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NEO

:: magazine

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sworn in
as Nassau's new
Comptroller**

**Doctors honor
John Rangos**

**HBN Women
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**Comedian
Alex Lyras in NY**

NIKOLAS TSAKOS

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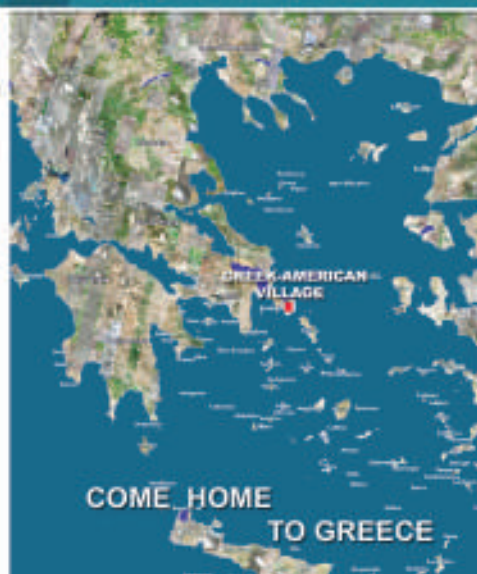
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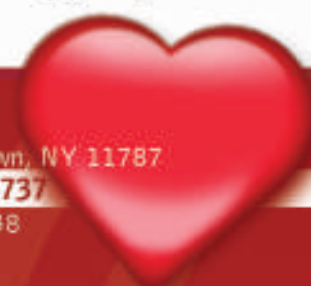


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New Year's resolutions

We all start the New Year with new resolutions and one of them is that this year, unlike last year (which we said to ourselves last year, too), we will stick to our New Year's resolutions and do something about them (thank God for New Year's so we can get a fresh start every year).



FROM THE EDITOR

This year my New Year's resolution is to help my father complete his memoirs and my nephew Costa do a video portrait of both my parents and their memories. They are both in their eighties; my father is 89-years-old and in frail health (but mentally sharp as always) and he began his memoirs shortly after he retired after nearly fifty years of service in education. (He started as a teacher in the mountains of Macedonia in Greece and went on to get a PhD from Columbia and serve as a principal of Greek parochial schools in Montreal, Chicago and New York.)

But his life is more than a service to education: it is the modern odyssey of a whole generation of immigrants who saw their world upended and who suddenly found themselves in the brave new world of America, which they transformed with their work ethic and resilience, and which transformed them in turn.



Popi and Constantine Michalakis with their granddaughters Ashlyn and Alexis.

My father was the first in his family to get more than an elementary school education. He went on to become a teacher in Greece (to poor boys in the mountain villages of Chios and Macedonia), got stranded during the start of World War II and briefly interned in a camp, took a kaiki back home and nearly drowned on the journey, was drafted into the Greek army as an officer on the nationalist side and fought five years on the front in the mountains, returned to a war-shattered Greece and could not see himself going back to the mountains to teach farm boys and instead applied for a scholarship of

foreign study. He chose New York and Columbia University because he had family here, and he wrote his doctoral thesis with a Greek-English dictionary by his side (probably the sainted Divry) on a borrowed table with a gimpy leg in a flat in Brooklyn (while my mother worked at a nearby sweatshop to support the family) and on a portable typewriter with sticky keys he had to unstick by hand every few words.

But he went on to graduate Columbia with honors, to lead and establish Greek parochial schools in Canada and the U.S., and to be an example to his family. And my mother was an equal exemplar: she stood beside him through all the vicissitudes of his career, had a sharp practical mind (inherited from the Neamonitis side of the family—her father was the richest merchant in northern Chios during Katohi) and was a fierce protector and defender of her family. Thia Popi has been a staunch aunt to all her numerous nephews and nieces throughout our extended family and a bedrock to her children and grandchildren.

My New Year's resolution is something old: to honor the life and service of people like my parents, who were storm-tossed by the revolutionary changes in their world, but who never lost their basic decency and sense of honor and their firm belief in their faith and family, and who will forever be an example of pioneer courage and fortitude to all the subsequent generations of their family.

Dimitri C. Michalakis

We are the largest Chapter on Long Island and in the 5 Boroughs. Our meetings are held at the Elks Lodge located at 30 Haven Avenue Port Washington, NY the last Wednesday of the month.

Our annual Christmas gala dinner dance to be held at Milleridge Inn on December, 16 2009, 7:00 PM.

Please visit our website for more info: <http://sites.google.com/site/ahepa456/>



We have a new Sons of Pericles Chapter. Contact George Pappas at gepappas@gmail.com for more information.

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Hellenic Medical Society honors John Rangos at Annual Gala

Leading businessman and philanthropist John G. Rangos Sr. was honored as Distinguished Hellenic this past December at The Hellenic Medical Society's 73rd Annual Scholarship Gala, held at the New York Athletic Club. Last year, the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, the nation's top ranking medical institution, and Greece's top ranking University of Patras embarked on a groundbreaking research and teaching collaboration which was championed from the beginning by Mr. Rangos. This educational collaboration is the first of its kind for Johns Hopkins University in Europe and represents a great opportunity for Greece. Over the years, Mr. Rangos has invested more than \$10 million in Johns Hopkins University and he offered \$120,000 to kick-start the first international medical/research exchange between Johns Hopkins Medicine and the University of Patras. Mr. Rangos is a member of the Johns Hopkins Medicine Board of Visitors and a long-time benefactor of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Medical Society, congratulated the honorees and welcome the participants at the gala which culminated another year full of public benefit activities. Earlier in the day, a seminar took place at the Cathedral Cultural Center, while a few days later, HMS hosted another event at the same venue, showcasing the work of Homades Aigaiou (Aegean Teams), a group of Greek professionals from many fields, including doctors, who organize trips to remote Aegean islands in order to offer medical and other kind of assistance to people still living there. HMS pledged to help by sending doctors and making the Teams' work known in the Greek American community.

The Hellenic Medical Society of New York (HMS) has its origins in the Greek-American Medical Fraternity, an organization co-founded by the renowned physician George N. Papanicolaou during the First World War. This organization officially registered with the New York State authorities in 1920. Drs. George N. Papanicolaou, Nicholas Papadopoulos, Constantinos Carousos and Constantinos Logothetis served consecutively as presidents of this fraternity.

In 1924, the Greek-American Medical Fraternity changed its name to the Greek-American Intercollegiate Club and broadened its scope

This club continued its activities until 1945 when its president, Dr. Savvas Nittis, changed its name to the presently known Hellenic University Club of New York.

In 1936, Dr. Polybios Coryllos formed with other members of the Hellenic University Club the Hellenic Medical Society of New York (HMS), a professional organization comprised of physicians.



Dr. George Tsioulias and the Honoree, Mr. John Rangos



Dr. James Koutras, Dr. Nikoletta Leontaritis and Dr. George Carayannopoulos



Dr. George Christodoulides, Dr. Diado Thomas, Consul General of Cyprus Hon. Koula Sophianou, Dr. Dia Christodoulidou, Dr. Lia Bartella, Dr. Christo Koutentis, Mr. Jerry Lastihenos and Dr. Peter Conday



Dr. Helen Rouvelas, Ms. Tatiana Deligianakis and Dr. Ananea Adamidis



Dr. Gouzoulis (left) with Dr. and Mrs. Fischer.



Another happy guest at the event



Dr. Maria Bournias and Mrs. Joanna Bournias

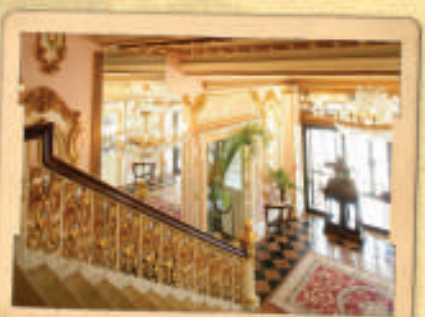


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Market Outlook 2010

An Investor's Perspective

By John P. Calamos Sr.

Investment
Front



The year 2009 was strong for the financial markets, and investors may be wondering if a repeat is likely in 2010. No one can answer this categorically, but it may help to remember the old stock market adage that says: "every bull market climbs a wall of worry." Thus, 2010 may be a challenging year, amid valid concerns about credit, employment, the pace of recovery and lingering volatility in financial markets; however, we believe there should also continue to be many investment opportunities. We foresee strong opportunity abroad, and investors willing to broaden their investment horizons from the U.S. market to a more global focus should benefit. Oftentimes the biggest obstacle for wealth creation is not market action but investor inaction. Looking back, at the dawn of 2009, many investors remained on the sidelines waiting for the foggy investment outlook to clear up, while later in the year they waited again for an impending market correction that did not materialize. However, as these investors waited, the seeds of worry planted in 2008 bloomed into hefty returns, particularly among growth stocks, convertible bonds, high yield bonds and non-U.S. equities, all of which outperformed the broad U.S. equity market.

From a risk management perspective, we strongly believe that investment strategies should focus on longer-term trends and on selecting companies potentially best positioned to benefit from these trends. This approach has worked well for us over many years and last year was not the exception. One such trend has been the global increase in regulations and economic policy, which stand to have lasting effects on the financial markets, and which we continue to monitor closely. The good news is that financial markets can exert pressure on government policy. By moving assets with relative ease across borders, markets have in a sense a vote on those policies and

as a result opportunities may shift quickly. We believe that the global economy is experiencing very uneven growth and that a rising tide may not raise all boats as it did over the past few years. This partly explains our belief that investors should now, more than ever, maintain a global focus while selectively choosing sectors, industries, and companies in which to invest. The global landscape is in constant flux and cross-border investing requires constant monitoring.

As Greek-Americans we hope and yearn for a prosperous Greece. Unfortunately, the realization that Greece's budget deficit for 2009 could potentially be near 13% of the country's gross domestic product sent global shocks toward the end of the year, leading to downgrades of Greece's creditworthiness. As a result, Greek stocks and bonds sold off, and the yields on government bonds increased to compensate for the additional risk taken by holders of Greece's public debt. It is not just the decrease in bond prices that is raising fears among international investors, who could always come back. It is the erosion of creditability in the Greek government that could worsen the situation near term and create more lasting problems. Unless investors can be persuaded that stability in public finances is achievable, Greece may cease to be, at least for a while, the magnet of foreign capital that it once was.

Here in the United States, the weak dollar reflects similar concerns of increasing debt levels. Whether it is a weakening U.S. dollar or Greek bonds selling off, investors searching for the best opportunities can always respond to government policy by moving funds around the world. Remember "it is not a stock market but a market of stocks," and we believe that stock selection shall remain a key differentiator of future returns in this uneven global growth environment.

John P. Calamos, Sr. is CEO/Co-CIO of Calamos Investments www.calamos.com.
For questions or comments please write to JPCsr@calamos.com, or call 888.857.7604.

The opinions referenced are as of December 2009 and are subject to change due to changes in the market or economic conditions and may not necessarily come to pass. Information contained herein is for informational purposes only and should not be considered investment advice.

A Happy, Prosperous
and Healthy New Year to All!

From an anonymous friend





George Maragos, with his wife Angela on his side, is taking the oath of office in front of Justice Stephen Bucaria (NY State State Supreme Court)



The Maragos bothers with their wives: Dino Maragos(nephew), Joseph Maragos, Angela & George Maragos, Spiros and Helen Maragos and Mary & Steve Maragos



The Maragos & Mangano Families. Standing L to R, Angelo Maragos, Peter Maragos, George Maragos, Edward Mangano (Nassau county Executive), Sal Mangano and Alex Mangano. Sitting L to R, Angela Maragos and Lynda Mangano

Maragos sworn in as Nassau County's first Greek Comptroller

By Demetrios Rhompotis



Standing L to R, Heidi Benetos, George Maragos and Kostas Benetos. Sitting L to R, Kathy & Peter Mesologites, Evans & Eleanor Cyprus, Mike Angeliades, Dino Carr, Libby Angeliades and Emily Carr



State Senator Dean Skelos, Comptroller George Maragos, Gregory Peterson (NY State Commissioner of Elections) and Angelo Maragos

George Maragos, a businessman and political newcomer who surprised everyone last November by winning the race for Long Island's Nassau County Comptroller, was sworn in to office on Sunday, January 3rd, in the presence of his family (wife Angela and children Peter & Sara, Angelo and granddaughter Sofia) and a jubilant crowd of about 400 supporters and well-wishers who gathered for the occasion at The Inn in New Hyde Park.

Another newly-elected, County Executive Edward Mangano (who in no small part owes his victory to Maragos), was in attendance, as well as Greek American New York State Senator Dean Skelos, New York State Supreme Court Justice Stephen Bucaria, Nassau County Clerk Maureen O'Connell and New York City Councilman Dan Halloran.

There were also a number of Nassau County Legislators, as well as George Demos, who's running for US Congress from Suffolk County, and many Greek-American friends and supporters. It didn't take long after the ceremony for the event to turn Greek, as festive traditional music poured out in abundance and everybody joined in dancing!

"I will watch your money as my own," Maragos, a Republican, said at his acceptance speech. "As

Comptroller I will implement better budget planning and strong oversight of spending to ensure that the tax dollars are well spent and value is received. I will fix the Tax Assessment System and modernize the County Government computer systems across all agencies to deliver millions in savings and eliminate waste and fraud. I will help achieve a better more efficient County Government that can reduce taxes for homeowners and break the government mentality that it can always take from the residents. I look forward to a vigorous but positive campaign to restore the Nassau County to fiscal health and responsibility."

Comptroller Maragos has over 35 years experience in senior management positions with major financial organizations, including vice president of Chase Manhattan Bank, vice president at Citibank, and in the last 20 years, as chief executive officer of his own company in financial services. He holds a masters in business administration (finance) and a bachelors in electrical engineering.

His son Angelo, who himself ran for City Council (District #26), and managed to get a significant percentage of voters in an area where the

Republican Party doesn't even bother to show up, introduced his father and traced his first steps in America, which represented a completely new world for him.

"My father was born on the small Ionian island of Lefkada in Greece and immigrated with his family as a young boy - all of them speaking only Greek, without any wealth to speak of, and with no prior experience to help them navigate their new, foreign society." However, "for my father and his brothers, these proved to be no obstacles. They had the love and strength of their family - and they had opportunities limited only by their imaginations. The rest was hard work and the motivation to succeed."

Indeed, all Maragos brothers, Steve, Spiro and Joseph showed up for the occasion, having traveled with their families from Montreal, Canada, where they reside and where the new Nassau County Comptroller arrived at the age of 9 before moving to New York. Joining them were a group of friends also originating from Lefkada, among them entrepreneurs John Zoitias, Thomas Zoitias, Nick Katopodis, Christos Vrettos and Vangelis Gerasimou with their families.



Vangelis Gerasimou, John and Maria Zoitias, Christos Vrettos, George Maragos, Maria and Thomas Zoitias, Nick and Marilena Katopodis and NEO's Demetrios Rhompotis



Eleni Kaufman, Kelly and Steve Lagoudis and a friend

GEORGE DEMOS

FOR U.S. CONGRESS



Wishing George Demos continued success and a U.S. Congressional seat in 2010!

Justin Bozonelis
George Carayannopoulos
Mike Plakogiannis
George Soterakis
Nick Vouloumanos

With a love of country and a desire to make her stronger, freer, and more prosperous, I proudly announce my candidacy for the United States Congress in the first congressional district of New York.

Washington has failed us and I intend to fix it. It is time for the first district to have a representative in Washington who is not a typical politician worrying about his career, but a strong advocate focused on one thing: solving the problems and challenges that face the American people and New Yorkers. The road to prosperity has never come through increasing our taxes and higher deficits that burden our children and grandchildren.

I have spent my entire career on our side fighting for us, whether as a United States Securities and Exchange Commission enforcement attorney or through my work at the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office. Every day of my career, I fought for innocent victims who were defrauded of everything and tried to right those wrongs by bringing the perpetrators to justice. Having worked on the 2009 Bernard Madoff prosecution team, I have seen first hand the very worst in Wall Street greed and corruption, but I believe in the best of the American character.

Our current congressman no longer represents our interests or our values. After eight years, he has had his chance, and he has failed. He has become a captive of Washington insiders and we need to replace him with someone more interested in fighting for us than promoting government bailouts and pork spending projects. Please join me as we begin our campaign of reform, integrity, and accountability.

www.GeorgeDemosForCongress.com

George Demos



It's been said that the sea is in the blood of the Greek people. The romantic notion of the lonely seafarer, so immortalized in the country's literature and poetry, has become embedded in the collective consciousness. Even the sight of Greece's blue and white striped flag flapping in the wind bears a resemblance to the Aegean on a breezy day. Its flowing azure water and foamy waves are at once a symbol of quiet strength and restlessness. The iconic image stirs the emotions as much for its beauty as its truth: it's the very depiction of the internal struggle of the human heart.

