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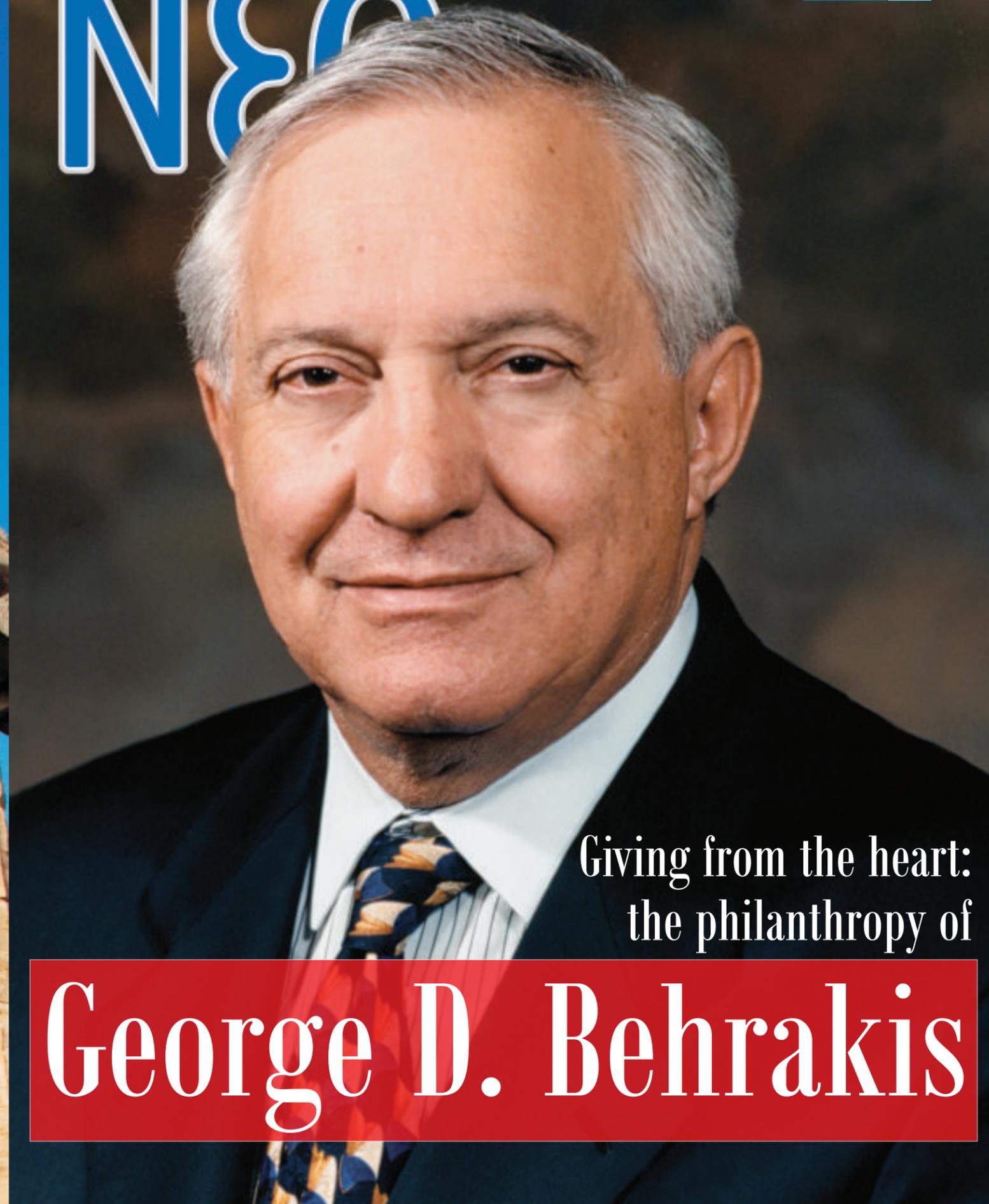
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**14 COVER STORY**

**08** U.S. Senator Olympia Bouchlos Snowe - Pan Meltron Ariston (Always in Moderation)

**31** Post-Radio Radio... On RadioNEOlea, the talk is Real, Raw, and yes, Authentic...

**34** Greece' latest Export: Clarinet Virtuoso Panos Aggelakos

**38** Author Urges Britain: Return Parthenon Marbles as War Debt

**10** 2011: A Year of Opportunity for Hellenic Issues

**11** Women's Career and Employment Forum by HPW

**13** Simotas and Malliotakis in the NY State Assembly

**26** Homer Takes Manhattan

**27** HILLENES WITHOUT BORDERS

**28** Yorgos Lanthimos' Film Receives a Nomination for Foreign Language Film for 83rd Academy Awards

**35** Ligo Ap'Olá at RadioNeo

**36** Discussing Class Action Lawsuit against Turkey on behalf of Cypriot Refugees

**37** FROM THE EDITOR

**37** periXscope

**26** The Pacific Pulse

**27** THE SWORD of ZEUS

**23** COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE IN FOCUS

**33** PYLOS

**35** brea of honey

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**On philanthropy**

Yes, it's another Greek word, and it means love of man, but what's made Greeks so successful is that they're scrappers and will survive and thrive in any environment. It doesn't mean that they're the most generous, or giving (certainly to their family and often to the church they are), and anybody who's ever tried to start something in the community—to start a scholarship fund, to help a school, to help a senior citizen center, let alone go far afield in the consciousness of most practical self-made people and do something creative like start a magazine such as this to bridge our generation gap—anybody who's ever tried knows firsthand how we Greeks eternally pay lip service to the glory that was Greece and to her culture, and with notable exceptions (such as George Behrakis in our cover story), do very little to foster that culture or her spirit of intellectual freedom.



**FROM THE EDITOR**

My father was a principal in Greek parochial schools and I speak firsthand—where are the Greeks who made their millions and want the obeisance of the community (all power to them) and who talk endlessly in endless tribute dinners about the glory that was Greece and their worship of her heritage and of paideia—where are they when Greek parochial schools throughout the United States are withering and closing because the church can no longer afford to keep them open or maintain them as Greek parochial schools alone? Where are they to supplement the salary of teachers at these schools, experienced teachers who barely make \$15,000 a year?

Where are they to provide scholarships to the bright Greek kids who need a hand and can make us all proud? Where do these bright kids turn to apply for such scholarships—real scholarships to top schools? The top-tier organizations like AHEPA and annual efforts like the Hellenic Times Gala provide some recognition and aid to our most promising kids, but with all the millions, if not billions in the room at some of these galas, the most that we can spare for our brightest kids is \$2,500 and \$5,000 scholarships—when tuition at top colleges can average close to \$50,000 a year?

Where are the annual trips to Greece for our kids sponsored by the foundations of our very rich? Some kids go to Greece and summer camps through the patchwork of programs funded by a patchwork of groups, and through the summer pilgrimage of their families, but where is that formal introduction to their culture and their heritage and to their responsibilities that Jewish kids get, paid for in full by the very rich and their foundations? These kids come back with a newfound bond to their mother country and to their people—why can't our own kids get that same introduction to their people in the country that started the civilization we all tout? We don't have the money to provide for the education of our kids in their heritage, but we eternally have the voice to complain that our kids are getting into mixed marriages and losing their identity?

I interviewed a billionaire once in the offices of his foundation soaring over Fifth Avenue. He was a kind man with an illustrious career who talked movingly about his roots growing up as an immigrant kid in the heartland of America and with a fond smile about the Greek school he attended and the hardscrabble work ethic of his parents. But his foundation, endowed with his billions, was planning to give nothing to the community or to any of the new generation of Greek kids who were trying to make it in America, just as he did once.

Where is our philanthropy and where is our *filotimo*? They're all Greek words that we use so well, and so rarely practice.

Dimitri C. Michalakis

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NEO Magazine  
is published monthly by  
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PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN NEW YORK

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# U.S. Senator Olympia Bouchles Snowe - Pan Metron Ariston (Always in Moderation)

By Andy Manatos

U.S. Senator Olympia Bouchles Snowe (R-ME) must have taken to heart Aristotle's words that "by acting always in moderation a person is sure to be just and temperate, and so is sure to be virtuous." This is the path Olympia has chosen in her public life in the Maine state legislature, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. She and her "balanced" Hellenic course were so popular that when she ran for re-election five years ago, in a year when Democrats swept their way to a majority of the Senate, she, a Republican, was elected by the highest percentage of any Senator.

However, a strong new voice in the Republican Party disagrees with the Hellenic value of moderation -- "the Tea Party." The prospects for this threat to Olympia are mixed, but one thing is certain: If Olympia does not receive enough in campaign contributions to counter the Tea Party in the primary election and her challenger in the general election, her seat and one of our most sterling voices in the Senate could be in jeopardy.

Andy Manatos is a former Assistant Secretary of Commerce and is currently a member of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America's Archdiocesan Council, President of the Coordinated Effort of Hellenes (CEH) and President of the public policy company Manatos & Manatos.

Greek-American women second-class political leaders? When I said, "No, why?" he pointed to the record. Greek-American men in Congress received over \$350,000 in campaign contributions from Greek-Americans in the last election, while a Greek-American Congresswoman, Dina Titus, received \$50,000. That's 86% less. Dina barely lost, by less than 1% of the vote. Three hundred thousand dollars worth of campaign ads probably would have kept this Greek-American in the U.S. Congress.

This community weakness surfaced in 1986 when nationally famous Lincoln, Nebraska Mayor Helen Bossalis barely lost Nebraska's Governorship. Had her meager Hellenic contributions been substantial, she would have been America's first Hellenic woman governor. Unfortunately I have seen this problem in our community's support for Olympia Snowe relative to Greek-American male Senate candidates.

For Orthodox Christians and the Greek-American community in Maine and around the world, Olympia has come through in spectacular fashion. For example, Olympia was often the swing vote for President Barack Obama's biggest issues and the White House was particularly responsive to her -- she was kiddingly said to be #1 on President Obama's speed dial. She utilized that position to strongly advocate positions that benefited the many Christians and other faithful in Maine who support freedom of religion for all religious leaders including Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who still does not enjoy full religious freedom in Istanbul (Constantinople).

She also advocated for those in Maine who support human rights for all people, including the people of Cyprus whose Jewish and Christian cemeteries and Churches have been desecrated by Turkey's occupation army. This year Christians in the Karpasia area of occupied Cyprus were prohibited from celebrating Christmas. Few know that since the time of her election to the House in 1978 and the Senate in 1994 she has played an important role in the presence of our Archbishops at all Presidential inaugurations. The Greek-American and Orthodox communities owe her for her tireless advocacy for the causes about which we care deeply.

