

NATIONAL HELLENIC FREE PRESS GREEK AMERICAN NEWSPAPER



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Kick-off Fashion Show Dinner for Little City Foundation 50th Anniversary Celebration

We would like to request your participation and support for Little City Foundation's 50th Anniversary Celebration. The Celebration will kick off with the Little City Fashion Show Dinner, hosted by Ford Models, Inc. and Zzazz Productions, on October 2, 2009 at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. Following the Fashion Show Dinner are many other special events throughout the year.



ion Show Dinner are many other special events throughout the year.

Through the perseverance, vision and efforts of the founding families, Little City Foundation opened its doors under very humble and intricate beginnings on October 1, 1959. We are very excited in celebrating our fifty years of existence at our Golden Anniversary Dinner on November 7, 2009, Fairmont Chicago Hotel on Michigan Ave. This year's recipient of the prestigious Sid L. Port Legacy of Distinction Award will be presented to Eleni Bousis, Little City Foundation Board Member and generous contributor. Mrs. Bousis, who also serves as President of the Board for the Greek American Rehabilitation and Care Centre, has been a long-time philanthropist to many organizations and is a great friend and advocate for Little City. Rob Waterhouse, Little City Foundation Board Member will be inducted as our Honorary Mayor of Little City at this event.

Little City has a long and lasting legacy as one of the first not-for-profit organizations of its kind, providing children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities such as autism, Down syndrome,

Cerebral Palsy, blindness and mental retardation, the opportunity to participate in the communities where they live, work and interact through programs and services that encompass housing, employment, recreation and art. Little City expresses its compassion for these individuals through their beliefs in equality. Our residents cherish life and bring diversity and humility to our society, inspiring all of us to treat every human being as a valued citizen.

Over the years, many distinguished men and women have helped Little City develop its 56-acre campus in Palatine, Illinois; from Bob Hope to Irv Kupciet to the current Mayor of Chicago, the Honorable Richard M. Daley. Many Hellenes have been part of this wonderful history, including Mr. George Alexander and Mr. Alec Gianaras who were amongst the founding members of Little City. We have been humbled by the generosity of such distinguished Humanitarians who have reached out to give a helping hand to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Through the efforts of those mentioned and many other kind and giving individuals, we have created a loving and nurturing campus, along with 15 community - based homes, that enable these individuals to live with hope, respect and dignity while pursuing life-changing opportunities. People with disabilities can truly succeed, achieve and accomplish great things during their lifetime, especially when they are given the same learning opportunities that we enjoy.

We hope you will consider joining us and lending your generous and unending support. If you cannot join us for this event, please find some space in your heart to make a much needed sponsorship or donation for this wonderful and worthy organization.

For tickets or more information, please contact Adam Meade, Director of special events at 773-265-1539 ext. 292 or ameade@littlecity.org.

Governor Quin Appoints Mariyana Spyropoulos to Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

Mariyana will focus on safe and clean water supplies

CHICAGO – August 05, 2009. Governor Pat Quinn today announced the appointment of Mariyana Spyropoulos to the Board of Commissioners at the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. As a commissioner, Spyropoulos will be deeply involved in creating and maintaining policies affecting flooding, storm water management, rivers, and conservation.

"Mariyana Spyropoulos is an environmentalist, attorney and entrepreneur. I am proud to appoint her to this important position," said Governor Quinn. "She will protect our waterways, which are among the Land of Lincoln's most vital natural resources."

A member of the Sierra Club, Spyropoulos received her J.D. from John Marshall Law School and served as a criminal prosecutor before opening her own law firm. She also has a Master's degree in business from Loyola University. ([Background Information](#)).

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago treats wastewater from domestic, commercial, and industrial sources in Chicago and numerous surrounding communities.

"I want to thank Governor Quinn for this important appointment. I look forward to serving on the district board as it works toward ensuring quality community health and a safe water supply for everyone," said Spyropoulos.

Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago operates the world's largest wastewater treatment agency, the Stickney Water Reclamation Plant. It also operates the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, the Tunnel Reservoir Plan, and one of the largest civil engineering projects ever undertaken, the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan, better known as the "Deep Tunnel Project."

APOCALYPSE NOW?

By Basil Venetis

It was newly revealed by French President Jacques Chirac, that George Bush wanted to invade Iraq to thwart Gog and Magog, the Bible's satanic agents of the Apocalypse. Filled with religious fervor, Bush ended up screwing us all.

