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**The mosque, the church,  
and Ground Zero**

This month's anniversary of the 9/11 attacks coincides in New York with the roiling controversy (amplified by the midterm elections) over the building of an Islamic cultural center and mosque just two blocks from Ground Zero. There have been demonstrations on the site pro and con, there has been blustering in the press pro and con—outcries that building a mosque on the site is poking a finger in the eye of the still-wounded citizenry of this country, and outrage that not building a mosque there violates the freedom of worship and sanctity of private property that is a bedrock of this country.

Sharif El-Gamal, the developer of the project, said the building of the center was an effort "to revitalize downtown New York...and demonstrate to all Americans and to the rest of the world that the American Muslim community rejects the violence perpetrated on September 11 and wants to be a part of the healing and rebuilding process."

But former American foreign service officer John Burgess (who did two tours in Saudi Arabia) put the controversy in perspective in his blog, Crossroads Arabia: "That decision may have been ill-considered, though. A lot of people have an emotional attachment to the World Trade Center and what happened there some nine years ago. As it is an emotional attachment, it is not necessarily a rational attachment. Dealing with the issues, dealing with history rationally can often be at odds with how people feel and behave."

At the same time, he argues, it's dismaying to hear that the 68% of Americans who oppose the building of the center do so for reasons such as fear "of the new Caliphate," which, in turn, only feeds into the suspicion of Muslims, moderate and otherwise, that Americans will never give them a fair shake, even in America, even if they're American citizens themselves, such as El-Gamal.

Lost in all this noise, of course, is that St. Nicholas is the little church that was destroyed at Ground Zero on 9/11 and no one has forcibly taken up its cause in the nine long years that the congregation has been left out in the cold. This August the former governor of New York, George Pataki, and the chancellor of Greek Orthodox Church of America, Bishop Andonios, met at the site to protest the government officials who they said were clearing the way for the mosque but blocking the reconstruction of the church.

"It's unfortunate that it took a controversy over a mosque to bring attention to the church," the Bishop said.

The Port Authority has said there is no doubt the church will be built and in 2008 it allotted 24,000 square feet for the building and also offered a \$20 million subsidy for construction. But negotiations broke down and the Bishop says all communications with the Port Authority have since ceased.

Still, being both politic and a man of God, he remains hopeful.

"To us, this is an opportunity for everyone — to see some progress in our negotiations with the Port Authority," he told The New York Times. "But also, for the people involved in the mosque, this controversy is their opportunity to dialogue with the community; to reach a better understanding of people's sensitivities, perhaps."

Perhaps.



Dimitri C. Michalakis



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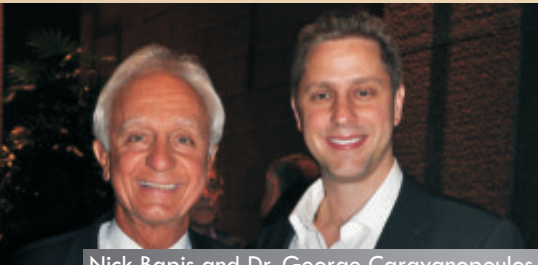
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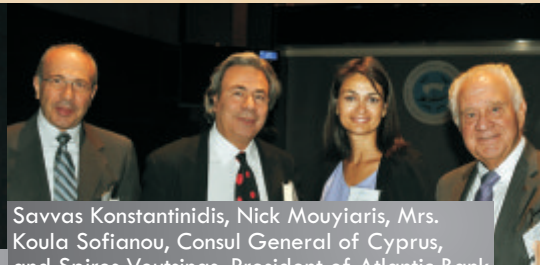
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From left, Dean Mitropoulos, Dr. Anthony Liberakis and Peter Kikis



Paulette Poulos, L100 Acting Executive Director



Left to right, Michael and Mary Jaharis, Ambassador Loucas Tsilas, Peter G. Peterson and Archbishop Demetrios of America. Behind, to right, Margo and George D. Behrakis



Peter Peterson addressing the L100 members



Peter G. Peterson, left, presented with Leadership 100 Award for Excellence by L100 Chairman Constantine G. Caras and Archbishop Demetrios of America

because they go together. If someone is successful, they have to remember the Church; they have to remember their philanthropic roots."

The Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Award for Excellence was initiated in 2003 to recognize outstanding Greek Orthodox and Greek American leaders who have excelled in their careers and who are committed to the advancement of Orthodoxy and Hellenism in their professions and in their lives. Past recipients of the Award have included George J. Tenet, Senator Paul S. Sarbanes, John D. Negroponte, Senator Olympia J. Snowe, Rudolph W. Giuliani, George L. Argyros, George Pelecanos and George R. Stephanopoulos.

Peter G. Peterson is Founder and Chairman of the Peter G. Peterson Foundation, Chairman Emeritus and Co-founder of The Blackstone Group, Chairman Emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, founding Chairman of the Peterson Institute for International Economics and founding President of The Concord Coalition. He was also Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York from 2000 to 2004.

Prior to founding Blackstone, Peterson was Chairman and CEO of Lehman Brothers and later Chairman and CEO of Lehman Brothers, Kuhn, Loeb Inc. He was Chairman and CEO of Bell and Howell Corporation from 1963 to 1971. In 1971, President Richard Nixon named Peterson Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs. He was named Secretary of Commerce by President Nixon in 1972.

Born on June 5, 1926, Peterson graduated from Northwestern University with a B.S. (summa cum laude) in 1947. He received his Masters in Business Administration with honors in 1951 from the University of Chicago. He has been awarded honorary PhD degrees by Colgate University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, Northwestern University, New School University, the University of Nebraska, the University of Rochester, and Southampton College of Long Island University.

Peterson is the author of several books, including Running On Empty: How the Democratic and Republican Parties are Bankrupting Our Future and What Americans Can Do About It; Gray Dawn: How the Coming Age Wave Will Transform America – and the World; Will America Grow Up Before It Grows Old?; Facing Up: How to Rescue the Economy from Crushing Debt and Restore the American Dream; and, his recently published memoir, The Education of an American Dreamer: How a Son of Greek Immigrants Learned His Way from a Nebraska Diner to Washington, Wall Street and Beyond.

## Peter G. Peterson Addresses Leadership 100 Forum

Peter G. Peterson, the renowned Greek American business leader and philanthropist, addressed a capacity crowd of more than 200 members of Leadership 100 from across the county and their guests at the inaugural Leadership 100 Forum on Business and Philanthropy, held at the Onassis Cultural Center in New York City earlier this month. After delivering a stirring and sobering message on the state of the U.S. economy and its global implications, he was honored by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of America and Leadership 100 Chairman, Constantine G. Caras with the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Award for Excellence.

"global debt crisis calling for a global solution," he said, but that, ironically, "Greece might actually benefit from all the pressure it is facing to reform its system. The country is doing what it has to do, and if they follow through, things will start to look good."

Turning to possible solutions at home, Peterson said that presidential leadership accompanied by bipartisanship is essential but that, "ultimately it is we the people who must make it safer for politicians to do the right thing." He cited the resilience and responsiveness of the country demonstrated by the "Greatest Generation" that lived through the Great Depression and World War II, who confronted and overcame and paid for a public debt far larger than today while funding the GI Bill, the huge highway infrastructure program and the Marshall Plan. Ending his remarks with a call for the country, and especially its youth, to focus on the future, he said possible solutions would require both benefit cuts and revenue increases.

Leadership 100 Chairman Constantine G. Caras and Leadership 100 Acting Executive Director Paulette Poulos said that when they decided to invite Peterson to deliver the first Forum on Business and Philanthropy they thought that he would be a good example for our Greek American young people because he is an inspiration to all "and he proved tonight that his Greek roots, his heritage, his upbringing through his father and mother, and his culture are really the foundation to his success, a lesson in itself. Leadership 100 is going to continue to do this on an annual basis because it's time for us to think in terms of business and philanthropy,

Peterson opened his remarks recalling his immigrant roots and stating that the majority of American people today "do not believe their children will do better than they." He then focused on the long-term problems confronting the nation. Namely, entitlements (principally Social Security and Medicare); current account balance of payments and savings deficits; and health care costs. He said that unless these problems are confronted, America could face dangerous and unprecedented geopolitical problems.

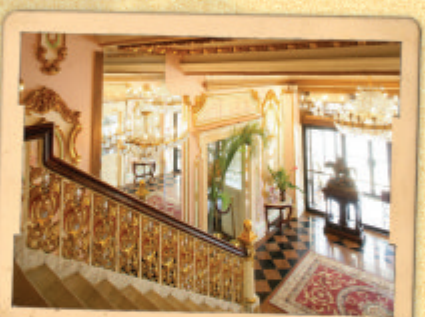
Citing Greece, he said the economic crisis there is not an exception among developed countries and most have similar and unsustainable future debt problems brought about by demographic changes such as declining birth rates and, therefore, declining numbers of taxpayers, increased longevity and huge and unfunded entitlement retirement programs. The next crisis will be a

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## A Smoother Ride: Low-Volatility Equity Strategies

Investment  
Front



By John P. Calamos Sr.

Many investors are afraid to be in the markets today, due to a sluggish economic recovery in the U.S., worries over European government defaults and a volatile stock market. Other investors, however, are afraid to be out of the market, not wanting to miss the beginning of a possible bull run in stock prices.

However, the current volatility and uncertainty are not reasons to stay out of the markets. If that were the case, there would never be a good time to invest! What matters is finding the opportunities amid the volatility and developing an asset allocation that addresses the reality of today's markets. Not all securities will fare equally well, quality will matter, and money managers who are active with highly selective strategies will continue to find ways to add value.

Therefore, what investors need are asset allocation strategies that address the current reality. For many investors, the blend of assets in their portfolio should include a core component with lower risk than a traditional stock-only allocation. These financial tools are known as low-volatility equity strategies, but they are not clearly understood by many investors.

What are Low-Volatility Equity Strategies?

The objective of low-volatility equity strategies is to outperform the broader equity market by reducing an investor's downside risk. These strategies – which are also referred to as defensive equity strategies - seek to participate in a greater portion of equity upside than downside over a full market cycle by using convertible securities. The securities incorporate a company's convertible bond to provide downside protection when the stock market drops (due to the bond's value and coupon income) but allow for the conversion into the company's stock to capture upside appreciation when the market rises. Investors do give up a portion of their upside equity returns with convertible securities, but the overall balance of risk/reward makes low-volatility equity strategies an appropriate core asset that many investors may want to consider.

These low-volatility strategies have proven to be effective in uncertain markets for decades. I personally witnessed their success during the sideways markets of the 1970s, the challenging environment of the early 1980s and other recent periods - including the turbulent "mini-cycle" of 2008-2009 - where these strategies outperformed their benchmarks and their peers.

This is not simply an asset allocation model with two different types of securities like a "balanced strategy" that blends some stocks and some bonds in a portfolio. Rather, this is a risk-managed approach including convertible securities designed to maintain an acceptable risk posture throughout the market cycle, and can offer investors time in the market with a comfort level that neither stocks nor bonds alone can provide.

Risk Management with Low-Volatility Equity Strategies

As difficult as it may be, the reality is that volatility is always a part of investing. An active investment manager should analyze existing and potential risks in the market and develop proactive strategies that address and even capitalize on them. Analysis should focus on the risks associated with an individual security itself, the industry of the issuing company and the economic sector in which that company operates. In addition, research should include a focus on the complex inter-relationship between events, sectors and economies, particularly as they relate to changes in wages, salaries, savings, imports and exports, and consumer trends around the world.

The flipside of volatility is opportunity, and controlling risk is a key factor in wealth creation. The primary goal of risk management is to contain equity risk without giving away equity opportunity. The bottom line is that properly researched, actively managed low-volatility equity strategies mitigate the need to make choices about when to get in and out of stocks - which are difficult decisions to determine in whipsaw markets.

As we look to the remainder of 2010 and beyond, we believe equity market volatility will continue. At the same time, the equity markets continue to be the best place for long-term investors - especially since stock valuations are very compelling. In my opinion, growth companies are the cheapest we have seen in twenty years. Some investors might view the current volatility as an uncomfortable, unwinnable contradiction, but we do not. Low-volatility equity strategies provide a compelling starting point for investors who want to try and smooth out the ride for their portfolios - both now and in the unpredictable years to come. We have used these convertible bond-related strategies as core holdings for asset allocation for decades.

