



Remembering Greek American Veterans of Philadelphia and the Delaware Valley

The Eleftheria Post 6633 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is composed of Greek American war veterans from the Philadelphia area who served in WW II, Korea and Vietnam. The post is putting together a book to document its history and the experiences of its members, including the following who recently

gathered in at the Fernwood Cemetery in Upper Darby, PA: George Baxavanos, Emanuel Leventelis, Ted Koukos, Sam Vasiliades, Nick Gianopoulos, Chris Pappas, George Bourlotos, Elias Horiates, Angelo Sioutis, Issac Anderson, Harry Mantas, Jim Markellos, Bill Phillips, Chris Kallas, Nick Pelis.



TNH/COSTAS BEI

A Little Koukla and the Biggest Saints

Eleni Theodora is thrilled to receive the delicious artos on her name day at the Church of St. Constantine and Helen in Jackson Heights, Queens during services where Archbishop Dimitrios and the Very Rev. Iakovos Koutsakis, the pastor presided.



Opa! Opa! Rings out in Upper Darby

One of the dance groups of the community of St. Demetrios of Upper Darby, PA dazzles in traditional costume at the parish's annual Greek Fair during the weekend of May 21. Festival Chair John Vassiliou and dozens of volunteers took part.

In the Spotlight: Konstantine Rountos, Diving

By Angelike Contis
TNH Staff Writer

NEW YORK – Marine Biologist Konstantine Rountos, 29, knows that an inspiring instructor can make all the difference. In his case, it was an ecology class with Manhattan College Professor Michael L. Judge that pointed him away from his medical school plans to his true calling, ecology. Notes Rountos of Judge's impact: "It really opened the door for how I view the world and the interconnectedness of the natural world... it clicked for me that I can create a difference in the world on a larger scale than just one patient at a time." Rountos has built teaching – whether to children or college students – into his own research. Studying the life around fish farms in Crete and Evia islands in Greece on a 2007/8 Fulbright grant is among his proudest achievements. A few weeks ago the Stony Brook PhD candidate also received the university's Sigma Xi Chapter Travel Award and the Distinguished Travel Award by the institution's Graduate Student Organization and Graduate School. With the onset of summer, Rountos is donning scuba gear again – this time, to investigate harmful algae in Long Island waters. Keep an eye out for this scientist who regularly comes up for air to share what he knows, in the name of our blue planet.

TNH: Tell us about yourself.

KR: I was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut and raised in Danbury, Connecticut. My father, John, came from Evia, Greece to Bridgeport with his family at age 12. They experienced the typical struggle of most Greek families coming to the United States. My mother, Valerie, a first generation Greek American, was raised in Massachusetts, in the Boston area. She was always very interested in science, graduating from Tufts with a degree in occupational therapy.

So science, fishing and the environment are really in my genes. My grandfather, who I'm named after, Constantine Angeles, was a fisherman in the Boston area. My uncle, Arthur Angeles, was too.

Since I could walk, I have been working at our family's diner. I've worked in pretty much any position you can think of, from the busboy all the way to the night manager. That's where I learned a lot about responsibility... My parents' work ethic really motivated me to make sure that I strived to be the best in college and try to make my mark. It was a life-changing experience going to Manhattan College, most importantly, as my wife Muriel also was a Manhattan College graduate. She has been fundamental



Above: Rountos diving near fish farms in Crete and Evia islands. **Left:** Konstantine Rountos, a Ph.D. candidate at New York's Stony Brook Institute for Ocean Conservation Science School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences.

in my success. It was a great education from Manhattan College. The faculty were inspiring and provided me with a foundation to pursue graduate school. After my undergraduate studies, I went to Stony Brook, where I completed my Master's degree researching seagrass ecology in Great South Bay, in Long Island.

TNH: What are some environmental changes you'd like to see in your lifetime?

KR: There are reports that in ancient times there was a bounty of large tuna in the Aegean. But today if you go to any Greek market, it's very rare to see any large fish and if you do see a large fish, chances are that it's farm produced. That's something that's really difficult to swallow. It shows us that we've really lost our force of being environmental stewards. In my lifetime I'd like to help Greece create better fisheries reform and help them restore and rejuvenate some of the coastal ecosystems.

TNH: What are some of your greatest achievements to date?