In Tsakos' case, this sentiment is taken literally. Shipping has been the family business since the mid-1800's. Before his Chios-born father, Panagiotis, became a ship owner in his own right, he rose the ranks of Greece's merchant navy to become a captain. In 1970, he founded the private Tsakos Group. Dealing mainly in dry bulk goods, such as iron ore, the company has grown exponentially to operate a fleet of over 70 vessels.

But it was shortly after his father started his company and bought his first pleasure boat that the younger Tsakos received one of his most memorable lessons in shipowning. Only it came not from his father, but his paternal grandmother, Maria. "My grandmother looked at the boat, which was about a 120 foot yacht, and said to my father, 'it looks really nice but what does it really carry?'" Tsakos said. "She could never imagine that someone would have a boat that wouldn't carry some sort of goods and call it a pleasure boat."

Few industries better reflect the country's strong family and practical values than the traditional Greek shipping culture. It's no wonder then, that despite its small size, Greece leads the world in maritime transportation. Consider this: ninety percent of whatever is moved around the world travels by sea—twenty-five percent of that is transported on Greek vessels. Although Greece produces little in terms of exports, it controls close to a quarter of the world's commerce. "We're the truck drivers of the seas," joked Tsakos. "Shipping provides a huge

Political Science.

Despite the years he spent away from home, he remained a purist about some things. "I never crossed the Atlantic by plane," he quipped.

Back then, the gritty streets of New York were a far cry from Athens. But his experience there helped inspire the "invention" of his own company, Tsakos Energy Navigation Ltd. (NYSE: TNP). He refined his dream as a graduate student at London's City University, where he wrote a thesis on the role of publicly listed partnerships in real estate. Applying this knowledge to shipping struck him as a natural progression. He eventually took his company public in 1993 on the Oslo Stock Exchange and it received its quote on the NYSE in 2002, making it one of the first Greek companies to achieve such distinction.

Though his rise to the top may seem swift, Tsakos faced an uphill battle luring investors to an industry historically shrouded in secrecy. He had to rely on ingenuity as much as experience for guidance. "At that time, shipping was even less known to the public than it is today," he said. "We were like the first Christians thrown to the lions in the Roman arenas. In terms of size, we had to compare ships to the Empire State Building so people would understand."

Having to compete with the excitement of the dotcom boom did little to help matters. "From 1993 until 2003, for the first ten years until other companies followed, it was a lonely

recovery are already on the horizon, at least for the dry cargo and tanker side of the business. As for the third leg of the industry, the containers, (i.e. high-end luxury goods, like cars or refrigerators) the rebound will be slower but he expects things to turn around by mid-to late 2011. "There were a couple of strokes but I think we're coming back," he said referencing the artery metaphor. "The second and third quarter of 2009 were the low points in our business but since then we've seen slow but steady positive movements."

Though he admits 2009 was a difficult year, it was a profitable one for his company and he remains bullish on the future. "We're living in a world that is more interdependent," he said. "Shipping is an efficient, economic and environmentally-friendly method of transportation, so I think long-term prospects are good."

He has a similar optimistic attitude about the economic hurdles faced by his homeland, believing that the country's entrepreneurial spirit will help navigate the road ahead. "Greece is not the only country in Europe going through a challenging time and as long as Greeks realize that, they will get out of the current problems like Ireland and Iceland are doing slowly," he said. "The few times Greeks have worked together they are always very successful."

This show of unity, he believes, extends to the Diaspora Greeks, and particularly the Greek-Americans whose mental know-how and high educational levels can go a long way in helping

BY KATERINA GEORGIU

TEN - THE COMPANY TO WATCH IN 2010: A CONVERSATION WITH NIKOLAS P. TSAKOS



PHOTO: ETA PRESS



Nikolas Tsakos greets Greek Minister of Economy, Competitiveness and Maritime Affairs Louka Katseli at the recent Capital Link Investing in Greece Forum in New York.



With a cardiologist mother and sea captain father, Nikolas P. Tsakos seems to possess an innate sensitivity for connecting the nuances of life with the sea. His earliest memory involves sailing with his father. Though only three years old at the time, the vivid impressions of that trip remain lodged in his memory: the beaming sun, the boundless water, the peaceful silence. "It was a way to make you feel at home," said Tsakos in a recent conversation by phone from Greece.

service to the world economy and is a leading indicator of when things start turning around because it moves all the basic commodities and goods needed for growth." For this reason, Tsakos is fond of referring to the industry as the "artery" of the world economy.

Tsakos officially began his career in ship management in 1981, but at his father's insistence his formative training included hands-on experience at sea and an immersion in the maritime traditions preserved for generations by their ancestors.

But while his father often cites his own career at sea as a matter of destiny, the younger Tsakos never set out to enter the family business in the traditional way. He represents the new breed of shipping tycoons—armed with foreign degrees and Wall Street know-how—who are reshaping the industry to reflect a more global worldview than their predecessors. And so, while working at the family offices in downtown Manhattan, he attended Columbia University, graduating in 1985 with a dual degree in Economics and

place out there," he said. "Shipping was considered very uninteresting. Only after commodity and oil prices increased it started putting the old economy in perspective. Shipping now has a bit more respect and understanding on the street than it did when we started."

His decision to blend the advantages of a public listing with the traditional strengths of a privately owned company proved good business sense. In addition to providing more transparency it was a lucrative move. The company has since paid back all the initial investment to shareholders in dividends and doubled the share price from the initial offering.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing shipping today is adapting to the increasing complexity and scale of demands on the sector. The last decade witnessed a boom spurred on by fast-growing economies, such as India and China—both of which saw a surging demand for oil. With the global recession oil prices took a steep dive but Tsakos says signs of

Greece with its present concerns. For his part, Tsakos and his family remain active in many organizations fostering closer ties between the worldwide Greek communities, such as Leadership 100, of which his entire family are members—including his wife Celia Kritharioti, a prominent fashion designer who has her own couture line, and their three children.

But the family's largest and most personal project is the Maria Tsakos Foundation, a non-for-profit founded by Captain Tsakos in 1978 to spread Hellenism worldwide via its language, culture, history and values. Based in Uruguay, its influence has extended beyond South America to include West Africa and Asia. The foundation also works closely with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to sponsor environmental projects.

Through their business and charitable initiatives, the Tsakos family is bridging the gap between nations by forging a shared human spirit that encourages all to grow and prosper—a philosophy that lies at the very heart of the Hellenic tradition.



From left, Dr. Anthony Pilavas, Dr. Nicholas Kaloudis, Dr. James Koutras, Dr. Nicholas Meztis, Dr. George Carayannopoulos, Mr. George Demos, Dr. Michael Plakogiannis and Dr. George Tsioulis

PHOTO: ETA PRESS

Greek Doctors for George Demos



Greek American doctors, representing various specialties, discussed the problems that they are faced with as well as shared their ideas about meaningful health care reform at a dinner meeting organized this past December at Kellari-Parea Bistro in Manhattan. The event also served as a fundraiser for George Demos in his campaign for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Demos thanked the participants and promised to look at their problems seriously if elected.

According to Dr. George Carayannopoulos who along with Dr. Michael Plakogiannis organized the event, "physicians are in the midst of the worst medical-economic storm in history, and we are working harder for less payment for our services. The current administration has a health care reform bill (Affordable Health Care for America Act [H.R. 3962]) which passed in the House of Representatives and is now undergoing intense debate in the Senate. This bill as it currently stands has no formal provision for medical malpractice tort reform, no provision to fix or remove the flawed

Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula (the formula Medicare uses to reduce our reimbursement each year), imposes a 2.5% tax on medical devices, imposes a 5.4% surcharge tax on individuals with gross incomes of \$500,000 or more, will reduce Medicare/Medicaid payments for medical services provided by hospitals and physicians, and will cost U.S. citizens \$894 billion over the next 10 years to enact this proposal." Moreover, Dr. Carayannopoulos stated, "payment for this \$894 billion cost is to be financed primarily through reductions in Medicare payments for medical services and through increased taxes and fees."

George Demos, a Republican, is running for New York's 1st Congressional District which includes Centereach, Coram, East Hampton, Holbrook, Montauk, Shirley, Smithtown, Southampton, and Westhampton. Demos has worked for seven years as a United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Attorney where he prosecuted white collar and corporate fraud including being a member of the team responsible for prosecuting Bernard Madoff.

For info and contributions his campaign website is www.demosforcongress.com

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Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA)

“The Origins of El Greco: Icon Painting in Venetian Crete”

In collaboration with the Benaki Museum, Athens, and the Holy Archdiocese of Crete

This very successful exhibition presents an extraordinary group of rare icons, including works of El Greco, drawn from churches and monasteries in Greece, as well as public and private collections in Greece, Russia, Italy, the United States, and Canada. Tracing the cross-currents of Byzantine and Renaissance influences in the workshops of 15th and 16th century Crete—the setting in which El Greco was trained—the exhibition is the first to focus on the evolution of the multifaceted relationship of Cretan painters with Western art during this rich period.

Onassis Cultural Center
Through February 27, 2010
Monday – Saturday, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
Free admission



Image credit line:

The Dormition of the Virgin
Before 1567
From Candia
Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco, 1541–1614)
Egg tempera on wood, priming on textile
62.5 x 52.5 cm
Signed on the base of the central candlestick,
at the bottom of the picture:
[Δ]ΟΜΉΝΙΚΟΣ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΉΣ ΟΤΤΟΥΛΟΣ Ο ΔΕΪΪΑΣ
(Domenikos Theotokopoulos depicted)

© Syros, Ermoupolis, Holy Metropolis,
Church of the Dormition of the Virgin.
Photo: Makis Skiadaresis

Southeast Europe Project Scholar Opportunities

Along with its robust public affairs programming, the Wilson Center Southeast Europe Project offers a number of exciting opportunities for research scholarships. The Project looks to foster innovative scholars and analysts whose works identify and illuminate emerging regional and functional issues involving Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, or Bulgaria, as well as related issues affecting broader geopolitics throughout southeast Europe.

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Please visit www.wilsoncenter.org/sepcompetition for more details.

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To receive notification about Southeast Europe Project news and events, send your name and e-mail address to sep@wilsoncenter.org



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Saturday, February 6th at 10:00am



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- Our State **Mathematics** Scores - **90%** meeting and exceeding the learning standards.
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Open Houses:

Thursday, December 3rd at 7pm

Saturday, February 6, 2010 at 10am

Saturday, March 13, 2010 at 10am

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If you would like more information on our weatherization program please feel free to call us and we would be happy to answer any questions.

Happy New Year!

The HANAC Weatherization Program is funded by NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal

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- Preserves the housing stock.
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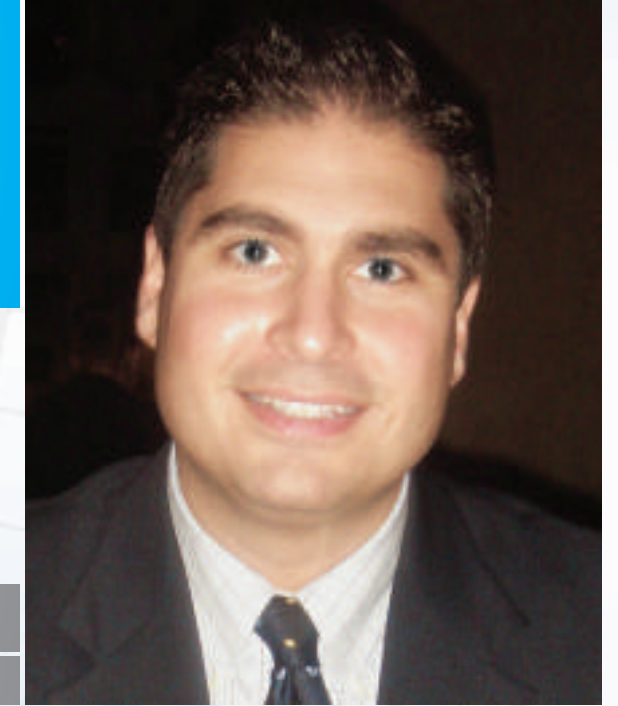
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Visit our website at www.hanac.org to see all the services HANAC provides for community

NEO



Following the very successful series "New Generation of Leaders" that featured members of the Leadership 100 Partners Program, Neo Magazine and the Hellenic Medical Society of New York have come together to present a monthly profile of "New Generation of Doctors."



THE NEW GENERATION of DOCTORS

Name:	Neofitos Stefanides, MD
Position:	Orthopedic Surgeon: Knee and shoulder specialist
Education:	ONYU undergraduate, Tufts University School of Medicine, New York Medical College BQ region residency, San Francisco Shoulder and Knee fellowship

Where were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Garden City New York.

Who or what were the main influences in your life?

My parents and grandparents were an inspiration to me to be a hardworking and religious individual.

Why did you become a doctor?

I always looked up to my father who was a physician. I admired the kind of relationship he held with his patients and I hoped to have the opportunity, someday, to provide high quality care to people as well.

As a new generation doctor, how do you evaluate the state of health care in the US?

I think the healthcare that is provided in the US is second to none, despite some studies that have shown otherwise. On the other hand, the bureaucrats within the insurance companies and government provide a major barrier between the doctor-patient relationship and erodes the quality of care. I will leave the specifics for another interview.

If you were a patient, what would be the ideal qualities that you would look for in a doctor?

Although a doctor needs strong academic preparation, personal qualities are equally important, for they are an integral part of patient care. This includes compassion, and one's ability to interact and communicate well with their patients. These qualities were fostered in me by my father, and these are the qualities that I look for in a doctor when I am a patient.

Has your Hellenic heritage influenced your professional conduct and in what ways?

The Hellenic people have endured difficult obstacles in the past and I believe as a whole we have high moral values both of which originate from our Greek Orthodox faith.

As a successful American you could and perhaps have joined major organizations that are focused more on mainstream society. Why HMS?

I am involved in a few medical organizations, but the HMS is one that is most important to me. The HMS holds an annual scholarship fund which I think is imperative for us as a group of people to do for young students of Hellenic heritage. It is very important to me to help other Greek students achieve their goals of becoming physicians. My father held the position of secretary of the HMS at one point and I try to do as much as possible for the society, as well as for Greek students looking to become physicians.

What qualities do you most admire or value in others?

Honesty and loyalty. These are qualities that I try to possess as well.

Who are your heroes in real life?

My father and grandfather are my real life heroes. They endured poverty, death and difficulty and succeeded despite these obstacles. They were hardworking, religious and honest people. I lost my father at a young age however, amidst the sorrow and pain surrounding my father's death, there was a celebration of his life, which was marked by professional excellence and

humanity. My father was recognized for his compassion, patience, and perseverance, qualities which he inculcated in me.

What are your thoughts on the current economic crisis?

The economic crisis that we are in currently was brought on by the overwhelming greed of the American people. This greed became so strong that we began robbing from our countrymen and overlooked any possible consequences of our actions. The government is trying to alleviate the sting of the crisis with government intervention and stimulus plans.

Where would you like to be in your professional and personal life 20 years from now?

Professionally, I hope to have a busy orthopedic practice so that I can provide quality care to as many people as possible. Additionally, it would provide me with great satisfaction to be able to pass my knowledge on to future orthopedic surgeons via a fellowship. Personally I hope to be married with children, spending as much time as possible with family and friends. I would also love to have the ability to travel the world with my family.

How do you spend your time outside of work?

I enjoy cooking, travelling, and participating in recreational sports.

What is your idea of happiness?

Personal and professional success and of course, always striving to be better.

The Hellenic Medical Society of New York (HMS) has its origins in the Greek-American Medical Fraternity, an entity co-founded by the renowned physician George N. Papanicolaou during the First World War. This organization officially registered with the New York State authorities in 1920.

HBN Women Leaders Initiative

The HBN-Women Leaders Initiative inaugurating reception was hosted recently in New York City by Dr. Virginia Davies who offered her penthouse, as well as covered the cost of wine and hors d'oeuvres in what it proved to be a great event, with more than 180 women and not few men participating.



