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WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Meaning of Christmas

If in spite of ambivalent feelings you keep on celebrating the Christmas holiday, it could be because of its hidden meaning.

There is a lot of controversy and confusion in people's minds over Christmas and its meaning both in our personal lives and in the world.

Some people feel it is an exclusively Christian holiday, holding no special meaning for them. Others believe it is nothing more than a feeding frenzy for the free market and an excuse to get people to open their wallets at every turn. Others take the viewpoint that it is a holy day that is cheapened and diminished by all the garish festivities. Yet few, if any, when really pressed, are will-



ing to give up the Christmas holiday, in spite of their ambivalent feelings.

The reason for this is because of the real meaning behind the Christmas season. A meaning that we all somehow psychically feel even though our own intellect doesn't fully comprehend what all the fuss is about.

That hidden meaning is that Christmas is the festival of the human heart. It is a time of year when all the universe conspires to raise the vibratory level of consciousness on earth to one of peace and love toward ourselves and one another. This season resonates to the sweet, childlike innocence that resides in all of us. A time when the heavenly forces inspire us to shift our focus away from fear and toward one of joy, and healing.

The Christmas festival emphasizes this shift in two ways; one is the rebirth of the soul and the second is the return of the light to earth. Even before the rebirth of Christ which centers around our modern day Christmas festival, as far back as recorded history, in fact, these two themes of rebirth and light have emerged again and again during this time of year.

It is as if Divine Consciousness moves forward year after year, during the darkest season, to bring us back to light.

Yet even knowing the true meaning of the Christmas season is not enough to convince some people of its importance. "Peace! Goodwill! Humbug!" they cry just as Scrooge did in the famous Dickens fable. "These are nice

ideas but no more than a fantasy. I feel no peace. No goodwill!"

Yet there is a way to feel this vibratory shift. There is a way in which your own heart can experience the love and light pouring into the earth's vibration from Divine Source. That way is to participate in the rituals of the season.

No matter who you are, your heart cannot resist the beauty of an ornamented Christmas tree or the glow of a mysterious menorah. Cynicism gives way to the celebration when carefully preparing holiday sweets or stringing colorful lights around the entrance to your home. Any heart warms to a rousing rendition of "Joy to The World" or the sensuous smell of roasting chestnuts on a crisp winter's eve.

Sadness leaves when carefully choosing gifts to delight and surprise those you love. The heart feels rich and fulfilled as you wrap them in gay paper and bows. For just a while, through partaking of the whim and richness of the season, life takes on an extraordinary hue, one of sweetness and safety. Something psychic and healing happens to our

hearts as we enjoy the layer upon layer of these sensual seasonal delights. These rituals open the heart chakra and allow us to feel and express the innocence and beauty of being a child of the universe.

Each occasion we create to feel the vibrations of Christmas helps raise the consciousness of the planet and return it to balance. For every person creating joy, there is one less person in pain.

These are the ways to experience the vibrational shift toward light that occurs during this season.

But there is one more thing you can do to amplify this experience a thousandfold.

That is to enter the season of Christmas with the intention of being a personal messenger of light and love, and celebrate in the name of service to Divine Consciousness.

Nothing transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary more directly than the intention to do what ever you are doing with the desire to serve Higher Power.

When we celebrate the season with such an intention and desire, we not only experience Christmas . . . we actually become Christmas: an agent of rebirth of the soul and the bringer of light.

Therefore, the best gift you can give to yourself and the world during this holiday season is a cup of spiced cider, a delicious Christmas cookie, a round of jingle bells, and the gift of self love. So be it. FROM THE EDITOR.

HELLENIC CHRISTMAS 2011



On Sunday Consulate General Office of Greece, Education Office, at the Museum of Science and Industry, presented Hellenic Christmas 2011. 5 Greek schools participated with Mrs. Georgia Katsis as moderator. From L. to R.: Z. Koultouridis, M. Zaharioudakis, Father Ioannis Rallis, Maria Litsas-Hatzinakos, Honorable General Consul of Greece Ioanna Eftymiadis, Metropolitan Iakovos, Vagelis Kasvikis, Education Office, E. Georgopoulou, Nick Panagakis, Elias Politis, Kyriakos Pontikis.



