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# NEO FROM THE EDITOR

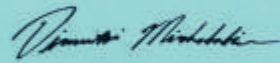
## An Online Prayer for Peace

Mark Twain wrote The War Prayer 100 years ago in the disillusionment of an old man with the eternal folly of man pursuing wars that purportedly solve momentary problems at the cost of monumental suffering. Markos Kounalakis, an experienced foreign correspondent who had seen the folly of men and wars firsthand, kept the poem in the back of his mind for years before deciding the time had come to resurrect its message. And, of course, he did it through the modern medium of film and exposure first on YouTube.

Mark Twain's poem never saw the light of day in his lifetime, even somebody as fabled as Twain couldn't get the powers to be of the time to buck the government and publish it. The poem might have never seen the light of day again today (or received any sort of exposure) without the global reach of online portals like YouTube, which have become the most direct expression of any kind of expression, silly, fatuous, but also serious and somber, such as the 14-minute film of The War Prayer. It will continue to haunt the Web and reverberate in the online universe in ways that Twain himself (a sucker for new gadgets—one of which bankrupted him) would have been astonished to see.

In more local storms, there is a man in Louisiana, born and bred, who made himself very successful in business, and in the confidence of a self-made man and the tradition of all Louisiana politicians, is bucking to take on the devastation of Katrina and rebuild his state. John Georges is not afraid of another Katrina; he says the state has made great strides in shoring up New Orleans, and he says Louisiana is actually doing well. It has a surplus and with a hard-nosed governor in office seasoned in business (he built the family wholesale grocery distribution business into a half a billion dollar empire) the state can reap the accumulated windfall sitting jammed in the pipeline from Washington and become an economic powerhouse again. Unfortunately, he measures only 8% in the latest polls among the declared candidates, but he's confident he can pull an "October Surprise," and the frontrunner will topple from his 50% perch, and the two will go head-to-head in the general election.

We wish him luck. His confidence can be refreshing in the face of the sobering thoughts of The War Prayer, and in the midst of another war where final victory has been proven, once again, the eternal chimera.



Dimitri C. Michalakis

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**NEO Magazine**  
is published monthly by  
Neocorp Media Inc.  
P.O.Box 560105 College Point, NY 11356  
Phone: (718) 554-0308  
e-Fax: (240) 384-8681  
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# Mark Twain War Protest Poem Interpreted Visually and Posted on YouTube

“Only dead men can tell the truth in this world.”

That was Samuel Clemens’ reaction when he heard that his anti-war poem, “The War Prayer,” had been rejected for publication as “too radical.” The new century had dawned with America taking its first steps as an imperial power, having defeated Spain and crushing an emerging Philippine independence movement.

Clemens was enraged by the country’s new direction. In protest, the writer also known as Mark Twain wrote a poem where a society beseeches God for victory in war. A prophet appears. God can grant the prayer, but the consequence is the horrific torture that war inflicts on a defeated nation. The prophet is ignored and written off as a lunatic.

A century later, “The War Prayer” delivered a powerful message when a video interpretation of Twain’s work appeared on YouTube and the Web site, [www.thewarprayer.com](http://www.thewarprayer.com). Directed and produced by Washington Monthly publisher Markos Kounalakis, the 14-minute short film employs hauntingly stark graphics by Greek

illustrator Akis Dimitrakopoulos.

Scored by accomplished Polish composer Wieslaw Pogorzelski and recited by Emmy-award winning narrator Peter Coyote, “The War Prayer” describes the blind hypocrisy of enlisting God to ensure victory in war — sadly, a tragedy as persistent today as it was during Clemens’ twilight years.

Kounalakis discovered a copy of “The War Prayer” inside the library of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, where he was posted as a correspondent for Newsweek and NBC during the early 1990s. It immediately made an impact on Kounalakis, who as a war correspondent, was about to witness the devastation in Afghanistan following the Soviet invasion of that country.

During 2006, Kounalakis gathered an international pool of talent to help him translate “The War Prayer” into an unforgettable visual and audio experience. Much of the work, including that of narrator Peter Coyote, was volunteered without compensation.

“The War Prayer” did eventually see print in

1916 in Harpers Monthly during the middle of World War I. The horrors of that global conflict echoed the message of “The War Prayer,” but its lesson remained ignored.

A century later, released through a medium unimaginable in Clemens’ time, the context of “The War Prayer” remains strikingly unchanged. Societies still seek battlefield triumph through the assumed endorsement of a deity, guaranteeing instead only unending destruction and misery. The expanding bloodbath in Iraq is only one example.

Clemens died in 1910, six years before “The War Prayer” appeared in public, his words about dead men and truth as real in 1916 as they are in 2007.

“The War Prayer” was also viewed on Brightcove.com and was rated #39 in the “Top 100 Buzz Videos.”

A DVD of “The War Prayer” is available overnight by calling Chris Holben at (916) 446-9900 or through the website [www.thewarprayer.com](http://www.thewarprayer.com).

## An Interview with Markos Kounalakis

*Why The War Prayer? How did you run across it? What struck you about it?*

*I found it in the US Embassy lenders library in Moscow, right around the time I was getting ready to go to Afghanistan to cover the end of the Soviet war and occupation. I took it home, read it, and have not let go of my copy of it in the last 17 years; its universality spoke to me. It seemed relevant to me when I went to cover the Afghan war and it seems relevant to me now, with religious jihadists and extremists targeting our civilians and with George Bush invoking the counsel of a “bigber father” to justify his war on a country that had nothing to do with 9/11.*

*Why do the film now? Why do it in this version (with still-life tableaux)?*

*Mark Twain’s words are very powerful and I wanted to make sure not to detract from them, but rather allow enough of a strong narration and simple imagery and motion to amplify and underscore the words. There are no explicit symbols used: the flag is blank, the house of worship has no crucifix or other explicit reference to any specific religion. I did not want to detract from the message and words in my production.*

*How did you assemble your team?*

*I am lucky. I have my San Francisco offices in Francis Ford Coppola’s building and a lot of talented people come*

*through there. There is also a recording studio and screening room downstairs, so that makes production easier. I worked primarily with my good friend, Jim McKee, with whom I founded Earwax Productions 25 years ago, and he worked selflessly on the audio tracks. I knew Stephanie Coyote (Peter Coyote’s wife) and she suggested I talk to Peter about his helping us on this project. Lawrence Ferlinghetti is a friend of ours who also has the famous City Lights bookstore a block up from our offices. I had worked with almost everyone on one project or another prior to “The War Prayer.”*

*What did each bring to the project?*

*When you get that much talent in one room, the only thing you can expect to happen is magic. For anyone who collaborates in high-level creative projects, this magic is familiar. It is nearly always a greater product than what a solo performance can create. Ensemble work is the most gratifying and most enhanced, in my estimation.*

*Why put it on YouTube and not release it otherwise?*

*My goal was to get it out to as many people as quickly as possible. The on-line medium allowed me to bypass the usual marketing and distribution bottleneck and go directly to the audience. If the project is worthy and it speaks to people, then they will pass it on to others and it will find its audience. If not, then it will wither and die in an ignored, dusty corner of the web.*

*What further plans do you have for the film?*

*In less than a week, I have been asked to consider broadcasting it on a satellite television network (not yet at liberty to discuss which) and present at a film festival. In this short amount of time, it seems also to have struck a chord amongst the on-line religious community and the on-line anti-war community. This is acceptance and reception is already beyond my initial plans.*



# Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace

*Why do you feel so strongly about this subject?*

*I have been to war and there is nothing holy about it.*

*What other initiatives might you personally take?*

*I recently began co-anchoring my weekly nationally syndicated radio program (the syndicator is Tom Athans, a fellow Greek-American from Michigan and Senator Debbie Stabenow's husband), "Washington Monthly on the Radio," which regularly features newsmakers. We recently had Gov. Bill Richardson, Sen. Bill Bradley, Cong. Charlie Rangel, and many others. This and the magazine and AKT Development - and let's not forget I've got a couple of small boys - are more than a full-time job. I did "The War Prayer" because I had to, not because I had the time to do it.*