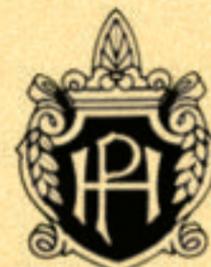
Unfortunately, Olympia is impacted by a question raised about our community. A non-Hellene asked me, do Greek-American men and women consider

Is the Greek-American community still living in the 1970's when the lack of support for women candidates suggested the belief that women were not considered up to the job? If not, what is the explanation for the disparity in Greek-American community support for Greek-American men and women candidates?

We are a particularly generous people who readily spend large amounts to entertain our friends and family. A Pew Foundation study found Greek Americans second (behind the Jewish community) in terms of income and education. Our involvement in public life must make more room for women.

Our community's support in 2012 for the only remaining Greek-American in the U.S. Senate, Olympia Bouchles Snowe, will help us understand if our community is proactive or reactive, if we are leaders or followers. There is no excuse for our community not generously supporting Olympia's reelection. There is no one in the U.S. Senate who is more highly regarded by colleagues, Republicans or Democrats, than Olympia Snowe. She has performed spectacularly for issues of great concern to Maine's Greek-American and Greek Orthodox community and for everyone who believes in religious and human rights and in frugal government.

Senator Snowe has come through for the Greek-American community. Now is the time for the Greek-American community to come through for her.

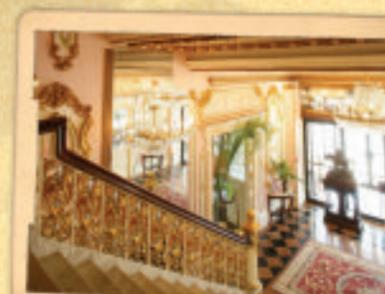


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by Nick Larigakis

At the beginning of each New Year, many of us take this wonderful opportunity to recommit ourselves to our goals, ambitions, and yes, even resolutions! The feeling of shedding the old provides relief, if only psychologically, so that we can start fresh in tackling the same old issues and new ones, either personally or professionally. 2011 is no different...or is it?

As it relates to issues affecting U.S. relations with Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey there seems to be a different feel in the air that I haven't quite experienced in all the years that I have been in Washington.

During the first two years of the Obama administration we have seen some positive rhetoric about our issues, albeit it has not led to any policy changes and our outstanding issues remain unchanged. Nonetheless, it's important to begin somewhere. 2010 saw a number of other developments that taken collectively has the potential to provide us with a great opportunity to advance our agenda in 2011.

The historic midterm election of November has dramatically changed the landscape on Capitol Hill. The Obama administration will face a Republican controlled House and a diminished Democratic

## 2011: A Year of Opportunity for Hellenic Issues

majority in the Senate. In my opinion, this will cause a deadlock in the domestic agenda for at least the next two years, and therefore, the foreign policy agenda may come more to the forefront. Of course, this includes Afghanistan, Iraq, and North Korea, but I contend secondary and tertiary issues may take on a new prominence. Greece and Cyprus fall into this latter category.

2010 also saw the significant deterioration of Turkey-Israel relations over the Gaza flotilla incident that occurred May 31. Add to the list Turkey's refusal to support stronger economic sanctions against Iran at the UN and the cause and effect has resulted in a strain in relations between Ankara and Washington. Moreover, with a strong neoconservative presence in the House of Representatives, there is a good chance that there will be mounting criticism of Turkey due to its recent actions.

One sign that this may already be occurring are recent statements made by Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), who is the new chair of the all important House Committee on Foreign Affairs. For



Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), who is the new chair of the all important House Committee on Foreign Affairs

example, following a meeting with Turkish Ambassador to the U.S. Namik Tan on December 7, 2010, she described the meeting as a "frank discussion about some troubling Turkish policies" that included Turkey's positions toward Cyprus and the Ecumenical Patriarchate. "Turkey must fully support a Cypriot solution to reunification of the island and immediately withdraw its troops from northern Cyprus," she said.

She also expressed concern about the "restrictive policies" placed on the Ecumenical Patriarchate by the Turkish government. "I asked that these policies be substantially changed to allow the Church to reopen the Halki Seminary and to remove the restrictive criteria for Patriarchal succession," she said.

Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen concluded, "these are issues which must be addressed soon if we are to avoid permanent damage to our relationship."

I can't recall another leading member of the foreign affairs committee issuing a public statement so critical of Turkey.

Further, it's important to note that Turkey—at least in the foreseeable future—won't be able to count on the full support of the Israeli lobby in Washington, which traditionally has been a very strong pro-Turkey advocate. Morris Amitay, a former executive director of AIPAC who has also represented Turkey, told the Washington Times, "if someone asked me now if I would try to protect Turkey in Congress, my response would be, 'You've got to be kidding.'"

In addition, it's significant that during the second week of February a very large delegation, which will include the leadership of the leading Jewish American organizations, will be visiting Athens and Thessaloniki. (Incidentally, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is reported to be visiting Athens February 6 or 8.)

All this creates a window of opportunity to advance our agenda in 2011; an opportunity that many of us have not seen before. But this window may not be open for long. Therefore it becomes incumbent upon all of us to actively engage our policymakers to educate (or in some cases, remind) them that in addition to everything else that Turkey is doing, it also continues to be the main impediment to a Cyprus solution and has contributed to the cultural and religious desecration in occupied Cyprus; it continues to violate the religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and it continues to violate the territorial airspace of Greece.

I am not saying it will be easy. Turkey still has allies in the U.S. led first and foremost by the defense industry. It was recently reported that Turkey is scheduled to spend "approximately \$4.5 billion on arms procurement in 2011" and there is a proposed 10-year program whereby Turkey is planning to spend upward of a staggering amount of \$25 billion on U.S. weapons!

Earlier this month, I met with the new U.S. ambassador to Turkey, Francis J. Ricciardone. I asked him about this procurement and his reply was that his job will require him to facilitate the sale of U.S.-made products to Turkey.

Nonetheless, I still believe the opportunity is there to make progress on our issues. However, to be effective, we must collectively keep reminding President Obama of his very positive campaign statements to the Greek American community. We must continue to engage our policy makers on the issues that affect us. Working together toward the same goals can result in some positive developments in 2011.

The time is right. The opportunity is here and now.

Nick Larigakis is President and COO of the American Hellenic Institute

Left to Right: Haeda Mihaltzes, Director of the NYC Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Aspasia Zerva, PhD, Professor of Civil Engineering, Drexel University, Alexandra Nestoras, Senior Associate Director of Career Development at Barnard College, Agbi Balta, Consul General of Greece, Koula Sophianou, Consul General of Cyprus, Dimitra Manis, Global Head of HR, Thompson Reuters, Dr. Lorraine Chrisomalis-Valasiades, M.D., OB-GYN, and Jaqueline Peros, JMP Image and Style Consultant LLC



## WOMEN'S CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT FORUM BY HPW

The Hellenic Professional Women, Inc. [HPW] recently held their inaugural annual "Career and Employment Forum" Breakfast panel discussion event where over 85 Greek-American women professionals and college students gathered to meet and hear from a dynamic panel of experts in various fields on career advancement, and personal success stories.

The Forum brought together seven accomplished professional women who shared their knowledge, insight and personal experiences, aimed to help and inspire women of all ages to seek and reach their career goals. Presented in two panels with Q&A sessions, the discussion was moderated by Haeda Mihaltzes, Director of the NYC Mayor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. The first panel shared their career experiences and personal advice. They included Dr. Lorraine Chrisomalis-Valasiadis, MD, OB-GYN; Anastasia Kavalis Miano, Senior Account Manager, Clear Channel Communications; Aravella Simotas, Attorney, New York State Assemblywoman; Aspasia Zervas, PhD, Professor of Civil

Engineering, Drexel University. The second panel focused on how to develop a personal/professional brand, offered resume writing tips, interview techniques and communications skills – they included Dimitra Manis, Global Head of HR, Thompson Reuters; Alexandra Nestoras, Senior Associate Director of Career Development, Barnard College; Jaqueline Peros, Certified Image Consultant, JMP Image and Style, LLC.

"We assembled an extraordinary group of successful Greek-American professional women—the entire morning was charged with energy, insights and inspiration. We all gained valuable information. It was gratifying to see the genuine offer of assistance and guidance from our panelists, and we are so grateful for their volunteer time," said Maria Frantzis, Founder and President of HPW.

Guests included Consul General of Greece, Agbi Balta, and Consul General of Cyprus Koula Sophianou. The Forum, sponsored by Pro Metal Construction, Inc.,

offered mentoring, networking and internship opportunities for women in the areas of chemistry, financial services, pharmacy, medicine, and media planning/advertising. Attendees had the opportunity to introduce themselves, and briefly speak about their industry or profession to facilitate networking among participants. The next annual "Career and Employment Forum" will be held in spring 2012.

The Hellenic Professional Women Inc. (HPW) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to inspiring and supporting professional opportunities for Greek-American women and students through networking, mentoring and education. HPW was founded by insurance executive Maria Frantzis in November of 2007 and incorporated in September of 2009. She envisioned a group that would help women advance their professional goals, build personal relationships, and promote their businesses while developing vibrant mentorship and employment programs. For more information visit HPW at [www.hellenicprofessionalwomen.org](http://www.hellenicprofessionalwomen.org).



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# Dr. Spiro Spireas New President of AHIF



The American Hellenic Institute Foundation (AHIF), the first think tank devoted to Greek American issues, announced the selection of Dr. Spiro Spireas as its president, effective January 1, 2011. Dr. Spireas succeeds AHI Foundation President and AHI (American Hellenic Institute) Founder Gene Rossides, who will remain on the Foundation's Board of Directors.

Gene Rossides for his leadership of the Foundation," stated Larigakis. "Under his direction, the Foundation launched a series of policy conferences, a study-abroad program, started a book publishing program, held a historic conference on Cyprus's fiftieth anniversary, started the AHIF Online Policy Journal, and initiated the endowment fund."

AHI Founder Gene Rossides said, "I enjoyed the opportunity to lead the AHI Foundation during a time of growth in new programs. I have tremendous confidence in the abilities of Dr. Spireas to lead the foundation in the years to come, and I wish him the best."

Dr. Spireas, New Hope, Pa., is the owner, founder, chairman and chief executive officer of Sigmapharm Laboratories, an emerging specialty pharmaceutical company operating out of Bensalem, Pennsylvania, and engaging in the development, manufacture and marketing of unique generic and branded pharmaceutical products. He is the inventor and author of more than 80 international

and domestic patents and 200 scientific papers, books, and other publications in the fields of industrial pharmacy, pharmaceutical technology, biopharmaceutics, pharmacokinetics and analytical chemistry.

In addition, Dr. Spireas is very active in the Greek Orthodox Church. He currently serves as the Parish Council President of St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Trenton, N.J., and he is a member of the Metropolitan Council of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of New Jersey appointed by Metropolitan Evangelos. On October 30, 2010, he was installed as an Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle.