Founder and President of HBN John Dimitrakakis with Lilia Ziamou and a friend

Trudy Mason addressing the women

A guest and Alexis Glenn

From left, a guest, Kally Constantaras, Dorothy Poli, Maria Drakos and a friend

Lily Georgopoulos, a guest, Matina Korologos and Tina Metis

Sophia Agellakis, Kalliope Lekkas and presenter Esther Lainis

Achilles Anastasopoulos, Dina Pinos, Daniel Sussot, NEO's Demetrios Rhompotis, Alex Peters, vocalist Faye and guitarist/composer Spiros Exaras

Event hostess Dr. Virginia Davies with HBN-WLI Founder and Director Dr. Olga Alexakos

Tina Metis, Victoria Todis, Anastasia Lekkas

Presenters Esther Lainis, Trudy Mason, Dr Sophia Katsambis, Anna Angelidakis, Alexis Glenn with Dr. Olga Alexakos, HBN-WLI Founder and Director in the middle

The HBN Women Leaders Initiative is an integral part of HBN and it aims to advancement of visibility of Hellenic American women entrepreneurs, business and leadership skills development and cultivation and promotion of resources and opportunities.

Dr. Olga Alexakos welcomed the guests on behalf of the Women Leaders Initiative and John Dimitrakakis, Founder and President of HBN, offered remarks inviting all participants to become active members and build a women's chapter that will show the way for similar undertakings in other states. Recently, an HBN Chapter was inaugurated in San Francisco.

The short presentations were followed by a discussion about "Women and the economy: how women can empower ourselves today through training and education, building leadership skills, and using available resources, as well as the impact of government policies in encouraging or hindering women's opportunities" with Virginia Davies, SJD, Rania Antonopoulos PhD., Sophia Katsambis PhD., Frances Gretes ML, and Anna Angelidakis MFA.

After the discussion the party started with live music featuring vocalist Fay accompanied by Spiros Exaras in guitar.

For more info on HBN and the Women Leaders Initiative the website is www.hbngroup.org/HBNGroup

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PRESENTS

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The scholarship recipients with the benefactors of the scholarships.



(from L to R) Assemblyman Michael Gianaris, Attorney of the Year John C. Stratakis, President Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri, Consul General Aghi Balta, Honoree George S. Canellos



John C. Stratakis and guests from the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce



(from L to R) John Stathatos, Peter & Anastasia Stathatos, Irene Vasilakos, Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri & Matthew Fulgieri



Past Attorney of the Year (2008) George Tsougarakis & attorneys from Hughes, Hubbard & Reed



(center) - Toulia & John Bougiamas with guests



Guests from Alma Bank and Alma Realty



Honoree George Canellos with attorneys from the SEC and Congressional Candidate George Demos



(from L to R) Kate Christoforatos, Maria Hartofilis, Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri, Kathy Diamantis



Officers & Board Members of HLA along with Honorees; (from L to R seated - George Poulos, Kathy Diamantis, Maria Hartofilis, Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri, Kate Christoforatos, Chrsanthi Zapantis-Mellis, Tony Andriotis); (from L to R standing - Michael Hartofilis, Peter Metis, John C. Stratakis, George S. Canellos, John Saketos, Spiros Tsimbinos, Chris Kulakis)

PHOTOS: MARIA TOLIOS

Lawyers annual fete a resounding success

The Hellenic Lawyers Association (HLA) recently held its annual dinner gala at New York's Pierre Hotel where close to 300 guests were in attendance to honor the major accomplishments of fellow law professionals of Hellenic descent.

The 2009 honorees were George Canellos, Regional Director of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and Attorney of the Year John Stratakis, a partner of Poles, Tublin, Stratakis & Gonzalez LLP. The HLA also awarded six scholarships to deserving law students, four of which were contributed by generous benefactors including the law firms of Hughes, Hubbard & Reed; Poles, Tublin, Stratakis & Gonzalez LLP; former Attorney of the Year Nick Papain, Esq., and Proto Insurance. That evening over \$5,000 was raised at the silent auction for future award scholarship recipients.

In her welcome remarks, the President of the Hellenic Lawyers Association Mamie Stathatos-Fulgieri observed that despite an uncertain economic climate, the Association "continues to prosper and succeed" and the dinner gala was a paradigm of its ongoing achievements. Also in attendance was the Consul General of Greece, Honorable Aghi Balta, along with numerous federal and state judges, prominent politicians, community leaders, and attorneys from large and small law firms and government practice.

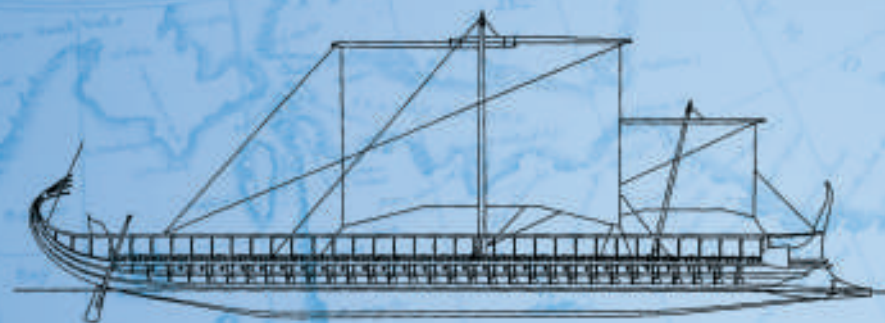
Mr. George Canellos, the highest ranking SEC official in New York, accepted an award plaque on behalf of his SEC colleagues who have worked hard to protect investors. Canellos spoke fondly of his maternal grandfather, who at the age of 15 came to New York from the Peloponnese in June 1921 - a few

months following the Titanic tragedy. He joked how his grandfather and fellow passengers spent the entire voyage looking for icebergs in the ocean, in the middle of the summer. Canellos' grandfather was the first Greek to graduate Harvard Medical School, and was a great inspiration to him.

The 2009 Attorney of the Year, John Stratakis, humbly and with deep emotion accepted his award. He was recognized not only for his thriving law practice, but for his generous philanthropic efforts. "I am grateful to the Board of the HLA for the honor; it is especially gratifying to receive an award from one's peers... I am deeply touched to receive this award, and especially when our community has such a large pool of incredibly talented and capable attorneys. It is important that our community coalesce behind professional organizations that uphold our values such as the HLA," Stratakis said in his acceptance remarks.

The absence of one of the most notable founding members of the organization, Judge Nicholas Tsoucalas of the US Court of International Trade, was felt by all as he was recovering at Massachusetts. Judge Nicholas Garaufis of the US District Court expressed warm regards from Judge Tsoucalas, who is expected to be at the gala next year.

The Hellenic Lawyers Association is the premier organization for attorneys of Hellenic descent in the New York metropolitan area. As such, it provides seminars, training and networking opportunities for its members. For more information HLA's website is <http://helleniclawyersassociation.org/>



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The Trireme in NYC Inc. wishes all a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!



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by Peter Shakalis



Not all Landlord Square Feet are Equal: Square Feet versus Rentable Square Feet

When leasing commercial office space, the size of the space is typically referred to in terms of 'rentable square feet' instead of square feet. The reason is that the rentable square foot measurement includes what is referred to as a 'loss factor'.

The concept of a loss factor goes something like this: since a tenant uses or is serviced by areas such as the building's lobby, hallways, freight loading areas, telecom-munication rooms and HVAC floor(s), but does not occupy (and pay rent on) these areas, the landlord includes in a tenant's rentable square foot measurement a 'loss factor' to compensate for its cost for these dedicated areas. These landlord loss factors can vary substantially between buildings as well as between divided and full floors.

For instance if one physically measured what a landlord called 10,000 'rentable' square feet with a 25% loss factor, you would find only 7,500 net or usable square feet. The tenant pays rent on this missing 2,500 square feet to compensate the landlord for the tenant's use of the above mentioned areas.

While there is a good reason for loss factors, it's important to determine just how much 'lost' space there is in the landlords quoted rentable square foot measurement when considering new office space. Some less scrupulous landlords will increase the loss factor they apply to space in their building arbitrarily, utilizing it as a profit center and taking advantage of unsuspecting tenants. It's important to note that tenants pay base rent on this loss factor measurement as well as annual operating escalation increases. If electricity is supplied on a rent inclusion basis say at \$3.25 per square foot, that's also included.

Loss factors aside, the net or usable space in an office unit can also be deceptive. It can include bathrooms, interior columns, supplemental heating/cooling units and other elements that reduce the space a tenant can utilize. Columns, corners, curves and other architectural elements will also make a difference. Tenants therefore should use "carpetable" or "assignable" square footage to determine how desks, computers and employees will actually fit into various blocks of space. A company looking at 10,000 rentable square feet in two competing buildings might find the one with a higher loss factor (i.e. with less usable space) is actually better because the company's people and equipment fit into the space better.

While loss factors are important, assignable or usable space based on the configuration of the floor is key - price alone is not necessarily an indicator of value. With companies trying to cut costs in this challenging economy, the role of their architect and broker in finding the 'right' space has become ever more important.

Peter Shakalis is a Director at
FirstService Williams Real Estate
pshakalis@fswre.com



From left, Dr. Spiro Spireas, Nick Larigakis, AHI Chairman, and Dr. Dan Georgakas on the podium.



Ted Spyropoulos,
President of SAE-USA



Nick Karambelas
of Sfikas & Karambelas



Rev. Dr. Demetrios
Constantellos



AHI Founder Gene Rossides



Nicholas Jivaras, Executive
Vice President of the
American College of Greece

The Future of Hellenism in America Conference

The American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF) hosted with success its Eighth Annual Conference on the Future of Hellenism in America. After first taking the conference on the road to different cities around the country in 2004, this year it was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Featuring over 20 prominent speakers drawn from the Greek American community nationwide, conference presentations analyzed key issues including the future of Greek American organizations, the political process and lobbying, religious and ethnic identity, promoting Hellenic culture through business, Greek education, and perspectives from young Greek Americans. Speakers also identified how Hellenism could be promoted into the future through these various channels.

AHI Executive Director Nick Larigakis opened the conference with an overview of the Future of Hellenism in America Conference's history and overall mission to "exist as a forum for discussion that we hope plants the seed for attendees to take forth these ideas and spread them to their local communities."

Conference Chair Spiros Spireas, Ph.D., who is Chairman and CEO of conference sponsor Sigmapharm Laboratories, LLC in Bensalem, Penn., welcomed attendees to the event. To provide context for the event's significance, Spireas pointed out that "This conference is of tremendous value and a tremendous initiative... It should be used as a way to lead and maintain our tradition of Hellenism in the world and here locally."

The opening keynote address on "The Now and Future of Greek America" was delivered by Professor Dan Georgakas, Director of Greek American Studies at Queens College-CUNY's Center for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. Georgakas provided an overview of both positive and negative trends and statistics regarding the strength of the Greek American community's identification with its Hellenic roots. While marriage outside the community has increased and the instances of Greek language spoken in the home has virtually disappeared except among immigrants and their children, Georgakas asserted that, "there are dynamic new factors in progress" that provide a counter-push.

Cyberspace has provided a medium through which Greek Americans can connect and reconnect with their culture through ever-increasing methods, for instance. Online social networks are proliferating, bringing people in touch with each other and with news from the homeland, irrespective of geographic location and on a real-time

basis. These elements have inspired "Neo-Hellenism," according to Georgakas, in which Hellenism is based more on cultural identification rather than geographic location.

"In some ways, I'm closer [to Greece] than my parents were," pointed out Georgakas, himself a child of immigrants. He added that, "many people who came earlier had a gap in connection [with Greece]. This no longer exists, so new immigrants are closer and can remain closer to their families."

Theodore G. Spyropoulos, President of SAE-USA, provided an overview of the organization's mission to represent and unite the nearly seven million Greeks abroad who are dispersed over seven regions around the world. Underscoring that Greek American youth is a focal point of the organization, SAE launched the SAE USA Youth Network with the goal of reaching out to young Greek Americans and getting them more involved in the community. "The only way our youth can be baptized [into the Hellenic culture] is to visit Greece... because Greece offers a tremendous wealth of knowledge." Greek American organizations also "need to revise who they are and what they do. We [at SAE] are here to help," Spyropoulos concluded.

Nick Karambelas, of Sfikas & Karambelas, overviewed "The Fundamentals of Participating in the U.S. Political Process". The two components of political participation are strategy and tactics. As a community, "we have to have clearly defined objectives," advised Karambelas. On the tactics component, he said "what we must emphasize now are the three W's - wealth, work and wisdom."

Congressman Gus Bilirakis overviewed how Greek American issues are currently represented in U.S. Congress, and by whom. Currently, there are four Greek Americans in Congress with 141 members in the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues in the 110th Congress.

Gene Rossides, founder of AHI, spoke on "The Role of the Greek American Community in Support for U.S. Relations with Greece and Cyprus and Why This Is Important". According to Rossides, "the future of our community depends on how involved we are in the political process" as it applies to foreign policy and decisions made about Greece and Cyprus. Rossides concluded by stating that, "our relations with Greece and Cyprus are important to the U.S., and to that extent, we [as community members and citizens] need to get involved in the political process, and get young Greek Americans involved."

Rev. Dr. Demetrios J. Constantellos spoke on "The Challenges Facing the Greek Orthodox Church in America." He identified five major

challenges: doctrinal, ethical, liturgical, mixed marriages and conversions to the faith. Doctrinal challenges currently faced by the Church include agnosticism, secularism and a broad variety of creeds that "confuse and leave young people to question the [Greek Orthodox] faith," points out Constantellos.

On ethics, the Church has outlined rules which are disregarded at an increasing frequency. On liturgical practices, Father Constantellos pointed to a dismaying low rate of participation in the Church community on the part of Greek Americans, citing a growing differentiation being made between being Greek and being Greek Orthodox and a disturbing trend on the part of the clergy to drop "Greek" elements from the Orthodox faith. And while many mixed marriages - even those blessed in the Church - rarely stay in the Church, those converting to the faith often do not have the depth of appreciation for or knowledge of the Greek language and culture to see how intrinsic a part it is of the Greek Orthodox faith, Father Constantellos pointed out.

Professor Van Coufoudakis spoke on "The Importance of Increasing Modern Greek Studies Programs and Expanding the Curriculum". After providing an overview of the current state of modern Greek studies in America, he offered advice to the Greek American community on how it can proceed more effectively in establishing additional modern Greek studies programs at universities throughout the United States.

American universities currently host 25 modern Greek studies programs, witnessing also the rise of Greek American studies. According to Coufoudakis, many programs have become repositories of information, attracting visiting scholars. However, programs often "face funding, organizational and staff problems," and we need to "think creatively on how we can assist these programs."

The conference was sponsored by Sigmapharm Laboratories, LLC, and held in cooperation with the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA), the World Council of Hellenes Abroad (SAE) U.S.A. Region, and the Behrakis Foundation. Co-sponsors of the conference included the Hellenic American National Council, the Federation of Hellenic American Societies of Philadelphia and Greater Delaware Valley, the Greek American Chamber of Commerce (Greater Philadelphia Chapter), the Hellenic Lawyers Association of Philadelphia, the Hellenic Medical Society of Greater Philadelphia, the Hellenic University Club of Philadelphia, the U.S.-Greece Business Advisory Council and the Hellenic News of America.



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FELLOW HELLENES

A year ago, a committee was formed under a common dream of establishing a chair of Hellenic studies at the Stony Brook University, in Long Island, NY.

The university received the idea with open arms. The inaugurating celebration of such a chair for Greek language and culture, opened under the musical delightful sounds of Gregory Maninakis' orchestra inside the Stony Brook University. At the end of the night the amount of over one hundred thousand was collected among a gathering of 180 guests.

Hoping that you are not going to remain inactive, we urge you to send your contribution for that noble Hellenic chair to:

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FROM THE COMMITTEE, WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY NEW YEAR,
PETER TSANTES



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Andreas Vgenopoulos



Evangelos Marinakis

Lloyd's Awards to Greek Ship Owners

By Margarita Vartholomeou

ATHENS (Greece) - The Lloyd's Awards were presented for the sixth consecutive year to Greek shipping companies during a beautiful ceremony that took place last December at the Athens Intercontinental Hotel.

The Lloyd's Award "Personality of the Year 2009" was bestowed on MIG president Andreas Vgenopoulos for his investments in Greek coastal shipping with Superfast and Blue Star Ferries and for his Marfin Bank's enhancement of its shipping portfolio.

The "Greek Shipping Newsmaker" Award went to ship owner Victor Restis and the "Lifetime Achievement" Award to captain Vassilis Constantakopoulos, founder of TEMES S.A. and chairman of the Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Agency (HELMEPA).

