

# news

Vol. IV, No. 4 - Summer 1996

THE HELLENIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY of Northeastern Ohio

## May Meeting Offers Potluck Dinner and Long Range Plan Review

The quarterly General Meeting for all members will be held at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church on Thursday, May 16.

The Potluck Dinner (no charge) at 6:30 p.m. will be followed by a short business meeting to elect a trustee from the general membership to a two-year term.

A program to follow-up on the Long Range Plan will be presented by Leslie Yerkes, president of Catalyst Consulting Group. Yerkes has guided the Long Range Planning Committee through the process - covering the issues of mission, values and vision. *hps*

-Pauline C. Latkovic

## Dialogue with Marilyn Rouvelas: Informative and Fun

The Third Annual Distinguished Speakers Luncheon, held on Sunday, March 31, 1996, featured Marilyn Rouvelas, author of *A Guide to Greek Traditions and Customs*. Rouvelas turned the hall at Sts. Constantine and Helen Cathedral into an intimate Greek setting for her presentation "Dialogue with Marilyn Rouvelas" by introducing herself briefly at the formal podium, then taking the micro-

phone in hand and reaching the audience person-by-person, *Oprah Winfrey* style. When they married, Rouvelas realized that she had not only married into Emmanuel's family, but into the entire Greek tradition as well. She was fascinated by Greek culture and knew she had much to learn about it. Holding a history degree from American University and having conducted research for periodicals and television programs, Rouvelas had the need, the interest, and the necessary skills and talent to write a guide to the traditions she was learning bit by bit. She volunteered on behalf of her church in Baltimore to write the guide as a fund-raiser if the men and women of the community would share their experiences and insights with her.

For a two-year period, Rouvelas met regularly with the people of her parish and interviewed them. The guide that came out of the project is both informative and fun. It covers the basic tenets of the Orthodox faith, architecture, art, liturgical music, language, services, and church etiquette. Most of our church bookstores sell the guide.

Rouvelas started her "Dialogue" by asking people after whom they were named. Immediately, the traditional pattern emerged of people being named after one of their grandparents, thus proving that many traditions have been passed on and thrive in America. She went on to ask for volunteers to express what they thought were unique traditions from their area of Greece or from their Greek-American communities. People shared sto-

*continued on page 4*

## Welcome New Members

James and Solveig Elios  
Charles and Koula Karikas  
Tom Pastis

HPS is meeting the challenge to preserve this culture which we so fortunately have inherited.

As members, you are being asked to invite others to join us in our great mission to pass the torch on to our descendants.

New members who join in 1996 will have their membership extended through 1997. *hps*

-Charlotte LaJoe

## "Adopt an Icon"

The beautifully restored and framed icon of St. Matthew served to launch the campaign to Adopt an Icon at the HPS Luncheon held at Sts. Constantine and Helen Cathedral on March 31. (Three other icons have also been restored.) *Funding is needed to complete the remaining 26 major works of art that were painted by Fr. John Zographos in 1929.*

This collection is a vital element in the preservation and transmission of our Greek heritage. Cards detailing the work and cost that were placed at each table to potential do-

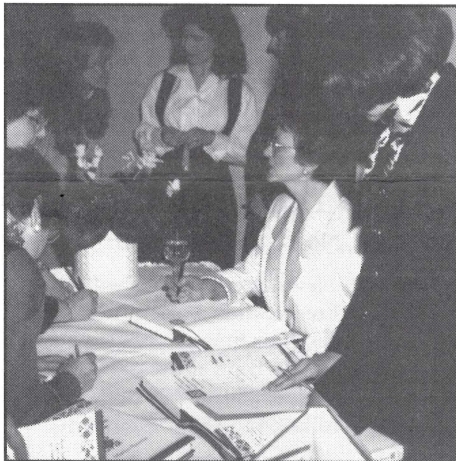
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## YIASOU! Taverna Nite '96!

Plans for Taverna Nite '96 are being finalized as you read this. We promise you a fun evening complete with Greek mezethakia and music for your listening and dancing pleasure!

