

GOLDEN GATE DISTRICT NO. 21

# Ahepa Traveler



CHAPTERS THROUGHOUT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN NEVADA

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Winter/December 2025



CHRISTMAS  
LOADING



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A quarterly magazine.  
highlighting significant  
events & achievements  
within the organization  
and the Greek-American  
community



Cover  
"Christmas loading"  
Artwork by  
Selana Sirra



## *Three Months, Fifteen Celebrations,*

## *.....and One Box of Melomakarona*

The Greek - American winter feels like a calendar someone decorated with holidays, melomakarona, and family embraces. From Christmas to Clean Monday, the December-January-February stretch is a nonstop parade of customs, tables, and emotions.

We begin with Christmas, where light triumphs over darkness and the table overflows with powdered sweets, warm wishes, and aunts asking, “*So, when are you getting married?*” Then comes New Year’s, with vasilopita hiding coins and promises. And before you’ve finished digesting, January brings the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. A celebration that reminds us that coming home is always welcome, especially if you bring cheese pie.

February, though, is the true star. Carnival unfolds our theatrical spirit, with masks that both conceal and reveal, and Clean Monday grounds us with lagana, taramosalata, and kites that soar... or at least try to.

These celebrations are moments that stay with us. Meraki, philoxenia, disguise, return, renewal. All Greek. All ours.

And for all of us, these traditions are more than custom. They’re bridges. A melomakarono, a Carnival song, a vasilopita with a hidden coin... each becomes a way to keep Greece alive, both on the table and in the heart.

*The editorial team*

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AHEPA TRAVELER is the official publication of Golden Gate District 21 Order of AHEPA (American - Hellenic Educational Progressive Association). It is published and distributed to members and friends. There are Ahepa, Daughters, Sons and Maids Chapters in Northern California and Western Nevada.

Article III – This Order shall be non-partisan in politics and non sectarian in religion. All partisan political and sectarian religious discussions are prohibited in any official deliberations thereof.

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Follow us on social media and keep the journey alive



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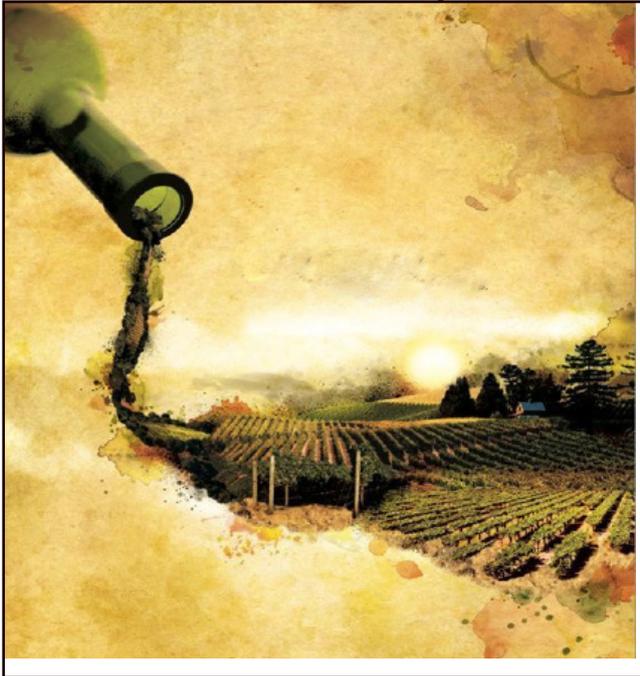
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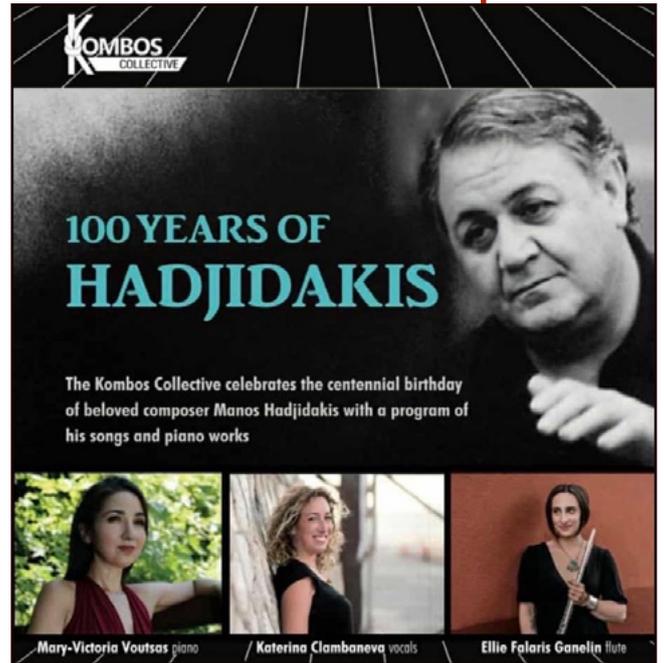
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## **Governor's Update November 2025**

Happy Thanksgiving and safe travels to you and your families as we begin the holiday season.

I am pleased to announce the progress of two of our charitable projects. Stockton Chapter 212 President, Tom Chiarchianis, has located a promising property for a Senior Living facility. The property details have been submitted to National AHEPA. We will keep everyone posted on the progress.

Oakland Chapter 171 is nearing the goal of sponsoring our next Service Dog for Warriors. Several other Chapter have also been fund raising for this worthy cause. I will be contacting each of our Chapter Presidents. The District lodge will help the Chapters achieve their goal of sponsoring a Service Dog. There are many veterans in need that we can help.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone to donate or seek donations for our Scholarship Fund.

*Respectfully,*

*MarkHallock*

*Governor AHEPAGoldenGateDistrict21*



## November Greetings from the District DOP Governor!



We had a successful District Fall Conference on 18th October at St. Katherine's Church Hall in Elk Grove. Thank you to all the DOP Artemis #5 and AHEPA #152 for all your hard work. The "mini" District Raffle was very successful. Father Dino had donated a Bossini tree for the grand prize which Brother Vassili Zarifis, AHEPA District Secretary won. He was very happy! Sister Diana Bouchard, Artemis #5, gave him care instructions. \$900 was raised for the District Scholarship! Thank-you again to everyone who participated—donors and raffle tickets buyers, both.

Congratulations to our District Penelope of the Year – 2025 – Sister Angela Christon (Echo #4) and our Daughter of the Year – 2025 – Sister Kathleen Farros-Hoepfner (Sparta #18).

Grand Treasurer, Sister Effie Kirkiles joined us for our District Conference. She has great advice for celebrating the DOP 100-year anniversary since the National AHEPA will not guarantee having the national convention in California, summer 2030. The National AHEPA didn't do Atlanta, GA either for their 100-year anniversary even though it was expected. The suggestion was a big GALA instead of regular Founder's Day. The Atlanta AHEPA chapter did the same and had a bigger success than anyone ever thought possible!

Mark and I are busy with visitations. We will be halfway finish at the end of November with San Mateo visitation on the 22nd of November. Sacramento, Modesto, and Stockton will finish the year off with combine visitations and Christmas parties in December. December 6th for Sacramento at the Watt Ave location Spaghetti Factory. Stockton & Modesto will do their combine Christmas Party but as a luncheon this year at Las Casuelas in Manteca on the 13th December. Both events start at 11:30 and are collecting unwrapped gifts for children to be donated to the different chapters' charities.

**Happy Thanksgiving to our extend AHEPA family from everyone in the District Lodge!**

*In Theta Pi,  
Athena Hallock, District Governor  
Golden Gate District 21*



**An Evening of Memory and Honor:  
The Reunion of AHEPA  
District 21**

In the light of community and history, AHEPA District 21 hosted an unforgettable banquet, a gathering filled with emotion, honor, and fraternal love. Dedicated to the athletic legends of the Greek-American diaspora, the evening brought together generations of Ahepans, Sons of Pericles, Maids of Athena, athletes, families, and clergy in a ceremony that honored the past and illuminated the future.