Meanwhile, The Lloyd's List Global Award for an Amver-Assisted Rescue at Sea was presented to Arcadia Hellas Shipmanagement's motor tanker Aegean Angel for the April 2008 rescue of 11 distressed mariners aboard a life raft after

their vessel sank 300 miles south of Puerto Rico.

The Lloyd's List Global Award for Newsmaker of the Year was presented to Navios Maritime Holding chairman and CEO Angeliki Frangou at the London ceremony.

The award Shipbroker of the year went to Golden Destiny. Also the National Bank of Greece was honored as the best "Shipping Financier Bank" for shipping investments in 2010.

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DIASPORA IS TO BE AND NOT TO BE

"Diasporas" is the first excerpt of a series of articles on "Hellenes Without Borders"

I was born in the Diaspora, like millions of other Greeks. The word itself, fittingly, comes from the Greek language, "a scattering or dispersion." For millennia Greece has been shedding population, in ancient times to Greek colonies established primarily in (what is today southern) Italy, Asia Minor, and the Black Sea basin, in the post-Byzantine world often to these same destinations or further west. In our era, Greeks have ventured to the far reaches of the world, North and South America, Australia, and northwestern Europe. Greece owes part of the energy of its rebirth to its Diaspora, which supplied material and physical aid to the cause. Sometimes they resettled in the newly emerged country, and often as not, returned to the Diaspora.

The reason for exit generally consisted of a combination of economic and political factors, and which combination depended on the era in question. Certainly Greece's grinding poverty and poor soils, coupled with constant wars and revolutions, spurred the majority of the modern exodus, though, as the population became more educated, the political and bureaucratic environment also encouraged a brain drain, as well as the peasants' brawn drain. As a maritime people from time immemorial, the means to exit are readily available.

My own Diaspora origins derive from political and from economic factors. My maternal grandfather left the hills above the Peloponnesian port of Patras for the railroads of Utah about a century ago. He returned to fight in the Balkan Wars, but after marrying, left again for the United States, and had six children in America, including my late mother. My late father was born on the seafaring island of Hydra, the son of a sailor father from a remote Peloponnesian village and a Hydriot captain's daughter. He was raised in Pireaus, during the 1930s, when Greece was slowly industrializing but deeply shattered by the Asia Minor disaster. My father's circumstances were middle class; his sailor father visited once or twice a year as the price for his family's relative comfort. The horrors of World War II and its aftermath took its toll on my father's psyche, and, after service in the Navy, he took to the sea. He possessed a good education and had every reason why he would live well in postwar Greece, but meeting my mother in America made him part of the Diaspora, and they had three children, all born and brought up in America.

I spent nearly all of the summers of my youth in Greece. As much as I did identify with Greece, I could not really say I felt totally at home there; I often said going back was "a dream that I hope never comes true." My father sometimes thought of returning to Greece, but the politics of the country, the inefficiencies, corruption, and bureaucracy relative to life in America always stayed his hand. Cautionary tales abounded, about people who sold up in the West, and then moved back. What started as a blessed dream often became a stultifying reality.

Nonetheless, Greece continued to draw me and the Diaspora experience held me in its thrall. I had the good fortune to travel quite widely, and in nearly everywhere I visited, I found Greeks. In Santiago, Chile, at the tiny Greek Orthodox Church, I met a fellow who recognized my last name, and we found that we were distantly related. In Hungary, I met remnants of a Communist Greek Diaspora scattered around the former Communist world. Elsewhere in Europe I encountered nearly empty churches which as always function as the cores of Diaspora communities, and people who barely knew Greek, just that their background was Greek.

Nations resemble sedimentary rock formations, where layers eventually blend into the whole. So it was with the Greek Diaspora. Thus, the Orthodox Cathedral of Vienna, a church with a venerable Greek past, now hosts Austrians of mixed Greek, Serb, Romanian and assorted backgrounds, assimilated for generations, along with a sprinkling of new arrivals, students, or visitors. The same held for the Greek Orthodox Church of Trieste, once home to a thriving Greek community of substantial wealth and influence, and now of Italians who acknowledge their Greek

descent by clinging to their church affiliation. Just around the corner, another Orthodox Church, this time Serbian, hosts a flock of Italo-Serbs as well as thousands of new arrivals. Sometimes the sedimentation breaks down, and the grains of sand emerge again. I have seen this when a fourth generation Greek-American discovers his roots, perhaps after a trip to the old country, and immerses himself in a country or culture he utterly wants to understand but will find that he cannot. It could be even more remote where a Sicilian-American fellow from Ohio converts to the Orthodoxy his distant ancestors might have celebrated, and then returns to Italy as an Orthodox bishop.

Other times, the rocks are crushed and the sands are sent forth to disparate fates. Greeks suffered ethnic slaughter and mass expulsion from their Asia Minor homelands, lands where they formed part of the ethnic mosaic and they were far more indigenous to the area than the Turks who expelled them. Other, smaller expulsions occurred, from Bulgaria, Russia, Alexandria, and finally Constantinople. Often as not, these expellees had a higher economic and cultural level than the local Greeks among whom they settled, and most chafed at their new surroundings and circumstances, the scars of which remain today.

Many of these refugees, having been uprooted once, resumed their wanderings in search of a better life. Most famous of these was a tobacco merchant's son named Aristotle Onassis, expelled from wealthy surroundings in Smyrna and unable to accept his straightened refugee reality, left for Argentina, where he made the first of many fortunes. Many others left for France, America, or the next generation, for Australia, Canada, and Germany. Others, with their relatively higher education and profound sense of material loss and grievance, joined the Communist movement and after the Civil War, many fled, willingly or otherwise, into the Communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

My sister's husband's family was not atypical of Asia Minor expellees. Pontic Greeks uprooted from comfortable surroundings on the southern shores of the Black Sea, to Kavalla, they lived in a prefabricated home in a refugee district, with winding streets recalling Asia Minor homelands. I remember visiting the house in the mid 1970s, before it, like most of the others in the neighborhood, gave way to modern, well-appointed multistory apartments, often financed by members of the family in America, Germany, or Australia. Of the four children in my brother-in-law's family, two had immigrated to America. Other family returned to Greece after years behind the Iron Curtain as Communist refugees. Still other, more distant relatives, lived in Russia centuries, now "returned" to their nominal homeland, Greece.

My "repatriation" was voluntary, as a senior banker. I possessed a Greek passport, a fluent though flawed facility in Greek, exceptional knowledge of Greek history and extended family in Greece. What I lacked, aside from my passport, were the myriad of hard-to-get documents from a labyrinthine bureaucracy that runs Greeks' lives, military service, and property. We would go every summer to Greece in my teenage years and my Serbian wife had a Balkan frame of reference which I grafted onto my historical knowledge to "prepare" me for life in Greece. I found that, for one who had lived "outside," nothing really prepared you for life in Greece.

The Elliniki Pragmatikotita (Greek Reality) strikes both as a fist and as a "water torture" of thousands of drips. The country operates, if at all, on connections and influence, to a degree that I simply could not fathom. Then there was the tyranny of the bureaucracy and the constant attempt to circumvent it and corrupt it, which created a vicious cycle. A case in point was the requirement that I go to the army for basic training, despite being 36 years old. Actually, my service in the army was a great experience, because, due to its short duration, I had the "tourist version" of military service. My unit was full of Russian-born Greeks, so much that Russian was the second language. Most of

those Russo-Pontioi (Russian Pontic Greeks) kept to themselves, but in some ways I identified more with them, as returnees from the Diaspora, than with local Greeks. The difference was that I returned under comfortable circumstances, with greater prospects. I was struck by the degree of alienation they felt from "their country" and their fellow Greeks.

Everyday life in Greece is a challenge. To do well seemed to presuppose beating and corrupting the system which is, itself, corrupt. I was not wired for such a life, where so many people got paid under the table and the cost of living was high. Looking the other way, whether in work or in life, was a way of life. I looked to the future of rising cost of living, a crashshoot healthcare and educational system and I surmised that I had a choice: to play the game and go native and under the table, or to vote with my feet and return to my Diaspora destiny. Looking at my wife and my son, named after my late father, the choice was obvious.

So, having seen off the moving vans, saying goodbye to friends and family, we packed our car, which we brought, like ourselves, from America, and started north on Greece's spanking new autobahns for Serbia and eventually, London. Going north, we encountered others on their way back to Germany, Austria, and elsewhere, particularly as we left Greek Macedonia and entered into the Slav Macedonian Republic. Crossing into Serbia, the road joined that from Bulgaria, where more joined the Diaspora journey north, driving loaded-down used Mercedes sporting German plates but swarthy passengers, Turkish, Albanian, or Bulgarian Gasterbeiter. Throughout Serbia, more cars joined the route northward, all sporting foreign plates but local faces. The whole Balkan Peninsula joined in the Diaspora experience, retracing in luxurious used cars routes once traveled by ox-drawn cart towards greater prosperity. Greeks and Serbs had been traveling this route in successive waves for dozens of generations, founding communities that either assimilated or survived due to influxes of new immigrants. Now the ranks were swelled by a mass of Muslim Turks for the industries of Western Europe.

For centuries Serbia had sent her children outward, due to the same factors as Greece. Serbia had suffered the disfigurement of five centuries of Ottoman rule, like Greece, and her Diaspora at that time also nurtured the dream of a re-born Orthodox state, and when it occurred, like Greeks, they returned to help run the new kingdom, while others, due to poverty and politics, left. The Yugoslav regime's soft Communism created a Diaspora of political dissidents along with those who left for the economic opportunities in Germany, Sweden, and elsewhere. Then, the wars of Yugoslav dissolution resulted in 400,000 Serbs leaving in order to live a normal life, particularly to Canada, Australia, and America. Among them was the woman who would become my wife. When we met, in Chicago, at the Serbian Orthodox Church, she was one of thousands of well-educated Serbs who sought a better life and possibly roots in America.

As we left Serbia, continuing to London, we waved goodbye to the Balkans and returned to the Diaspora, to the way of life we both knew was our destiny. And yet, before leaving, we bought a house in Serbia and return constantly, as to Greece. Like many Diaspora people, we cannot quite let go. We might just return, one day.

Alexander Billinis has spent a decade in international banking in the US and Europe, most recently in London. He is particularly interested in Greece's economic and cultural position in the Balkans, and is writing a travel-historical book about the post-Byzantine states of modern Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania.



By Alexander Billinis



"The Common Air:" Alex Lyras Takes Flight

By Katerina Georgiou

"The Common Air," the riveting one-man show starring Alex Lyras, is a sensory delight—much like Walt Whitman's mystical collection of poetry, "Leaves of Grass," from which it derives its name. The production had two successful showcases in Los Angeles before debuting in New York last November at The Bleeker Street Theatre (45 Bleeker Street in Manhattan) where it has just received an extended run through February.

Co-written by Lyras and director Robert McCaskill, the play has Lyras portraying six characters interconnected by a shared fate: a delay at JFK airport due to a terrorist scare. Each one represents an archetype in all of us: the Driver, the Art Dealer, the Lawyer, the Musician, the Philosopher and finally, the Expatriate who longs for home. All are fascinating and depicted with intelligence, humor and intensity by Lyras.

"The Common Air" reminds us that it's during life's pauses, which are often fear-induced, that we can more closely observe the different roles we're playing. And it's our longing to reconcile the disparate parts of our selfhood into a unified whole

that drives the search for our own personal truth. But finding out who we are is disorienting at first, so we have to work backwards, like the prodigal son, to find our way back home—to our real self. "Loss of perspective is an interesting place to be," Lyras said by phone from Los Angeles where he's based. "You're in between destinations."

Few settings are more ideal to illustrate the play's premise than an airport. Before we take "flight" we need time to assess where we are in the present moment.

"This is my third solo show," said Lyras. "I have a lot to say in terms of social critique, and I like to make fun of things. I've been stranded in the airport so I've had my ear talked off. I think it was important to have some realism...why people go into these personal stories."

One of the play's characters provides the answer: the airport is a theater.

This is especially true these days with the not so uncommon threat of violence looming over our heads. While the nameless characters are familiar ones in the post 9/11 world, the stereotypes end there, thanks to the writers' adept characterization and sensitivity for the complexities of life in the dual worlds of existence—body and soul.

Lyras and MacCaskill spent eight months in 2007 writing the play. The result is a series of well-crafted monologues exploring the many ways in which people attempt to discover their true identity—either by lying to themselves or having the courage to face the truth. Both routes are a bumpy but often comical ride because as the play's clever subtitle suggests: "Everyone travels with baggage."

Growing up in Scarsdale, NY, Lyras' fondness for storytelling was fostered by his parents, who introduced him to the theater and opera in nearby Manhattan. The son of a lawyer and chef, he studied philosophy at Bucknell University before heading to Chicago to study law in the early '90s.

This proved a fateful decision that shifted the course

of his life. Down the street from his law school was Second City, the famous improvisation theatre. Sitting in the audience, Lyras understood the law was not his calling. He returned to New York and attended Chicago City Limits, the satellite improv school of Second City. That's where he met and began a long creative collaboration with his acting teacher, McCaskill—who counts Bernadette Peters, Michelle Rodriguez and Montel Williams as clients he coaches. A year later, Lyras was well on his way to a career in the theater.

But his brief stint in law wasn't in vain, as is clear from his dizzyingly authentic portrayal of the hard drinking but amusingly lucid lawyer. "Everyone is a character," said Lyras. "Real life...that's what every writer draws from."

This includes his inspiration for the dancing Iraqi cab driver—a role that allows Lyras to demonstrate his remarkable range and ear for accents. "I met the cab driver," said Lyras. "We were going through Times Square to a club. That guy was over-the-top enthusiastic that we were all going dancing. He told us he was a professional and began to do a jig in his seat. He had a jamming Middle Eastern tape playing in his taxi and that tape is playing in the show."

By the show's conclusion, we realize that we are at once—the Driver and the Art Dealer, the Lawyer and the Musician, the Philosopher and the Expatriate—all parts of our selfhood. And each unique experience underscores the human responsibility for caring about the world we create. Whether or not we treat it as a gift bequeathed to us by the universe is a matter of choice. Because as "The Common Air" so eloquently illustrates, despite the many roles we play in life, it's the air we breathe that unites us to a higher force—and allows us to manifest our own realities.

Performances of "The Common Air" take place on Friday evenings at 8pm through February 26th.

For more information, please see:

www.thecommonair.com

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*On behalf of the coordinating
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and myself personally,*

*I wish fellow Hellenes
and Philhellenes everywhere
a very happy, healthy and prosperous
New Year 2010!*

Theodore G. Spyropoulos



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*2010 wishes
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no more occupying Turkish troops
but a reunified homeland
in progress and prosperity
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CAPE FEAR CHAPTER 408

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MESSAGE OF Mr. PHILIP CHRISTOPHER, PRESIDENT OF PSEKA

This past July was the 35th Year of the invasion and occupation of Cyprus . Thirty-five years have passed since that tragic summer. Thirty-five years of injustice, human rights violations, and occupation of an EU member state. Thirty-five years of individuals passing without returning to their ancestral homes. Thirty-five years of struggle for freedom, for human dignity, for human rights. Thirty-five years of drastic changes in the world, and yet Cyprus still remains under occupation by Turkey.

It is a different world today than 1974. The Republic of Cyprus is now a member of the European Union. The Republic of Cyprus is a cosmopolitan nation. The Speaker of the Parliament is of Armenian descent. There is a large Russian community, a thriving Armenian and Maronite Community, and a significant East Asian community. Cyprus is a bridge of Europe to the Middle East, with a strong economy, that guarantees all rights to all citizens.

For the last 35 years, we have been fighting a problem of invasion and continued occupation. A solution cannot be achieved without the removal of all Turkish troops and settlers, and the return of all Cypriot citizens to their ancestral homes.

Please take a few moments on Christmas Day for a special prayer for our island home. Spend a few minutes in recognition of those who gave their lives, of the missing, of the refugees, and of the enclaved. Our children and grandchildren have grown up never seeing their family homes . Our churches and graveyards that lie in ruin. The overseas Cypriots have waged their own war against the Turkish occupation, and we have struggled against seemingly insurmountable forces.

Thirty five years is a long time and have been overtaken by the feeling of complacency. The affluent Turkish lobby and the general indifference of the international community, have created more barriers for us to break down. I encourage everyone to continue the fight for justice for the Cypriot people. Some things are clearly inherently right or wrong. And right is on the side of freedom for Cyprus!

Our success depends on everyone to remaining strong and focused on battling this ongoing injustice, and I assure you that we will not stop, we will not rest, until we see the removal of Turkish troops, the removal of the illegal settlers, and return of all refugees to their homes.

