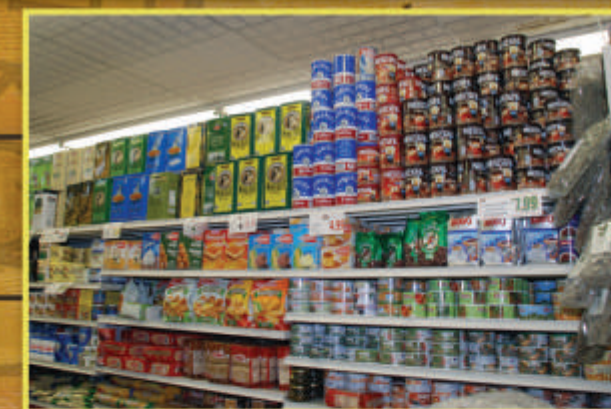
I know this is clearly a cliché but I have to say it, you are not alone! The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that more than 80 million people will spend this holiday as a single. Besides, everyone knows that this day of "love" has just turned into another overrated retail holiday where companies persuade you to buy over priced bulks of pink and red sugary treats. So what, someone won't be sending you flowers or buying you chocolates this year. You can buy your own damn chocolates and probably pick out a better kind than the type most men buy from Duane Reade.

Instead of sulking at home and feeling sorry for yourself, grab your single friends and go out and make this about you and not about being depressed for not having a valentine. Create a new tradition amongst yourselves and go for dinner and a movie or go out dancing. Or better yet, make this about someone less fortunate and stick with the theme of love and caring by giving back to your community. You think you're lonely? Try visiting a nursing home or a hospital and you will immediately reevaluate this situation. You will be surprised at the great amount joy you experience simply by visiting the elderly or sick. If you do decide to make a visit, don't forget to bring some treats such as chocolates or cupcakes!

Maria (Maria.Athanasopoulos@gmail.com)



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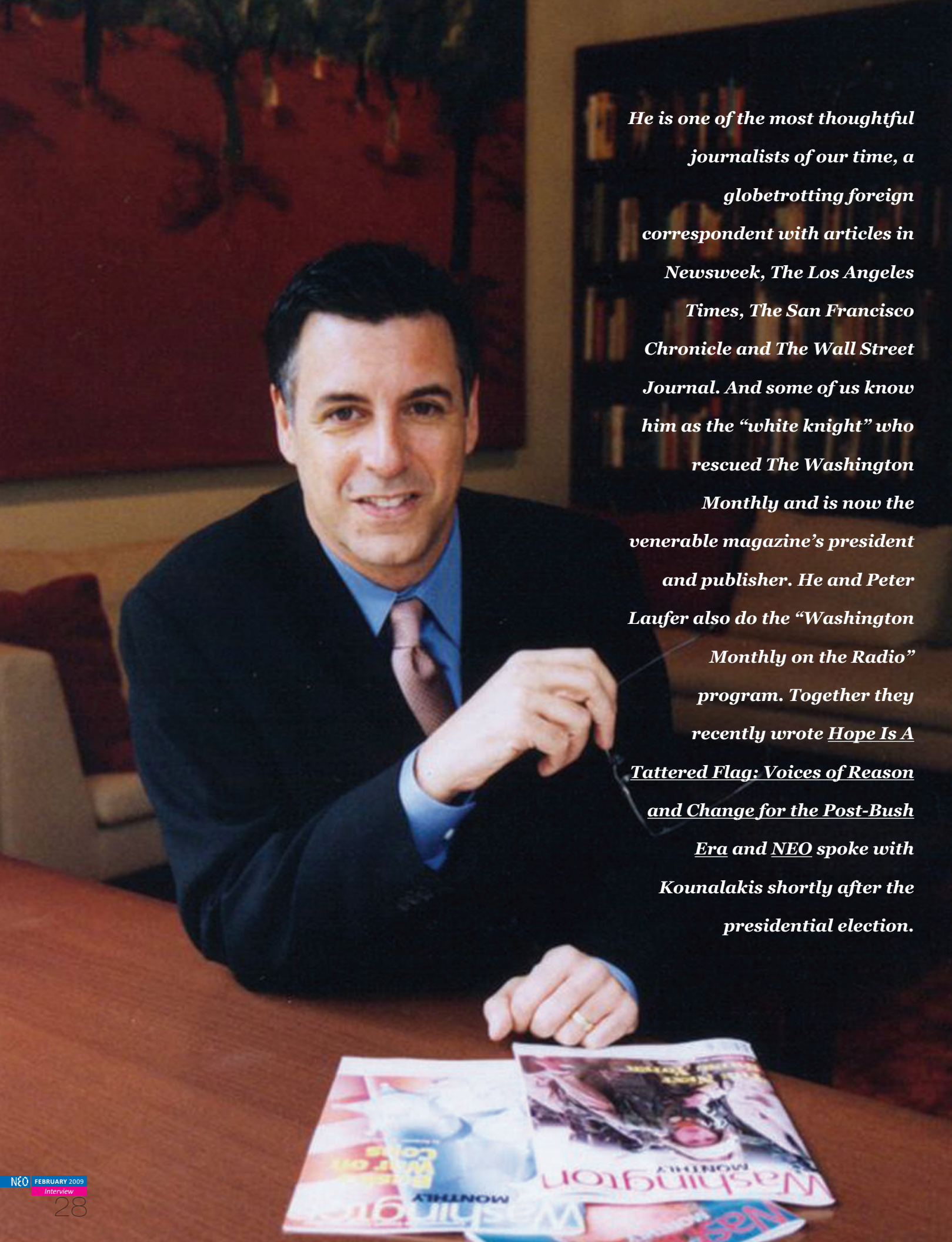
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He is one of the most thoughtful journalists of our time, a globetrotting foreign correspondent with articles in Newsweek, The Los Angeles Times, The San Francisco Chronicle and The Wall Street Journal. And some of us know him as the “white knight” who rescued The Washington Monthly and is now the venerable magazine’s president and publisher. He and Peter Laufer also do the “Washington Monthly on the Radio” program. Together they recently wrote Hope Is A Tattered Flag: Voices of Reason and Change for the Post-Bush Era and NEO spoke with Kounalakis shortly after the presidential election.