*Have you directed anything before?*

*Yes, a number of short films back when I was working at*

*the Swedish Broadcasting company in the early 1980's. And I also did a good amount of radio drama and "Audiograph" directing and producing. I'm not new at this, just rusty.*

*What was the experience like?*

*All in all, I am very pleased. I love doing this. It needs to be driven by passion. It needs to be a labor of love.*

*What did you hope to accomplish by this project?*

*No more than I already have. If you go to the multiple sites (Daily Kos, Political Animal, or just blog links on Google, etc.) where "The War Prayer" has been presented, you will find long threads of fascinating conversations around my movie. They focus on Twain, the Spanish-American war, Iraq, George Bush, God and Justice, etc. You will find that it is mostly a civil, thoughtful, reflective, and passionate conversation that the movie has inspired. What more can I ask for?*

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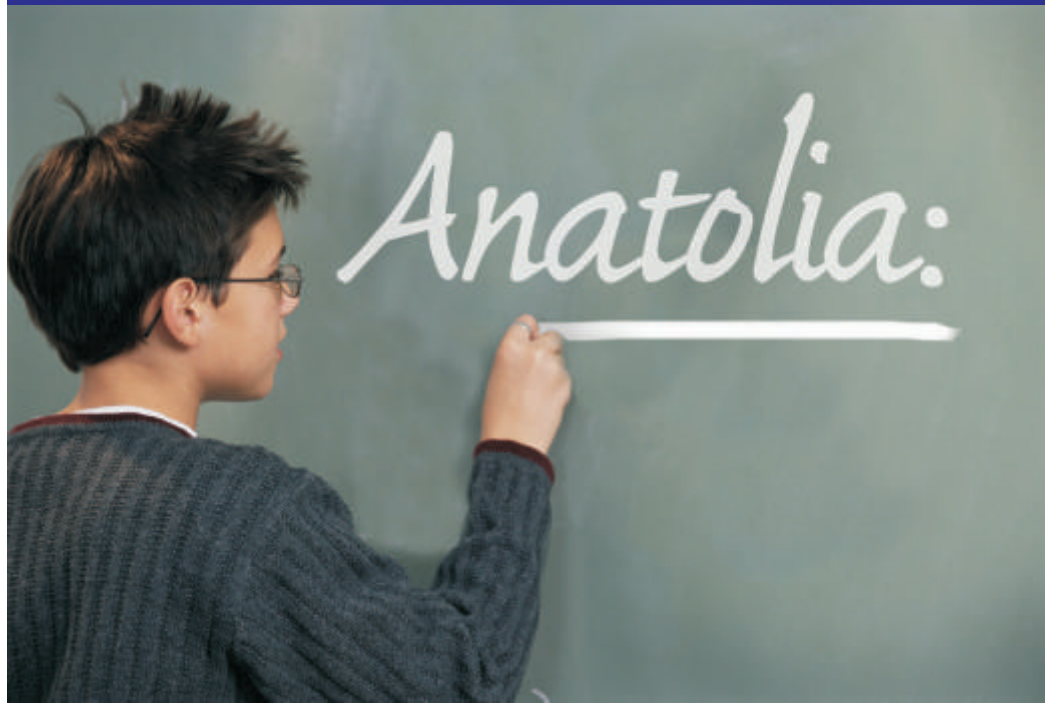
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George Kalantzis,  
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**The Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace**

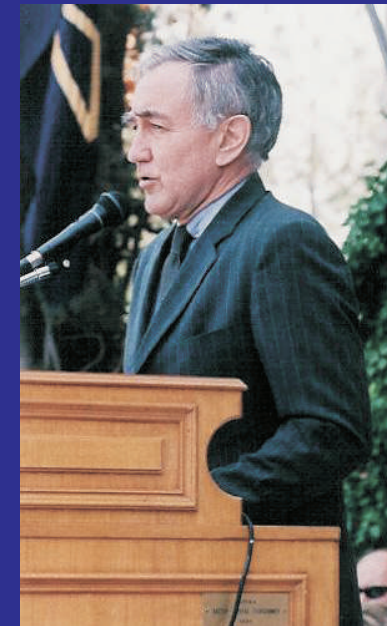
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# A school at the crossroads of history then and now



Anatolia president Richard Jackson



Minor, and flourishing today on its 50-acre campus in Thessaloniki, Greece (where it reopened in 1924 after an invitation from Eleftherios Venizelos—"You must come to Thessaloniki. This is our most international city").

two full semester study abroad programs, and then a similar program for maximum two course credit."

Plus the school is a haven for bright kids from Greece itself and those displaced in recent years from other parts of the Balkans.

President Jackson himself was a career American foreign service officer before he took the post at the college, which seemed a natural fit.

"As a refugee school leaving Asia Minor we felt we had a mission first and foremost to offer scholarships to the most deserving kids from the islands and mountain villages," says Jackson. "Now the needy are in the big cities and usually there are kids from Greek families who have been uprooted from countries of the former Soviet Union, and these kids have a lot of catching up to do. This is the trend of our scholarship students, who make up 11 % percent of our high school."

"Our mission, apart from delivering a first-rate modern education," he says, "is to be a bridge for mutual understanding between our two countries, Greece and the United States." (The school was founded by American missionaries and is officially called the American College of Thessaloniki (ACT) and chartered by the state of Massachusetts in America.)

But the school is more than just a traditional refuge for refugees: President Jackson calls Anatolia "the best school in northern Greece, if not in the entire country."

It's not every school whose history spans three centuries, and which continues to thrive while at the crossroads of several cultures and academic traditions.

"We are unique in many ways," says Anatolia College president Richard Lee Jackson of an institution that made history itself by starting at the dawn of the 19th century in Turkey (with a multi-national faculty), fleeing to Greece with the Greek exodus from Asia

Of the school's 2500 students (comprising Anatolia Elementary School, Anatolia College and ACT), all are Greek in the primary grades, nearly 96% are Greek at the high school, and 55 % are Greek at the university level, with the remainder coming from neighboring countries and from America.

"With full U.S. accreditation, kids from all over the U.S. can come and do a semester or do a year and then use these credits towards their graduation requirements wherever they're studying," says Jackson. "We have



"We have by far the most cutting-edge library and technology center of any private or non-profit in southeastern Europe, courtesy of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation," he says. "We have the Michael Dukakis chair for public policy and service—the roots of the Dukakis family are in Asia Minor. And we have business programs with American case study business methods adapted to a Greek reality that are unique. We also have a network of 10,000 graduates in all professions."

American universities than any school in the United States, which is an extraordinary claim to make, but has not been contradicted. Only the top students usually apply to our international baccalaureate program. And our counseling is a model for others. In fact, we've been asked by the president of Serbia to help train their college advisors."

The bedrock of the school is the network of alumni ("I say to the students at orientation, I want you to shake hands with the student on your left and right because they're going to be your friends for life," says Jackson) and also the voluntary 55-member board of trustees from Greece and the United States.

"Let's say a Greek American in San Diego would say, we have our own problems here, why should I give to a university in Greece?" says Jackson. "And I would answer by saying that particularly for Americans of Hellenic heritage our school is a very significant educational bridge between these two countries. Graduates create a whole fabric of ties. These kinds of universities, have underpinned the relationship between the U.S. and other countries in a way that presidents, and government administrations, and embassies can't do. They are our greatest resource."