I urge all individuals, to express their frustration in the way they feel appropriate.

Every action counts, every voice matters, as long as we work legally and cohesively, as long as our efforts are united and work toward a common strategy.

It is a testament to our community and that the younger generation of Cypriot and Greek Americans is active in the cause for justice for Cyprus . Our younger people may not have seen first hand the pain and violence of the war, but their hearts and souls are tied to Cyprus and the cause of justice and human rights.

I remind everyone that we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep. We have made promises to our children, our parents and grandparents to see a united, free Republic of Cyprus .

*Wishing you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and
a Happy and Healthy New Year!*

*The American Hellenic Council
wishes you a happy,
healthy and
prosperous 2010 !*

*...and don't forget to Save the Date
35th Annual Awards
Dinner Dance*

*Saturday, April 17, 2010 Join us in honoring dedicated
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who with their achievements,
their contributions to our political life
and their support of our heritage
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A Very Merry Christmas and
A Happy and Healthy New Year*



(L-r) Francisco Economides, Demetra Atsaloglou, Nick Larigakis, Vasilios Kotsatos

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The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), the leading association for the nation's three million American citizens of Greek heritage, and countless Philhellenes, honored excellence in several professions at its "National Regional Salute Banquet" held recently in New York.

"Tonight we honored excellence in public service, philanthropy, and in one's chosen profession," said Supreme President Nicholas Karacostas. "Our honorees inspire and serve as a fine example for all of us to emulate in our everyday lives. Their work on behalf of the community, and within society, is reflected in the worthy mission of the AHEPA family. The American Hellenic community can be proud of their fine accomplishments."

AHEPA's 1st Regional Salute Banquet in New York



The distinguished honorees, AHEPA family dignitaries, and their guests share a moment prior to the start of the evening's program



Supreme President Nick Karacostas, U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, and Daughters of Penelope Grand President Elaine Sampanis display the AHEPA Pericles Award



Supreme President Nick Karacostas, AHEPA Medal of Honor Honoree Col. Mark Gatanas (ret.) and Presenter Past District 5 Governor George Karatzia.



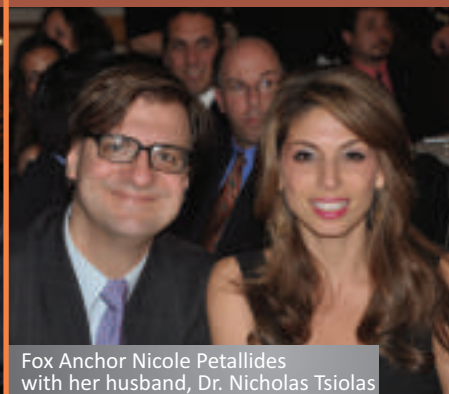
Presenter Dr. Frank Pappas, Supreme President Nick Karacostas and Honoree Capt. Dimitrios Roumeliotis.



Supreme President Nick Karacostas, Mrs. Georgia Kaloidis, Dimitrios Kaloidis, recipient of the AHEPA Archbishop Iakovos Humanitarian Award, and PSEKA President and Ahepan Philip Christopher who presented the award.



Supreme President Nick Karacostas with AHEPA Academy of Achievement in Medicine Honoree Dr. William Tenet.



Fox Anchor Nicole Petallides with her husband, Dr. Nicholas Tsiolas

The honorees for the evening included: Honorable Robert Menendez, AHEPA Pericles Award, Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney, AHEPA Pericles Award, Dr. William J. Tenet, AHEPA Academy of Achievement Award-Medicine, Dimitrios Kaloidis, AHEPA Archbishop Iakovos Humanitarian Award, Colonel Mark D. Gatanas (ret.), AHEPA Medal of Freedom, Captain Dimitrios G. Roumeliotis, AHEPA Presidential Certificate of Honor and Nick Manos, AHEPA Hellenic Award.

More than 300 persons attended this sold out gala affair which was the first of four AHEPA National Regional Salute Banquets to be held in 2009 – 2010. Traditionally, AHEPA hosts a Biennial Salute Banquet in Washington, DC every two years. However this administrative year, the Supreme Lodge decided to embark on a new and fresh approach by taking this historically gala affair "on the road" to four geographically disperse communities. Future venues include: Portland, Ore., on March 6, 2010; and Chicago on April 24, 2010. A fourth venue will be finalized soon.

Past Supreme Governor and Past Sons of Pericles Supreme President James Gounaris served as Master of Ceremonies. Other notables included: former CIA Director George Tenet who presented his brother, Dr. William Tenet, with the AHEPA Academy of Achievement Award in Medicine; and Greek Ambassador to the U.S. Vassilis Kaskarelis, Consul-General of the Republic of Cyprus Andreas Panayiotou, and PSEKA President Philip Christopher offered remarks.

AHEPA was established in 1922 by visionary Greek-Americans to protect all from prejudice from the KKK. In its history, AHEPA has joined with the NAACP and B'nai B'rith International to fight discrimination. It has grown to become the largest membership-based association for Hellenic-Americans and Philhellenes in the world.

From left, Archbishop Demetrios of America, Onassis Foundation President Anthony Papadimitriou, Archbishop Eirinaios of Crete and Pavlos Geroulanos, Greece's Minister of Culture, cutting the inaugurating ribbon.

Archbishop Demetrios, Ambassador Loukas Tsilas and Michael Janaris.

PHOTOS: ETA PRESS



ORIGINS OF EL GRECO EXHIBITION IS INAUGURATED

In the presence of Their Eminences, Archbishop Demetrios of America and Archbishop Eirinaios of Crete, Pavlos Geroulanos, Greece's Minister of Culture, Anthony Papadimitriou, President of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, Ambassador Loukas Tsilas, Director of the Onassis Foundation USA, and Aimilia Geroulanou, President of the Benaki Museum, the official opening of The Origins of El Greco: Icon Painting in Venetian Crete Exhibition took place last December at the Olympic Towers Atrium, New York. "In an era of political and cultural flux, El Greco and the other very important Cretan iconographers bring back a message of hope and creativity that stems from interaction and dialogue between different cultural and geographical environments," Mr. Papadimitriou stated in his speech. "The message is here: artistic genius will always be able to win over alienation and prejudice."

Put together for the Onassis Cultural Center by Dr. Anastasia Drandaki, Curator of the Byzantine Collection at the Benaki Museum, Athens, The Origins of El Greco comprises of 46 exceptional works from public and private collections in Greece, Europe, the United States and Canada, many of which traveled to the U.S. for the first time. Eleven icons come from the Holy Archdiocese of Crete and it's only the second time they are presented outside the island.

Among the Greek lenders to the exhibition are the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation, Athens; Antivouniotissa Museum, Corfu; Benaki Museum, Athens; Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens; the Holy Metropolis Church of the Dormition of the Virgin, Ermoupolis, Syros; Collection of Ecclesiastical Art, Saint Catherine of the Sinaites, Heraklion,

Crete; National Gallery of Athens; Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum, Athens; Public Library of Lefkada; Municipality of Heraklion, Crete; and Marianna Latsis Collection, Athens. Among the lenders in Europe, the United States and Canada are the Hellenic Institute of Venice; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg; and Queen's University, Kingston, Canada.

According to Dr. Drandaki, "the icon painters in the workshops on Crete in the 15th and 16th centuries were renowned for their skill in painting impeccable panels not only in the traditional Byzantine manner but also in a style inspired by Western models. Although a dialogue with Western painting was not new to Byzantine art, a number of special factors undoubtedly helped to encourage the immersion of Cretan artists in Western iconography and style, especially after the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453." The Origins of El Greco will illuminate these fascinating developments as seen in rare panel paintings that span the course of two centuries.

An illustrated 132-page catalogue, featuring entries on each painting in the exhibition and essays by curator Dr. Anastasia Drandaki; Olga Gratziou, Professor of Byzantine Art History, University of Crete; and Nicos Hadjinicolaou, Professor Emeritus of Art History, University of Crete, has been published for the occasion and is available at the Onassis Center Gift Shop.

The exhibition is organized in collaboration with the Benaki Museum in Athens and the Archdiocese of Crete and it is exclusively funded by the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA). The exhibition will be on view at the Onassis Cultural Center, 645 Fifth Avenue, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, until February 27. Entrance is on 51st or 52nd Street, between 5th and Madison Avenues, in Manhattan. Admission is free.

PHOTOS: ETA PRESS

40
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Cosmos FM Radio Celebrates 22nd Anniversary



From left, Stavros Soussou, Archbishop Demetrios of America, Maria Papadakis, Eliana Papadakis, Metropolitan Bishop Evangelos of New Jersey and Archbishop Eirineos of Crete. Second row from left are Costas Angeloudis, Spiros Dongaris, James Pantelidis and Polys Kyriakou.



Nicholas and Kathleen Chimicles during their presentation.



Anthoula Katsimatides, Mistress of Ceremonies.



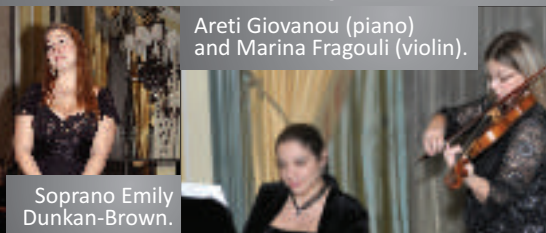
Members of the Board of Directors, from left, Spiros Dongaris, Polys Kyriakou, Stavros Soussou (chairman of the Board), James Pantelidis and former member of the Board Kostas Angeloudis.



Eliana Papadakis, James Stefatos, Vali Stavropoulos and James Armenakis.



Stavros Soussou (Chairman of the Board), Ioanna Giannopoulos (Cosmos FM Director of Operations), Maria Papadakis and Peter Krekoukis (Marathon Bank Vice-President-Cosmos Volunteer-Producer).



Areti Giovanou (piano) and Marina Fragouli (violin).



Soprano Emily Duncan-Brown.

Hellenic Public Radio COSMOS FM (HPR) 91.5 FM (G.A.E.P.I.S) celebrated its 22nd anniversary this past December with a lavish gala at New York's Pierre Hotel. The late Dr. Constantine Papadakis, former President of Drexel University, received posthumously the station's prestigious Phidippides Award for his passionate advocacy of Hellenism. His daughter Maria Papadakis and wife Eliana were on hand to accept the award. Previous honorees include Senator Paul Sarbanes, NYU President Emeritus John Brademas, Professor Edmund Keeley and Composer Mikis Theodorakis among others.

This year's event featured as honored guests Archbishop Demetrios of America and Archbishop Eirineos of Crete who had just arrived in New York. Actress Anthoula Katsimatides acted as Mistress of Ceremonies, while Soprano Emily Duncan-Brown, Pianist Areti Giovanou and Violinist Marina Fragouli serenaded the participants through a bouquet of beautiful opera arias. Nicholas and Kathleen Chimicles were the keynote speakers, offering a very moving synopsis on the life and marvelous accomplishments of the late Constantine Papadakis. Manny Velivasakis, the event's co-Chair, also contributed to this special eulogy by reciting memories from his visit to Papadakis native village in Crete. Stavros Soussou, the GAEPIS Chairman, opened the night and Metropolitan Bishop Evangelos of New Jersey did the Invocation. The Board of Directors of G.A.E.P.I.S. presents the Award to a person (or an organization) in recognition of his or her efforts in the advocacy of Hellenism. The Award was inspired by the Athenian herald Phidippides, who, Herodotus tells us, was dispatched by Miltiades, in 490 B.C., to request the aid of the Spartans in defending Athens from the Persians who had landed at Marathon. Phidippides is said to have

accomplished an incredible feat as he ran 200 kilometers in two days to reach Sparta. A few centuries after the battle of Marathon, it is Lucian, circa 170 A.D., who informs us that it was also Phidippides who ran to Athens to announce the victory to the city of Athens. Upon his arrival to Athens, Phidippides is said to have called out "Rejoice. We have won!" and then expired. The dedication and stamina of Phidippides to deliver the news serve as inspiration to Hellenic Public Radio in its work to bring quality coverage of the political, social, and cultural issues that concern Hellenic-Americans and philhellenes. COSMOS FM (www.gaepis.org) broadcasts under the aegis of the Greek American Educational Public Information System, Inc. (GAEPIS) -- a not-for-profit media, educational organization. GAEPIS was founded in 1987 to meet the needs of Hellenic Americans, serving the Hellenic-American community in all its diversity. By providing quality coverage of issues and informative and educational programs in both English and Greek, GAEPIS seeks to address the needs of recent immigrants from Greece and Cyprus, Americans of Hellenic descent and Philhellenes.



From left, Dennis Droushiotis, US-Cyprus Chamber of Commerce President, Renos Georgiou, Steven Tserpelis and Consul General Koula Sophianou

Cypriot Americans welcome new Consul General

The Cyprus Federation of America and The International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA) hosted a Welcome Reception for Koula Sophianou, the new Consul General of the Republic of Cyprus in New York. The event, held at the refurbished and always hospitable Pancyprian Sports Lounge in Astoria, drew a great number of Cypriot Americans, surpassing every expectation and despite the harsh weather conditions.



Consul General of Greece Aghi Balta with Peter Papanicolaou, President of the Cyprus Federation of America



Consul General of Cyprus Koula Sophianou addressing the reception in her honor



Philip Christopher during his welcoming remarks with Nick Mouyaris (right).

Introducing Ms. Sophianou, Philip Christopher, President of PSEKA, recalled that he met and welcomed all her predecessors in the years following the Turkish invasion, and he offered a briefing on the efforts under way on behalf of the Cypriot American community in bringing an end to the illegal occupation and continuous suffering. Christopher's parents, refugees from the city of Keryneia, died in the US without being able to return to their home in the occupied Cyprus. Peter Papanicolaou, on behalf of the Cyprus Federation of America, in his welcoming remarks pointed out how important the position of the Consul General in New York is in relation with the Cypriot American community and its various organizations. He also pledged his unconditional support to any effort or initiative that will help the cause's advancement and the people of Cypriot descent in the US. Consul General of Greece in New York, Aghi Balta, said that although she met Ms. Sophianou only recently, her good fame preceded her arrival, promising a very fruitful tenure. Representatives of various Cypriot and Greek American organizations in general, introduced themselves and offered their good wishes. Consul General Sophianou was impressed by the gathering, and visibly moved, recalled that as refugees from the occupied city of Famagusta, her family had received assistance from Cypriot American organizations! She promised to go beyond her means to advance the efforts for a just solution of the Cyprus problem and to make it easier for Cypriot Americans when dealing with Cyprus through the consulate. She concluded with the wish in her next post to represent a reunited Cyprus.

Ms Sophianou studied at Purdue University in Indiana where she received both her bachelor's (she was a recipient of a CASP-Cyprus America Scholarship Program-scholarship) and master of arts degrees with honors. During her graduate years she worked as an instructor of Spanish at the Foreign Language Department of Purdue's Liberal Arts School. She joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus in 1998. She served at the Protocol and Consular Affairs and the Political Affairs (International Organizations-Multilateral Affairs) Divisions of the Ministry respectively until the summer of 2000 when she was posted to the Embassy in Athens. She held the post of Consul from 2000-2002 and later she dealt with Political Affairs until September 2003 when she was posted to Cyprus's Permanent Representation of the European Union. Ms Sophianou was responsible for the relations between Cyprus and the European Parliament. During her term in Brussels she worked closely with Cypriot, Greek and foreign MEPS to promote issues of Cypriot interest, including issues that dealt with the different aspects of the Cyprus Problem (missing persons, enslaved, illegal settlers, usurpation of properties, etc.). She returned to the Ministry in September 2007 where she worked at the Cyprus Question and Turkey Division until November 2009 when she assumed her current post. Ms Sophianou is fluent in Greek, English and Spanish, has a good knowledge of French and passive knowledge of Italian.