Banking on the Strength of a Tattered Flag

by Kaymaria Daskarolis

“There’s never been anything like this moment. What this represents has never occurred in the past.”

NEO: What inspired you and Peter Laufer to write Hope Is a Tattered Flag? You already had the conversations in your radio program, “Washington Monthly on the Radio” – why collect and publish them in a book?

KOUNALAKIS: What we had found in the course of our doing the radio program is that there was an incredible sense of optimism and hope around the country, even during the darkest days of the Bush administration. We saw that despite the failures and the travesties of some of the policies pursued by the Bush administration, the majority of Americans, and certainly a great number of those with whom we spoke on the radio program, were still trying to move on and figure out solutions that were inclusive and broad-ranging and global. You get one audience from your radio program – a fairly large audience – but we thought we could reach a different audience and a broader audience by taking some of those interviews and editing them into a concise and interesting read for a broader public.

we try to get to things about them or their perspectives that are not typical. Many of us know who Joe Klein is – a reporter who is also a successful novelist and an analyst of the political scene – but he gets personal within the pages because we push him in very gentle ways and we get him to a point where he’s actually talking about personal experience. That changes the way that we then perceive him and how he comes to the type of analysis that he does. And that’s true for almost everyone we talk to. I think Pat Buchanan is an exception because there’s no way you can get into that soul, but for most other people who are in the book it seems like you can get in a little bit further and a little deeper than the sort of sound bite world that we’re used to with those who make the headlines and who are newsmakers. We also bring into the book a number of people to whom you don’t have access on a daily basis and whom maybe you don’t come across. They include the Black Elk from West Virginia, a guy who is trying to legalize ferrets as pets in California, and a number of idiosyncratic and iconoclastic individuals.

“I don’t think we’ve ever in our history as a nation been able to as symbolically break with an historical injustice as we have now.”

NEO: What did you think the value would be of a broader or different audience having access to these conversations, and what do you believe is the value in general of having these conversations made available to the public, whether on the radio or in a book?

KOUNALAKIS: I think there is value in sharing the types of insights and personalities that make up our country, and to share those at a time when the voices that seem to be coming across are very limited and not as broad-based as some of the ones we have. Within the pages of our book, we have lots of newsmakers and people with whom we are familiar, but even with those people

NEO: I had that experience while reading some of the conversations in your book. I felt like I was getting an opportunity to know these people who are forming and shaping pop culture and governmental policy – some of the greatest minds we know to exist on the planet today sharing more personal insights. It was very interesting to read.

KOUNALAKIS: That was our goal: to humanize these individuals whom we know, but also to provide us with an insight into their thinking, their hopes – and for those who had a means of presenting the picture of what America should look like, their voices of reason.

“The United States has propelled itself into a new world and is now in the process of reinventing itself as a result of its democratic behavior.”



NEO: And so joining your voice to their voices of reason, what do you think we – both as Americans and as citizens of the world – should be demanding of ourselves right now? What should we be holding ourselves accountable to both privately – in our homes, with our families – and publicly, in terms of our civic responsibilities?

KOUNALAKIS: First of all, I now have the privilege of having this interview with you well after the book was published, because we went to press prior to our election in November – a few months prior to that election is when the book came out. We’ve fulfilled one part of our responsibility as citizens by showing up to the polling booth in large numbers. A big part of our civic responsibility is something as simple as going out and voting. I think with the response to this election cycle in the voting booth, all of us have taken a much larger responsibility for those institutions and individuals who represent us. So it starts at a very basic level, but an important one nonetheless.

Regardless of how we would have voted – we have in hindsight the ability to say that it was for Barack Obama – but in either case we would have elected a course of change from our last eight years. Now, while we talk about civic engagement, responsibility, and participation in our democratic United States of America, there’s also something uniquely Greek or Greek American to this in that I think we – and I’m including you and those who read NEO Magazine in this – see ourselves to a greater or lesser degree as stewards of that democratic tradition. It’s partly an accident of birth and geography, and a continuation of cultural tradition, but whatever those reasons are we are burdened with the honor of upholding a democratic tradition and promoting it culturally, socially, and politically. And so, I think we have a higher responsibility towards activism within the political realm. I think we have a higher burden towards leading our communities in the business world and in other areas, and doing it in a visible way that actually sets an example,

to the degree that it’s possible. I think you can point to any realm of our academic or social or cultural life and see that we oftentimes, as a community, despite our small numbers in this country, are overrepresented. So I would just say that I hope to pass that on – and I do both through the radio program and in a minor way through the book – to our larger community, to the community that surrounds us, and of which we are actively a part.

NEO: Do you see any values that are upheld and really important to the Greek American community that you think would make a huge difference if they were more culturally and authoritatively embraced today?