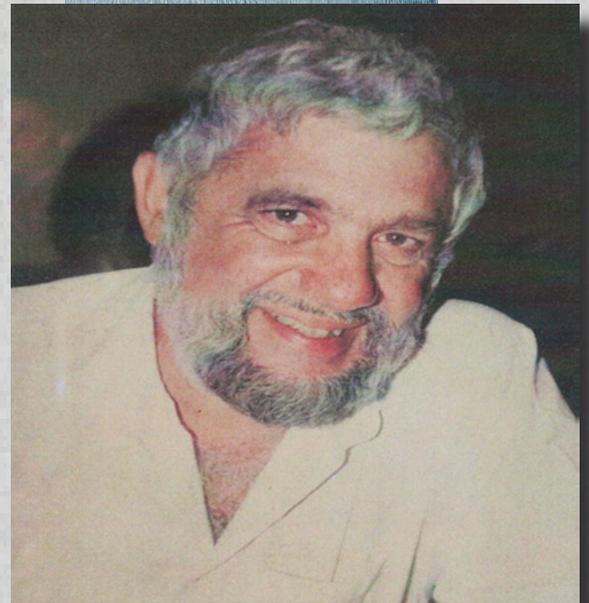
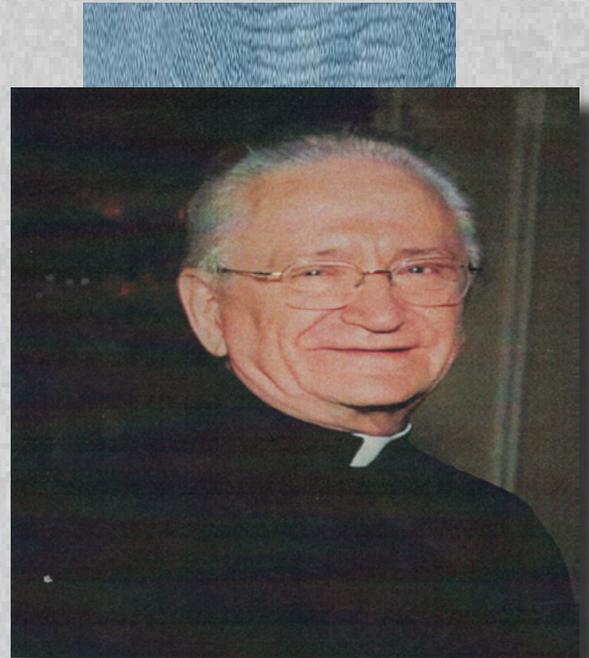
*The Past District Goves are (LtoR):*  
George Booras PST, George Zioulas PSG, Mark Hallock DG, Chris Frangos, Tom Chiarchianis, Alexander Mallas, PSG

*A celebration of Hellenic spirit, athletic legacy, and communal unity*

# The Ceremony of Honor: Two Legends in the Pantheon of History

With heartfelt emotion, the community honored Father Anthony Kosturos and sportswriter Nick Peters, two figures who embodied virtue, service, and a deep love for youth and athletics. Their induction into the Northern California AHEPA Athletic Hall of Fame stands as a profound recognition of lives devoted to the common good and the spiritual cultivation of the next generation.

The evening was a celebration of collective memory, Hellenic soul, and the strength of community. Every glance, every handshake, was a promise of continuity.





Members of the Daughters of Penelope Urania Chapter #290 in San Mateo joined friends from the Sons of Pericles and the Maids of Athena for a joyful reunion banquet. The evening was filled with laughter, heartfelt stories, and the warmth of reconnecting with old friends. Together, they celebrated the bonds of the AHEPA Family, honoring tradition while creating new memories that will carry their spirit forward.



*Clockwise from Left:  
Joanne Zongus, Gloria Higham, Kathy Mertens,  
Karen Bagatelos, Maria Vavuris, Claire Gagag,  
Felicia Avramov, Eleni St. John, Vickie  
Buonocore, Marina Fitzgerald.*



You can scan the QR code or simply [click here](#) to view the full program of the evening and relive each moment.

Joanne Booras, PGP  
Oakland Maids #1  
in 1973 Western  
Regional BBT-SF



On behalf of Ahepa District 21 which hosted the Reunion Dinner Banquet for all Past Sons of Pericles, Maids of Athena, and Basketball Players, together with inducting Father Anthony Kosturos and Nick Peters into the Northern California Ahepa Athletic Hall of Fame, **we want to recognize the success and enjoyment experienced by the 144 persons who attended the October 4th event held at the Basque Cultural Center in South San Francisco.**

We extend special recognition to the Sponsors who allowed us to purchase a Perpetual Plaque for the past and future inductees to the Northern California Ahepa Athletic Hall of Fame, and allowed us to comp the families of the 2 inductees. We appreciated the attendance of Father Costa Efstathiou and Father Aris Metrakos. Kudos to Vikki Vrettos Fraioli and Davis Zouzounis whom organized and filled 2 tables each. The presence of 9 active Sons of Pericles from Fresno added to the success of the event. The Sons held a 50/50 raffle fund raiser and raised \$1,400 for a planned trip to the National Sons of Pericles Basketball Tournament.

Ahepa District 21 wishes to continue Athletic sponsored events honoring Hellenic individuals who have achieved honors in the Athletic dome. Feel free to contact the Hall of Fame committee below and nominate for consideration any person you feel worthy, maybe yourself with achievements, articles, photos, history.

*Stamus Cocolos Chairman of the Northern California Athletic Hall of Fame*

*Call or text, 209-480-7856 email: scocolos@yahoo.com*

*or Chris Frangos Vice Chairman*

*Call or text, 650-868-2402 christofrangos@gmail.com*

**AHEPA**  
**District 21**  
*Fall*  
*Conference*



**A day of  
unity,  
renewal, and  
Hellenic pride  
in Elk Grove**

AHEPA Golden Gate District 21



## AHEPA Family Fall Conference 2025

Lin Grove, October 18, 2025



*Enjoy the video, a vibrant journey through the conference, filled with inspiring moments, captivating photos, and the spirit of AHEPA Family in motion.*

*By clicking on the video, you will be redirected to another page (YouTube). To return to the magazine, please go back to the previous tab.*

## *AHEPA District 21 Fall Conference*



*Sitting L to R*

*Chris Frangos PDG, Alex Mallas PSG, George Zioulas PSG, Vassilis Zarifis DS, George McClure SG, Mark Hallock DG, Dennis Davis LtG, Andrew Ganetsos DT, Stamus Cocolos, Athletic Dir*

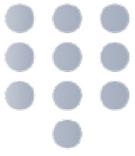
*Standing L to R*

*Bob Sexton PSG, George Booras PST, Nick Pries PDG*

On October 18, 2025, members of AHEPA Family District 21 gathered in Elk Grove, California, for a spirited Fall Conference hosted by the Daughters of Penelope Artemis Chapter #5 of Sacramento. Delegates from across Northern California and Reno Nevada came together in a day marked by hospitality, heritage, and heartfelt collaboration.

The morning session opened with greetings from national and district leaders, followed by updates on youth programs, scholarship initiatives, and centennial projects honoring the legacy of early West Coast chapters. Plans for the first West Coast Hellenic History Tournament sparked excitement, while Founders Day and Hall of Fame celebrations highlighted the district's vibrant cultural life.





In the afternoon, officers reviewed bylaws, digital banking protocols, and strategies for improving transparency and inter-chapter coordination. The Scholarship Foundation reported strong financial health and new outreach goals, while members discussed revitalizing the Hellenic Lecture Series and expanding public engagement.