"It is a great honor and privilege to be named AHI Foundation president, as well as a huge challenge, to be following in the footsteps of AHI Founder Gene Rossides," said Dr. Spireas. "I look forward to working with AHI President and COO Nick Larigakis, the AHI Foundation Board of Directors, and staff to augment the Foundation's reach and to make a difference in the Greek American community."

"We are very happy that Dr. Spireas has agreed to serve as president of the AHI Foundation," said AHI President/COO Nick Larigakis. "He is a visionary leader who will bring a wealth of enthusiasm and talent to the Foundation. Dr. Spireas will be a significant asset to the foundation and will help it meet its mission to the benefit of the Greek American community."

"The AHI Foundation Board of Directors is deeply grateful to AHI

# Simotas and Malliotakis in the NY State Assembly

Addressing a packed auditorium at the newly renovated Museum of the Moving Image in Astoria, New York, State Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas, Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney and State Senator Michael N. Gianaris vowed to work towards restoring faith in government, bolstering the economy, and addressing lingering social inequalities. The remarks were delivered at the joint inauguration ceremony.

Simotas and Nicole Malliotakis (R-East Shore/Brooklyn) are the first Greek American women elected to office in the state. While acknowledging the significant challenges facing



From left, Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney, State Senator Michael N. Gianaris and Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas

Simotas, who invoked the New York State motto of "Excelsior"—meaning "ever upward"—will immediately have the opportunity to build on her vision of a more effective and accountable government. Assigned to the Energy, Judiciary, Small Business, Banks, and Consumer Affairs and Protection Committees, she will draw on her experience as an attorney and her background in economics as she confronts issues vital to both her district and New York as a whole.



Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis (R-East Shore/Brooklyn)



Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas

New York and the skepticism towards state government among its residents, Simotas cited her Greek immigrant parents' hard work and sacrifice and Astoria's rich civic and cultural heritage as her inspiration for entering public service. "For me, serving our community is a natural calling and fighting for this district is a privilege," she told the audience. "While it's true that politics is too often driven by bitter partisanship and gridlock, I still believe that government can work for working people again."

"Serving on the Energy Committee will allow me to lend my voice towards protecting the interests of western Queens, which provides 60 percent of New York City's power," Simotas said. "I'm also looking forward to using my other assignments to work on revitalizing our state's economy and ensuring that our legal system protects working people."

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# Giving from the heart: the philanthropy of George D. Behrakis

By Dimitri C. Michalakis

A favorite story George Behrakis tells about his philanthropy is that when he was young and taking a business trip to Europe, he met a man he knew who was always crying poverty but was now flying business class and taking his whole family along on a month-long vacation. "I thought you were broke?" Behrakis told him and then told him some more. "Don't ever talk to me again. I don't want to hear from you."

The feeling stuck with him over an illustrious 40-year career in the pharmaceutical industry (from his early days at Johnson & Johnson to the start of several companies of his own), and when he retired officially from business at 60 (he's now 76), he began an exhaustive career of philanthropy that has enriched many fields.

In the sciences and education, he and his wife Margo have established chairs and scholarships at a number of universities and medical facilities, including his alma mater of Northeastern, where he endowed the George D. Behrakis Chair in the Field of Targeted Pharmaceuticals and funded the construction of the George D. Behrakis Health Sciences Center. He's also funded the George D. Behrakis Hellenic Fellowship in Respiratory Allergy at the Johns Hopkins Asthma and Allergy Center, and many others at Tufts University, Brigham & Women's Hospital, Saints Medical Center in his hometown of Lowell, Massachusetts and chairs at the University of Mississippi, Hellenic College, Boston College, Bentley College and Merrimack College.

He also sponsors fellowships to Harvard for Greek physicians.

"I bring one or two cardiologists a year from Thessaloniki to Harvard and the Women's Hospital to spend a year or two in research," he says. "And every couple of years I sponsor two more. And the people at Harvard are ecstatic. The professors here tell me, George, you brought us the cream of the crop. These kids write papers that are published in the most prestigious medical journals in the United States. I'm very proud of them. They're very motivated. And what I want is for them to go back to Greece and be able to contribute."

In the arts, he and his wife are equally generous. Most prominently their donations have reached \$25 million to Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and the museum has named its Art of the Ancient World wing in their honor.

"We have the largest collection of Greek vases of any other museum," he says proudly. "It's spectacular. And I wanted to make sure there was a Greek name at the galleries." He's known for his fundraising prowess, but he admits, "I couldn't recruit anybody else, so I said, I'm doing it; I don't need you guys. You're worth that much money, come on, give something for your parents or grandparents."

Which comes down to his equally-devoted philanthropy to the community and to his heritage. From serving on the board of his hometown church in Lowell, to publishing the Hellenic Voice, to leading the Leadership 100 and now serving as chairman emeritus, to serving as an archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, to establishing along with Metropolitan Methodios the nearly 300-acre St. Methodios Faith and Heritage Center summer and winter camp in Hopkinton, New Hampshire for the Boston metropolis, which hosts hundreds of campers throughout the year.

"We have close to 800 Greek kids coming down, for a six-week period, and when we first started we were lucky to have 200," he says. "And we have 30-40 college kids who volunteer to serve as counselor, all Greek. And those 30-40 kids know each other now, get together now, and they meet in Boston, if they're in college, they'll meet on the weekend, and these people never knew each other before. This is what you want. You want the Greek kids to get to know the other Greek kids, like we did: I grew up in the Greek section of Lowell and I thought we were all Greek. Everywhere we went there had to be five or six of us together. We didn't know what a xeno was. We need to bring the new generation back into the fold and I think the camp, for one, has been a great thing."

It seems everything he does he considers a great thing, because he says, "I'm the type of person that if I'm going to get involved, I get involved 100%. I not only volunteer, I give. As the Greeks say, *cimouna tiheros*."

His luck began when his father Drakoulis immigrated from Mani, met his mother Stavroula, also from Mani, and they started a family in Lowell. Behrakis and all his siblings went to the Hellenic American Academy there (as did his kids—"I wanted them to learn the language") and he went on to pharmacy school and a master's in biochemistry, before he was drafted into the Army. When he came out in 1959, he went to work at McNeil Labs for Johnson & Johnson (including the development of Tylenol—"You may have heard of it?") But after nine years he got restless.

"I realized that I could do it myself: I didn't need to give my talent to a company. So I started my first company (Dooner Laboratories) and sold it nine years later. Then I got into the eye business (Muro Pharmaceuticals) and started to make eye products that I sold to Bausch & Lomb. Then I went into asthma (with Muro), and after a number of years I sold it but stayed on the board for a number of years and that was it."

But he enjoyed every minute of it and he was very good at it. "In school I was good in manufacturing and I was good in research. And by mixing marketing and research you know exactly what the next major problem is going to be for the next 15-20 years, so you know which product to target and try to make."

For example, he discovered that asthma was a growing trend. "It was increasing 16 percent a year and the young children were getting asthma because of the environment. Even now in this country we have a very large asthma population. So I started researching asthma and emphysema and bronchitis and also allergic rhinitis. I started working on spray steroids for the nose and the mouth and I made a number of products and built up a sales force of 200 salesmen and went from there."

And the government regulation of the industry didn't faze him. "A lot of regulations by the government," he admits, "a lot of compliance issues and regulation issues, but I never had trouble, because I tried to do it the right way. I didn't want my name to be blemished in any way."

In 2000, he was supposed to officially retire from the industry which he had helped transform. And he did—but then his other career began in earnest.

"What are you going to do, watch television, play golf all day?" he says. "You've got to use your brain."

And he's done so tirelessly (what retirement?), eager to share his knowledge and commitment with the new generation both in his field and in the community.



George Behrakis is receiving the Order of Honour by President Karolos Papoulias of the Hellenic Republic during a special ceremony at the Presidential Palace. Mr. Behrakis became the first Greek American, not born in Greece, member in the Order of Honour.

"Right now my focus is on working with physicians in Greece and the government: they recently passed a law about smoking in public places and I've been involved with that with my cousin, Panagiotis Behrakis, who's a physician in Greece. In Greece we have over 20,000 kids starting to smoke at age 11. And we've been trying to curtail that and make sure they don't start, because we're going to have a catastrophe in 30-40 years. These kids will have lung cancer and some form of cancer starting if they start smoking at 11."

In the community, he's a firm believer in the mission of L100. "The Leadership to me was something our forebears should have done a long time ago, but they didn't have the resources. Now most of the Greeks are successful and are entrepreneurs or professionals, whether they're doctors, lawyers, pharmacists, dentists. We now have a large number and the most important thing is to build a leadership and people involved as a group and that way we have strength: we can do things that we couldn't do before."

He says he'd like to see the membership of L100 at least double (from the current 860) and he believes it will. "It's going to happen. I believe so. With the good people we have and the young people coming on the board who have energy and are aggressive I think we can continue to build and bring the youth in through organizations like Leadership."

His own family has steadily grown and now includes nine grandchildren. Of his four kids, Drake works in real estate, Elena is an artist and teacher, Joanna was an accountant and now teaches music, and Stephanie runs the family foundation. His wife Margo is very much a partner in the Behrakis philanthropy and they will celebrate their golden wedding anniversary this July ("We met at a Greek dance in Watertown, Massachusetts").

"I'm not going to BS people," says the plainspoken self-made man who has made himself the angel of many causes. "If I want to give, I give from my heart. My family, and my wife, that's the way they think, too."

George and Margo Behrakis in front of the building that houses the Art of the Ancient World wing, which the Boston Museum of Fine Arts has named in their honor.

**DISCUSSING CLASS ACTION LAWSUIT AGAINST  
TURKEY ON BEHALF OF CYPRIOT REFUGEES**



*From left, Dr. Kostas Mavrides, Attorney Athan Tsimpedes and the event's moderator Elena Maroulleti*

Washington based Attorney Athan Tsimpedes presented the merits of his class action lawsuit in the U.S against Turkey and the self-proclaimed "pseudo state" in the Turkish-occupied northern part of Cyprus, during a vibrant discussion that was organized recently at the Stathakion Cultural Center in Astoria, by AKTINA FM and AKTINA TV, two highly rated media outlets on New York's public station WNYE-91.5FM and WNYE-Channel 25, whose primary mission is the promotion and preservation of rich heritage, history and culture of Cyprus in America. The discussion was moderated by Elena Maroulleti, President of AKTINA Productions, and included Dr. Kostas Mavrides, a scholar, political analyst and columnist who came from Cyprus especially for the occasion.

Despite the bitter cold, including parking difficulties created by the latest snow storm, about 100 Greek Cypriots attended the event, titled "The Ongoing Violations of Turkey on Cyprus - Decades later Greek Cypriots stand a chance of suing the aggressor in U.S. Courts." Using slides, Mr. Tsimpedes outlined in detail the legal facts which support his case, while he also revealed documents that verify the illegal commercial activities in the US of Turkey and its puppet regime in the Turkish-occupied northern part of Cyprus.