"MOSTLY ORTHROS" BYZANTINE CHANT & FOLK MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Axion Estin Foundation, Inc. in collaboration with the CUNY-Graduate Center PhD programs in Music announces the "Mostly Orthros" Byzantine Chant & Folk Music Festival. The events are scheduled for the 2010 Martin Luther King Weekend (January 15-17, 2010). The events include the "Chanting Orthros Workshop", the Axion Estin publication of the "Great Theory on Music" by Chrysanthos from Madytos first published in Trieste in 1832, with translation and commentary by Dr. Katy Romanou (Senior Visiting Scholar of the Onassis Foundation USA, Associate Professor of Musicology, University of Athens, Greece), and other special interest presentations. The symposium will conclude with a benefit banquet to be held jointly by the Axion Estin Foundation and the Rev. Peter N. Kyriakos on Sunday January 17th, 2010, at the Newington Cropsey Foundation Museum, 25 Cropsey Lane, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York, 10706. This event's honoree will be Dr. Helen Evans, Mary & Michael Jaharis Curator for Byzantine Art of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, for her contributions to the preservation and promotion of the Byzantine Arts. For more information visit <http://www.axionestin.org> or contact the Axion Estin Foundation, c/o Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 10 Mill Road, New Rochelle, NY 10804, Tel (914) 235-6100 | Fax (914) 235-0708

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Καλή Ορεξη!

Young Professionals get together in Southern California



element of trust embedded in the fact that we are all partly Greek and we should use it to at least meet each other and if possible help each other," added Ryan Botsford, a financial advisor for Morgan Stanley Smith Barney in Santa Monica who recently moved to Los Angeles from his native island of Syros.

The most recent Orange County event, which took place in the upscale restaurant Charlie Palmer, was deemed a success as many new faces showed up. Peter Polydor, a Toronto native who recently moved to Southern California and is an Associate at Sail Venture Partners, a VC firm, was instrumental in organizing it after seeing the success of the first one. "We have a lot of Greek-Americans in Orange County but we hardly ever get the chance to meet each other at the same place and have fun. This event allows us to coordinate and get a great group of people together by taking the hard logistics out of it. It also helps people

who are transplants from Greece or other locations build a support network, a social base," he said.

According to Mizan, "it's important to engage every age group and provide our members with a sense of community. In our day and age, people are short of time and overworked. It's hard to relate in depth. We hope that by organizing some of these gatherings, we are providing the venue where some meaningful relationships can develop, either personal or professional, or both. This in turn will benefit the members and create this sense of community that most young people now are in search of."

The events have no entrance fee and are not for profit. They are usually held after work-hours at a restaurant or lounge conducive to talking and are open to everyone. The goal of the AHC is to have several of them every year and judging from the success of the first two, we should be expecting one rather soon!

The American Hellenic Council of California launched a new effort to create a platform of communication for young Greek-Americans by organizing networking mixers. The two events that have been held so far, one in Los Angeles and one in Orange County were very well received and had more than 60 young professionals in attendance.

"The goal is to attract people from all walks of life who want to network, meet new friends etc. in a casual environment where there is no pressure nor any expectations," said Alexander Mizan, Director of the American Hellenic Council, who planned the events.

"In an era where people go to random events they find on various Internet websites, we thought that this was something that could be well-received by young Greek Americans. We have an



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Peter Papagianakis is licensed to practice law in New York and Florida.

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Stratton Leopold (left) with John Aniston.

The Greek Heritage Society of Southern California premiered recently "The Promise of Tomorrow 1940-1960" at the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills. Close to 600 guests filled the lobby and enjoyed a wonderful reception catered by Daphne's Greek Cafe and Metaxa.

"The Promise of Tomorrow 1940-1960" premieres at Beverly Hills

John Aniston hosted the evening, with additional comments by Stratton Leopold. The filmmakers spoke about their experiences in making the documentary.

Thereafter, everyone watched and thoroughly enjoyed "The Promise of Tomorrow," part 2 of the organization's documentary trilogy, which continued the story of the Greek immigrant experience in Southern California. "The Promise of Tomorrow" chronicled the World War II years and the 1950s, and highlighted the first generation Greek Americans and the changing face of our community – Greek at home and American outside. Everyone witnessed how first generation Greek-Americans were determined to get an education and make a good life for themselves and their families. In a very short period of time, they have become prominent leaders in the arts, business, technology, academia, science and government – virtually all levels of contemporary American society.

In addition, the question of identity was brought up more than once, with such comments as "We are not just Greeks; we are not just Americans, but we are a new breed – Greek Americans!"

Collaborators in the project were writer and director Anna Giannotis, executive producers Zoye Fidler, Shelly Papadopoulos and John Gregory, Producers, Antonia Lianos, Gus Dalis and Harry Ratner, editor Rich Uber and composer Bob Luna, along with many hard-working volunteers and contributors.

To order DVD copies of "The Promise of Tomorrow, contact the Greek Heritage Society at greekheritage@hotmail.com. Their website is www.greekheritagesociety.org



Greek Heritage Society of Southern California Board members.

"Clean Monday" Celebration to Benefit The Gennadius Library

Monday, February 15, 2010, 6:30 pm, Molyvos, 871 Seventh Ave., New York City

Reserve early as space is limited.

All guests will receive a gift bag with a copy of *LENTEN SPECIALTIES: Recipes for Fasting in Style* by Jim Botsacos and Diane Kochilas along with a gift of Ambrosial Granola from Anastasia Hariclia Makoulis and Lenten delicacies from Joan Coukos's *Chocolat Moderne*. (One gift bag per couple or single guest.)

For further information, please contact Jane Conlon Goble, Development Officer, at Tel: (609) 683-0800 ext. 14. Fax: (609) 924-0578, or E-mail: jgoble@ascsa.org

Business Networking | Entrepreneurship | Innovation | Leadership

Hellenic Business Network (HBN) is a national, independent non-profit organization whose goal is to mobilize and utilize the expertise and resources available within our community to advance the commercial interests of all Hellenes and Philhellenes.

Hellenic Business Network was founded to focus on what drives Hellenism and business to success in the new global arena.

HBN is a **platform** for bringing together all the entrepreneurial dynamics – people, resources, business opportunities and commitments in the critical mass necessary to make a real difference to the lives of our Members, Friends and our community.

Our strategy is to accelerate entrepreneurship within the Hellenic community by connecting entrepreneurs with the resources they need for success: technology, seed money, markets, management, access to a unique network of partners, sponsors and members, and support services. HBN will represent the best competencies within the Hellenic business community, universities and organizations.

Business Networking

WHAT WE DO

HBN Networking After Work (HBN-NAW) – a program to provide a more casual venue for members and friends to network, learn, discuss, and create opportunities by holding monthly business networking events. The events will be held at some of the city's most popular venues from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and may include special themes.

HBN-NAW Boston: Held the third Thursday of each month at the Bistro Lounge of the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston.

HBN-NAW New York: See our calendar at <http://hbngroup.org/events>

HBN-NAW San Francisco: Held the third Thursday of each month at the Seasons Bar of the Four Seasons Hotel in San Francisco.

Entrepreneurship

HBN Big Idea Competition (HBN-BIC) – a program to transform the best ideas into successful companies through a process of business school class education, mentorship, team-building, and networking, culminating in a final contest where the winning business plan will be awarded a substantial sum, press coverage, and support – eventually leading to significant funding and a successful startup company formed.

Contact us at HBN-BIC@hbngroup.org or visit us at <http://hbngroup.org/bic>

Innovation

HBN Innovators (HBN-IN) – a program to support entrepreneurs, visionaries, and creative thinkers by holding themed networking events which foster community interaction.

Leadership

HBN Business Networking Symposium – The signature event of the year for every HBN chapter featuring the most successful Key note speakers of our times.

HBN Women Leaders Initiative (HBN WLI) – a new Initiative to nourish, support and promote women entrepreneurs and leaders. Contact us at HBN-WLI@hbngroup.org or visit us at <http://hbngroup.org/wli>

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Καλές Πιορτές - Happy New Year!

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Minister Louka Katseli, flanked by the Mayor of Piraeus Panagiotis Fasoulas, Mrs. Anastasia Paloumbi-Anagnostopoulou, President of the Museum, and Mr. Panos Laskaridis, Vice President of the Museum, is cutting the inaugurating ribbon.



Mrs. Marilena Laskaridis (right) and NEO's Margarita Vartholomeou

**Works by Volanakis
at the Maritime
Museum of Greece**

By Margarita Vartholomeou

An exhibition of paintings by Constantinos Volanakis (1837-1907), the poet of the sea as he became known, was inaugurated this past December at the Maritime Museum of Greece under the exclusive auspices of the Foundation of Aikaterini Laskaridis. This exhibition which is part of the celebration for the Museum's 60 years, was inaugurated by the Minister of Economy, Competitiveness and Maritime Affairs of Greece, Mrs. Louka Katseli.

A considerable number of dignitaries, ship owners, representatives of the art world and of course members and friends of the Museum, were present for the occasion. Among them, Panagiotis Fasoulas, Mayor

of Piraeus, Captain Vassilis Constantakopoulos, Mr. George Tsavlis, and the President of Titan Theodoros Papalexopoulos. Mrs Anastasia Paloumbi-Anagnostopoulou, President of the Museum, welcomed the guests while remarks were offered by the President of the Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation and Vice President of the Maritime Museum of Greece Panos Laskaridis, by the Mayor of Piraeus, Mr. Fasoulas and Minister Louka Katseli who was impressed by the art work of Volanakis. She also said to be aware of the problems the Maritime Museum is facing and promised to do as much as she can to help.

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**-HIDDEN IN THE SAND-
By Vasia Markides**

A documentary that chronicles the story of Turkish-occupied Famagusta in northern Cyprus. During the 1974 Turkish invasion, all Greek Cypriot Famagusta residents fled their city fearing for their lives. Since then, the occupation forces have sealed off Famagusta and keep it under strict military surveillance so that no one can return home. The film tackles the ugly effects of this ongoing injustice.

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Honoree Andrew Athens; NBC 5 news anchor Allison Rosati; Mae Calamos; NHM board member John Calamos; Honoree and NHM board member, Frank Kamberos



NHM board member and gala co-chair, Dean Papadakis; NHM board president, Aristotle Halikias

Owners representative, Evans Spillios; architect, Demetrios Stavrianos; Centaur president, Peter Alexopoulos



Dr. Thanasis Economou accepts the Paradigm Award from Chris Tomaras



Patricia Kara Mistress of Ceremonies

His Grace, Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, Chris Tomaras

John Vlahakis, NHM Executive Director Stephanie Vlahakis

qualified American born students of Greek descent who have never visited Greece will do so on trips organized and paid for by the Foundation, so they can see for themselves and appreciate their heritage as such knowledge is their birth - given right.

This year, the Foundation received a record number of applications from all over the U.S with the largest number showing GPAs of 4.0 and higher. Of the fifty one award recipients, twenty five with documented financial need received a \$10,000 scholarship grant each. The Invocation and a special prayer were offered by His Grace Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos, while well known Greek-American actress and spokes model Patricia Kara served as the evening's Emcee.

A second highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Foundation's annual PARADIGM AWARD to world-renowned NASA Senior Planetary Scientist, Dr. Thanasis Economou, whose name is linked with most of NASA's 50 year history. After accepting the award, Dr. Economou offered a fascinating presentation with images from space, including current NASA missions he is involved with.

Noted as Chicago Greek-American Community's most illustrious social event, a number of clergy, political and civic leaders attended, including: Amb. Anastasios Petrovas, Consul General of Greece in Chicago, Alderman Richard Mell. Also in attendance were the Honorable Maria Pappas, Cook County Treasurer, the Honorable Judge James Booras, the Honorable Judge Peggy Chiampas, the Honorable Judge Anna Helen Demacopoulos-Kosmas, Mrs. Maryanna Spyropoulos, Commissioner of the Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, Mr. Michael Halikias, Mr. John Calamos Sr., 2007 Paradigm Award Recipient and Chairman and CEO of Calamos Investments, Mrs. Eleni Bousis, President of the Greek American Rehabilitation & Nursing Centre, Mr. Demetrios Kozonis, Chairman of the Chicago Sister City - Athens Committee, Mr. Endy Zemenides, Senior Advisor to Illinois State Treasurer Alexi Giannoulas and Vice President of The International Coordinating Committee "Justice for Cyprus", and Mr. Gregory Pappas, President of the Greek America Foundation.



2009 PanHellenic Award Recipients



BUILDING A LEGACY IN CHICAGO

The National Hellenic Museum's fundraising gala, Building a Legacy, was recently held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Chicago. About 500 guests enjoyed an evening that began with an intimate cocktail reception, passed hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction. Guests then headed into the dining room for an elegant sit-down dinner. The Gala was emceed by NBC 5 news anchor, Allison Rosati, and co-chaired by Dean and Katie Papadakis of Kaplan, Papadakis, and Gournis PC, in Chicago. The Museum has recently undergone a rebranding effort, acquiring a new name, logo, and mission; connecting generations through Greek history, culture, and art.

The National Hellenic Museum, which is currently located in a 10,000 foot space on the fourth floor at 801 W. Adams Street, has been fundraising to build a new, state-of-the-art multi-level museum on the corner of Halsted and Van Buren Streets in Greektown. The Museum was able to make light of the long-in-the-works project with a

skit performed by Second City that lampooned the arduous process. It was announced at the Gala that Centaur Company CEO Spiro Tsarapas and President Peter Alexopoulos recently won the bid to proceed.

The evening honored two men who have contributed significantly to the museum's development. Andrew A. Athens, founder of Metron Steel, and the United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC), an organization that was instrumental in helping acquire the property for the Museum, and Frank S. Kamberos, founder of the Treasure Island chain of grocery stores, and Museum board member who established the digital, interactive Frank S. Kamberos Oral History Center at the Museum.

The excitement level rose palpably when National Hellenic Museum board president, Aris Halikias, introduced a video that took viewers on a virtual, three-dimensional tour which revealed in stunning detail the new museum's design and interior. The project

architect is Demetrios Stavrianos, of RTLK and Associates, who was on hand that evening to celebrate the formal unveiling of the new museum.

Attendees included executives John and Mae Calamos (Calamos Investments); Peter and Ethel Parthenis (Grecian Delight); Peter and Paula Fasseas (Metropolitan Bank Group and PAWS); Aris and Lisa Halikias (Republic Bank); and John and Niki Marks (Mark IV Realty).

The Gala raised over \$250,000 in operating funds. Last October, excavation commenced for the construction of the new building at 333 S. Halsted Street.

The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 am to 4 pm and Saturday from 11 am - 4 pm. Suggested general admission is \$5 for adults and seniors. Children 12 years of age and under and members are admitted free. Information about exhibitions, programs and special events is available on the museum website at www.nationalhellenicmuseum.org.

Panhellenic Scholarship Foundation Awards Gala

The Awards Gala took place at the prestigious Union League Club of Chicago and was filled to capacity by family, friends and philhellenes wanting to share in the PanHellenic Scholarship Foundation's celebration of fifty one of the "best and brightest" Greek American students. All of the students were inducted into the PanHellenic Honors Society and as members will have the opportunity to communicate, network, promote education, stay connected and preserve their Hellenic Heritage.

Foundation Founder and Chairman Chris P. Tomaras in his address to the audience revealed his future plans that include an endowment fund that will provide benefits to students in perpetuity, and a program titled "Birthright Greece" by which



Gala Dinner 2009 Union League Club of Chicago



Anna Giannoulas, Eleni Bousis, Demetris Bousis, Paula Fasseas



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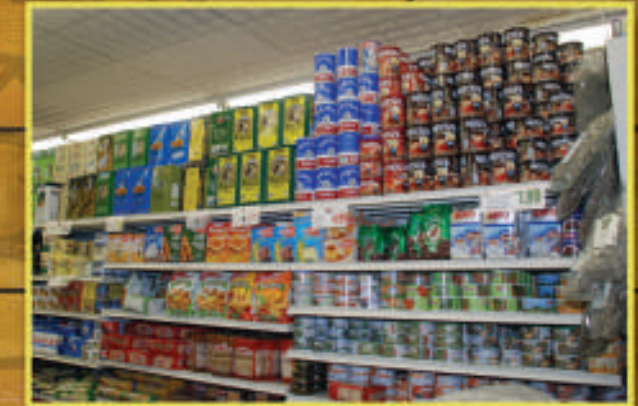
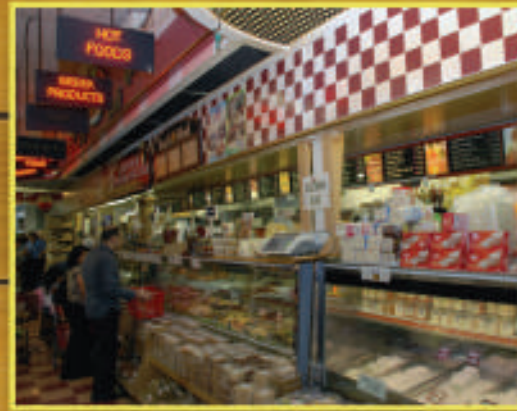
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Maria A. Pardalis

Stuffed Fillet of Flounder with Arugula and Fennel Salad

Happy New Year! After indulging in sweets and alcohol during the holidays, it is now time to detox and that begins with eating. No, I'm not talking about going on a crazy fad diet or trying to lose 10 pounds in 3 days. New Year's resolutions lead to disappointment because people try to accomplish too much too soon. Quickly cross out the word diet from your list and replace it with healthy living. Following parts of the Mediterranean lifestyle will help you boost your longevity, reduce the risk of heart disease, and help you lose weight while eating delicious foods. The cuisine is one of the healthiest in the world and extremely simple to create in your own home.

