

Melina Kanakaredes Is Unyielding about Her Heritage: "It's Who I Am"

By Evan C. Lambrou
Special to The National Herald

NEW YORK – Some people seem to have it all. On the surface, it might seem that things just come easy for them. But when you scratch the surface a little, when you dig to find what's underneath, you realize that it doesn't always come easy, not even for the most talented and gifted among us. No matter how attractive and intelligent someone is, he or she still has to earn his or her station in life. America is a meritocracy, after all.

What might make it seem easier for some is often simply a matter of perception, however, and that perception is often a product of what a person radiates with his or her positive attitude.

Positive attitude is probably the shortest way to characterize Melina Kanakaredes, among the most successful actresses in Hollywood today. In speaking with the National Herald, she was just bursting at the seams with it.

The interview was unique. Calling from the set of CBS' hit show, "CSI: NY," she had to break away three times in between shoots. In the process, she managed to be generous with her time and complete the interview. Production for the show began on August 11, shortly after she returned from Greece with her family. The studio is presently shooting for October's shows. There are 26 episodes planned this season, the show's fifth, and Melina will be working five days a week through next May.

In spite of her hectic schedule, she still finds time to be who she is: a Greek American girl who grew up to be a family-oriented woman with a successful career, who also remains committed to her cultural heritage and way of life, which she learned while growing up with a close-knit family in Akron, Ohio.

"When you're in this profession, you're always redefining yourself based on the role you play, and if

you're not careful, you can lose yourself. You have to change to become the character, but you don't have to change who you are in real life," the Emmy-nominated actress told the Herald.

I think that I've been very blessed. I have an amazing family. And my love and adoration for our cultural heritage is a result of my upbringing in a loving family. Being Greek American is extremely important to me, and it's always been something I emphasize in my life," she added.

Her other television credits include "Providence," "NYPD Blue," "Northern Exposure," "Due South," "Oz" and the daytime drama, "Guiding Light." Her film credits include "The Long Kiss Goodnight" (starring Geena Davis) and "15 Minutes," in which she played Nicolette Karas, the girlfriend of Robert De Niro's character.

Though it might seem to difficult to a casual observer that a person in her profession could remain grounded in her ethnic heritage, Melina has clearly managed to do so. She is intensely proud of her Greek background. She speaks Greek fluently. She married someone Greek. She insists on raising her children in the Greek tradition. And she stays actively involved with the Church, despite the challenges her career presents.

So how does she manage to do all of that in light of the demands her profession places on her?

"It's so hard to say that I balance anything out because it's just who I am. I really strongly appreciate who we are as a people. I think Greek Americans are special. We live in an amazing country, and our cultural heritage provides us with that much more, so we can celebrate who we are. I remember asking my pappou (grandfather), 'Am I Greek or am I American?' And he said, 'You're an American first because this is your country. But you

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New Orleans Parish Evacuates City Prior to Gustav



TNH/COSTAS BEJ

First Day of School

The sound of children once again echoed through the William Spyropoulos Day School in Flushing, N.Y. as parents brought students in for the first day of school on Wednesday, September 3, 2008.

Hurricane Misses New Orleans, Church Avoids Heavy Damage

By Theodore Kalmoukos
Special to The National Herald

BOSTON – "We thank God the city was spared from a new catastrophe," Rev. Anthony Stratis, Dean of the Holy Trinity Cathedral of New Orleans told The National Herald in a telephone conversation on Monday night, September 1. Along with his presbytera and their two sons, Fr. Stratis fled New Orleans on Saturday evening and they drove all night to Ft. Walton Beach Florida where Fr. Constantine Mersinas extended them hospitality. With Hurricane Gustav on the way and a mandatory evacuation ordered by the city's mayor, Fr. Anthony prayed for the best.

Asked if the Holy Trinity Cathedral had suffered any damage, Fr. Anthony said, "I have not been informed of anything bad yet, I hope whatever damage has occurred to be minimum," and he added "thankfully the storm did not hit with the force we feared it was going to hit and thus we anticipate the damage is small." Fr. Anthony made it clear that "nobody has gone to see the church as yet because as you know the city was evacuated, but also as we speak now Gustav continues to punch the area."

While the storm was hitting the city of the New Orleans, Fr. Anthony was in constant touch with a good number of his parishioners who had evacuated the city to safe areas. He said, "happily everyone is well and safe. My desire is to return back to New Orleans as soon as possible and I will do that as soon as the electrical power is restored and the authorities proclaim the streets to be safe. If I have a chance I might go back tomorrow (Tuesday) if not I will attempt to return on Wednesday."

On Saturday, August 30, Fr. Anthony went to the Holy Trinity Cathedral and communicated by phone and e-mail with the majority of his parishioners informing them

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Cypriot Leaders Upbeat after Talks

By Evan C. Lambrou
Special to The National Herald

NEW YORK – Cyprus' rival Greek and Turkish leaders started new peace talks this past Wednesday and said they hoped for a new deal soon, one aimed at reaching a comprehensive solution to the thorny problem and reuniting an island divided by war 34 years ago.

The negotiation process has an open-ended timetable, but the United Nations has warned that the talks can not go on indefinitely

without tangible progress.

Preparatory talks, held at committee level since March, have been accompanied by confidence-building measures, notably the opening of a border crossing in Ledra Street linking the south and Turkish-occupied north in the symbolic heart of old Nicosia.

It is the first intensive push for peace since a U.N.-reunification plan was overwhelmingly rejected by Greek Cypriots, but approved by Turkish Cypriots, just a week before the island acceded to the European

Union in 2004. Cyprus joined the E.U. in May of that year as a divided island, with Turkish Cypriots denied the bloc's membership benefits.

Optimists are pinning their hopes on the personal chemistry and shared leftwing politics of the two leaders.

Republic of Cyprus President Demetris Christofias met with Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat for two hours inside the U.N.

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Greek American Makes Breakthrough in Deciphering Cancer Causing Enzyme

PHILADELPHIA - Researchers at The Wistar Institute have deciphered the structure of the active region of telomerase, an enzyme that plays a major role in the development of nearly all human cancers. The landmark achievement opens the door to the creation of new, broadly effective cancer drugs, as well as anti-aging therapies.

Researchers have attempted for more than a decade to find drugs that shut down telomerase—widely considered the No. 1 target for the development of new cancer treatments—but have been hampered in large part by a lack of knowledge of the enzyme's structure.

The findings, published online August 31 in Nature, should help researchers in their efforts to design effective telomerase inhibitors, says Emmanuel Skordalakes, Ph.D., assistant professor in Wistar's Gene Expression and Regulation Program, who led the study.

"Telomerase is an ideal target for chemotherapy because it is active in almost all human tumors, but inactive in most normal cells," Skordalakes says. "That means a drug that deactivates telomerase would likely work against all cancers, with few side effects."

The study elucidates the active region of telomerase and provides the first full-length view of the telomerase molecule's critical protein component. It reveals surprising details, at the atomic level, of the enzyme's configuration and how it works to replicate the ends of chromosomes—a process critical to both tumor development and the aging process.

ACHIEVING IMMORTALITY
In humans, telomerase adds multiple repeats of a short DNA sequence to the ends of chromosomes, known as telomeres, thus preventing damage and the loss of

genetic information during cell division.

When telomerase is dormant, telomeres shorten each time a cell divides, leading eventually to genetic instability and cell death. By preserving chromosomes' integrity, telomerase allows cells to continue living and dividing. The enzyme is active in cells that multiply frequently, such as embryonic stem cells, but is switched off almost entirely in normal adult cells to prevent the dangers of runaway cell proliferation.

Cancer cells, however, often regain the ability to activate telomerase, which has been implicated in 90 percent of human tumors. The enzyme permits cells to replicate indefinitely and achieve the cellular "immortality" that is the hallmark of cancer. Deactivating telomerase would stop tumor growth.

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The First Wave of Greek Vaudevillians

By Steve Frangos
Special to The National Herald

PART 1

The commanding presence of Greek immigrants during the very formation of Modern American Entertainment is well documented. As promoters Greek immigrants were among the most influential individuals in an incredibly wide array of entertainment arenas such as dance halls, nickelodeons, music halls, carnivals, and certainly vaudeville and movie theaters. Leaving the promoters aside, for the moment, we need to begin relocating and re-assessing the careers of Greek immigrant performers.

The impact Greek immigrant performers had on American entertainment, again while document-

Continued on page 4

Ancient Gold Treasure Puzzles Greek Archaeologists

By Nicholas Paphitis
Associated Press

ATHENS – A priceless gold wreath has been unearthed in an ancient city in northern Greece, buried with human bones in a large copper vase that workers initially took for a land mine.

The University of Thessaloniki said in a statement Friday that the "astounding" discovery was made during its excavations this week in the ruins of ancient Aigai. The city was the first capital of ancient Macedonia, where King Philip II — father of Alexander the Great — was assassinated.

Gold wreaths are rare and were buried with ancient nobles or royalty. But the find is also highly unusual as the artifacts appear to have been removed from a grave during ancient times and, for reasons that are unclear, reburied in the city's marketplace near the theater where Philip was stabbed to death.

"This happened quite soon after the original burial; it's not that a grave robber took it centuries later



AP PHOTO/ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, HO

In this hand out image provided by Aristotle University of Thessaloniki on Friday August 29, 2008, a 2,300-year-old gold wreath among human bones in a water-logged gold jar found is seen.

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Greek Lobby Excited About Biden as VP Pick

By Marcos Charalambides
Cyprus Mail

Barack Obama's choice of Senator Joseph Biden as his vice presidential running mate has sparked hopes among Greek lobbyists in the United States that the promotion of the Cyprus problem will take on a more substantial profile.

Leaders of the Greek American community as well as deputies in Washington who deal with promoting Greek national issues praised Biden's consistent philhellenic views throughout his 35 years in the Senate and considered his selection the best thing that Greece and Cyprus could hope for.

As far back as 1997, the Athens News Agency reported, Biden had firmly asserted, speaking to the then newly appointed US ambassador to Ankara, that the Turkish government had violated international law by invading Cyprus in 1974 and continued to violate international law by keeping its troops there. "Our policy is that [the Turkish invasion and occupation] was illegal," he had stated.



AP PHOTO/PAUL SANCIYA

Democratic vice presidential candidate Sen. Joe Biden, left, and Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. Barack Obama.

More recently, he appeared with his fellow Democrats, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, during the 23rd conference of the International Coordinating Committee Justice for Cyprus (PSEKA) in 2007, where he expressed the view that, while he supported Turkey's EU accession, the United States' position should depend on Turkey's adherence to improving its citizens' human rights and religious freedom and its attitude regarding its differences with Greece over the Aegean dispute and the Cyprus problem. He went on to comment that the United States should demand and make perfectly clear that the foundations of their relations with Turkey would depend directly on the way the Cyprus problem would be resolved, on the complete withdrawal of Turkish forces and on whether Turkey would continue its claims regarding its right to the oil that had been discovered two years ago in the waters between Cyprus and Egypt.

During this year's PSEKA conference, he announced his satisfaction with Demetris Christofias' election

as President and stated that he was hopeful about the possibility of a resolution to the Cyprus problem since the two sides' interests were now beginning to converge.

Biden cautioned his audience not to expect much from George W. Bush and further expressed his hopes that, in this year's presidential elections, the United States would elect a truly committed president who would be willing to take on some risks so that the procedure can actually progress.

Biden, who heads the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, is also known to have voiced positions against Turkey with regards to both the Armenian and Kurdish disputes, according to Phileleftheros.

Unsurprisingly, the Democrats' choice of Senator Joseph Biden was met unfavorably by the Turkish press.

According to the English-speaking version of Zaman, a leading deputy of the ruling Justice and Development Party commented that "it is not easy to be happy with this

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GOINGS ON...

SEPTEMBER 6-7
WYCKOFF, N.J. – The St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church cordially invites the community to its 2008 Greek festival on the church grounds at 467 Grandview Avenue. The three day festival has a lot to offer, homemade food, Greek Pastries, Live Greek Music for your dancing pleasure. The Youth of the St Nicholas church will dance to traditional Greek dances. Additional activities are Wine and Ouzo, Indoor Taverna, Kafanio, Folk Dancing, Children's Rides and Games, Cultural Exhibits, Boutiques and Flea Market. There is additional parking in three nearby locations and free shuttle buses. Hours: Saturday, noon to midnight and Sunday noon to 7 PM. Free admission and parking. For more information please call 201-652-4774.

SEPTEMBER 7
WILMINGTON, Del. – Holy Trinity Church in Wilmington cordially invites the community to its annual picnic on Sunday, September 7 at the church (808 North Broom Street) immediately following the Divine Liturgy. There will be entertainment for the children, sign up sheets for the Sunday School, Greek School and all Youth Ministries and of course food and fun. For more information, please call 302-654-4446.

SEPTEMBER 8
NEW YORK, N.Y. – The American Hellenic Institute Business Network and The New York Chapter of the American Hellenic Institute cordially invite the community to its monthly Informal Networking Reception for members and guests at Avra Restaurant (141 East 48th Street) on Monday, September 8, 2008 at 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Cash bar & complimentary hors d'uvres. Please RSVP to Col. Andonios Neroulas at 212-759-8550 or andonias@att.net.

SEPTEMBER 11
WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Southeast Europe Project, in conjunction with the Kennan Institute and the East European Studies Program, cordially invites the community to a forum, "Russia and the West: Repercussions for Southeast Europe and Eurasia," with Dr. Alexandros Petersen, Southeast Europe Policy Scholar, Woodrow Wilson Center and Adjunct Fellow, Russia and Eurasia Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies at the Woodrow Wilson Center (1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW) on Thursday, September 11 at 10:00 - 11:30 AM. For more information please email sep@wilsoncenter.org.

SEPTEMBER 12-15
KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – St. George Greek Orthodox Church cordially invites the community to its 2008 Greek Festival at the church (4070 Kingston Pike). This three-day festival has lots to offer such as all homemade Greek pastries, live Greek music, lots of authentic Greek cuisine, shopping, kids booths and many more festivities. St. George has performed the Greek Fest for 29 years and has a large following of tens of thousands people yearly. For more information, please call 865-588-5043.

SEPTEMBER 18
WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program cordially invites the community to a tribute for "Ancient Greek Music: Songs of Many Spheres," on Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 6:45 - 9 PM. Musicologist John Franklin, an assistant professor of classics at the University of Vermont, provides an overview of the kinds of ancient Greek music, such as epic, lyric, choral, dramatic, and elegy; discusses when it would have been performed—such as at symposia, invocations, festivals, funerals, and military occasions—and how it changed over time. For more information, please call 202-633-3030.