I can't really say that I'm incredibly surprised that George W. Bush told Chirac that he was fulfilling biblical prophecies through the invasion of Iraq. We all know that Bush thought he was on mission from God, to at least some extent; after all, he profusely talked about being a born again Christian throughout his campaign and presidency and frequently cited his faith as a major guiding force behind his policies his policies and his thinking, or preferably, knee jerk, impulsive reactions based on a messianic delusion. Karl Rove and the secular neocons did his thinking for him. Apocalypse now!

Lytton Bulwer of Texas points out the United States is teetering on a very dangerous brink. Theocratic government should be anathema to any freedom-loving citizen. We exclaim with horror over the abuse of women and ethnic and religious minorities in the Middle East, and the U.S. population is obviously aware that those abuses stem directly from the fanatical theocracies that seem to thrive in that region. Are we really so blind that we can't see the probable results of a Christian theocracy? Don't we have significant evidence that the only substantive difference between a Muslim the-

ocracy and a Christian theocracy is in the books they revere as the revealed word of God. Look at Bosnia. Both the Bible and the Koran offer chilling accounts of how the enemies of God should be dealt with, and history is replete with examples of the willingness of religious zealots to follow those directions in every blood-soaked detail.

The threat of an American theocracy is real. It can happen here. The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. Our recent history clearly proves that a strong minority in America want it ruled by a prophet who gets his guidance through direct conversations with God. Didn't we sort of reject Rule By Divine Right over 200 years ago? Any society that aspires to true freedom must ensure freedom of religion. What we seem to have forgotten is that such a society must also ensure freedom from religion. The clash between faith and freedom is not confined to Islam. The Crusades and the Inquisition were part of the Church's holy war against its infidels. However, this despotism ended when the Enlightenment, which did not penetrate the Muslim world, demonstrated the power and the glory of the human mind, and entrenched reason over faith. America's Founding Fathers, products and admirers of the Enlightenment, realized that a nation based on individual liberty had to remove religion's power. So they established the secular principle of separation between church and state.

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3. To support the ideas of the Greek Orthodox Faith.
4. To promote the use of the Greek Language.
5. To extend the knowledge of Hellenism, Greek culture and traditions.
6. To encourage all worthy community causes.
7. To further the just causes of the people of Greece.
8. To uphold the Greek Cypriot cause.
9. To assist all Greek-American fraternal, cultural, patriotic and religious organizations.
10. To install Americanism in the Greek-American community.

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ENTERTAINMENT LIVE

By Denise Rekoumis

In Movie News

According to studio estimates issued on Sunday, "G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra" sold about \$56.2 million worth of tickets during its first three days since opening on Friday, the fourth-biggest August debut of all time.



The storied Venice Film Festival is updating its awards lineup by offering a prize for the best 3D movie of the year. Organizers said in a statement Saturday that nine films will compete for the new award at the festival's 66th edition on Sept. 2-12.

American Idol Drama

Paula Abdul may have left "American Idol," but could a move to "Dancing With the Stars" be in her future? Such a move would find Paula switching from singing to dancing - something that she, a two-time Emmy award winner for Outstanding Choreography, is well versed in. The star announced via Twitter earlier this week that her "Idol" days were over after eight seasons on the show, but she hasn't nailed down her next move yet. After the news that she'd be leaving "Idol," Paula told The Associated Press later in the week that she was fielding a number of options.

Victoria Beckham doesn't feel guilty about filling Paula Abdul's seat at the judges' table during American Idol's Denver auditions on Friday. Posh Spice, 35 — who will appear in one episode of Season 9 — said she couldn't turn down the opportunity, which came one day after Abdul announced she wasn't returning.

In the ongoing Jackson drama... A British tabloid reported Saturday that the god-

father of Michael Jackson's three children claims to be the father of the singer's daughter Paris. The News of the World quotes Jackson's longtime friend Mark Lester as saying that he "gave Michael my sperm so that he could have kids — and I believe Paris is my daughter." The newspaper also quotes Lester, is a 51-year-old former child star known for his lead role in the 1968 movie version of the state show "Oliver!" as saying he's willing to take a paternity test.

Beatles fans mobbed London's Abbey Road on the 40th anniversary of the famous photo that turned this ordinary London street into a musical pilgrimage site.

Hundreds of fans swarmed the site Saturday morning, bringing traffic to a standstill.

Abbey Road cuts through the swish north London neighborhood of St. John's Wood and is where the Fab Four recorded much of their work.

30 Rock "star" Tracy Morgan filed for divorce on Friday, the New York Daily News reported. According to the newspaper, the comedian has been separated from wife Sabina, his high school sweetheart, for eight years. They have been married for 23.