John P. Calamos, Sr. is the Chairman, CEO and Co-CIO of Calamos Investments, and is the author of "Convertible Securities, the Latest Instruments, Portfolio Strategies and Valuation Analysis." You can contact John at [jpcsr@calamos.com](mailto:jpcsr@calamos.com).

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# 9/11 in New York and the (Greek) American Identity Crisis

By George Schira

New York City marked the ninth anniversary of September 11, 2001 this year, a year shy of a decade, at a time at which one may think the event would have retreated into recent history crowded out by other concerns like the enduring economic crisis. The experiences of that tragic day are always on my mind and that of all New Yorkers, as well as most Americans. Observers, politicians and artists still grapple with the full impact of that tragedy in our lives and history. Having grown up in the aftermath of World War 2, I remember talk of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the warning of German submarines off the East Coast of the USA. My older sister recalls running to my father for consolation, fearing another attack on the mainland. Hawaii then was not a state but something of a foreign place to many. My father told her not to worry, that she was safe, and America would never be attacked.

Well, on 9/11, America was attacked and, what's more, New York, where my mother was born and my father and both sets of grandparents had settled. And I was living in the city on that day, a city that had become the de facto capital of the world, political, financial and cultural, something of the seat of Empire. The shock has continued to have reverberations, death and destruction, for the 3,000 victims of all nationalities, religions and races, but mostly New Yorkers and Americans, and illness or unending grief for their families, friends and the first responders. But the shock waves went out to encompass all of us, those not on the scene who watched it on television but could see the smoke in the air and smell the debris. For me it was like a rape from which the victim never quite fully recovers, like post-traumatic stress disorder. And this was before those of us not on the scene saw the gruesome pictures of people jumping from the towers and the inferno that was soon to envelop them.

I was going to center my comments on how a paralysis of will in New York has affected the rebuilding of the site devastated by that attack on the 16-acres known as Ground Zero where the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center had stood. The 8-acre Memorial Plaza with its underground museum and the once named "Freedom Tower" (now three towers) have not been built in the nine years since that day while memorials have gone up in those other two spots where hijacked planes crashed or that experienced attack, in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon in Washington DC. Even a small memorial to British victims was dedicated at Ground Zero by Queen Elizabeth on a short and hurried visit during one of the hottest days of the year, in

July of this year, her first visit to the city in 53 years. New York was mired in bureaucracy and competing financial interests played out over the terms of three New York governors and three governors of New Jersey (the two states control the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey which controls construction at the site, and which had seen a turnover in leadership as well).

However I didn't have to wait long for those lingering effects to visit New York City and America once again as new controversy gripped New Yorkers and Americans throwing them into an identity crisis that pulled the current and previous Mayors, the current Governors of New York and New Jersey and even the President of the United States of America and the Democratic and Republican Parties into a vortex of religion and politics, culture and ethnicity that became known as the "Ground Zero Mosque" controversy.

America has been called the great experiment and American identity is problematic at best as we have gone beyond the melting pot to an ever more diverse society. Sociologists have noted that Americans change religion every day and that now includes all the world's religions along with some new ones begun at home.

Old Europe is somewhat different as different groups stay longer in their ghettos while others, like the gypsies or "Roma", remain apart, but even that will change as Europe, in the words of Romano Prodi when he was President of the European Commission, becomes more and more a union of minorities.

President Obama, himself, who one out of five Americans now believe to be a Muslim, is the son of a Kenyan father who was agnostic and rejected the Islamic religion of his father and a Christian mother from Kansas who taught him to respect all religions and all people, professed his Christian faith only as an adult when he was exposed to the Afro-American community and black church experience in Chicago, but had to put out the message during the mosque controversy that he was something of an evangelical Christian who receives daily Bible verses—a common ground for most politicians in recent times. His troubles started with the famous Cairo speech reaching out to the world's Muslims and grew in intensity when he spoke up in defense of constitutional rights at an Iftar dinner at the White House endorsing "the right to build a place of worship and a community center on private property in lower Manhattan" only seeming to qualify his endorsement the next day when he said he wasn't commenting on

the wisdom of doing so, complicating the situation even further.

Earlier, Mayor Bloomberg took his defense of the constitutional right to build the "Ground Zero Mosque" when he stood on Governors Island with the Statue of Liberty in the background and representatives of every faith on either side—including the Greek Orthodox Church—and said: "We've come here to Governor's Island where the earliest settlers first set foot in New Amsterdam, and where the seeds of religious tolerance were first planted. We come here to see the inspiring symbol of liberty that more than 250 years later would greet millions of immigrants in this harbor.... And whether your parents were born here or you came here yesterday, you are a New Yorker." He went on to say that being a New Yorker meant living with your neighbors in mutual respect and tolerance and that it was that spirit of openness and acceptance that was attacked on 9/11. No mention was made of the genocide of the Native Americans or the African slaves brought to this free land.

If only it had ended there, but life is far more complex as is New York and as is America and today's world and the media beat the story to death while new controversy erupted over a Florida Christian minister's threat to burn the Koran, only to relent after criticism from General David Petraeus facing demonstrations in Kabul, Afghanistan and, later, the President, pleading for tolerance.

While opposition among New Yorkers to the construction of the mosque and Islamic cultural center (the Cordoba House or Park 51 at 45-47 Park Place which will be a 15-story building rising two city blocks from Ground Zero) hardened by a margin of 63 to 27 in a poll taken in mid-August despite the 64 per cent, representing every demographic group, stating that developers had a constitutional right to build it. Not only was this a matter of religious liberty but of local choice as the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission and 29 of 30 Lower Manhattan community-board members voted to approve construction of the building in the former Burlington Coat Factory that had, in fact, been damaged by one of the planes that crashed into the Twin Towers. National politicians, however, mostly Republicans facing Congressional elections, with the notable exception of the newly-elected Republican Governor of New Jersey, Christopher Christie, fanned the flames, generating opposition to the building of mosques across the country. Former Mayor Rudy Giuliani, the best known Republican who is most identified with 9/11 having been mayor at the time, weighed in calling the plans for the mosque and cultural center "divisive" breeding hate rather than healing wounds.

One irony of history is that pre-World Trade Center this area of Lower Manhattan was once known as "Little Syria" and was inhabited by Arab Muslim and Christian immigrants from the Ottoman Empire and that two mosques have been in the same neighborhood, one four blocks away and one 12 blocks away for many years, one since 1970, the very year that the first tower, the North Tower of the World Trade Center, was completed. And next store to "Little Syria" in those days was "Little Athens."

Muslims in the New York Metropolitan area, an estimated 600,000 among more than 15 million people today, have opinions as diverse as other Americans, some regretting the push of the proposed project that is seen by some Americans as a sort of trophy building after a

successful jihadist conquest while others welcome it as a harbinger for a changed Islam in a country that rejuvenates and revolutionizes everything, even religion.

Going back to that tragic day nine years ago, I was working as a consultant to Leadership 100, a charitable organization that supports the Greek Orthodox Church, and was asked to devise an organization plan for a September 11 relief fund to respond to the crisis that had counted Greek Orthodox Americans among its victims and destroyed one of its churches, St. Nicholas. I consciously resisted going down to Ground Zero. Months passed before I went down there when serving on the committee planning the building of the memorial. That is when I met the families of victims of the tragedy and personally felt moved to extend my condolences to each one. However I couldn't follow the group's visit down a rickety ramp into the deep pit that still held remains and half way down scurried back up to the top seeking the shelter of a police trailer. That's when I felt myself surrounded by the palpable presence of forms in the air. I was shaken and sat down inside the trailer when a police officer asked what had happened. When I told him, he said I wasn't the first to experience that. I say this only because I think I understand it when others talk of sensitivities and hallowed ground.

In the latest turn of events, the Greek Orthodox Church in America has been brought into the fray, a religious community that has stayed below the radar of American politics, when Fox News reported that the Port Authority had reneged on a deal to rebuild its St. Nicholas Church in a land swap right at Ground Zero after purportedly having offered \$60 million in public money. The media put the story in terms of "approval for the mosque on the fast track" and "continued delays on building the church" and it was seized on by Greek American and other politicians running for office, creating a quandary for the Greek American Community and Greek Orthodox Church.

All this was going on while the Kuwaiti-born 61-year-old Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf whose idea it was to erect the Cordoba House, a moderate Sufi Moslem who has helped teach FBI agents and was touring the Middle East under the aegis of the US State Department, internationalizing the crisis further since he has not been transparent about the source of funds to build the center that some believe comes from Qatar, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, the last engaged in spreading its intolerant brand of Islam, Wahhabism, worldwide. But this man is a Sufi, the most accommodating denomination of Islam and he has written "What's Right with Islam is What's Right with America" which argues that American democracy is the embodiment of Islam's ideal society and the Cordoba House is to be "open and accessible to all." Later he emphasized that there would even be "prayer spaces" for Christians and Jews.

On the day of the anniversary, the solemn commemorations were accompanied by demonstrators pro and con on the building of the "Ground Zero Mosque" and the

media began to discuss the phenomenon of "Islamophobia" wondering again at the repercussions abroad.

Commentators however, who had noted that the Imam had made ambiguous statements suggesting some American responsibility for 9/11, called terrorism a complex subject, and refused to term Hamas or Hezbollah terrorist organizations and opined that the Cordoba project was reclaiming the West for Islam, it having been the famous mosque erected in Cordoba when Islam conquered Spain, continued to stand their ground. Others, however, noted that he was compromising those positions and other, mostly evangelical Christian religious leaders around the country began to counter anti-Muslim sentiment.

So here are the questions: Are Americans nine years after 9/11 obsessed with an enemy that may no longer be the threat it once was as some contend? Do we play into our enemies' hands if we deny American Muslims the right to build the mosque as Mayor Bloomberg says? Do we give a victory to the terrorists as former Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich believes, testing the winds for a presidential run, and characterizing the project as part of an "Islamist cultural-political offensive" to undermine and destroy our civilization? Has the American imagination been taken over by this new intolerance, handing a victory to the terrorists?

The mosque dispute may not effect this either way some say because the threat waxes and wanes regardless due to other factors beyond our control, at home and abroad. So it will prove to be neither a triumph nor a defeat but simply tell the world America and New York have moved on.

If anything, in the aftermath of 9/11, the world has grown confused if not more complex and reactionary in the literal sense to the polls and the media with the Internet spreading reactions like wildfire worldwide. Somehow we all need to get back to our moral compass, remember who we are as human beings and where we are going on spaceship earth and truly create a new mythology for the future, one that includes us all.

In the meantime, I trust New Yorkers will recover from this and remember the transactions of everyday life that keeps the city alive and free and open to all. The restaurants are full again and when the theatre let out one recent evening that was a bit cooler, the streets seemed as packed with people, New Yorkers and Americans and other tourists, as on New Year's Eve in Times Square. New Yorkers may have lost their innocence and Americans their sense of exceptionalism but neither has lost their life-affirming optimism.

*George Schira was the first Executive Director of the Carter Presidential Center. He lived in Greece from 1989 to 1991. Since 2000 he has served as a communications consultant to the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund.*

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PHOTO: NICK DIMITROKALIS

Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, Vice President of Earth Friendly Products, with NEO's Joanna Xipa

# Kelly Vlahakis: Greek and Green!

By Joanna Xipa

**“Nothing would give us greater satisfaction than to provide green jobs for a cleaner environment and place our next manufacturing facility in our beloved Greece... We are weighing our options and given the right incentives, we would be delighted to invest in a facility there”**

God Bless America, the Land of Opportunity, where hard work and perseverance really do pay off in the pursuit of happiness, and in our case, the “Greek-American” Dream!

Did you know that out of all the ethnic groups in the United States, the Greek-Americans have proven to rise above the rest and become number two in business success? Why is that, do you think? Isn't it about time we start uncovering these Hellenic gems in our society and let their shining glory lead us by example to follow, both locally and in the rest of the world – specifically and most importantly now, in Greece?