SEPTEMBER 18-22
LAS VEGAS – The 5th Annual Opa Las Vegas & Greek Festival Trip will be held on Thursday, September 18th to Monday, September 22nd, at the Monte Carlo Hotel. Group discounts available. Book your room before the room block fills up. Please use offer code "xopa08." Rates are \$130 (Thursday and Sunday), \$205 (Friday and Saturday). Call or book online (TEL: 800-311-8999, web: https://reservations.mgmmirage.com). For more information, e-mail info@opalasvegas.org or visit the web at www.opalasvegas.org.

SEPTEMBER 19
BROOKLINE, Mass. – The Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School Of Theology cordially invites the community to its 2008 Tennis Classic at Longwood Cricket Club on Friday, September 19, 2008 at 10:30 AM - 5:00 PM. You are invited for tennis on Friday, September 19, 2008, at the prestigious Longwood Cricket Club in Brookline MA. Our day at Longwood will be a fun day for all levels of tennis players, and non-playing spouses or friends are welcome as well. To celebrate the start of what we hope will become an annual tradition. We are offering this inaugural event at cost to all past and (we hope!) future supporters of Hellenic College and Holy Cross. The price for this year only will be \$125 for tennis players and \$50 for luncheon-only guests. For more information please call Dr. Nick Marinakis at 781-334-6747.

SEPTEMBER 24
WASHINGTON, D.C. – The American Hellenic Institute in cooperation with Greek America Magazine cordially invites the community to a Capitol Hill Event "In Commemoration of the Smyrna Catastrophe of 1922" a presentation by Giles Milton, journalist and New York Times best-selling author, introducing his new book "Paradise Lost – Smyrna 1922," at Rayburn House Office Building Room B-338 on Wednesday, September 24, 2008 at 5:30 - 7:30 PM. Light Refreshments Will be Served. For more information, please call 202-785-8430.

OCTOBER 17
ALEXANDRIA, Va. – The American Hellenic Institute cordially invites the community to the 5th Annual Benefit Golf Tournament at Greendale Golf Course (6700 Telegraph Road) on Friday, October 17. Breakfast is at 7:30 AM; Shot-Gun Start is at 8:30 AM. Christine Brennan, USA Today Sports Columnist, will be this year's celebrity golfer. Sponsorship: \$5,000 – Tournament Sponsor, name on all marketing items and news releases, includes 8 golfers; \$2,500 – Tournament Co-Sponsor, Sponsor name on large signs in clubhouse foyer, includes 6 golfers; \$1,000 – Hole Sponsor, Sponsor name on large sign, only one sponsor per hole, includes 4 golfers; \$500 – Golf Cart Sponsor, Sponsor name on one golf cart, includes 2 golfers; \$250 – Registration Sponsor, Sponsor name on table, includes 1 golfer. Sign up individually or with a foursome. If you do not have a foursome, we'll assign you one. All levels of play are welcome! Lots of wonderful prizes Directions: Take Beltway Exit 2 to Telegraph Rd. South approximately 3.5 miles to the park entrance on the right. Dress Code: Collared shirts, no denim. For more information, call Nick Larigakis at 202-785-8430.

NOTE TO OUR READERS
 This calendar of events section is a complimentary service to the Greek American community. All parishes, organizations and institutions are encouraged to e-mail their information 3-4 weeks ahead of time, and no later than Monday of the week before the event, to english.edition@thenationalherald.com.

Greek American Makes Breakthrough in Cancer Research

Continued from page 1



Emmanuel Skordalakes

In addition to its role in cancer, telomerase holds significant implications for the development of therapies to combat aging and other age-related diseases. Finding ways to activate telomerase under controlled conditions and allow some cells to begin dividing again could result in healthier, younger-looking tissue that lives longer.

AN ELUSIVE ENZYME
 Telomerase is a complex structure made up of multiple protein domains and a stretch of RNA, which contains the template the enzyme uses to synthesize telomeres.

Last year, Skordalakes and his team solved the structure of a key segment of the molecule—the so-called TRBD domain, where RNA binding occurs. However, the complexity of telomerase has proved a roadblock to determining the enzyme's overall architecture—a goal pursued by researchers worldwide for more than 15 years.

To perform the necessary studies, scientists first must gather large quantities of the enzyme in a specific conformation. Because the complex structure of telomerase most likely allows it to change configuration, that process has been challenging, Skordalakes says.

To find sufficient quantities of the enzyme for the study, Skordalakes and his team looked be-

through," Skordalakes says. "Once we found that the gene from this organism expressed the protein in the quantities we needed, we were able to move quickly."

The researchers used X-ray crystallography, a technique that analyzes the diffraction patterns of X-rays beamed at crystals of a molecule, to determine the three-dimensional structure of the enzyme's active region—the catalytic component called telomerase reverse transcriptase protein, or TERT.

The study revealed surprising features, including the fact that the molecule's three domains are organized into a doughnut shape, an unexpected configuration. Knowledge of the structure allowed the researchers to create a model of the enzyme's function.

"It's extremely exciting," Skordalakes says. "For the first time, we can see how telomerase assembles at the end of chromosomes to initiate telomere replication."

LOOKING AHEAD
 Skordalakes plans to further study TERT and search for new telomerase inhibitors that could become cancer therapies. He also will look at modifying existing drugs. Previous attempts to target telomerase have fallen flat, but knowledge of the enzyme's structure will help researchers to determine the limitations of existing agents and make them more effective.

Skordalakes began his studies of

telomerase when he joined The Wistar Institute in 2006 and established his first laboratory. "I've always been interested in understanding, on a molecular level, the function of protein nucleic acid assemblies and using that information in the treatment of human disease," he says. "Telomerase, because of its important role in cancer and aging, was an obvious target for me."

He says though the process was frustrating at times, his team was determined to solve the structure. "It required a lot of perseverance and effort, but we really wanted to do this," he says.

The research was supported in part by the Commonwealth University Research Enhancement Program of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Ellison Medical Foundation.

The Wistar Institute is an international leader in biomedical research with special expertise in cancer research and vaccine development. Founded in 1892 as the first independent nonprofit biomedical research institute in the country, Wistar has long held the prestigious Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute. The Institute works actively to ensure that research advances move from the laboratory to the clinic as quickly as possible. The Wistar Institute: Today's Discoveries – Tomorrow's Cures.

Curtain Comes Down on Patriotic Garage Door

By Alan Hustak
 The Montreal Gazette

MONTREAL – A Pierrefonds man has been ordered to remove the huge Greek flag painted on the garage door of his house because it violates the borough's aesthetic standards.

Quebec Superior Court judge France Charbonneau ruled last week that nothing prevents Theodore Antonopoulos from flying the Greek flag on his property, but that by painting blue and white stripes on his garage door he has violated municipal restrictions governing the overall look of the streetscape.

"A municipality has the authority to set uniform standards within its jurisdiction and for the buildings within it," Charbonneau writes.

News of the ruling, which is in agreement with a previous ruling from a lower court, has taken Antonopoulos by surprise.

"It's a shock to me. I haven't been informed, and the flag is still there," he told The Gazette yesterday. "I will speak to my lawyer and see if there are grounds for an appeal. None of the neighbors have complained to me about it. None at all."

"I'll speak with my lawyer and see what's involved time-wise, money-wise," Antonopoulos said.

Antonopoulos painted the two-meter by four-meter flag on the door of his double garage in 2004 to celebrate Greece's victory over Portugal in the European Soccer championship that year. The Greek team had bucked the odds to win Europe's premier soccer tournament.

Shortly afterward, he was slapped with a \$138 ticket because installing "a sign that is painted or reproduced on a building or a fence" violates Pierrefonds municipal Bylaw 1047, Article 124.2.

Antonopoulos decided to contest the fine. Last year, Municipal Court judge André Hotte ruled against him, saying people cannot paint whatever they want on their houses.

"What if everyone painted their sports team, their country's flag, even Mickey Mouse on their home?" Hotte said. "If everyone expresses their patriotism, that is visual pollution and not harmonious with the neighborhood."

The judge ruled the blue-and-white painting is distracting to passing drivers and ordered it to be removed from the double garage door of Antonopoulos' home.

Undeterred, Antonopoulos took his case to a higher court. His lawyer, Julius Grey, argued the municipal bylaw is illegal because it violates the freedom of expression guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Human Rights.

Much of Montreal's Greek American community has rallied around Antonopoulos.

Depending on the advice of his lawyer, Antonopoulos is prepared to continue the fight.

"It has cost me some money in expenses to go to court," he said. "But I'm not prepared to disclose how much."

And despite the flap, the flag is still there.

"I'm not sick of it at all," he said.

The Montreal Gazette published the above on August 25, 2008.



Democratic vice presidential candidate, Sen. Joe Biden, right, speaks to a crowd of supporters as presidential candidate, Sen. Barack Obama, walks on stage behind him Saturday, August 30, 2008.

Greek Lobby's Joy at Obama Choice for Running Mate

Continued from page 1

selection when looking from Turkey and considering Biden's almost two-decade-long firm support of the Armenian diaspora's efforts for recognition of their allegations of a genocide," and further asserted that he believes the Turkish public opinion will follow McCain's strategies "more closely than before given the disappointment over Biden's selection."

The daily also pointed to the front page of the leading Turkish newspaper, Hürriyet, which criticized Biden's selection and labeled him as "inconsiderate" following a 1999 conversation between Biden and the then prime minister of Turkey, Bülent Ecevit, when the senator had reportedly told Ecevit, "if you do not solve the Cyprus problem then I will not approve the financial aid package of \$5 billion which you expect from us, from the Congress" in a bid to put pressure on the Turkish government.

Despite the overall contentment with Biden's selection prevalent among the Cypriot media, some have expressed worries that the senator may now decide to loosen his firm positions regarding Turkey

following his newly-appointed role as Barack Obama's right hand man.

Furthermore, as reported by the Washington Post earlier this year, although Obama doesn't reject their advice, he is not a big fan of lobbies, declaring, "they won't run my White House, and they won't set the agenda in Washington." Nonetheless, according to a recent ABC News article, although Obama may decry taking cash from federal lobbyists, Biden doesn't seem to share this opinion and has taken \$344,400 from lobbyists since 1997, indicating he may be more open to lobbies, including ones favoring Greek and Cypriot national interests.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Vote on our website!

You have the chance to express your opinion on our website on an important question in the news. The results will be published in our printed edition next week along with the question for that week.

The question this week is: Did the Republican National Convention change your opinion about John McCain?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

The results for last week's question: Did the Democratic National Convention change your opinion about Barack Obama?
 15.38% voted "Yes"
 69.23% voted "No"
 15.38% voted "I don't know"

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A Student of Life: Emmy Nominated Actor Thaa Penghlis

By Paul Papadeas

Special to The National Herald

This is Part II of an interview by Paul Papadeas with Emmy nominated actor Thaa Penghlis.

TP: Have you read Orianna Fallaci's, "A Man?" I've read it three times. I'm also developing a One Man show on Panagoulis and a workshop with Milton. I found his story fascinating. And his family sent me a letter from Las Vegas and in the middle of moving I lost it. I wanted to get in touch with them. He was younger than I was at the time he went to prison. Because it was theater, I wanted to take this to the stage. It was a fascinating character study. Especially, when they buried him thousands of people came to his funeral. When they were putting him into his grave the priest slipped and fell on top of the glass casket. He ended up leaving in embarrassment. It's a fabulous story on how Panagoulis was killed.

TNH: Tell me about your opportunities to work in Greece?

TP: They wanted me for a series there and I wanted to do it for my parents. It was called, "H Konini Stragetha" (The Red Stamp). It was about a Greek Lawyer and journalist who expose government corruption. I met a Greek Producer who made a less than savory offer and wanted me to star opposite her sister, and I said "no." Needless to say, she became very offended.

We had another meeting with a big producer from Athens and we were sitting at the dinner table and he said to me, "Mr. Penghlis, how much money do you want?" I responded, "I'm terribly sorry, but I would prefer not to discuss money at the dinner table." But, no, he insisted that I tell him. So, I said, "You're like my uncle." And this Executive asked, "Do you love your uncle?" I said, "No." So, he looked at me and I felt that this was not going to work. This is where I learned the phrase, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts." Then the original Greek Producer arrives and she crashes the dinner with this enormous gift for me, kisses me and then whispers into his ear which I found out later was, "I got him first, and I got him cheap." And then she leaves. And this caused such an uproar - because they hoped to get me first and merely testing the waters. And the accusations started flying. And I said to them, the only reason I want to do this is because of my parents, working there would not change my life or career.

This was in 1998. Look, I was invited back and when things did work I was unavailable. But I swore I'd never work with them again.

TNH: Anything you're developing right now?

TP: Well I have a few scripts that I'm writing, I have something called "The Gordian Knot," and I just got back from New York to meet with editors. I've been writing something called "Sacred Spaces" about my journeys.

TNH: How did you make the transition into soaps from film - I know you were in such films as Altered States.

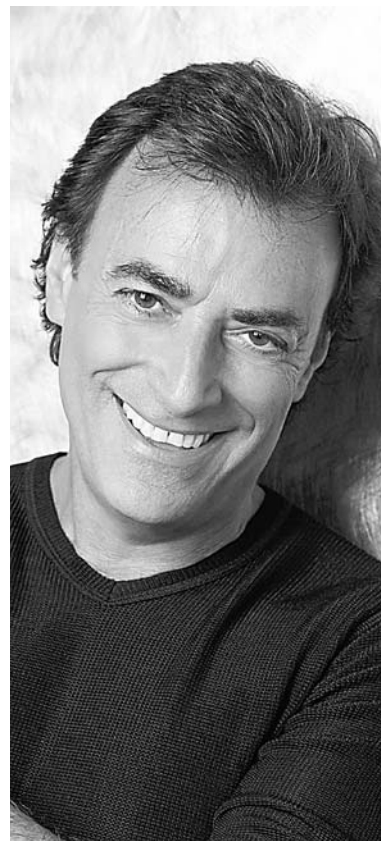
TP: Right after I did a number of films, there was a long nine month strike and there was no work. General Hospital came with Elizabeth Taylor and I felt that this would be interesting. They made a wonderful offer. And I went with it and I followed that up with a stint on Days of our Lives. In addition I went on to act in a few Mini-Series and from there I did Mission Impossible television show.

I remember my parents dying in 1995, this shocked me, they both left in four days of each other. I didn't want to act anymore. I think my dream was tied to my family. And when they left, I felt the dream died. I had to reinvent myself. I didn't work again for seven years. I just decided that I would rather do something else and out of it came the writing. I gave myself time off and as you know in this town, when you get off the train it's hard to get back on.

TNH: How did you manage it?

TP: I got a call one day while I was writing and they asked me to get back on Days of Your Lives. When someone dies it places you in the present - it smacks you across your face. I couldn't call my parents anymore to tell them the good news or about a journey nor to share my most private moments and special things in life. That was no longer there. But, I slowly began to come into myself. I was told once that I was to be a long distance runner and the best would come at the end - in the last 25 years of life.