The family of TV pitchman Billy Mays said they were never aware that he used cocaine or other non-prescription drugs before his death and they were considering whether to have an independent review of an official autopsy.

The Hillsborough County medical examiner's office released the results of its autopsy on Friday, finding that cocaine use had contributed to the heart disease that suddenly killed the 50-year-old in June. He was discovered by his wife in bed at their Tampa condo the morning of June 28.

Mays was a pop-culture fixture with his energetic commercials pitching gadgets and cleaning products like Orange Glo and OxiClean.

Finally, in the lucky side of news, Edward Williams is the definition of lucky after winning the lottery for a second time in a year. Williams, 47, of Wichita won \$75,000 in September playing a \$10 scratch ticket. Then on Wednesday, he defied the odds again when matched all the numbers in the Super Kansas Cash drawing to win a jackpot worth nearly \$900,000.

"When I hit \$75,000, I figured lightning struck once, it won't ever hit again," Williams said in a prepared statement released by Kansas Lottery officials. "This one knocked me flat!"

Hellenic American Academy Tuition Scholarships; Update

In early June the Hellenic American Academy announced that it had



received funding for a targeted scholarship endowment fund to underwrite the tuition for first, second and third grade students. A few positions are still available.

Funding for the endowment for the upcoming 2009 - 2010 academic year was secured for up to ten students for each grade; 30 in total. This scholarship opportunity is probably without precedence in our community. Under the terms of the grant, the tuition of \$4,000 per year for first, second and

third grade students will be paid by the grant. Parents will only be responsible for the fees related to the hot lunch program, registration, etc. which total about \$1,500 per student.

Socrates Day School is a unique private elementary school offering high academic standards in a dual language, Orthodox Christian learning environment for children from preschool through 8th grade. Socrates is celebrating 101 years of successful graduates, 1908 to 2009, and offers a warm, loving environment, small classes and a talented team of educators. The Academy also offers a bilingual summer camp, Saturday and evening language programs as well as a variety of cultural programs.

For information on the grant, application and registration, contact Ms. Angie Maglaras, principal of Socrates Day School or Ms. Voula Sellountos, Head of Schools, Hellenic American Academy at 847-317-1063.

General information is available at www.HellenicAmericanAcademy.org.

Jim Ascot

Ascot for Congress '10

Dear Friends, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and to announce my candidacy for representative of Illinois's 7th Congressional District in the February 2010 Democratic primary.

I look forward to dedicating my energies to an agenda that will include reviving our economy locally through the creation of jobs, adopting tax incentives to encourage business, shepherding the passage of an inclusive and affordable health care program that provides incentives for preventive health care, investing in our children's education and protecting our environment.

You can count on a tireless effort from me and my staff to be proactive and to challenge the status quo both here and in Washington. Accountability, transparency and service will be the hallmarks of my office.

My family and I immigrated to the United States from Greece and settled in Chicago when I was 9 years old. I graduated from Lane Technical High School in Chicago, earned a Bachelor of Science and Masters in guidance counseling from Bradley University, Peoria, IL and hold a Doctorate of Philosophy in Psychology from Columbia Pacific University, San Rafael, CA. I worked as a therapist and crisis intervention specialist for some years in the emergency room of Loretto Hospital.

My career interests thereafter changed from crisis intervention to real estate and business development. I established Chicago-based Ascot

Realty Group, Inc. in 1986, served as President of the Chicago Association of Realtors and was named Realtor of the Year in 1999. I have been actively involved in the community and provided charitable services to a number of organizations including Rotary One of Chicago and the Chicago Composers Forum. I served as President of the Lane Tech High School Alumni Association and Chairman of the Lane Tech High School Local School Council. In addition, I have served as a Board Director of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. I was a candidate in the Democratic Party primary for U.S. Congress from Illinois' 7th Congressional District in 2006 and in 2008 was appointed by Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan to the Illinois Election Day Registration Commission of which I was elected Chairman.

The political climate in the country is changing as we now realize that real change is required to correct years of disastrous economic policy. President Obama and Congress have started on a path toward prosperity but it is imperative that federal policy be carefully guided to ensure transparency and efficiency. With your help I will provide the experience and dedication necessary to guarantee the smart change that we all know we need. I therefore respectfully ask for your support as the Democratic candidate for Illinois's 7th Congressional District. Thank you. **Jim Ascot**

(£1.1m), the 4,000-tonne Arctic Sea sailed from Finland and had been scheduled to dock in the Algerian port of Bejaia on 4



August.