Circle the date Sunday, July 28, for Taverna Nite '96 at the Greek Isles Restaurant from 7 p.m. to ??? We welcome all young and old, from near and far for an evening of fun, food and conversation!!

More information to follow.



phone in hand and reaching the audience person-by-person, *Oprah Winfrey* style.

Rouvelas converted to Greek Orthodoxy when she met and fell in love with husband, Emmanuel. On one of their first dates, he took her to a popular Greek cafe in their then home of Oregon and gently introduced her to *Retsina* by dipping his fingers into it and then touching her lips with it. She admits it has never tasted as good to her since.

## ΤΑ ΛΕΜΕ ΣΤΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ

Αγαπητοί φίλοι

ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!!! Ευχομαι η Αγια Ανασταση του Κυριου να χαρισει σε εσας και τις οικογενειες σας οτι επιθυμηται και να φερει στον κοσμο αγαπη, ελπιδα και χαρα. Απο το τελευταιο μας ραντεβου μοι συνεβηκαν δυο πραγματα που θα ηθελα να μοιραστω μαζι σας. Το πρωτο ειναι κοινωνικο, το δευτερο πρωσωπικο.

Στις 31 Μαρτιου ειχα την ευκαιρια να παραβρεθω με τους γονεις μου στη τριτη Ομιλια μετα Γευματος που παραθετει ο συλλογος για τρια χρονια τωρα. Η ομιλητρια, κα. Μαριλυν Ρουβελας, μιλησε για τα ηθη και εθιμα των Ελληνων εδω στην Αμερικη. Οση νοστημια δεν ειχε το φαγητο, το ειχε το προγραμμα!

Με το μικροφωνο στο χερι, η κα. Ρουβελα πηγαινε απο τραπεζι σε τραπεζι και ρωτουσε τους ακροατας για τα διαφορα εθιμα που εφεραν οι γονεις και παπουδες τους απο την Ελλαδα και απο που συνεχιζουν εκεινοι εδω. Σε ενα απογευμα ολοι μαθαμε για ηθη και εθιμα απο ολη την Ελλαδα σχεδον, σε μια ζωντανη και εντονη ατμοσφαιρα, διαφορετικη απο τον σοβαρο και ακαδημαϊκο τονο που χαρακτηριζε προηγουμενους ομιλητες. Συνηστω σε ολους το βιβλιο της κα. Ρουβελα με τον ομωνυμο τιτλο.

Το δευτερο γεγονος, αν και πρωσωπικο, νομιζω οτι αντιπροσωπευει ολους μας. Επι ευκαιριας των 200 γενεθλιων του Κληβελαντ, η πολιτεια μας κυρηξε διαγωνισμο ζωγραφικης, σε πληνια πλακακια, με θεμα τις διαφορες εθνικοτητες που ζουν στην πολη μας. Η δικη μου συμμετοχη, διαλεχτηκε να ειναι μια απο τα σχεδια που θα αντιπροσωπευουν την Ελληνικη κοινοτητα της πολης μας.

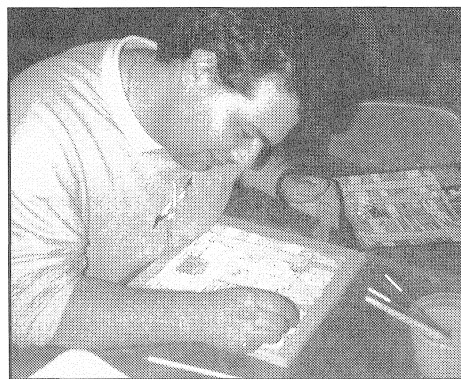
Αν και εξ παρχης αυτο φαινεται σαν δικος μου θριαμβος, νομιζω οτι ειναι θριαμβος για ολους τους Ελληνες της περιοχης μας. Στα γαλανολευκα χρωματα του σχεδιου μου, κρυβεται τιμη και σεβασμος για ολους τους Ελληνες μπογιατζηδες, εστιατορες, δασκαλους, δικαστες, επιχειρηματιες, και τοσους αλλους που συνετελεσαν και συντελουν στη προοδο του Κληβελαντ. Μπορει να μην ειμαστε πολλοι οπως στην Νεα Υορκη, αλλα απο τοτε που πατησαμε εδω... κανουμε και θα κανωμε θαυματα.