Greek Scholl, Aurora, IL., Teacher-coordinator: Stella Languist



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1. To defend all who are unjustly attacked
2. To applaud the achievements of all our people
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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Eating canned soup ‘poses a chemical risk’

People who eat canned soup should be aware that a chemical used to line the tin can leach into the food and end up in the body, say scientists.

Tests on 75 volunteers revealed the compound bisphenol A (BPA) was readily ingested and detected in large amounts in the urine, the Journal of the American Medical Association reports.



ciation reports.

Past studies have linked high BPA levels with adverse health effects. In the EU the chemical is already banned from baby bottles.

But it is still used in cans as a coating to prevent rusting and keep the food fresh. Some soft drink cans and bottles also contain BPA.

Dr Jenny Carwile, lead author of the latest study at the Harvard School of Public Health, said: “We’ve known for a while that drinking beverages that have been stored in certain hard plastics can increase the amount of BPA in your body. This study suggests that canned foods may be an even greater concern, especially given their wide use.”

Our current advice is that BPA from food contact materials does not represent a risk to

consumers but the agency will be looking at this study”

Worrying levels

Her team asked the volunteers to eat either a freshly made 12oz serving of vegetarian soup or one out of a can once a day for five days.

After a weekend of rest, the groups switched over so that the fresh soup group now ate the canned variety and vice-versa.

Tests on their urine revealed detectable BPA in 77% of samples after fresh soup consumption and 100% of samples after canned soup consumption.

A serving of tinned soup a day appeared to increase BPA 20-fold.

The average concentration of BPA was 1.1 ig/L after fresh soup consumption compared to and 20.8 ig/L after eating soup from a tin.

The researchers say levels like these are “among the most extreme reported in a non-occupational setting”.

The study did not look at what the health im

pact of this might be, but they say this warrants further investigation, even if rises might be temporary.

Fellow researcher Karin Michels said: “The magnitude of the rise in urinary BPA we observed after just one serving of soup was unexpected and may be of concern among individuals who regularly consume foods from cans or drink several canned beverages daily.

“It may be advisable for manufacturers to consider eliminating BPA from can linings.”

The UK’s Food Standards Agency said: “Our current advice is that BPA from food contact materials does not represent a risk to consumers but the agency will be looking at this study, as it would at any new piece of work, to see if it has any implications for our advice to consumers.”



Cook County Treasurer Maria Pappas welcomes composer Michael Karras and Chris Tomaras to her annual Holiday Party. Pappas’ guests joined several hundred persons from diverse ethnic and religious group attending Pappas’ Holiday Party, which has become a tradition in the Treasurer’s office at the Cook County Building in downtown Chicago.

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2

Is Greece the test for Europe?

By Mariyana Spyropoulos

After yet more cliff-hanging tensions, on November 29 Euro-area finance ministers approved further support (5.8 billion euro or \$7.7 billion) for Greece, which was days away from running out of cash to cover government salaries and other obligations. Still to come – but virtually certain in light of the nod from Brussels – is the next slice (roughly \$3 billion) of the parallel loan from the IMF. Together, these funds will provide much needed breathing space for the recently formed coalition government.

The latest installment of this Greek drama



was made possible only by a late about-face by the leader of the New Democracy Party, Antonis Samaras. Bowing to intense pressure from inside and outside the country, Samaras finally signed a letter to Greece's creditors, in which he pledged his support for the terms of the bailout program as the other coalition partners had already done. However, members of Samaras's party continue to denounce details of the austerity program as part of the political maneuvering ahead of the elections currently set for Feb 2012. At the same time, bickering within the Socialist PASOK which faces a leadership contest, threatens to undermine the implementation of important reform measures.

Meanwhile, the government under Papademos is looking to reduce the crushing debt burden on Greece and that means completing negotiations with the country's private creditors. Back in October a deal was struck in principle that the banks and other private investors would take "a haircut", i.e. economic slang for a write down in the value of their holdings of Greek bonds. At the time, an overall reduction of 50 percent was agreed with the International Finance Institute (IFI) the private creditors association representing the majority of foreign holders of Greek debt. But talks on the details of the deal broke down almost as soon as they started in earnest with the bankers demanding an interest rate of at least 8% on new bonds and the Greek govt offering 4.5 to 5 percent. There is also disagreement over the use of an additional euro 30 billion of funds being provided by Greece's Eurozone partners. However, seasoned observers of such negotiations believe a final deal will be struck before long – because the consequences of failure are too high for either side.