As Executive Producer and actor I did an Indy film called "The Mirror" which was accepted into the Hollywood Film Festival last year and was shown at the Cannes Film Festival this year. I'm expanding, and it's taking me a long time to think of myself beyond being an actor - because it's been my bread and butter and the thing that opened most doors for me in life.



Actor Thaa Penghlis

It's come late but my ground is pretty solid. All the experiences I went through are part of who I am today. When you go into a tunnel in life you never know when you'll see the light again.

TNH: Most actors don't handle rejection well. How did you deal with it over the years?

TP: I got into metaphysics. Also, I have quite a mouth. You may be my boss but I will not be disrespected. If I see any side of that I always correct it and as succinctly as possible. I let people know who they're dealing with. It's not about being difficult. My motto is, "if you do not know how to treat me, let me show you." As for metaphysics - I take my journeys. Last year, I followed Moses' footsteps where he wandered climbing Sinai and this year I followed Paul Tarsis, the Apostle in Syria.

TNH: Your generation of actors may be the last of the greats as they came directly from the theater.

TP: Yes, we came at the end of a renaissance. Even when I did "Slow Dancing in the Big City" for John Avildsen in New York, it was right after that I didn't know what I was going to be doing. I was taking care of my friend's place in New York, he had just died and I was trying to

keep everything ready for his funeral. I remember the phone rang - someone had seen me in a play and it was my first movie part. She wanted me to play the part of a Choreographer and that is what I was currently playing on one of Milton Katselas' productions of "Jockeys." I went in for the audition. I beat out two others for this role. They gave me the part. I remember going out to Park Avenue and buckling to the ground. It was my first film! I can't tell you the feeling. Because those first steps - you are breaking down doors. I was then sent to Columbia during that era where they were really serious about finding actors that were trained in the theater. I auditioned and they told me, "This is some of the best work we've seen here in 12 years." Those first steps became victories for me. It's important that in the early stages of an actor's life they get solid footing and to build on that, otherwise they get smacked down and have difficulty knowing how to get back up. And in those days, they were tough and highly critical. If you were no good, they would tell you to stop wasting your time. Today, you know you are patronized. They tell you that you need a bit of training or if you are a pretty face that should be enough.

TNH: Why has it changed?

TP: What has taken over the industry is no longer the art. They just go by what sells, what's the latest fad. Why do you think reality TV has become so popular? It's cheaper, there are no residuals, and it's the ordinary man trying to be famous for fifteen minutes. For those of us who have trained well are not a problem on the set, don't waste time, money and we know our lines. I think this is the secret to longevity in this profession. Now, I'm in the position to show the younger generation of actors how it's done, the way it was shown to me, by those who came before me.

You've got to be your own counselor. You must understand that it has nothing to do with ego. I've always believed that we're here and the soul guides us. We come here with a piece of the soul which has never found God. So in this lifetime you take that piece, you work it out and then attach it in the other life and you keep coming back until you have completed it. The people that have come along that are not to my liking and vice versa - are there to remind us that we're doing something well or misinterpreting. Everyone is a teacher to me. Sign-

posts are very important. If you want to discover what life's about - you go out and see what other cultures are doing. That's why I take these journeys. They fill me up with their simplicity and beauty of others' lives and then I come back and understand how it affects my life and that to me is exciting. It's as if these journeys have waited for me to arrive there.

TNH: What is something you wish you could have done?

TP: I wish I could have been an archaeologist. Now, don't get me wrong. My life has been very rewarding. I've been able to give people some joy. But, the idea of digging into the earth and finding something and understanding a part of history that was ignored or misunderstood is intriguing to me. And that is why I take these personal journeys. Because I think I'll find out what somebody else has missed. That's what keeps me going on these voyages, or "journeys" the thought that I have something new to discover. It's like the life of Ulysses, always trying to find the way back home.

TNH: Have any younger independent directors approached you?

TP: Sure. But I also keep a low profile. This has been my choice because I'm more interested in the journey than the celebrity. Now it's interesting, because I'm dealing with the paranormal and it's something I'm developing - it's like a good bottle of wine. I've had a great education, have been blessed to have great people who crossed my path and have trekked across Jordan, Turkey, Morocco, Italy, Greece and South American - so many things that have been part of my life, such as spending time with my spiritual teacher. A quick story - when Joan Crawford died, I knew her daughter Cristina - she said to me, that when Joan passed away, that she had burnt all of her photographs and letters and they found her sitting with her wig off like a little old lady. I thought with all of the celebrity, in the end what's it for? To me, it's about personal fulfillment. Lots of people spend time in developing career and not enough time in developing self. I see this with many of my actor friends who did not spend time developing themselves because they were trying to get famous. They didn't do what I call - God's work with self. And now they are paying the price. I think the way to keep one's path alive is to walk on it and to find the way through.

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The First Wave of Greek Vaudevillians in America

Continued from page 1

ed, is for the moment hopelessly scattered. Part of the problem is that entertainment genres in the late 1800s and early 1900s were not defined as they are today. The blurring of various genres allowed for performers to move across and among various performative settings we would today see as totally separate. All this back and forth traffic makes locating and comparing documents on specific individuals all the more challenging.

Take the Greek Strongmen, who began appearing all across North America immediately after the American Civil War, they were especially prone to crossing entertainment boundaries. Strongmen such as George Costaky, Demetrios Tofalos, Nicholas Protopapas, Antoni Pierre, the Combis Brothers and a host of others were a common feature of circuses, carnivals, vaudeville houses, music halls and sporting clubs around the nation. These strongmen would wrestle in sports clubs, music halls and other venues, then without a moment's pause, these same individuals became the starring figures of the circus, carnival and midway. Next, these very same men would also appear on the stages of music halls and large theatres to not only wrestle but also perform in vaudeville acts involving strength and/or acrobatics. Various accounts even report that on one notable occasion Demetrios Tofalos sang and was heartily applauded.

Part of this effortless movement between what we see today as distinctly separate genres had to do with the times. Greek immigrants as promoters and performers were right there as American entertainment evolved into their present forms.

As a case in point North American vaudeville: "was a genre of variety entertainment prevalent on the stage in the United States and Canada, from the early 1880s until the early 1930s. Developing from many sources, including the concert saloon, minstrelsy, freak shows, dime museums, and literary burlesque, vaudeville became one of the most popular types of entertainment in North America. Each evening's bill of performance was made up of a series of separate, unrelated acts. Types of acts included (among others) musicians (both classical and popular), dancers, comedians, trained animals, magicians, female and male impersonators, acrobats, one-act plays or scenes from plays, athletes, lecturing celebrities, minstrels, and short movies (wikipedia.com)."

A caveat. I am arbitrarily dividing Greek immigrant performers from the first generation of Greek-American vaudevillians. Internationally recognized performers such as the Andrews Sisters, the Condos Brothers, Hermes Pan, Betty George and numerous others make up what might be called the second or even third wave of Greek entertainers in North America. Delineating the chronological gradations of Greek performers (and promoters) in American entertainment forms is an extended project for future researchers to delineate.

Our survey here, can begin with a most unusual clown at Ringling Brother's Circus (and many other venues) that is always identified as only "Monsieur Natalie, the Greek clown." From 1883 to some time after 1895 Natalie toured the country with his trained Arkansas razor-back pigs. In 1895, Natalie's troupe of hogs included "Domino, Frisco, Cinch, Pedro, and Keno" (Hayward Review May 3, 1895).

Bowing to the audience on bent forelegs when they all first entered the ring was only the beginning. A comedic exchange between Monsieur Natalie and the porkers was accompanied by singing, kisses, and answering questions from the audience. Taking turns nudging the good Monsieur in his derriere with their long snouts ended this part of the act. After some more slap-stick doings the act closed with an amazing synchronized bedlam of jumps and dashing all-out-runs over an elaborate series of hoops, sticks and drums.

A persistent rumor among Greek Americans centers on Hadjatis Yannaco. Known as "Long Tom," this Greek was one of the group of Hellenes the US Army brought to the American southwest in the 1850s as part of the military's experiment with camels as dray-animals.

As this story goes Long Tom took some of the camels, in lieu of pay, and then joined the Ringling Brothers circus. Furthermore, as this tale continues Long Tom and his string of camels are credited as being 'the first camel act' in an American circus.

While I have heard this story over and over and seen it printed dozens of times I have never seen or heard this act described.

At least three Greek magicians annually toured the nation and there certainly may be many more. Costa Economou performed as a magician under the stage name of "LaVier." Both the late Professor Theodore Saloutos as well as the late Steven G. Economou, M.D. (nephew of this magician) have

written about this performer.

Yet another Greek immigrant, George Canaris performed magic under both the titles 'Canaris the Great' and 'Canaris and Cleo' from the early 1900s well into the late 1920s. By all accounts comedy, in the form of "clever burlesque magic" was the act's keynote theme. Canaris' billing suggests that when he first arrived from Europe and touted itself as offering "Parisian Magic" (Colorado Springs Gazette January 16, 1915). Canaris toured the country appearing in vaudeville houses in towns such as Fitchburg and Lowell, Massachusetts, Portsmouth, Ohio and many others. In New York City, Canaris and Cleo appeared at Proctor's East 125th Street Theatre (New York

A comedic exchange between Monsieur Natalie and the porkers was accompanied by singing, kisses and answering questions.

Times March 1, 1914). Available reviews are consistently good: "Canaris, a Greek magician, and Cleo are uncommonly good;" "Canaris, the Greek magician is easily one of the foremost of magicians...his act closes with...some of the best leg-dermain ever seen in a local theatre" and so on.

From 1915 through 1934, news accounts from across the United States proclaim Professor Avdalas as the Famous Greek Magician. Never a small act Avdalas appeared with a minimum of ten assistants, known as his "Original Hindu Company." Playing on the early 1900s, preoccupation with Oriental themes (which was a confusion of Egyptian, Arabic and India tales and popular culture stereotypes) Avdalas' individual tricks, within his overall act, included The Cremation, The French Spy, The Human Suspension Bridge, The Rajahs Enchanted Chest "and fifty other new and baffling effects (Iowa City Citizen September 30, 1919)." Professor Avdalas always closed his performance with his most renowned illusion the fabled Talking Tea Kettle (Sheboygan Journal April 12, 1919).

Referred to as the Eight Wonder of the World, news reports on the Talking Tea Kettle were unanimous: "Among the many and new mysterious features of the Great Avdalas world magic show is his "Talking Tea Kettle," which is pronounced the most mystifying and sensational mental telepathy act

before the public. "The Kettle" answers without hesitation and with absolute accuracy any and all proper questions submitted by the audience. Reads your thoughts, gives advice and offers many valuable suggestions. The most puzzling and astounding feat ever presented successfully by any magician at any time (Iowa Citizen September 30, 1919)."

Now long-forgotten the Talking Tea Kettle was a national sensation. Along with other mystifying tricks of the era the Kettle was cited by Spiritualists as proof that the Spirit World Could Contact Us at Will! None other than Harry Houdini (1874-1926), arguably among the greatest American magicians of all time, wrote an article reporting that the Kettle worked by an early form of radio. Unfortunately this very controversy has obscured the life and career of the 'Famous Greek Magician' known as Professor Avdalas. David Phelps Abbott (1836-1934) is credited as the inventor of this trick. As any of you that have seen the recent movie on magicians of the 1880s to 1890s, The Prestige, will recall, the very intimate back-and-forth exchange between inventors and magicians was quite common.

It is perhaps difficult, from this point in history, to comprehend exactly how astounding Professor Avdalas' Talking Tea Kettle was for American audiences. Always a top-billed act Avdalas The Great can be seen in advertisement-after-advertisement oppose such performers then appearing at other local venues such as stage actor John Barrymore and film actors as Claudette Colbert, Frederick March, Laurel and Hardy and others of similar stature.

From the very beginning of his performances in North America it was common for the arrival of Professor Avdalas "and His Wonderful Talking Tea Kettle" to replace or interrupt ongoing performances. To cite but one advertisement it reports the good Professor's arrival replaced a popular movie serial episode: "Owing to the engagement of Professor Avdalas, the kind of illusionists, we have postponed the 7th episode of "The Diamond from the Sky" to next Tuesday (Racine Journal-News June 29, 1915)."

Clearly, more specific details need to be teased out of the historical record on Greek immigrant performers.

Readers who wish to contact Mr. Frangos are encouraged to e-mail him at greekwrite@yahoo.com.



Holy Trinity Cathedral suffered damage during Hurricane Katrina.

New Orleans Church Avoids Hurricane Damage

Continued from page 1

that the there will not be a Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning and also urged them to evacuate the city as soon as they could. He also recommended to somehow create a communication network among themselves and with him. He told the Herald that "I received many replies from my parishioners as to where they had planned to go and thus we had established a link between us."

He then went into the church and placed the Epitafio, the Analogio (the cantor's stand) the Bishop's Throne and other valuable sacred items on high tables in order to be protected as much as possible in case the church was flatted again as was the case three years ago with Katrina. Fr. Anthony took with him the Holy Artoforio, the Holy Gospel, the Holy Chalice, the Antiminstion and other sacred items from the Altar he went home pick up his prescriptions and their two sons and left to Ft. Walton Beach in Florida to stay with Fr. Mersinas.

"I urged my parishioners to start evacuating early this time before the highways became jammed as happened three years ago," he said.

After an all night drive, Fr. Anthony and his family went directly to the church of St. Markella in Ft. Walton Beach in Florida on Sunday morning and participated in the Divine Liturgy. "We prayed to God to save our city, because as the Authorities were saying Gustav appeared to be stronger than Katrina which had turned our city into and ghost city." He also said "on the other hand no-

body can say accurately how strongly and where it was going to hit until it hits," Fr. Anthony said. "Our people here are used to these situations and evacuations because the extreme phenomena of hurricanes and tornados are frequent in our area. There is the possibility that the storm avoids our city and in a day or two we can regain our normal lives, but you never know and never can be sure."

"Some of my parishioners remained in the city due to their professional obligations, some are doctors, but they were in safe places," he said.

Asked how people feel that three years after Katrina they are threatened with a new powerful storm. "It is difficult but what can you do," he said. "Here we have to deal with hurricanes, in Boston you have the snowstorms and the blizzards. I am sure you remember the blizzard of 1978 which paralyzed Boston for one week. Of course hurricanes are more dangerous and catastrophic than the snowstorms." Speaking about catastrophes, Fr. Anthony said, "New Orleans has not yet recovered from Katrina three years ago. I went to Biloxi, Mississippi for a funeral and the situation there is not any better from New Orleans."

The Holy Trinity Cathedral itself and also the Community Center suffered heavy damages from Katrina which were repaired and the parish started to have its life back. Before Katrina, the parish consisted of 400 families, today.

"We have a little over three hundred families," he said.

Melina Kanakaredes Is Unyielding about Her Heritage: "It's Who I Am"

Continued from page 1

are also a Greek American, which makes you a better American.' I like that, so I try to live by his philosophy," she said, adding that striving for excellence is an innate part of being Greek.