Fish is a key component of the Mediterranean diet and essential for good health. Ring in the New Year with heart-friendly flounder. These white flat fish are appetizing and are very easy to cook. When purchasing flounder, it is important that it almost looks alive with its eyes intact, gills reddish and its skin moist. This low fat fish is best paired with nutrient and phytochemical packed arugula and fennel salad. If you haven't tried fresh fennel, you must try it!

This elegant dish is wonderful for company but easy enough to make for a family weeknight dinner.



Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

Serves 4 to 6

Fennel and Arugula Salad with Toasted Walnuts

Ingredients

- 2 medium fennel bulbs
- 2 cups baby arugula
- ¼ cup toasted walnuts
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- freshly ground black pepper
- coarse salt

Directions

1. Trim outer layer of fennel bulbs and cut stalks from tops. Preferably using a mandolin or sharp knife, slice fennel as thinly as possible. Discard tough core.
2. Place sliced fennel in a salad bowl and add baby arugula, and walnuts.
3. For the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together lemon juice, zest, olive oil, and season with salt and pepper.
4. Drizzle dressing over fennel mixture and toss well.

Stuff Fillet of Flounder

Ingredients

- 10 (5 oz) flounder fillets, fresh
- 16 ounces fresh baby spinach
- 1 Vidalia onion, finely chopped
- 4 scallions, finely chopped
- ½ cup fresh dill, chopped
- 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- Paprika, for seasoning
- 1/5 cup extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Rinse flounder fillets and pat dry. Season both sides with salt and pepper and set aside.
3. In a large saucepan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onions and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes or until slightly browned.
4. Stir in scallions and baby spinach. Cook for 2 minutes or until spinach is wilted.
5. Remove pot from heat and drain excess liquid. Add breadcrumbs, feta and dill to spinach mixture and stir until well blended.
6. Spread about ½ cup of spinach filling on the end of each fillet. Roll up and secure with a toothpick.
7. Carefully line up fillets, seam side down, in a lightly oiled baking dish. Sprinkle with paprika and add 15 ice cubes. Cover dish with aluminum foil and bake for 25 to 30 minutes.
8. Remove foil and place baking dish back in the oven. Broil for 3 to 5 minutes or until fillets are lightly browned.

Remove toothpicks and serve with a generous portion of arugula and fennel salad. Lighter fish like flounder go best with white wines. Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc compliment this meal perfectly.

Kali Orexi and Kali Hronia!!

Did you know...

Fennel is one of the oldest known diet remedies? Ancient Greeks used the seeds to prevent obesity and drank fennel tea to prevent bad breath!

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"Songs for the Rain and the Clouds"

The music and visual program "Songs for the Rain and the Clouds" was presented recently by Alexandra Skendrou, soprano, and Manolis Papisifakis, pianist, at the Church of St Mark's in the Bowery, East Village. Sotiris Melissis had the musical supervision and the songs arrangements of the recital. Visual Artists Arthur Hughes, Nikos Makarounas and Stefanos Zannis drew images inspired by the songs, while multimedia artists Aspa Papazaharia and Ben Pollard created an artistic video by using these images.

The video was projected on the church main wall.

A diverse audience, among them the Consul of Greece to New York, Mr. Evangelos Kyriakopoulos, showed up for this memorable presentation, offering accolades to the artists.

Soprano Alexandra Skendrou holds a master's degree from Mannes College of Music. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, Bruno Walter Auditorium-Lincoln Center, Queens Theater in the Park, Merkin Hall, Miller Theatre, Amato Opera, The National Arts Club, National opera house of Greece and St. Georg Church in Ernen Switzerland among others.

Recently Ms. Skendrou performed in the recital Love Invincible in Battle, with excerpts from the operatic music by Mikis Theodorakis. This recital was organized with great success by the Cathedral School of the Holy Trinity for its 60th year anniversary.

Ms. Skendrou contributes with many Greek- American foundations and institutions that promote Hellenic Culture.



PHOTO: ETA PRESS

*Greetings and
Happy New Year
from New Orleans!*



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for
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As a proud Greek-American with strong roots, I am very excited to be a candidate for Mayor of New Orleans, where America's first Greek-Orthodox Church was founded by seamen and merchants who yearned to share their culture and their Orthodox heritage.

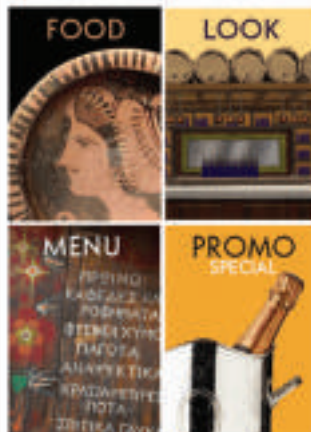
It is a great honor to be taking part in an historic election that will determine the future of one of the world's most remarkable cities.

May your New Year be a wonderful time of success, the realization of your dreams and good health.

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The Cathedral Philoptochos Board with the dignitaries and honoree.

PHOTO: ETA PRESS

Philoptochos honors Helen Nicozisis

The Archdiocesan Cathedral Philoptochos Society celebrated its 76th Annual Chrysanthemum Ball honoring Helen Bakalis Nicozisis, at the lavish Metropolitan Club of New York. Mrs. Nicozisis is a recipient of the St. Paul Medal Award, the 2003 Athenagoras Human Rights Award on behalf of OCMC and 2005 Humanitarian Award of the American Hellenic Institute.

A native New Yorker, Helen is married to Louis Nicozisis. They both are members of the Annunciation Church in Lancaster, PA, and St. Mark Church in Boca Raton, FL. They are also members of the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund on which Helen has served and chaired committees related to philanthropy. Mr. & Mrs. Nicozisis have three children: Jeannie Arida, Philip and Jonathan and three grandchildren: Elena, Christina and William Arida.

The Chrysanthemum Ball is the primary fundraising event for the Cathedral Philoptochos. All sponsors and contributions enable the Cathedral Philoptochos to carry out its philanthropic mission.



PHOTO: ETA PRESS

From left Fr. Frank Marangos, Cassandra Romas, Louis Nicozisis, Helen Nicozisis, Stella Pantelidis and Athena Economou.



Prof. Nadia Seremetakis (right) with Pan Macedonian Studies Center Director Nancy Biska.



Prof. Seremetakis at the Macedonian House


The Pan Macedonian Studies Center in New York hosted recently Professor C. Nadia Seremetakis, an innovative and well-published anthropologist with a vast array of scholarly and poetic achievements. The Center's Director Nancy Biska introduced Dr. Seremetakis who in turn held an interdisciplinary lecture "On the Branches of Memory: Feeling, Materiality and the Environment," spanning ethnography, archaeology, physical anthropology, and environmental studies. A Q&A session followed.

Currently at the new University of Peloponnesus in the School of Humanities and Cultural Studies, Professor Seremetakis' teaching experience includes institutions in the United States and Europe. Additionally, she has served as advisor to the Ministry of Public Health in Greece and as an advisor to the World Health Organization.

An experienced academic with more than 25 years of scholarly research and publications, Professor Seremetakis is the author of the award-winning *The Last Word* (1991) and *The Senses Still* (1996), in which she probes the boundaries of anthropological methodology, theory, and fieldwork. She is also an acknowledged poet and translator, and has been the topic of a documentary film on Greek national television.

The PAN MACEDONIAN STUDIES CENTER, INC., a non-profit 501(c)(3) Organization, is located in 149-14th Ave, Whitestone, NY 11357-1730. Telephone number is 718-747-0488 and its website www.panmacedonian.info





Best Wishes to all members of the
**Hellenic American
 National Council**
as well as the entire Omeogenia
*Happy, Healthy and Prosperous
 New Year*

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Sotiris Doganis

Sotiris Doganis, one of the most significant new voices in Greece, presented recently his art-song album, titled "ΣΤΗ ΜΟΝΑΧΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΡΘΟΥΤΗ", which was released by "SEISTRON." It contains a full cycle of lyrical songs, with their breath resting on the eternal man and his fate, abolishing isolation and cultivating companionship. The melodies, delicately embracing the deeper meanings of the lyrics, find their ideal expression through the unique performance of Sotiris Doganis along with the great Cretan lyre player – performer Vasilis Skoulas and the exquisite Sofia Tserou. Mihalis Terzis composed the songs, Anna Bithikotsi wrote the lyrics and Mihalis Nikoloudis did the orchestration.

A Professor of Byzantine Music and accomplished Cantor, Doganis was born and raised in Alones, Rethymno, on the island of Crete. His voice is so deeply connected with the forms of his place of origin, that its expression personifies the root, a wonderful amalgam of the elements which constitute tradition, as it emerges from the Byzantium and reaches our days.

Doganis grew up in an environment in which his daily life was connected with song. Along with his first words, he started singing. His teachers were his anonymous fellow Cretans and the great troubadours of Cretan Music Kostas Moudakis, Thanasis Skordalos, Manolis Kaklis and others. His role model was Nikos Xylouris. Being a member of music-dance group "Arkadi" he started singing and "traveling" always further on. They year 1993 was a landmark for him, as he was acquainted with the Romiosini performer Grigoris Bithikotsis and since then the Sir of Greek song, Anna Bithikotsi and Kostas Nikolopoulos led him in art song, as he worked alongside acknowledged artists of Greek music. His career reached a top in 1996 with the release of his first personal record, titled "Horos I Zoi" (Life is a Dance) with lyrics by Anna Bithikotsi and music by Kostas Nikolopoulos, featuring the performance of Grigoris Bithikotsis himself and with internationally acclaimed Yanni trusting Sotiris Doganis with the melody of "Desire" for the homonymous song.



John S. Frankis and Joanna Patilis



The hosts, Nick and Marilena Katopodis



Vangelis and Anna Maria Gerasimou



Nick Katopodis, George Avramopoulos, Gregory Sioris and Spiros Exaras



Frej and Ani Hagobian



Christos Kavvadas, Katerina Bastaki and Faye.



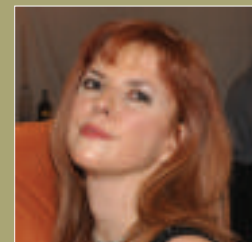
Nick Katopodis, Niko Sahlaras, Evangelos Gerasimou, Pete Mamais, Thomas Tsamis and Frej Hagobian

Christmas Season in Manhasset

PHOTOS: ETA PRESS



Mr. Lovely, John Kouros

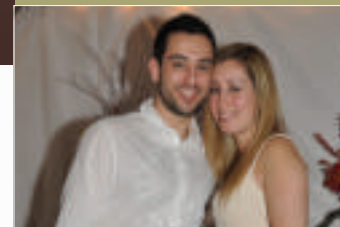


Lorraine Cancro

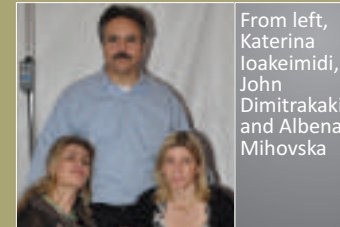
Nick and Marilena Katopodis welcomed family and friends at their home in Manhasset this past December to celebrate the Season and the conclusion of another fruitful year. Food, music, dance, cigars, even ...hookah at a specially built up outside pavillion just for the purpose, but most importantly friendship and high spirits were in abundance, keeping the party going until the early hours of the next day. It's been a tradition for them since they got married and moved there. Spending time with family and friends is what makes Christmas so special!



Stacy Anagnostopoulou, Adela Bazenikas and Maria Elena Palau-Rhompotis



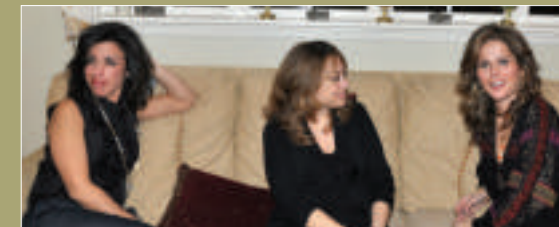
John Frankis and Stacy Anagnostopoulou



From left, Katerina Ioakeimidi, John Dimitrakakis and Albena Mihovska



Aggie Sahlaras, Fay Tsamis and Marilena Katopodis



Maria Mamais, Aggie Sahlaras and Marilena Katopodis



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THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS: THE LANCE OF LEADERSHIP

The most recent inauguration of the New York and San Francisco chapters of the Hellenic Business Network (HBN) provide the Hellenic community across America further opportunities for its leadership in the marketplace, its education and research excellence, and creative entrepreneurial success to be nationally and internationally recognized. Apart from accelerating entrepreneurship, the primary goal of the newly formed networks is to represent the best competencies within the marketplace, universities and organizations. As a member of HBN's Advisory Board I have been asked what role the Church can play in this collaborative vision. What counsel and/or advice can Christian Orthodoxy hope to provide Hellenic business leaders throughout the country? I believe that, at the very least, the current focus on making wise decisions to reduce unethical financial practices while advancing servant-centered business models in the marketplace should provide Orthodox Christian leaders a most crucial and welcome seat at the deliberations.

According to a nationwide study of prominent U.S. presidents and CEOs conducted by Management Science and Development Inc., one of the top two leadership skills of successful executives is their ability to analyze and resolve complex problems. Effective leaders are reported to probe deliberately and to act swiftly. Management experts insist that such valiant leaders have the ability to make difficult decisions because they are not afraid to analyze and probe the concerns and issues that confront their organizations.

The long historical experience of the Orthodox Church provides Hellenic American entrepreneurs in leadership positions important insights from which to envision successful futures for their companies, universities, and organizations. In particular, the Church's celebration of the life of Saint Longinos (October 16), the centurion who pierced the side of Jesus' body while it hung on the Holy Cross, provides business as well as Christian leaders a wonderful decision-making approach. While no name is given for him in the Gospel narratives, the moniker attributed to him by the early Christian community is most probably the Latinized form of the Greek word for spear or lance (longche).

Scripture informs us that in order to certify his death, Longinos pierced the side of Jesus with his spear. The wound immediately produced the necessary proof – blood and water. As a result of the darkened sky, the rent temple veil, earthquake and manner in which Jesus accepted death, Longinos was enlightened and thereby empowered to offer his now famous declaration of faith: "Truly, this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47)!

The lancing of Jesus is so significant that it is liturgically enacted each time the Holy Gifts are prepared for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. While the Orthodox celebrant is arranging the wine, water and bread during the Office of Oblation (Proskomide), he inserts a special lance-type utensil into the portion of the bread designated as the Body of Christ (Amnos) saying: "One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side and immediately there came forth blood and water. And he who saw it bore witness, and his witness is true."

This on-going liturgical thrust of Longinos' lance into the side of Jesus (Amnos) exemplifies the need for Church and business leaders to properly probe the pastoral, administrative, and political climate of their respective environments. The effect of such intimate lance-style investigations provide the necessary prerequisites for effective decision making that may be classified into five major approaches: (a) authoritative, (b) facilitative, (c) consultative, (d) delegative, and (e) pastoral.

The authoritative decision-making approach occurs when leaders simply make a decision based on their best understanding of a given situation and then announce it to their subordinates. The authoritative style is most appropriate to situations in which leaders possess the appropriate information and experience necessary to make the right decisions. On the other hand, the facilitative decision-making style involves a cooperative effort between leaders and subordinates. In this option decisions are based on shared input from all parties.

The consultative decision-making approach allows leaders to make the final call after receiving input from knowledgeable and willing subordinate advisers. The delegative strategy occurs when a leader delegates decision-making authority to a knowledgeable subordinate or subordinates. It goes without saying that subordinates who receive delegated decision-making powers should also have sufficient knowledge and experience to make informed decisions. The attractiveness of delegation as a decision-making strategy grows as a function of organizational size and complexity.