*Helen Sexton, PDG*



*L to R, Yurie Pauls, District Treasurer, Athena Hallock District Governor, Effie Kirkiles, DOP Grand Lodge (Grand Treasurer?), Laurie Sahines, District Secretary, Alicia Frangos PDG*



*In Greece, every George is a national treasure. In Elk Grove, we had a vault.*

**Lto R:  
George McClure  
George Zioulas  
George Booras  
George Koumis  
George Carathimas  
George Pauls**

The day concluded with group photos, laughter, and renewed commitment to AHEPA's mission. As District 21 approaches its centennial decade, the Elk Grove conference reaffirmed the power of fellowship, tradition, and shared purpose in shaping the future of Hellenism.





## *St. Nicholas Celebrates 80 Years*

By Jacqui Argyres

On Saturday, September 20, the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church community center in San Jose was the setting for an afternoon tea celebration filled with community spirit and shared memories.

Hosted by the St. Anna Philoptochos and the Daughters of Penelope Daphne #29, the event honored **eight decades of parish history**. Guests enjoyed tea, conversation, and a nostalgic touch as many arrived dressed to represent their favorite decade from 1945 to 2025.

The afternoon was a warm tribute to the parish's legacy and a celebration of the faith and fellowship that continue to define the St. Nicholas community of San Jose.

*All photography courtesy of Victoria Smyrniotis*



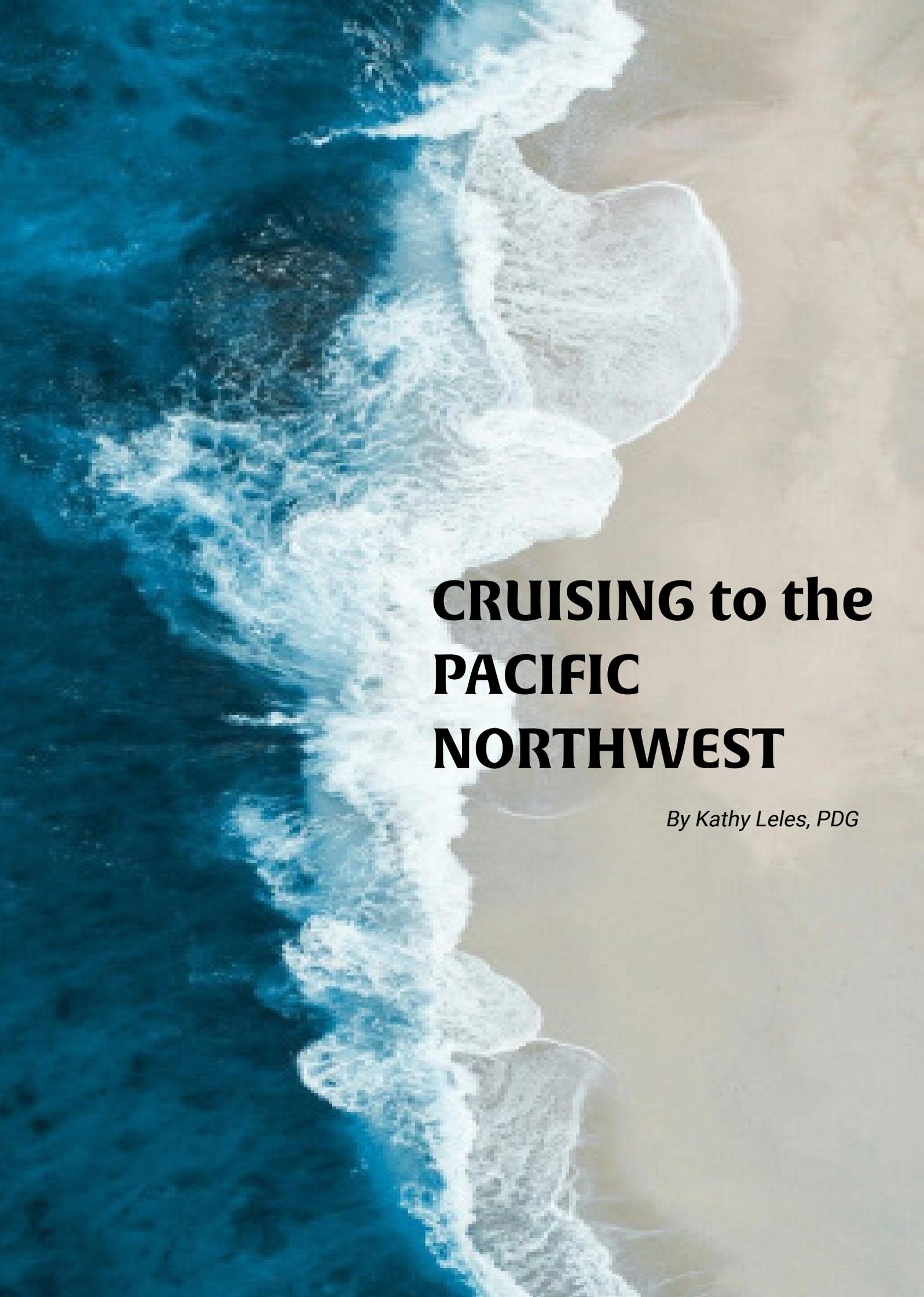


Afternoon Tea  
The only right occasion of the British  
Empire!

Scones, Strawberry	St. Nicholas Curlew
2	12
2	12
2	12







# **CRUISING to the PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

*By Kathy Leles, PDG*

The Past District Governor's League (PDG) of District 21 brought back their yearly trips after a hiatus in an effort to raise funds for scholarships. With the assistance of Gus Ropalidis from Expedia Cruises, 32 people made their reservations and on October 5th, boarded the Ruby Princess in San Francisco to the Pacific Northwest for a one week cruise. Ports of call included Victoria B.C., Vancouver B.C and Seattle, Washington.



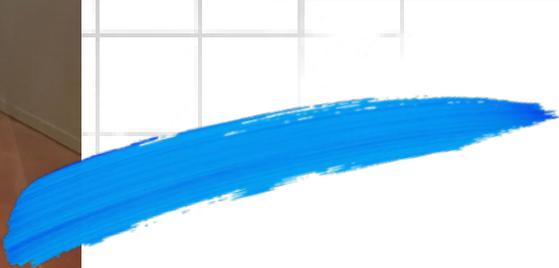
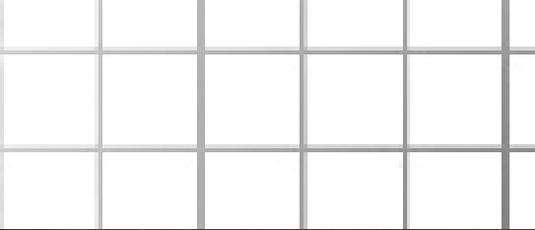


For one whole week, travelers were kept busy at sea with many activities which included bingo, spa treatments, comedy and karaoke nights, contests with the crew, knitting and much, much more. Once at port, excursions were taken to such places as Butchart Gardens, the Capilano Suspension Bridge, the Space Needle and Seattle's Public Market to watch the throwing of fish and be amazed at the beautiful bouquets of flowers for sale. A few of our travelers even visited the stunning Chihuly Garden and Glass Museum as well as waited at the original Starbucks for a cup of coffee.