Θα τα πουμε αργοτερα

hps

Μαρκος

## Mark Fikaris Donates Plaque to City's Bicentennial Walk



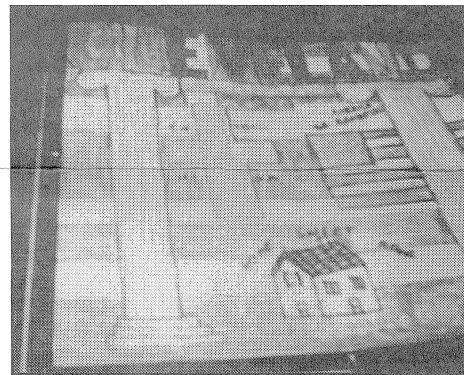
A plaque designed by Mark Fikaris, representing the Greek American Community of Cleveland will be displayed on the Bicentennial Walk.

Mark, an immigrant from Greece, a recent graduate of Cleveland State University, an active member of Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral, the Hellenic Pres-

ervation Society and the Hellenic University Club, has had no formal art training. He was inspired to try his hand at painting in order to honor the Greek American community of Cleveland which in his own words, "contributes so much to this land that I have adopted."

hps

—Dr. Themistocles Rodis



## Stressed Out? You Should Have Heard What's Going On at Mt. Olympus!!!

At the March General Members meeting, Robert Lewis, a retired partner at the law firm of Ulmer & Berne, and one of the founders and member of the Board of Trustees of Cuyahoga Community College, gave a lecture on how the Greek gods were similar to mortals – the fact that they both create stress and experience stress, and how they closely resembled humans at their worst – cruelty, infidelity, ferocity and duplicity. In his lecture Lewis talked about the ongoing feud between Zeus and Hera, and the constant fighting that went on because of their frequent bouts of infidelity. And even though they would treat their brothers, sisters, sons and daughters in the worst way, they still could at times show love, compassion, and mercy. If only Hard Copy were around 2000 years ago, the stories they could tell!!!

Lewis, a jazz musician, is a scholar of ancient Greek culture and language and a playwright. His first play, *Five Angry Women*, was produced in March 1990 at the Ohio Theater in Cleveland.

hps

—Steven Rackas

## HPS Newsletter

Vol. IV, No 4 – Summer 1996

The HPS Newsletter is published by the Hellenic Preservation Society of Northeastern Ohio four times a year for members and friends. Send address changes to Charlotte LaJoe, 25026 Mill River Road, Olmsted Falls, Ohio 44138.

**Editor:** Dr. Themistocles Rodis

**Layout:** Pauline C. Latkovic

**Writers:** Kathy Apotsos, Mark Fikaris, Charlotte LaJoe, Pauline C. Latkovic, Eleni Papouras, Mike Papouras, Steve Rackas, Rose Rodis, Dr. Themistocles Rodis, Koula Stevens, Argerie Vasilakes

**Photographers:** Helen Collis, Paul Mathiellis, Rose Rodis

**Errata:** Apologies to Paul Mathiellis for our failing to acknowledge his contribution of the photograph depicting the "doming" of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in the last issue.



# Greek Garden Restoration: Community Involvement Sought!

A meeting to plan the Greek Garden's role in the city's Bicentennial will be held on Saturday, May 4, at the Botanical Gardens (11030 East Blvd., across from the Cleveland Museum of Art), in the Duncan Room from 10 a.m. to noon, chaired by Andrew Chakalis and Gus Callas. Anyone wishing to participate in this major event is invited to attend.

The rededication of the Greek Garden will take place on Sunday, Sept. 8, 1996. Activities will include music, dance, costumes, food and awards. If you wish to participate in any of these areas, please call Andrew at 431-0470 or Gus at 779-6981 to reserve a seat.

Meanwhile, Chakalis reports that the firm of Sol Fusco will be starting the final stonework phase in April and will be completed in May.

Students from the Gates Mills Horticulture School will contribute by pruning and mulch-

ing in the spring and fall. Plans to involve elementary schools in the area are also in the works.

