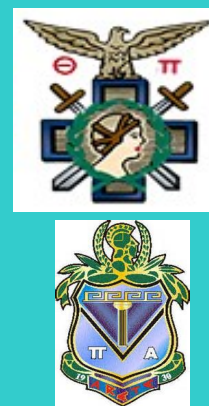




# Yankee News

Publication of AHEPA District #7

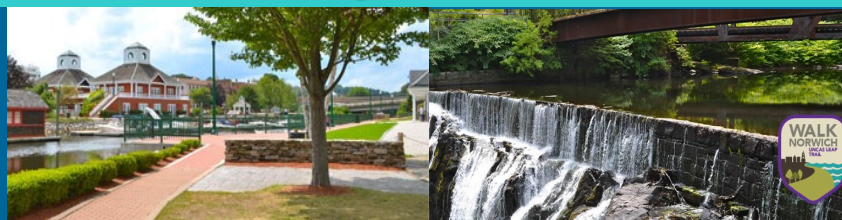
Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Western Massachusetts  
*In Continuous Publication Since 1949*



## May, 2017



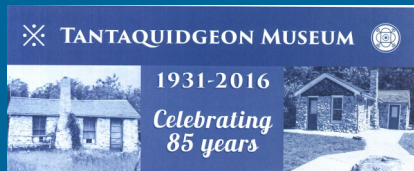
The Farm Market is open year-round. Daily 9-6. Holmberg Winery opens May 6th for the 2017 season!



Walk Norwich! Heritage Trail...a 2.8 roundtrip trail along the river, thru historic downtown, to the Uncas Leap heritage area...a 2 mile trail by monuments, burial grounds and the ravine. Both are easy walking trails.



Friday 5:30 pm: Music: Andy & Bethany  
Captain Scott Food truck  
Bring your own food, enjoy the wine!  
Sunday noon: Music: David & Chenot



Native American Artifacts & Village. Free admission.



Convention Banquet Saturday evening - Cocktails at 6, Dinner at 7 (\$40)  
Hellenic Express! @ 8:30 p.m. (\$25 or included with banquet)



The Ultimate Escape: Locked in a room with only one way out. You have 1 hour! Search for hidden compartments, passages, and clues. Teamwork is key! \$23pp with 3 or more people. Times avail. Fri & Sun, 10 am - 11 pm. Book ahead!

# The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association New England Regional Convention Friday, May 5, Saturday, May 6 & Sunday, May 7, 2017 At the Holiday Inn in Beautiful Norwich, CT

Relax...Enjoy the shuttle to & from the Holiday Inn Convention Center to Mohegan Sun, Moments away...



Elemis Spa  
Hair, mani or pedi from \$30  
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Shopping, shopping, shopping.  
Do we need to say more?



Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center  
Wednesday - Saturday  
9 am - 5 pm with last admission @ 4 pm.  
Adults \$20 / Seniors \$15

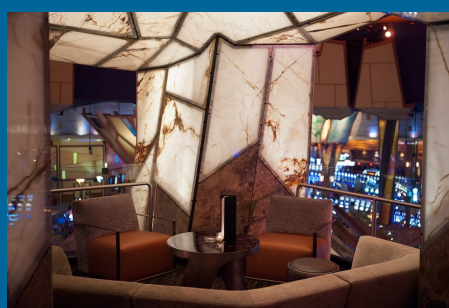


Faith Hill & Tim McGraw  
Friday, May 5, 7:30 pm  
\$139, \$99, \$79

Also On FRIDAY at COMIX Mohegan Sun:  
- Alonzo Bodden - 8:00 pm  
- In The Bar Music - J-Krak & Cairo 9:30 pm  
- Filthy Friday 10:30 pm



The Vista Lounge



(Oh, and did we forget to mention..?  
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### A MESSAGE FROM THE AHEPA DISTRICT 7 GOVERNOR

Dear Brother AHEPANS, Sisters of the DOP, and friends,

Thank you AHEPANS of the Yankee District for your support over the past year. As we approach the annual Convention, we are taking stock of the year gone by and developing strategies for the year to come.

1) Membership – We have lost members by death and by apathy. I am concerned mostly about losses due to apathy because that is something we can combat. The reasons for this type of member loss are varied. Many are not billed and do not realize they are no longer paid members. Try billing early in the year and collect all dues and pay all per capita (national and district) by March 31<sup>st</sup> or no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>. Others are not properly and fully engaged. Give those brothers a reason to stay and a purpose.

2) Board of Past District Governors – This group of experienced AHEPANS will aid in selecting potential future candidates for Lodge offices and making recommendations for a variety of potential programs. Thank you brother PDGs for taking on this responsibility. They will meet by the May Convention.

3) Athletics - We have two men who have agreed to become District Athletic Directors. They are Brother Alex Boutsioulis and Brother Greg Stamos. We look forward to redeveloping a district athletic strategy.

4) Fundraising – We are in need of ideas and plans for yearly major fundraising events to support education scholarships and other worthy district projects.

5) Team Building – I am encouraging chapters to work together to support new Sons of Pericles chapters, having joint meetings, and joint social events. This will build stronger chapters.

6) Increased Awareness – My knowledge of AHEPA and what it does have increased due to my participation in the Lodge. Many AHEPANS in this district who have not served at or above the chapter level often don't appreciate what AHEPA does at the District and National levels. That has to change if we are to have a healthy fraternity.

To combat these and more issues, spread the wealth. Share what you know with your chapter members, involve them in meaningful projects, and help them live up to their fullest potential as AHEPANS.

Fraternally,  
Gregory Simones



### A MESSAGE FROM DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE DISTRICT 7 GOVERNOR

Dear Sisters,

Wishing you a bright and cheerful Spring and a Happy Easter!