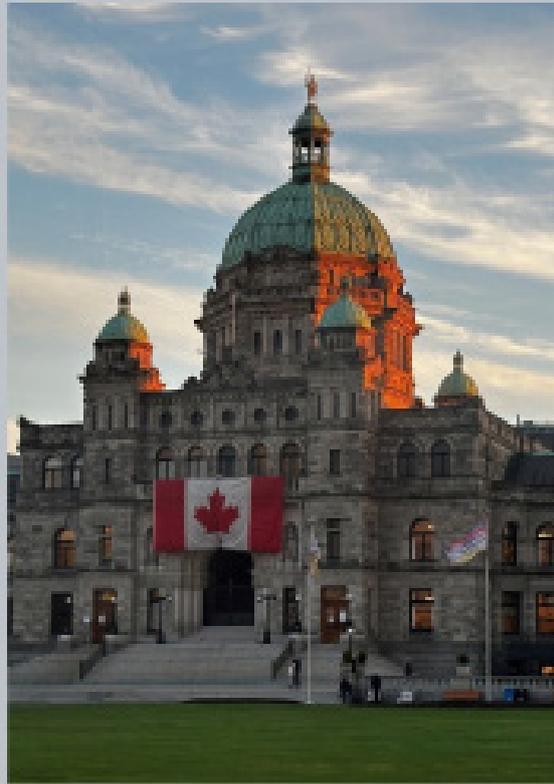
Celebrating their birthdays on the ship were Vlasis Fousekis and Christine Skorinis and both were sang to by our most delightful waiters.

In the end, due to the support of our travelers, the Past District Governors League raised \$3100.00 to go towards the scholarship fund and support the academic needs of students. Travelers are already suggesting trips for next year – so where will we travel to next? \_\_\_\_\_









Click [here](#) to enjoy the video with photos and highlights from the journey, and let yourself be carried away by the beauty and charm of the Pacific Northwest...



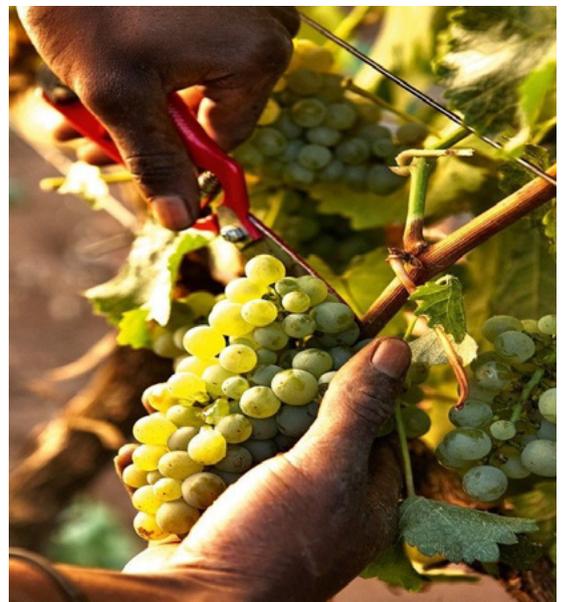


# Wine, Homer & Hippocrates III:

## THE TIMELESS RITUAL OF THE HARVEST

October marks the grape harvest across temperate regions. A ritual echoing Homer's "dark wine" (μέλαν οἶνο), gift of the gods, remedy for sorrow, companion to joy.

We joined the harvest in California's Cupertino Hills, Bay Area, where **Bruce and Joyce Steakley** cultivate a vineyard with devotion. Their winery, aided by volunteers such as George Zioulas and Vassilis Zarifis, who helped collect and process the large grape harvest, is a labor of love, not commerce. Each year yields 50–60 cases of red wine: cabernet sauvignon, malbec, merlot, and cabernet franc, each bottle a quiet celebration of community and care.



California has become a global winemaking center. Its Cabernet carries time's wisdom, its Chardonnay, joy's lightness. Each bottle begins in the vineyard and arrives in the glass with grace.



In Greece, wine history dates to 6,500 BCE, with ancient Macedonian roots. The Greeks pioneered wine legislation in the 5th century BCE and celebrated wine in Homer's epics, Plato's Symposium, and Athenaeus' Deipnosophists. It symbolized hospitality, contemplation, and civilization.

Hippocrates prescribed wine for pain relief, wound cleansing, and balance — body and mind.

From ancient Macedonia to Napa's valleys and Cupertino's hills, the harvest remains a timeless ritual.

Wine continues to mature in barrels and memory, a vessel of culture, healing, and human connection.



# You gave **BLOOD** You gave **LIFE**

The AHEPA Silicon Valley Chapter with the help of the DOP Daphne Chapter organized another successful community Blood Drive flawlessly executed by the not-for-profit Vitalant Blood Bank. Thank you to all the volunteers and donors! We had 34 appointments with 7 first time donors, and we collected 28 units of blood which could save up to 84 lives!! A big heartfelt appreciation to our St Nicholas Church in San Jose which enthusiastically allowed us to use their event hall!



Click Facebook button to link to our Facebook post

# Oakland Chapter 171

## HONORS LIFELONG *Dedication* TO HELLENISM

By John Aronis, Chapter Secretary



On Saturday, October 25th, Oakland Chapter 171 hosted a heartfelt joint service pin luncheon with the Daughters of Penelope, celebrating the enduring commitment of its members to the ideals of Hellenism and brotherhood. The event honored:

**10 years:**

*Nikolas Stathakos, Mike Kolokithas*

**25 years:**

*Stephen Miller, Dennis Metaxas*

**30 years:**

*Athanasios Patrikios*

**35 years:**

*Harry Metaxas*

**45 years:**

*Nicholas Stamatakis*

**50-year Life Members:**

*Nikos Yfantis,*

*Costas Bournazos,*

*Jerry Katopodis*

Serving the principles of Hellenism for decades is a testament to the strength and unity of our community. These Brothers exemplify the values of philanthropy, education, civic responsibility, and cultural preservation. Their dedication reinforces the bonds that connect generations and inspires younger members to continue the legacy. Events like this remind us that the spirit of Hellenism thrives when we honor the past, celebrate the present, and invest in the future.



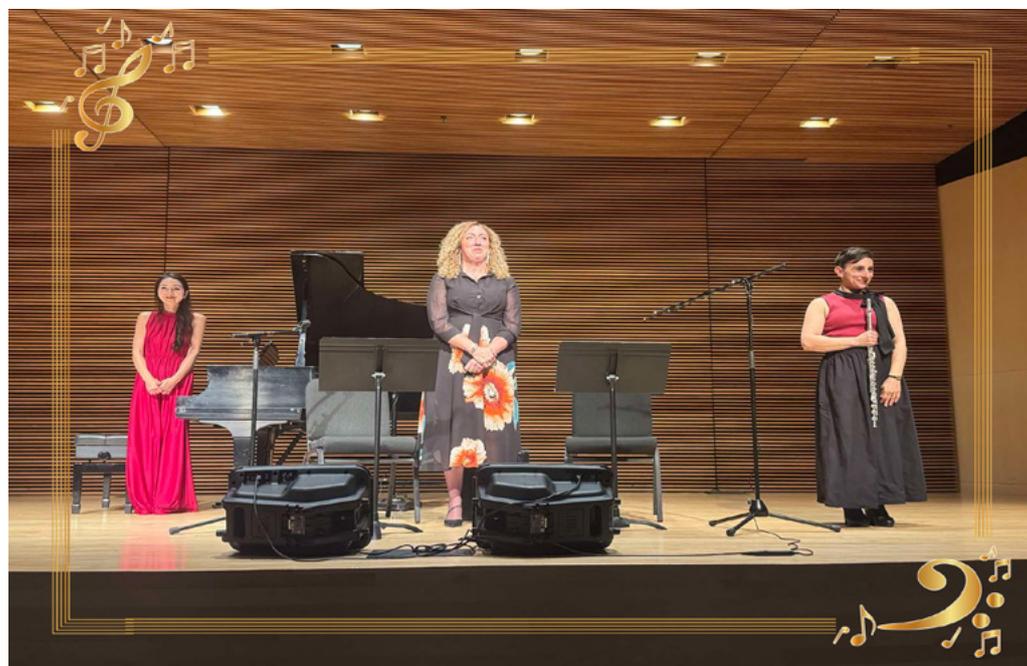
*A Legacy of Brotherhood, Guided by the  
Light of Hellenism*