In addition, lighting donated by Cleveland Public Power along with police beat patrols will increase safety. The Greek flag atop a new 25 ft. pole will fly above the restored garden which also boasts a fountain and stone benches.

The renovation of the terraced site is the creative work of Jim McNight, landscape architect. Two large, new signs (at each end of the area) will more readily direct newcomers. The Greek Garden should be a source of pride and enjoyment and renewal for the Greek community. It is also a location for wedding, photos, etc. The possibilities are endless ...

*hps*

-Koula Stevens

# Early Outstanding Greek Immigrant Women

The excerpt below is a part of a continuing series about early Greek immigrants that is being published in the HPS Newsletter. These series are intended not only as a part of the fulfillment of the HPS mission but also as background for local histories about Greek Americans that are beginning to appear with greater frequency.

Very few references have been found about outstanding Greek immigrant women, particularly prior to the 20th century. Even the references to Greek women in the 20th century, until relatively recently, have been generally "home-oriented," so to speak; that is, as women's lives centered around family, home, and church," according to Stella Coumantaros in *The Greek American Community in Transition*, edited by Harry J. Psomiades et al (1982). (In that work, nevertheless, 8 out of the 14 articles are written by women.)

The only references to Greek American women that have been found, outside of "home-centeredness," in the late 19th and early 20th centuries are in the pioneer effort of Thomas Burgess, *Greeks in America ...*, published in 1913. Even at that, he wrote about only three Greek women to whom he referred as "more or less well-known [Greek Americans] who were still living in the United States at the time:

...Demetra Vaka [sometimes spelled Vaca] (Mrs. Kenneth Brown), formerly on the staff of the *Atlantis* [one of the two national Greek newspapers in the U.S.], author and collaborator with her American husband of the wild and woolly tales, 'Haremliki,' 'The Duke's Price,' 'In the Shadow of Islam,' etc; Mrs. Julia D. Dragoumis, author of 'Tales from a Greek Island,' published first in the *Atlantic Monthly*; and Mrs. Seraphim G. Canoutas, scholar, musician, and writer, nee Euphrosyne Paleologos, scion of the last of the Byzantine emperors.

In a more recent work, *Hellenes and Hellions ...* (1981) by Alexander Karanikas, Demetra Vaca and the 'Duke's Price' is mentioned, but he fails to note one of her more important serious works, 'In the Heart of German Intrigue' (1918). He also fails to note or make any reference either to Mrs. Stella Coumantaros or Mrs. Canoutas. Athena G. Dallas in the Psomiades book also fails to mention any one of the three. (In a later excerpt of the HPS Newsletter some of the outstanding Greek American women of the 20th century will be discussed).

*hps*

The subject in the next issue will be the first of 4 outstanding Greek Americans of the 19th century: John C. Zachos, educator, surgeon and writer.

-Dr. Themistocles Rodis

## "Green Thumb Alert!"

*"What lives in a garden?  
Love lives in a garden.  
What makes a garden?  
God and lovers know."*

This verse appears on a bronze, garden plaque. If these sentiments move you, please volunteer at the times listed below:

- Schedule:** Starting April 12 thru October
- Time:** 9:30 a.m. to (your choice)
- Dates:** 2nd Friday or Saturday of each month
- Work:** Light clean-up, weeding, raking, etc.
- Tools:** Please bring your own.
- Call:** Andrew Chakalis: 431-0470  
Gus Callas: 779-6981
- Directions:** I-90 Exit Martin Luther King Blvd. South on MLK. Left turn on 2nd street. Proceed to stop sign. Right turn up the hill. Right turn just past the Italian Gardens. You're there!

*hps*

-Koula Stevens

## What's Current in Collections

With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the collections committee will be renting a climate-controlled storage unit to house its collection. Items will be protected in acid-free materials and placed on shelving. Insulation board lining the walls and floor will also help in protecting articles.

Andrew Chakalis, former Extensions Curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art, has given invaluable help to the committee in establishing the tracking system and the parameters of the proposed collection. Categories are: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts (includes Music and Folk Art), Prints/Drawings, Photography and Textiles. Donations will go through a review process. Criteria for acceptance of donations are: historical element, time period, origin of article, condition of item and educational impact.