An avowed Thessaloniki chauvinist, he concedes Athens has worthy programs, as well, "but Athens is too big for its population. Thessaloniki is on a human scale. And the kids who come here from the States, for example, have the unique experience of looking up from their studies and staring at Mount Olympus, which they might be reading about, or mingling in the cafes with other kids from the States who speak English, but are also Greek. It's the common sharing of a wonderful culture and it's a unique learning experience."

He says the branches of American universities abroad very often are not accredited and Anatolia, anyway, has "a better placement record into the top



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# John GEORGES

## GOVERNOR



*Nike, John, Liza, Dabel and Zana Georges*

# John Georges tackles the storm in Louisiana

By Dimitri C. Michalakis

## He's running for governor and planning an October surprise

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans John Georges was out of town, but he made sure his family was safe and then he returned to the devastated city to stay alone for almost a year and help the city rebuild.

"Holy Trinity Cathedral was under four feet of water," remembers the 46-year-old businessman of the cathedral, the oldest Greek church in the Americas, of which he is president. "But we got it open again in three months. The Patriarch came to visit us in the fourth month." How did he do it when most of the city was still under water? "Divine intervention," he draws.

Actually, he put his hard-nosed business skills to use (he runs a \$500 million family business called Imperial Trading), bargained with vendors and contractors and "we were there on the spot to make quick decisions when other people in that situation didn't know what to do."

And now he wants to do the same for the state by running for governor of Louisiana on the Republican ticket. He announced his candidacy only a few weeks ago and it doesn't faze him that he's starting out with an 8% approval rating in the polls, compared to the frontrunner's 50%. He's planning to climb into the double digits by Labor Day and is hinting of the proverbial "October surprise."

He thinks Louisiana needs a hard-headed businessman at a crucial time like this. "All we have is a bunch of politicians running," he says. "I not only helped rebuild my church in New Orleans, I helped rebuild my children's school, and rebuild my businesses, while the government is still taking forever to get help to these people. People are still living in trailers. I think we have a leadership void and the next step is to take a shot at it."

How would even a seasoned businessman cut through the inevitable bureaucracy of government? "Well, I'm a little more than a businessman," he says. "I also served six years on the Louisiana Board of Regents, which is the governing board of higher education. So I have a background in running a government agency. The Regents ran all the universities and their academic curriculum, approved all the budgets, and the construction and expansion for all of Louisiana."



*John Georges with Peter Frampton*

"And let me ask you something. If you had a choice for one man to lead the recovery of Louisiana, who would you choose: Barack Obama or Lee Iacocca?" Iacocca? "Well, there you go," he says. "That's what I tell everybody. We ask where all of our leaders have gone, and I'm telling you they come from the generation where we used to cut grass, and wash trucks, and deliver papers, and we worked. I went to Greece to stay and work with my relatives, who were very poor, every summer."

Georges has already sunk more than \$5 million of his own money into the race, hired political pros, and put up a website (where he's shown playing basketball with his 10-year-old son, appropriately called Nike). And he's determined to separate himself from the other candidates in the campaign by projecting a positive image.



*John Georges talking to constituents on stoop*



*John Georges talking to woman on porch*

"The others are running negative campaigns," he says. "The Republican is typically complaining about corruption, and the Democratic party is attacking him for voting with Bush. You can't always go with your party when you serve your state. You have to pick. You have to be the governor that everybody wants, not the governor they have to have. I think this race is about leadership, not credentials."

Georges got his credentials early growing up in New Orleans and working with his father Dennis and grandfather Gus in the family business, a food supply company started by his grandfather in 1916. "My grandfather came when he was 17, but actually there were Greeks in New Orleans even before the Civil War," says Georges. "And they've always been prominent. New Orleans is a very European city. It's one of the most interesting cities in America and has a lot of culture, history, and very beautiful architecture."



*John Georges talking to workers*

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John Georges in front of gumbo place

Growing up, he says, "I went to work with my dad on Saturdays to wash trucks and I loved it. The business was small then, and it went through cycles of success. Our family is an American success story now in its fourth generation."

When John took over he diversified the company into everything from real estate, to gaming, to shipping and to the oil business and the company is now a half-billion dollar powerhouse in many fields.

So why give that up now and go into politics?

"A couple of things happened," says Georges. "My father died of a brain tumor in 2002 and you start to wonder what more can I do. I've made enough money. And I want to do something charitable. So I ran for the board of the church and became president. And when my business was doing well, I decided to fund my campaign and run for governor and that's where I am."

He says other successful businessmen are doing it all over the country and cites former Massachusetts governor and presidential candidate Mitt Romney and New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg as prime examples, though he admits the timing for such high-profile campaigns is risky.

"The timing usually never works out for these people," he admits. "And the timing is not perfect for me, either, because it's hard to get people to look at all the candidates: they get fixated on one. So you have to establish your own brand without taking the other guy down."

In that light, he praises his opponent, Rep. Bobby Jindal, for being a "decent" person and says he wants him to stay a congressman so he can continue to help Louisiana and the Republicans hold on to their shrinking minority in Congress.

"He is a smart guy and he's a good guy and he's an honest guy," Georges says, damning his opponent with positive spin. "But he's needed in Washington right now."

But won't the next governor of Louisiana need to know his way around Washington and politics himself to get anything done for Louisiana at such a crucial time?

"Who said I don't know politics?" Georges counters. "I've been in politics all my life. I'm a Greek."

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# “ONE WORLD – ONE MARKET”

## in Thessaloniki



With names such as Valentino and Roberto Cavalli participating, and an all-impressive American pavilion among a host of other national representations, this year's 72nd Thessaloniki International Trade Fair taking place from September 8 to 16 at the International Exhibition Center is expected to be the most successful ever and to reestablish its status as the biggest and most important exhibition for international trade, innovation and opportunities in south eastern Europe.

The central message of this year's HELEXPO will be 'One World – One Market' and the fair will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Greece, Konstantinos Karamanlis.

Within the framework of the 72nd HELEXPO, a series of themed events will take place, an institution that started in 2005 and has been improving ever since. One of the most popular events is AUTOLAND, this year focusing on city cars. Especially for this event, part of the exhibition center has been turned into a virtual miniature city, allowing the visitors to take a test drive in simulated city conditions.

In addition, featured will be DECOLAND (dedicated to decoration that will be open to the public on Tuesday 11 and Thursday 13 September), ACADEMIA (education and books), ENERGYLAND (energy, modern

systems and alternative energy forms), PLAYLAND (children's entertainment) and STATELAND (relations between the state and the citizens).

A very significant novelty will be the event called HOBBYMANIA, that will present a series of exhibits concerning spare time based on imagination and creativity.

At the same time, in addition to the international participations, the central event called GLOBAL EXCHANGE will host the 3rd TIF BUSINESS FORUM on 'Creativity-Design-Passion: The New Soul of Business' and GLOBAL EXCHANGE ETHNIC, focusing on cultural heritage and traditional products.

**FASHION FORWARD INTERNATIONAL THESSALONIKI** will also be one of the prominent events of this HELEXPO. Its increasing success is evident by this year's presence of world-renowned fashion designers such as Valentino and Roberto Cavalli, who will present their next season collections. Moreover, top Greek fashion designers will also present their own collections. Due to the increasing number of visitors, this year's **FASHION FORWARD INTERNATIONAL** will be held at Palais des Sports.



Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis will inaugurate HELEXPO

A real 'innovation' of the 72nd HELEXPO will be INNOVATION, a themed event dedicated to innovative products, presenting intelligent inventions and in general how our everyday life will be in the next years.

Finally, among the entertaining events, the successful DISC FESTIVAL will include daily concerts by the most famous stars of the Greek music scene.