Since last Summer, the New England Regional Convention Committee, (NERC), has been meeting monthly to plan a Tri-District Convention that meets once every three years. This is the year!

The District Governors of the Daughters and AHEPA from Districts seven, eight and nine, along with the Grand Governor, Supreme Governor and interested leaders, have been planning the events. It will be held on May 5, 6 & 7 at the Holiday Inn in Norwich, CT. We have tried to plan the elements of this Convention so they will appeal to all interests.

The Grand President of the Daughters of Penelope, Jan Spanos, will be arriving Friday and staying for the Convention. She would like to get to know as many of the Sisters as possible. The Grand Governor, Lili Respass, will also be in attendance, along with dignitaries from AHEPA. I encourage you to support this Convention and to participate in full. Come enjoy a happy Spring weekend with Brothers and Sisters who share the same value system. Participate in the deliberations and help promote the AHEPA family's philanthropic activities. Hope to see you there.

Yours in Theta Pi,  
Karen Isaac



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- |                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
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| Demetrius Tasoulas | District Lt Governor       |
| George Rados       | District Secretary         |
| John Melonopoulos  | District Treasurer         |
| Alex Boutsioulis   | District Advisor           |
| Rick Pecka         | Sons of Pericles Advisor   |
| Jack Isaac         | Supreme Governor, Region 4 |

### THE YEARS GO FAST. ENJOY THEM TODAY.

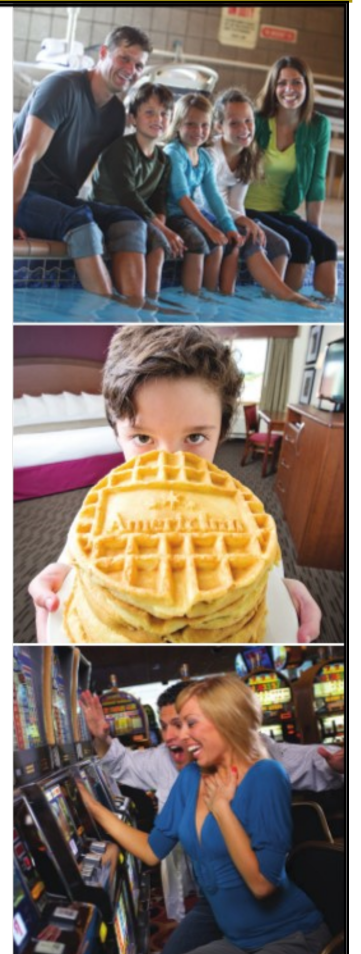
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**EDITOR'S NOTES** by Jack Isaac

Dear Brothers,

In the last Yankee News, in my editors' notes I raised the subject of declining membership in our beloved order. We also have a problem bringing in younger members. I also admitted that I did not have the definitive answer to this situation. I've asked each of you to delve into your experiences and give your opinions as to why this is happening. Here are some of your thoughts. Thanks for contributing!

*"In my opinion the reasons of youth's non-participation are multiple!*

1. *They are not given opportunities to cover responsible positions within the Fraternity.*
2. *When and if a position is allowed, there's instant non constructive criticism and scolding.*
3. *Ignorance by the elders that times have changed and youth sees things differently.*
4. *Lack of proper upbringing from their families when children are pliable.*
5. *Peer and community rejection if not from the same region.*
6. *Historically uneducated (and I don't mean lack of a piece of paper from an institution)! Should I go on?!"*

*George A. Rados, PDG*

*"I agree that we are facing a declining membership issue. But I question your assertion in the recent YN that "paper members" are counterproductive when it comes to increasing membership..."*

*"My view is that it is not possible to grow membership without "paper members", and this is demonstrated by the numbers. At least in lower Fairfield county, people these days don't have time to participate in many of AHEPA's activities. But they consider it their patriotic duty to support the premiere Greek American organization by paying dues. There is nothing wrong with this. In Stamford, membership declined in the last 2 years because of various deaths, transfers, moves, and drop outs. The current members are much more responsive to email reminders, and I am hopeful that our membership will stabilize around the current number.*

*If there is a moral to take out of the recent decline, it is that collecting dues is of paramount importance to a chapter's health, and secretaries are crucial in that effort."*

*Nick Nikas, PSG*

**"LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE**, we need to review where we came from (first 100 years of AHEPA); why we're hanging onto tradition and not embracing change. We have to start thinking outside of the box, our History, our Charters. Social Media and the Computer ARE HERE! We have to think of where we want the AHEPA be in 2050, or we're going to be DELETED."

*George J. Scarveles, PSG*

*"I do not know how to answer your request for information as to how to encourage young men to become members of AHEPA. Here are the reasons why:*

1. *I am almost 80 years old, and not familiar with the interests or how young people think. I assume the young people think and have interests that differ from mine.*
2. *I have been a member of the AHEPA family since I was fourteen years old. I cannot imagine life without being a member of AHEPA.*
3. *AHEPA's original mission was to educate America about the new Greek immigrants who were living here, and to introduce Greeks to America urging them to become citizens. This goal has been reached.*

*I recommend the following:*

1. *Interview young men who might be interested in Hellenism.*
2. *After reviewing their ideas as well as interested activities, organize the collected data.*
3. *Our national leaders should then use this information to develop programs and activities that will attract younger newer members.*
4. *Then develop a national creative energetic recruiting program. that allows inclusion of local behavior patterns."*

*- Andrew Aros, PDS, Life Member*

**Letter to the Editor**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONFERENCES**  
by Andrew Aros

We recently concluded our annual Spring Conference. The 2017 District Spring Conference followed recent trends, most of the brothers attending were the same small handful that are present at every District # 7 business meeting. The meetings followed a familiar pattern: reports from Supreme and District Lodge officers followed by more reports from the chapters. Intertwined with the saddened refrain of "Why aren't more members present?" was the observation that the average age of the brothers present is steadily increasing. As the barrage of speakers continued, the collective brothers' seats became sore, the brains ceased to efficiently absorb information and the focus of interest for some of the brothers became "How much longer before we eat lunch?"