That innate Greek American drive to succeed and do well, she explained, is what probably helps her keep that precious balance between family and career.

"We all do this, and I think we each do it in our own way. Every time I meet someone Greek, I discover that special pride within us – that drive to succeed and excel that we're born with – and whether you're an actress or a physician or a priest, it's something that's in our hearts. You can't take that away. It forms the person you are. I learned a long time ago that I should give as much as I can to my career, but also to separate the fine line between who I am and what I do," she said.

"Splitting the difference between our lives at home and what we do for a living is something that we all experience, but our culture is truly a gift, and I tell my kids that. I make sure my kids go to Greek school. My girls learned to speak Greek before they could speak English, and let me tell you, in Los Angeles, that's no easy feat. It's very important to us to give our kids a Midwestern upbringing, even though we're on the West Coast," she said.

"Ultimately, what keeps me grounded is my family. My children and my husband are the most important thing in my life – and our community. Growing up in Akron, we had one church (the Annunciation), and anything Greek was associated with *ekklisia* (church). I was very active with GOYA and church camp each summer," she added.

Melina and her family are now members of Saint Sophia Cathedral in Los Angeles. She works hard to maintain her family's Greek identity and culture in California. Her parents still have a home in Akron, but they also live with her and her husband several months out of the year, so the children are also being raised by their grandparents for part of the year.

Melina is a second-generation American of Greek descent. Her parents, Harry and Connie, were born in the United States, while both sets of grandparents came from Greece.

Her maternal grandparents were from Naoussa, "where all the great wine is from," and her paternal grandparents were from Palia Eretsou in Asia Minor.

Her maternal grandmother, Areti Temo, died recently. Melina was very close to her, and considers her to be among her greatest sources of



LEFT: Melina Kanakaredes as Detective Stella Bonasera on CBS' hit show "CSI: New York," currently in its fourth season. The Emmy Award-nominated actress also played Dr. Sydney Hansen on NBC's "Providence" for five seasons. RIGHT: Greek beauty at its best. Melina was born and raised in Akron, Ohio.

inspiration, citing her as a woman with a liberated attitude.

"She stood for something without even knowing it. She turned down the customary proxenio (an arranged meeting and subsequent wedding initiated by introductions through a mutual acquaintance) and married out of love. She came to a new country, and raised a family. She was a true matriarch," Melina said.

"I speak Greek fluently because my *yiaya* (grandmother) spoke only Greek to me, and I was very fortunate to have her in my life for so many years. She met both of my daughters. My grandfather was also a very forward-thinking person who could think outside the box. My mother and both her brothers went to college. It wasn't, 'exo dyo paidia kai mia kori (I have two children and one girl).' It was, 'exo tria paidia (I have three children),' all of whom were treated equally. There was no difference between the daughter and the two sons," she said.

But while her grandmother holds a special place in her heart, she also

said she considers her source of inspiration to be family-wide: her parents, sisters, cousins and uncles.

"If I fall, there are many sets of hands to catch me and push me back up. If I didn't have the security of that love, that solid grounding from everyone, I don't think I would be the person that I am now," she said.

Melina's mother was born in Youngstown; her father in Akron. The two met in Akron. Her mother moved there as a little girl after spending part of her childhood in Greece. Melina is the youngest of Harry and Connie Kanakaredes' three children. She has two sisters, Areta and Lia.

She married Pantelis (Peter) Constantinides a first-generation American of Greek descent who is originally from Chicago, a chef by trade who is now a real estate developer. They have been married for 16 years and have two daughters, Zoe and Carina.

Asked what propelled her to pursue a career in the performing arts, Melina said she developed an

affinity for music, dancing and theater at an early age, noting that her father exposed her and her sisters to the many different sides of theater when she was still a schoolgirl.

"I was exposed to the New York cultural scene. My dad would take the station wagon and drive us there, and we'd go see three shows in a single weekend, and then turn around and head back home for school after the weekend was over. We were always seeing a grand musical hit on Broadway, but my dad would also insist that we see some small plays, too, to see what the younger playwrights were writing," she said.

Greek parents would not typically push their children to pursue a career in the performing arts, Melina said, but her parents were very open to the idea and got behind her, although they also pre-conditioned their support on getting an education.

"Needless to say, I didn't think theater was going to catapult me onto my the A-list of my father's career choices, but he showed me the

opposite. Both he and my mother were extremely supportive. My parents' attitude was, 'As long as you get another degree,' so that I would always have something to fall back on. Not going to college was not an option," she said. Melina attended Ohio State University, and is a 1989 graduate of Point Park College in Pittsburgh.

Being Greek Orthodox is also extremely important to her, she said, and she was invited by Archbishop Demetrios of America to join the Archdiocese delegation to Rome at the end of this past June.

"I had the pleasure of going to Rome with His Eminence and His All Holiness (Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople) for the feast day of Saints Peter & Paul this summer. It was such an amazing experience. The fact that the Pope recognizes our Patriarch as an equal, and to hear them both recite the original Creed in Greek so beautifully together – it was so wonderful to be there for that. The Patriarch has the most beautiful voice. And for my young daughters to have had the opportunity to feel the power of all that was just incredible," she said.

The experience was so moving, "my daughters and I are currently writing a children's book about meeting the Pope and the Patriarch," she said.

"And for me, I'm one of those people who feel very strongly about doing things in Greek. I can't take the Greek out of the Liturgy. It's one of the reasons I speak Greek, and it's part of who I am. We received so much of our culture in this country from the Church. I can't separate the two, and I want to have that for my girls," she added.

That Greek thing just keeps coming up with Melina, who fiercely resisted Anglicizing her name to make some people in Hollywood happy.

"Every agent from every place, except for the one I'm with right now, and who I've been with since I started in this business, told me to change my name – from Melina K to Melina Kane to Melina Karides. But I decided a long time ago that, whatever I end up doing, I want to be Melina Kanakaredes. Several years ago, Kirk Douglas wrote a book called, 'Let's Face It.' I got a call from a friend of mine in New York. She told me I'm listed in his book. It was a section about how he ended up having to change his name (from Issur Danielovich), and he was saying hats off to the younger generation of actors who didn't do that – like De Niro and Pacino – and then to the little ones like me who kept their name. I laughed when I read that because I wasn't doing it to make any kind of state-

ment. I was just doing it because I work very hard, and I want to be who I am," she said, noting that she is also involved with writing, directing and producing.

Melina is currently involved with a project called "Summer Rental," a movie written by Vlas and Charley Parlapianides, which she is helping to produce, and in which she and Michael Chiklis are also starring. The film is scheduled to begin shooting next summer (the Parlapianides brothers recently sold the rights to "War of the Gods," now budgeted for \$80 million).

She also tries to spend as much free time as possible using her celebrity status to advance good causes like the Children's Brain Tumor Foundation, as well as raising awareness about breast cancer and Thalassemia.

"There is a gift in celebrity. Celebrity status isn't anything I searched out. It's simply a part of this business. But the gift of celebrity can make a difference in raising money for good causes. Cancer in any form is tragic and unacceptable. To see kids who are born with tumors is just heart-wrenching. There's nothing worse than to see innocent children suffering from something like that. I have to do something to try and help. So if there's anything I can do to help shed light on these conditions; to raise public awareness; and to raise money, I will," she said.

As someone who takes so much pride in her heritage, has she ever thought about using her celebrity status to push for or promote Greek-themed films?

"Absolutely. 'Summer Rental' is a story about a Greek family. And I have been supportive of the Greek Film Festival here in Los Angeles. I always like to try and hire Greek actors, if possible. I feel it's important for us to support each other. Nobody ever gave me a job because I'm Greek, but I believe in merit. You have to be good at what you do, and Greek people have a knack for working hard and creating opportunities for themselves. I'm always so proud of Greeks. I always look at the final credits in a movie to find a Greek name, and I'm always wishful about somebody Greek doing something great. We take pride in each other, and we want to help give each other opportunities when someone has merit. And for the younger generation, I think it's about pride and a sense of wanting to unite and move forward as Greek Americans because we really are remarkable people," she said.

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Ike Pappas, Former CBS Newsman Who Reported Oswald Killing on Radio, Dead At 75

CBS News

NEW YORK — Ike Pappas, the long-time CBS News correspondent whose live radio report of Lee Harvey Oswald's murder following the assassination of John F. Kennedy secured him a special role in history, died Sunday of heart failure in Virginia Hospital Center in Arlington. He was 75.

During his 23-year career at CBS News, Pappas covered wars, political events and the civil rights protests of the 1960s. But perhaps the defining moment of his journalistic career came as a radio reporter for WNEW New York covering Oswald's prison transfer in 1963.

As he asked Oswald a question, Jack Ruby brushed past Pappas to shoot and kill Oswald. "Oswald has been shot ... mass confusion," reported Pappas during his live broadcast, which also captured Oswald's last words. Pappas later offered key

testimony at Ruby's trial and appeared before the Warren Commission investigating Kennedy's assassination. "The man in the white raincoat," as he was identified, was also an integral part of the best-selling record album about the tragedy, "Four Days That Shocked the World."

Pappas joined CBS News 11 months later in October 1964 as a writer and reporter for the radio series "Dimensions." He also served as a general assignment reporter covering major stories including the 1964 presidential election, the historic Selma civil rights march and racial troubles in New York City.

He was named a CBS News correspondent in May of 1967 after returning from a seven-month assignment covering the Vietnam War. Based in Chicago, he reported on several key stories for "The CBS Evening News" with Walter Cronkite" including the funeral of

former President Harry S. Truman, the assassination and funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and college campus unrest.

Pappas was on the Kent State University campus with a CBS News film crew when the Ohio National Guard shot four students in May 1970. He also covered the Six Day War in 1967 and the launch of Apollo 11 from Cape Kennedy in July 1969.

In 1970, while reporting on the civil war in Jordan, Pappas was detained along with several other journalists and held in a hotel during some of the conflict.

Pappas served as a Pentagon correspondent for seven years beginning in 1975. During this time, he went overseas to cover the conflict in Lebanon, reporting the advance of Israeli troops into Beirut. In 1985, he became the CBS News congressional correspondent.

He began his career as a maga-



AP PHOTO/FILES
An undated file photo of longtime CBS newsman Ike Pappas.

zine writer and then became a reporter for United Press International before joining WNEW Radio in New York in 1958.

Pappas left CBS News in 1987 as one of more than a dozen on-air reporters and 200 other staffers laid off in a cost-cutting move by new ownership.

In the following years, he started his own television production company, Pappas Network Productions, through which he produced fundraising videos and local programming, including "Crimewatch Tonight," a syndicated nightly crime report he anchored himself. He also worked to create entertainment television programming and provided media coaching to individuals. Of his separation from CBS News, Pappas told Electronic Media in 1988: "I come from a line of Greek people who have always greeted tough times with a determination to make things better. I took

a negative and turned it into a positive and I couldn't be happier."

Pappas made an appearance in the 1988 comedy, "Moon Over Parador," playing himself in the film starring Richard Dreyfuss and Raul Julia. This led to another appearance as himself in the Gene Hackman - Tommy Lee Jones film "The Package" the next year.

Born Nestor Papademetriou in Queens, NY on April 16, 1933, Pappas attended local schools before graduating from Long Island University. He served in the U.S. Army in Germany from 1954-56, contributing to the Armed Forces Network and Stars and Stripes.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, the former Carolyn Hoffman of Pekin, Ill.; three children: Theodore of Newport Beach, Calif.; Alexander of Sugarland, Texas; and Sarah Thomason of Greenville, S.C.; and two grandchildren: Christos and Nicholas Pappas.

DEATHS

ACKERMAN, HELEN

CLINTON, Mass. — The Worcester Telegram & Gazette reported that Helen (Lambros) Ackerman, 87, of Clinton, formerly of Ludlow, MA, died Friday, August 29, 2008, in Sterling Healthcare, Sterling, after an illness. Her husband of 38 years, Anthony J. Ackerman, died in 1991. She is survived by a sister, Christine Lambros, with whom she lived; four sisters-in-law, Marguerite Lambros of Sterling, Freda Lambros of Dudley, Angelina Lambros of Shrewsbury, and Demetra Lambros of Cranston, RI; three nephews: Peter Lambros and his wife, Elaine of Lafayette, CO, Steven Lambros and his wife, Kim of Leominster, and Nicholas Lambros and his wife, Joanna of Cranston, RI; five nieces: Maris Rafer and her husband, Gerson of Osterville, Nikki DeLouchry and her husband, Michael of Marlborough, Louellyn Lambros and her husband, Ramiro Rivera of Scituate, Susan Lane and her husband, Jack of Shrewsbury, and Elaine MacKenzie and her husband, Christopher of New Canaan, CT; seven grandnieces; eleven grandnephews; two great-grandnieces; two great-grandnephews; one great-great-grandniece; one great-great-grandnephew; and several cousins in the United States, and in Greece. Four brothers, George, Frank, Andrew, and Nicholas Lambros, and three sisters, Nicoletta Lambros, Angela Vaughan, and Jennie Lambros, predeceased her. Helen was born in Clinton, the daughter of Harry and Stavroula (Despotopoulos) Lambros. She was a 1938 graduate of Clinton High School, and attended Springfield College. A resident of Ludlow for many years, Helen returned to Clinton to live with her sisters, Christine and Jennie, following the death of her husband, Anthony. From 1938-1953, she worked for Eastern Isles Importing Co. of Clinton, advancing to the position of credit manager. She then worked for several years as a credit manager for Totsy Manufacturing of Springfield. Helen was a member of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, and its Ladies Philoptochos Society, the Daughters of Penelope, the Clinton Hospital Guild, and the Clinton Historical Society. She was an ardent supporter of WGBH Public Television. An avid reader, she had a great appreciation for the works of Shakespeare. She enjoyed buying antiques, and giving them away to her loved ones. During their time living in Ludlow, Helen and Anthony frequently baked miniature pies, which they gave away to their friends. The funeral was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2008. Burial was at Woodlawn Cemetery. Memorial donations to Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Nursing & Rehabilitation Center (300 Barber Ave., Worcester, MA 01606).