HELEXPO's themed events combine in the most successful way interesting topics with entertainment. Apart from the parallel events, one of the most spectacular exhibits for the general public will be the wax figures of Eleftherios Venizelos, Konstantinos Karamanlis and Andreas Papandreu from Madame Tussaud's Museum. The famous London wax museum accepted HELEXPO's request to present three of the wax figures from the museum's collection during the 72nd Thessaloniki International Trade Fair.

As in the past three years, a series of presentations aiming to promote the 72nd HELEXPO to Greek and non-Greek businesses have been organized at the Chambers of the Greek regions, inviting the businesses to place themselves at the center of the events and take advantage of the opportunities for trade and high return transactions.

In addition, at a special event in Athens organized in honor of the ambassadors, speeches were delivered by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Evripidis Stylianidis, the Chairman of HELEXPO Mr.

Aristotelis Thomopoulos and the elected municipal officer Mr. Themis Kartsiotis, the 72nd HELEXPO. These speeches confirmed HELEXPO's business orientation and its dynamic opening to the international business environment.

HELEXPO will be open between 5pm and 11pm on weekdays, and between 10am and 10pm on the weekends.



Highly acclaimed popular singer Elli Kokkinou



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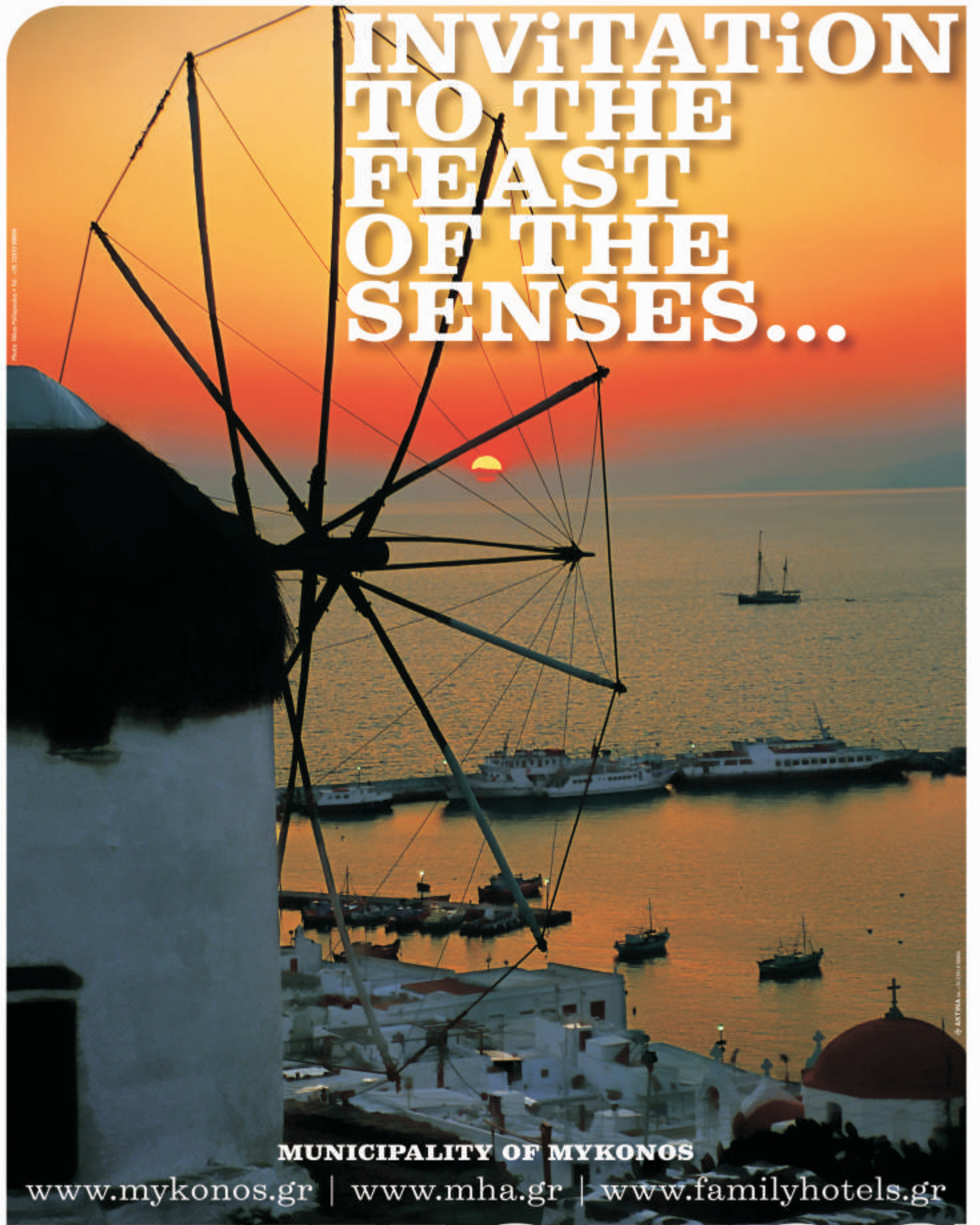
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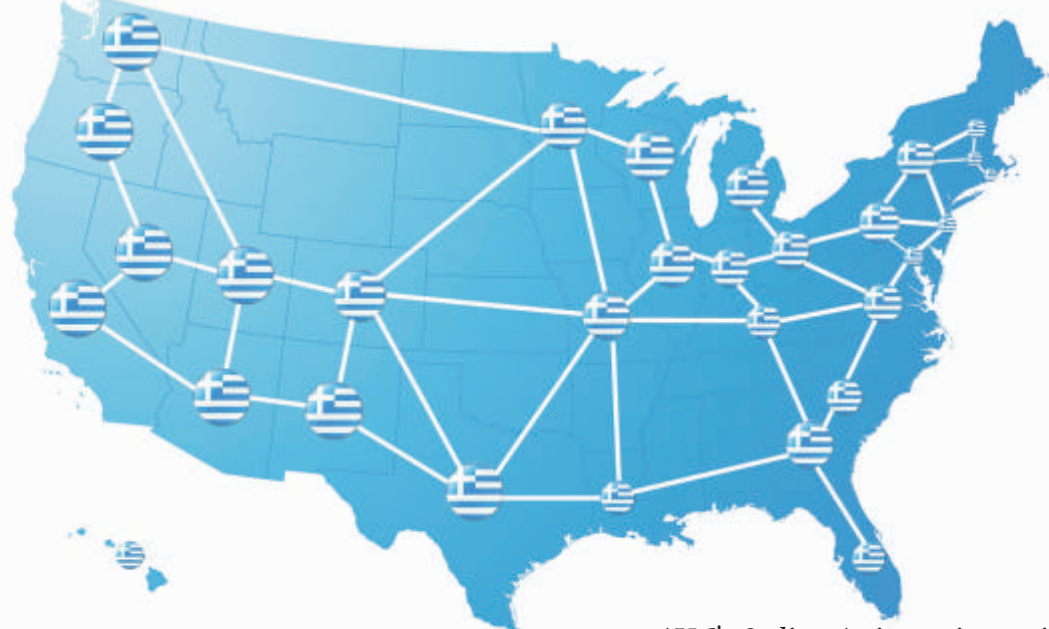
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AHC's Online Action unites activists from 30 states



Aris Anagnos (left), AHC Vice President of Political Action, speaks with Rep. Tom Lantos (CA), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in Washington, DC.

# Online Activism in Hellenic American Community Surges

By Eleni Hioureas



Everyday, somewhere in a state like Oregon, Missouri, or Hawaii, Hellenes and Philhellenes join with an extensive network of online activists across the country, in sending messages via email to their elected officials communicating their concerns about issues such as ending the occupation of Cyprus, calling for religious rights for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and ceasing FYROM's propagandist use of 'Macedonia'.