But even if the final terms of the deal are closer to Athens's position, does this mean Greece is out of the woods? Far from it. The country faces an almost unprecedented fifth year of negative growth, soaring unemployment, and further austerity as the Government seeks to get the deficit under control. Greece also faces the difficult task of raising revenues in a climate of diminishing incomes and passing further structural measures ranging from privatization of public monopolies and other state holdings to labor market reforms to modernization of the country's notoriously ponderous administrative and legal procedures.

And all this against a backdrop of continuing crisis in the wider Eurozone are with the very existence of the euro under threat.

Can Greece make it - i.e. get back to something resembling a normal, functioning economy with a decent level of employment and incomes?

I believe it can, but it will be touch and go because the risks of failure are high on all fronts. First, internally, the government has no option but to implement the full set of measures agreed with the troika (ECB, IMF and European Commission). These measures are not only needed to get Greece's fiscal house in order

and restore Greece's competitiveness but a turnaround on the reform front would risk an end to the international loans that are keeping the country afloat.

Despite his written word, Samaras and his colleagues still hint at "renegotiating" the terms of those loans if his party wins the upcoming elections, but they will find that easier said than done. He might want to check with Enda Kenny, the Prime Minister of Ireland, who rode to power on a similar pledge in the middle of that country's rescue deal with the troika and then found them adamantly opposed to his key demand, a lowering of the interest rate on the loan to Ireland. Faced with the dead fast refusal of the creditors to countenance such a concession, Mr. Kenny had no option but to turn around and quietly bury the pre-election pledge. Ironically, strict adherence to the program measures agreed with the troika has resulted in Ireland recovering faster than either Portugal or Greece, with strengthened competitiveness, faster growth, and an improved fiscal outlook.

There is very little reason to believe that the European powers-that-be would be more sympathetic to a new Greek government - especially one that had already promised to implement the program. All that such political double dealing is likely to achieve is to increase the uncertainly surrounding Greece's commitment to reform when such commitment is critical to success.

Externally, the risks are, if anything, even higher. While Greece remains the weakest link in the chain of euro economies, the markets now have much bigger fish to fry. In recent weeks, interest rates on Spanish and Italian bonds have reached the levels that drove Greece, Ireland and Portugal into requesting an international rescue. France's AAA rating has come under pressure, and even Germany has seen international investors turn up their collective nose at the most recent offering of government paper.

The fate of the euro itself hangs in the balance as last week's coordinated action by the Fed and its counterparts has underscored. Whether that action by the central bankers will be enough depends largely on the steps their finance ministry colleagues take to enlarge the European bailout fund and bolster the IMF's firepower, while at the same time putting in place a credible fiscal framework and closer financial integration. Only a cohesive and comprehensive effort by the Eurozone as a whole, together with a sizeable and effective firewall designed to resist further pressures on the larger vulnerable economies will convince markets that the politicians are serious about getting to grips with reform on a euro-wide scale. It remains to be seen whether the latest set of proposals backed by France and Germany aimed at strengthening fiscal coordination in Europe represent the first steps in that direction.

Greece must be part of that effort and that means the government of Greece must continue to focus on competitiveness and growth and the policies to achieve those goals. The past two years have been extremely difficult for the Greek people. To date, they have responded heroically. Despite the headline focus on strikes and demonstrations, the reality is that most Greeks know that there is a long road ahead to put the country back on its feet and have accepted the need for hard times. What they expect, however, is that the tough reform measures will be implemented in an equitable way and with protection for the most vulnerable members of society. This is a message the political leadership in Greece – across party lines – should heed.