The immigrant experience itself, on a personal level, has made us swallow our pride and eat our fair share of ‘humble pie’ in our patience and perseverance over the course of many years while jumping over many hurdles... all the while

staying true to ourselves by holding on tightly to the most valuable intangible possession we could ever have: our Word – not only to each other, but to ourselves, and to our identity!

Luckily, the tradition still holds as there are countless examples of Greek-American children who have followed in the footsteps of their courageous parents. Kelly Vlahakis-Hanks, the Vice President of Earth Friendly Products ([www.ecos.com](http://www.ecos.com)), a family owned and operated business since its inception in 1967 by her Greek immigrant father, Eftychios Van Vlahakis, is such a case. Ever since I met this young woman, I've been drawn by her genuine warmth and optimistic outlook on life. Even as a young girl, Kelly spent her summers working in her father's business, doing whatever had to be done to make and sell household cleaning products. After spending years distinguishing herself in the communications field for several high profile companies, Kelly began working full time at Earth Friendly Products as the Director of Media Relations in 2003. Seven years later, she was named Vice President of the entire company. Her responsibilities involve all areas of the business, from sales and marketing to new product development and manufacturing. Kelly has always been in awe of her father, who started his business from scratch. She learned by observing the shining examples provided by both her parents. From their strength, wisdom and perseverance in the face of adversity, Kelly learned to believe in herself, trust in her judgment and never give up on her dream and the dream of her family.



## Tell me about your father's immigration experience and how he started the company.

When he came to this country in the 1950's, my father had \$22 in his pocket, didn't know the language, initially lived in homeless shelters, but ended up going to Roosevelt University and studied Chemistry because of his fascination with all the Greek-root words! He worked as a chemist for other companies for many years... got laid off in '66, used his severance money and started off as a one man show mixing chemicals in the garage! Now we have over 300 employees and worldwide distribution... it's been really exciting to watch it grow from a small operation in his garage.

The first facility was opened in IL and has since become Corporate Headquarters. In 1989, Venus Labs went Green with the help of my brother, John, an avid environmentalist, bringing something new to the table and steering the company to a more environmentally responsible direction. We have since opened four other locations in NJ, FL, CA, and most recently WA. in order to reduce our carbon footprint, by never having to ship across country, reducing costs, and passing that savings onto our customers. That approach has been responsible for making Earth Friendly Products the lowest priced green cleaning products on the market and I'm proud to say we are the number one selling green laundry product in the world.

## When did you join the company and how did you prepare for it?

I took a UCLA honors program in college, in communication studies and history. I put that training to good use when I got my first job out of college as PR director for Bluepoint, a company based in Athens (the swimwear provider for the Athens Olympics in 2004), travelling back and forth between L.A. and Greece, handling their international media campaigns. I've also worked for the Brown & Dutch public relations agency in Malibu, as well as the Trump Organization handling publicity for the Miss Universe pageant. Finally, I became the Executive Director for the American Hellenic Council from 2001 to 2003 where I learned valuable experience in the political arena for topics pertaining both to Greece as well as the United States. It was important in the first five years out of college that I worked outside the family business to bring more to the table, while having already developed my own work ethic and understanding of how the outside business world works. I was able to hone in on my communication skills as a professional and use that to raise awareness to the environmental issue, while creating strong ties with politicians. Becoming green is a universal issue and it is important to be non-partisan to engage in both sides of the dialogue.

Since joining Earth Friendly Products, I'm proud to say that our company has quadrupled in size! We finally penetrated mainstream stores like Sam's Club, Costco, Smart & Final, Ralph's, Whole Foods, and Mother's Market, to name a few... and as of this August 2010 Wal-mart as well! In the United States, our ECOS is the number one green laundry detergent. We also supply to Canada, from our West, Midwest and Eastern regions.

## Canada?

ECOS has become the No. 1 selling laundry detergent in Canada, even outselling the top name brand detergent that contains toxic chemicals (according to the Neilson reports announced in mid June of this year)! Canadians can find our products at big names such as Canadian Tire, Costco Canada and

Lawblaws.... In fact, Can Tire prides itself in being less than 10 minutes away from every household so we are really excited at how accessible our products have become!

Society is just more aware of greener cleaning... i.e. from washing clothes in toxic laundry detergents which have mercury, formaldehyde and other toxins that are absorbed quicker through skin than through your mouth. With dishes, for example you can even smell the residue of bleach and carcinogens in some of the brands that are known to be poisonous to our environment and are choking our lakes and streams. Indoor air pollution is as much as 70 times higher than outdoor air pollution because of toxic cleaning products. All of us can do our part to control that and make our homes safer for people and pets.

## Has the Greek-American community embraced the concept of going green?

With all communities the awareness is growing. As people see more & more loved ones affected with illnesses, they are looking for ways in which to protect themselves, their family and their children. Family is number ONE in priority for Greeks, who happen to be very loyal as well. So our goal was to educate people about the critical importance of using greener cleaning products and to throw out old buying habits and misplaced loyalties to certain brand name products that have been harmful to us all for generations. In the Greek community, the interest has grown dramatically because they could see how it's affecting their family's health.

Naturally, we have a very special interest in the Greek-American community and we provide significant support through financial contributions and our work on behalf of various worthy organizations, including the American Hellenic Council, Los Angeles Greek Film Festival, National Hellenic Museum and the GABBY Awards, to name just a few.

Furthermore, we always try and work with other Greek-owned companies. Here in Southern California, for all of our organic catering (for company events) we use a company called “Green Event Studios” run by Maria Foscarci. For all bags and totes, which are 100% hemp, our supplier is “I'm Eco Friendly” by Nicki Orlandou. The videographer who's filmed all of our television footage and archived it on the web for online streaming is Philip Georgious. And of course, the architectural firm that has spearheaded all of our environmentally green, sustainable facilities from the grounds up is “REV Design” co-wned by Evie Giovanopoulou who served as the lead architect on all of our projects. So there are other Greeks working alongside in our industry... It's an exciting time to be Greek & Green!

## Have you considered expanding to Greece?

Our products are distributed in Europe as well as throughout North America and Asia. We have a bottling operation in the UK and Earth Friendly Products are distributed throughout Europe. We are planning to expand our operations in Europe in the very near future and are actively looking at manufacturing locations there. We know that to be competitive and sustainable in Europe we must manufacture our products on the continent. Nothing would give us greater satisfaction than to provide green jobs for a cleaner environment and place our next manufacturing facility in our beloved Greece. My father is the only one to come to this country from Chania. It's his deepest desire to create jobs on the island of Crete. We are weighing our options and given the right incentives, we would be delighted to invest in a facility in Greece.

## Speaking of Greece, solar energy comes to mind. Are you using alternative energy sources at the Earth Friendly Products facilities?

We are helping to pioneer alternative energy sources and Earth Friendly Products now operates the largest solar powered commercial facility in Illinois. Today, our company leads the green cleaning products field in the use of solar energy to help power all five of our facilities around the country. Currently, 60% to 70% of the energy used by our manufacturing facilities comes from solar power. We plan to increase that to 100% in the future. That's also a great business incentive because clean alternative energy provides us with a great return on our investment. At the same time, this approach also mirrors our strong belief in helping to protect people and the environment in every way we can.

## Who has been the main inspiration in your life?

That's easy: my parents. My father is a very brave man. He came to America with nothing, worked incredibly hard and built a magnificent company... one that we are all proud to be with. It represents the fulfillment of my father's dream, the Greek-American Dream. He drove himself very hard and served as the perfect example of the business work ethic to everyone around him, especially me. I love and respect my father. I am eternally grateful to him and it is an honor for me to be part of this family. You see, I was the new addition to the family. My African American mother has always been just as big an influence in my life as my father. She always praised him for being such a great father and wonderful role model that he is. At the same time, my mother was equally inspirational. Her eternal optimism, strength of character and belief in herself provided a strong foundation for me growing up. I found that I could rely on both cultural heritages to propel me towards success in life.

My mother was the true embodiment of unconditional love and support, with 150% belief in me... that I can do and be anything that I wanted in life. When you give that to children it lifts them and carries them through life. She has lived a very difficult life, but she had an indomitable spirit and a belief that nothing was impossible. She was diagnosed with breast cancer when I was 14 and my younger sister was only 2 at the time. Neither that nor chemotherapy phased her, as determined as she was to raise us both, taking care of our everyday needs, while raising us through school. She eventually beat it by the time I graduated High School ...but after proudly attending my little sister graduation, in June of 2007, she started complaining of fatigue for the first time ever in her life. Being the strong woman that I've always known her to be, I knew something was wrong. Medical tests showed her cancer spread to the liver, and within 3 weeks of chemotherapy, she had passed away at the age of 58. I was 30 at the time and my sister was 18.

I'm thankful that I've had my mother by my side through the major milestones in my life. She was able to enjoy my graduation, stand by me at my wedding and even hold my hand in the delivery room at the birth of my daughter, Alexia-Eftychia (named in my father's honor). As a mother myself, being touched with cancer in the family at such an early stage in my life, I am compelled to be proactive in doing all I can to promote and protect the health and well-being of others. This is why I believe so strongly in Earth Friendly Products and in our future!

Cover Photo by Nick Dimitrokalis



# CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT AGAINST THE "TURKISH GAZA" OPERATING A FRAUDULENT SCHEME WITH HSBC BANKS DEFRAUDING REFUGEES OUT OF THEIR PROPERTIES.

The lawsuit filed in the U.S. seeks compensation for the interference of property rights and has named the so called "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" ("TRNC") and HSBC, a global banking system, as defendants. The defendants have offices in the U.S. coordinating their illegal business enterprise of depriving Cypriots of their property, through fraudulent transactions in the occupied areas referred to as the "Turkish Gaza." **Anyone can join the lawsuit regardless where they live.**

**Cypriots from Greece, England, Cyprus and the U.S. have already joined in this lawsuit.**



HSBC, the only known international bank that clears money to and from the Turkish Gaza, conducts business with an illegal regime and will be responsible for participating in such illegal transactions. For example, the Amaranta Valley project was headed by a convicted felon that defrauded many innocent parties. Hundreds of millions of dollars passed through HSBC for the construction and sale of the Amaranta Valley properties that belong to displaced Cypriots. The Turkish Government ignores its economic sabotage in Cyprus while it seeks an image as a Human Rights supporter through the use of a flotilla ship sent to the Israeli Gaza. It is time to stand united and stop the Turkish lies. The named Plaintiffs include Telemachos Fiouris of Florida and Ioannis Shekersavvas and others from the Kyrenia Refugee Association "Adoulati Kirenia" in Cyprus. Having waited for 36 years with no results from the leadership and the with recent decisions by the European courts forcing individuals to seek compensation in the Turkish Gaza, all Cypriots harmed by these events around the world are urged to join in the U.S. lawsuit.

**This lawsuit was filed by Washington, D.C. based attorney Athan T. Tsimpedes who may be contacted at 202-772-3159 or by email: athan@tsimpedeslaw.com**

This advertisement was paid for by Telemachos Fiouris and urges all Cypriots harmed by these events to join in the lawsuit and stand united.