This recent surge in online activism in the Greek community has been made possible through the Online Action Alert campaigns of the American Hellenic Council (AHC), a Los Angeles-based non-partisan political advocacy organization whose aim is to promote Hellenic issues by educating and informing elected officials, the press, and public. Via the AHC's website ([www.americanhellenic.org](http://www.americanhellenic.org)), any user may log on, choose from a robust list of Hellenic issues currently before Congress and, with only a few clicks of the mouse, contact their representatives using prewritten or self-composed messages, all in under two minutes and without any cost to the user.

George Harriet, a dedicated AHC online activist from New York, says "the AHC's Online Action makes it much simpler for me to let my elected representatives know how I feel about certain issues. It is easy and efficient and increases my involvement on Hellenic issues."

The AHC's Online Action Alert tool was first launched in the summer of 2006. A huge leap forward for advancing Hellenic issues, it was the first nationwide online action system for Greek Americans to voice their opinions to the Congress via the web. Within the first few hours of launching the system, activists from California, Florida, and Illinois had already used the system to urge their representatives to support House Resolution 603 which called on Turkey to remove its occupation troops from Cyprus.

Now one year later, the AHC's Online Action network has expanded from 3 states to 30, with activists from across the nation using the service to stay in contact with hundreds of policymakers who wield influence over issues that affect the Hellenic community worldwide.

Ken Kassakhian, Executive Director of the AHC, expresses the critical role that online action plays in lobbying for Hellenic issues today: "From working on Capitol Hill for a member of Congress, I learned that consistently communicating with your Congressional office through email is absolutely critical and can make all the difference when it comes time for an issue to be brought to vote on the House floor. We are excited to have this tool that makes it possible for citizens from all states to voice their concerns in support of winning religious rights for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, bringing a just resolution to the ongoing occupation and division of Cyprus, and urging FYROM to stop using 'Macedonia' for political ends."

The Congressional Management Foundation, a non-profit that measures the effectiveness of lobbying efforts in the U.S. Congress, recently issued a report highlighting the critical

importance of online action campaigns in effectively communicating with and influencing members of Congress. The report states:

"The Internet is having a hugely positive effect on the discourse between citizens and Congress. A large majority of congressional staff surveyed, 79%, believe the Internet has made it easier for citizens to become involved in public policy. People who engage in political activities online or who write to their elected officials, are very likely to be active members of their communities." Some experts who analyze political efforts in Washington, D.C. even predict that using online political action will become an indispensable campaign strategy of all effective organizations working to influence policy.

Michael Cornfield, professor at The Graduate School of Political Management (GSPM) of The George Washington University, says, "I think the distinction between online and off-line campaigning will vanish. Which is to say, there will be an online dimension to every aspect of campaigning. That's where we're heading, online campaigning will become the new normal."

Aris Anagnos, Vice President of Political

Action for the AHC, agrees adding, "an excellent example of effective online action is the overwhelming majority support that the resolution to properly acknowledge the facts of the Armenian Genocide (House Resolution 106) has gathered in the House of Representatives through the Armenian National Committee of America's Click For Justice campaign. We are proud that as Greek Americans we supported and participated in this effort. Of course, online action should supplement other activities such as face to face meetings with policy makers and fundraising for candidates who support our issues. But there is tremendous potential by using new technologies. The great thing about online activism is that it provides a vehicle through which an incredible amount of momentum can be generated quickly. There is so much potential. So much more is possible. I hope everyone with a computer and concern for our issues logs on and takes action for our future."

For more information regarding the AHC's Online Action Alerts, the offices' phone number is (323) 651-3507. People can also email to [director@americanhellenic.org](mailto:director@americanhellenic.org).

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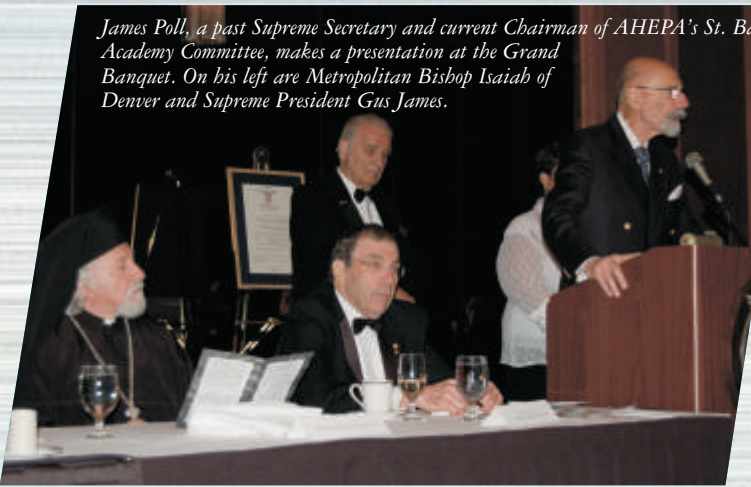
The international tour of the performance was organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The National Theatre of Greece would like to acknowledge the support of the Ministry of Tourism for the presentation of the performances in New York.



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James Poll, a past Supreme Secretary and current Chairman of AHEPA's St. Basil Academy Committee, makes a presentation at the Grand Banquet. On his left are Metropolitan Bishop Isaiab of Denver and Supreme President Gus James.



Daughters of Penelope Grand Governor Zone III Helen Santive (left) being escorted by Past Grand President Mary Verges.



From left, Peter Tsantes, Past Supreme Governor Elias Tsikerides and Past Supreme President Dr. Spiro J. Macris.



Past Supreme Governor H. John Kumpakis, Past Supreme President and Convention General Chairman Lee G. Rallis, and Alex Christy, delegate from Portland, Ore.



(Standing, L-R): Newly-elected Daughters of Penelope Grand President Karen Stamatiades, Grand Vice President Barbara Stavis Wolf, and Canadian President Eleni Inglis. Seated is outgoing Grand President Georgia Psibogios.



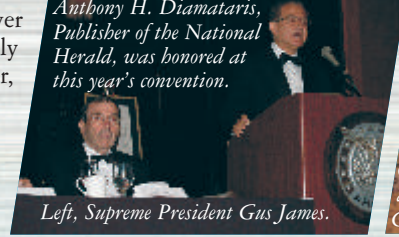
## The Denver Convention

Hundreds of delegates, friends and their family members from all over the country, participated in this year's 85th Annual AHEPA Family Supreme Convention held July 10-15 in the mile high city of Denver, Colorado, surrounded by the beautiful Rocky Mountains.

At least "people found out that Denver is not a cow town, we had more people here at the banquet and the Greek night that we had for many years," Lee Rallis, Chairman of the Organizing Committee and former supreme president (1988-89), said in an interview with NEO. "It's been a wonderful success and we want to thank all the brothers."

Ike Gulas, a well known and respected lawyer from Birmingham, Ala., won a landslide victory in the election held at the end of the convention and was installed as Supreme President for the 2007 - 2008 year. "I am honored to be given the unique opportunity to serve as supreme president of the largest association of Americans who share a common bond of

Anthony H. Diamataris, Publisher of the National Herald, was honored at this year's convention.



Incumbent Supreme President Ike Gulas (center) with George (left) and John Levas from New York's Gold Coast Chapter 456.

ancestry," he said. "As we are in the midst of our 85th year, I intend to help AHEPA grow in terms of membership and international influence as we approach our centennial anniversary."

The Supreme President thanked outgoing supreme lodge members and his family for their support. Gulas said he was particularly proud to have his father Aleck who has been an AHEPA member for more than 60 years, participate in his installation by reading the president's charge.

President Gulas is a member of Chapter No. 3, Birmingham, a vibrant chapter in the AHEPA. His family has been there for more than 100 years and he is the founding partner of Gulas & Stuckey, P.C. of Birmingham.