The cradle of democracy, the birthplace of the Olympics, the foundation stone of Western philosophy – the gifts of the Greeks to the world have been many over the centuries. I believe that Greece can still set an example of how to face, and overcome, adversity, as it has throughout its long history. So long as political developments do not throw progress off track, and so long as the broader Eurozone problems are tackled decisively and credibly, Greece now has the possibility of re-launching its reform efforts with continued support from the international community. Success is not guaranteed. It will require continued determined efforts by Greeks at all levels of society for years to come. If those efforts were to be hindered by short-term political maneuvers, that indeed would be a Greek tragedy.

Europe's four big dilemmas

The issues the Europe's leaders face may seem complicated and interconnected.

But essentially they boil down to four big dilemmas. How these dilemmas are resolved will decide whether the eurozone stays together, or ultimately unravels despite the latest agreement.

Borrowers vs Lenders

Like the US and UK, Europe faces an enormous overhang of accumulated government and private-sector debt, much of which is now not repayable. So the question is, how much gets written off, and who picks up the tab?



For the eurozone as a whole, the debt problem is comparable with that of the US, and potentially manageable. The problem is that some eurozone countries are much more heavily indebted than others.

In October's deal some private sectors lenders have already agreed to write

down the value of Greek debt by half. Investors also think the Portuguese, Irish, and even the Spanish and Italian governments, may eventually follow suit.

The October package calls for banks to invest more than 100bn euros building up their capital, but it is not yet clear if they will be able to do so without intervention from governments. If other European countries join Greece in writing off their debts, banks may need even more money. Ultimately Germany and other less-indebted countries may have to bear much of the cost of rescuing the eurozone's banks as well as its weaker governments.

Austerity vs growth

Like everywhere else, most European governments have seen their borrowing balloon during the recession and anaemic recovery. At the same time, fears over southern European governments' ability to repay their debts mean their borrowing costs have also gone through the roof. Under pressure from Germany and the ECB, all of these countries have been pushing through painful spending cuts and tax rises.

But here's the problem: austerity is killing growth throughout Europe. And with less profits to tax and more dole cheques to write, weak growth makes it even harder for governments to cut their borrowing and repay their debts. In order to turn the slowing eurozone economy around, the ECB now looks set to slash interest rates from their current 1.5%.

The central bank considered buying up more Italian and Spanish debt, pumping cash into the financial system and easing the pressure on those countries to slash their borrowing. But this move has always been strongly opposed by German members of the ECB.

Another option to stimulate growth is for the few other countries that markets are still willing to lend to to borrow and spend more, offsetting spending cuts in southern Europe.

Yet for Germany, who can currently borrow at unprecedentedly cheap interest rates, borrowing is anathema.

Discipline vs Solidarity

Germany's view on the eurozone crisis is simple. Southern European governments borrowed recklessly at the cheap interest rates available inside the euro. Now they are being punished by markets, and must learn discipline. Germany wants other governments to incorporate strict budget rules into their constitutions to stop such recklessness in future.

Moreover, the focus on discipline misses a bigger point. While Germany's view may be apt for Greece - whose government cheated on its borrowing statistics to qualify for the euro in the first place - it is grossly unfair for Spain. Yet, inside the euro, Spain cannot devalue to regain a price advantage. Nor can it necessarily expect the ECB to cut interest rates or buy up its debts.

Being put a fiscal straitjacket as well just makes things worse.

Compare this with the US state of Michigan, where the collapse of the US car industry has spelled disaster.

Unlike in Europe, the US has a federal government that can tax other states in order to help out Michigan, by paying for unemployment benefits and rehabilitating the big car companies.

If the euro is to function in the future, economists warn, then a similar system of centralised fiscal transfers will be needed there too.

Europe vs the Nations

On the face of it, the big political standoff in Europe is one of paymaster Germany versus bankrupt southern Europe. For German voters, their country's post-War economic miracle was built on a hard currency, prudent finances, and strong exports. It is hard for German voters to fathom that these very virtues are at the heart of the current crisis.

But Germany has everything to lose if it does not help the south out, and the eurozone unravels. If the Greeks, Italians and others default on their debts, German and French lenders would be the biggest losers.

As Greece's economy shrinks and shrinks, its people cry out. But can German voters hear them? If they also leave the euro, it would be a legal and financial disaster for all concerned. Moreover, German export success for the past decade has been built on the weaker, more competitive exchange rate that came with sharing a currency with southern Europe. Without the euro, safe haven Germany could expect its currency to shoot up, with devastating consequences for the country's export-driven industry.