The crew reported having been boarded by up to 10 armed men as the ship sailed through the Baltic Sea, but the intruders were reported to have left the vessel on an inflatable boat after 12 hours.

Ransom demand

There are also reports of the ship having been attacked a second time off the Portuguese coast.

However, the vessel's operators said they had no knowledge of the incident and Portugal said the ship was never in its territorial waters.

Before eing found, the last known contact with the crew was when the Arctic Sea reported to British maritime authorities in Dover as it passed through the busy shipping waters of the English Channel.

It was then sighted in the Bay of Biscay on 30 July.

Last weekend, a multinational investigation was launched after police in Finland said a ransom demand had been made, while emphasising that they could not confirm its authenticity.

The Arctic Sea was eventually found on Sunday night 300 miles (480 km) off Cape Verde in the Atlantic Ocean.

The Maltese authorities say they are now trying to ensure that the Arctic Sea is granted a safe berth "to allow for the required investigations into the seaworthi-

WHY WE LIKE BEING GREEK:

Because we have a small country full of people with big hearts.
Because we never visit others empty handed.
Because there is no way to explain to foreigners what is “kapsoura”(burning desire for someone).
Because we always make it, albeit in the last moment.
Because we were slaves for 400 years yet never bring that up as an excuse for our current state.
Because we are everywhere around the planet.
Because “filotimo” (friend of honour, helping someone because it is a shame not to) does not exist in any other language.
Because whenever foreigners cannot find a word, they use one of ours.
Because we spend our bad and low times with our friends and family, not with shrinks..
Because Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were Greek.
Because we invented theatre.
Because we gave birth to Democracy.
Because we discovered logic.
Because we jumpstarted science.
Because we are proud of our culture, not of our wars.
Because when we were building the Parthenon, the others were still sleeping on trees
Because we gave the light to all these leaders who are “striving”for peace by making wars.
Because we have a distinction between Eros (falling in love) and Agapi(innocent love), while we feel both of them passionately.
Because Eros was a Greek God.
Because we gave the oath “freedom or death”.
Because when others used to be clothed with wolf skin we were weaving see-through linen.
Because “Greeks do not fight as heroes, heroes fight like Greeks” (Winston Churchill, 1941).
Because we gave our ancient alphabet to the Romans & our medieval alphabet to the Slavs.
Because we are not ashamed to cry.
Because we dance when we are sad.
Because we work to live and do not live to work.
Because 97% of the stars' names are Greek.
Because when you shout “brother or cousin “ in the streets everyone turns around.
Because the inside of all our churches are not dark but full of light.
Because our parents do not forget that we exist when we reach 18.
Because when we want to sunbathe, we go to the beach, we don't crawl on grass or jump into fountains.
Because we confront every difficulty with humor.
Because the Olympic games were born in Greece .
Because, with our (Olympic) light, we unite the world and pass the message of peace.
Because our sky is blue, not grey.
Because 40% of Oxford dictionary is made up with Greek words.
Because we know what “Kefi” (propensity to fun) means.

Because Homer wrote Iliad 3500 years ago and Hollywood turned it into a movie just recently.

Methane seeps from Arctic sea bed

Methane bubbles observed by sonar, escape from sea bed as temperatures rise

Scientists say they have evidence that the powerful greenhouse gas methane is escaping from the Arctic sea bed. Researchers say this could be evidence of a predicted positive feedback effect of climate change. As temperatures rise, the sea bed grows warmer and frozen water crystals in the sediment break down, allowing methane trapped inside them to escape.

The research team found that more than 250 plumes of methane bubbles are rising from the sea bed off Norway. The joint British and German research team detected the bubbles using a type of sonar normally used to search for shoals of fish. Once detected, the bubbles were sampled and tested for methane at a range of depths. Writing in Geophysical Research Letters, the team says the methane was rising from an area of sea bed off West Spitsbergen, from depths between 150 and 400m. The gas is normally trapped as "methane hydrate" in sediment under the ocean floor.

METHANE HYDRATES

Methane gas is trapped inside crystal structure of water ice. The gas is released when the ice melts, normally at 0C. At higher ressure ie under the ocean, hydrates are stable at higher temperatures. "Methane hydrate" is an ice-like substance composed of water and methane which is stable under conditions of high pressure and low temperature. As temperatures rise, the hydrate breaks down. So this new evidence shows that methane is stable at water depths greater than 400m off Spitsbergen. However data collected over 30 years shows it was then stable at water depths as shallow as 360m.