**Tsimpedes Law Firm, 1050 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 1000, Washington DC 20036 U.S.A., Ph: 202-772-3159, Fax: 202-449-3449**

## George Best Costacos WALK OF HOPE



Sunday, October 3, 2010  
Carl Schurz Park



## George Costacos Annual Walk of Hope

The George "Best" Costacos Cultural and Cancer Research Foundation is organizing its first Annual Walk of Hope to raise funds and awareness for brain cancer research and the Actors' Equity Foundation. The walk will be held on Sunday, October 3, 2010 (Rain or Shine), at the beautiful Carl Schurz Park at 86th Street and East End Avenue in Manhattan. Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the walk at 11:00 a.m. A musical program featuring young performers will begin at 1:00-2:00 p.m. Preregistration is encouraged. For more information and to register, go to [www.georgebestcostacosfoundation.com/events](http://www.georgebestcostacosfoundation.com/events). A recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, THE GEORGE "BEST" COSTACOS CULTURAL AND CANCER RESEARCH FOUNDATION was founded in 2009 to honor the memory of the late actor/singer and member of the ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION, George "Best" Costacos, who died in November 2008 of a malignant brain tumor. The foundation's mission is to promote, foster, and advance the professional pursuits of young performers in theater, dance or musical performance, to support research to understand the etiology of cancer and to support improvement in the management of brain tumors. This year, the foundation will support the innovative research of the laboratory of David C. Lyden, M.D., Ph.D. Among his notable findings, Dr. Lyden has identified two bone marrow-derived progenitor cells that form new blood vessels in tumors and regenerative diseases with clinical applications. The ACTORS EQUITY FOUNDATION was created in 1962 and serves the purpose of voluntarily aiding and assisting the members of the acting profession and to promote the theater arts. The Actors Equity Foundation was created in 1962 and serves the purpose of voluntarily aiding and assisting the members of the acting profession and to promote the theater arts. George Costacos was born in Athens, Greece in 1964. An award from the Fulbright Foundation gave him the opportunity to study in New York. His passion for music and theater led him to receive countless kudos for diverse and prolific creativity as an actor and a writer, "carving the steady and significant course of a dynamic artists who has bewitched with his multifaceted talent, knows how to magnetize the lens of current events and puts his signature on every aspect of his work" — to quote a few of the glowing reviews in the abundant international press. Esquire Magazine called George Costacos "The most important Greek of Broadway."



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## 3-MILLION-DOLLAR WOMAN

by Kathy Heine

Two years and \$3 million worth of timeshare is an impressive record for any salesperson. But for someone who's a fashion designer by background, never sold timeshare before, and sold it for the first time during the start-up at an urban timeshare where units start at \$15,815? The record is nothing short of remarkable, and the most amazing thing is - get this - she accomplished it by being nice to people.

"I believe that if you're nice to clients and honest with them, they're gonna go for it," says Manhattan Club's \$3 million sales executive, Rania Dante. "It works with high-end clientele. It works with any clientele," she says.

A native of Greece who speaks six languages, Manhattan Club's timeshare sales dynamo is particularly adept at wooing international and/or affluent clients. She generates many of these clients herself, often cultivating them over the phone before they ever set foot in the sales center. Then, if they do not buy the day they visit, she follows up with cards, phone calls - even dinners - until she eventually makes the sale.

Dante honed her art of the soft sell during the eight years she ran her own fashion business, then again during her stint as a real-estate agent in Beverly Hills and the Big Apple. "When you're working with Beverly Hills clients, you don't usually say, 'You have to buy this \$20 million mansion right now,'" she says. "That's the biggest difference. In timeshare you have to ask for the money that day."

That hasn't been a problem, however. The Manhattan Club, which offers stunningly decorated one- and two-bedroom suites with all the amenities of a five-star hotel, is just across the street from Carnegie Hall and only two blocks from Central Park. Fifty Broadway shows are within walking distance. The clientele that are attracted to Manhattan Club are highly qualified. They enjoy the theater, the arts, and shopping. They come in to the city for trade shows. Many are referred by clients who already own a unit at the Manhattan Club. All of these factors contribute to a very high closing rate.

Incentives make it worthwhile for clients to buy on the same day. And because prices do go up - in one year the price went up eight times - it's actually in the client's best interest to buy the day of the presentation. Still, Dante does not believe in pushing people to buy. "I like to give people options," she says. "If they like it, they're welcome to do it. If they don't, that's fine, too."

Dante continues to cultivate clients even after they purchase. She sends them thank-you cards, calls them - "whatever has to be done to make them feel good and wanted," she says. Happy clients, in turn, give more business to Dante by sending her their friends. Would her approach work elsewhere? "People are the same everywhere," she says. "They just have nuances. Treat them nicely, and they'll be wonderful to you."

*From the March-April 1999 Issue of RCI Premier Magazine*



# Light at the End of Greece's Difficult Tunnel

By Andy Manatos and Andy Athens

It may be difficult to see now, but there is light, bright light, at the end of the obstacle-filled economic tunnel through which Greece is now passing. In fact the light at the end of this tunnel is significantly brighter than at its entrance. How can this be?

The answer has two parts. The first part of the answer involves the fact that Greek people prosper in economies that are based on the merit of the individual or company – economies like those in America and Australia. For example, a Pew Foundation study found that in America, (an economy three times larger than China's) Greek Orthodox citizens have higher income and education levels than all other religions, except for members of the Jewish faith.

But, one might ask, is Greece still the wellspring of such successful people or did America and Australia train Hellenes to perform so well? Relatively recent Greek immigrants to America and Australia outperform second and third generation Hellenes, proving that Greece is still the wellspring such performance.

In Greece, historical developments caused the economic system to become less based on merit and to become filled with a range of corruptions, thereby limiting the areas in which Greeks can flourish and lead the world. The fact that the Greek people could achieve a good standard of living amid decades of such corruptions is, in itself, a testament to their extraordinary abilities. As well, Greece's ability to have already reduced by 40% its deficit compared to last year is another indication of an ability to accomplish difficult things. The elimination of corruptions in the Greek economy will unleash the country and its people.

There is no doubt in our minds that Greece will soon be one of the world leaders in some technologies and other fields. Look what happened to the Jewish people, who are much like we Greeks. As Israel's economy has stabilized in recent decades, Israeli technologies have moved to the cutting edge.



George Sakellaris, founder and President of Ameresco, the number one American company for improving energy efficiency and reducing the carbon dioxide footprint of major facilities, including the US Capitol building.

The second part of the reason that there is bright light at the end of the tunnel involves decades of pent-up demand for involvement in the Greek market by successful businesses owned by Hellenes outside of Greece. And, once they show that foreign companies can prosper in the Greek economy others will follow.

One of many examples of the pent-up demand for access to the Greek market is the Ameresco Company, owned by George Sakellaris. It is the number one American company for improving energy efficiency and reducing the carbon dioxide footprint of major facilities, including the US Capitol building. Its work costs these facilities effectively nothing. The amount of savings in fuel expenditures generated by the improvements Ameresco puts into place within a facility are so great that they cover the cost of the newly installed energy efficient equipment in addition to providing continued

savings in fuel expenditure for the facility owner. Applied to Greece, this system could create many future-looking Greek jobs paid for, neither by Greek citizens nor the government, but by Euros diverted from the pockets of Middle Eastern oil producers.

Prime Minister George Papandreou is taping this pent-up demand for access to the Greek market by successful Hellenes in the three meetings he held with them in recent months. We have seen this demand over the decades as we arranged for various Greek Ministers to get together with America's top Greek-American businesspeople. Their reaction is similar to the Diasporas of Ireland and Israel that played a significant role during those countries' times of trouble.

One might ask if these companies want so badly to go to Greece what's stopping them. The answer is that these business leaders have seen virtually everyone lose money who tried to take their business to Greece. The various corruptions in Greece's economic and bureaucratic system, that they didn't see in other foreign markets where they were successful, stopped them. However, if current reforms are fully implemented and Greece becomes a meritocracy, you will see hundreds of top notch businesspeople, Hellenes and non-Hellenes, investing in Greece.

If the corruptions disappear, so will Greece's brain drain. Hellenism's best and brightest will stay in Greece, and many who left will return like a moth to a flame, bringing with them high paying jobs and cutting-edge new Greek companies.

Since the "Golden Age", Greeks linked merit, reward and excellence. With merit of performance in mind, Greeks were the first to create organized athletic competition. Additionally, the Greeks were the first to have merit and democracy choose their leaders rather than brute intimidation or inheritance. Alexander the Great expressed Greece's merit-based criterion when he bequeathed his kingdom "to the strongest."

Converting Greece to a more merit based economy isn't easy. But Greeks have never shied away from difficult necessities. Mirroring the typical Greek reaction, author Nikos Kazantzakis said, "Though my teeth clattered with fear, I bound my forehead tightly with a red handkerchief to hide the blood, and I returned to the assault." Whether fighting the Axis forces in WWII, preparing for the 2004 world-leading Olympic Games or struggling through today's IMF/EU imposed economic transformation Greeks somehow meet Kazantzakis' challenge to "reach what you cannot."

**Andy Manatos – former US Assistant Secretary of Commerce, President of Manatos & Manatos, and President of the Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH)**

**Andy Athens -- former US steel industry leader, first and longest-serving President of the World Council of Hellenes Abroad and Chairman of CEH**



## Learn Where Learning Began - Full-Tuition Scholarships at American College of Greece

The Greek America Foundation is proud to announce the Hellenic Legacy Scholarship for students studying abroad in Greece at DERE – The American College of Greece in Athens for the upcoming spring semester, which begins in January 2011.

In addition to an extensive series of programming and special events throughout the nation, the Greek America Foundation recently launched its Hellenic Legacy Scholarship Fund to provide semester-long, full tuition scholarships.

The Hellenic Legacy Scholarship is one of the core components of the mission of the Greek America Foundation. Study abroad in Greece provides an opportunity for a truly transformative experience in which students have the chance to learn more about themselves and to develop an understanding of the place of Hellenism and Greece in the world.

Candidates must be U.S. or Canadian university students with a commitment to community building and leadership who wish to spend a semester abroad in Greece. Ideal candidates are independent-minded students who wish to immerse themselves into the heart of an ancient capital city at an educational institution comprised of over 3,000 Greek and international students. The deadline for spring semester scholarship applications is November 1, 2010.

The Greek America Foundation is also proud to announce Deborah Cunningham as the recipient of its first Hellenic Legacy Scholarship. She will study abroad during the 2010 fall semester.

Deborah is a senior at Wheaton College in Illinois with a double major in Ancient Languages and English. Deborah chose to study abroad in Greece in order to "gain a deeper, more personal understanding of Greek culture." Having studied Ancient Greek, Deborah is now looking forward to immersing herself in the modern language and culture. At the American College of Greece she plans to study Modern Greek, Greek Folklore and Anthropology, and the Archaeology of Greece.

The Greek America Foundation is very pleased to be able to support Deborah in her efforts with a scholarship for a full semester's tuition to further her study and experience of diachronic Hellenism. Stay tuned as we follow Deborah on her journey of personal discovery in Greece. She will be blogging regularly and posting photos from her journeys at <http://www.greekamerica.org/hlf/>

For additional information, please contact the Hellenic Legacy Scholarship program director Jennifer Kellogg at [jkkellogg@greekamerica.org](mailto:jkkellogg@greekamerica.org)

by Peter Shakalis



## Manhattan Office Market Holding Steady...

As the summer draws to a close and business activity picks up once again, the opportunities in the office space market for companies looking to lease new space or renew their existing leases are many. However the doom and gloom that some in the real estate community anticipated seems to be on the side lines for now. While the market has a long way to go before the return to the pre-recession days, it is holding steady. Rents in July of this year were 40% lower than they were in July 2008, however this precipitous decline has abated. Although rents remain weak, the amount of space that was leased in the second quarter of 2010, a total of 7.4 million square feet, was double the amount recorded in the second quarter 2009. Moreover, it was 42% higher than during the first quarter of 2010.

A number of business sectors were active this past quarter with law firms, finance, non-profits, quasi-government organizations and government agencies completing some substantial transactions. Law firms were responsible for a large number of lease transactions, and some of the largest transactions. During the last decade, law firms on average have accounted for 10 % of space leased in the city (as measured by square feet), however this past quarter they have accounted for over 23% of all space leased. Proskauer Rose L.L.P. took over 400,000 square feet at 11 Times Square; Willkie Farr & Gallagher signed for 355,000 square feet at 787 Seventh Avenue; and Kenyon & Kenyon renewed at One Broadway for nearly 200,000 square feet.

Leases closed by financial firms constituted just 11 percent of the total in the second quarter, while financial sector firms in recent times have occupied at least 25 percent of the total stock of space in Manhattan. It is interesting to note that at least half of the leases in the financial sector originated in the hedge and equity funds sub-segment of the industry. Investment and commercial banks were largely absent from these leasing statistics, however some recent transactions include Capital Bank One's expansion to 140,000 square feet at 90 Park Avenue, Alliance Global Investors 213,000 square foot deal at 1633 Broadway and Piper Jaffray, an international middle market investment bank's deal in Midtown for nearly 65,000 square feet at 345 Park Avenue.