The balance of the Supreme Lodge is a fine blend of veteran leadership combined with energetic newcomers. They are: Canadian President Fotis Antoniou, Supreme Vice President Nick Karacostas, Supreme Secretary Dr. John Grossomanides, Jr, Supreme Treasurer Anthony Kouzounis, Supreme Counselor John Galanis and Supreme Athletic Director Dr. Monthe N. Kofos.

Past Supreme Governor Alex Rigopoulos of California and Past District 7 Governor George Rados of Connecticut.



The delegation from Greece: Georgia Zabarakis Anastasopoulos, Elias Kafkas, Anastos Dimitropoulos, Panos Liatsos.



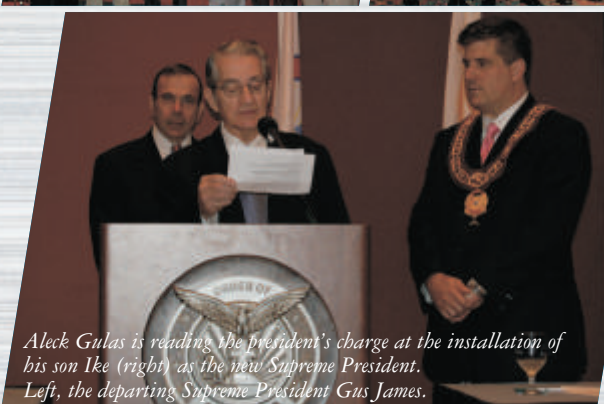
The new Supreme Lodge.



John W. Galanis, AHEPA's legal counsel, and Anastos K. Dimitropoulos, President Pericles AHEPA Chapter from Athens, Greece.



AHEPA delegates from New Jersey gather in support of Lee Millas. Among them are Asteris Fanikos, A. P. Livanis and H. Allen.



Aleck Gulas is reading the president's charge at the installation of his son Ike (right) as the new Supreme President. Left, the departing Supreme President Gus James.



Youth and beauty represented by Alexandra Loukas, Stephanie Brady, Demitra Palmos and Aristea Brady.



Greek American youth from all over the US made an impressive statement, just by being there!



(L-R): AHEPA Executive Director Basil Mosaidis, Comedian Basile, and Teddy Konstantis, convention photographer.



A group picture of Son and Nieces.



# Celebrating two pillars of Hellenism in America

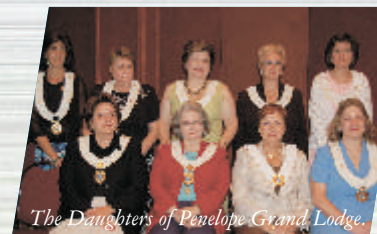
In 1922, visionary Greek immigrants organized what would become the primary promoter of Hellenism in America and received the charter from the Ecumenical Patriarch to organize their church in the new homeland. It was the same year that the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association was founded in Atlanta to protect Hellenes from the prejudice of groups such as the KKK. The weekend of September 7-9 Greeks from throughout the world are expected to converge in Atlanta in order to celebrate the 85th Anniversaries of these two pillars of Hellenism in America, with a series of events hosted by the AHEPA Mother Lodge Chapter No. 1.

"In 1922, the America of equality, which we cherish today, was not the norm. Greeks were treated as low-life foreigners who

were different and unable to understand American society. But for the determination and steadfastness of the eight Greek-Americans in Atlanta, our accomplishments today would not have been realized," Ike Gulas, AHEPA's newly elected supreme president, stated saluting the occasion. "We not only owe gratitude to AHEPA for assisting our ancestors assimilate in a foreign and distant land, but we also owe them praise for the ability to foresee the need to establish an organization that would stand-up for what is right, not only for the Greek population, but also for all who needed a voice."

AHEPA is the largest Greek-American association in the world with chapters in the United States, Canada, Greece, and Cyprus and sister chapters in Australia and New Zealand.

The Daughters of Penelope Grand Lodge.



George Tambakis, Regional Director of the Hellenic Tourism Organization, with Dina Tsoupanaki.



Craig S. Clawson (right) and Ted N. Sleder from Omaha, Nebraska.



More AHEPA delegates.



The Baltimore delegation, headed by Steve Mavronis (right).



From left, G. Harris, John Scampelos, George Polychronis, Pet. Kaldis and James Petheriotis.



Pete Chambers is conducting an impromptu fund raiser during one of the sessions.



The eight Supreme Governors are Charles Stamoulis, Colonel Nick Vamvakias, Lou Arvanitis, Connie Calliontzis, Phil Giavasis, George Pantazelos, John Georgifandis and Nick Perderis.

The remaining organizations that comprise the AHEPA family also held elections and Karen Stamatiades is the new Grand President of the Daughters of Penelope (DOP.) Founded in San Francisco in 1929, DOP is the first women's organization of its kind established in the United States with the mission to promote the ancient Greek ideals of Hellenism, Philanthropy, Education, Civic Responsibility, and Family and Individual Excellence.

"I am humbled by the honor of being elected Grand President of such a dynamic organization by my peers," said Stamatiades, who is a member of Menelaos Chapter No. 53, Atlanta. "I look forward to the challenge of leading the Daughters of Penelope as we approach our eightieth year and I am committed to strengthening the core elements of our mission, especially civic responsibility and education, for the betterment of the community."

Stamatiades, a 31-year member of the Daughters of Penelope, has served all major positions at various levels within the organization, including Chapter President, District Governor, and Grand Vice-President.

Elected to the Daughters of Penelope Grand Lodge were Grand Vice President Barbara Stavis Wolf, Covington, La., Grand President of Canada Eleni Inglis, Hamilton, Ontario, Grand Secretary Elaine Sampanis, West Chester, Ohio, Grand Treasurer Christine Constantine, Vernon Hills, Ill., Grand Governor, Zone I Anna-Helene Panagakos, Brooklyn, N.Y., Grand Governor Zone II Nicky Stamoulis, Seminole, Fla., Grand Governor Zone III Helen Santire, Houston, Grand Governor Zone IV Lois Kotzambasis, Tucson, Ariz., and Grand Advisor, Maids of Athena Joanne Saltas, Murray, Utah.

Rick Pecka was elected Supreme President of the Sons of Pericles, an organization with over 400 members. "The AHEPA family offers more opportunities for young Greek-Americans than any other special interest organization that I know of," he said in an interview with NEO. "There are so many young people out there who maybe are unfamiliar with the Sons and Maids. We need to begin to spread the word more efficiently."

Stephanie Maniatis was installed Grand President of the Maids of Athena and said: "Ever since I joined the Maids when I was 14, I've really believed in this organization and I just want to do as much as I can to inspire these girls, to get them closer together and move forward."

"We don't have a problem getting new members," said Lee Rallis, past supreme president. "It's keeping members we have. AHEPA first has to solidify what it used to be, the head of lay Greek people in the United States. We are not there anymore unfortunately. I remember that Archbishop Iakovos used to tell us, you take care of the lay people and we will take care of the church people. That was a wonderful situation and hopefully we will get back to that way."

Next year's supreme convention will take place in Athens, Greece.

*Demetrios Rhompotis contributed to this report.*

# A talk with Spiro Makris



*From left, Ambassador of Greece Alexandros Mallias, Ambassador of Cyprus Andreas Kakouris, Congressman Gus Bilirakis and Spiro Makris, Chairman of the Cyprus and Hellenic Affairs Committee.*

By Demetrios Rhompotis

AHEPA's former Supreme President (1995-1997) Dr. Spiro J. Makris, in his capacity as chairman of the Cyprus and Hellenic Affairs Committee, one of the organization's most important and popular, held a session in which the Ambassadors of Greece and Cyprus, Alexandros Mallias and Andreas Kakouris respectively, along with Congressman Gus Bilirakis, participated and spoke of ways Greek-Americans could help in advancing issues of common concern through the American political system. At the end of the meeting, Makris, one of the most respected AHEPA leaders, spoke to NEO and along with Gus Bilirakis, urged Hellenes in America to become more active and aggressive in seeking accountability from their elected officials.