# MANOS HADJIDAKIS: THE POET OF GREEK MUSIC

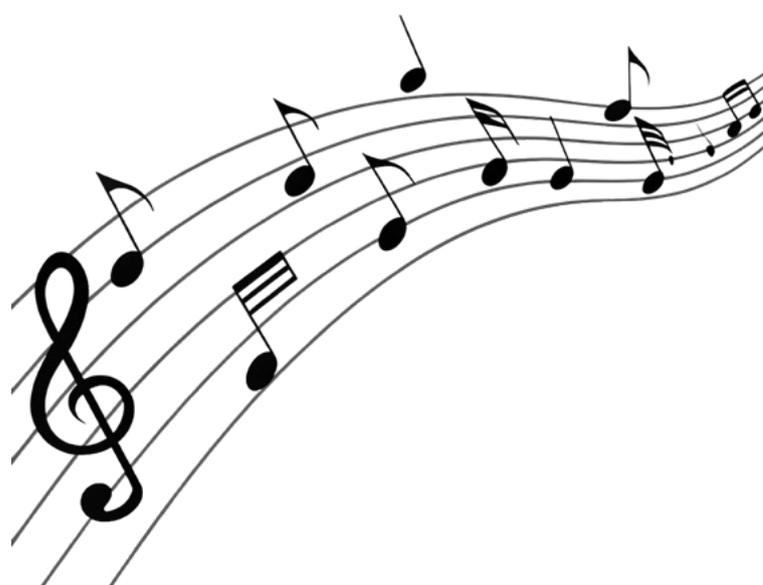
On October 17, 2025, the heart of Greek music beat strongly in Mountain View. The musical ensemble Kombos Collective presented a moving evening dedicated to Manos Hadjidakis, marking the centennial of his birth.

The event took place at the Community School of Music and Arts, featuring a trio of musicians, Katerina Clambaneva (vocals), Ellie Falaris Ganelin (flute), and Mary-Victoria Voutsas (piano). They performed a selection of Hadjidakis works, from his most lyrical songs to his introspective piano compositions. The audience was transported through time and emotion, guided by the sensitivity and depth that only Hadjidakis could evoke.

Born in Xanthi in 1925, Manos Hadjidakis is considered one of the most important composers of modern Greece. His music bridged the gap between popular and classical traditions, rebetiko and symphonic forms, giving voice to the Greek soul and making it resonate globally. From “Never on Sunday” (Ποτέ την Κυριακή), which earned him an Academy Award, to his compositions for the Art Theater and the Roes Dance Theater, Hadjidakis left an indelible mark on Greek culture.



The evening in Mountain View was a celebration of Greek cultural heritage, a bridge between Greece and the diaspora, and a reminder that Hadjidakis music remains timeless, moving, and profoundly human.



**KOMBOS COLLECTIVE**

## 100 YEARS OF HADJIDAKIS

The Kombos Collective celebrates the centennial birthday of beloved composer Manos Hadjidakis with a program of his songs and piano works

Mary-Victoria Voutsas piano / Katerina Clambaneva vocals / Ellie Falaris Ganelin flute

# *An Inspiring Evening with Our Grand President !*

*By Jacqui Argyres*

**DOP Chapters Daphne #29 and Urania #290** were thrilled to co-host a memorable dinner welcoming our Daughters of Penelope **Grand President, Antoinette Marousis-Zachariades!** The event, held at Buca di Beppo in Palo Alto, brought together sisters from both chapters for an inspiring evening of fellowship and leadership. Grand President Marousis-Zachariades shared her insights and commitment to advancing the mission of the Daughters of Penelope, offering a chance for local members to connect directly with our highest office.



The turnout was wonderful, creating a vibrant atmosphere that truly showcased the dedication and strength of our local sisterhood. It was a successful night of unity, inspiration, and delicious food!



*From left to right far back:*

Daphne Treasurer Mary Ann Barrous Devetzis, Tina Bundros, Daphne VP Elizabeth Fkiaras, Past Grand Governor Zone IV Linda Belba, Past District 21 Governor Alicia Frangos, Past Grand President Joanne Booras, Barbara Karvelis, Past District 21 Governor Laurie Sahines, Past Daphne President Joanna Dunn, Grand President, Antoinette Marousis-Zachariades, Past Urania President Demetra Sperow who celebrated 70 years with DOP, Urania President Claire Gagas, Valerie Vasilakos, Daphne President Jacqui Argyres, Urania Past Secretary Vivian Gavros, Adrienne Roberts, and Urania Treasurer Christine Longinidis

*Keep  
Alexandra's  
dream alive*



**EOS #1**

**Mother Lodge Chapter**

# 96th Anniversary of the Founding of the Daughters of Penelope

## Mother Chapter EOS No.1 Hosts Warm and Wonderful Events

*By Kathleen Courtney Bardis*

Anniversary celebrations are always “warm and wonderful” but our 96th more than met expectations...with Grand President Antoinette Marousis Zachariades demonstrating her leadership, charism and sense of humor by posing for hundreds of pictures, introducing the Raffle by picking the first ticket, and continuing to call out winners (congratulations to PGP Jan Spanos whose ticket purchases resulted in more than one winning number!)

One hundred and twenty Daughters, Ahepans, friends and family gathered on Saturday November 15th after the traditional Friday Welcome dinner at Holy Trinity church where EOS President Sofia Nicklas greeted current and past Lodge members , served dinner and welcomed all.

Fathers Constantinos Economos and Nicholas Metrakos of Annunciation Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church respectively gave the invocation followed by comments from District 21 Governor Athena Hallock, Grand Governor & Liaison Helen Santire, Consul General Grigorios Tassiopoulos and our Grand President.

We had the great good fortune of having 101 year old Sister Virginia Coppock from Urania Chapter in San Mateo CA with us. And PGPs Joanne Booras and Jan Spanos introduced the District’s Penelope of the Year Sister Angela Christon of Echo Chapter in Oakland.

The warmth of the afternoon was brought to a head by Keynote Speaker Dr. Natalia Estassi who spoke about the Celebration’s Beneficiary-- Okizu Camp. Okizu Camp provides free, supportive and healing programs to families affected by childhood cancer as Dr. Estassi’s son was.

EOS No.1 will donate a portion of the proceeds to Okizu Camp.

Our thanks to all who attended the 96th celebration, our donors of funds and Raffle prizes and our wonderful co-chairs Sister Anastasia Zotalis and PDG Foula Vasilogiorgis.

A picture is worth a thousand words. Please enjoy these photos from our 96th Anniversary. We look forward to seeing you in 2026 for our 97th Anniversary!











# FRIENDSGIVING



*By Kathy Leles*

**Eleftheria 278 of the Maids of Athena** celebrated their newest members by hosting a Friendsgiving at the home of President Kylie Affholter.

With the assistance of Vice President Kristina Gavrilis, they welcomed nine girls into the chapter and installed new officers for the 2025-2026 year.



Chapter Advisor Kathy Leles spoke about the Maids of Athena, performed the initiation and installed the officers. Besides Kylie and Kristina, Eleni Voudouris will hold the office of Secretary and Haven Leer, Treasurer.





The girls then spent time discussing various ideas for fundraising and community involvement. Upcoming events include their annual Christmas Tree gift card raffle, preparing lunches for the Gospel Mission and collecting toiletries for men, women and children facing homelessness.



If you know a young lady - ages 14 to 28 - who would like to be a part of the only active Maids chapter in District 21, contact **Kylie** at [kylieaffholter@gmail.com](mailto:kylieaffholter@gmail.com) or **Kathy Leles** at [kleles@att.net](mailto:kleles@att.net).