In many cases law firms do appear to have enough clarity about their future business prospects to fix their occupancy costs now, but are taking the same amount or less space in their new leases. Even though current market conditions favor occupiers, the large investment and commercial banks however still perceive too much uncertainty about their occupancy needs to take advantage of the market.

**Peter Shakalis is a Director at FirstService Williams Real Estate**  
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# THE NEW GENERATION of DOCTORS



**Name:** Elias Anthony Iliadis, MD

**Position:** Board Certified in Internal Medicine, Cardiology, Interventional Cardiology and Vascular Disease; Director, Peripheral Vascular Intervention, Associate Director, Cardiac Cath Lab, Cooper University Hospital, Camden, New Jersey, Associate Director for Research and Education, Cooper University Cardiology, Assistant Professor of Medicine, UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Committee Member, Medical Student Policy and Procedure Committee, Cooper Medical School of Rowan University

**Education:** BS Chemistry Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, MD Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Piscataway, NJ, Internal Medicine, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA, Cardiology, Rush Presbyterian St. Lukes Medical center, Chicago, Ill, Interventional Cardiology, University of Michigan Medical Centers, Ann Arbor, MI

**Where were you born and where did you grow up?**

I was born in Neptune New Jersey and grew up in Freehold New Jersey which was during those years, a blue collar town in which we owned the local American Diner "Tony's Freehold Grille". I was the third child of Greek immigrants and taught to value education and pursue excellence while maintaining respect for our peers.

**Who or what were the main influences in your life?**

A person most influential in my life was my mother and her very strong Christian beliefs. She constantly put others before herself and instilled her values in us. She dreamed of becoming a physician which was very difficult as an immigrant. She was proud of her parenting of her sons as her greatest accomplishment.

**Why did you become a doctor?**

I was always intrigued by the human body and its ability to heal itself as well as our capacity to alter disease process through medicines or procedures. From an early age, I enjoyed the scientific method and thought that a medical career offered the best opportunity to pursue both interests. I volunteered on the local rescue squad to test my endurance in the medical field and found that all those years paid off through learning to deal with a variety of patrons with respect and compassion while serving their needs. Overall, this career fulfills my body and soul.

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

The US has the most advanced health care system in the world with most if not all innovation arising from here. However, the cost of health care has spiraled out of control and the physicians have been greatest negative impacted by the latest proposed reforms without adequate discussion. Measures to control cost such as Tort reform and pursuit of fraud should be top priorities while improved quality and access have not been

adequately promoted. Overall, despite challenges, I still remain optimistic and anticipate a healthy discussion among all parties.

**If you were a patient, what would the ideal doctor look to you like?**

My ideal physician is knowledgeable, personable and my advocate for me in the overall health care system. A Greek American physician would add an extra dimension to our interaction and would help him understand my unique diseases (ie eating liver soup at 1 am after Easter may contribute to cholesterol and gastric problems...).

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

My Greek heritage has also been a driving force for excellence in my life, both personally and professionally. I believe our heritage can be manifested in modern life through our drive to excel professionally and in American society while promoting our traditions for our youth. In my field of Cardiology, there are noted Greek experts which have become my role models and helped focus my career. I believe that our minority status as a European immigrant has driven us (the Diaspora) to excel in the American landscape.

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

I have been part of the Hellenic Medical Society in each of the areas I have trained and worked. Similar to the Orthodox Church for some, I have sought out other Greek American organizations for acceptance and sense of belonging. I am strongly committed to promoting the youth of our society in health care careers with both financial and referral support to encourage a stronger Greek Presence. In the HMS Philadelphia, we use the pillars of "Fellowship, Scholarship, and Philanthropy" as the driving force of our medical society and in every endeavor we pursue.

**What qualities do you most admire or value in others?**

My parents were focused on interpersonal interactions and valued mutual respect very highly as I still do. I believe in our fast paced society the ability to adapt and re-invent oneself is valuable. Lastly, I believe true altruism is missing in modern society and should be cherished when observed.

**Who are your heroes in real life?**

I would consider individuals of great moral character to be my heroes: Nelson Mandela who fought social injustice for 20 years with non-violence and prevailed. People who face adversity and respond with greatness: Stephen Hawkins, Phd. Medical breakthroughs which affect millions: Georgios Papanicolaou, MD.

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

Professionally, I would envision myself as chief of an academic cardiology division of a major teaching university hospital. This would entail publishing several papers per year and contributing to medical science. Personally, I envision 20 more years with a wonderful person, Katherine Dedes Iliadis, and hopefully relishing the successes of our children and their families.

**How do you spend your time outside of work?**

Our family enjoys our beach home in Bethany Beach, Delaware, both summer and off season. I pursue golf and tennis as much as possible.

**What is your idea of happiness?**

Happiness is loving the person you are or are becoming. Happiness is making the people around you succeed and improve their lives.



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*FOS—Forum on Orthodox Spirituality—is a ministry of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of the Holy Trinity. Conducted by Rev. Dr. Frank Marangos, FOS was created in response to the need voiced by New York-area professionals for deeper spiritual illumination and nourishment. FOS aims to transform lives by drawing attendees into a fuller understanding of Orthodox faith and worship, all in the context of contemporary culture and society. FOS also seeks to build strong relationships and a sense of community.*



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# An artist's quest in finding a home in unhomeliness

By Dina Pinos

Greek Iranian American artist and educator Aphrodite Desiree Navab is presenting her latest collection of photography "Between the Lines" at Soho20 Chelsea gallery (547 W 27th St., Suite 301, NY, NY 10001), from September 7 to October 2. There will also be a live performance of this series at Zora Space (315 4th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11215) on October 28.

"Through my art I dislocate and relocate my place between Iran, Greece and the United States," she states. "Each installation places a foundation stone into a new home that I am building away from home, but always in critical dialogue with the memory of the childhood homes. To be 'unhomed' as cultural studies theorist Homi Bhabha puts it, does not mean that one is 'homeless'. Nor does it mean that one can be accommodated easily. By occupying two places at once, a cultural hybrid becomes difficult to place. This 'third space' of working, contesting and reconstructing creates an opening for other positions to emerge. My art provides the space of 'unhomeliness'- a space of trans-national and cross-cultural initiations."

Aphrodite's art has been featured in over 100 exhibitions around the world and is featured in a number of permanent collections, including the Lowe Art Museum and the Harn Museum of Art. She has also published several scholarly journal articles dealing with photography, identity and gender exposure. Her creative writing is published or forthcoming in five anthologies.

## Tell our readers about yourself and your family background.

I am a Greek Iranian American artist and writer born in Isfahan, Iran, who uses visual art and writing to investigate transnational issues in art and culture.

My father, Ali Navab, is an Iranian doctor who met my mother, Katina Armenakis, a Greek American, in New York City while he was completing his medical residency there. They married and went to Iran and gave birth to four children. They lived there for seventeen years. My father was Vice Chancellor of the University of Isfahan and Dean of the Medical School.

Throughout the first ten years of my life we lived in Athens for several months every summer. When the revolution came and our family left Iran, my father was not allowed to leave with us. They put him on forbidden passage. For two years we waited in Athens until he was given permission to leave Iran to seek medical care. My family reunited and settled in New York City. Greece was the middle ground and sanctuary for my family's relocations.

In 2004, I completed an Ed.D. in Art and Art Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. I taught as Assistant Professor of Art at the College of Fine Arts, University of Florida, and at the School of Visual Arts in New York. I received my BA magna cum laude in Visual and Environmental Studies from Harvard University in 1993.

## You are both an educator and artist. Tell us about your art work and how your background has influenced your aspirations.

My art teaching and practice have been shaped by the road of my personal life, which has taken a number of unpredictable turns. The Islamic revolution of 1978-79 forced me to leave my childhood, my relatives and friends in Iran. After living as almost a refugee first in Greece and then the United States, struggling to find some coherence, some place for myself within

Greek Iranian American artist and educator Aphrodite Desiree Navab



these new cultures, I discovered photography as an undergraduate in the Visual and Environmental Studies program at Harvard University. This was the first time that I was able to explore and express through art, what was lost and what was gained from my life's translations. As a result of my own experiences, I have wanted to facilitate other people's need to understand the world and to be understood beyond the boundaries of language and culture, through the powerful and communicative medium of art. While being a practitioner of art for over twenty years, I sought not only to make art for public exhibition, discussion and debate but also to include the artist's voice in the writing of history and criticism of art through my publications and lectures.

The issues with which I am concerned in art keep coming back to the things in my life which I have had to re-define in exile: memory, language, identity, and culture and the ways in which images include certain visions, while excluding others. One of my aims in art and teaching, therefore, is to investigate and debate the images of identity and culture circulating in mass media, not to supply more narrow and stereotypical images, but rather, to contribute more sensitive and informed visions to the public; where art and education become one.

## Talk to us about your Tales Left Untold series.

Through nineteen years of art practice I have learned that photography is part myth, part reality, part fiction, part truth. But how was I to explore this rich paradox within my own art? This was the dilemma that motivated me to conceive of the Tales Left Untold (2000) series. I had already investigated issues of identity in earlier work, but I was coming to see that the way the photograph makes and breaks identities within the image itself is entirely another matter. The struggle, then, is to make

photographs that comment on the very nature and culture of photography.

In this paradoxical and irreverent spirit, I dressed up in a traditional Persian outfit and explored hiding places. After traveling in the West of the United States, I found the recreated Mormon Pioneer town in Salt Lake City to be an ideal setting for exploring identity, playing roles, being known and unknown, telling and withholding. I never reveal all of me, nor all of the scene. In most of this photographic series, actually, only part of a feature or scene is shown, so as to allow more space for interpretation by showing less. Just as I have had to pick up the pieces of my identity along the way, so too, must the viewers of my exhibition turn the photographs into tales which make sense to them. My aim was to invite people to come and see this real and unreal world, this theater of identities. I tore the edges of all the photographs. I tore away at the straight documentary tradition of having to keep everything straight. I tore them to look like torn memories, torn identities—bits and pieces wanting to be whole. Tattered tales defy straight paths. Not to become larger straight angles, but to take on shapes not yet identified. Ultimately the tales are ways of a new North American, a Middle Eastern-North American woman trying to write her own myths within the older myths of North America.

## How did you come up with the title?

I did not know from where in my subconscious I had pulled out the title. Two years later, on my first trip back in over twenty years to my native country, Iran, I found out. In a closet full of dust and disorder, with books stacked desperately in every direction, in the house we deserted twenty-one years ago when we ran to the airport for our lives, on a shelf deep within my memory, I found my parents' book, *Tales Worth Retelling*. The installation, *Re-Collecting Iran* (2002-2004), embodies within its fabric both the process and product of my trip to Iran. It is a cultural re-collection of objects and memories left behind after twenty-two years of exile. It consists of black and white photographs taken in Iran along with personal and cultural objects that I brought back with me to the United States. Each group of objects is organized on a pedestal with a group of images relating to three themes: Transit, Home, and Visual Cross-Culture. The installation uses the ethnography exhibit aesthetic of a natural history museum, to challenge this tradition of exhibiting the Other as strange, native, backwards, etc. Because I am exhibiting the self, I am doing auto-ethnography, studying a culture as a participant within that culture-- as a passionate, subjective and vulnerable observer, not an objective one. Thus the objects on display have the look of a museum exhibit but are priceless only to the artist herself: from my first toys, bed sheets, and artwork that my family had deserted in Iran to contemporary Iranian popular culture items (like movie stars on key chains, photo and cinema magazines, etc.) that I brought back to share with the North American public.