Tsimpedes presented and distributed the U.S "Certificate

of Occupancy" of the self-proclaimed TRNC (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus), that set up shop in Washington, DC, which verifies that it operates as a commercial enterprise and not as government. "The pseudo state has offices, employees, hires attorneys, involves itself in litigation in the United States and is selling properties under false title and illegally representing itself as a government through its trade name the 'TRNC' that subjects it to the jurisdiction of U.S courts," he noted and further stressed that, "every time the pseudo state uses the TRNC logo it is violating the laws of the U.S and nations of the civilized world that have condemned the TRNC through UN resolutions. The United States does not recognize the illegal regime "TRNC". Referring to the so-called "ambassador" of the "TRNC" in the U.S, Hilmi Akil, Tsimpedes stressed that, "he is not an ambassador, but a known lobbyist who enters the U.S under a business visa that supports the argument that the 'TRNC' is a business and not a government".

The audience also had the opportunity to be informed and see for the first time specific confidential documents about the conspiracies surrounding the 2004 UN Proposal for the settlement of the Cyprus question, known as the "Annan Plan". Guest speaker, Dr. Kostas Mavrides, a well known and outspoken scholar, who overwhelmingly supports the class action lawsuit spearheaded by Mr. Tsimpedes, and who was the first to expose these conspiracies in 2004 and more recently in 2010, explained that before he gave his "stamp of approval" to what the attorney is doing, he first dedicated more than nine months studying the case. "I stand before you today, very confident, and I can tell you that this case has many merits," he stressed.

Another issue which was discussed by both speakers was the March 1, 2010 decision of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) which encourages Greek Cypriots to seek compensation for their properties in the Turkish-occupied north by bringing their claims before the so-called Immovable Property Commission (IPC) in the



pseudo state. Both speakers stressed that ECHR's decision does not force Greek Cypriots to bring their claims before the IPC, but it rather "suggests" to them to do so and they both urged everyone to avoid this "avenue" because as they explained this will support the ongoing efforts of Turkey and of the pseudo state to eventually completely expel the rights of the refugees in the Turkish occupied north.

Speaking to NEO magazine, Elena Maroulleti, President of AKTINA Productions, Inc., stressed that, "since the 1974 Turkish invasion and the subsequent illegal occupation of Cyprus, all Greek Cypriots who were forcibly expelled from the ancestral homes, including me, knew that Turkey violated U.S laws by utilizing American arms during its invasion and thereafter for its occupation of the northern part of the island... We always wondered whether or not we can sue Turkey and pursue our justice through legal avenues. Finally, we can, through this class action lawsuit and without jeopardizing the Cyprus talks currently underway and without giving any recognition to the self proclaimed pseudo state in the Turkish occupied northern part of the island. I am all for it and also a participant. If we lose, at least we'll have the satisfaction that we have made an effort."

The event was attended by several representatives from various Greek Cypriot and Greek American community organizations and was greeted by the very Rev. Archimandrite Sebastian Skordellos who represented his Eminence Archbishop of America Demetrios. Mr. Philip Christopher, President of the International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus, also participated as did Mr. Elias Tsekerides, President of Federation of Hellenic Societies, Mr. Kostas Tsentas, Executive VP of the Cyprus Federation of America and Mr. Theodoros Pavlakos, President of the National Issues Committee of the Federation of Hellenic Societies.



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# DOGTOOTH

receives Oscar nomination

## Yorgos Lanthimos' Film Receives a Nomination for Foreign Language Film for 83rd Academy Awards

"Dogtooth", the official Greek Foreign Film Oscar Entry has been nominated by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences in the Foreign Language Film Category for the 83rd Academy Awards. The film made its West Coast premier at the 2010 the Los Angeles Greek Film Festival.

"This was very unexpected. It makes me and my collaborators extremely happy," commented Yorgos Lanthimos.

This is only the 5th time that a Greek film has been nominated for an Academy Award®. Previous nominations from Greece include: IPHIGENIA (1977) Nominee, Foreign Language Film; BLOOD ON THE LAND (1965) Nominee, Foreign Language Film; THE RED LANTERNS (1963) Nominee, Foreign Language Film; ELECTRA (1962) Nominee, Foreign Language Film. The

country has yet to win an Oscar.

"Dogtooth", directed by Lanthimos and written by Lanthimos and Efthimis Filippou, is the story of three children of a factory manager who have been raised in complete isolation, spending their lives shut up in the family's house and learning only their mother and father's bizarre version of the outside world. As they enter adulthood, however, the three begin to test the boundaries imposed by their parents' unrelenting and often cruel domination.

The film, is produced by Boo Productions co-produced by Greek Film Center, Yorgos Lanthimos, Horsefly Productions and stars Christos Stergioglou, Michele Valley, Aggeliki Papoulia, Mary Tsoni, Christos Passalidis

and Anna Kalaitzidou. "Dogtooth" is Executive Produced by Iraklis Mavroidis Associated Produced by Athina Tsangari with Cinematography by Thimios Bakatakis, Art Direction & Costumes by Elli Papageorgakopoulou, Editing by Yorgos Mavroparidis, Sound by Leandros Ntounis.

"Dogtooth", distributed in the U.S. through Kino International a division of Kino Lorber Inc., has been intriguing cinemagoers and fans worldwide with its provocative, experimental, yet thought provoking nature. The film has garnered many awards worldwide.

Yorgos Lanthimos was born in Athens in 1973 and studied film and television direction at Stavrakos Film School. Since 1995, he has directed numerous short films (including 2001's Uranisco Disco), experimental theatre, music videos and TV commercials; his first feature film was 2005's internationally-acclaimed Kinetta.

To support "Dogtooth" you can click "like" the film on Facebook. You can also visit Oscar.com using a Facebook account and vote for the film, which will compete against four other foreign films for the final Best Foreign Language Film award. The Oscars will be awarded on **Sunday, February 27th, 2011** at the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood.

## NIARCHOS FOUNDATION AWARDS CHALLENGE GRANTS

The Stavros Niarchos Foundation has awarded two challenge grants of \$25,000 for each of the next two years to the New York City Greek Film Festival.

"To say a simple 'thank you' is just not enough. We are most grateful to the Niarchos Foundation for their support and for their understanding of our mission and of the difficulties we face" said Festival Director James DeMetro. "The Foundation has been at our side practically from the very beginning, but we honestly never expected this level of support. With this money the Foundation is not only seeing to the Festival's continuation but to its further development. People at the Foundation have been generous with their money and their advice. It's energizing to know that they want us to keep growing and improving."

Festival Manager Stamatias Ghikas explained that the Niarchos funds, which the Festival must match, are earmarked for very specific purposes, to pay for professional services that will take the Festival to the next level. "The budget in the past has never allowed us to move in the direction that these grants are going to take us," Ghikas said.

"The cost of running a decent festival in New York is somewhere between \$75,000 and \$100,000," DeMetro said. "Ticket sales cannot meet the expenses, particularly since the Festival wants to keep prices affordable for all. Without benefactors like the Niarchos Foundation the Festival would not be possible."

Supporters of the New York City Greek Film Festival can help meet the challenge of the Niarchos grants. Those interested in making a contribution are urged to contact Mr. Ghikas at the Hellenic American Chamber of Commerce office, 212-629-6380.



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**ALL GREEK PRODUCTS AVAILABLE**

by Peter Shakalis

## Selecting your real estate team early in the acquisition process is always beneficial...

When making the decision to begin the process of looking for new office facilities it is always wise for a company to first put together a real estate team consisting of a group of professionals who will represent the company's varied interests in the search process. The earlier the tenant develops and engages this real estate team the better off they will fair in the process. The tenants real estate team works to 'level the playing field' between the tenant and the landlord, considering that the landlord has at its disposal a team of building leasing agents, construction contractors, architects, real estate attorneys, vendors, and others all actively engaged in the office leasing process.

The tenants real estate team should at a minimum include a commercial real estate agent, an architect and a real estate attorney. Additional team members may be required depending on the nature and complexity of the transaction. These might include information technology consultants; telephone consultants; construction project managers; state and local government incentive experts and furniture vendors.

Office lease negotiations are complex involving evaluation, analysis and negotiation of items such as building operating escalations, floor loss factors, office construction and work allowances, electricity costs, financial rent analysis, lease verses rent commencement dates, base years, expansion/renewal/cancellation options and other issues. The tenants leasing agent must be knowledgeable in these areas and should exclusively represent the interests of the tenant in this process from the beginning. With the advent of computerized listing systems, finding space is the easiest part of the agent's role. Negotiating the previous mentioned business points of the lease, understanding the tenant's business needs as they relate to its space considerations, and the ability to coordinate the various other disciplines in this process is imperative. Selecting the right broker therefore should be done carefully, with an emphasis on past experience, expertise and recommendations.

Working hand in hand from the start with the leasing agent should be the architect. The tenant who goes out looking at new locations without first consulting with an architect to determine its needs, often waives their valuable time looking at the wrong space alternatives. The architect determines the parameters from which the leasing agent can then identify suitable locations. They are responsible for determining how many rentable square feet are required (very different from square feet) based on a thorough evaluation of the tenants current and future operational needs, a process called 'programming'. This evaluation serves to determine not only how much space the tenant needs, but the building floor configuration that is best suited for the tenant - center core verses side core floor plates as an example. Particular services the building must provide to accommodate the tenants operational needs such as after hour HVAC, extra electrical capacity or perhaps 24/7 day a week access will be identified. While some landlords offer architectural services to prospective tenants, it is wise to have the tenant's own architect review the plans as well.

The third member of the team is the attorney who will negotiate the legal issues in the lease. While tenants often use their corporate or personal attorney to handle a lease transaction it is always advisable to use an attorney who is experienced in negotiating landlord/tenant issues. Leases are complex documents often more than 100 pages in length. Moreover the tenant can rest assured that the landlord will be using a real estate attorney to negotiate on its behalf. An experienced real estate attorney will have the ability to navigate difficult issues in the lease and work constructively with the landlord's attorney to reach agreement, which often is the difference in making or losing the deal. Provisions agreed to in the lease will be referred to by the landlord and tenant over many years, emphasizing the importance of getting the most favorable terms possible.

The process of securing a new office facility particularly in New York is often a difficult process with many twists and turns. Having a good team in place from the start can facilitate the process and help avoid many of the pitfalls.