Finally, the Orthodox Pastoral Action (OPA) Model includes a four-phase approach to decision-making that is based on the two primary and complementary sources of insight that flow from the pierced side of Jesus. An ancient icon of Holy Friday wonderfully illustrates the OPA Model's theological underpinning. The sacred image depicts two hovering angels on either side of the Holy Cross. Each angel holds a chalice. While one angel receives the blood flowing from the crucified body of Jesus, the other cups the water. The message is clear. The sacramental grace offered from both the baptismal font and the liturgical chalice originates at the pierced side of Christ. In the final analysis, however, the Church, as well as the entire Cosmos, is sustained by the blood and water of Christ's Body. Decisions for every religious and secular issue, problem or concern, should therefore take into serious consideration one or both of these sacramental sources.

It is apparent that the probing lance of Longinos provides a powerful decision-making image that may help remind leaders, who choose to imbue their entrepreneurial visions with Christian principles, to seriously consider an issue's pastoral implications prior to determining future scenarios. Does the problem being studied improve or deter the process of new life for employees and vendors? How will the decisions made affect the wellbeing of constituents, clients or consumers? Within a climate of resource scarcity, financial fear and lack of corporate trust, it would be beneficial to ascertain the degree to which decisions will affect the pastoral efficacy of our nation's institutions and organizations. The four-phase OPA model provides the necessary filters for successfully probing and effectively determining the most appropriate futures.

The first phase of the OPA Decision Making Model is called Ortho-poria. In this initial step leaders focus their attention on evaluation, investigation, and the honest probing of problems and concerns. The word poria describes a process of diligent examination that would make a specific problem capable of innumerable solutions. Unfortunately, when pursuing such information, entrepreneurs often defer the insight of religious wisdom to the voice of secular organizational expertise. While knowledge of social science, administrative and organizational disciplines may be respectfully consulted, leadership deliberations should always bend the knee to pastoral conditions, implications and insights. In short, while beneficial, secular systems of expertise that are, unfortunately, preoccupied with "bottom-line" scenarios, must never be allowed to dilute the Christian principles of honesty, care and love.

The second phase of the OPA Decision Making approach is Ortho-poiesis. Poiesis is etymologically derived from the ancient Greek term poio, which means "to make." The word describes the process of production, creativity and program/strategy formation. The philosophers Plato and Aristotle contrasted poiesis from praxis (doing or practical activity). Whereas praxis only requires skill, poiesis requires virtue. The idea is that during the creative production phase (poiesis), the ends are set. Ortho-poiesis, therefore, requires knowing which activities and ends are worth pursuing. In this step leaders use their God-inspired creativity to forge new direction based on preferred future scenarios.

Ortho-paidia is the third phase of the OPA decision-making process. Every decision has instructive implications. While they may not have direct didactic impact, decisions can greatly affect the social and political systems of every organization, group or cluster. The distant ripples of what may, at first, appear as benign and un-connected decisions to problems and concerns may later adversely affect an organization's social climate. The lack of capacity among entrepreneurs to acknowledge and seriously consider the power of such forces frequently contributes to many unintended difficult political situations among clients, constituents and employees. Ortho-paidia stresses the need to analyze the actual and potential educational impact of leadership decisions being considered.

The final phase of the OPA decision-making approach is Ortho-praxis. Praxis is the process by which an objective, strategy, or program is enacted or practiced. In Ancient Greek the word praxis refers to activity engaged in by free men. Aristotle believed that there were three basic activities of man: theoria, poiesis and praxis. He suggested that there were three types of knowledge that corresponded to these kinds of activity: theoretical (truth); poetical (production); and practical (action). Aristotle further divided practical knowledge into ethics, economics and politics. He also distinguished between eupraxia (good praxis) and dyspraxia (bad praxis, misfortune).

Hellenic American entrepreneurial leaders should pursue a praxis that is right and virtuous. Ethical decisions however must be translated into decisive action. Unfortunately, many organizations all too often suffer from paralysis rather than timely action (praxis). Fearful of making an unintentional mistake, leaders are often tangled in a web of over or under analysis of competing strategic visions. Tragically, such leaders end up micromanaging all conclusions while lower-level directors and their constituents impatiently wait longer and longer for decisions to trickle-down.

There is no greater threat to an organization's enduring stability and effectiveness than that caused by an insalubrious aversion to risk-taking. However, while entrepreneurs should never resolve to irresponsibly embark into hazardous territory, judgments based on diligent analysis and prayerful evaluation must quickly be transferred into faithful praxis!

Two piercings occurred at Golgotha on Holy and Great Friday. While a sharp lance pierced the body of a crucified prisoner, divine love probed and thereby changed the heart of a military commander - a leader! All Hellenic American leaders, whether in the Church, profit or non-profit sectors, would therefore be well served to consider their own readiness to probe . . . as well as their willingness to be probed in such a similar fashion!

Rev. Dr. Frank Marangos is the Dean of the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New York City. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the New York Chapter of the Hellenic Business Network (HBN). He is also an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Saint John's University (NY).



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NEW BOOK AND FILM TO SPOTLIGHT GREEK HEROISM IN WWII

PHOTO: GEORGIA IVAS



Jimmy Stavrakis (left) and Aris Melissaratos at the Blue Hill Tavern, in Baltimore.

In a shattered Europe after World War II, many Greeks dreamed of making new lives in America. Among those who dared to do so were the parents of Aris Melissaratos and Jimmy Stavrakis, two friends based in Baltimore, Md., that are industrial successes of the Greek-American postwar generation. They now have teamed up with internationally award-winning writer N.J. Slabbert to produce a multimedia project, THE SWORD OF ZEUS: THE HIDDEN STORY OF HOW GREECE SHAPED WORLD WAR II.

Em Saks, Project Director for Slabbert's publisher, Montagu House, has invited Hellenes worldwide to share family WWII memories for possible use in a ZEUS film, books, educational web site and interactive DVD. Details can be found at <http://www.theswordofzeus.info/>.

Slabbert's advisory team, chaired by Melissaratos, includes former Walt Disney Imagineering Executive Vice President Gilbert F. Decker, who has also served as Chairman of the U.S. Army Science Board; former NATO liaison expert and Greek Army Brigadier General Stergios Smirlis; and industrialist Dr. Peter Yiannos, a well-known leader in Hellenic cultural organizations.

The first ZEUS book, due out in summer, is a prose narrative that will illuminate Greece's WWII role in what Slabbert believes will be unexpected ways. A graphic novel will follow, "using illustrations to tell the tale of Greece's role in a way that will appeal to a wide band of age groups." The related film will be shot in Greece and elsewhere in Europe.

Melissaratos, senior advisor to the president of Johns Hopkins University, is a key champion of the project, which he sees as "a major Hellenic event." He was Maryland's Business and Economic Development Secretary from 2003 to 2007. He worked for Westinghouse Electric Corporation 32 years, retiring as Chief Technology Officer and Vice President for Science and Technology. Earlier he was Chief Operations Officer for the company's Defense Electronics Group, responsible for \$3.2 billion dollars in sales.

Stavrakis is CEO and founder of Adcor, a manufacturing concern serving the aerospace, telecommunications, defense and other industries. He credits his entrepreneurial skills to the inspiration of his immigrant father, Kosta Stavrakis, who built a machine shop business in the 1960s. He also co-owns Baltimore's elegant Blue Hill Tavern restaurant, having previously co-owned Finn Maccool's, a successful pub on Washington, D.C.'s Capitol Hill.

Stavrakis decided to become a funder of ZEUS after learning about the project from Melissaratos. "I was excited," he explains, "by the very title of the project and by the concept of honoring my parents' generation of Greeks who went through WWII and the challenges that followed it."

ARCHBISHOP DEMETRIOS OF AMERICA THE FIRST DECADE 1999-2009



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This beautifully produced book presents a full spectrum of the activities in the life of the Greek Orthodox Church in America from the years 1999-2009, the first ten years of Archiepiscopal Ministry of Archbishop Demetrios of America. The 368-page hard cover book contains 537 photographs, all taken by the Official Photographer of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Dimitrios Panagos, and masterfully compiled & edited by Revekka Papadopoulou.

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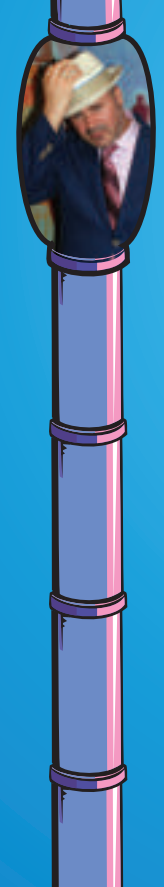


Wishing all Happy, Prosperous and Healthy New Year!

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PERISCOPE THANK YOU!



Once more my column has been suffocated; this time, actually, I'm left with only a small window, just the size that I need to offer you my New Year wishes! So, besides the usual stuff, I hope this year will be full of creative challenges and opportunities that will help us become more real if not "better" people. As former California Treasure Phil Angelides put it in a conversation with me a while ago, "now is the time to produce real wealth". He referred of course to the economic downturn and the collapse of the built-on-sand financial structure that led even giants like Lehman Brothers to oblivion. I, however, would apply that urge to people as well and to the creations that go beyond money-making. In other words, it's time to produce real wealth in music, in literature, in theater, in movies, in food, of course, in thought, and the list goes on for much longer than this space can hold. We need more real wealth in this era of superficiality and that will certainly will induce more real people, as well, in turn to choose more real leaders and our priorities in life will too be more real and realistic.

I hope this past Holiday Season you had the opportunity to enjoy some great company, nice drinks and food, and last but not least, a few aromatic cigars that remind us of both life's beauty and frugality as we watch that handmade masterpiece go up in smoke for our pleasure. What remains after a while is only a vague aftertaste that sooner or later will be washed out in another drink. We'll be lucky if our lives will manage to leave even this little aftertaste to others, so if you really think it over, there is no reason for so much stress when it comes to perpetuating our name for generations to come. In some cases it's mere vanity, since human memory and history have a strange kind of justice that doesn't allow for either interpretations or misinterpretations. In other words, don't ask, don't tell, or something like that, to be a little Clinton nostalgic.

Anyway, besides extending my New Year wishes, let me also say a big thank you to all NEO supporters that this year too stepped up to the plate, not to eat, but to help, producing the biggest NEO issue ever, with a record number of 72 pages! It's true, when we started this month's edition I thought we would be lucky to do the same as last year, given the harsh economic conditions. Mais non! You surprised us once more and we thank you for that, while renewing our commitment to making this magazine even better and yes, more real!

DEMETRIOS RHOMPOTIS
dondemetrio@neomagazine.com

Silence in Russia on the 60 Minutes program with Bartholomew

By Sergey Bychkov

A few days before Christmas, one of the most popular U.S. television news programs CBS 60 Minutes provided a prime time segment on Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. In it, he touched on some of the most pressing problems and not only for the Orthodox people. Of course, it would be in vain to expect a comment from Moscow on this unprecedented occasion.

Last December, a seven day pilgrimage of the Russian Orthodox Church to holy Christian sites in Asia Minor (Turkey) was concluded. It was a group of 71 pilgrims headed by Moscow Patriarchate's Secretary on Overseas Parishes, Bishop Mark of Egorevsk. It would be naive to think that the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and its Department of External Church Relations (DECR) did not watch or hear about the program. Especially since so many Russians were in Turkey!

On December 19th, at the original Church of St. Nicholas, in the historic city of Myra (Demre-Turkey), Bishop Mark officiated at the Divine Liturgy. About the same time, at the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George in Constantinople (Istanbul), His All Holiness Bartholomew sang a prayer together with priests of the ROC. The seven days pilgrimage ended on the 21st of December.

Such eloquent silence is evidence that the leadership of DECR either had nothing to say or that the work of this synod establishment is paralyzed by the recent restructuring. The strangest thing is that consultations of the DECR, headed by Archbishop Hilarion, with representatives of the Ecumenical Patriarch on the forthcoming Pan-Orthodox Council in Chambésy, continue!

On the official Russian Church websites we are informed of the new musical pieces composed by Hilarion and being presented here and there but there is an absolute silence on the most important events in the life of Orthodoxy. Why?

Dr. Sergey Bychkov, a journalist, is a historian of the Russian Orthodox Church and author of numerous books on the subject.

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Interview with Fashion Designer Esther Nash

Photo: Philly

Last month's "Recessionista Fashionista" article had many of you buzzing and emailing me requesting more budget friendly fashion tips. Although I adore haute couture and know how to shop while remaining recession friendly, I am not an expert. That is why I decided to feature Esther Nash, an artsy fashion designer who is signed with Ikon Model Management's Celebrity Division and has her very own "Recession Collection" clothing line. Esther and her designs have been featured in over 300 publications nationally and internationally. She designs jewelry, sportswear, rock star glam wear, resort wear, swim wear, hats and more.

I was intrigued to learn that she is Greek-American and not only designs clothing but also struts down the catwalk in them. Esther's designs are very futuristic, heavily textured and colorful. I had the opportunity to interview Esther to discuss her career and frugal fashion tips.

MAP: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself, who is Esther Nash?

EN: A 4th generation New Yorker known as a celebrity fashion expert, socialite, fashion host, and model.

MAP: You mentioned that you are part Greek, however you are identified as only being "Jewish and a Latina" in the media. Why have you never acknowledged being Greek?

EN: My parents divorced when I was very young and I was raised by my mother. I was never told that I am half Greek. I later learned that my father is 100% Greek from Athens, where he resides to this day.

MAP: Why should we feature you in NEO?

EN: Greek society has heavily contributed to culture and the arts and NEO's readers will be very proud to have me as one of their representatives. I have received awards and scholarships from the National Academy of Design and NYC Art Students League. I am proud to say that I graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology and took part in the Cooper Union Portfolio intensive summer program.

MAP: What inspired you to become a fashion designer?

EN: I love art, beauty, style, fashion and color. I already had two art gallery presentations in SoHo and in Chelsea of my fashion art work. I am planning on a third Fashion Art

Presentation for 2010-2011. Expect an invite!

MAP: Who is your favorite designer and why?

EN: Betsey Johnson, Alexander McQueen, and Stella McCartney. They are all individuals and think outside the box just like I do.

MAP: Tell us about your fashion mantra.

EN: My fashion mantra is: "Be seen and be remembered! Make the impression of a lifetime the first time with your Esther Nash

design. Sparkle and shine like the superstar that you are!"

MAP: Your clothing line Babydoll appeared in Sex in the City, how did you manage that?

EN: That is top secret. I will give you a hint, when you are talented they find you. My designs have also been seen on Playboy TV, MTV, VH1, Gossip Girl and Ugly Betty.

MAP: What advice can you give to other Greek-Americans that wish to take a similar career path to yours?

EN: Never let go of your dreams or you will always look back in regret. If you have to work minimal jobs at a time to make your dream a reality, then do it. Do not be afraid of being alone, you must sacrifice and be disciplined if you want to accomplish greatness. You may have to say goodbye to friends, family and significant others. You can't have everything so you must choose wisely.

MAP: Have you ever participated in Fashion Week?

EN: Absolutely! I even walked down the runway for Anna Wintour in one of my shows. I recently participated in "The Chocolate", a well known charity that selects designers and pastry chefs to create a fashion design 60% chocolate and 40% fabric.

MAP: What are you working on now? You have accomplished so much at such a young age, what is next?

EN: Showing my new line of Rock Star Glam Wear, preparing for my role as a fashion host for TV, meeting with film directors, finishing my autobiography and first line of Fashion Self Help books. I am also raising funds for my Not-for-profit organization (Art Gallery for Youth). My PR gal Shelly and IKON Model Management have huge plans for me on becoming a household name. I am looking forward to my follow up interview with NEO to share more.



If you are interested in learning more about Esther or want to join her "in list" go to www.ESTHERNASH.com. For my fellow New Yorkers, go to Allan & Suzi to check out Esther's line.

Esther's Top 5 Frugal Fashion Tips

1. Raid your mother's and grandmother's closet!

What is family for if they can't help you accessorize? You can never go wrong with vintage clothes. Just try to select classic pieces that you are able to work into your wardrobe.

2. Swap clothes with your friends.

It is important when you are making friends to select girls that are about your size.

3. Always wear jewelry

Despite tough times, it is important to wear a bracelet, necklace, watch and earrings. It is what separates a plain Jane and a diva. It is also conversation starter. I promise.

4. Shop in your closet!

Create new outfits by layering, mixing and matching your current wardrobe. This can easily be done by wearing a turtleneck and blazer over a dress for an entirely new look. Tights can instantly transform an outfit; a shirt is now a new dress!

5. Only buy the essentials.

A few good items that every young lady needs in her closet are: a cocktail dress, dressy shorts, skirt, blazer, clutch bag, platform wedge heels, pumps, and dressy flats.



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