## What about your I Am Not a Persian Carpet series?

In my subsequent series, *I Am Not a Persian Carpet* (2001), I challenge the ways that cultures have been reduced to commodities. Based on my observations in Europe and North

America, it is not an exaggeration to say that in the West, the only thing known about Persian







By Andrea Photopoulos

The Pacific Pulse

# Mezes: "A Taste of Greece" in San Francisco (In More Ways Than One!)

you will not be disappointed with the taste. For dinner I chose and thoroughly enjoyed stuffed calamari, dolmathes, bifteki, garides saganaki, and then for dessert galaktoboureko and ravani. How did I eat all that? Well, Mezes, which means "small plate" or appetizer in Greek, specializes in tapa style gourmet with the idea of sharing and socializing with fellow diners. My fellow diners just happened to include two young men who moved to San Francisco from Greece for school and are now working in the Bay. Nikos Sarilakis a 27 year old Online Marketing Manager for Sustainable Life Media found his way to Mezes with some friends and felt right at home. Stating Mezes was a place of comfort in a new life with no family or friends close by. Alexandros Trimis was my other fellow diner who is also 27 years old and moved to California two years ago to study at Stanford. Currently, Alex is working in Menlo Park as a Project Manager for oDesk, but he lives in the city and loves coming to Mezes monthly especially when there is live Greek music. After chatting it up with Alex and Nikos I quickly realized that Mezes was more than just a restaurant, but a meeting grounds for young Greeks who have come to the States, like an international hangout, a place to connect and make friends ...a home away from home ...a community.

Community has always been an important factor in the Maheras vision for Mezes and the restaurant has not only acted as a social network for native Greeks but has been proactive in helping many local causes. Mezes has hosted multiple receptions for a number of organizations and causes, such as "Fire Victims of Athenians" and "SF Education Fund" with all the proceeds benefiting each one. Many great things are happening on little Chestnut Street in the Marina District and we have not even heard the music. Patron, Katerina Prongos, a Greek American, is thrilled that a new session of live Greek music is starting up again and she claims the music is so powerful and passionate it draws her to singing on stage. Stating the music is "A real flavor of being Greek, it's great, like an energy force you feel from the music that is unexplainable." Working at Coldwell Banker only three blocks away Katerina along with a group of co-workers have been regulars at Mezes for years, especially on

live music nights. Every last Thursday of the month, Mezes will be having live music and the neat part is all the musicians are from Greece. Either visiting San Francisco for business or pleasure, whatever the reason being these Greeks find their way to Mezes prepared with a program to captivate and take the audience deeper into Greek culture. "A musical message from Greece, presented as it would be at the local Athenian bouzouki says," Jimmy Consos, head of marketing and customer service at Mezes who also happens to be a fabulous bouzouki player. Jimmy is a regular musician for this program and arranges all the magic. He shared that they play a "classical mix of Greek pieces, 50's and 60's Greek cinema, and modern Athenian Style." However you look at it, from any angle, whether food, community, or music, Mezes has a great deal to offer and is definitely a must for your next visit to the Bay. A cozy San Francisco restaurant nestled in the heart of the Marina District, but do not be fooled by the typically tinier urban size, this little restaurant is pulsing with life and excitement coming all the way from it's heartland in Greece.

**Mezes is located at 2373 Chestnut Street, San Francisco, CA 94123-2609, tel. (415) 409-7111**



Katerina Prongos (far right) enjoying dinner with friends. From left, Nathan Churchhill, Jane Sioshansi and Geovanna Lindo.



My fellow diners at Mezes, from left to right, Jimmy Consos, Nikos Sarilakis and Alexandros Trimis.

As the millennium struck in 2000, Athens native Nikos Maheras' big dream of opening an authentic Greek Restaurant in San Francisco came true with the ribbon cut of Mezes "Taste of Greece". Maheras wanted patrons to feel that once they stepped foot into his restaurant, they were traveling thousands of miles to a taverna in Greece. Now, ten years later Mezes (www.mezessf.com) is one of the most popular Greek restaurants in the Bay. Named "Best Greek Meal" for 2009 & 2010 in San Francisco's Chronicle, Mezes brings it all to the table. Excellent service, atmosphere, live music, a specialty wine list, and we can not forget the most important thing...the FOOD! Yum!



Jimmy Consos, Harry Madeckas (Greek American Chef who works at a famous Michelin star restaurant in Athens called Estiatorio Varoulko), and owner and Chef of Mezes Nikos Maheras at their 2010 NYE special event.

I'll admit I was looking forward to experiencing Mezes first hand after learning so much about it and by the end of the night I was sad to leave for I realized there is much more to this place than good food. Even on a foggy August night, the city of San Francisco was full of life and excitement. As you walk into Mezes you are greeted with smiling faces and warm hellos. The menu had something for everyone, catering to vegetarians, gluten-free, and meat lovers. Whether you are feeling like a nice fresh horiatiki salata or a traditional souvlaki plate

WITHOUT BORDERS \* HELLENES WITHOUT BORDERS \* HELLENES WITHOUT BORDERS

## A MIRACLE ON MOUNT MELA



By Alexander Billinis



PHOTO: ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew flanked by other Orthodox clergy officiates liturgy at the Panaghia Soumela Monastery. Underneath, a Turkish security officer watches the premises. The monastery was turned to a museum after Pontic Greeks were expelled in 1923 following the Treaty of Lausanne.

Resurrection is the word that comes to mind, when thinking about the liturgy that took place last month, on the date of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary, at one of her Holiest Shrines, Panaghia Soumela. No, not the new Panaghia Soumela outside Veria, in Greece, but the original one in Pontus, modern day Turkey, in the lush, green Pontic Mountains of the Black Sea coast. Asia Minor is a vast necropolis of Byzantium and Orthodox Christianity, the site of one of the greatest tragedies of history. However for a brief moment, one of her holiest shrines came back to life, as if a holy seed awaiting a drop or water and sunlight, began to bloom again. This moment feels like yet another one of the miracles attributed to this monastery that is under the protection of the Mother of God.

I regret not having had the opportunity to participate in the liturgy myself. I was in Kavala at the time, which, with its huge Pontic Greek population, was truly the next best thing to being there. Television played the liturgy over and over, and no eyes watching remained dry. Outside, in cafés, on the beach, in shops, the liturgy was the only topic, replacing, for a while at least, talk of austerity, closed shops, and the prospect of emigration (or re-emigration) to Germany and elsewhere. For a moment, something loftier than

This year, last month, many of the Pontic Diaspora returned. The Greek and Russian organizers managed to secure Turkish permission for the liturgy to occur in the monastery, led by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. Over 1,500 people attended; again these were mostly Russian Pontic Greeks along with brethren from Greece. The beautiful service emphasized inclusion and tolerance. His All Holiness Bartholomew made it a point to send his blessings to Muslims who were celebrating Ramadan. That

the material trials of today's Greece reigned.

The Monastery of Panaghia Soumela ("Soumela" in Pontic Greek means "of Mela") lies on a massive ledge of Mount Mela, part of the verdant and majestic Pontic Alps. This lofty enclave is perhaps the best crowd symbol or metaphor for the Pontic people, an extraordinary branch of Hellenism. For well over fourteen centuries a religious enclave, dedicated to the Mother of God, has existed here, endowed by Byzantine Emperors, the Emperors of Trebizond, the Kings of Georgia, and, during the Ottoman era, by wealthy Pontic Greeks in Pontus and Russia. Following the Treaty of Lausanne, signed by Greece and Turkey in 1923, in the aftermath of Greece's defeat, all Orthodox Christians were required to leave Asia Minor and the monastery was closed.

Until this past August 15, Panaghia Soumela had lain silent since 1923; it had sadly been left to the elements, becoming an empty though sumptuous relic. For most of the past nine decades, the monastery was completely deserted and falling to ruin. It became an inconvenient truth to the Turks - an elegant architectural and spiritual proof that the original inhabitants of their land were Orthodox Christians. While Turkey was poor and isolated, this monastery in the extreme northeast of Turkey was easily obscured and forgotten by most of the world—though never by Pontic Greeks. As modern-day tourism started to penetrate this beautiful and historic part of Turkey, the truth could no longer be hidden. Greeks too started to come more often, searching for lost relatives among the Pontic-speaking Muslims. In that search for their roots, the route often led the seekers to the difficult and winding trek up to Panaghia Soumela. As years wore on, the monastery became a museum, much like Aghia Sophia in Trebizond, or, of course, Aghia Sophia in Constantinople.

For many years, Pontic Greeks around the world have been pushing for the right to hold a liturgy for the monastery's name day, the 15th of August. The thaw in the Greek-Turkish "Cold War" and the improving Russo-Turkish relations have fostered this annual "homecoming." Last year, three thousand people converged on Panaghia Soumela for the name day and a minor incident ensued.

Perhaps this is a romantic wish, or simply one of faith. I do know, however, that Muslims greatly respect the Virgin Mary and her well-known penchant for miracles may be at work here. As her Greek Christian children, let us be joyful for "small beginnings". Hopefully, we can look forward with faith and prudence in the face of these trying times and hope perhaps that they might be pointing toward a long-needed change for a better future.

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. He has worked with companies invested in the Balkans, and is writing a travel-historical book about the post-Byzantine states of modern Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania.

PHOTOS: CRAIG ADAMS

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Bessie Ziozis and her brother in law Stefano Ziozis



John Constantinides from Wells Fargo, host Nick Katopodis and Nick Kostakos of Marathon Bank



Katherine Tedesco, Steve Spucces and Maria Frankis



Entrepreneur and philanthropist Achilles Seitarides, Chris Kavvadas and Nick Sahlaras



Helen Petras, Kathy DeRosa and Bessie Ziozis



Eleni Avgousti, Joanna Kyriakou and Fotis Papagermanos of ETA Press



Dr. Effie Ahladiotis (North Shore Dental), her husband Basil Salloum and Dr. John Frankis



Anthony DeRosa and Harry Golematis



Andy and Christina Zoitas



Comptroller George Maragos with Journalist Markos Papadatos



NEO's Kyprianos Bazenikas with Angelo Gerasimou



Nick Sahlaras, Thomas Tsamis and Mike Gerasimou



Eleftheria Ikouta, Principal of Plato's Greek School, with Nadia Dragaris and Lambrini Gementzopoulou



Emmanuel Caravanos, Treasurer of the Hellenic American Bankers Association, Tina Handras, Senior Vice President Marathon Bank, and Nikolas Kostakos, Vice President Marathon Bank



Joanna Kyriakou, Markos Papadatos and Joanna Xipa



George Michelis and Anthony DeRosa



NEO's Kyprianos Bazenikas and Demetrios Rhompotis, Honorary Guest Nassau County Comptroller George Maragos, the evening's Hosts Dr. John Frankis and Nick Katopodis and NEO's Los Angeles Desk Director Joanna Xipa

PHOTOS: ETA PRESS



Markos Papadatos, Kathy DeRosa and Ana Tuminello



Maria and Thomas Zoitas (left and right), Andrew Zoitas, Nicole and friends visiting from Greece



Maria Zoitas, Maria Kondakis, Stamatis Tsilimos from Nexus Radio and Georgia Vavas all the way from ...Baltimore!



Eleni Avgousti, Myrto Charamis and Thomas Zoitas



Dino Ralis with Eleftheria Ikouta



John Dimitrakakis of HBN with Alexis Glenn of HBN Women



Anthony Roccia, Lawrence Levy and Nick Katopodis



Adelina, Maria Zoitas, Kati Paliuras and Marilena Katopodis



Vasso and Taki Katsoulis with Lawrence and Marilyn Levy



From left, Myrto Charamis, Joanna Kyriakou and Eleni Avgousti



Helen Petras and Maria Frankis

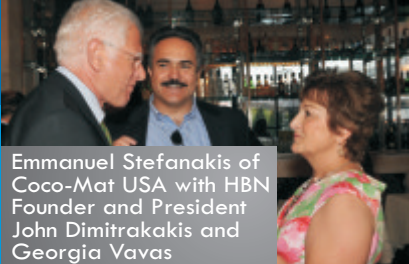
## Friends gather in support of NEO

When Dr. John Frankis and Nick Katopodis from Manhasset, New York, came up with the idea of organizing a Welcome the Summer event in support of NEO magazine – the first of its kind for this publication – given that it was late May, they concluded that a maximum of 50 friends, for a last-minute notice, was the best they could hope for. Well, they were wrong! When the night of the event came, a beautiful June evening with a majestic sunset, over 100 people--double what they expected--showed up at Roslyn's super-elegant Limani Restaurant to share a few hours of each other's company, to meet new people, enjoy the wonderful Greek wine offered for the occasion by Dimitris Ziozis from Wonderful Ethnic Imports, and to savor the mouth-watering appetizers of Chef Peter Spyropoulos.