The task for the District Lodge is to engage those brothers who are present at conferences. Perhaps many of the reports could be published, collated and presented to those present. A calendar of coming events including National, District and Chapter functions will have more impact and will be more accurate than an oral presentation.

Certainly the Spring Conference under the direction of the District Governor could appoint chairmen for the committees that meet at the District Convention. This would enable the appointed chairmen to review and investigate their committee's responsibilities. It would also give the chairmen time for reflection and development of possible solutions. At the convention the committee could eventually produce an innovative solution to problems.

These are just two suggestions for conferences. They should be improved and expanded by the ideas of Past District Governors and those of the current District Lodge Officers.

Increased interest in the actions of the District Lodge is imperative if the District Lodge is to remain viable. The average brother's disinterest in the District and the actions of the District Lodge is obvious. We are coming to the end of the current year, and many appointed offices in the District Lodge remain unfilled.

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**AND INFORM**  
**DISTRICT 7 AHEPANS**



## SALUTE TO A VETERAN

### HARRY J. DANOS

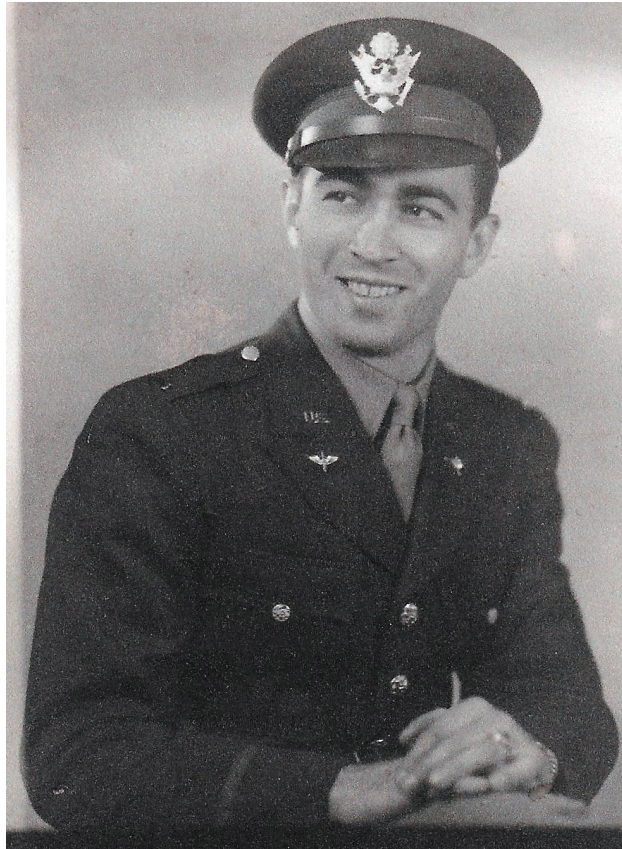
Members of the District Lodge, Greg Simones, John Melonopoulos and Jack Isaac, sat down with Bro. Harry Danos beloved member of the New London AHEPA chapter, and successful architect, to interview him for the Yankee News. The interview was held in his home in the shoreline community of Niantic, CT. We sat among his treasured photographs and military memorabilia and listened to this 92 year old with an amazing memory discuss his years in World War II. Here are some of his recollections.

Harry's brother Leonard was the first of the two brothers to enlist. He had a distinguished military career serving on the carrier "Lexington". Harry wanted to be a navigator, but he discovered that he didn't have the required perfect vision. He worked for a time at GE in Pittsfield, Mass., where a co-worker told him that the Army Air Corps was looking for meteorologists. Harry volunteered and was sent to Amherst College for training. One of his classmates there was the iconic Hall-of-Famer, Ted Williams.

The Army then decided that it didn't require so many trainees and sent Harry to Yale to train as a cryptographer. Upon completion of the coursework he was sent to the Pacific

Theater. Harry worked in air-sea rescue. He was sent to Iwo Jima as a 1st Lieutenant where he began tracking planes going over the island. Planes would report to the tower and, if needed, rescue missions would be sent.

While performing his duties, he met Col. Paul Tibbets who would go on to be the pilot of the *Enola Gay*, the plane that dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan.



Harry, to this day, believes it was the right decision to use the bomb because the Japanese were fanatically loyal to their Emperor and would never have surrendered.

Harry was next given orders to go to the Philippines. As he was ready to board the plane, he was told he would have to take the next flight. Fate intervened for he later found out that the plane had crashed leaving no survivors. After a stay in occupied Japan, Harry left the service in 1946. Upon returning to the states, he married his wife "Kitty", had a son, Michael, and ran Danos and Associates Architects.

In his youth he was a member of the Sons of Pericles. He has great memories of the men who mentored him and the time he spent in the drum corps. Harry started this discussion by saying that he was proud to be a Greek and an Ahepan. He ended it by saying that we should continue doing the good work of the Order of AHEPA, especially with the elderly.