ANTONOPOULOS, CHRISTOS
Haverhill, Mass. — The Eagle-Tribune reported that Christos Antonopoulos, 89, of Haverhill, joined his wife, Chrysoula (Zoganas) Antonopoulos, in heaven on Sunday, August 24, 2008. He was born in Klepa Nafpaktias, Greece, Aug. 30, 1918, son of the late Demosthenes and Ekaterini (Papachristos) Antonopoulos. He and his late wife were married in Greece, Aug. 23, 1942. Educated in Greece, Mr. Antonopoulos served in the Greek Army and fought in World War II. He survived being captured by the Italians and Germans. After the war Christos wanted to make a better life for his family. He made the journey to the United States in 1955 in hopes of saving enough money to have his wife and four children join him. He worked many jobs to be able to provide for his family back home in Greece as well as save enough money for their upcoming journey to the United States. Chrysoula and their four children joined him on Oct. 2, 1958. They first settled in Lowell and then made their home in Haverhill. Christos worked in the then thriving shoe industry in Haverhill while providing for his family. In March of 1967 he became a United States citizen. Christos retired in 1974 spending time be-

tween Haverhill and Florida eventually settling down in Haverhill. He was very active in the Greek Community and was instrumental in helping many Greek immigrants settle in the Haverhill area. He was a member of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Apostles. Christos enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and telling stories of the "Old Days" in Greece and how he would go to Honolulu one day. He is survived by his children, Ekaterini Christoforakis, James Antonopoulos and his wife Stella, Charles Antonopoulos and his wife Felicia all of Haverhill, Danny Antonopoulos of Florida and his companion Suzanne McGilvray of Exeter, N.H.; grandchildren, Panagiota Christoforakis of Haverhill, Chrisoula Labella and her husband Joe of Rocky Hill, Conn., Angela Antonopoulos, Maria Dimakis and her husband Nick, Nicholas Antonopoulos, all of Haverhill, Raymond Antonopoulos and his wife Erin of Woodland Hills, Calif. and Danny Antonopoulos of Haverhill; great-grandchildren, George Davis, Danny Meleitte, Manoli and Antonios Dimakis, Charlie Antonopoulos, Macy Jo Antonopoulos, as well as many nieces and nephews. The funeral was at August 27 at The Greek Orthodox Church of The Holy Apostles in Haverhill. Burial was at Walnut Cemetery. Memorial donations to the Greek American Benevolent Association (P.O. Box 81, Haverhill, MA 01831).

CONSTANTINE, KATHERINE
AKRON, Ohio — The Akron Beacon Journal reported that Katherine Constantine, 86 of Akron, died on September 1, 2008 at Rockynol Assisted Living after a long illness. She was born on January 9, 1922 in Erie, Pa. and has spent most of her life in Akron. Katherine owned and operated Constantine's Florist, was a member of the Greek Orthodox Church of Annunciation where she was active in many of their organizations, and also served as president of Elpis. Kay had a very soft spot in her heart for the elderly and would visit with flower in hand to many of the nursing homes in the Akron area. Her passion for traveling took her around the world 8 times. Katherine was preceded in death by her parents, Charles and Anna Fevas. She is survived by her daughter, Anna Marie (Lyle, Jr.) Frederick of Sharon Twp; sister, Mary Petrackis; grandsons, Jeffrey (Debbie) Frederick and Jason (Melissa) Frederick; great-grandchildren, Jason, Brandon, Jordan, Tyler, Ryan, Lauren and Lindsey Frederick; and niece, Connie (Ted) Sarros. The family would like to thank Rockynol Assisted Living 4th Floor Special Care and Hospice VNS for all their love and care. The funeral was held on September 5 at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Akron.

HAMILOTHORIS, GERASIMOS
EAST BRUNSWICK, N.J. — The Home News Tribune reported that Gerasimos "Jerry" Hamilothoris, 80, of South River passed away peacefully at his home with his family at his side. Born in Tinos, Greece, he had resided in Keyport and Perth Amboy before moving to South River 30 years ago. Before his retirement in 1989 he was employed as a baker for 40 years, retiring from the DuVillie Diner in East Brunswick. He was a member of St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Piscataway. He was predeceased by his parents, Achilles and Penelope Hamilothoris. Surviving are his wife of 45 years, the former Stella Karra; his son, Achilles and his wife, Laurie of Delran; his daughter, Stella Lemieux and her husband, Mark of Tulsa, Okla.; his sister, Irene Lambriodis of Reading, Pa., and his brothers, Jimmy Hamilothoris of Pompano Beach, Fla., and John Hamilothoris of Tinos, Greece. The funeral was held on August 29 at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Piscataway. Burial was at Washington Monumental Cemetery in South River.

HOOD, VIVIAN
KITCHENER, Ontario — The Guelph Mercury reported that Vivian Farfaras slipped gently away with her

family at her side, at Guelph General Hospital, on Sunday, August 24, 2008. She was 49. Devoted wife of Stephen Hood. Beloved mother of Phillip and Christopher. Loving daughter of George and Anastasia Farfaras of Guelph. Dear daughter-in-law of Rita Hood and the late Victor. Sadly missed by her siblings, Tom, Chris, Angie and Peter, nieces, nephews and aunts, uncles and cousins in Athens and Tripoli, Greece and the USA. Vivian's many community roles and contributions in the past included teaching Greek to children within the Canadian/Greek community of Saints Peter and Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Kitchener, organizing multicultural activities in Guelph, supporting many charitable events and organizations and parent teacher councils. Vivian was a 1978 graduate of GCVI. After studies at the universities of Guelph and Athens and after her employment at Agriculture Canada, Vivian returned to school, graduating in 1992 from the University of Waterloo School of Accounting. At the Globe & Mail, Vivian provided financial analysis to InfoGlobe/Globe information Services, Report on Business and ROB magazine. In Guelph, she managed the finances at the River Run Centre from 2001 to 2006. Other past coworkers and friends were at Employment Insurance Canada and Hillson & Co. All of these roles notwithstanding, Vivian's truest vocational passion was in raising her two sons and being a great partner to her husband of 22 years. Many thanks to the dedicated staff of the Guelph General Hospital Oncology Clinic and 4 West for their care and support. The funeral was held on August 28 at the Saints Peter & Paul Greek Orthodox Church in Kitchener. Memorial donations to the Canadian Cancer Society.

MOUSTAKAKIS, VASILIOS
HARTFORD, Conn. — The Hartford Courant reported that Dr. Vasilios "Bill" Moustakakis passed away on Tuesday, August 26, 2008. He was born on January 8, 1942 in Karpathos, Greece. He was the son of the late Michael and Zoe (Kafezidakis) Moustakakis. He is survived by his wife, Joyce (Chryssos) Moustakakis of Houston, TX. He began his American dream in 1962 when he entered this country in search of a better life. He graduated from MIT in 1966 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. He then worked for the Connecticut Department of Highways and Transportation and resided in New Britain. He received a Master of Science Degree in Applied Mechanics from the University of Connecticut in 1971. He received his Doctorate in Engineering Mechanics from Penn State University in 1975. He had a long and successful career in the engineering field and was well respected amongst his colleagues at ExxonMobil, where he spent most of his career in numerous locations, most recently in Houston, TX. Besides his beloved wife, he is survived by his children: Dr. Michael Moustakakis and his wife Dr. Emily Daponte of West Hartford, Dr. Emmanuel Moustakakis and his fiancée Ms. Christina Rousakis of Astoria, NY, and Mrs. Anne Guess and her husband Mr. Bobby Guess of Katy, TX. He was a loving "Pappou" to his three grandchildren: Will and Hope Moustakakis of West Hartford and Zoe Isabella Guess of Katy, TX. He is also survived by his three brothers: Alex Moustakakis of Greece, George Carr of Apex, NC, and Pericles Moustakakis of New Britain. He was predeceased by his sister: Anna Sakelliadou of Greece. He is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews whom he loved dearly. Dad will always be fondly remembered for teaching us the value of hard work and the power of a dream. He was a man that believed that the American Dream was a living thing and he realized his own with great dedication and hard work. We are grateful for his many sacrifices and for giving us his shoulders to stand on. The funeral was held on August 30 at St. Basil the Great Greek Orthodox Church in Houston, TX. Memorial donations to St. Basil the Great Greek Orthodox Church (1100 Eldridge

Parkway, Houston TX 77077).

NEDELKOS, CHRISTINA

MANSFIELD — The News Journal reported that Christina Nickolaou Nedelkos, 78, died Thursday, August 21, 2008, at home. She passed on with her loved ones by her side. Born Aug. 15, 1930, in Neret, Macedonia, Greece, she was the daughter of Velios and Katherine Noleff Nickolaou. She was a member of Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church and the Philoptochos Society of Mansfield. She was an excellent homemaker with a great sense of humor who loved to cook her ethnic foods and enjoyed crocheting items for her family and friends. Christina took great pride in her vegetable garden and her many rose gardens, receiving numerous awards for her outstanding flower gardens. She enjoyed attending her grandchildren's functions which included sporting events and school activities. She is survived by her husband, Lazaros G. Nedelkos; her children, Maria Nedelkos, Christos L. (Melissa) Nedelkos, Georgann (Dennis) Eichelberger, and Catherine Nedelkos, all of Mansfield; grandchildren, Christopher and Alyssa Nedelkos, and Nicole Eichelberger; brother, George (Mary) Nickolaou of Battle Creek, Michigan; and sister-in-law, Millie Nickolaou of Crown Point, Indiana. Numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews also survive. She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Nick Nickolaou of Crown Point, Indiana; and sister, Katherine Dimitropoulos of Melbourne, Australia. The funeral was held on August 26 at Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church. Burial was at Mansfield Cemetery. Memorial donations to Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church or Special Wish Foundation.

PEFKAROS, KYRIACOS

MIAMI, Fla. — The Miami Herald reported that Dr. Kyriacos Pefkaros, husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, son, brother, beloved friend, trusted doctor, and lover of classical music passed away. Kyriacos' life began on August 18, 1948 in Limassol, Cyprus, the son of Chrysoula and Charalambos. He and his brother Marios grew up spending summers in the mountains of Pafos with their grandmother Sapho. At 17, Kyriacos moved to England where he would study medicine at Leeds University. There he met a Cypriot medical student who would become his wife, Athena. They were married soon after their graduations from medical school and moved to the United States to practice medicine. Kyriacos and Athena settled in Miami, Florida in 1977. They had two children, Chryso and Soula. He carried his Nikon camera everywhere they went capturing beautiful images of Soula and Chryso learning, growing, and adventuring. On Saturday mornings he'd lure them out of bed for Greek school by whipping up a batch of homemade pancakes. During his medical career, Kyriacos taught at the University of Miami Medical School and practiced at Doctor's Hospital, Baptist Hospital, and finally at Mercy Hospital where he practiced for over 20 years. Sadly, and much to his disappointment, he was forced to retire after a heart attack in 2005. His retiring meant the loss of an exceptional and much-admired cardiologist. He was deeply loved by his patients and colleagues who saw him not only as a doctor but also as a friend and confidante. He always dedicated precious time to his patients, treating them medically but also showing care for their personal lives - their loves, losses, marriages, careers, triumphs, struggles. In 2002

he gained a son when eldest daughter Chryso married Lambros Katsoufis. In 2006, Kyriacos became a grandfather when Chryso gave birth to her daughter Zoe, now two years old. Zoe brought a tremendous joy to the last two years of Kyriacos' life. On August 31 he died suddenly due to complications of his medical conditions. At the time of his death he was surrounded by the unending love of his wife Athena, daughters Chryso and Soula, brother Marios, son-in-law Lambros, and friends who came to be by his side. The spirit of this loving friend and wise physician will ever be in the sounds of the Rolling Stones and the arias of Maria Kallas, the waves of the Mediterranean Sea, a warm plate of Greek meze, and a good rain storm. Most importantly, it will ever be in the hearts and minds of those loved ones who continue on. He will be buried in his homeland, Cyprus. The funeral was held on September 5 at St. Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, in Miami. Memorial donations to Kyriacos' name to United Order True Sisters Cancer Camp, Miami Children's Hospital.

TARAS, BESSIE

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — The Commercial Appeal reported that Bessie Varnavas Taras 89, of Memphis, died on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 at Baptist Memorial Hospital after a long illness. She worked tirelessly for church, was past president of the Ladies Auxillary Elpis Philoptochos Society, one of the founding members of the Greek Festival, and founder of the Junior Greek Orthodox Youth of America Memphis Chapter. She was preceded in death by her husband, Bill K. Taras, co-founder of Jim's Place Restaurants. She leaves a daughter, Tina Liollio (Angelo) of Memphis; two sons, Costa Taras (Nancy) and Dimitri Taras (Mary Katherine), both of Memphis; two special nephews, Kosta N. Taras of Memphis and Kosta J. Taras of Huntsville, AL; three sisters, Mary V. Lenis, Ann Vergos and Doris Anagnos, all of Memphis; six grandchildren, Bill Taras (Melissa) of Memphis, Chris Taras of Dallas, TX, Victoria Liollio Riordan (Bill) of Atlanta, GA, Evan Liollio (Tricia) of Spartanburg, SC, James Taras of Memphis, and Sam Taras (Sheley) of Memphis; four great-grandchildren, Robert and James Liollio, Ana Sophia Riordan and Alexander Taras. The family would like to thank her caregivers for their support during her illness. The funeral was on August 28 at Annunciation

Greek Orthodox Church. Burial was at Memorial Park Cemetery. Memorial donations to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church.

VALHOS, HELEN

SOMERSWORTH, Del. — The Seacoast Online reported that Helen Valhos, 75, of Somersworth died peacefully on Tuesday, August 26, 2008, surrounded by her loving family after a courageous battle with cancer. Predeceasing is Helen's mother and father, Stella (Demopoulos) and Arthur Melitus; sisters Dinah Marouthis, Olympia "Bea" Jones, and Dorothea "Dot" McCarthy; and brothers George "Butch" Melitus and James Melitus I. Surviving is Helen's husband, George Valhos of Somersworth; daughter Kelly Abbott and husband Steven of Kittery, Maine; son Nicholas Valhos and wife Lisa of Berwick, Maine; her beloved and treasured grandchildren, Cody Abbott of Kittery, Maine, Shelley Valhos of Dover, and Stephanie Swanson and husband Robert of Raleigh, N.C.; and her new great-granddaughter, Callie Rose Swanson of Raleigh, N.C. Also surviving is her sister, Mary Valoras of Dover; brother James Melitus and wife Kathleen of Dover; and several much loved nieces, nephews and friends. The family would especially like to thank the Hyder Family Hospice House for the exceptional care and support they provided. Born and raised in Dover, Helen appreciated the gift of life to its fullest. Among her greatest accomplishments was her 56-year marriage to her loyal and loving husband, George Valhos. Helen was a self-starter from a young age; she and her husband owned a restaurant and nightclub in Kittery, Maine, as well as a waterfront bed and breakfast in Alton Bay, for several successful years. Helen will be sorely missed, but never forgotten. She proudly saw her grandchildren achieve some of the biggest goals of their lives this past year. Helen's granddaughter, Shelley Valhos, graduated from college this past May; her grandson, Cody Abbott, graduated sixth in his high school class; and her granddaughter, Stephanie Swanson, gave birth to Helen's first and only great-grandchild, Callie Rose Swanson, in August. The funeral was held on August 29 at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Dover. Burial was at the Greek Orthodox Cemetery in Dover. Memorial donations to Hyder Family Hospice House (285 County Farm Road, Dover, NH).

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Greek Pagan Service Held At Parthenon

By Maria Petrakis
Bloomberg

ATHENS — A group of worshippers of ancient Greek gods held their first service at the Parthenon temple in more than a millennium, prompted by the removal of statues on the site to a new museum.