**How would you describe your experience as head of this committee?**

People attend the meetings, we get very excited, we get very frustrated, we get very angry, emotional, but we've got to get beyond that, we have to start thinking rationally and calmly about how we can more successfully implement our positions through Congress and through the Executive Branch. It's important that when we leave this convention and go home we begin a new effort to communicate with our congressmen and senators, reestablish old relationships, make new relationships. It's really very simple: the strength that AHEPA has is its grassroots organization. We have well over 450 active chapters throughout the country. I daresay that those 50-60 people we had at this meeting, they are probably from different congressional districts, so here we had 50-60 districts represented at this small meeting.

**Do you also believe that this way more young people will be interested to get involved as well?**

Absolutely! We have members of the AHEPA who are young and perhaps do not come to the convention because of their profession. It's difficult for someone who has a full time job to take off for a week to attend the convention. But they are Ahepans, Hellenes in spirit and they are patriots and they want to do what they can to contribute. These people perhaps more than other Ahepans know their congressmen because they are young businessmen, professionals, they have reasons to communicate with their congressmen on business issues, other issues. They have the relationship already established. It's very easy to go from one topic to another. These congressmen and senators know the Greek community, they know how hard we've worked to become successful, we've never asked for anything, other than fair share and equal opportunity. We've become successful as Greek community by our own efforts. The American politicians respect that.

It's true, as you just said, that many Greek Americans deal with elected officials for various reasons, but sometimes the whole thing ends up being photo opportunities. It seems we are lacking an agenda.

That is a frequent criticism. We've got to become more aggressive, we've got to make clear to our elected officials we contribute to your campaign, we vote for you, we expect some accountability on those issues that are very important to our community and to our country at large. It's not enough to meet with a congressman, someone takes a picture and it appears on the congressman's newsletter next month. We've got to be smarter, not just being accommodating, not just contributing to the campaign financially, not just voting.

**What do you think of AHEPA's future?**

I think AHEPA has a great future. We are in a transition period, yes, we have many older people in AHEPA, but the goals of AHEPA appeal to young Greek Americans. The older generation is ready to pass to torch to a younger generation, to take it up and move on.

**Do you expect a big turnout in Athens next year?**

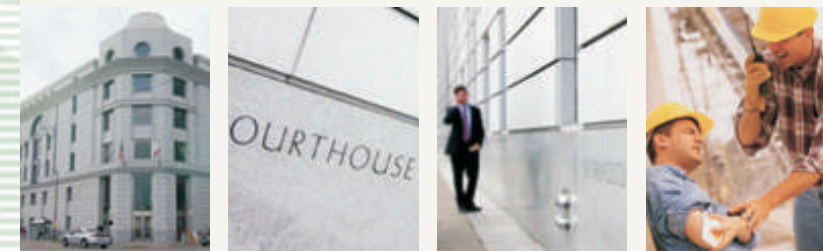
Absolutely! It's going to be a large convention, they will be many young people there, the arrangements that have been made are extremely good economically. I think most if not all Greek Americans can afford to come to Greece to attend the convention. It won't be more expensive than going to Bahamas or Puerto Rico or some of the other sites that we had our conventions at in the past. We look forward to going to Greece, renewing our relationship with the Greek people. It's going to be a fantastic convention.

*On the subject of promoting our community's issues, Congressman Gus Bilirakis speaking to NEO, also suggested a more assertive approach.*

*"I'd like to have three people assigned to a particular congressional district within AHEPA, talk to them about the issues, help them on their campaigns, make sure that they sign up for the Greek caucus and also co-sponsor our legislation, with regard to our issues. And keep in touch with these people. Help them on their campaigns, but make sure they support us, be stern with them. That's how we are going to do it. Because of campaigning, unfortunately we have to raise a lot of money, so we have to support those people financially too. But hold them accountable. And then I also want young Greek Americans to come to Washington and intern with us and learn the issues and get interested. Public service is in our blood."*

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*Aristos Constantine, Cyprus Trade Commissioner in New York, Klio Demetrios, Commercial Attache, Pambos Argyrides, President of Vasa Winery, Elli and Theodoros Fikardos, President of Fikardos Winery.*

*Nikos Katrakis, KASELL Sales Manager, Nikolaos Miliakos, Vice General Director Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Lakonia, George and Elli Tsihidis from Monemvasia Winery.*



*Philippos Trikomitis, dairy exporter and President of Philippos Trikomitis & Sons Ltd, with his assistant.*

*Anthony Blikas (left) and Kostas Mastoras from Optima Foods.*

*From left, Yiannos Pittas, President of Pittas Dairy Industries Ltd, Nicos Nicolaides, Export Administrator of Pittas Dairy Industries, and Joanna Savvides, President of the WTC of Greater Philadelphia.*

*George Iacovou - Export Manager of MP Theodorou & Co Ltd., exporters of Cyprus Sea Salt Flakes.*

## Fancy foods from Greece and Cyprus

Greece and Cyprus featured prominently at this year's Fancy Food Summer Show, held this summer at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City.

The impressive Greek pavilion, organized by HEPO (Hellenic Exports Promotion Organization,) consisted of 47 booths, representing a total of 26 exporting companies. At the same time Greek Mediterranean gastronomy was highlighted through the «Kerasma» initiative, with tasting bars where visitors had the chance to try Greek dishes. Those delicious treats were accompanied by daily live presentations of a well-known chef who cooked in front of the audience using authentic Greek products.

In the framework of the European program «Choose the Original Cheese» that covers dairy products with a special emphasis on feta, additional promotion of the Greek businesses took place with simultaneous video coverage by a special crew from the national Greek television station.

President of HEPO P. Papastavrou with CEO P. Drosos also attended this year's Fancy Food Summer Show.

Halloumi cheese was Cyprus' flag carrier again this year, accompanied by an impressive representation of the island's wineries that continue a tradition going back millennia.

Commandaria, the oldest wine with appellation of origin in the world, is still in production, made in Cyprus by the same method since at least 1,000 B.C.

Halloumi® and Cyprus' other fine cheeses are still made following traditional methods. They can be found in the gourmet cheese bins of retail Specialty Food Stores, like Gristede's, Fairways, Zingerman's, Zabar's, and other fine stores.

In addition, other specialty food products were represented, such as Honey Spread derived from the combined mixing of rare varieties of natural bee honey and organic herb extracts and Hand-Harvested Natural Flavored Cyprus Sea Salt Flakes. No other salt looks like it or feels like it.



*From right, Dennis Dimasbiotis, Equis Trading Inc., Peter Kakoyiannis, President Cyprus-US Chamber of Commerce, John Catsimatidis, Chairman & CEO Red Apple Companies, Marga Catsimatidis, Emiliano De Laurentis, Editor & Publisher Sante Magazine, and Karla Guerrieri, journalist Sante Magazine.*