*Three sweets,  
three stories,*

one shared taste:

the sweet persistence of tradition.

Every holiday comes with its symbols. Greek sweets come with stories, memories, and a flavor that refuses to fade.



## **Melomakarono: From Makaria to Honeyed Grace**

The word melomakarono carries within it an ancient ritual: “makaria”, the bread once offered to mourners after a burial, a wish for the soul’s peaceful rest. Honey arrived as an act of transformation—from grief to delight. With walnut, cinnamon, and orange, the melomakarono became the sweet of inner warmth. It became a memory that perfumes the winter, a piece of tradition that melts in the mouth and warms the soul.





## Kourabie: The Shortbread of the East

Despite its Eastern-sounding name, the kourabie has European roots. It belongs to the shortbread family, with the classic ratio: one part sugar, two parts butter, three parts flour. But the Greek version insists on almonds. It likely arrived from Smyrna, tucked inside refugee suitcases. Its snowy white color made it a symbol of joy—for weddings, baptisms, and of course, Christmas.



## Vasilopita: The Coin of Hope

Vasilopita is the most Greek version of the global “cake of kings” tradition (French galette des rois). It’s tied to Saint Basil and the story of the hidden coin: when the saint distributed gold and jewels collected as ransom to the poor, he tucked them into loaves of bread. Thus began the custom of the lucky coin, a gesture of love that became a game of fortune and a wish for the new year.

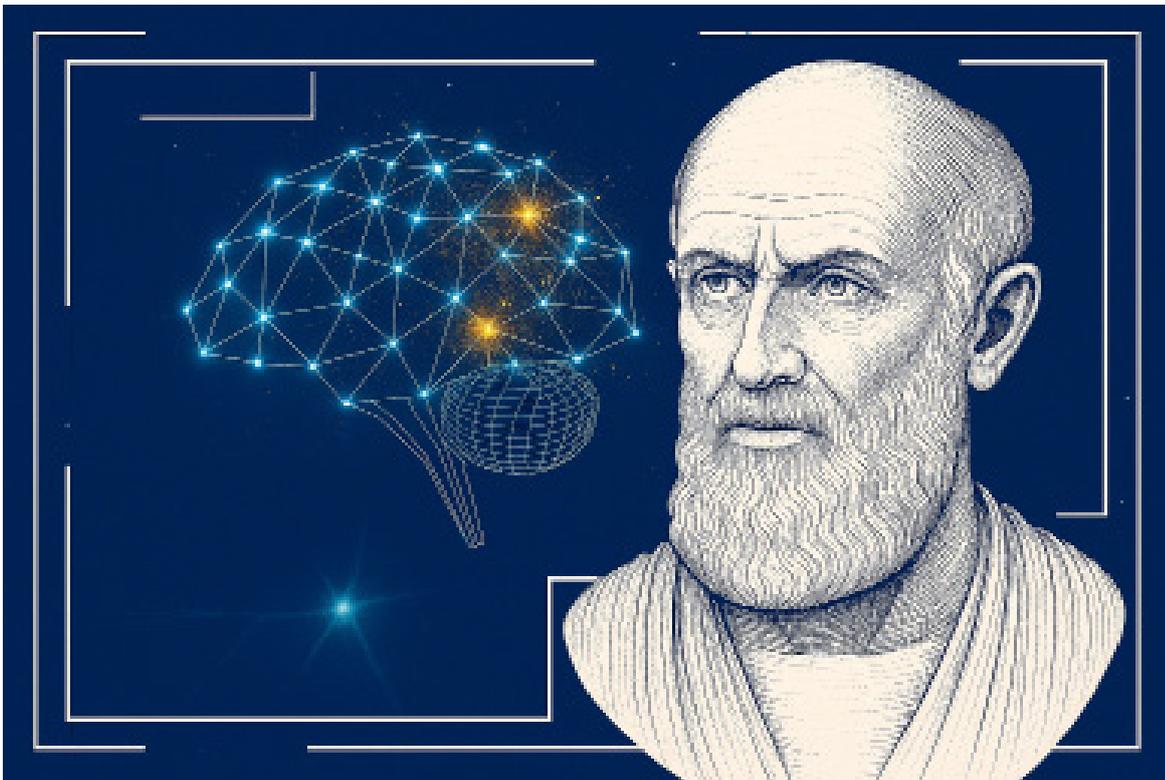
And if this story whetted your appetite, click [here](#) to discover recipes for melomakarona from every corner of Greece, that melt in your mouth. Choose your favorite, and let the holidays begin in your kitchen. And if you are a fan of kourabiedes, click [here](#) to discover a wonderful recipe generously shared with us by Catherine Ioannidis Zarifis.



In TIME's annual roundup of the **Best Inventions of 2025** ([source](#)), one innovation stands out: Adaptive Deep Brain Stimulation (aDBS) ([feature](#)). This groundbreaking method dynamically adjusts neurostimulation in patients with Parkinson's disease, responding in real time to fluctuations in brain oscillations and motor activity. California, home to leading institutions like **Stanford and UCSF**, is at the forefront of implementing this technology. Yet the story of aDBS is not solely American. **Greek researcher Varvara Mathiopoulou**, based at Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin, contributes to an international study exploring how movement, medication, and stimulation modulate beta oscillations in the subthalamic nucleus—a key parameter for the success of aDBS.

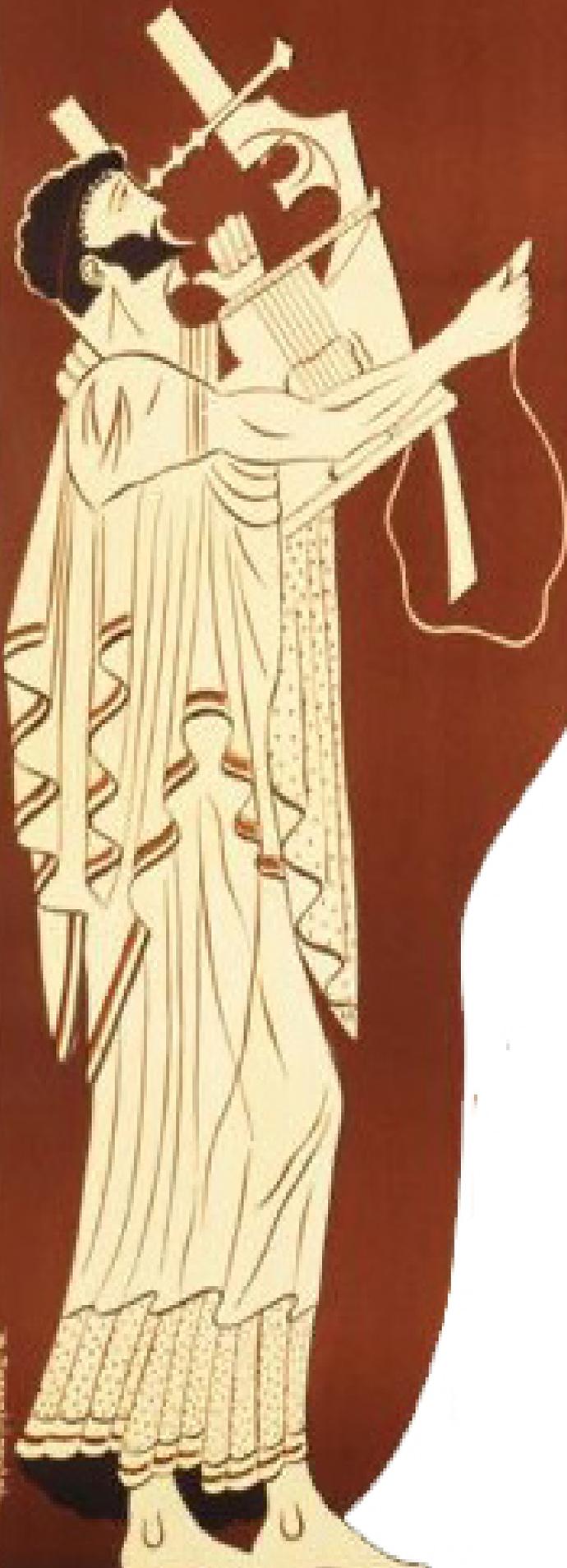
# California's science, Greece's voice: a new approach to brain care

Mathiopoulou's work bridges European and Greek scientific expertise with California's technological advances, opening pathways for collaboration, knowledge transfer, and clinical application in Greece.