Ocean has warmed

Temperature records show that this area of the ocean has warmed by 1C during the same period. The research was carried out as part of the International Polar Year Initiative, funded by Britain's Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). The team says this is the first time that this loss of stability associated with temperature rise has been observed during the current geological period. Professor Tim Minshull of the National Oceanography Centre at Southampton told BBC News: "We already knew there was some methane hydrate in the ocean off Spitsbergen and that's an area where climate change is happening rather faster than just about anywhere else in the world."

Nearer the surface the hydrate breaks down as temperatures rise and the methane is released. Gas rises from the sea bed in plumes of bubbles - most of it dissolves before it reaches the surface. So far scientists haven't detected methane breaking the ocean surface - but they don't rule out the possibility. "There's been an idea for a long time that if the oceans warm, methane might be released from hydrate beneath the sea floor and generate a positive greenhouse effect." "What we're trying to do is to use lots of different techniques to assess whether this was something that was likely to happen in a relatively short time scale off Spitsbergen." "However methane is already released from ocean floor hydrates at higher temperatures and lower pressures - so the team also suggest that some methane release may have been going on in this area since the last ice age.

Significant discovery

Their most significant finding is that climate change means the gas is being released from more and deeper areas of the Arctic ocean.

Professor Minshull said: "Our survey was designed to work out how much methane might be released by future ocean warming; we did not expect to discover such strong evidence that this process has already started."

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"Plant Your Roots in Greece Foundation", is a non-profit tax-exempt organization, incorporated in Washington DC.

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NEWS FROM GREECE

FinMin: Econ crisis highlights need for reforms



Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis met on Tuesday with Economy and Finance Minister Yiannis Papathanassiou at his Maximos Mansion office. After the meeting, Papathanassiou said the ongoing global economic crisis has not left the Greek economy unaffected. The consequences, nevertheless, are milder than those in other economies, although the current crisis has again brought to the surface the Greek economy's structural problems.

"Our duty is to present and implement a programme of reforms aiming for the development and creation of more and better paying positions ... We must do what hasn't been done in the last decade," the FinMin said.

Preserving eponymous Lake Stymphalia

Lake Stymphalia in the northeast Peloponnese is a well-known wetland of heightened ecological importance for the local region, one included in the European Union's Natura 2000 programme for the conservation of fauna and flora.

Stymphalia, located in Corinth prefecture, is the only mountainous lake in the Peloponnese, Greece eponymous southernmost province. Surrounded by Mt. Kyllini (Zireia), Mt. Oligyrtos, Mt. Mavrovounio and Mt. Garrias, the wetland is rich in bird, amphibian and plant life, and is a very important refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds, including 133 species of protected fowl and birds threatened with extinction. It is also home to the endemic fish taxon *Pseudophoxinus stymphalicus*. This species is quite interesting, because during dry periods it survives by sinking into the lake's mud and forming a slippery 'envelope' around its body.

During the Roman era, the lake supplied water to ancient Corinth some 65 kilometers away through an aqueduct constructed during the reign of Emperor Hadrian. Parts of the ancient aqueduct are still visible today.

On its north shore lie the remnants of ancient Stymphalos.

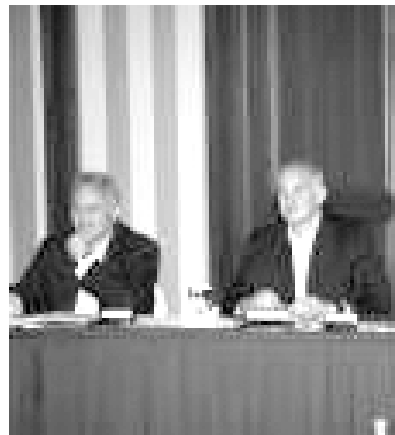
In Greek mythology, Lake Stymphalos is the site of Hercules' sixth labour, namely, to slay the man-eating Stymphalian birds

(Stymphalides), pets of Ares, the god of war. The mythological creatures fled to the lake to escape a pack of wolves and bred quickly, taking over the countryside and destroying the area's crops and fruit trees.

The local government of the modern-day town of Stymphalia has launched a campaign to preserve the lake and the entire area's wetlands environment.

PASOK letter to Christoforakos' lawyer

Main opposition PASOK party secretary Yiannis Ragoussis has addressed a letter to German



attorney Stefan Kursawe, the counsel for one-time Siemens Hellas CEO Michalis Christoforakos, requesting all evidence the latter alleges is in his possession and that concerns PASOK.

Ragoussis, in his letter, cites a decision of

PASOK party leader George Papandreou, to request the information.