**Peter Shakalis** is a Director at Colliers International NY LLC  
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Mr. and Mrs. Tabliambouris and Mr. and Mrs. Bapis with daughter



Thanasia Mamais, Maria Mamais, Vaso Katsoulis and Helen Maropakis



Father Evan, Father Dennis and Presvytera Paula with guests



Renee Rallis, School board President



Maria Mamais, Anna Theodosopoulos, Marilena Katopodis

John & Helen Petras with their daughter Alexandra

Mrs. & Mr. Gregory Michelis with granddaughter Alexandra Petras



Cbris Neocleous, Kosta Kamberis



George Patilis, Niko Katopodis, Joanna Patilis



Nicoletta Gargas and Approdite Vorillas, Glendi Committee Members

## THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL GREEK LANGUAGE INSTITUTE: CELEBRATING 21 YEARS OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

The Parent Teacher Association of the Archangel Michael Greek Language Institute in Port Washington, New York, broke all records this past January at their annual Apokriatiko Glendi (festivities before the Lent), celebrating 21 years of family and community. "This has been a tradition in our Greek School for several years now," says Marilena Katopodis, a member of the organizing committee. "Typically the funds support our Greek School and we've been trying to raise additional funds since we occupied the new space on 100 Fairway Drive in Port Washington." According to Mrs. Katopodis, "starting last year we have been asking for Teacher Wish Lists. Items to be purchased this year include additional desks, bulletin boards, clocks for classrooms and of course material to enhance the Greek School Curriculum."

The School's Principals are Eleni Capous and Ekaterini Spyridakis, two very dynamic women who have sought to make the Institute a beacon of Hellenic knowledge in this part of Long Island, which has attracted thousands of Greek Americans the previous two decades. "We have close to 220

children attending the Greek School which includes kindergarten to Regents," says Protopresbyter Dennis Strouzas, the Archangel Michael Parish Dean. "We have 550 families as members, 250 children in Sunday School, 150 in Hope-Joy and 100 in GOYA."

Last November, the community hit another milestone by hosting a benefit concert in celebration of "The Hellenic Thread in the Tapestry of American Culture", starring Greek artist George Dalaras at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. The all successful event featured the City Music Cleveland Orchestra under the baton of Alexandre Myrat. The program comprised of selections from George Dalaras' musical career and original works by the renowned composer Christos Hatzis, including the world premiere of Credo (Pistevo). All proceeds went to the special fund for the completion of the facilities for the Cultural and Education Center.

This year's Apokriatiko Glendi was a showcase of the Parish's dynamism that was founded in 1980 a small group of very determined Greek Americans. Hundreds of parents and children showed up to

celebrate Hellenic education creating a buzzing ambiance of joy and promise for the future. Protopresbyter Dennis and Presbyter Evan Evangelides did the invocation, followed by the Greek School Board President Irene (Renee) Rallis and Anna Frangoulis-Gioutlakis, the PTA president, who did the introduction and reminded those present that the struggle continues. Welcoming remarks were offered by Susan Cavounis and Chris-Marie Tzavelis, the Glendi Co-Chairpersons.

The best part however, was kept for the end: children from Kindergarten all the way to Seventh Grade performed traditional Greek dances, dressed with costumes from various parts of Greece. Under the direction of Joanna Kyriacou Anderson, the dancers, full of enthusiasm and pride, made everybody to stand up and accompany them clapping the rhythm and cheering exuberantly at the end of each tune! "A beautiful evening, reminiscent of the fact that this Parish and Hellenism in America, have a lot more to give," observed Mrs. Maria Mamais, a proud parent, echoing the general sentiment in the room.



Glendi Committe Members, Marilena Katopodis, Chris-Marie Tsavelis (Chair of the Glendi 2011), Mariann Matarangas, Violet Mazzei



Proud Greek School Parents



Anna Gioullakis, the PTA President

Susan Cavounis, Chairperson of the event with her husband Michael Cavounis



# THE NEW GENERATION of DOCTORS

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Maria M. Mountis, DO, FACC</b>
<b>Position:</b>	Cardiologist, Section of Heart Failure and Cardiac Transplant Medical Director, Mechanical Circulatory Support Program Heart and Vascular Institute, Cleveland Clinic
<b>Education:</b>	Heart Failure and Transplant Fellowship: Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Cardiology Fellowship: Albert Einstein Medical Center, Internal Medicine Residency: Lehigh Valley Hospital, Medical School: Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Undergraduate: Saint Joseph's University

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

I was born in the beautiful city of Paris, France, to parents who were born and raised in Agios Georgios Sikousis, Chios, Greece. Like many Greek families at that time, my father's family immigrated to the United States and my mother's family immigrated to France, where eventually my parent's married. At the age of 6, my family moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where I lived until moving to Philadelphia to attend college. Lancaster is where my parents and brother still call home. Cleveland, Ohio is where I now call home.

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

My parents instilled in me a strong work ethic, unwavering values, and a belief that I could accomplish anything with hard work. There are many professors, friends, colleagues, and patients that have also touched my life, but a few shine. Dr. Susan Brozena and Dr. Mariell Jessup, two intelligent, compassionate, and successful female cardiologists have been mentors to me and who I strive to emulate. My colleague, Dr. Randall Starling, a leader in the field of heart failure has been paramount in nurturing my career. Life experiences have also impacted me, including a visit to Egypt as a medical ambassador, volunteering, and experiencing the beauty of the Greek culture and the traditions of the Orthodox faith.

**Why did you become a doctor?**

My father suffered a severe heart attack when I was 10 years old, which crippled him with heart failure for many years. He had countless hospitalizations for heart failure, arrhythmias, and near-death experiences. He was eventually placed on the waiting list for a heart transplant. He became too sick and needed a mechanical heart to sustain him until a transplant was available. In my last year of medical school, after a 6 month hospital stay, he received a heart transplant and has been doing well for the last 10 years. All of these experiences, along with the first-hand observation of care provided by exceptional physicians, verified my desire to enter the medical profession. My parents say that even at the age of 3, I emphatically stated I wanted to become a physician to help others – God works in mysterious ways!

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

We are fortunate to live in the United States, a world leader in health care and medical research. Despite political differences, the goal of modern-day society is to provide the best, most affordable health care to all individuals. Taking advice from our ancestors' practice, it is crucial to practice a healthy lifestyle and promote the concept of preventative medicine. Focusing on risk factor modification with exercise, a healthy diet, and smoking cessation, we can decrease rates of cardiovascular disease and cancer, which will in turn decrease health care costs.

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

A great physician will be caring, knowledgeable, humble, empathetic, a patient-advocate who takes the time to answer questions, ease concerns, and educate. These are the reasons we entered the medical profession and thus, so important to uphold these standards.

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

My Hellenic heritage and Greek Orthodox beliefs influence me on a daily basis. Most influential is the Hippocratic Oath: first do no harm, and allow this to be the guiding principle with each patient we encounter. There are also many wonderful examples of physicians in our Orthodox religion, such as Saint Panteleimon and Agoi Anargyroi, Saints Cosmas and Damianos, whose life stories allow us to practice medicine in a dutiful way.

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

In the medical profession, we join organizations to continue our education and foster collaboration with colleagues throughout the world. The following is the mission statement of the Hellenic Medical Society of New York: to be the bridge between our cherished heritage and future accomplishments. We are fortunate to have this exceptional Society that not only unifies Greek-American physicians in New York, but reaches across state lines and to Greece. During my medical school training, I was awarded scholarships by the Hellenic Medical Society, for which I remain grateful. As a past recipient, I have the duty to support the Society and its mission. I have traveled to Greece to speak at a cardiology conference and am honored to be involved in maintaining unity between Greece and the United States for continued medical innovation.

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

Hard work, humility, humor, and high ethical standards are qualities I admire most. I admire my brother who embodies these, cares for family selflessly, and helped support me in my endeavors.

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

Leaving Greece during their teenage years, my parents immigrated with little education or resources, but with a tenacity to survive in a new country. My mother, raising two children and caring for my father, with barely a grasp of the English language, continued to persevere and instill in us the importance of an education and scholarly activities. My parents are my heroes and they continue to teach me humility, respect, patience, perseverance, and love.

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

Professionally: continuing to provide the best possible care to patients, educating, mentoring young physicians, and being on the forefront of clinical research for advanced heart failure therapies.

Personally: to be blessed with a supportive husband, to raise a beautiful family, and to continue exploring this magnificent world.

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

Travelling and learning about other cultures are some of my passions. I also enjoy reading, photography, music, yoga, and cooking, with fondness of Greek specialties my parents taught me, including pastitsio, avgolemono soup, and baklava!

**What is your idea of happiness?**

Knowing that I made a difference in an individual's life makes me happy, be it by caring for them and their family or listening to their stories. I am fortunate to have health, a wonderful family, caring friends, and to be a part of a wonderful profession which brings me much happiness.

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



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**The Young Entrepreneurs' point of view**

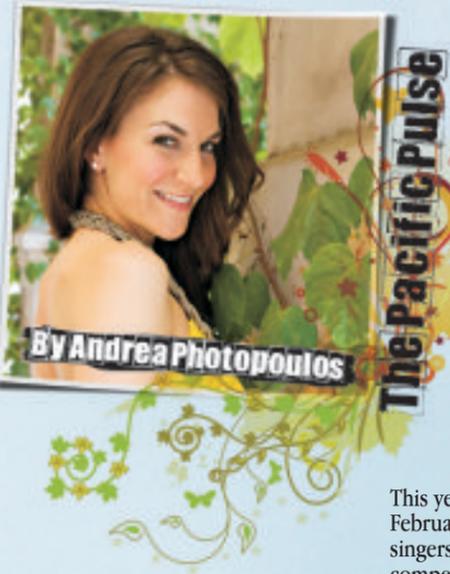
Start-up founders talk about their start-ups, their experience and gaps in technology/energy/biotech/social media that can create ideas.

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**The investor's point of view**

VCs / Angels / investors from Computer/IT/Social Media, Biotech, Green and Renewable Energy sectors talk about the economy and opportunities.



# It's February... Time to get your Greek Dance On at FDF!!!

This year marks the 35th Anniversary of the Folk Dance and Choral Festival that will be held in Ontario, California on February 17-20th. As a fellow Greek dancer and FDF participant of many years, I just want to wish all of you dancers and singers the BEST OF LUCK in this year's competition. FDF has been the biggest and most looked forward to Greek dance competition for years on the West, impacting the lives of many young Greek Americans... one of them being Miss Vasiliki Fkiaras, a Greek dancer of sixteen years and an FDF participant of nine years. I asked her to share her story with NEO...



Chrysi Aeti comes in 3rd place for FDF 2010!  
Vasiliki going on stage to receive her metal.  
Congratulations!

## "I Love FDF"

By Vasiliki Fkiaras

The Folk Dance and Choral Festival aka "FDF", is one of the greatest Greek dancing competitions ever. Many Greek Americans from all over the West Coast and sometimes even other countries look forward to this event every year. I began my journey as a Greek dancer at the young age of five, with the dance group "Mesologgi" at St. Nicholas Church in San Jose where I grew up. My first FDF was when I was 12 and I have been going to FDF ever since. Even when I went off to college three years ago to Sonoma, I wanted to continue dancing, so I joined the Oakland dance group "Chrysi Aeti". I drive 45 minutes to practice and even have to pay the Richmond bridge toll every time, but it's all so worth it. I love FDF. I love the environment and the great energy that happens during this event. A whole lot of fun, with festivities going on all weekend long. FDF has to be one of the most memorable events that I have had in my life.