KOUNALAKIS: I think what you’ve seen during Obama’s campaign is that there is an embracing of those very deep basic values that we uphold and represent. He talked during the entire campaign in a collective voice, he always spoke about us, he seldom used the personal pronoun I. That is very much an ancient and democratic value – the power of a collective wisdom versus the individual tyrant, whom we’ve experienced recently – who thought that he could with a very small cabal make decisions, without taking into account the majority of the nation. It doesn’t mean that you’re bound to decisions or the collective tyranny of the majority – that’s why we elect leaders, to be wise and to make decisions on our behalf, but to be disregarding of those voices and of that majority in the way this Bush administration has been is unprecedented in my lifetime. I am very optimistic in what I’ve seen so far in terms of our values being represented, whether they be our values of faith or our values of governance, and I think that’s why Obama won the majority of votes, he really was able to strike that chord. Now we need to see, under the pressures of governing a very complex system, whether those can be applied and implemented.

NEO: This is a very important and historic time for us.

KOUNALAKIS: There’s never been anything like this moment. What this represents has never occurred in the past.

NEO: Some people have been drawing comparisons between what’s happening today in our country and what was happening when FDR was in office. Do you feel those parallels can be drawn?

KOUNALAKIS: When we talk about FDR, often the question is focused on economics and whether or not we are looking towards a period of greater involvement of government within our economic life. Even during the Bush administration, we’ve seen this occur. I don’t think it’s a question of whether or not our new president takes us in those new, more interventionist directions. Our current administration has taken us there. And that’s been in response, by the way, to a crisis of their making, for the most part – or at least it’s been exacerbated during the Bush administration. So there’s a certain level of reactivity that you have to deal with on the economic front. I think really the question is, has there been such a break with the past in any other previous administration? And I can honestly say that I don’t think we’ve ever in our history as a nation been able to as symbolically break with an historical injustice as we have now. It is equivalent to and as dramatic as the greatest things that have happened collectively in this nation. I think it’s far beyond any previous election, and the United States has propelled itself into a new world and is now in the process of reinventing itself as a result of its democratic behavior. Of course because of that, collectively our expectations are very high – the world’s expectations are very high – and that will probably be one of the greater challenges, because any administration is limited in the amount of work that it can do. But symbolically it is an unprecedented change.

NEO: And what are your hopes and expectations for the Obama-Biden administration?

KOUNALAKIS: Well, they are charged with two things. One is cleaning up the mess and the messes of the last eight years. The question of the war and peace, of course, in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the broader spread of extremist violence. Secondly is the economy. In a time when we are beyond any immediate

solution being available to us, they have now got to reinvent government intervention, regulation, and our capitalist system, starting with the fundamentals of banking and moving into manufacturing. These challenges are of course beyond any individual and are going to prove very challenging to any administration. Those are just the things they have to fix. They don’t include the changes they want to make to make it a more equitable society where we can move away from these large disparities of wealth and poverty, where we can guarantee health care for our people. The challenges are massive. Barack Obama said from the very beginning, recognize the challenges and recognize that I am only a human being, I am fallible, and I will make mistakes; recognize within yourselves that in order for us to achieve anything, to be successful in solving any of these problems, I must request both sacrifice and service from you as a people, from us. So the question is, are we up to it? The way that we framed our book and the way we frame our radio program is to say that yes, we’re up to it, we just have to be asked. And we need leaders who have that level of vision and articulation to be able to inspire us to service, to make sacrifices.

NEO: What do you think sacrifice and service look like for the average American?

KOUNALAKIS: What sacrifice does not look like is plopping down your credit card and becoming a consumer rather than a citizen. What it looks like for any individual is different, but I think in general one of the sacrifices is a sacrifice of material wealth to the point where we have to agree to be able to levy on ourselves the ability to pay for services that we deem are necessary. We have to pay for education, we have to pay for health care. Obama said he’s going to levy higher taxes on those who make more than a quarter of a million dollars per year, so we’ll have a more equitable tax system where the wealthier pay a larger percentage of their income. And service again is very individualized. For some people it means going into the military and serving in our armed forces, protecting and defending democracy – not promoting democracy at the gun of a point, but certainly defending it both here and abroad. For others it’s

community service and for others it’s teaching kids to read or helping older people. It is a highly individualized action, but one that can be facilitated by our local, state, and federal institutions, and certainly catalyzed by a leader who deems it important and has walked the walk. George Bush certainly never had the moral authority, when you look back at his history. Not to say that someone who is young and reckless is unable to take on a mature role later in life, but he certainly doesn’t have an inspiring personal story or narrative to point to when he asks of us certain things, or for sacrifice or service. I think you start at a much higher point when you’ve done it yourself.

NEO: In your conversation with the founder of Washington Monthly, Charles Peters, you said that as a journalist starting out you kind of went by the credo, “comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.” Do you still operate by that? Did you seek to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable in your book, *Hope Is a Tattered Flag*?

KOUNALAKIS: It’s interesting you should ask. I’ve been thinking about that lately. I think that one of the other things that has occurred with the election of Obama is that that credo and that attitude is divisive, and I’m not sure that I hold to it any longer. It implies that you’re doing something to a group of people whom you deem as unworthy of something, so I have to say that I really am revising my attitude towards that. Certainly comforting the afflicted is important in journalism, but afflicting the comfortable is not really appropriate. I think challenging the comfortable in ways that are positive is appropriate – challenging them to try to do better, to also participate in sacrifice and service; holding them to the high moral standards that we expect from our civic leaders, those who hold a great deal of wealth and who have power. So I guess I would change it now to challenge the comfortable. And some might say that maybe it’s because I personally am in a very comfortable position these days, but I don’t think so. I think it has more to do with the bi-partisan, inclusive decision that we’ve made in this election that say you need everyone to come up with a collective wisdom and solution to our problems.