Just as Hippocrates laid the foundations of medicine as a practice attuned to the nature and temperament of each patient, modern neurotechnology seeks to integrate biological individuality into clinical care. In this convergence of ancient wisdom and contemporary science, personalization becomes a return to origin

# February 9: International Greek Language Day



## Honoring 2,500 Years of Unbroken Speech and Heritage

Greek is a living legacy. Spoken and written unbroken for over 2,500 years, it is one of only two languages in the world with such continuity, serving as a vital vessel for a rich cultural heritage. From Homer's verses to Solomos' anthem, Greek carries the heartbeat of a civilization that shaped the world. On International Greek Language Day, we honor this sacred thread that binds us. It is a profound honor for Greece, and a proud inheritance for every Greek American. Let us celebrate our voice, our history, our eternal connection to Hellas. It is the language of our ancestors, our prayers, our poetry and it still speaks to the soul of the world.

«Μου εδόθηκε, αγαπητοί φίλοι, να γράφω σε μια γλώσσα που μιλιέται μόνον από μερικά εκατομμύρια ανθρώπων. Παρ' όλ' αυτά, μια γλώσσα που μιλιέται επί δυόμισι χιλιάδες χρόνια χωρίς διακοπή και μ' ελάχιστες διαφορές. Η παράλογη αυτή, φαινομενικά, διάσταση, αντιστοιχεί και στην υλικοπνευματική οντότητα της χώρας μου. Που είναι μικρή σε έκταση χώρου και απέραντη σε έκταση χρόνου. Και το αναφέρω όχι διόλου για να υπερηφανευθώ αλλά για να δείξω τις δυσκολίες που αντιμετωπίζει ένας ποιητής όταν χρησιμοποιεί για τα πιο αγαπημένα πράγματα τις ίδιες λέξεις που χρησιμοποιούσαν μια Σαπφώ ή ένας Πίνδαρος π.χ. , χωρίς ωστόσο να έχει το αντίκρισμα που είχαν εκείνοι επάνω στην έκταση της πολιτισμένης τότε

### Οδυσσέας Ελύτης

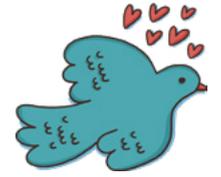
*Απόσπασμα από την ομιλία του στην Ακαδημία της Στοκχόλμης, στην παραλαβή του βραβείου Νόμπελ, 1979*

“It was given to me, dear friends, to write in a language spoken only by a few million people. Yet it is a language that has been spoken for two and a half thousand years without interruption and with only minimal differences. This seemingly paradoxical dimension corresponds to the material and spiritual essence of my country—small in the expanse of space, yet boundless in the expanse of time. And I mention this not at all to boast, but to show the difficulties a poet faces when using, for the most cherished things, the very same words once used by a Sappho or a Pindar, without, however, having the resonance they held across the breadth of the civilized world of their time.”

### Odysseas Elytis

*Excerpt from his speech at the Stockholm Academy, upon receiving the Nobel Prize, 1979*





# DOVES, POETRY AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS: THE TRUE STORY OF FEBRUARY 14<sup>th</sup>

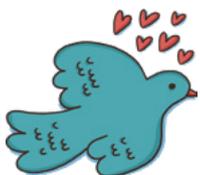


Forget the heart-shaped chocolates and last-minute roses. February 14<sup>th</sup> didn't begin as a celebration of love. It started as a **calendrical confusion**. Saint Valentine? There are at least three! The most famous is said to have secretly married Roman soldiers, defying the emperor's orders. Romantic? Yes. Revolutionary? Absolutely.

But the link to romance came later, when **Geoffrey Chaucer** decided that birds choose their mates on February 14. From then on, the day evolved into a festival of postcards and emotional overconsumption.

And here's something you might not know: in Finland, the day is called "**Ystävänpäivä**": Friendship Day. Not fiery passion, but affection, companionship, and hot chocolate with friends.

After all, the ancient Greeks had already figured out that **Eros (Ἔρως)** isn't just winged, he's wildly unpredictable. That's why they depicted him with a bow, not a calendar.



# Financial Focus:

## Goal Setting for Success

By Steve Bolaris

Whether you're planning your legacy or just trying to get ahead, financial goal setting is a powerful tool. Here's how to get started and stay on track.

### Define Your Financial Goals

Success looks different for everyone, but if your aim is financial independence, becoming debt-free, or qualifying as an accredited investor, start by setting clear, realistic goals. Learn from credible sources and separate fact from opinion.

### Cut Costs, Not Corners

Before chasing higher income, examine your spending:

- Trim dining out, entertainment, and non-essential travel
- Differentiate between needs and wants (do you need that new car?)
- Build a budget that prioritizes savings and investments
- Tackle Debt Strategically
- Pay off high-interest debt first (credit cards, student loans)
- Use cashback credit cards—but pay them off monthly
- Avoid carrying balances with 18%+ interest when your savings might earn just 3.5%

### Start Investing Early

- Open low- or no-cost accounts (e.g., Fidelity, IBKR)
- Use pre-tax dollars for IRAs or Solo 401(k)s;
- after-tax for Roth IRAs
- Consider REITs if direct real estate investment isn't feasible

### Track Your Progress Daily

- Monitor your 401(k), brokerage, and savings balances
- Add up all accounts—including private investments—and compare to your goals
- Do not include the value of your residence
- Daily tracking builds awareness and momentum

**Bottom Line:** Financial success starts with clarity, discipline, and consistency. Set your goals, live below your means, invest wisely—and check in with your progress every day.



# upcoming events



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Please join us

# *Saint Nicholas Gala*

*Black Tie Optional*

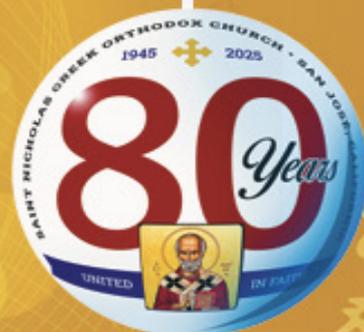
**Celebrating Our 80th Anniversary  
Saturday, December 6, 2025**

**Social Hour: 5:30pm - Small Hall  
Three Course Dinner: 7:00pm - Community Center**

**Adults \$130  
Children under 12 \$60**

**Limited Seating -  
RSVP Early**

**St. Nicholas Church  
1260 Davis Street  
San Jose, CA 95126**



*The Sacramento AHEPA Chapter 153  
cordially invites the Golden Gate  
District Lodge to their Christmas  
Luncheon*

Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 - 11:30 am to 2:30 pm  
**OLD SPAGHETTI FACTORY**  
1625 Watt Av., Sacramento

**MENU CHOICES**

- GREEK LEMON CHICKEN
- SICILIAN MEATBALLS OVER PASTA
- BAKED LASAGNA
- PASTA WITH MIZITHRA w BUTTER

EACH MENU ITEM INCLUDES FRESH BAKED BREAD, SOUP OR SALAD, SPUMONI OR VANILLA ICE CREAM, COFFEE OR TEA

For reservations email [georgekoumis@gmail.com](mailto:georgekoumis@gmail.com) or text (916) 607-3020 BEFORE TUESDAY, Dec. 2nd, WITH YOUR MEAL CHOICE

- Lodge visitation meeting with the Sacramento Chapter will follow the luncheon
- The luncheon is a join event with DOP Artemis Chapter #5



Please join the  
Stockton & Modesto  
AHEPA Family's annual

# Christmas

LUNCH

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SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 13

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---

11:30 AM

---

Las Casuelas

1580 W. Yosemite Avenue  
Manteca, CA

\$30.00 per person  
(includes desserts & beverages)

Please bring an unwrapped gift for a child this Christmas season.  
Pay your chapter dues before the lunch and a member of each  
chapter will be chosen to have their dues paid for 2026!