Now that the groundwork has been carefully laid, we look forward with excitement to the offerings of generous individuals in our community. More information will be coming soon.

*hps*

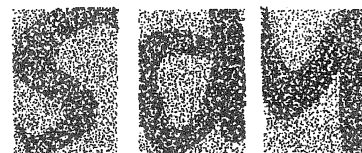
-Rose Rodis

## HPS Calendar

- May 23-27 ..... Annunciation Festival
- July 11-14 ..... St. Demetrios Festival
- July 28 ..... Taverna Nite '96

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
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THE HELLENIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY  
of Northeastern Ohio  
6701 Rockside Road, Suite # 303  
Independence, Ohio 44131



## Icon-continued

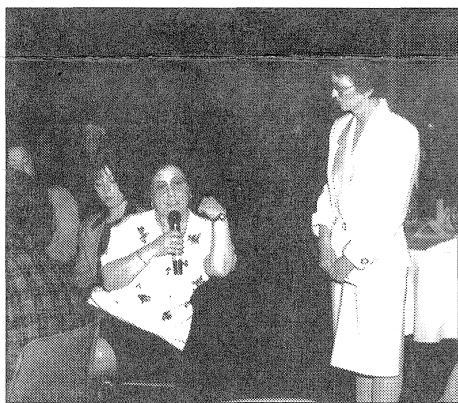
nors, elicited positive responses. Cards will also be mailed to potential donors. Each donor's name will receive honorable recognition on a plaque that will eventually be displayed prominently. Any individual, family, group, society or business wishing to become a sponsor is asked to please call Andrew Chakalis at 431-0470 or Rose Rodis at 521-3718.

*hps*

—Koula Stevens

## Rouvelas - continued

ries about all-night Easter festivities and large family gatherings, much like the ones we enjoy here.



Rouvelas then asked how many people attended Greek school. Most people in the audience raised their hands. She then asked how many people enjoyed Greek school. Most people put their hands down and chuckled at the idea of enjoying Greek school.

## Is There Someone You Know That Has Promoted The Hellenic Ideals of HPS?

If so, please make sure that they are nominated for the HPS Recognition Award that is presented at the annual ball. The purpose of the award is to honor individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to the mission of HPS. The criteria for nominees are: 1) A demonstration of outstanding service, sustained excellence, accomplishment and creativity to the mission of HPS; 2) A nominee should have demonstrated outstanding leadership in Northeastern Ohio, nationally or internationally; 3) A nominee should have contributed a significant financial contribution to further the mission of HPS.

Any current member or recipient of the award may make one or more recommendations to the Awards Committee, which will be subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Remember, a nominee need not be of Greek decent, nor does that person have to be a member of HPS. The organization wants to make sure that individuals and/or organizations that have contributed to Hellenism are given the credit that they deserve. Also, nominations can be made at any time during the year, and there are *no restrictions on the number of awards* to be made each year. Each winner will receive a plaque and be recognized at the HPS Annual Ball in October.

Anyone wishing to fill out a nomination form may pick one up at our quarterly meetings, or contact Steve Rackas at 524-3999. A form will be mailed to you, as well as answers to any questions you might have. *hps*

—Steven Rackas

Since most of the Greek traditions are tied to the Greek language, the decline in the use of Greek means we are losing traditions without really noticing. It takes someone like Marilyn to care enough to ask for a detailed explanation.

At this point, the discussion inspired several people to express their deeply-felt concern over our gradual loss of traditions through our lack of sound Greek school programs. In the past, the transfer of traditions was mainly done through word-of-mouth: from Greek parent to Greek child. But here in America, over the last few generations, parent and

child have let the traditions fall into disuse. Greek parents haven't taken the time to teach and diaspora children haven't taken the time to learn the old traditions in our new setting.

The *Guide* and the dialogue help bridge the cultural and generational gap. Both express how important the traditions are in showing us who we are as people. It helps us be both Greek and American by enjoying the old traditions and enriching the new ones we are helping to develop here in America. *hps*

—Kathy Apotsos