Nassau County Comptroller George Maragos, NEO's Man of the Year for 2010, joined the attendees and received a framed cover of the June issue, featuring himself and his achievements in his half year on the job (in which he cut the County's deficit by half). Rev. Gerasimos Ballas, Dean at St. Anargyroi and Taxiarches Church in Greenport, was there as well, John Levas, President of the area's AHEPA Gold Coast Chapter 456, Eleftheria Ikouta, Principal of the Greek School of Plato, in Brooklyn, Tina Handras, Senior Vice President of Marathon Bank, with Nikolas Kostakos, head of the local branch, Emmanuel Caravanos, Treasurer of the Hellenic American Bankers Association, Kathy DeRosa, founder and President of the DeRosa Foundation, and John Dimitrakakis, founder and President of the Hellenic Business Network.

Indeed, everybody was special that evening and that was reflected in the people's festive mood. "We gathered here to recognize the work this wonderful magazine is doing for the community and to ensure that it will continue to do so," said Dr. John Frankis welcoming the guests. "I thank you all for coming – indeed in such a short notice. It shows your sensitivity and quality as Hellenes and friends of the Hellenes to show up whenever and wherever our extended civic duty calls."

This October, NEO magazine marks five years of uninterrupted publication. It also marks the beginning of a new 24/7 radio station, RadioNEO, which will be on the air in New York and Chicago and all over the US online (radioneo.us). Details to follow.



Emmanuel Stefanakis of Coco-Mat USA with HBN Founder and President John Dimitrakakis and Georgia Vavas



Dr. John Frankis, the evening's host, John Petras, Katherine Tedesco, Steve Spucces and Peter Sanoulis



Adelina of Adelina's Hair Design in Manhasset, Kali and Spyro Paliuras of CSPN Inc.



Rev. Gerasimos Ballas with Dino Ralis



Peter Mamais and Stefano Ziozis



Socialite and Producer John Kouros



George Sarafoglou, Peter Mamais, Lawrence Levy and Anthony Roccia



Dr. John and Maria Frankis



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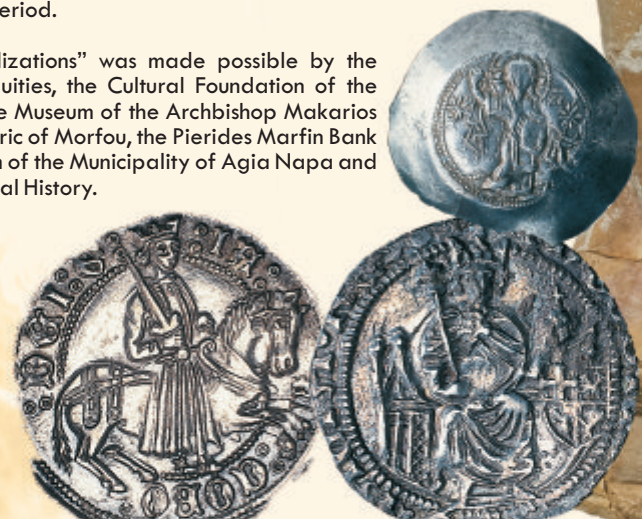
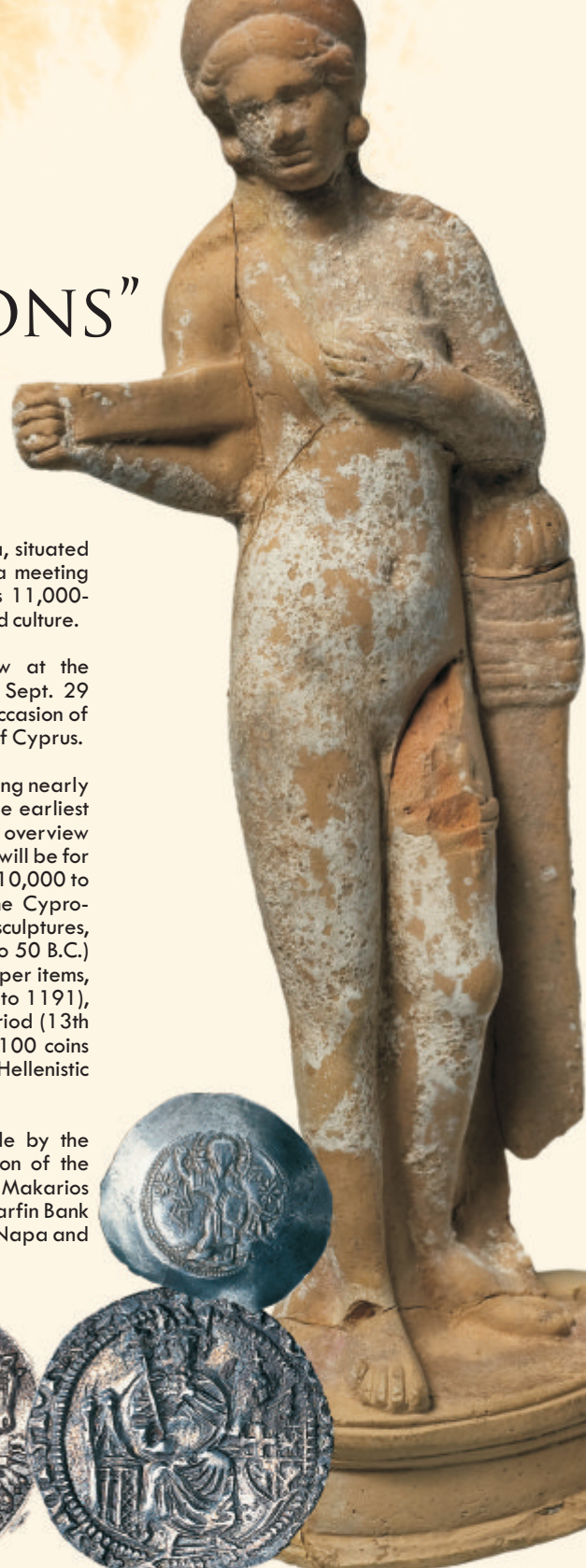
# “CYPRUS: CROSSROADS OF CIVILIZATIONS” TO OPEN AT SMITHSONIAN

Cyprus, the eastern-most island in the Mediterranean Sea, situated at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa, has been a meeting point for many of the world's great civilizations. From its 11,000-year history, Cyprus has woven its own distinctive history and culture.

“Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilizations” will be on view at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History from Sept. 29 through May 1, 2011. The exhibition is presented on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Cyprus.

The exhibition will feature more than 200 artifacts—covering nearly 11,000 years of history—which range from items from the earliest villages to masterpieces of medieval religious art, give an overview of the island's unique culture. Among the objects on display will be for the first time in this country: A pygmy hippopotamus skull (10,000 to 8,500 B.C.), gold jewelry and sphinx sculptures from the Cypro-Archaic period (750 to 480 B.C.), vases, bowls and sculptures, including an Aphrodite marble, from the Hellenistic (325 to 50 B.C.) and Roman (50 B.C. to A.D. 330) periods, bronze and copper items, including lamps and jugs, from the Byzantine period (330 to 1191), religious icons, paintings and vases from the medieval period (13th to 16th century). The exhibition also will feature nearly 100 coins from different eras in Cypriot history, starting from the Hellenistic period through the Venetian period.

“Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilizations” was made possible by the Cyprus Department of Antiquities, the Cultural Foundation of the Bank of Cyprus, the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation, the Holy Bishopric of Morfou, the Pierides Marfin Bank Museum, the Thalassa Museum of the Municipality of Agia Napa and the National Museum of Natural History.



By Maria A. Pardalis

## bread & honey

A COLUMN DEVOTED TO MAKING GREEK FOOD EASY

### Fresh Fig and Toasted Walnut Bread

Figs are undeniably summer's golden fruit. Luckily, for those of us in the tri-state area, they are still in season till the end of September. Whether you are a fruit aficionado or not, I urge you to go out and buy this exceptionally nutritious treat before its heartbreakingly short season quickly fleets away! Though dried figs are available year-round, they certainly do not hold a candle to the juicy flavor of fresh figs, nor do they evoke the taste of summer as poignantly.

An emblem of the elegance of ancient Greek cuisine, figs are delicious whether eaten simply raw or heavily macerated and layered over a rich Roquefort mousse tart. The Greek poet Alexis of Thuri referred to the fig as “that god-given inheritance of our mother country” and the “darling of my heart”. Darling to my heart indeed they are, as I associate them with my carefree childhood summers spent in Greece and Cyprus surrounded by beautiful fig trees, fig tarts and even fig ice cream. I may no longer be able to spend months basking in the Mediterranean sun while eating a plethora of plump figs freshly cut from my grandmother's

trees, but I can incorporate them into my daily diet and happily reminisce. I especially love to pair them with goat cheese, drizzle with dark honey, stuff into a tender pork loin and roast to perfection; now that to me is pure culinary bliss.

Figs are versatile and excellent over Greek yogurt, in pancake mix or even made into preserves, which will enable you to savor the flavor of summer for months to come. Celebrate the fig this weekend and try my recipe for a quick bread filled with toasted walnuts and ripe figs.



Yields: 2 small loaves,  
Prep time: 20 minutes  
Bake time: 50 - 60 minutes

#### Preparation:

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees place the oven rack in the middle position.
2. Next place chopped figs in a medium bowl and top with orange juice. Allow to sit for 15 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, combine applesauce, honey, sugar and eggs; stir with a whisk until well blended. Add yogurt, vanilla, orange zest, and mix well.
4. Stir in flours, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Gently fold in prepared figs and walnuts.
5. Spoon batter into 2 medium greased 8-by-4-inch loaf pans. Sprinkle tops with raw can sugar and cinnamon mixture. Bake at 350 for 50 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer to wire rack to cool completely before slicing.

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups ripe fresh figs, stemmed and quartered
- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 cup applesauce, unsweetened
- 1 cup toasted walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated orange zest
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup honey
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 1 cup plain low fat yogurt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Pinch ground cloves
- 1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup raw cane sugar mixed with 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional - for topping)
- 2 (8X4 inch) loaf pans

A slice of fig and walnut bread makes for a well rounded hearty and portable breakfast, especially when topped with a tablespoon of natural nut butter for added protein. It is also delectable served warm and topped with vanilla ice cream for dessert!

Kali Orexi!!

#### Did you know...

Early Olympian athletes feasted on figs as training food and were also presented figs as laurels to the winners as the first Olympic "metal"?

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Maria Garozi (Photographer/Vogue Contributor) and Anna Badavas of Condestat



The hostess, Eleni Delibaltadaki (left) and Olga Alexacos



Olga Alexakos, Esther Lainis and Fran Gretes



Mari Carras with Anthoula Katsimatidis



Annie Badavas and Eleni Delibaltadaki



Efie Lekkas, Olga Alexakos and Professor Vasilis Katsikiotis of Bank of America



From left, Elena Kyriakides, Koula Sofianou (Counsul General of Cyprus) Olga Alexakou and Leslie Kabrin



## An Evening of Conversation and Art in Manhattan

The Association of Greek American Professional Women (AGAPW) recently held an event entitled "An Evening of Conversation and Art" in Manhattan. The gathering was hosted by Eleni Delimbaltadakis and Spencer Janis at their loft in Flatiron.

The capacity crowd had the opportunity to hear a first-rate presentation on the state of the Greek and global economy by Dr. Vasilis Katsikiotis, Ph.D., Managing Director and Head of Insurance Linked Products Trading Global Markets and Investment Banking at Bank of America-Merrill Lynch. "If history can even serve as a distant guide, Greeks have always risen to the occasion when conditions were such that survivorship of the nation was put into question. I'm deeply convinced that Greeks are mindful of their historical heritage and they will rise to the occasion once again. This time,

the entire world will be watching," emphasized Dr. Katsikiotis. His presentation was followed by a lively discussion.