*Editor: Not long after our interview we received the disturbing news that Harry had a fire in his house. Luckily he wasn't home at the time but the house was a total loss. We grieved at the thought of a lifetime of memories and memorabilia that was lost to him and to future generations.*



## Presidential Palace Guard Athens Greece

by Leigh A. Berger

*Reprinted with permission from the GCA Journal, Vol. 31 No. 1.*

In the spring of 2014, my wife and I had the good fortune to take a Mediterranean cruise that stopped in several historic ports, including Athens, Greece.

Our local tour guide took us to all the traditional tourist spots, but also made a point to park the cab and walk us to the entrance to the Presidential Palace. He timed it perfectly so we could witness the ceremonial changing of the Palace Guard, or Tsolias.

As the mini-parade of the relieving guard squad proceeded down the sidewalk towards us, it was clear that these were no ordinary soldiers. This was obvious in both their uniforms and in their very interesting marching methods. Seeing them high-step their way through the intricate guard-changing procedures was spectacular.

The guide explained that their marching techniques and their ornate uniforms (including their 7-pound shoes!) have historic significance dating back to the Greek battle for independence in the 19th century.

But make no mistake by their appearance, these are elite special forces, plucked from the ranks of the best of the best and not to be

trifled with. And they were 100% undistracted from their ceremonial routine.

Once they got close enough to see their weapons, I realized that each

soldier was carrying a beautiful specimen of an M1 Garand. The brand new pumpkin colored stocks, much like my first from the CMP (a 1943 Winchester) were easily recognizable. All had bayonets fixed. I didn't expect this treat in the midst of my vacation and I was like a kid back in the candy shop. (And my wife thought she finally had my undivided attention for these two weeks away from my collecting hobby!)

I took a lot of photos of their maneuvers but also tried to get some close-ups of the rifles and how they handled them during the proceedings. After returning home and looking at the photos on a larger screen, I could see that at least one soldier had his rear sight dialed out to maximum elevation. I'm not sure if he was expecting an attack on the palace from 1000 yards anytime soon, but if it was coming, he was going to be ready for it! I also saw a smattering of safeties set to either Fire or Safe during the formations. I couldn't



tell if they were loaded or not, but based on other ceremonial guards I've read about, I'd imagine they were unloaded. The ceremony was very orchestrated and formal, much like The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier guards at Arlington or the Royal Palace in London. There were lots of butt plates being slammed against the concrete during their drills. This display was an extra-special treat for this M1 aficionado to witness and an unexpected bonus to all the great history we took in during the trip through the region. Needless to say, our driver earned himself a nice tip for his day's work.

So if you ever have the opportunity to handle or purchase a Greek-returned M1, look for the well-worn butt plate, and you just may wind up with a rifle that was in the hands of the elite Tsolias, performing the duty of the Palace Guard of the President of Greece!

ANDREW C.  
ZACHARIADES

**SUPREME PRESIDENT  
ORDER OF AHEPA**

*Best wishes to the Brothers  
in Yankee District #7*



Vincent Antonelli, DDS  
Ted Malahias, DDS  
Sean Kim, DDS, MAGD

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March 25, 2017, Saint Sophia and AHEPA 250 raised the Greek Flag on Independence Day. Some participants: Children of St. Sophia, Fr. Dean Panagos, Greg Simones, Mark Nickerson EL 1<sup>st</sup> selectman, Mike Passero NL Mayor, Chris Soto NL State Rep, Demetrius Tasoulas.



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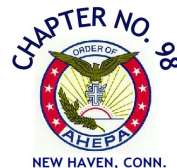
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**Eptahorian Saint George Society**  
Founded in Nashua, NH in 1903

Since its inception, June 3, 1924, Greek-Americans from Eptahori, Greece have taken an active role in AHEPA Chapter 48 of Waterbury, Connecticut.

Currently, over forty Eptahorians are also involved fraternally in the AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope.



*Celebrating 90 Years!*

Proud of its members' immigrant roots;

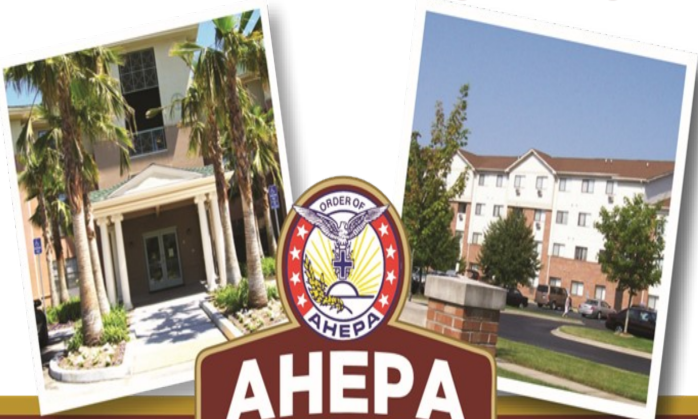
Proud to have celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in March 2016;

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**Greek Independence Day Celebrations in CT, NY, and RI** by Greg Simones

AHEPA Yankee District 7 commemorated the 196<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Greek Independence Day in several ways. Greek flags were raised in at least seven CT cities and in two RI cities. District



DG Greg Simones at the CT Statehouse



DG Greg Simones and Advisor Alex Boutsioulis at the NYC Parade



RI Statehouse Senate Chambers to witness the proclamation recognizing Greek Independence Day sponsored by State Senator Leonidas Raptakis

Governor Greg Simones, Advisor Alex Boutsioulis, Hellenic Affairs Director George Rados, PSG George Scarveles, PDG John Grossomanides, PSP Dr. John Grossomanides, and PSC Greg Stamos were present at one or more of the following events:

- 1) Friday March 24<sup>th</sup> - **Connecticut Statehouse Observance** with Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman in attendance and program at St. George Cathedral in Hartford with Fr. George Zugravu. The Governor's Proclamation was received by AHEPA brother Fr. Charles Simones, Three Hierarchs Chapel, Storrs, CT;
- 2) Sunday March 26<sup>th</sup> - **New York City Greek Independence Parade** marching with the AHEPA Family from Districts 5 (NJ, DE), 6 (NY), 7 (CT, RI) and 8 (MA) See this website for the parade video; <http://www.hellenicsocieties.org/PARADES.html>
- 3) Thursday March 30<sup>th</sup> - **Rhode Island Statehouse Observance** (Providence) including proclamation ratified onsite by Senate and House. The Governor Gina Raimondo, Lt. Gov. Daniel McKee, Senator Leonidas Raptakis, and Vice Consul General of Greece Maria Koukoutsis all addressed the crowd. A program followed at Assumption Church in Pawtucket where a meal was served and all were entertained by a professional dance troupe from Epirus Greece.

**HELLENIC AFFAIRS:  
MISSION AND GOALS**

By G.A.Rados -AHEPA District 7 Chair

The mission of the Hellenic Affairs Committee of the Order of AHEPA District #7 is to provide a better understanding and cooperation between The United States and Greece. Strengthening the political, economic, and cultural ties that bind the two nations together is mutually beneficial. This could also help protect territorial sovereignty.

The purpose of the Hellenic Affairs Committee is to present an organized and unified voice supporting Greece whenever the need arises. Through the use of lectures, publications and media exposure, plus the use of public relations, people will develop an understanding and knowledge of Greece. American public opinion will support the concerns of Greece.

To accomplish these goals, every chapter in District #7 is to appoint an Hellenic Affairs liaison person who will communicate with and assist the Hellenic Affairs Chair. To finance the committee's expenses - associated with both public relations and informing the public about current issues - each chapter is assessed \$ 50.00 per year.



**Dr. John Grossomanides**  
*Past Supreme President*  
**AHEPA**  
&  
**Anna-Helene Grossomanides**  
*Past Grand President*  
**Daughters of Penelope**

**The Bridgeport Chapters  
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DAUGHTERS OF PENELOPE**



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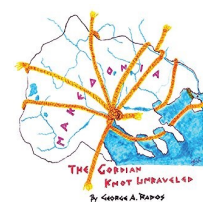
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**Governor, District 7**

~\*~

**First National Hellenic History Tournament  
At the Orlando Convention**

The AHEPA District #7 Hellenic History Tournament was established in 2009 as the first HHT in the nation. Almost immediately, chapters in neighboring districts wanted to join as well, and the tournament became regional, attracting teams from New Jersey, New York and the rest of New England.

In 2014, Greater Chicago launched its own tournament, and so did Greater Philadelphia in 2016. This attracted the attention of George Vorkas, the current Chairman of the AHEPA Educational Foundation, who has invited the top two teams of the three regional tournaments to compete in a national tournament on July 28, 2017, under the auspices of the national convention in Orlando. Announced prizes are \$2,000 for each member of the first place team and \$1,000 for each member of the second place team.

Our next District #7 HHT will be on October 28, 2017, but team registrations must be submitted by June 30. For more details, please see insert in this issue or at <http://www.ahepad7.org>.





Southington



Bristol

New Britain & Meriden AHEPA Family members visit five towns to raise Greek flags for Greek Independence Day. (West Hartford not pictured.)



New Britain



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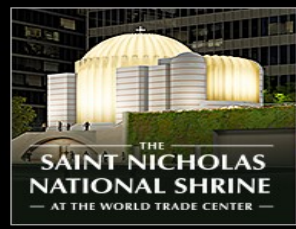


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**Plan your Support.**

Now the time has come to build the Saint Nicholas National Shrine at World Trade Center. AHEPA and its affiliated organizations, the Daughters of Penelope, Sons of Pericles, and Maids of Athena, will support the campaign to build the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church & Shrine by raising funds during the next two years.

All donations made from your chapter to National AHEPA should be made into one check payable to the AHEPA Foundation, Inc. - Memo: St. Nicholas Campaign.







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Lodge #7**

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Secretary - Marianne Boutsoulis  
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Lakis Andriotis  
for his many years of service!**

**Providence, R.I.  
Sophocles Chapter 106**



## HARTFORD AHEPA Family News

### Blood Drive by Jerry Copsinis

The chapter recently concluded its ninth annual blood drive at the church social hall on December 28th. Members on the committee included brothers, Jerry Copsinis, Paul Matsikas, George Karageorge, Larry Papanic, Tony Caliby and Jerry Pangakis. This is a way for the chapter to give back a vital service to the community. Blood drives are always important but the need for blood is acute around the holidays. Forty percent of the donors were from the chapter and church community while the rest of the donors came from Hartford and Wethersfield. The activity has become an important part of the Christmas celebration and tradition. We hope to continue with it in the years to come.

### Valentine's Fundraiser by Tina Smith, President

The DOP Thoas Chapter #198, Hartford, recently held a successful Valentine's Day fundraiser after church in St. George Greek Orthodox Cathedral to benefit our Scholarship fund. Pictured (*top right*) is one of our newest members, Elena Argentaru, who worked tirelessly on this project with Lisa Marotta.

### Faki Dinner by Tina Smith

AHEPA #58 and DOP Thoas #198 recently gathered for their annual Lenten Faki dinner at the AHEPA home in Wethersfield. AHEPA President Jordan Smith provided the delicious Faki and the Daughters of Penelope provided other Lenten dishes. Not only did we have a good turnout from our chapters, we also were graced with many honorable guests: Father George Zugravu who blessed our meal, DOP Zone 1 Grand Governor Lili Respass, AHEPA District 8 Governor and Past Supreme Governor, Dalton Respass, AHEPA District 7 Governor Greg Simones, DOP District 7 Governor Karen Isaac, and DOP District 7 Marshall Ginny Argyros.