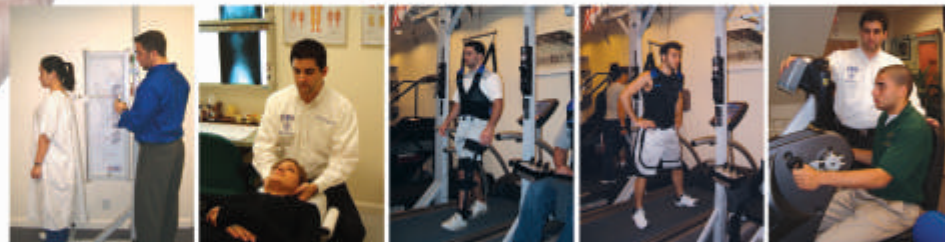
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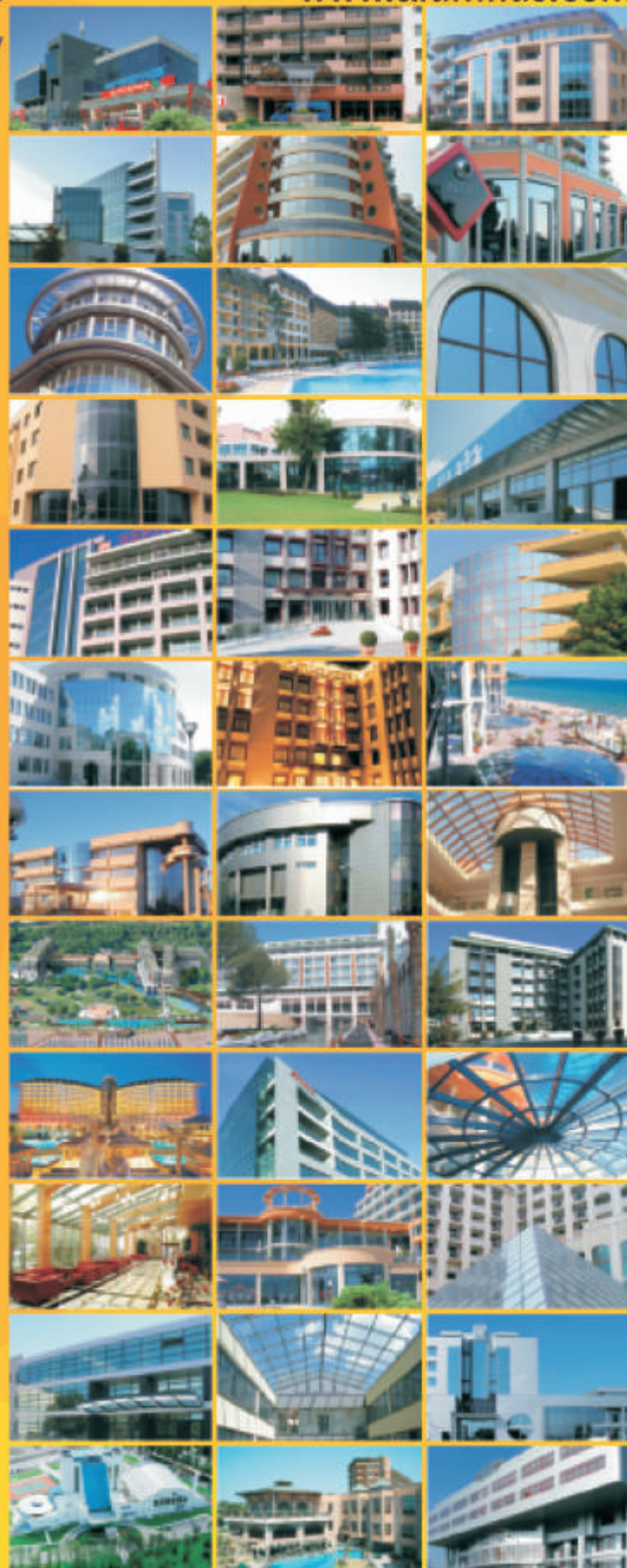


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## BOOK REVIEW:

by Grady Harp

# The Pale Surface of Things

Janey Bennett makes a startlingly fine debut as a novelist with *The Pale Surface of Things*. Not only is Bennett able to conjure a fascinating story of many complexities and intertwining plots, she is able to place her story on the island of Crete in such an assured manner that her gift for research and exploration of a certain place leads us to wonder if Crete is her home!



In florid prose, exacting attention to details of each of the several plots, and in her ability to bring the reader into the realm of Crete with all of its idiosyncrasies and history and charm Bennett creates a propulsive novel that is a most satisfying read on many levels.

Bennett wisely places American characters with Cretan peoples and inserts as a common ground the presence of a priest who was born on Crete and studied in the US: the result is a flawless mix of language and concepts from both the familiar with the unfamiliar.

Douglas is a young man without self direction who goes to Crete at the expense of his adopted family, the Hansons, to study Minoan Archeology and to marry the Hanson's daughter Denise. In a brilliant opening chapter Douglas is fleeing the wedding day ritual and beginning an Odyssey that will change his life.

As an 'ex-patriot' of sorts Douglas encounters the friendship of Father Dimitrios who lives a celibate life tending to his villagers and restoring a war-damaged wall of art in his church, meets a young lad Aleko whose warmth and familial invitations stun the now penniless Douglas, and enters the 'interior' of Crete on a fascinating journey. In a series of events so rapid fire they feel like explosions, Douglas and Aleko share experiences that test the durability of family codes and tragedies, place Douglas in jeopardy, and ultimately lead him (with the guidance of Father Dimitrios) to an understanding of himself and an acceptance of his place in the universe. '... what people take for being good is just being brave and doing it alone.'

Bennett offers many subplots that explore the presence of the Nazis on Crete in WW II, the history of a family that has been challenged by misunderstandings and vendettas, the manner in which the Hanson family finds greater happiness and worth because of the daring ending of a haughty wedding ceremony, the ways in which youth of Crete learn maturity, and copious sidebars regarding archeology, history, art restoration, Cretan foods and traditions, and the beauty of the simplicity of life on an isolated island. Crete, in so many ways, is the main character in the novel, and Bennett knows her way around her stage as well as anyone who writes.

THE PALE SURFACE OF THINGS is a solid, intoxicating novel that gently reminds the reader of the importance of philosophical issues and the way they mold lives. It is a smart, entertaining, superb novel!

## JANEY BENNETT

By Anna-Marie Krahn  
Valley Record

Janey Bennett describes Crete as a place of "hard rock, hard sun and guns." She chose the Greek island as the setting for her first novel, *The Pale Surface of Things*, because, she said, "I wanted a place for {main character} Douglas to fall apart against."

Bennett started the book not knowing where it would end up. She spent the first of seven years of work on the novel just fleshing out her characters.

"If you let a story come from the characters," she said, "then they determine the actions." She wanted to take a young man who, like many young Westerners she sees today, is disaffected and joyless, and "see what it would take to heal him."

After writing 5,000 pages, most of which she discarded, she figured it out.

"I hit him with every blow I could think of. After I finished the book, I thought, 'What is the single thing {that healed him}?'"

She realized it was accountability. To really live as himself, Douglas had to acknowledge the truth about his actions and accept responsibility for them. After that realization, she spent another year rewriting the novel. Bennett had been to Crete once before she started writing, but she needed to get the geography right, so she went back again and spent three weeks driving around between book locations with her camera.

Health issues prevented her from returning to Greece, so she read as many books about Crete as she could find.

"I just absorbed them. I read 200 books," she recalled. "My understanding of life on Crete got deeper without getting specific."

When she was further along in the book, she consulted Greek friends and experts of all kinds about specific details. She became especially good friends with a young American Greek Orthodox priest. The two spent a lot of time exchanging e-mails, not only about book details, but also about ethics, and what would happen to priests who faced the dilemmas that two priests face in Bennett's book.

"I think it gave me the courage to go a little bit deeper, to what agony a priest could go through," she said.

Bennett's academic experiences also informed her work. She was trained as an architectural historian, and paid attention to the sociology of the past while researching architectural history.

"Novel writing is one step deeper than that," she explains, "but it's the same skill." Both involve "trying to define the essence of what life in a certain circumstance was like."

Her background in history also helped to give Bennett a feel for the history of Crete, and influenced her decision to set her novel there.

"There's just history everywhere. It's an amazing place."

Bennett divides her time between Hornby Island and Bellingham, Washington. She has just become a landed immigrant in Canada.

"I love the way people use language in Canada," she says. "People here speak with a vocabulary that's just wonderful."

She is thrilled with her landed immigrant status. "I belong here," she enthused.



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