The evening also featured a photography exhibit by a young artist, Maria Garozi, entitled "Would we be America if not for...? The American Superwoman and Immigrants on the Streets of New York", which was enthusiastically received by all present. Ms. Garozi gave a brief introduction of her work, which is part of a greater photopoetry project she is working on, focused on immigrants in New York City.

Dr. Olga Alexakos, the president of AGAPW, gave welcoming remarks and introduced the speakers and special guests, who included Ms. Koula Sophianou, Consul General of Cyprus, Ms. Polyxeni Mastroperrou, Director of the Greek Press and Information Office and numerous members of the Greek American community and press.

The guests had the chance to enjoy fine Greek wine provided by Mr. Konstantine Drougos of Wonderful Ethnic, and complementary meze tasting provided by Mr. Christos Valtzoglou of Pylos restaurant.

AGAPW is planning a series of events starting in September. For further information on upcoming events and on the organization please visit their website, [www.agapw.org](http://www.agapw.org) or call Dr. Alexakos at 917-405-6833.

PHOTOS: ETA PRESS

# This was a magic moment...



The newly engaged: Andrea Catsimatidis and Chris Cox



From left, Chris Cox, Andrea Catsimatidis, Trisia Nixon and Edward C. Cox, John and Margo Catsimatidis and John Catsimatidis Junior



Jay Black performing for the newly engaged couple and their guests

It was a beautiful evening in the Southampton on August 28th, for the engagement party of Andrea Catsimatidis, daughter of John and Margo Catsimatidis, and Mr. Chris Cox, son of Trisia Nixon and Edward C. Cox, grandson of Richard Nixon. The party took place on the grounds of the local Greek Orthodox Church and it was a very elegant affair with music legend Jay Black performing for the newly engaged couple. Fr. Alex Karloutsos was on hand to bless the engagement.

Andrea, 19, is a member of NYU's class of 2012 and Chris Cox, 31, is running as a Republican in Long Island.

Among the famous guests in attendance was Mr. Peter Arnett, the former CNN correspondent.

NEO magazine was on hand to wish the couple and their parents congratulations.

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# WEST COAST BEAT



Gus Sverkos

Yours truly, Joanna Xipa

Elias Ladas

PHOTO: NICK DIMITROKALIS

## KALIMERA L.A. WITH JOANNA XIPIA & FRIENDS!

Coming soon this September, on behalf of RadioNEO, stay tuned for "Kalimera L.A. with Joanna Xipa & Friends", a new and exciting Greek-American online radio Call-in show, with your chance to have your voices, ideas and events heard (both locally & around the world)!

With a dash of the hottest Greek hits, a pinch of my lighthearted humor paired with my entertaining co-hosts, Gus Sverkos and Elias Ladas, and of course a daily dose of Greek-American guest speakers as well, you're also welcome to call in and add a breath of fresh air to the mix!

In sharing with you a little bit about my co-hosts, you will surely appreciate the long-time commitment DJ/Promoter/Restaurateur Gus Sverkos of Goodtime Productions has made to the local Greek communities in Southern California. He was featured in the June issue of NEO magazine in my "West Coast Beat" column and you may look it up online via the archives if you haven't read about him already.

Elias Ladas, is another Greek-American who you may have already heard about recently placing third with his Celebrity Partner, Eugenia Manolidou, in Greece's "Dancing With The Stars" this year, broadcast here via Antenna Satellite on Sunday evenings. American born and raised in Athens, with a passion for dance that started out as a hobby 20 years ago, it has since blossomed into a full blown career here in Southern California, where he is ranked amongst the top 20 out of 2,500 professional dance instructors in America!

I'm so excited to bring together this love of music and dance for you, with the passion of my hometown Greek spirit that I will forever carry with me from the world famous Danforth Avenue of Toronto! If the three of us can come together from different corners of the world and bring smiles and good cheers your way every day, then no mountains are too big for crossing over to unite us now!

Our L.A. morning show will air 9am PST, 11am Central, 12pm EST. It will give you all a chance to shout out to your loved ones with birthday wishes, wedding announcements, or even last minute reminders or sharing of your events going on the very same evening!

So, don't be shy... Feel free to speak in Greek, or English... or even Grenglish! Won't that be interesting, eh? So, fire up the 'mbriki' if you will, make mine a 'metrio', sit down with us and enjoy 'enan elliniko kafe'!



## Greece: From PIG to Guinea pig

There is a saying in Greek--which might have come from another language, I don't know--that the best defense is going on the offense, in other words: don't fall back and wait for the enemy to take the first step and only then try to repel the attack. The Greek way is to attack first, grab the bull by the horns, and either drop him to his knees or jump over him--as they did in the ancient Cretan bull fighting--and let him run in the opposite direction, snuffing with rage. In these modern times the bull has come to Greece in the form of the out-of-state control, supra-national financial institutions that have imposed on the country an asphyxiating set of rules and regulations with the sole aim to guarantee that they will get their money back that was lent at usurious rates. The less explicit goal is to ensure that Greece doesn't default because such a prospect would trigger a chain reaction with Portugal, Spain, and even England following suit, and with consequences to the world financial order that will be both unpredictable and unprecedented.

Small Greece is being used as a guinea pig (up to a few months ago she was just ... a pig: a member of the contemptuously-named group of countries whose initials form the acronym PIGS - Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Spain) for the array of therapies being applied that even if they prove successful, most likely will kill the patient--or the pig, in this case! That is what has driven the people hopeless, as I had the chance to witness firsthand during my recent three week vacation there: even if "they behave" and follow the rules religiously (with all the misery they entail, because they brought on series of salary and pension cuts) doom most likely won't be allayed, because the economy will collapse under the weight of the therapy. While this measures onslaught is being applied, new packages of measures are in the offing, even harsher, leaving no illusion that things will go better. Instead it's certain that the situation will get only worse. At the same time, much needed state investment in order for the economy to move forward is non-existent (last year, however, just before the crisis started full course, the previous government could secure more than 25 billion € for the banks - just like here, by the way) while the banks are still unwilling to make loans easier for businesses to start or expand. Whatever remains from the middle class business sector is relentlessly taxed and attacked and as a result a huge--for such a small country--number of shops, small scale manufacturing or other free enterprises are shuttering one after the other.

People in Greece have been through major crises before: in the last 60 years only they went through world wars, a foreign occupation, a civil war, a military dictatorship and a national tragedy (Cyprus). And yet, according to those who went through all that, it's the first time that Greeks are so dispirited, so hopeless, unwilling to seriously believe that

there is a better future for them individually or collectively. All they know is that more suffering is in the offing and there is no leadership or some other kind of guidance that could convince them that, through hard work and sacrifice, something better will come. It's as if they reached the end of a path that instead of the Promised Land brought them to the beginning of another dessert.

In the meantime, Greeks are not alone in this, even within their country. About two million immigrants, legal and illegal, face even worse challenges and nobody knows how they will react as even the little they could make becomes scarce. Hundreds of thousands have nowhere else to go: their countries, Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, don't want them back as Greece found out when it attempted to repatriate some of them. Turkey, unable herself to cope with the influx of those illegal immigrants, facilitates their entry into Greece, taking advantage of the impossible-to-guard Aegean Sea. All the while, Greece keeps requesting EU aid, but to no avail. It would take a government with unusual nerve and guts to play a radical card and perhaps grant all illegal immigrants Greek citizenship overnight and buy them an one-way airline ticket to a European country of their choice (helping at the same time the Greek airline companies), but you can't hope for something like that! Had such a government been in place, no so much precious time would have been wasted from last October until last February, the country could have found less expensive money in the free market (China and Russia indeed made offers. In fact tiny Moldova got loans with half the interest rate Greece was paying at about the same time), and even the agreement with the IMF and the other European financial institutions could have been struck in different terms (as did Turkey in the '90s).

All these missed opportunities have exasperated Greeks even further and made them cynical, distrustful and ultimately unwilling to move forward just when the opposite is sine qua non if the country is to escape certain death. Let us hope that the ignition to the much needed renaissance will not come in the form of another national tragedy (shock therapy), after a prolonged dark ages period into which the country has just entered. Since the political party system has failed in its entirety, hope can only come from entities and individuals who have stayed out of the "party" have long realized that there is another path to life and success. From their real guidance, inspiration, faith and hope can emanate and spark a positive movement which in turn will make our brethren there to react in a wider manner and put their wit into action.

Throughout modern Greek history great deeds were achieved despite governments or other official forms of leadership and the Herculean task of getting out of this mess is no exception.



A breathtaking view of the village of Aghios Petros, in Lefkas Island, where I grew up. Despite the economic crisis that hit Greece, land prices remain high, with properties selling for €250,000 (about \$400,000) a piece

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# Manatos Family Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in America



(L to R) Tina and Andy Manatos (Mike's parents), Fox 5 DC News Anchor Laura Evans Manatos and Mike Manatos, Kathleen Matthews and Host of MSNBC "Hardball" Chris Matthews

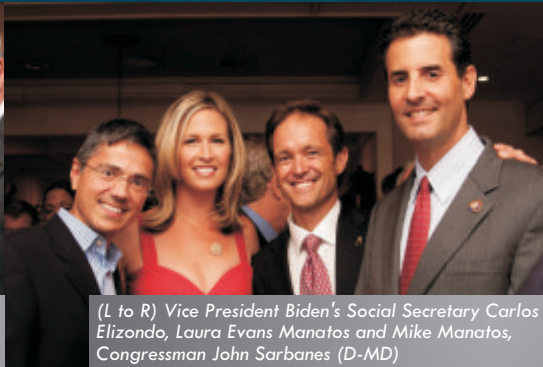
The Manatos family recently celebrated three important milestones, including the 100th anniversary of the arrival of their family in the United States. The celebration was covered by US News & World Report, Politico, The Hill, Roll Call and NBC Washington. Members of Congress, White House staff, current and former senior State Department officials, and members of the media including Chris Matthews, host of MSNBC's Hardball, joined the Manatos family at a reception on Monday evening at Kellari Taverna on K Street.



(L to R) Andy Manatos, American University President Neil Kerwin, Mike Manatos, former Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), former Bush Administration Undersecretary of State Marc Grossman



(L to R) Mike Manatos, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Marcie Ries, former US Ambassador to Greece Charlie Ries, former Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD)



(L to R) Vice President Biden's Social Secretary Carlos Elizondo, Laura Evans Manatos and Mike Manatos, Congressman John Sarbanes (D-MD)

The Manatos family celebrated the arrival of Nick A. Manatos (originally Manatakis - Μανατάκης) 100 years ago (on July 27, 1910) at Ellis Island from Crete, Greece. They also celebrated the 75th anniversary of the arrival of Mike N. Manatos in Washington, DC, where he began the family's uninterrupted work on US public policy development from the public and private sector, as well as the 20th anniversary of Mike A. Manatos joining the firm of Manatos & Manatos.

Richter, chief of staff to Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-Maine); Julia Frifield, chief of staff to Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.); and McMahon chief of staff and former lobbyist Chris McCannell."

"The guest list showed the party to be a convergence of Washington's Greek community, lobbyists, and members of Congress and staffers, as well as a contingent of local news personalities. It also went a long way to show that Manatos & Manatos is a key player on K Street and in Congress, even if some of the party chatter wasn't focused on cap-and-trade, healthcare, or the elections," noted the US News and World Report. "Mike Manatos' wife, Fox 5 News anchor Laura Evans Manatos, divided her attention between the couple's three children and her Fox 5 colleagues. Chris Matthews, host

of MSNBC's "Hardball," made an appearance with his wife, former ABC 7 anchor Kathleen Matthews."

"The Manatos family's Washington, D.C., ties run deep. Mike Manatos' grandfather was the Senate liaison to presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. His father was President Jimmy Carter's assistant secretary of Commerce for legislation before starting the family's lobby shop with his father in 1983," Roll Call wrote. "The firm still represents several clients, including Ameresco, Cubicorp, the Pancyprian Association of America and Lafayette Federal Credit Union, according to lobbying disclosure reports."

According to Roll Call, "Reps. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), Michael McMahon (D-N.Y.) and Dina Titus (D-Nev.) all showed up, as did former Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-Md.) and his son Rep. John Sarbanes (D-Md.). Several top Capitol Hill aides also joined in the festivities, including John

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