### AHEPA A121 Pawtucket Chapter News by Yiannis Apostolakis

The Brothers at the AHEPA #121 Pawtucket Chapter have been working very hard to expand our Chapter's reach within the community. We are actively contributing AHEPA news within our community newsletter, talking to people about AHEPA and encouraging them to join our Chapter as well as taking initiatives within the community to make our Chapter more visible.

### AHEPA Sponsored Greek Classes for Adults

After many months of logistical preparations and community engagement we are excited to announce that, for the first time in our community, we started a Greek Language Program for Adults. Our initiative was in response to our community's needs to expand the knowledge of Greek Language among adults who may have had some Greek in the past, or may be totally new to the Greek Language mainly by marrying into a Greek American family. We conducted community surveys to gauge the interest in participating as well as the individual needs of people and then we crafted a class syllabus, with the help of an experienced instructor of Greek language. Our first class has (11) attendees and the interest for subsequent classes is growing. Our AHEPA chapter uses a small amount of class fees to cover costs. We also compensate the church for utilizing our church community center to conduct our class.



### AHEPA A121 Heritage Bake Sale

On Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, our Chapter organized an AHEPA Heritage Day Bake Sale, to raise the funds for sponsoring a team for the upcoming Hellenic History Tournament. Our youth is very excited about its participation at the Hellenic History Tournament and the community appreciates our AHEPA Chapter engagement to helping our youth discover their roots. We offered mostly fasting food and we are happy to say that our fundraiser was a great success. At the same time, we took the opportunity to talk about AHEPA, and asked people to join us. We provided lots of printed materials relating to the activities of our Chapter as well as to the activities of AHEPA at the District and National level.

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Smith Brothers Insurance, LLC is proud to support Yankee News and I am personally honored to have been part of the efforts of the AHEPA organization in their Affordable Senior Housing program for over 20 years.

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### Chapter 98 Educational Forum

by Gregory J. Stamos

AHEPA Chapter #98

sponsored an educational forum on the Patriarchate on February 15, 2017 at St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, Orange, Connecticut, in tandem with the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, the Hellenic Bar Association of Connecticut and St. Barbara's Church. Present and supportive of the endeavor were Supreme Governor Jack Isaac, District Governor Greg Simones, and numerous AHEPANS from throughout the District. The main focus of the lecture was the Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Enthronement of His All-Holiness, Patriarch Bartholomew, in particular his significant accomplishments of a quarter-

century of leadership amongst the worldwide Orthodox faithful. Professor Evangelos Hadjimichael, President of Chapter #98 provided the introductions, Chapter #98 member and Past Supreme Counselor Gregory J. Stamos served as moderator. Stamford Chapter #99's Nikoforos Mathews provided the context of Patriarch Bartholomew's significant accomplishments by giving an overview of the five (5) facets of the denials of religious freedom under which the Patriarch operates. Professor Demacopoulos then highlighted the significant accomplishments of what he termed the transformative quarter-century of leadership of Patriarch Bartholomew, focusing on three (3) aspects in particular: Intra-Orthodox conciliation, as symbolized by the Great and Holy Council in Crete in the summer

of the 2016; Intra-Christian dialogue; and in particular, the world-wide leadership of His All-Holiness in environmental preservation.

A lively and informative questions and answer session followed, and the uniform consensus of the audience was that all left with a much stronger appreciation of the issues relating to the Patriarchate, the denials of Religious Freedom, and the significance of His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew's tenure as leader of the Orthodox faith.

This presentation was the latest in a series of sponsored lectures and educational forums by Chapter #98 relating to issues affecting the Greek diaspora, such as the Greek economy; and issues of social importance, such as the Plight of the Christian Minority in the Middle East and the Syrian Refugee crisis.

### News from New Haven, #98

by Evangelos Hadjimichael

#### Chapter Initiation

On March 23, 2017, Chapter 98 celebrated the initiation rite for five new members, all from the community of Saint Barbara Church. The Chapter joyfully admitted the new brothers, and rejoices at the prospect of added talent and energy to carry on its obligations and fulfill its vision for the future. Brothers from the District 7 Lodge assisted in the ceremony: District 7 Governor Greg Simones, Lieutenant Governor Demetrius Tasoulas, Treasurer John Melonopoulos and immediate past District 7 Governor Alex Bitsioulis.

Members of Chapter 98 served as Initiation officers: E. Vagos Hadjimichael, George Scarveles, Greg Stamos, Mark

Hojnoski, Tom Tambis, Jim Benas and Patric Marchitto. Additionally, during the pre-initiation reception, and during the initiation, several additional brothers in attendance provided a large measure of warmth and support for the initiates who, it is certain, will find a convivial environment in the bosom of Chapter 98 to make their contributions to the Chapter's aspirations.

The newly minted Ahepa brothers are Chris Hadjimichael, George Papadimitriou, David

Mikhail, Peter Vouras and David Patrick. They are all ages and they all have honorable and creative backgrounds, and have performed with distinction in their respective endeavors.