"Following this statement of yours and despite the fact that you refer exclusively to the New Democracy party, which has avoided accepting your aforesaid public invitation, PASOK calls on you, publicly, to respond to your commitment, providing all evidence and proof that your client alleges is in his possession and concerns PASOK and, in any case, everything that has been brought to the attention of German Justice," Ragoussis' letter states

Bounced checks rise in July

Credit conditions reportedly worsened in the local market last month, with the number of bounced checks reaching 30,342 and totalling 296.49 million euros, official figures showed on Monday.



In the January-July period, the number of bounced checks reached 196,431, totalling 1.954 billion euros.

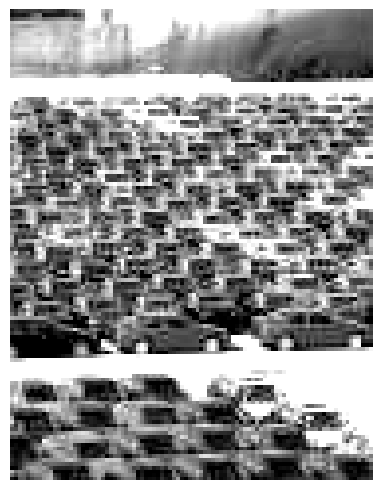
Observatory in Grevena



A final study for the construction and operation of an observatory atop Grevena prefecture's Mount Orliakas, in northwestern Greece, will be ready in October. Meanwhile, works are scheduled to start in the first days of 2010, according to local officials.

The new observatory is expected to field three telescopes.

Trade deficit drops in May 2009



Greece's trade deficit dropped by 4.2 billion euros in May 2009 (yr-yr) to stand at 11.6 billion euros, according to figures released here on Monday by Eurostat.

Specifically, exports reached 5.8 billion euros, while imports totaled 17.4 billion, thereby slashing the deficit from 15.8 billion to 11.6 billion euros, in relation to the corresponding month of 2008.



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PICTURES FROM
THE WORLD



A fire fighter tries to extinguish a burning olive tree in the village of Dombrena, approximately 120 kilometers north of Athens. Authorities say wildfires are threatening homes in southern and central Greece where strong winds are hindering fire fighters.



Portrait of Darfur. Violence has become common place. These boys walk passed this rebel battle wagon, indifferent to its presence.

Greek nature - Ecotourism

Notwithstanding its limited surface area, Greece is endowed with a particularly rich and diversified natural environment as a result of a rare geomorphology, with many striking natural contrasts and areas of great ecological value. The country's abundant natural gifts –thousands



of indented coasts, imposing rocky massifs, caves, gorges, lakes, rivers, biotopes of spectacular beauty and unique natural habitats– coupled with the mild climate, place it among the ideal destinations for ecotourism and alternative forms of tourism.

When travelling in Greece, nature-loving tourists are offered the opportunity to:

- to wander in aesthetic forests or explore national parks not merely in the mountainous regions of the mainland, but also on certain islands or in the proximity of rivers and lakes
- to enjoy the wonderful natural monuments, gorges, caves and waterfalls.

- to watch and admire rare bird species nesting or seeking refuge in coastal ecosystems and wetlands (rocky coasts, sandy beaches, sand dunes, river deltas, lakes, marshes, coastal plains, etc)

- to study the highly diverse floral life of the Greek countryside

- to visit the unique marine parks supported near the islands of Alonissos and Zakynthos, which provide shelter to two protected species, the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus Monachus*) and the Mediterranean green loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) respectively.

- to engage in extreme sports (canoe-kayak, rafting, monoraft, hydrospeed, canyoning, mountain biking, etc), activities which have seen a spectacular rise in popularity in recent years