EXARAS JOINS MAESTRO KITSOPOULOS AND THE QUEENS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FOR A SPECIAL CONCERT

By Dina Pinos



On Saturday, February 21, 2009, the Queens Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Constantine Kitsopoulos will perform a concert entitled New Sounds at the Queensborough Performing Arts Center. Commemorating Leonard Bernstein on what would have been his 90th birthday this season, the Orchestra will present works by composers who influenced him greatly; Prelude & Fugue for Strings, Op. 29 by Benjamin Britten and Suite from "Pulcinella" by Igor Stravinsky. The Orchestra will also debut a world premiere work by Greek guitarist and composer Spiros Exaras featuring the Spiros Exaras World-Jazz Ensemble, comprising some of New York's greatest musicians, Henry Hey, Mike Pope, Joel Rosenblatt, Earthman and Lefteris Bournias. Spiros Exaras blends Greek instruments and rhythms, jazz and classical styles of music with his jazz fusion ensemble and the Orchestra to create an all new musical sound. NEO Magazine interviewed Spiros as he prepares for his ground breaking debut.

As a musician, what is the significance of this event?

This project is much like a life-time achievement. It is an accumulation that is truthfully, even beyond my dreams. As a musician trying to broaden my range, I am always thinking of various angles to perform my music. But, I had never dreamed of something like this!!! I have been composing and arranging for an acclaimed symphony orchestra. This is a very complicated task. It is not easy and not an everyday thing. This project requires a combination of skills, ideas, numerous sleepless nights - "blood, sweat and tears!!!" in order to all get it down on paper. I feel that my music will obtain some kind of imposingness. In other words, people are going to pay attention to something different.

How have you prepared, been inspired, organized your musical skills for this event and how have you worked together with the other musicians involved to compliment your talents?

Organizing one's skills is always a challenging task. For this project I really had to search deep within myself! I had to pull out all of my arranging chops and combine them with any new ideas that recently sparked in my brain! This project is one where talents have combined to work together - the musicians of my World-Jazz Ensemble play a remarkable role in it. They are all world-class musicians with abilities to perform and improvise in many different styles of music. This concert and its music requires a large diversity. It is important for me to acknowledge the significance of the brilliant talent of the conductor, the Musical Director of the Queens Symphony Orchestra Mr. Constantine Kitsopoulos. He is a very talented musician who has worked in numerous projects that have crossed over classical music, from Broadway shows to contemporary composers and several symphony orchestras throughout the world. His assistance in organizing the musical arrangement of this concert is tremendous.

Have you performed other concerts such as this one in the past? Compare them for us.

In my career I have performed numerous times with classical orchestras or other smaller chamber ensembles. I have played music from classical composers as well as contemporary ones. I have participated in several big bands, but I have never performed MY MUSIC with a symphony orchestra before. I cannot emphasize the importance of how significant this concert is as an accumulation of my entire career's work.

Spiros, you are a musician with a great range. How do you do it??? This is quite a talent for a musician. Some musicians specialize in classical ...in doing jazz ...rock'n roll ...You seem to be able to do it all. How do you accomplish this? What is in your background that gives you an edge for this feat?

Thank you for your observation. Actually, this really all depends on how you see some things. Many classical musicians are very arrogant. They believe that classical music is the most difficult and intellectual music. While on the other hand, many jazz players think that jazz is the most creative and free style of music. I listen to many Greek folk players (laikous organopaiktes). They claim that their music is "the jazz of Greece." In a way, it is embarrassing in making such a claim. In my opinion they are all missing the point. If you take and envision music without putting it in a box, then you will realize that all kinds of music has something to offer which is different and fulfills certain moments or feelings. When I was studying classical guitar and composition, I was also playing hard rock in a band. In addition, my childhood background is very rich. I was raised in Greece, a country with a wealth of culture and a very interesting traditional music heritage. It is like a bouillabaise of sorts. Mixing all these elements together and combining them with my personality is what has encouraged me to perform all these different styles. Educating myself about them, I respect all of them for what they are.

What has been the feedback for concerts such as this one? How have you used this feedback and other feedback, in general to improve your range, style, talent?

Music is like cooking. Music is like a recipe. You are "cooking" a project, selecting and combining all the different ingredients before

you put them on the fire ...But you don't know how is going to sound until you "taste" it! That's when you get the feedback!! For a musician, it is very important to "study" people's comments and reactions of your performance. This is where you will grow, improve your style or correct certain things you did incorrectly in the past. I always try to record my performances. This is how I can hear my weak spots, either in ideas or techniques. It helps me immensely in avoiding going in the same direction but to move on to my next one. And on the other hand if I tune into something nice I did, something that sounds pleasant, unique, I can take that idea to another level and create something else. For me, self-criticism is very important. Creativity is an all around process -- the good with the bad, -- appraise with criticism. This is where one grows and attains other plateaus!!!!!!!!!!!!

Please discuss in overall terms, what is life for a musician today? You are competing with young talent ...or NO TALENT that is recorded in studios with other musicians, if I can even call them that, singing, writing, other producers calling the shots. Give us an overall view of what is life like for you and your colleagues today. What is the competition like, how do you see the future?