KR: Receiving a Fulbright fellowship for independent research that allowed me to give something back to the country of my ancestors, by creating change, was a monumental ex-

perience. Another thing that I am very proud of was being a Division One lacrosse player in college. By senior year I was a scholarship player and co-captain.

TNH: How important is teaching in your work?

KR: I'm very happy and very blessed to be able to teach as an adjunct professor, most recently at the New School University in Manhattan. Teaching at the university level is something that's not very common for people with only their Master's degree. Teaching is part of why I am a scientist, to translate the science to young minds and to the public. There are many wonderful scientists that are doing great work, but when it doesn't get out to the public, I feel that it doesn't do as much good. That's one of the reasons that I have conducted public education initiatives and have worked with nonprofit groups here in the U.S. and in Greece. To try to get people thinking about science and thinking critically about how they are interacting with their environment, and to ultimately improve their relationship with it.

TNH: What are some future goals?

KR: Right now as the field season starts up, we are getting

good weather to go out on the water to collect samples. I'm currently looking at harmful algae that are becoming more and more frequent in our coastal areas, how they affect fish, and assessing damage to small forage fish species in the greater Long Island area. I'm hoping to finish my Ph.D. in 2013, to complete my dissertation and graduate.

TNH: Do you have any role models?

KR: I do have a very significant role model: the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. He helps me develop as a scientist and enforces my passion to be an environmental steward and a conservationist. I never realized until recently how involved the Orthodox Church is in environmental protection and stewardship. He made me appreciate my faith even more. He said: "We must treat nature with the same awe and wonder that we preserve for human beings. And we do not need this insight in order to believe in God or to prove his existence. We need it to breathe; we need it for us simply to be." It comes down to motivating people, whether they are religious or not religious, to be environmental stewards. That's something that I believe in deeply.

Angelike.contis@ekirikas.com

If you'd like to nominate a notable member of the Greek American community for "In the Spotlight", please contact english.edition@thenationalherald.com with your suggestions.

GOINGS ON...

■ NOW THRU JUNE 30

NATIONAL - The American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with Cisco and under the auspices of the Prime Minister of Greece, has launched the Make Innovation Work Competition, offering a \$100,000 first prize to an innovative business plan that advances the Greek economy. The competition focuses on innovative ideas from entrepreneurial Greeks around the world that could make Greece more competitive in one of four areas: Green Energy, Tourism, Alternative Agriculture and Transportation Shipping. For more information, please visit www.miw.gr.

■ JUNE 2-5

TENAFLY, N.J. - St. John Theologian Cathedral at 353 East Clinton Avenue in Tenafly will hold its 41st Annual Taste of Greece Festival on June 2-5. Festival hours are from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on Thursday, noon to midnight on Friday and Saturday, and noon to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday. The huge tented outdoor grill will feature American favorites and Tastes of Greece including the "Ouzeri Bar" and the "Kafenio". Enjoy evenings of Greek music and dancing, and Greek folk dances performed by The Hellenic Dancers of Tenafly. Free parking is available on the church grounds and the adjacent JCC on the Palisades, with free shuttle service. For directions or information call (201) 567-5072 or visit the Festival web site www.tasteofgreece.org.

YONKERS, N.Y. - The Greek Orthodox Church of Prophet Elias, 15 Leroy Avenue, Yonkers, N.Y. is holding its Annual Greek Festival on Friday, June 3 from 5 p.m. to midnight; Saturday, June 4 from noon to midnight; and Sunday, June 5 from noon to 11 p.m. There will be traditional Greek food and pastries, Greek dancing, live music, games for the children, nightly raffles and a fabulous flea market. For more information, call the Church office at (914) 963-3638.

STAMFORD, CT - The 1st Annual "GOC OPEN" will be held at the Sterling Farms Golf Course, Stamford, CT on Thursday June 4th 2009 sponsored by the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation of Stamford. 7:45 a.m. SHOTGUN. Breakfast and Lunch will be provided. Hole-In-One prize: Mercedes Benz (Mercedes Benz of Fairfield) Reserve Your Four-some today! \$150/per person. Send payment to: Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 1230 Newfield Avenue Stamford CT 06905; Attn: Lazaros Karipides. Checks payable to: Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church (reference the "GOC Open") Contact Larry Karipides at (203) 570-5863 or: karips@optonline.net. Please visit us at our website: www.gocopen.com.