I have been able to meet amazing people and make new friends from cities all over California. FDF has exposed me to my Greek heritage and has educated me on my Greek history with the different dances from different regions of Greece. As for the competition, each group picks a region of Greece and performs a set of dances sometimes with singing too. The dance competition takes place on Friday and Saturday with each dance group performing two different sets, "semi-final" and "final". The awards banquet is on Sunday, which is my favorite part because we get to dress up in evening wear and celebrate everyone's victories. FDF has become a very important part of my life. Every year I look forward to the reunion of new and old friends and the excitement and pride that the weekend's fun festivities will bring.



A supportive older sister as well,  
Vasiliki poses with her sister Eleni  
before she goes on stage



Vasiliki and her dance group,  
Chrysi Aeti performing  
at FDF 2010. Opa!



Look at that beautiful  
authentic Greek dance  
costume. Vasiliki is  
ready to perform

SHARE YOUR FDF STORIES AND PHOTOS (PAST OR PRESENT) WITH NEO AT  
[a.photopoulos@neomagazine.com](mailto:a.photopoulos@neomagazine.com)

I want to know how FDF has had a positive impact on your life. Find out more about FDF and how you can help support this amazing Greek dancing event at  
<http://www.yourfdf.org/support.html>

## VIENNA: WHERE GREEK FIRST APPEARED IN PRINT



Aside from Venice, whose Greek community we visited several months ago (March 2010), the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire were another key destination for "Hellenes without Borders" in the early phase of Greece's modern Diaspora. Thus far, we have visited the Greek communities in Hungary (October 2010), and Trieste (November 2010). Now let us consider the history of the Greek community in Austria's capital, Vienna.

Like other Greek communities in the ex-Austrian Empire, the Greeks' large scale migration to the area followed the peace treaties between the Austrian and Ottoman Empires, most specifically the Treaty of Passarowitz, signed in 1717. Aside from fixing the boundaries between the two empires, a key provision was the right of Ottoman and Austrian subjects to engage in commerce in each other's realm. After several decades of war, there was a great pent up demand for commerce and reconstruction. The Austrians lacked knowledge of the Ottoman Empire, and the Turks disdained commerce, so as a practical matter the opportunity fell on Ottoman minorities, Orthodox Greeks and Serbs, as well as Jews and Armenians.

The Vienna Greeks hailed primarily from Macedonia, Epirus, and particularly from Thracian cities such as Constantinople and Philippoupolis (modern Plovdiv, Bulgaria). Bulk goods, particularly cotton, were the lifeblood of the trade. Though legend has it that Greeks set up the first coffeehouse in Vienna, Dr. Theophanis Pampas, a local Greek Viennese doctor with an encyclopedic knowledge of the community, informed me that this singular honor goes to the Armenians. As I write these words, I am drinking Viennese coffee, which is exquisite.

The Greek community grew and prospered. In typical Greek fashion, factions appeared. Some Greeks took Austrian nationality and in many cases entered the Austrian nobility. Others retained Ottoman nationality, which had the benefit of lower taxation but restricted their activities to the mercantile sphere. Each faction then founded its own church, both within a hundred meters of the other, in Vienna's Greichenviertel (Greek Quarter). These churches remain to this day, and liturgy

alternates every Sunday from one church to the next.

Education and literacy in Greek were key endeavors of the Greek community, regardless of faction. The Vienna Greek school, which I had the honor to view one Saturday morning in progress, is older than the Greek state itself, founded in 1804. Even more importantly, Vienna is where Greek first appeared in print. The actual site of the first Greek printing press is gone, but within the Greek Quarter, a stately baroque Viennese building houses the second Greek printing press, where Rhegas Pheraios, the first martyr of Greek independence, edited the Greek newspaper. All Greek publications, particularly those in the Diaspora, in a very real sense descend from this site.

By the time of Greek independence in the 1820s, the Vienna community was at its acme, with about 5,000 members and an increasingly diverse socio-



economic structure. The articulate and prosperous community naturally agitated for Greece's liberation from the Ottoman yoke, but at the same time they were conscious that the Austrian Empire, a bundle of nationalities under a relatively benign but nonetheless absolute autocracy, was violently opposed to, and fearful of, revolution. Austrian



Greeks therefore had to walk a very thin line between joy at Greece's prospective independence and their personal safety and livelihood in the Austrian Empire. After all, the Austrians arrested Rhegas Pheraios and handed him over to the Turks,

who strangled him in Belgrade in 1798. In Belgrade, the Serbs honor him with a statue and a street bearing his name, as he agitated for a pan-Balkan federation.

Greek independence did not result in a large repatriation of Austrian Greeks. The impoverished little kingdom could offer nothing in comparison to the vast Austrian Empire. The inexorable tide of assimilation began to absorb the Greeks into Austria's ethnic goulash, and other Greek Austrians began to move to Britain or France, where the economies were more dynamic than Austria. A trickle of new immigrants arrived through the years, which, along with the efforts of the long established membership, kept the community intact.

The two World Wars increased pressure on the Greeks to assimilate, particularly during the barbaric Nazi era, but the religious community remained intact. Postwar, Austria had none of the mass immigration of Greek guestworkers like in neighboring Germany, but a fair amount of Greeks did go to Austria, particularly for study, and afterwards they often stayed in the country. This includes the current Deputy Mayor of Vienna, Greek-born Maria Vassilakou, a member of the Austrian Green Party.

Like Austria itself, the Greek Community of Vienna is a shadow of its former size, but still prosperous and elegant. Like the Greektowns of America, today's Viennese Greeks rarely live in the area, but some do have businesses there, and the church and community hall, as always, functions as the community's center of gravity. Like the other Greek communities we have "visited," these Viennese "Hellenes without Borders" are living history of Greece's perennial—and continuing—Diaspora.

By Alexander Billinis

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.

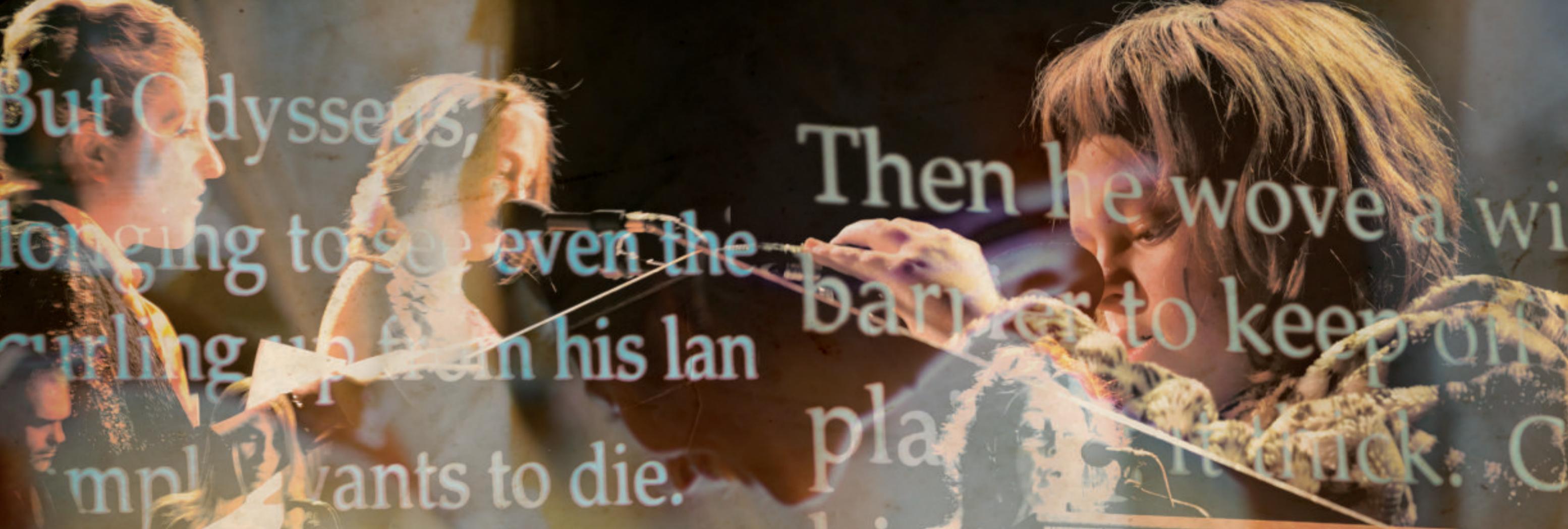
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Readers of all ages do all-night "Odyssey" reading in New York

by Dimitri C. Michalakis

My daughter and I were readers number 25 at the marathon all-night reading of *The Odyssey* by lovers of Homer from all walks and of all ages on a cold November night at New York's 92nd Street Y.

"Do you want to do it?" I had asked my daughter Alexis, who is 25 and game for anything.

"Sounds like fun," she said.

It seemed a perfect thing to do together: a little slice of Homer's dark and briny voyage after the bloat of the Thanksgiving holiday and in the twinkling allure of Circe's island of Manhattan.

But even my daughter the trouper (she had done plays in school) and me the old trouper (I had done plays) were a little nervous about reading in such a prestigious setting and after the fanfare of these same readings being done everywhere from the island of Chios (Homer's birthplace of legend) to Alexandria to Montevideo and now to New York by

the international non-profit literary group dedicated to the reading of the poet, The Readers of Homer.

And despite the busy Thanksgiving weekend, I was told that Liam Neeson (a philhellene) might be among the readers, and Tina Fey, and possibly Arianna Huffington, and Colonel Matthew Bogdanos, the Marine hero who had safeguarded the remaining artifacts of the Iraq Museum after the fall of Baghdad and was a passionate classicist.

"Are you nervous?" my wife asked me.

"Thanks for reminding me," I said.

We braved the chill of the streets, but then walked into the lobby of the Y to a sunny scene: the 200 readers of the evening collegially sporting their numbers and mingling with friends and family who were drifting in and out of a nearby room spread with a veritable Homeric banquet: a roast lamb head anchoring a feast of mulled wine, and olives and sweet goat cheese, of leeks and black bread and chick pea spread, and of honey yogurt and nuts and

pomegranate for dessert, while people of all walks talked eagerly about the night's proceedings.

A woman at our table said she had been everywhere at the readings, including Montevideo and Kos. "It was wonderful," she said. "We were pretty bleary-eyed by the morning, but then we woke up to the sun coming out and to the words of Homer, so who can beat that?"

A man and a woman across the table, who were spooning their chick pea spread on black bread, breathlessly compared their expectations for the reading.

"It's so beautiful to share it with everybody," she said.

"It's something communal out of ancient Greece," he said.