Thank you for addressing this question. I think it is really overlooked in industry. I cannot tell you how terrible it is for us, musicians, in today's world to compete with an UNTALENTED musician. We feel that all our efforts go to waste. I was never afraid of any talented person. I actually admire them. But today, a large slice of the entertainment business has a lot to do with either the technological achievements or what is considered as fashion and fashionable involvement or even both.

We have on the one hand, all the technology that helps any untalented or uneducated musician or singer to produce a record and to accommodate his nonmusical skills. For example, your vocal technique is extinct but protocols come and do the correction on any note that you sang out of key. This technology appeared in the early 1990s. In other example, a musician can build up his solo, little by little and be able to take parts, or steal them rather, from another spot of the same piece due to his luck of technique or creativity. These aids are only aids. Making what you call music this way is a kind of rip-



QSO Maestro
Constantine Kitsopoulos

off, a short cut of unfairness. Using these modern "assistants," or techniques, we are missing the feeling and sophistication of creation. That is why the old fashioned school of learning is so important.

A musician or a listener with a sophisticated ear goes to a concert and really gets disappointed from listening to a favorite artist because you soon realize what a terrible musician he or she really is ...They have lost the entire scope of musicianship. Now, don't get me wrong. I like technology, if it is used as part of a performance or a composition from a knowledgeable producer. This is also a process of creativity. But, when it is used to cover mistakes or play the role of a composer, then this is another story!

The subject of fashion in the music industry is another can of worms. Priorities have changed in a way. Once upon a time, a song writer was striving to come up with a melodic line or sophisticated lyrics. Today, the influence and power of fashion in our world has guided artists in other directions. Believe it or not, many performers spend hours and hours a day in front of a mirror trying out several designers or hair styles. I suppose this has to do a lot with our contemporary lifestyle. We are all living in a very flashy, materialistic and less spiritual world.

Honestly, I try very hard to refuse to become victim of the image makers! I still believe that true art, and especially music, is the reflection of the world. I don't know what the future will be. I am always optimistic as a person, but I am sure in one thing: As more and more technology continues to enter our life, the less sensitive and spiritual we will become.



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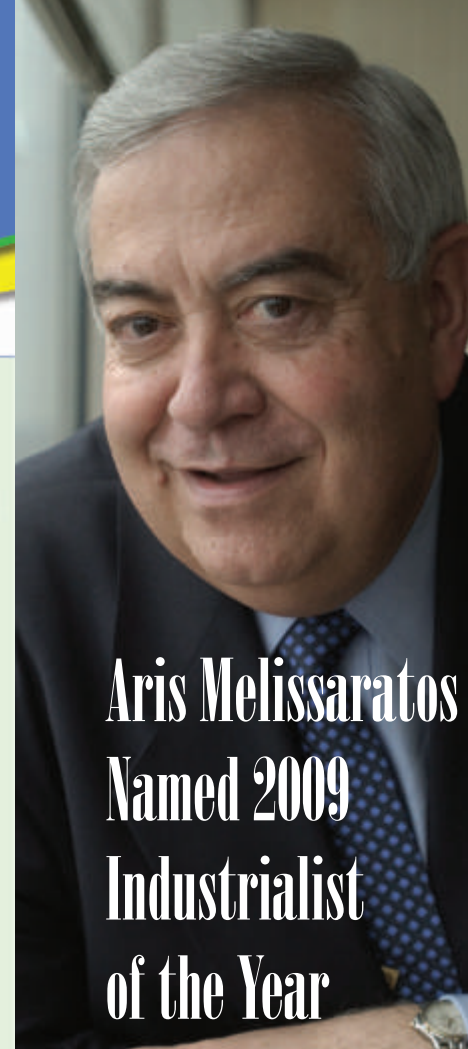
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Aris Melissaratos Named 2009 Industrialist of the Year

The Baltimore Museum of Industry has named Aris Melissaratos, Senior Advisor to the President for Enterprise Development at Johns Hopkins University, the 2009 William Donald Schaefer Industrialist of the Year. The annual luncheon will be held on Thursday, June 11, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Melissaratos was selected because of his extraordinary commitment to Baltimore businesses and his efforts in promoting technology throughout the region. n accepting the honor, Melissaratos said, “I have lived in Baltimore since my arrival from Greece at age 13. Since then, I have had increased opportunities to work in all aspects of Baltimore’s and Maryland’s industries. Over that time, I became conversant with the technology and business details of all Maryland manufacturing companies, from large to small. I am truly honored to be considered worthy of this prestigious William Donald Schaefer Industrialist of the Year Award, which is most appreciated at this stage of my post industrial career.”

Melissaratos, a 1966 Johns Hopkins graduate, served from 2003 to 2007 as Secretary of Business and Economic Development for the State of Maryland, driving the state’s unemployment figures down to an impressive 3.6% and positioning Maryland for leadership in the emerging “knowledge economy”. He worked for Westinghouse Electric Corporation for 32 years. When he retired he was the corporation’s Chief Technology Officer and Vice President for Science and Technology, responsible for running Westinghouse’s research and development functions. Before that he served as the Chief Operations Officer for the company’s Defense Electronics Group, where he was responsible for managing 16,000 employees (9,000 engineers) and

\$3.2 billion dollars in sales. On leaving Westinghouse he became Vice President of Thermo Electron Corporation and CEO of its Coleman Research Corporation and Thermo Information Solutions subsidiaries. He formed Armel Scientifics, LLC which invested in over 30 start-up companies in Life Sciences and Advanced Technology.