About a dozen worshippers sang hymns to Athena, the goddess of wisdom and ancient patron of Athens, to avert evil as they faced the 2,500 year-old Parthenon temple. The Parthenon was built in the 5th century B.C. to worship Athena.

"Not one ruler has removed the sculptures from the Parthenon over the centuries," Yannis Kontopidis, vice-president of Ellinai, a group campaigning to revive the worship of ancient Greek gods.

"Moving these sculptures to a museum that is foreign and hostile to the Greek environment is like breaking up a family."

Greece moved sculptures from the Acropolis last year to install them in the glass-and-concrete New Acropolis Museum, built to convince the British Museum to return sculptures from the Parthenon that it holds.

Designed by Swiss-born architect Bernard Tschumi and Greece's Michael Photiadis, the museum is scheduled to open this year.

Ellinai has defied Greek government bans to hold prayers at several ancient temples. The Parthenon was converted into a Christian church in the 6th century A.D. and into a mosque under the Ottoman Empire in the 1460s.

Ancient Gold Wreath Puzzles Archaeologists

Continued from page 1

and hid it with the intention of coming back," excavator Chrysoula Saatsoglou-Paliadeli told The Associated Press.

"It probably belonged to a high-ranking person."

The "impressively large" copper vessel contained a cylindrical golden jar with a lid, with the gold wreath of oak leaves and the bones inside.

"The young workman who saw it was astounded and shouted 'land mine!'" the university statement said.

Saatsoglou-Paliadeli, a professor of archaeology at the university, said the find probably dates to the 4th century B.C., during which Philip and Alexander reigned.

"Archaeologists must explain why such a group ... was found outside the extensive royal cemetery," the university statement said. "They must also work out why the bones of the unknown — but by no means insignificant — person were hidden in the city's most public and sacred area."

During the 4th century B.C., burials outside organized cemeteries were very uncommon.

In a royal cemetery at Vergina, just west of Aigai, Greek archaeologists discovered a wealth of gold and silver treasure in 1977.

One of the opulent graves, which contained a large gold wreath of oak leaves, is generally accepted to have belonged to Philip II. The location of Alexander's tomb is one of the great mysteries of archaeology.

The sprawling remains of a large building with banquet halls and ornate mosaics at Aigai — some 520 kilometers (320 miles) north of Athens — has been identified as Philip's palace.

Aigai flourished in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C., attracting leading Greek artists such as the poet Euripides, who wrote his last tragedies there.

The Macedonian capital was moved to Pella in the 4th century B.C., and Aigai was destroyed by the Romans in 168 B.C.



Artifacts Return Home

LEFT: A part of a grave stele, 410-400 B.C., is displayed at the archeological museum of Athens on Wednesday, September 3, 2008, after the return from New York, US to Greece. It was in the collection of the antique dealers S. White and L. Levy. The grave stele depicts a youth and a bearded warrior. **RIGHT:** A bronze calyx krater with a separate stand and a thin disc-shaped cover, 340 B.C., are displayed at the archeological museum of Athens on Wednesday, September 3, 2008, after the return from New York to Greece. The antiquities were in the collection of the antique dealers S. White and L. Levy. Ancient luxurious and intact bronze vases are rare. Kraters were bowls for mixing wine with water.



AP PHOTO/THANASSIS STAVRAKIS

Cypriot Leaders Upbeat after Talks

Continued from page 1

patrolled buffer zone which separates the two communities.

When the leaders emerged from their first round of talks, they expressed confidence that they will reach a settlement. They are expected to meet again on September 11, according to U.N. officials.

Wednesday's meeting was the fifth this year between the two leaders — paving the way for more substantive negotiations initially focusing on power-sharing. Mr. Christofias and Mr. Talat are now expected to meet at least once a week. The two have also agreed to set up a hotline so they can remain in constant telephone contact.

"We will try our utmost to achieve a settlement as soon as possible. Neither I nor Talat could guarantee this tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. This is a common will, a common desire, and we shall make common efforts," Mr. Christofias said.

Mr. Talat said he hoped agreement could be reached by the end of the year. He denied that Turkey, a guarantor of the island's 1960 independence agreement, was poised to block any concessions in the negotiations.

"We are in favor of a solution, and Ankara is supporting us," he said. "That's why, after four years of stalemate, we are confident that we will succeed in concluding a comprehensive agreement — hopefully... this year."

Cyprus — an island of fewer than a million inhabitants — has been divided since 1974, when Turkey invaded to exploit a brief coup aimed at uniting the island republic with Greece.

Turkey keeps 35,000 troops in the breakaway Turkish Cypriot north, while a small number of Greek troops are stationed in the south. The island was ruled by Great Britain, which still has two sovereign bases on the island, until 1960. Turkey and Britain are also guarantors of the independence agreement.

Past efforts to reach a settlement have been scuttled by disagreement on issues like power-sharing, property rights for Greek Cypriot



AP PHOTO/PETROS KARADJIAS

Cypriot president Dimitris Christofias, left, Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat, right, and UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Cyprus Alexander Downer, center, exit from a UN compound at the UN buffer zone after their meeting in the divided capital of Nicosia, Cyprus, Wednesday, Sept. 3, 2008.

refugees and the nature of a future federation. But prospects of progress were raised by repeated commitments made by Mr. Christofias and Mr. Talat toward finding a solution.

On Wednesday, Mr. Talat insisted differences between the two sides were "not insurmountable."

Mr. Christofias said an agreement must be a federal model, and not a partnership of separate states, noting that the foundations of an agreement are fully described in the High Level Agreements of 1977 and 1979, which provide for the transformation to a federal state.

"In our efforts, we must be guided by the relevant United Nations Resolutions, which endorse the so-

lution of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation with political equality, as described in the relevant Security Council Resolutions, with a single sovereignty, citizenship and international personality," he said.

Alexander Downer, the U.N.'s special envoy and former Australian foreign minister, said the two Cypriot leaders had to persuade their communities that a solution would benefit both sides, noting that the groundwork has been laid because of the two leaders' strong and steady leadership, and that the process has been facilitated by hundreds of meetings which were already held at a technical (committee) level.

"This, of course, is your process,

and we at the U.N. stand ready to support you at all junctures, according to your needs as you express them to us. But it is worthwhile to acknowledge that significant progress has already been made in a fairly short time to build confidence and create a solid foundation on which to start formal negotiations," he said.

"The negotiations which you begin today can and must have a successful outcome. You own this process and, as a result, your continuing leadership is a critical element to make it succeed," he added.

The United States Government has also expressed its full support for direct talks between Mr.

Christofias and Mr. Talat, but noted that both sides need to show the necessary political will.

"We fully support this new effort to reach an agreement. We ourselves are taking a look at whether or not it's appropriate to have a special envoy for this effort. But if the basic work is going to be done, and if we are going to reach an agreement, that hard work is going to have to be done by the two sides. So we fully support this meeting as well as the resumption of this effort," he said.

Asked to comment on a statement by Turkish President Abdullah Gul that "the solution must be found on a new partnership established by the two equal political communities and founder countries," Mr. McCormack said the U.S. is not going to interfere with the process by imposing its will.

"We are always supportive of a bi-zonal, bi-communal effort, an agreement that is arrived at by both parties. We're not going to try to dictate the specific conditions. Those are for the parties to work out. However, the international community is ready to support this effort, to nurture this effort, and when required, to try to make proposals. We ourselves, are not in that position right now. But make no mistake about it, the international community supports this effort," he said.

The Russian Government, meanwhile, has stressed that it will not recognize the illegal Turkish Cypriot regime in northern Cyprus, saying that Moscow has not changed its position on the Cyprus question.

"The Ambassador of Russia to Turkey was clear when he was asked by Turkish reporters (on Monday) about the possibility of recognizing the self-styled regime. He said it was not possible for Moscow to recognize this pseudo-state and reiterated the U.N. resolutions," said Vladimir Maystrenko, the Russian Embassy Spokesman in Nicosia. "We can not but express our regret that some people are led astray by (other) reports."

The above incorporates information from reports posted by the Australian, the Cyprus News Agency and the Associated Press.

SPORTS

AEK Defeats Panathinaikos in First Week of Greek Super League

By Barney Spender
Reuters

ATHENS — AEK Athens overcame midweek European disappointment to beat Panathinaikos 2-1 in the opening round of the Greek league on Sunday, August 31.

AEK's season got off to a poor start when they were knocked out of the UEFA Cup by Cypriot side Omonia and their Brazilian World Cup winner Rivaldo decided to leave for Uzbekistan.

Their response, however, suggested they had not lost their spirit and they went 2-0 up at home to a Panathinaikos side that had comfortably eased through to the Champions League group stage.

Edinho curled the ball into the top right-hand corner of the net on 20 minutes and shortly before half-time Ismael Blanco converted from the penalty spot.

Panathinaikos made most of the running in the second half although AEK's Ignacio Scocco had one shot rebound off the bar.

Georgos Karagounis got a late goal for Panathinaikos in the fourth minute of added time when his floated free kick drifted over the heads of everyone in the box and into the goal.

A second-half double from Ar-

gentine winger Luciano Galletti led champions Olympiakos Piraeus to a 3-1 home win over Asteras Tripolis on Saturday, the opening day of the Greek Super League season.

Olympiakos, dumped out of the Champions League by Anorthosis Famagusta in midweek, went behind before halftime when Danijel Cesarec converted a penalty.

Galletti levelled with a long-range shot that flew past the goalkeeper in the 61st minute before netting his own penalty two minutes later.

Olympiakos had several more chances and Darko Kovacevic wrapped up the points when he got on the end of a long pass to slide the ball into the net.

Ergotelis and PAOK Salonika also got off to winning starts.

Visiting Ergotelis went a goal down to promoted Panthrakikos when Cesar Henriquez scored in the 19th minute.

Nigerian striker Patrick Ogunso to equalized seven minutes into the second half before the same player made it 2-1 in the closing stages.

Brazilian defender Marcos Antonio gave PAOK an eighth-minute advantage at OFI Crete and former Portugal midfielder Sergio Conceicao completed a 2-0 win.

There were good wins also for



AP PHOTO/PETROS GIANNAKOPOULOS

Larissa, Aris, Xanthi and new boys Panserraikos.

Aris were made to wait until the second half for their goals before scoring two in five minutes to beat Levadiakos 2-0. Javito got the first on 65 minutes with Polish striker Piotr Wlodarczyk adding the second shortly after.

Larissa got all their goals in the first half, dispatching newly promoted Thrasvoulos Filis 3-0.

Argentine striker Facundo Parra scored twice either side of a goal from compatriot Marcelo Sarmiento.

Nabil Taider's sixth minute goal was enough for Xanthi to win away at Panionios while Burkina Faso international Patrick Zoundi scored twice in the first half for Panserraikos in their game at Iraklis.

Serge Die pulled one back for the hosts in the second half but Panserraikos ended their first game back in the top flight after 16 years with a 2-1 win.

Panathinaikos' goalkeeper Mario Galinovic challenges for the ball with Daniel Maistorovic of AEK, during their Greek Super league soccer game in Athens's Olympic stadium, on Sunday, Aug. 31, 2008.



book · worm. - noun
1. One who spends much time reading or studying.

2. Any of various insects, especially booklice and silverfish, that infest books and feed on the paste in the bindings.

Source: The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition

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info@thenationalherald.com

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Assistant to Publisher, Advertising **Veta H. Diamataris Papadopoulos**
Managing Editor **Evan C. Lambrou**
Assistant Managing Editor **Mark Frangos**
Production Manager **Chrysoula Karametros**
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Democritou 1 and Academias Sts, Athens, 10671, Greece
Tel: 011.30.210.3614.598, Fax: 011.30.210.3643.776, e-mail: athens@ekirikas.com

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Ill-advised and plain wrong

No matter how you slice it, Republican Presidential Nominee John McCain's selection of Alaska Governor Sarah Palin for the vice presidency was ill-advised and plain wrong, if not downright political suicide, for the GOP and the country.

This has nothing to do, and should have nothing to do, with the revelation that Governor Palin's unmarried 17-year-old daughter is pregnant. That's a personal issue, a family problem if you prefer, though most definitely a very poor example for the youth of America. But it should not have any political ramifications.

Those of us who are parents with teenage children understand this very well, for we have a realistic of this issue.

Thus, the political war that is raging among the major parties and throughout the media about the wisdom, or lack thereof, concerning Senator McCain's running mate selection is mainly based on the fact that Governor Palin was almost totally unknown to the American people until now, and that she lacks any foreign policy experience (although Cindy McCain expressed the view that this is not the case since Ms. Palin is the governor of the state that is... closest to Russia).

Speaking to her church just this past June in the town of Wasilla, where she was first elected mayor, the Governor herself said that the war in Iraq was "a task that is from God." Now that's simply dangerous talk.

It is now becoming clear that not only has Mr. McCain selected an unknown governor with just 22 months of executive service under her belt, thereby burning the only strong card he had over his Democratic opponent, Barack Obama – that of Senator Obama's relative inexperience – but also on top of that, he made his choice on the basis of a few phone conversations and two brief meetings, with little (if any) background checking on Ms. Palin.

Now that a few revelations about her past are starting to come out, there are naturally many questions about the judgment of the man who wants to lead this country – and the rest of the free world – and his management skills.

For example, it has been reported that Ms. Palin hired an attorney to represent her in a case involving the firing of the supervisor who refused to fire her sister's cop ex-husband. It has also been reported that her husband, "the first dude," belonged to a party advocating the secession of Alaska from the United States.

Was Mr. McCain aware of these issues? Did she tell him about these things before she was selected? We don't think so.

This past Wednesday night, Ms. Palin's combative and, at times, sarcastic style electrified the delegates of the GOP Convention who are deeply worried about the controversy surrounding her selection. She performed as best as she could have been expected to perform.

This prompted John McCain to ask the enthusiastic delegates, "Do you think we made the right choice?"

Unfortunately, once the dust settles, the answer will be no.

Time will tell, of course, but the other night, Peggy Noonan, a speechwriter for Ronald Reagan and a respected columnist, was caught on a live microphone on MSNBC saying the other night about the selection of Ms. Palin, "It's over."

Another school year

As the Labor Day weekend signaled the end of summer 2008, never to come back, lucky are those who managed to take some days off; stop their daily routines; and get away from it all, hopefully in some beach on a Greek island and heal their burned-out bodies and souls.

And what surer sign that the summer is over than, thank God, schools opening once again, as have our own parochial schools.

We have said it before, and will say it now, and keep on repeating it for as long as we can, our schools are the hope of this community's future, as they are in any society.

For as long as we witness the opening of Greek American schools, their playgrounds filled with children, we know there is a strong, vibrant community fighting for its survival. Should the time ever come that no Greek schools exist, then we can be certain the community will have ceased to exist.