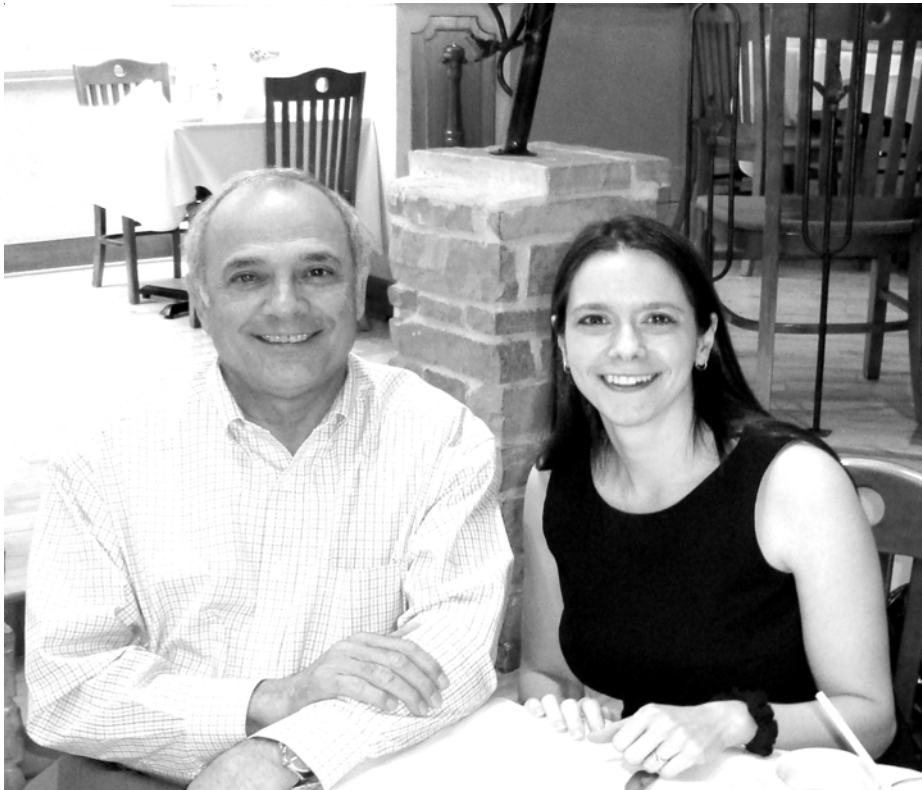
- to stay in agrotourist units which are being developed all over the country and afford visitors the opportunity to become familiar with vernacular architecture, cultural and gastronomic tradition, local products, farming activities and the daily life of local inhabitants.

Visitors of ecologically sensitive areas must observe all rules for the protection of the environment against pollution, the non-disturbance of natural habitats and the preservation of the various ecosystems' equilibrium. Information on visiting protected areas and participating in special programs can be obtained from local information centres, local authorities, and specialised agencies. (See relevant list)



This year the Greeks did not travel as arule a-broad. They preferred staying home. Most of them left Athens and visited their native vil-lages and t h e i r ancestral homes

Hellenic Lawyer Associations
Seek Ways to Work Together



The President of the Hellenic Bar Association of Illinois met for lunch with the Vice President of the Hellenic Lawyers Association of New York, Elena Paraskevas-Thadani. The meeting was fruitful and the grounds were laid for more frequent communication and efforts to co-operate on programs, when feasible, between the two asociations. The HBA and the HLA are believed to be the oldest and the largest Hellenic Lawyer Association in the U.S. There are estimated to be about 500 Hel-lenic American Lawyers in the Chicago area and more than twice that number in the new York City area.

People 'get happier as they age'

Older people appear better able to control their emotions

Most people get happier as they grow older, studies on people aged up to their mid-90s suggest.

Despite worries about ill health, income, changes in social status and bereavements, later life tends to be a golden age, according to psychologists.



They found older adults generally make the best of the time they have left and have learned to avoid situations that make them feel sad or stressed. The young should do the same, they told the American Psychological Association.

The UK is an ageing nation - in less than 25 years, one in four people in the UK will be over 65 and the number of over-85s will have doubled. And it is expected there will be 30,000 people aged over 100 by the year 2030.

According to University of California psychologist Dr Susan Turk Charles, this should make the UK a happier society. By reviewing the available studies on emotions and ageing she found that mental wellbeing generally improved with age, except for people with dementia-related ill health.

Work carried out by Dr Laura Carstensen, a psychology professor at Stanford University, suggested why this might be the case.

Dr Carstensen asked volunteers ranging in age from 18 to mid-90s to take part in various experiments and keep diaries of their emotional state.

She found the older people were far less likely than the younger to experience persistent negative moods and were more resilient to hearing personal criticism.

They were also much better at controlling and balancing their emotions - a skill that appeared to improve the older they became.

TIPS FOR A HAPPY OLD AGE

Envisage ways to thoroughly enjoy the years ahead and imagine living to a healthy and happy 100. Design your life and daily routines to reinforce this goal. Don't put all your "social" eggs in one basket - invest time outside of your family and career too

Dr Charles explained: "Based on work by Carstensen and her colleagues, we know that older people are increasingly aware that the time they have left in life is growing shorter.

"They want to make the best of it so they avoid engaging in situations that will make them unhappy. "They have also had more time to learn and understand the intentions of others which helps them to avoid these stressful situations."