Among many honors, Melissaratos was named 2008 Baltimore’s Extraordinary Technology Advocate (BETA). He is the founding co-chair of the Greater Baltimore Technology Council and is a former vice president of the Maryland Chamber of Commerce.

Founded in 1977 as a project of the Mayor’s Office, the Baltimore Museum of Industry is a private, nonprofit organization established to celebrate the past, present and future innovations of Maryland industry and its people through dynamic educational experiences. The Museum is a leader in innovative education of Maryland industry and a major attraction for Baltimore, MD and the Mid-Atlantic region.

The William Donald Schaefer Industrialist of the Year Award was introduced in 2004 to recognize and celebrate Maryland’s visionary business leaders as distinguished by their innovative approaches to industry, and dedication to the well-being of their communities. The award is named for William Donald Schaefer, a founder of the Baltimore Museum of Industry and former Mayor of Baltimore who in 1977 began a project to recognize and preserve the innovations of this region’s industrial heritage.

To purchase tickets or find more information on the Industrialist of the Year luncheon, visit www.thebmi.org, or call 410-727-4808 ext. 129.

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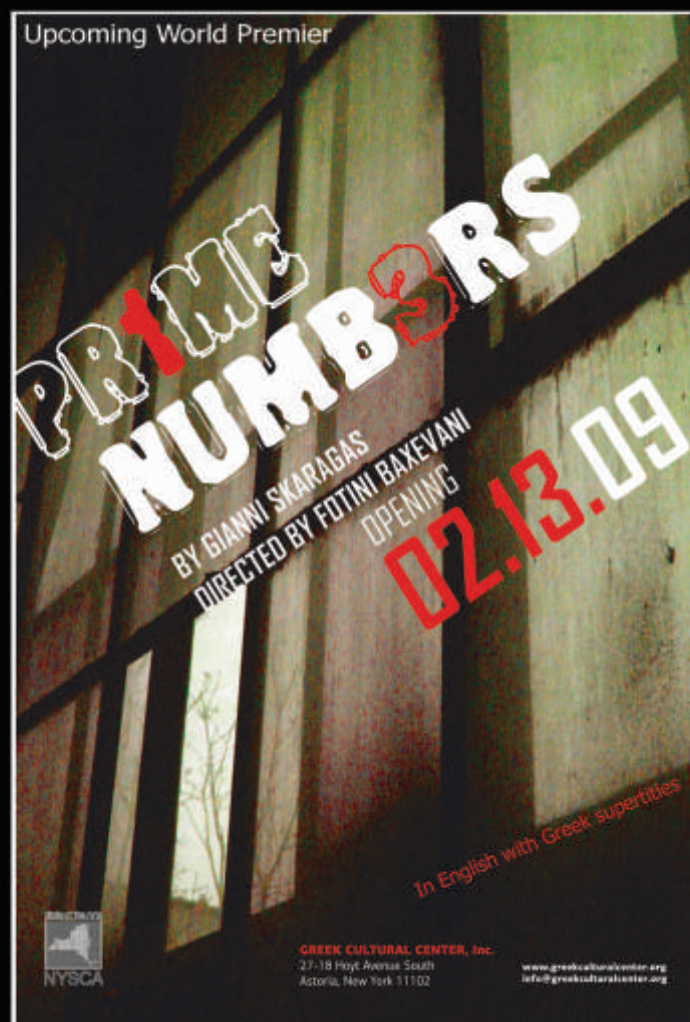
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Alkis Sarantinos and Theodora Loukas

Anthoula Kasimatides, Manos Pantelidis
and Christiana Papadakis

New Play by the “Ichneftes” Theater Company

The “Ichneftes” Theater Company in collaboration with the Archdiocesan Hellenic Cultural Center is presenting the hilarious comedy “3Penny Youth,” written by the masters Asimakis Yalamas and Kostas Pretenteris. Directed by Martha Tompoulidou, this play is one of the best Modern Greek comedies. Funny dialogue, hysterical transformations, unexpected situations and innocent truth are some of the brilliant and unique components that have made the play a huge success as much on stage as on film during the Golden Era of the Greek Cinema.

A poor, newly wed couple, Irene and George, are struggling to build their own house with a loan. George’s salary is not enough but he’s so jealous and “traditional” in some respect that he does not let his wife work and help him financially. Under totally unforeseen circumstances, Irene finds herself hired as a secretary to the owner of the business her husband works for, as she is presumed single; the flirtatious young boss has a special preference to single women. From that point on Irene stands in the middle of a “Don Juan” boss, an “Othello” husband and a contractor that threatens to take their house from them if they do not pay their installments on time. A series of hilarious misunderstandings and unexpected developments take place until everything clears and all characters get their own lesson in life. The production of “3Penny Youth” is a result of a strong, collaborative ensemble of ten professional actors. The music is a vital part of the show and is composed by the late virtuoso bouzouki player and composer Giorgos Zampetas. There will be a surprising combination of live performances and projected black and white footage with music.