This year, the enrollment at our schools is the best it has been for years. More than 650 students are attending Saint Demetrios School in Astoria. Principal Anastasios Koularmanis says that the future looks even brighter: "In the lower classes of our schools, we are seeing a large increase in the number of students, larger than what we had five years ago. We have 150 students in the Pre-K program, compared to the 80 we had last year. And this number may increase even further."

Still everybody knows that these numbers constitute a small percentage of students that could attend Greek schools. And everybody also knows that the number of schools available constitute a fraction of the schools that we should have across the country. This is not daydreaming. It could become reality if only we would decide that Greek schools matter, if only we would decide to make it happen.

New Cyprus Talks

It's not clear whether the two leaders of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities accomplished much with their meeting on September 3. But at this juncture, it's probably not that important.

What is important is that they were smiling at the conclusion of the talks, calling each other "comrade" and "friend." This is a sea change in the atmosphere of the countless of meetings held over the last 34 years since Turkey invaded and occupied a significant part of Cyprus.

They will have to produce results soon, of course, if the talks are to continue meaningfully. We will know soon, since the next two meetings are scheduled on September 11 and 18, just a few weeks away.

Sources close to the negotiations tell TNH that this is the first time a real chance for a breakthrough appears imminent. Two new leftwing leaders, who enjoy overwhelming support in their communities, genuinely want to reach a solution. And they are helped by international developments, as well as by Turkey's desire to join the European Union.

Still, Turkey might balk at the last minute. It could be that the military might have the last word, again. And up to now, their last word has been to abort any meaningful progress.

What Mr. Talat told reporters, in response to questions during a post-talks press conference concerning Turkey's influence, is telling: "We are here. We support a solution. Ankara supports a solution. And we are convinced that a total solution will be found... hopefully by the end of the year."

Mr. Christofias also spoke eloquently: "The time has come to respond to the calling of history; to achieve the vision of a reunited fatherland, which will belong to its people, the people of Cyprus, who will decide for their future without the intervention of third parties and self-proclaimed protectors of our communities."

Who can argue with that?

Obama Has the Characteristics To Be a Leader in Foreign Affairs

To the Editor:

VENI, VIDI, VICI. During this Presidential campaign, we have heard many times that 2008 Democratic Presidential Nominee Barack Obama is inexperienced in international affairs, while his Republican opponent John McCain is.

Yet many of our most effective and beloved Presidents, who left a great legacy behind, had little or no experience in international matters when they took office. Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan are good examples.

Their lack of foreign policy experience aside, these Presidents all had some crucial characteristics: great communication skills, integrity and good judgment. That is all a good President needs; the rest is icing on the cake. If one couples these crucial characteristics with great energy and organizational skills, while pursuing what is good for the country rather than for special interests, then one will clearly see that it is not Senator McCain, but Senator Obama, who has the necessary criteria.

Recently, Mr. Obama, in order to dispel the notion about inexperience in international affairs, visited several countries and met one-on-one with various heads of state (friendly or not). The response was phenomenal. Many heads of state met him at the tarmac and personally drove him around. Obama looked like the "de facto" leader of the free world; a person to be trusted; a person who foreign leaders were willing to listen and work with to solve common problems. Let George W. Bush or Mr. McCain

match that.

Wherever Obama went, he attracted thousands of ordinary people. In Germany alone, 200,000 people gathered to listen and applauded his speech. Their applause and approval is still reverberating around the world. And he is not even the President of the United States yet.

Lets face it, and take it from an old Republican, whether we like it or not, Obama is the man to bring real change to our beloved country; to clean up the cesspool called Washington; to bring integrity and respect back to our country and pride to all of us. He will motivate us to become the people our forefathers envisioned and expressed in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, one Nation under God with Liberty and Justice for all. He will bring family values, good judgment, clear vision, common sense and a bounty of energy to be successful.

McCain is George W. Bush's surrogate dressed in a lamb's skin. I am not sure, but if ever John McCain becomes our President, Heaven forbid, that he would be able to push the right button when that red phone rings at 3 AM. That's why I strongly believe Barack Obama is the right choice and the right man to send to the White House in November.

Constantine Gletsos, Ph.D
Pomona, New York

Andy Dabilis Articles Show True Love and Respect for Greece

To the Editor:

For good reasons, Andy Dabilis' column is the first one I turn to when my weekly English edition of the Na-

tional Herald arrives. His column mirrors much of what many of us who have traveled to Greece over the years know to be true.

First of all, he writes well, the obvious result of a successful journalistic career. But more importantly, his obvious love of Greece is always apparent to anyone who regularly reads Letter from Athens, even when it is tempered, as it should be, by unflinching criticism of things gone wrong.

As a Greek American, I came of age in a small midwestern town devoid of other Greeks, learning the language of Greece and its history at the feet of immigrant parents during a time when it was not fashionable to have an exotic name or speak with a foreign accent. As a cohort of like immigrants of the Diaspora, we lived in isolated areas devoid of support systems of church, social clubs and schools, yet managed to maintain our faith and live with a profound awareness of our heritage.

Keep up the good work. Write about current events, societal issues, and the politics where it all began. But at some point, talk also about those of us who, to our neighbors, appeared as American as apple pie, yet in the wilderness we found ourselves and remained Greek to the core.

James C. Rouman, M.D.
Hartford, Connecticut

McCain is Stuck in the Past With No Vision for the Future

To the Editor:

Up front and center in Senator John McCain's campaign is his Vietnam War experience of 40 years ago. Stuck in a time warp, he avoids ar-

ticulating the bread-and-butter issues of overriding importance to all Americans in a meaningful way.

McCain's ideas for change are hackneyed platitudes, uninspired and uninspiring. Do we the people need a president who can not get beyond his own past, even though he served unremarkably in the Senate for 26 years?

In a fast-changing world when all nations face the same critical issues of energy supply, among others, we need a futurist with a vision and creative ideas to experiment and to solve problems.

McCain's campaign platform has abortion as one of its most important issues. This alone defines the intellectual dwarfism that everyday working people are exposed to. Going backwards as McCain wants to do is a surefire way to disaster.

Katherine Aliferis
Franklin Square, New York

TO OUR READERS

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PRESS CLIPPINGS

Obama's Message Should Be a Wake Up Call for Europe

By Nikos Konstandaras
Kathimerini

Reading Barack Obama's speech, with which he accepted the Democratic Party's nomination as its candidate in the presidential election, I felt envious of the way in which the Americans choose their leaders. The candidates are obliged to visit every corner of the land and listen to the problems of citizens, so that they can both shape and present the policies on the basis of which they will seek votes. We do this in Europe too, but in each country separately: We cannot all vote together for the president who, with his or her team, will lead Europe, that potential other superpower.

Obama's speech in Denver on August 27 was a clever synthesis of all that he is and all the things he had seen and heard during his long march to the nomination. The frequent references to the problems faced by women, workers, low-income households, the ill, injured war veterans and pensioners were at the heart of his speech. He associated them with his own adventure, in

which he, the son of a single working mother managed to study, to get ahead, to be elected to the Senate and to now seek his country's presidency. He wanted to show that he is an ordinary American, just like the people to whom he referred, and not the inexperienced favorite of the elite, as his rivals present him. At the same time, with his tale of transformation and victory, he wanted to tell his audience that they too can bring about change in their lives, by voting for him.

Obama was toughened up by the electoral process. He got to meet and listen to voters and he gained experience that he lacked when the campaign against the other Democrat candidates began. The process shaped the candidate. As Obama noted: "The change we need doesn't come from Washington. Change comes from Washington. Change happens because the American people demand it – because they rise up and insist on new ideas and new leadership, a new politics for a new time."

As a European I felt envy when Obama spoke about America's power. "This country of ours has more

wealth than any nation, but that's not what makes us rich. We have the most powerful military on Earth, but that's not what makes us strong. Our universities and our culture are the envy of the world, but that's not what keeps the world coming to our shores," he said. "Instead, it is that American spirit – that American promise – that pushes us forward even when the path is uncertain; that binds us together in spite of our differences; that makes us fix our eye not on what is seen, but what is unseen, that better place around the bend."

This American faith in the future works as a self-fulfilling prophecy, whereas the concern of Europeans is not so much for a better future but rather how they will maintain what they have already achieved. Those were my thoughts, until the end of the speech, when Obama summed up the aims of his campaign. "America, we cannot turn back," he said. "Not with so much work to be done. Not with so many children to educate and so many veterans to care for. Not with an economy to fix and cities to rebuild and farms to save. Not with

so many families to protect and so many lives to mend. America, we cannot turn back. We cannot walk alone. At this moment, in this election, we must pledge once more to march into the future." The future, in other words, demands an improved education system, the securing of health care for all, the protection of the social security system, and so on.

In the most important speech of his life, at the moment that he was revealing his vision of the future, Obama, the candidate of "Change," spoke almost exclusively about the past. A better future means a return to the old values and to a lost sense of security. That future is Europe's present. It is us that others envy. But we do not seem to have realized it: Instead of strengthening our union in order to safeguard and further develop what we have, each country sinks into its own problems and we allow the vision of a strong Europe to vanish. And it takes a visionary and charismatic American to show us what we have.

Kathimerini published the above on September 1.

War in Georgia Exposes Fault Lines in NATO Letter

By Judy Dempsey
International Herald Tribune

BERLIN – As a signal to Russia that NATO will not be intimidated, its ambassadors will travel to Georgia this month. They want to see the aftermath of a war in which Russian troops last month occupied parts of Georgia, gained control of the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and then recognized them as independent states. The envoys also want to assess whether Georgia is ready to be offered, in December, a road map to join the alliance.

Russia is furious with NATO's refusal to back down from its commitment to admit - one day - Georgia and Ukraine into the U.S.-led military alliance, a pledge made during its summit meeting last April in Bucharest and repeated since Russia rolled into Georgia after the Georgians attacked South Ossetia. Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, told students of Moscow's diplomatic academy Monday that "there is a feeling that NATO again needs front-line states to justify its existence."

NATO diplomats dismiss such charges. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO's secretary general, has repeatedly said that democratic countries flanking Russia should be an asset, not a threat, to the Kremlin. But Russia does not trust NATO. In Moscow's view, NATO, and the EU, have become more anti-Russian since the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic states joined both organizations. It also sees the alliance as encroaching on regions Russia considers within its sphere of influence.

But inside NATO, despite the show of unity over the Russia-Georgia crisis, there is no consensus as to whether the alliance should expand deep into the Caucasus, or admit Ukraine, birthplace of Russian

Orthodoxy. Indeed, Georgia is just the latest challenge to the alliance's identity: since the end of the Cold War, NATO has been trying to reinvent itself.

Inside the alliance, there are three competing tendencies. First is the legacy of the Cold War. NATO claims it is a collective security organization committed to Article 5 of its charter in which its members pledge to defend another member if attacked. Before 1991, it was assumed a Soviet Army onslaught would activate Article 5. For some in NATO, Russia's actions in Georgia recall this East-West standoff.

Then there is the enlargement process begun in the late 1990s. It was designed to complete the reunification of Europe by bringing the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe into the Euro-Atlantic orbits of NATO and the EU. But while countries from the Baltic states to Bulgaria are now members of both organizations, NATO has gone further. It has established special partnerships with countries stretching as far as Azerbaijan and now appears determined eventually to admit Ukraine and Georgia, both former Soviet republics.

NATO diplomats say the point about creating membership road maps and partnerships is to expand security by encouraging the democratization of armed forces, to increase political transparency and to introduce accountability into the intelligence services. But Henning Riecke from the German Council of Foreign Relations says expanding democracy through partnership agreements runs counter to the possible commitments of Article 5. "They contradict each other. It is as if Article 5 is still about containing Russia," he said.

The third element is NATO's involvement in the fight against terrorism. After the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001, Article 5 was in fact invoked for the United States - which reject-

ed help - and the battle against Al Qaeda and its allies was supposed to transform NATO into an agile organization capable of dealing with new threats.

In practice, this has proved a highly risky development. NATO now operates "out of area" in Afghanistan, far away from the Europe it was originally supposed to defend. The alliance is paying a high price. Riding on the back of the "peace dividend" that came with the disappearance of the Soviet threat, NATO countries in the 1990s reduced their armed forces, particularly the conventional ones, and slashed defense budgets. The result: insufficient personnel, training and equipment to cope with the insurgency in Afghanistan.

It does not help that the alliance is at odds over how to balance these three strands.

There are, for example, differences over the goals of enlargement. The United States wants the alliance to expand closer to the areas of conflict, such as the Middle East. That was one reason to establish U.S. bases in Bulgaria and Romania, as points from which small and flexible forces could be deployed quickly. Washington also wants to use the alliance to support its allies, such as Georgia and Ukraine.

Poland and the Baltic states have their own reasons for supporting Georgia and Ukraine joining NATO. "They believe these countries would be more stable and secure if they were in NATO," said Tomas Valasek, a defense analyst at the Center for European Reform in London. "But it is also about creat-

ing a buffer zone between them and Russia. Russia is still seen as the threat."

Poland's enduring fear and suspicion of Russia was one of the main reasons Warsaw wanted the United States to deploy part of its antimissile defense shield on its territory. It was not the shield, as such, that Poland wanted, according to its Defense Ministry. It was the presence of American troops and the security guarantees the United States would give Poland against any possible attack - from Russia. Donald Tusk's center-right government does not believe NATO would be prepared to protect Poland by using Article 5, which says a lot about Poland's trust in the alliance.

Germany and some other European countries are uncomfortable with these views of enlargement. Germany's conservative chancellor, Angela Merkel, and her Social Democratic coalition partners do not want NATO to be used to face off against Russia. Nor do they want German troops to be dragged into any conflict in the Caucasus. This is why Merkel is still reluctant to agree to a road map for Georgia and Ukraine next December.

"There is no common basis upon which to judge which countries should join the organization or what NATO wants to do with a bigger alliance," said Gunilla Herolf, a security analyst at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Until that issue is resolved, trips to Georgia by NATO ambassadors will merely disguise the dangerous fault lines running through an alliance preparing for its 60th birthday next year.

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LETTER FROM ATHENS

Russia Wants Greece To Do the Right Thing

Talk about being caught between Scylla and Charybdis:

Greece, and now, particularly, Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis, is being torn between long-standing alliances with the West—the United States, the European Union, and NATO—and leanings that existed long before that, to the East, and these days that means Russia. It's too early to say which way this will play itself out, but there are more indications all the time that Greece is beginning to favor its more natural ethnic and religious relationship with Russia, not because of ethnicity or religion, but for the same old reasons that always motivate governments: power, politics and business.

It's a burgeoning shift that threatens to become the clichéd sea change, and a play on the old Greek saying that the power of a woman can draw a ship. This time, the seduction is coming from Mother Russia and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, the wizard behind the screen who had to give up the presidency after serving two terms but made sure his hand-picked puppet Dimitry Medvedev would be his successor so that Putin could keep pulling the business and foreign policy strings, and he's playing Greece like a balalaika. The winds of change are blowing from Moscow to Athens.