NEW YORK - The Greek America Foundation hosts the 2011 Gabby Awards, where Greek America's Best and Brightest Stars will shine on a night of accomplishment and celebration. Details at <http://www.gabbyawards.com>. The awards show will take place on Saturday, June 4 on Ellis Island. Nine awards will be given in categories ranging from the performing arts, to politics, to business. Two Lifetime Achievement Awards will also be given to former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis and artist Stephen Antonakos. After Party and Red Carpet will take place at Pier Sixty Chelsea Pier featuring dinner designed by celebrity chef Cat Cora and entertainment by famed Greek recording artist Glykeria. The event is the main fundraiser for the Greek America Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion, preservation and perpetuation of Greek culture and ideals in North America. (<http://www.greekamerica.org>)

MANHATTAN - The Gabby Awards Farewell Concert featuring TRIFONO will take guests on a musical journey through Greek musical heritage. The concert taking place at Town Hall features an appearance by Lina Orfanos. Concert tickets are included in the Gabby Awards ticket price while supplies last. Those not attending the Gabby Awards can purchase tickets through Ticketmaster. Town Hall, 123 West 43rd Street.

ASTORIA, N.Y. - All are invited to a fundraising and networking event dedicated to Marina Evripidou, a young mother who is battling cancer. Marina was diagnosed the day she gave birth to her baby girl. The event will be at the Avel Lounge, 19-26 Steinway St. in Astoria on June 9 from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. Appetizers will be served. RSVP at rsvp@marinaevripidou.org. Visit the following site for further information and to make a donation: <http://www.marinaevripidou.org>.

■ JUNE 9-12
HOLMDEL, N.J. - The Church of Kimisis of Holmdel invite everyone to their Greek Festival Thursday, June 9 to Sunday June 12 featuring rides, games & prizes, Greek food and pastry, boutique and folk dancing. Rain or shine, ATM on site. For info visit 222.kimisis.com or call (732) 739-1515.

STAMFORD, CONN. - The Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation of Stamford promises "Fun for the whole family!" at its annual Grecian Festival- Rain or Shine: Thursday June 9 through Sunday, June 12. Thurs & Fri - 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.; Sat 12 noon to 11 p.m.; Sun 12 noon to 10 p.m. There will be Greek foods and pastries - folk dancing - Wines - ouzo - a Greek agora and Rides and games. A fabulous car raffle limited to 999 tickets for a 2011 Mercedes Benz GLK 350 AWD will be offered. Free admission - free shuttle service. 1230 Newfield Avenue, Stamford, CT. Call 203-322-2093 for information.

BROOKVILLE, N.Y. - The Holy Resurrection Greek Orthodox Church, Corner 25A & Rt. 107 in Brookville, NY hosts its Greek Village Festival 2011, June 10 from 6-11 p.m.; June 11 and June 12 from 3-11 3-9 p.m. Free Parking and Shuttle Bus from C.W. Post campus. The festival features four cooking classes with world renowned Executive Chef George Kyrtatas, author of My Big Fat Greek Feast, music and dancing; petting zoo and pony rides on Saturday and Sunday, June 11 and 12. For info visit www.greekvillagefestival.info or contact: Stella at (516) 456-3548 or Zefy at (516) 532-3004.

■ JUNE 11
MANHATTAN - The singers of the Konovets Quartet will return to the St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church for live concert of mostly Russian Orthodox hymns on Saturday, June 11 at 6:30 p.m. Tickets \$ 20 adults \$ 10 children 12 and under. Includes concert and dinner afterwards and free parking. St. Spyridon is located at 124 Wadsworth Avenue. Contact Savva Demoleas for more information at sdemo62@aol.com or 718 483 3275. The hosts would appreciate it if you contacted them to let them know how many people you are coming with so they can plan accordingly. Konevsky Monastery is a Russian Orthodox monastery that occupies Konevets Island the Russian Federation. During the Soviet period, the monastery housed a military unit. In 1990 it became one of the first monasteries in the region to be revived by the Russian Orthodox Church. The Konovets Quarter donates much of their income to efforts to rebuild the monastery.

■ 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 regarding the event 3-4 weeks ahead of time, and no later than Monday of the week before the event, to english.edition@thenationalherald.com

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: Will Greece Restructure or Default?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

The results for last week's question: Was Socrates guilty?
17% voted "Yes"
76% voted "No"
7% voted "Maybe"

Please vote at: www.thenationalherald.com