And then the feasting ended in appropriate Homeric fashion with three members of the Lyravlos musical ensemble from Greece marching to the center of our

dining room and blowing their turtle shell and goat horns—an unearthly sound in the middle of Manhattan—and summoning the assembly to the adjoining Kaufmann Hall for the start of our reading.

"Thank you for coming out and trying to do this rather challenging, long and different experience," Professor Kathryn Hohlwein greeted us from the podium of the stage. She is the founder and president of The Readers of Homer and a lifelong academic who admits "in the teaching and sharing of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, I came to find my profession of teaching and I've gone on to understand better the power and significance and relevance of these two poems."

In this time of war, she said, "these poems have a stunning immediacy and relevance to the experience of young people who are either in combat and have suffered trauma: whatever side they're on, whatever war they were in and then trying to reintegrate into civilian society and come home."

She introduced Yannis Simonides, the internationally-acclaimed actor of the classics and both a founder and the managing director of The Readers of Homer, who laid down the ground rules for the evening: "We don't comment. We don't apologize. We don't use our name. We just come up and follow the flow. We just use the microphone the best we can in the different languages of the world. There's nothing to be afraid of. Enjoy the long wonderful evening."

And then the reading began with Professor Hohlwein intoning "...Lift the great song again..." as the English translation of the poem by Stanley Lombardo was projected on a screen and Professor William Mullen of Bard College mounted the stage to read the first passage: a balding man in a business suit, until he reared his head back, closed his eyes, and began to read from Homer, from the heart, in ancient Greek, in a voice that rang throughout the hall and thrilled us all, with his face lit up by the light of the podium, like some ancient bard before the fire of a royal banquet hall.

# HOMER TAKES MANHATTAN

And then a blonde woman read also in ancient Greek, in such rhapsodic devotion, and after her so many others in so many languages: Spanish, and French, and modern Greek, and what sounded like Danish, and an African tongue. Kids, and seniors, and whole family groups, solemnly taking their turn on the stage and at the podium, their faces glowing in its light.

Lyravlos provided musical interludes between "rhapsodies" on period instruments such as the "Pan" pipes, and on lyres, and sea shells, and goat antlers, all the devoted handiwork of Panagiotis Stefos, the distinguished musician and favorite of composers such as Hadjidakis and Theodorakis, and a specialist in modern music, until twenty years ago he acquired a passion for ancient Greek music and instruments and he founded Lyravlos, which has performed ancient Greek music in concerts and lectured on it to groups throughout the world.



There were also dance interludes by the Choreo Theatro Company in choreography by Irina Constantine Poulos, the performers in stark and powerful tableaux set to music by the Slovenian group Silence: "Penelope's Solo on the Balcony"... "Odysseus and the Sirens"... "Odysseus and Calypso"... "Odysseus and Poseidon..." Haunting dances of primitive beauty and choreographed struggle—some with masks—that made them even more haunting.

And then it was the turn of my daughter and me to mount the stage and get ready for our reading. We stood and waited for the woman before us to finish, and then we walked forward to the light of the podium and shared our passage on Odysseus's great sorrow: Odysseus' heart sank and his knees grew weak, began my daughter. With a heavy sigh he spoke to his own great soul. And then I read, Ah, Zeus has let me see land I never hoped to see, and I've cut my way to the end of this gulf, but there's no way to get out of the grey saltwater...

As our voices rang over the tribal darkness of the hall and the sound echoed back to us, I could hear and sense as never before the primal despair of Odysseus' voice in his unforgiving world of magic, and fate, and gods and heroes.

We finished our reading fairly early in the night and unfortunately had to leave. But devotees stayed till the break of rosy-fingered dawn and closure to the evening with Mark Latham's original composition of Four Meditations on War under the poster for the evening by Laura Hohlwein.

The reading now moves on to the Getty Villa in Malibu, California on April 30 and will continue its odyssey throughout the world on its stated mission to revive the ancient art of public reading, recognize "the eternal immediacy of Homer," and provide a "multilayered audiovisual experience" for people of all ages and nationalities and from all walks of life.

It certainly provided a memorable experience for us in New York on that cold winter night in Manhattan.

"A night that will not be forgotten," wrote the Greek newspaper Kathimerini of the reading in Greece, and we certainly agree.



By Callie Lappas

Radio NEO's "RadioNEOlea" show, which has held the Saturday afternoon slot on the station's line-up since October, feels at first like a show about nothing. After an initial listen, some might say it's simply a couple of young Greek-Americans gathered around a mic shooting the breeze. Upon closer inspection, there's a feeling that behind the playful laughs and busy banter, something is actually being said. Therein lies the magic of this show which is so masterfully arranged that it manages to entertain and inform while appearing completely effortless, fun, and full of surprises. In fact, RadioNEOlea is a 2-hour talk radio show that cleverly talks about everything under the sun, inspired by topics and events that are current and relevant to young Greeks-Americans in NYC and across the US.

A certain courage is required to navigate a live and uncensored program that insists on being a bona fide window on the Greek-American world. And perhaps even more so, a certain chemistry on air is what will ultimately keep listeners engaged and wanting more. I, Callie Lappas, and Pete Antiaris, co-hosts of RadioNEOlea, were the likely team selected to do just that. As active members of the Hellenic-American Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals group, we were an obvious choice to co-host a program that would speak directly to Greek professionals in the NYC area. By merging the enthusiasm and curiosity of youth with the experience of true veterans in the Greek-American life, Pete and I easily maintain a delicate balance of blending humor and social commentary each week for their audience.

RadioNEOlea is the ultimate destination for young Greek-American listeners in the NY area and beyond seeking something different. The show strives to be both an entertaining and informative program in which its hosts are decidedly real, raw, and authentic. With each show RadioNEOlea brings a fresh and diverse selection of original programs with topics ranging from the serious headlines in Greece and U.S. to the sometimes silly but often fascinating "mati" and "proxenia" stories of the Greek world. RadioNEOlea engages listeners with creative topics geared toward young Greek-Americans, with unique commentary, irreverent humor... and much, much more! Some of the consistent segments include things like "Greek Word of the Day", "Headlines", and "Calendar of Greek Events in NYC".

Listeners can tune in to RadioNEOlea live every Saturday from 12pm-2pm EST on [www.radioneo.us](http://www.radioneo.us). In addition, you can enjoy the show On-The-Go from the WWG application on iPhones and Android phones. To learn more, join their Facebook page "HACCYP Radio Neolea" and receive weekly notifications on upcoming show topics.



In a day of 'firsts', during their 'first' show of the New Year, Pete decided to get Callie to try her very 'first' McDonald's Big Mac!

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By Maria A. Pardalis

## bread & honey

A COLUMN DEVOTED TO MAKING GREEK FOOD EASY

### Interview with Pylos Restaurant



Along the uber trendy and artistic 7th Street in the East Village, nestled between some of Manhattan's most loved shops such as Porchetta, Butter Lane Cupcakes, and Angelo Lambrou Atelier, lies Pylos, a

rustic and quaint Greek restaurant. Its simple wooden exterior and authentic Hellenic interior, complete with Mediterranean blue colored shutters and over 1,000 handmade clay pots packed tightly on the ceiling, instantly differentiates Pylos from all the other shops on the street.

Pylos musters a very homey ambience and with dishes named Greek Yiayia's fried potatoes and Christos' towering galaktobourekakia, it's easy to see that your dining experience will be filled with warm hospitality and comforting food normally found in a traditional Greek household.

The food is fresh and the choices infinite; how can you decide between something like Artichoke

Heart Moussaka layered with caramelized onions, herbs and three cheeses and Champagne Avgolemono? The menu seems very unique and that's because it is! It was inspired by the widely recognized and respected authority on Greek cuisine, Diana Kochilas. Along with Christos Valtzoglou, one of the owners, Diane has created a menu showcasing wholesome and regional Greek dishes, similar to what you can find in any Greek home.

After salivating over the succulent dishes that were being served, as I was interviewing Nikos Karaiskos, the general manager, I had to ask for them to share one of their favorite recipes with us.

### Cretan-Honey Braised Lamb Shank served with Gigantes Skordalia

Makes: 12 portions

Ingredients:  
 ~for the Lamb Shank~

- 12 lamb shanks
- 2 fennel bulbs, chopped
- 3 leeks, chopped
- 4-5 garlic cloves
- 3 bay leaves
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- White Wine
- Tsikoudia or Raki
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Dredge the lamb shanks in flour. Lightly coat a large skillet with olive oil and place over high heat. Add shanks and pan sear until browned.
2. Transfer shanks, fennel, garlic, leeks, and bay leaves to a roasting pan to braise. Pour equal parts of white wine and tsikoudia to cover the shanks and vegetables half way. Place a cover over roasting pan and place into the oven to braise for 3 hours.



Ingredients:  
 ~for Gigantes Skordalia~

- 1 to 2 pounds giant beans, soaked over night, & then boiled till very soft.
- 4 fresh garlic cloves, crushed
- 3 tsp roasted garlic
- 1 cup olive oil, plus more if needed
- lemon juice and salt to taste

Preparation

Once the beans are cooked and really soft, drain them and run thru a food processor at high speed. Add in both types of garlic, olive oil, lemon juice and salt.

Ingredients:  
 ~for Shank Sauce~

- ½ cup Honey
- 1 cup White Wine
- 1 Bay Leaf
- Thyme & ground pepper to taste
- Juice of 4 large oranges

Preparation

1. Combine all ingredients into a large saucepan and bring to boil. Reduce heat and cook down to a thick liquid.
2. Glaze cooked shanks with sauce about 10 to 15 minutes before serving.

Serve the shanks with the gigantes skordalia and enjoy!



If you are yearning for a casual and relaxing atmosphere, with the ability to eat traditional wholesome fare at an almost frugal price, Pylos Restaurant is a phenomenal choice. They have a rich and sensual prix fix menu for Valentine's Day and seating is still available! Check out their website for more information: [www.pylosrestaurant.com](http://www.pylosrestaurant.com)

PHOTOS: ETA PRESS

By Stavroula Toska

Panayiotis or Panos Aggelakos is a virtuoso of the clarinet who has been playing for over 23 years, professionally for 18. He got his start in Mystras, Sparta, where he was born and raised and learned to appreciate the customs and values of the Greek rural people. He has studied with some of the best in Greece and continues to look for ways to expand in his field. "I learned from the best because I wanted to become the best I could be. There was never any ego involved - it's always been about the work," says Aggelakos. From there he went on to become one of the best, performing in major festivals and events all around Greece. His reputation as a professional along with his talent and ambition led him to countries like England, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria and Spain where he played traditional Greek music in front of huge crowds. As he recently said, "people around the world are fascinated with Greece and our culture. I always look for opportunities to show the world who we are through our music. I feel so proud every time I hear a non Greek say to me how touched he is by what I played; to me it's a beautiful piece of music from my country, to them it's a whole new world opening up."