RSVP by November 30<sup>th</sup> to:

Kathy Leles

209-815-2935 kleles@att.net

Anna Affholter 209-345-5945

Annaaffholter@gmail.com





# Celebrate New Year's Eve

## Dinner, Music & Dancing! 2026!

hosted by: **St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church San Jose, CA** 1260 Davis St, San Jose, CA 95126

- Dec 31, 2025 7pm – 1am
- music by [www.VitalSounds.net](http://www.VitalSounds.net) - **dj Alex 650-591-1010**
- Dinner & refreshments! Spectacular family style dinner!
- Music, games, dancing and midnight toast.
- Let's make memories together as we step into 2026 w/hope, joy & love!

**Dinner: \$50.00 adult and \$30.00 children under 18**

More information coming soon!! [saintnicholas.org](http://saintnicholas.org)

RSVP here | <https://forms.gle/kUwFHMcNMxCmqKsj6>



**New Year, New Memories -  
Let's Make Them Together**

**Save the Date: December 31  
7:00 PM – 1:00 AM**

Dear Parishioners & Families!  
Join us as we welcome the New Year 2026 with faith, fellowship, and fun! Let's gather as one community to celebrate the blessings of the past year and embrace the joy ahead. Spectacular family style dinner and refreshments provided. Music, games, dancing and midnight toast. Bring your loved ones, your dancing shoes, and your gratitude. Let's make memories together as we step into 2026 with hope, joy and love.

Dinner: \$50.00 adult and \$30.00 children under 18.

More information coming soon.



**Disc Jockey Music**  
Weddings, Baptisms, Anniversaries and Social Events  
Greek and American Music

**Vital Sounds**  
...the life of your party!

Call DJ Alexander Today!  
650-591-1010  
[www.vitalsounds.net](http://www.vitalsounds.net)  
alexander@vitalsounds.net  
P.O. Box 444 Belmont, CA 94002

Reliable, Affordable and Professional



# Hellenic Music Ensemble – 2026 World Tour

[click here to buy tickets](#)

A century of iconic Greek music comes to life in a global celebration of Hellenic culture.

The Hellenic Music Ensemble, a 21-piece orchestra under the musical direction of Panos Liaropoulos, is on a landmark world tour celebrating the centenary of Greece's legendary composers Mikis Theodorakis and Manos Hadjidakis.

Featuring two of Greece's most celebrated voices, Natassa Bofiliou and Giannis Haroulis, the concert blends powerful contemporary performance with timeless orchestral arrangements. They are joined by special guest star, the Tony and Grammy Award-nominated Broadway singer and actress Judy Kuhn, creating a rare artistic bridge between the Greek and American musical worlds.

Audiences will experience a sweeping journey through Theodorakis' stirring anthems of resistance and Hadjidakis' lyrical masterpieces of love and poetry. Visiting nine countries and performing on some of the world's most prestigious stages, this international celebration introduces the beauty and soul of Greek music to audiences worldwide. This is an unmissable tribute to two cultural icons and the living spirit of Greece.

For more information, you can visit [hellenicensemble.com](https://hellenicensemble.com).

---

[> San Jose Civic Events Calendar](#)

[> Visitor FAQs \(Including List of Prohibited Items\)](#)

## DATE

Local January 29, 2026 - Invalid date

Event January 28, 2026

## TIME

Local 5:00am

Event 7:00pm

## LOCATION

San Jose Civic

135 West San Carlos Street, San Jose, CA 95113

[Get Directions](#)

# Sons of Pericles Centennial Weekend

Fri, Jan 30 | Manchester

Join the Sons of Pericles as we celebrate 100 years since our founding  
on February 3, 1926!

[Click here to buy tickets](#)



## Time & Location

Jan 30, 2026, 6:00 PM – Feb 01, 2026, 10:00 AM

Manchester, Manchester, NH, USA



**Sparta Chapter #18**



**CONSUMNES  
RIVER FARM**

# **PAINT & SIP**

*Uncork your creativity*



*All Welcome  
Do not need to be 21+  
Proceeds to Benefit DOP  
Sparta #18*

**JANUARY 31  
11:00 AM**

*Consumnes River Farm  
28305 N. Thornton Rd.  
Thornton, CA 95686*

## ***Tickets \$45 - What's Included:***

- ✔ All art supplies provided
- ✔ A finished bottle to take home (filled with our Bellindora Gourmet Blend Olive Oil or your choice of Bellindora Vinegar!)
- ✔ Step-by-step painting guided by @katspaintparties
- ✔ Complimentary glass of wine or beverage
- ✔ Raffle Entry

**PURCHASE TICKETS**

*Seats limited!!*

Visit the Tasting Room  
Contact a Chapter Member

[www.consumnesriverfarm.com](http://www.consumnesriverfarm.com)



# greek **k** Word of the Issue

Word: **Philoxenia**

Noun – pronounced “fee-loh-KSEH-nee-ah”

Philoxenia is often translated as “hospitality,” but that barely scratches the surface. Literally meaning “friend to the stranger,” philoxenia is a cultural code, a sacred duty to welcome, protect, and honor those who arrive from elsewhere. In ancient Greece, it was a divine law. Zeus Xenios watched over guests and punished those who failed to show kindness. Philoxenia is alive in the way a villager offers you mountain tea without asking your name. In the way a stranger insists you sit, eat, and rest before you speak.

Used to describe:

- A family who welcomes travelers into their home as if they were kin
- A taverna owner who refuses payment for a meal “because you’re far from home”
- A gesture of warmth that turns distance into belonging

Philoxenia goes beyond opening your door. It opens your heart.

*In a world that often fears the unfamiliar, Greece teaches us to embrace it.*

## surpr singly Greek

### **Talos in Silicon**

Artificial intelligence may feel futuristic, but its roots are strikingly Greek. The term “cybernetics” comes from “κυβερνήτης”(kiv-erni-tis), helmsman. A navigator. Just as ancient pilots steered through uncertainty, today’s systems guide data, drones, and decisions.

And then there’s Talos (Τάλως), the bronze giant of Crete. Forged by Hephaestus, programmed to patrol the island, and powered by divine ichor. Talos was myth’s first automaton: self-operating, relentless, and eerily modern.

Today, robotics labs name prototypes after him. The word “automaton” itself is Greek: “αυτόματος” : “that which moves by itself.” From myth to machine, the leap is shorter than we think. So when we speak of AI, algorithms, and autonomy, we’re not just imagining the future. We’re echoing the past.

*When machines begin to think... chances are, they’re thinking in Greek.*

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**Encourage and lift one another because we build  
this world TOGETHER**



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It is an act of memory, participation,  
and creation. It is the choice to stand  
beside a magazine that, for 75 years,  
has united, documented, and inspired  
the Greek-American community of  
California and the diaspora.*

Follow us on social media and keep the journey alive





District 21

AHEPA Traveler

A quarterly magazine highlighting significant events & achievements within the organization and the Greek-American community