Seated, Front row, left to right, the five initiated brothers: David Mikhail, Peter Vouras, David Patrick, George Papadimitriou, Chris Hadjimichael. Standing, left to right; Peter Stamos, Brad Lott, Manny Cosmas, John Melonopoulos, Tom Tambis, Jim Benas, Demetrius Tasoulas, Vagos Hadjimichael, Greg Stamos, Greg Simones, Mark Hojnoski, Alex Boutsoulis, Gary Andrews, Peter Iosifides, David Patck, Patric Marchitto, George Scarveles. **Photo by Patric Marchitto**

#### Chapter 98 - In Other News...

- On February 11, brothers prepared and served lunch to about 65 men, women and children in the Branford Community Center.
- On February 15, the Chapter staged a presentation on the Patriarch's quarter-century of spiritual and theological accomplishments (above).
- On February 19, the Chapter held its traditional Ahepa Pancake Breakfast offered to the community, following church services.
- On the same day, an Ahepa-sponsored event for the youth, "Curious Creatures" after the breakfast, for young ones and their parents.
- On March 1, a new documentary film by Stavroula Toska was screened by the Chapter. *Beneath the Olive Tree*, is focused on the period following the civil-war in Greece, 1946-1949; it follows the life of five women who were exiled on a barren Aegean island for political reasons.
- On March 23, the Chapter held the induction ceremony for five new Ahepa members. (above).

Looking ahead to next month, following the Holy Easter, the Chapter will sponsor a day-long visit to the St. Nicholas Shrine at Ground Zero in New York, with guided tours of the Shrine and of the National 9/11 Museum and Memorial. The visit, scheduled for Saturday, April 22, is open to the community and to brothers and family members from other Chapters in District 7.

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**Reflections from a Grandfather**

+Fr. Costas J. Simones

Dear People,

I have been a Greek Orthodox priest for fifty-seven plus years. As a priest of the Orthodox Christian Church, I have experienced the reality of the miraculous presence of Jesus Christ in the sacraments of the Church and in the life of the faithful who sincerely look to Jesus for guidance and abiding love. Having experienced every aspect of the miracle of life in all its dimensions of joy and sorrow in this world, I have come to realize that Jesus Christ is the most important Person in the life of every human being born into this world. This thought was driven home to me more profoundly on the morning of February 16<sup>th</sup>,



*"We tried so hard to save you but you lost the war, you will remain in our hearts forever until we meet again in heaven."*

2016 when I was called at 5:30 in the morning to inform me that my precious grandson, Costa, was dead from an overdose of heroin and that I should come immediately to read the prayers for the dead.

Costas had been addicted to drugs by being introduced to the gateway drug marijuana in middle school. By the time he had reached high school he was experiencing with many opiates that are favorites with young people in America today. At some point after his senior year in high school, someone introduced him to heroin. This had become the

drug of choice for him and it did not take long for him to be heavily addicted to it. For three years after this, Costas was in and out of rehab and detox facilities. Nothing seemed to be able to reverse the chemical imbalance that eventually took his life at the age of twenty-one. I, as an Orthodox Christian priest, have spent my whole life committed to the reality of life after death. I am no stranger to sickness and death but when death hits home at such a young age it is very difficult to deal with even as a priest. Thank God for Jesus Christ and His Holy Orthodox Church. As Orthodox Christians, we do not simply grieve without hope at our great loss; we look to the Lord of Life and His promises of eternity for comfort and consolation. Since the day Costa physically left this world, I am constantly saying Christ Is Risen and Costas lives.

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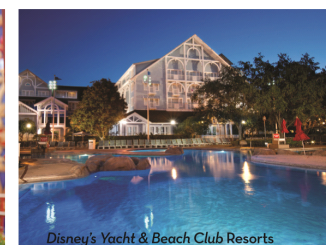
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**CHAPTER 245 Shares Ionian Village Essay**

*Newport's Maud Howe Elliott Chapter 245 offers young members of our local community help to defray costs associated with attending the Ionian Village. Recently, Ronnie Purcell attended. He is the grandson of brother Ahepan, Reverend Dr. George E. Economou. Upon his return, he wrote the following essay. We share it with you, and hope you find it interesting.*

Ionian Village Essay  
by Ronnie Purcell

Ionian Village was really a life changing experience, from going on day trips, to having vespers at the chapel, every part of Ionian Village changed me into a better person. Ionian Village is not just a summer camp, it's a place where memories are made that last a lifetime. A place where you can truly connect with God. My time at Ionian Village was probably one of the best times I have had my whole life. The typical camp schedule was waking up, having activities and sessions, free swim, and then to round out the day, evening chapel and an evening activity.. Every aspect of Ionian village changed me. I saw many holy relics and tombs of many holy saints while at Ionian village. One saint in particular that stood out for me was St. Nectarios. One place that was so beautiful to me was the island of Zakynthos. I also witnessed many miracles at Ionian Village, which some may consider coincidence, but they are too perfect to be considered coincidence.

At first, I was really unsure about going to Ionian Village, even on the plane going to Greece. Once I got to Ionian Village, and the days started to go by, I realized that Ionian Village was really a special place, a holy place. Fr. Evagoras said to us on the first day "Trust the program", so I did. Once I started trusting in the program I became close with the kids in my cabin. I enjoyed every session and every activity, and I couldn't wait for the next day to come. Going to visit saint's relics like St. Nectarios really stood out to me, especially when I heard scratching on the tomb

Visiting the relics of St. Nectarios really strengthened my Greek Orthodox faith, and going to the island of Aegina, where the relics are located was also very fun. It is known that if you put your ear up against the tomb of St. Nectarios you can hear scratching or knocking. When I put my ear up against his tomb I could hear scratching. This really amazed me, how a miracle like this could happen because I have never experienced something like this. I found that Aegina was truly a beautiful island. I also got to do some shopping while I was in Aegina, and even got a souvenir. Aegina is an hour away from Athens and was a really fun place to visit, and a place I look forward to going to again.