The play’s Director Martha Tompoulidou was born in Thessaloniki where she graduated from the Aristotle University with a degree in Greek Literature. She also graduated from the Athens School of Drama of G. Theodosiades. As an actress – “distinguished at every

appearance for her supremely refined technique, unique ability to immerse in characters and potential for highest pitch sensibility” - she worked with the National Theatre of Greece in Ancient Drama Productions (world tour), the Free Theater in Modern Repertoire, in Concerts with the baritone Anastassis Christoyannis and in Musicals. Having won a Fulbright scholarship, Martha came to NY where she took acting, dancing and singing classes in HB Studio and the Broadway Dance Center. Here she has collaborated with the Greek Cultural Center, Theatron Inc., Resonance Ensemble Theatre and the Federation of Hellenic Societies of NY. She also worked as a Radio Producer at The Hellas FM Station (“I have something to tell you”) and as a contributing writer for the Greek News newspaper.

Actors Antonis Armeftis, Eva Galani, John Kallianiotis, Anthoula Katsimatides, Theodora Loukas, Diodoros Pagoudis, Manos Pantelidis, Christiana Papadaki, Alkis Sarantinos, Stephanos Stephanou are taking part in the play, scheduled to start February 13 and last until March 22. Performances will take place at the Archdiocesan Hellenic Cultural Center (27-09 Crescent Street, Astoria, NY) Fridays and Saturdays 8:00 p.m. and Sundays both at 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. For reservations call: (718)626-5111. The Hellenic Cultural Center was established in 1986 with the aim of cultivating the beautiful customs and culture of Greece. When it opened its doors for a variety of lectures, performances, exhibits and cultural gatherings, it fulfilled a dream of the late Archbishop Iakovos and its founders. The Theater has over 200 comfortable tilt back chairs and a professional stage. After each event, people gather in the Hall to talk and enjoy the paintings, drawings, sculptures and other works of art exhibited on its walls. The Hall is also used for meetings and social events.

PERISCOPE



A few days ago the world bowed with respect and sorrow, as real people of every color, faith or nationality commemorated those who perished during the Holocaust--the darkest, perhaps, chapter in human history. For us, Hellenes, the pain resonates even more because genocide against our people took place at the beginning of the 20th century in Turkey. with the same policies of eradicating anything Hellenic in that country and continuing unabated to this day. The pogrom of September 6-7, 1955 in Constantinople/Istanbul, another Kristallnacht just a few years after the original, caused destruction of unprecedented proportions to a community already severely battered by history. Tens of thousands of people abandoned the city, reducing the number of Greeks from 120,000 in 1950 to about 3,000 today. In the See of the Orthodox Catholic Faith, Roman Catholics outnumber the Orthodox 10 to 1! The "final solution" in this plan is the gradual depopulation of the Greek community, which in turn will lead to closing the Ecumenical Patriarchate, one of the world's, and certainly Turkey's, most ancient institution.

In an equal manner Turkey does whatever she can to prevent countries, especially the US, from recognizing the Armenian Genocide, another tragic period in human history, which opened the way for the Assyrian, the Pontian-Greek and ultimately the Jewish Genocide (Holocaust). (Actually the ultimate was the Rwandan Genocide, in the '90's, in front of international TV cameras!) It is historically proven that German operatives were following very closely the extermination process of the Armenians and, of course, offered advice, while gaining ...valuable experience! Hitler himself is quoted as saying, when officers pointed him the possible international repercussions of carrying out the Final Solution, "Who remembers the Armenians?"

It is doubly sad to realize that those who lead the effort in the US not to remember the Armenians are those who rightly claim the tragic legacy of the Holocaust and happen to lead organizations that supposedly are trying not to have crimes like that repeated. It is absolutely disheartening to see how those groups have hijacked the term Holocaust and exploit it for primarily diplomatic gains.

A brilliant piece by Gerald Caplan, (Globe and Mail, January 23, 2009) explores the situation in detail. "Resolutions calling for recognition are regularly pushed by American-Armenians and their many supporters. Jewish groups regularly lead the opposition." Then, "those who argue that denying the Holocaust is psychologically tantamount to a second holocaust, have taken the lead in

“Who remembers the Armenians?”

pressuring presidents and Congress against recognizing the reality of 1915."

Caplan ends with the cynical, but realistic, assumption that "some readers work on the naïve assumption that an event is deemed genocidal based on the facts of the case. Silly you. In the real world, you call it genocide if it bolsters your interests. If it doesn't, it's not. It's actually the same story as with preventing genocide."

President Obama pledged before his election to recognize the Armenian Genocide and it remains to be seen if he will keep his word. President Bush had done a similar pledge, but he reneged on it once elected after facing the Turkish/Jewish lobby.

The new president has brought with him an aura of optimism and willingness to go ahead with breakthrough moves. But he can't do it unless people keep reminding him about this and other issues. American-Armenian groups have already started working in that direction and they mustn't be alone. As a long time friend of the Jewish people – much before it was in vogue – I expect our Jewish compatriots to rise and yes, take the lead. There are already good signs as countless members of the Anti Defamation League made Abraham H. Foxman, its National Director, to realize that the Jewish people's approval to his tactics when it comes to deny genocides for the sake of politics, cannot be taken for granted. That is the spirit and the way to go. Henry David Thoreau said: "He who accepts evil without protesting it is really cooperating with it." Imagine what he would say for those who willingly and knowingly cooperate, especially if it happens to be descendants of people who experienced that evil in its fullest!

New Yorker Yvette Jarvis, an accomplished basketball player, model, singer and the first African-American ever elected in office – in Athens, Greece, that is - came to the US for the Obama inauguration. An elected Member of the Municipal Council of Athens since October 2002, she also serves as an advisor to the Mayor in matters of Immigration. She's also worked extensively on issues concerning minorities. I had a talk with her at a reception on the eve of the Obama sworn-in ceremony, the essence of which you can see on page 12. According to Yvette, as she is widely known in Greece, what she mostly expects from the new president is "to restore belief in the American dream. Living in Europe was very difficult for all Americans, no matter where they lived, for the last eight years." As she travels extensively throughout Europe and the world, she thinks that "people internationally missed the America that is righteous."