Greece has been an ally of the United States in every major war, even though being badly treated as a second-rate partner as America has favored Turkey because of that country's size, trade and geographical advantage to Asia and as a bulwark against Russia. Greece just hasn't had that much to offer, but the US keeps pretending it cares when the truth is that it would sell out Greece in a heartbeat if it were in the American national interest. Karamanlis, educated at Tufts University outside Boston and a savvy observer of US foreign policy, hasn't been duped by the American fake pretensions that Greece matters, and has begun to align Greece more and more with Russia, even visiting Moscow and hosting Putin in April of 2007 in Athens to sign the \$900 million Bourgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipeline to carry Black Sea oil to Greece, part of Putin's energy gamesmanship to make countries dependent on Russia. Since the US isn't going to be providing any energy, Karamanlis had no choice, really, but the pipeline was just the start of how Greece was being pulled closer to Russia like a tractor beam was doing the draw.

In Athens, where he was treated more like a Czar than a President, Putin said that, "The pipeline allows diversification in the oil routes, in the best interest of our countries, our peoples and the economy," while Karamanlis said, "This visit bears witness to the excellent ties between the two nations." Translation: Greece is now lined up with Russia where it counts, especially as Putin had twice come to Athens to talk business.

Since then, Greece agreed to bypass signing with the European Union-sponsored and US-backed Nabucco natural gas pipeline to carry gas from Turkey to Austria through Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary as a weapon to lessen EU dependence on Russian gas, in favor of the Kremlin's South Stream pipeline that goes from Russia's Black Sea coast to Bulgaria and splits en route to Italy with one part going through Greece. It is operated by the Russian gas monopoly Gazprom, which Putin has used against American and western investors, as he has with Russia's oil industry, blackmailing foreign companies into ceding control of their operations to Russia or be fined into oblivion for fake environmental problems.

Development Minister Christos Foliass said everything was on schedule, and that the pipeline would be complete by 2014. He said, as he had to, that South Stream isn't a rival of Nabucco—which it is and which it will bankrupt before it starts—and that South Stream would be a boon as demand for gas in Greece and the EU was constantly rising. The project was formally ratified by the Greek parliament in August, which means while the rest of Europe is freezing in the dark, Greece is guaranteed gas and an alliance with



by ANDY DABILIS
Special to
The National Herald

Russia that has grown stronger. The \$10 billion project will carry 30 billion cubic meters of gas a year—much of it through Greece, so now it's in Russia's natural interest to keep Greece safe and happy. Even the opposition weaklings of PASOK accepted the agreement and they'd oppose a resolution the sun will rise tomorrow if New Democracy sponsored it, so you can tell how important Russia is, even to them. "Russia is a very big energy player and the positive ties we currently enjoy can only be a good thing," Foliass said, in the understatement of the year.

Energy alone is reason enough why Greece has lined up next to Russia, but there are many others, including Kosovo. When the EU, pressured by the US, agreed to recognize independence for Kosovo, run by Albanian thugs, it walked into a Russian Bear Trap, although Karamanlis and Greece wisely sidestepped this one. Russia warned that if Kosovo could claim independence, so could Georgia's breakaway provinces of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and when Georgia President Mikheil Saakashvili—who, having been educated in the US as well should have known better than to rely on America as an ally—moved his military into South Ossetia, Russia pounced and its army destroyed Georgia forces, occupied South Ossetia and Georgia, and promptly recognized the provinces as independent. What could the US, EU or the UN do? Nothing. Putin and Karamanlis are together on this because of Greece's refusal to recognize Kosovo, which can never be a member of the UN anyway because Russia has a veto. You don't tug on Superman's cape and you sure don't kick a bear to get his attention. Serbia fiercely protested the west's recognition of its former province, where much of Serb history and heritage are located and Greece backed its Orthodox cousins.

Greece needs Russian support too for keeping FYROM from getting the name it wants, Republic of Macedonia, and as an intervening agent in Turkey's internecine insistence on getting as much of Cyprus as it wants, aided and abetted by Greek Cypriot President Dimitris Christofias, a Communist and its Red Agent getting ready to sell out his homeland for less than the \$24 in beads and trinkets the Dutch paid the American Indians for Manhattan.

Andreas Andrianopoulos, a former Greek member of parliament, an adviser to Russia, and a participant at the US's Woodrow Wilson Center Project specializing in Southeast Europe, headed by John Sittlides, a Greek-American who knows Greek policy, wrote of the ties that are binding Greece and Russia and the gradual shift from west to east. "For many in Athens the Kremlin was looked upon as a substitute to reserved—towards Greek pursuits—western attitudes," he said, although there were some fears Greece would wind up in Moscow's pocket because of its reliance on Russian energy. He cautioned that could happen and that Greece should not be overly-dependent on Russia in any sphere because Russia has other national interests too, and is almost as close to Turkey as is the US.

"Athens was driven to the relationship by simply reacting, almost dazzled, to the mostly unexpected Russian overtures. Which of course flattered its national ego and carried important geo-economic advantages. But it is Moscow that plays the tune," he said. This is a dancing bear that is dangerous.

"It is obvious that the shots are called by the Kremlin and Athens simply reacted to Moscow's initiatives," Andrianopoulos wrote. "There are no deeply thought plans. Neither is there a far-reaching political strategy." Hear that tune? He did, when he warned, "The jingles of the balalaika are much stronger than the tunes of the bouzouki playing a syrtaki dance."

Mr. Dabilis was the New England editor for United Press International in Boston, and a staff writer and assistant metropolitan editor at the Boston Globe for 17 years before relocating to Greece. His column is published weekly in the National Herald. Readers interested in contacting him can send e-mails to andyadabilis@gmail.com.

Obama vs. McCain: Entering the Homestretch

Now that the Democratic and Republican National Conventions are over, and the candidates are officially nominated, the 2008 Presidential contest is entering the homestretch. This is a good time to review the dynamics of this election.

Five months ago, when the hopefuls were still battling with their rivals for their party's nomination, the consensus was that the Democratic candidate, no matter who it might be, was bound to win by a landslide. In its eight years in office, the Bush Administration, had piled up a questionable record reflected in the dismal lows of the President's popularity. Now, however, as the contest enters the final and most crucial stage, public opinion polls show that this is going to be a tight race.

Senator Obama had run an exemplary campaign during the primaries, overpowering the formidable "Clinton machine"—Senator Hillary Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton. Strangely, once Obama had secured the nomination, his campaign seemed to run out of steam. For several weeks during July and August, he left the field to McCain forces. They aired many—and very effective—ads, well placed on the electronic media. By contrast, the Obama ads were mostly tepid and ineffectual.

For months, many commentators were pointing out that the central strategic narrative the Obama campaign needed was to turn the election into a referendum against the Bush Administration's eight years. Specifically, they said, once Senator McCain had won the nomination as the Republican candidate, the Obama aim should be to tie John McCain to George W. Bush and tar McCain with all the real and imagined sins of the President. During July and August, the Obama campaign tried to focus on the McCain-Bush connection. The effort had limited impact. By contrast, the McCain strategists were able to highlight Obama's "inexperience," while portraying McCain as a "maverick," in effect distancing McCain from President Bush.

At the same time, McCain tried to shift public attention from the economy to the issue of national security. A brief flare-up over Iran's nuclear program in June and then a worsening of relations with Russia over Georgia in August reduced Obama's 10-point advantage from 49 to 47 percent just before the Democratic Convention in Denver. The impressive DNC did not change these percentages very much, as Obama did not get the usual bump.

Now that the RNC is over, Obama

and his strategists will have to roll up their sleeves and show the voters why they should elect Obama instead of McCain as the next President of the United States.

Indeed, there is much at stake. The tenor of America's relations with the rest of the world is one fundamental issue. In a multi-dimensional world, armed might alone can not carry the day. Imagination, flexibility, diplomatic acumen and old-fashioned principles of "winning hearts and minds" have to be part of the mix.

Obama seems to have a different view of the world than McCain. The voters need to know what to expect.

For the past eight years, a neocon leadership imposed policies which cost our country dearly in both treasure and human suffering. McCain professes to agree that the record of the past eight years is not so good, yet he vows to keep and continue some of the key policies. The voters need to know what to expect.

A Republican President would have the opportunity to appoint at

least three new Supreme Court Justices in the next four years. These appointments stand to bring a Conservative majority of 7-2 which will very likely give a conservative tilt to the Court's decisions for the next 25-30 years. This is a matter of paramount significance to women, as well as to Democratic and Independent voters throughout the country. The voters need to know.

For his part, Senator McCain has been effectively promoting the idea that he is a "maverick." During the GOP Convention—thanks to Hurricane Gustav—he was fortunate enough to avoid having President Bush on stage with the inevitable pictures of the two of them embracing. Such pictures would have tarnished McCain's efforts to distance himself from President Bush and the Republican Party. But the voters still need to know how different McCain's policies are from those of President Bush.

A major talking point of the McCain campaign was Obama's "inexperience." Since Obama's record is rather thin, the argument carried



AP/STEPHAN SAVOIA

LEFT: Republican Presidential Nominee John McCain helps pack Hurricane Gustav relief packages in Toledo, Ohio this past Monday, September 1. RIGHT: Democratic Presidential Nominee Barack Obama speaks at a rally in Milwaukee, Wisconsin the same day.



AP/ALEX BRANDON

Georgia is the World's Next Big Battleground

In the dog days of summer, an artillery barrage from Georgia on its recalcitrant province, South Ossetia, sparked a Russian invasion which has lured the United States into a confrontation with Russia. It is a somewhat slow-moving crisis in which both sides are raising the scales of a conflict that may reach a point where neither side will be able to back down. The Bush Administration is reckless, and the occasional saber will not salvage the out-going President's reputation for incompetence.

However, provoking the Russian's will cost America dearly with respect to international stature and allies. The Europeans depend on Russia for 40 percent of their oil and gas. The French may sound tough (and they do not lose an opportunity to wave the flag of France's dignity), but it's only short-term bluster. At the end of the day, Europe needs the oil and gas.

Perhaps, the current race for the White House is a metaphor of what is going wrong in the United States. On one side is Senator Barack Obama (D-Illinois), charismatic and today's darling of America's liberals, but effectively a neophyte in foreign affairs. Instead of using the caution and reflection he has been celebrated for, he rushes to condemn the Russians in what is a very complicated situation, and essentially overlooks that the Georgians provoked the crisis.

This is not how a head of state should react to an international problem. More remarkable is the fact that Obama is falling into a fast-emerging quagmire organized by Bush and company. It is even more astonishing how a bumbling, ignorant Bush Administration is leading the Democrats into a new, and potentially deadly, crisis in the Caucasus. Aren't Iraq and Afghanistan enough? Apparently not, and it seems Obama does not think so, either; otherwise, he would have chastised Bush for committing the U.S. to yet another reckless adventure. Perhaps Americans might realize that the Presidency is not a job for well-intentioned men or women whose appetite is greater than their abilities.

In this context, John McCain is

litical featherweight who lacks any Presidential attributes or, for that matter, being governor of any state larger than Alaska. To call her a "hockey mom" is an insult to hardworking women with families and careers.

How will this ex-beauty queen and semi-airhead deal with someone like Vladimir Putin? For that matter, how will Obama or McCain stare down the ex-KGB chairman, President and current Prime Minister of Russia. Putin would have them for breakfast, and Palin for dessert. The only one who stands above the bold, beautiful and reckless is Senator Joe Biden (D-Delaware), and one has to feel sorry for the man who, if Obama wins, must spend the next four years as a foreign policy tutor, while Obama babbles the over-used Evangelist-style rhetoric—e.g., "we are the sum of our parts, not parts of the sum"—on everything from the price of gas to foreign affairs.

Some critical historical analysis should be on the menu for all political contenders before they attempt to solve complex issues with simple political rhetoric.

The problem between Georgia

and Russia is complex, and has a long history which the current candidates for the White House should take into serious consideration. Georgia emerged out of the Kingdoms of Colchis and Iberia in the dim past. The latter, one of the first countries to adopt Christianity as an official religion early in the 4th Century, subsequently provided a nucleus around which the unified Kingdom of Georgia was formed

early in the 11th Century.

After a period of political, economic and cultural flourishing, this kingdom went into decline in the 13th Century and eventually fragmented into several principalities in the 16th Century. Three subsequent centuries of Ottoman and Persian hegemony were followed by a piecemeal absorption into the Russian Empire in the 19th Century. In the wake of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Georgia had a brief period of independence as a Democratic Republic (1918-21), which was terminated by the Red Army invasion of Georgia, and the country became part of the Soviet Union in 1922. Although a small part of the Russian Empire, it contributed Joseph Stalin



AP/SERGEY PONOMAREV

An elderly woman carries a branch last Sunday, August 31, in front of houses destroyed during the Georgian assault on Tskhinvali, the regional capital of Georgia's breakaway province of South Ossetia, this past August 7.

weight. Now that Senator McCain chose Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska as his running mate, the issue of "inexperience" has taken a different hue. The young governor has an even thinner resume than Obama. If elected, she will be a heart-beat away from the Presidency.

It is evident that McCain chose Palin primarily because she is a woman and has a strong record as a religious conservative. Traditionally, however, Presidential candidates have professed that, in choosing a running mate, the primary consideration was the ability of the Vice President to take over at a moment's notice. What does this selection tell the voters about McCain's judgment and priorities?

Beyond the assets and liabilities candidates, being human, bring to any election, there are factors in this election which are seldom mentioned in public, yet they may decide the election regardless of the contestants' merits.

Let us remember that the President is "elected" by the members of the Electoral College, and that a candidate receives all the delegates in each state where he manages to win a plurality of the public vote. Because of this, a candidate may win the most votes nationwide and still lose the election.

During this year's election, there are many thousands of Democratic and Independent voters in the South and elsewhere who may stay home because of Obama's African American origin. This is not a wild guess. We often hear that Obama needs to win over the so-called "blue-collar workers." These voters have typically voted Democratic. Why are they showing such reluctance at this time?

Another factor lurking under the table is the possibility that an international crisis may erupt somewhere. There is no shortage of hot spots around the world. Such an occurrence could easily refocus public opinion toward national security and away from the economy. This would help McCain, as did the two incidents during the summer we mentioned above.

Summing it all up, the imperfections in this election are too many to allow a prediction of the outcome with any degree of certainty at this time. The race is too tight, and it's still too early to tell.

Dr. Kousoulas is professor emeritus of Political Science at Howard University in Washington, DC. He is the author of several books, notably "The Life and Times of Constantine the Great," and numerous scholarly articles. Readers who would like to contact him directly can e-mail him at dkous@comcast.net.

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Dr. Gerolymatos is Chair of Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia and the author of "Red Acropolis, Black Terror: The Greek Civil War and the Origins of Soviet-American Rivalry."

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