Dr Carstensen said the young would do well to start preparing for their old age now.

This includes adopting a healthy daily routine and ensuring some social investment is spent outside of the workplace and family home.

Andrew Harrop, head of public policy at Age Concern and Help the Aged, said the findings were encouraging. "For many people, older age and later life is often looked upon with dread and worry."

Far too many younger people assume that getting older is a process that will inevitably mean sickness, frailty and lack of mobility and greater dependence. However, this is far from the truth in very many cases.

Many older people lead active, healthy lives enriched by experience and learning.

This positive advantage can be brought to bear across so many aspects of daily life which - in turn - hugely benefits our ageing society.

It's vital that there is growing acceptance that just because someone is getting older, it doesn't mean they no longer have a significant contribution to make. This study is one of many which shows that later life can be a enormously positive experience.

China reduces holdings in US debt

China wants to establish a new global currency regime.China reduced its holdings of US government debt by the largest margin in nearly nine years in June, according to data from the US Treasury. China holds more US government debt than any other country and cut its holdings of US securities by more that 3% in June, said the BBC's Chris Hogg.Japan and the UK - second and third largest holders of US debt - increased their holdings over the same period.

China's holding of US debt is about 7% higher than at the turn of the year.

Inflation fear

In recent months the US government's budget deficit has widened thanks in part to the Obama administration's costly stimulus plan.

Our correspondent in Shanghai says that China is worried about this, and fears the stimulus efforts will fuel inflation in the US, reducing the value of the dollar.

This would then erode the value of the debt China holds in the US currency.

In June, China cut its holdings of US securities by about \$25bn, a fall of 3.1%.

'Dollar alternative'

The sales were made as the US treasury secretary was visiting Beijing to try to reassure the Chinese that their investment in his country's government debt is safe.

In 2008, the Chinese increased their holdings in US debt by 52% over 12 months.

"China has said it would like to establish an alternative to the US dollar as the world's favoured currency for foreign exchange reserves," said our correspondent.

Pakistan Taliban spokesman 'held'

Pakistan's army has arrested a man it believes to be the chief spokesman for the country's Taliban, officials say.

Maulvi Omar was a spokesman for the Tehrik Taliban Pakistan (TTP), one of the main Taliban groups in the country.

He was reportedly picked up in the Mohmand tribal area close to the border with Afghanistan, while travelling in a



car with two associates.

Mr Omar is said to have been a key aide of Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud, thought to have been killed recently.

Pakistani officials say they will produce Mr Omar before journalists later on Tuesday. "A very, very important militant has been arrested," Maj Fazal Ur Rehman told the AFP news agency.

Despite that statement, correspondents say Maulvi Omar's importance has diminished in recent weeks because of army advances in his stronghold of Bajaur, in north-western Pakistan.

His arrest came as a senior Pakistani army officer said that it would take months to prepare an offensive against the Taliban in South Waziristan, where they are strongest.

Lt Gen Nadeem Ahmed was speaking after briefing the visiting US envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke.He said the army was short of "the right kind of equipment" in the offensive against militants in the north-west.

Problems remain The arrest follows a

concerted military offensive against the Taliban in the Swat valley region of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province.

Maulvi Omar comes from Bajaur, a tribal area in the North West where the Taliban established themselves early on.

Pakistani security forces have clashed with militants recently in nearby Mohmand, which is currently controlled by the Taliban.

The BBC's Aleem Maqbool, in Islamabad, says Maulvi Omar's detention will be seen as another success for the Pakistani military.

He was a senior aide to Baitullah Mehsud, and Pakistan will be hoping the removal of key leadership figures will plunge the Taliban into disarray, our correspondent says.

They are already on the back foot with the defeat in Swat and the reported death of Baitullah Mehsud, head of the organization.

Despite denials, there has been no clear proof yet from the Taliban that their leader is still alive.

While Maulvi Umar's position is not as vital, he is remains of significance primarily for two reasons.

He has been acting as a liaison between the various Taliban groups to settle differences.

Maulvi Umar also had strong connections in the media, and was a key figure in the Taliban's propaganda campaigns.

Correspondents say that his arrest may provide key information about the Taliban's recent operations and especially the mystery surrounding the status of Baitullah Mehsud.

Islamabad and Washington say Baitullah Mehsud was killed in a US drone attack earlier this month.

Nevertheless, the infrastructure through which militants have been recruited and trained remains in place.

There has been a surge of violence in the north-west since the army launched a summer operation to dislodge Taliban militants from their strongholds there.



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