On this point I would add, if I may, that despite the multiple-faceted crisis America is going through today, a very fascinating opportunity to offer leadership on a worldwide scale has emerged, in the face of Barack Obama. When almost every leader in every major western country – with the exception or Russia's Putin – seems to be “burned”, Obama enjoys an unprecedented popularity. “I’ve been to five or six countries in the last two months and everywhere Barack was in everybody’s lips and in everybody’s prayers,” says Yvette. Should he be up to this extraordinary opportunity, remains to be seen.

PHOTO: EFA PRESS



Yvette Jarvis could not control her excitement talking about Barack Obama and I couldn't control mine talking to her!

As for Yvette, her American dream is defined in the hope that one day she will be back in the US and following Obama's footsteps she'll work for a non for profit organization that will allow her to visit "public schools and talk to children about learning how to be real citizens." Very inspiring, but my suggestion to her was to stay in Greece and become the ...Greek Obama! Like in the rest of Europe, they are in need of one badly!

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Study in Cyprus ...for free!

By Maria Athanasopoulos

Are you a Greek-American college student of Cypriot descent that is yearning for the opportunity to study abroad in Cyprus but sadly doesn't have the funds to make this a reality? Well put your worries aside because the chances of you making this yearning into reality just got greater thanks to the Cypriot Youth Committee of America (CYCA). CYCA, the official youth division of the Cyprus Federation of America, is giving several lucky students the opportunity to study abroad at the University of Cyprus this summer!

CYCA's mission is to strengthen the ties of their Cypriot heritage through the development of educational, artistic, professional, political and social programs in the United States and abroad. They are also part of the world organization of young overseas Cypriots (NEPOMAK) and meet annually to focus on achieving this mission in the Diaspora. During one of their conferences four years ago, they created the Discover Cyprus Program (NDCP) as part of a global effort to boost the Greek-speaking education abroad and preserve Hellenism amongst young overseas Cypriots.

Last summer's Discover Cyprus Program included participants from the US, the United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa, Greece and Australia. A total of 41 students participated in a three week long intensive language and culture course at the University of Cyprus' School

of Modern Greek. In addition to spending time in the classroom, students also explored the island of Cyprus through a series of excursions to museums, monasteries and the Green Line.

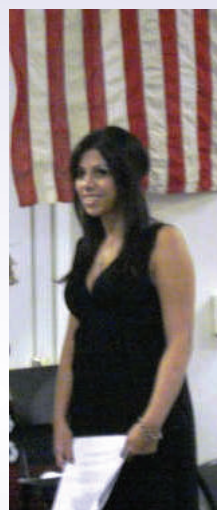
The US has had participants from many states including Maryland, Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Illinois and California. Renoulla Jones, a student from Maryland University attended last year's program and stated "The NDCP experience was definitely the opportunity of a lifetime and I learned so much about Cypriot culture, language and history. I am now considering studying at the University of Cyprus in the near future to enhance my language skills and learn more about Greek Mythology. I would recommend this trip to anyone". Renoulla, along with the other students, lived in the university's dorms which enabled her to experience the many aspects of life in Cyprus.

NDCP is an excellent opportunity to meet other young Cypriots from around the world, explore the island of Cyprus, and enhance Greek language skills. This year's annual program will take place from July 6th through the 23rd and is open to anyone of Cypriot descent between the ages of 18 to 22. If you are interested in applying or acquiring more information, contact Spiro Xenophontos at spiroxen@gmail.com or Debbie Kamilaris at dmk171@aol.com. The application deadline for this summer's program is March 31, 2009.



Greek Honors Society Formed at St. John's University

A Modern Greek Language Honors Society has been formed under the auspices of the Pan Arcadian Federation of America at St. John's University (SJU), in Queens, New York City. Professors John G. Siolas, Catherine Tsounis, Herbert Pierson, SJU Chairman of the Languages and Literatures Department and Willard Yoder, SJU Coordinator of Minor Languages, prepared the Constitution and the by-Laws. Veronica Georgiades, a senior student inaugurated the new entity. "I was inducted into the Italian Honor Society in May '2008 in an inspiring ceremony," she said. "I realized then that it is time to form an Honor Society for the



Veronica Georgiades

Modern Greek language."

Georgiades is a high honors student whose ancestors come from the Island of Cyprus. Her father is from Limassol and a Queens College graduate from the CUNY University system. Her mother, a St. John's University graduate, is from Ammohostos (Famagusta), a refugee of the Turkish invasion. Veronica is a recipient of the Pan-Cyprian Association and Athanasiades Foundation scholarships. She plans to attend graduate School for a higher degree in the multi-faceted field of Psychology.

The Pan Arcadian Federation of America is a nationwide organization dedicated to promoting the principles of Democracy and the ideals of Hellenism. For more information, visit <http://www.panarcadian.org/aboutus>.

"The formation of a Modern Greek Language Honor Society, with the necessary minimum funding, will create a precedent in Higher Education," said Dr. Herbert Pierson. "We also plan to form a Chinese Language Honors Society in the near future." For more information, contact: tsounisc@stjohns.edu and siolasj@stjohns.edu.

Website: <http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~tsounisc>

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