Another event that strengthened my faith was not visiting a saint's relics or tomb,

but was when the whole camp was doing an evening activity on the soccer field. When we were doing an activity on the soccer field, the power was out. Since there were no lights to illuminate the field, the headlights of cars had to be used. Once the evening activity was done, the whole camp got in a big circle to discuss the next couple days, and where we would be going. We were told we would be visiting the relics of St. Dionysios of Zakynthos. Fr. Evagoras said we should try singing the apolytikion of St. Dionysios. Immediately after we started singing the Apolytikion, the power came back on. There are really some things too perfect to call coincidence, and this was one of them.

One of my favorite trips was traveling to Athens for three days. Athens is a very exciting city, and in Athens I went to Monastiraki and Plaka to shop. Monastiraki and Plaka are really beautiful parts of Athens with many restaurants and places to go to. Also while in Athens I went to the Acropolis. The Acropolis and the Parthenon specifically, are two of the most famous landmarks in all of Greece. Going to the Parthenon and actually seeing it in person was much different than seeing pictures of it. Although it was the people of Ionian Village that really made this trip a unique experience.

One of the most fun parts of Ionian Village was really just bonding and getting to know my cabin better after the evening activity. This was one of the only times in the day where we got time to relax and get to know each other. It was a time of rest after a very long and fun day. This was the time I got to meet the most friends. This was when we laughed and sometimes were serious, such as the final cabin activity of the day which was devotional. Devotional was a time where the whole cabin made a circle and we discussed how the day went, and what we were going to do the next day. It was a time where we discussed our thoughts and feelings about certain topics such as God and our faith.

From going to Ionian village, my life changed. My spiritual life was enriched, and my everyday life was filled with excitement when I was at Ionian Village. As time went by I began to trust the program. I also began to see how holy a place Ionian Village is. I was walking around a place where many miracles have and will happen. I began to see how wonderful the places we went to were. I began to understand how much the staff cared for our safety. I knew how much I wanted to come back.



**SPRING CONFERENCE** by Andrew Aros

At 10:10 a.m., March 18, 2017, New Britain President Emmanuil Stergakis welcomed the Brothers of Yankee District #7 to the 2017 Spring Conference. 29 Brothers representing 11 chapters attended the conference. DG Gregory Simones also welcomed the Brothers then introduced members who had served on the Supreme Lodge and Past District Governors.

Unfavorable weather conditions delayed Supreme Governor Jack Isaac's return to CT from the Supreme Lodge meeting in Arizona. He sent a message explaining a decline in AHEPA membership is a major concern that must be addressed on local, district and national levels. At the conference Lt. Governor Demetrius Tasoulis also addressed the issue and gave several suggestions as to how to reverse this alarming trend.

Past SG Nick Nikas stated the two highest scoring teams of 2016 Hellenic History Tournament will be invited to the National Convention to participate in a national tournament. The winners will receive additional scholarship money. He also announced this year's HHT will be October 28, 2017 at St. Barbara Church in Orange. Flyers will be in the Yankee News. He expressed a desire for more than five chapters to submit teams for the upcoming HHT. It was embarrassing to have more teams from out of our district participate than we did in our own tournament.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

Hellenic Affairs Chairman George Rados has formed a committee that will articulate the mission as well as the scope and nature of the committee. PDG Alex Boutsoulis and the District Board of Governors will review the 90 Day Rule before new District ByLaws are introduced. The brothers present unanimously agreed a chapter secretary and a chapter president can verify a member is in good standing for a District Scholarship. Current Scholarship applicants will informed in May if they have earned a district scholarship. The Scholarship Award Dinner will be June 25, 2017 in Waterbury.

**CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

**New Haven** will sponsor a trip to St. Nicholas at Ground Zero on Sat., April 22, 2017. There will be a guided tour of the grounds and explanation of the construction of the national Shrine. Shortly thereafter, on Sun., April 30, 2017, **Danbury** will sponsor a concert by renowned singer Sofia Papazoglou. Each chapter will receive a rebate of \$5 of \$10 for every ticket they sell. On Sat., July 1, 2017 **Norwich** will sponsor an AHEPA night at the new stadium in Hartford. If you enjoyed the Taverna hosted by **Bridgeport** then purchase your ticket in advance! The Fri., August 25, 2017 event can only sell a limited amount of tickets. On Sat., Sept.23, 2017 **Paideia** will have the grand opening of it museum.

**BEST WISHES,  
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PLEASE send pictures and articles TOGETHER whenever possible, with those in the picture(s) named in the context of the article or with it. Submit your information TO [YANKEED7NEWS@AOL.COM](mailto:YANKEED7NEWS@AOL.COM) to be certain your submissions -in their entirety- get to us by the deadline.

**CALENDAR**

Fri., April 21, 2017 -  
Deadline for NERC Registration  
Mon., May 1, 2017 -  
NERC Banquet Dinner Reservation Deadline  
Wed., May 3, 2017 -  
Capitol Hill Day & Reception, Washington, D.C.  
**May 5,6 &7, 2017 - Tri-District Convention (NERC), Norwich, CT**  
Sun., May 21, 2017 -  
AHEPA Sunday!  
Thur. June 1, 2017 -  
Deadline: National Convention Delegate Reporting  
Sun., June 25, 2017 -  
Scholarship Foundation Luncheon, Waterbury, CT  
Fri., June 30, 2017 -  
Deadline: 2017 Hellenic History Tournament  
**July 24-30, 2017 - National Convention, Orlando, FL**  
Tues., August 1, 2017 -  
Deadline: Yankee News September Issue  
*See the Spring Conference notes on page 11 for more District 7 Chapter events!!*

**AHEPA District 7 Yankee News**

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