His love for music didn't stop with the clarinet. He also plays the kaval, flute and saxophone. As someone who always tries to bring new elements to his work, and with an endless desire to explore music outside the borders of Greece, Aggelakos came to New York in November of 2010. "I visited

New York for the first time two years ago. I couldn't get enough of the music scene in this city. So much culture, so much variety in every corner you turn. I felt so inspired, I had to come back." He promised himself he would return to pursue a career here and so he did. Since November, he has performed in special events around the city and has been working on putting together his own ethnic band to "...marry different cultures and sounds. Music speaks a universal language, it brings people together in good times and bad. I have been very fortunate in life and my work has taken me many places. I have witnessed firsthand what it is like to go to an unknown country and make hundreds and thousands of people fall in love with the sounds of the clarinet. I want to create the same with other musicians and their sounds. I want to incorporate jazz and Byzantine or Middle Eastern sounds into my music, experiment, take risks and see where it's going to take me. People are so surprised when they hear me playing a piece that's not traditional Greek with the clarinet. You have to see the look on their faces. I don't limit myself."

Aggelakos' goal while in New York is to promote his music not only within the Greek community but in every other community within the country. "America is a melting pot. You can either make your point by staying true to who you are and not forget where you came from or disappear in the mix. I am very proud of who I am and of the work I have been doing all these years as an artist. It hurts me to see all this negative publicity surrounding

Greece in the press lately and what I want most is to remind people what our country is about."

As if performing wasn't enough, he also teaches clarinet with students varying from 10 to 63 years old. "It's never too early or too late to pick up an instrument and learn to play. Music taught me to look at everything in life from a different perspective and it's a joy to help someone do the same. Life is too short to not do the things we truly want to do," says Aggelakos and we couldn't agree more.

It is very refreshing for us at NEO to have someone who is so committed and remains so passionate about his craft after so many years.

If you are preparing for a special event and would like to have Panayiotis Aggelakos perform, please contact him at [aggelakosklarino@yahoo.gr](mailto:aggelakosklarino@yahoo.gr), or call (347) 806-7649. He is also available for private or small group lessons, beginners as well as advanced.



**GREECE' LATEST EXPORT:  
CLARINET VIRTUOSO  
PANOS AGGELAKOS**

PHOTOS: EFA PRESS

# Ligo Ap'Ola at RADIO NEO

By Katerina Skaris



With Stavento all the way from Greece



Nicholas Mancuso

Kally Glotsos, Eleni Skaris and I, Katerina Skaris, host a show every Saturday 6-8pm on Radio Neo ([radioneo.us](http://radioneo.us)). Bringing listeners new music, and new topics every week, our show literally is about a "little bit of everything" (ligo ap'ola in Greek). Each week we have a "Question of The Week" posted on our Facebook page (NeoRadio Koritsia). It is in this way that we engage listeners of our show to give us their perspectives on situations; while many call in during our show, those that are shy, can post their responses on our wall. We then recount all interesting answers live, offering our own point of views on the topics. Our goal is to keep listeners entertained and engaged in all our conversations. Thus, we discuss everything from superpowers, to breakups, to best spots to eat, and include questions such as "If you were the opposite sex for 24 hours what would you do?" or even "What is the best/worst pickup lines you have heard?"

In addition to our weekly topics, we have various and new guests each week. From singers, to DJs, to bands, to writers, we hope to introduce our listeners to new personas as well as have guests they admire and love. In 2010, hailing from New York, singer/songwriter Derek James and front man Nicholas Mancuso of Spaceman Radio were two of the guests that kicked off our show. DJ Alex Kouros was also present, mixing hot new tracks, and even discussing his influences and how he became a DJ. PR Executive Jamie Panas of Guinness World Records not only explained how one becomes a record holder, but touched upon some of the most interesting records of 2011. She ended the show by giving away two of the 2011 books to listeners. In addition, we had XFactor contestant Vincent Kavallieratos come in and recount his experiences on ANTI's hit show. Our closing guest of 2010 was Greek HipHop sensation Stavento. Mixali and Cleopatra discussed their stay in

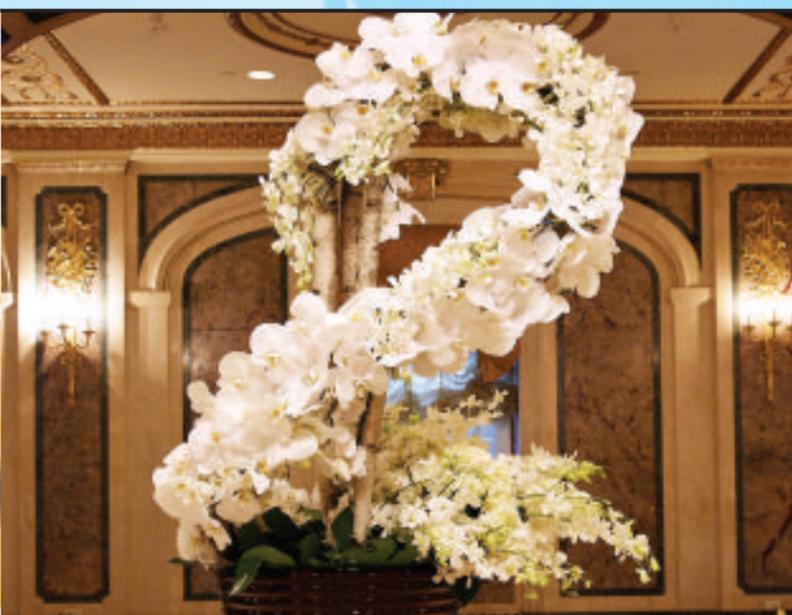


The Ligo ap'Ola Hostesses Kally Glotsos, Eleni Skaris and Katerina Skaris

New York, their show at Central Lounge in Astoria on Christmas Eve, and finally their songwriting process. In 2011 we have many surprise guests coming up so stay tune each week for our announcements.



DJ Alex Kouros



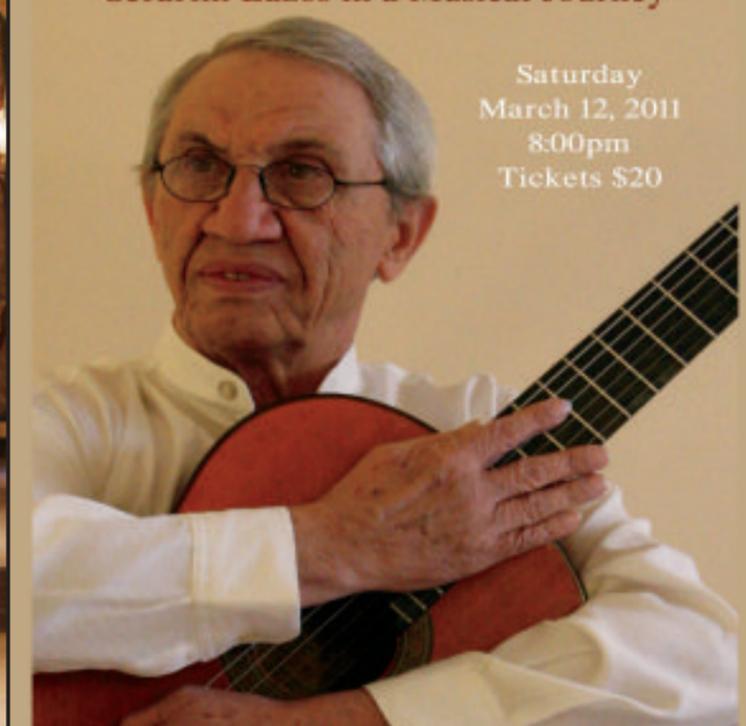
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PERIXSCOPE

## Survival of the ...featest!

I'm so glad that I can come to you this time with a piece of optimistic news! I was reading that despite the onslaught of the Internet, Google, online publications, blogs, etc., printed magazine circulation in this country has gone up 11% over the course of the last decade! Yes, it's true and it has been confirmed, Ladies and Gentlemen, magazines not only survived the "electronic age" but managed to do better. And we are talking about an old industry, not a new one, like blogs that can show huge percentage points upwards in very short periods of time. For a well established field to expand 11% in ten years is quite an accomplishment.

When we talk and hear about the crisis in the printed press we assume that everything printed is about to come down. The truth is that newspapers have been seriously hit and their mid-term (forget about long term) survival is in serious doubt. The reasons are many and one should not focus only on the advent of the Internet media that have demonstrated the tendency to render newspapers obsolete. When television came about, although the pressure was felt by it, cinema didn't disappear. What happened with newspapers? We can see each time we pick one up, even among the most robust ones, that they failed to redefine themselves and as a result were redefined by their "opponents" – the new, Internet media – as anachronistic, backward, devoid of spontaneity etc. Their struggle to survive – and I worked for many years in newspapers – has to do mostly

with the fact that they have failed so far to find a role and then play it as best they can. Yes, there is a lot of imagination on the table, every kind of improvisation and cautious steps that come with the speed of an 85 year old rheumatic, which is indicative of their clumsiness to respond to new trends. But the point has been missing all along.

The same isn't true for the magazine industry. In fact, more than a few went far ahead and much earlier than the Internet era itself. Wired comes to mind and Vanity Fair to cite a more classic beauty. Perhaps the fact that they don't come out every day, in contrast to most newspapers, contributed to their ability to focus in a more timely fashion on the new challenges and start responding to them in no time. Instead of fighting for survival as most newspapers have been doing, magazines somehow managed to go beyond the problem and open the window to new opportunities and challenges which placed them in a position of leadership. It was a giant leap forward that proved once more the survival of the fittest theory by actually taking it a step further in showing that there is always future for those who can be creative and not simply trying to adjust.

Of course, the night is still young, the struggle is still in the beginning and who knows, maybe in ten years from now more accomplishments or setbacks can happen. For the moment though, magazines have carried the day and can deservedly celebrate (albeit not relax). NEO isn't

of course a big player in the American publishing scene, but it is very close to become the "play maker" in the American Greek community. Following in the trend of the past five years, last January we published the most successful issue ever. This despite the bad economy and the collapse of Greece which sent ripples that reached our community here as well. People have come to embrace this publication and, yes, we are optimistic that we'll keep moving upwards, towards new heights, not evaporation of course!

Our main focus now is to partner with the right individuals or entities that will enable NEO to accomplish its mission in becoming the community's mouthpiece – in matters that matter, not just in gossip and second rate Church affairs that make atheists look blessed in comparison! And we aim to set a real and realistic American Greek agenda in order for the community and its various components to move in a semblance of common direction. We were never a monolithic group as some either mentally blind, stupid or simply crooked people want us to believe.

Perhaps it's a very ambitious, audacious you could say, goal but we are Greeks and can't expect less from ourselves!

DEMETRIOS RHOMPOTIS  
dondemetrio@neomagazine.com



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