Southern Europeans meanwhile would see their currencies plummet outside the euro, leading to rises in inflation and their cost of living as painful as the austerity they are protesting against. Yet these stark realities are not widely appreciated in Germany or its neighbours.

Because the real problem is that there is nobody who can credibly speak for the common interest of Europe.

Since its inception in the 1950s, the European project has been run and controlled by a club of national governments. The political process has been one of haggling behind closed doors, with issues presented to electorates as a matter of competing national interests.

But such haggling is dangerous in a financial crisis. Any solution must be agreed by 17 governments, and ratified by 17 parliaments, an impossibly slow process.

And the longer it takes, the more bitter each dispute risks becoming, and the greater the market's loss of confidence in the euro becomes, undermining Europe's fragile economy.

The European Commission president, Jose Manuel Barroso, has tried to speak for the common interest, pleading for the Commission to take the lead in solving Europe's problems. But he is a political appointee, and as such, he is easily ignored by national leaders and scarcely noticed by the wider public.

Perhaps, if Mr Barroso were an elected leader, he could guide European public opinion towards a comprehensive solution to the crisis that balanced the interests of the different nations. But as it is, the European public is very far from understanding the issues, or agreeing to the greater economic and political integration that may be needed to save the euro.

Sadly, this political dilemma is one that may not have a workable solution.



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Koraes Elementary Students Participate in the Annual Geography Bee Competition



On Thursday December 1, 2011, fourteen Junior High students who scored the highest on their geography quizzes at Koraes Elementary School, affiliated with SS Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Palos Hills, participated in the annual geography bee competition sponsored by the National Geographic Society. Photo GB2011 pictured from left to right: Mrs. Lisa Pedersen (junior high social studies teacher), Chase Maniatis (7th grade 2nd place winner), Georgia Hiotis (8th grade 1st place winner), Demetrios Kladis (6th grade 3rd place winner), and Mrs. Mary Zaharis (principal)

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Seven in 10 Greek taxpayers claimed poverty in 2009

Greek taxpayers appear to be a strange mix, with most of them claiming to live below the poverty line while others own yachts, swimming pools and even helicopters, according to statistics released on Friday by the Finance Ministry.

The data, based on tax statement records for 2009, the second year of

Greece's current recession cycle, showed an extraordinarily high rate of poverty as stated by taxpayers, with 70 percent telling the tax authorities that they had an annual income of below 12,000 euros, the tax-free ceiling at the time. In fact, four out of 10 households claimed their annual



income was even lower than the new tax-free ceiling of 5,000 euros.

However, at the same time, there are four in every 10 households that own a house, one in two taxpayers has a car and more than 900,000 have revenues from renting - which illustrates the extent of tax evasion.

Data also show that there are 10,406 taxpayers who own yachts of more than 10 meters in length, while 128 own airplanes or helicopters. All this forms the basis for cross-checking in order to establish the validity of statements.

The 2010 statements, concerning incomes obtained in 2009, showed that the total number of taxpayers came to 8,451,733, with 3,058,590 of these being salary workers. At 2,342,865, pensioners accounted for 36 percent.

More than 360,000 taxpayers owned houses of more than 200 square meters, while 910,470 people lived in rented accommodation. Over 135,000 taxpayers were paying rent for their children who were living and studying in another city.

The number of taxpayers who declared their country homes came to 662,403, with 133,169 of them saying that their houses had a total area of over 150 square meters. However, only 11,763 of them stated they owned a swimming pool.

There were also 512,275 taxpayers who acquired a new vehicle in 2009, while the number of car owners came to 4,482,674.

All this was before Greece entered the strict monitoring of the eurozone and the International Monetary Fund, which started in May 2010.



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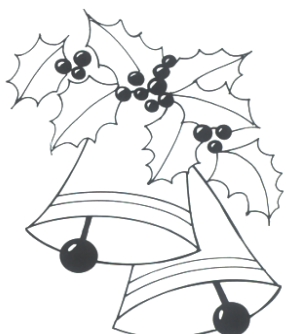


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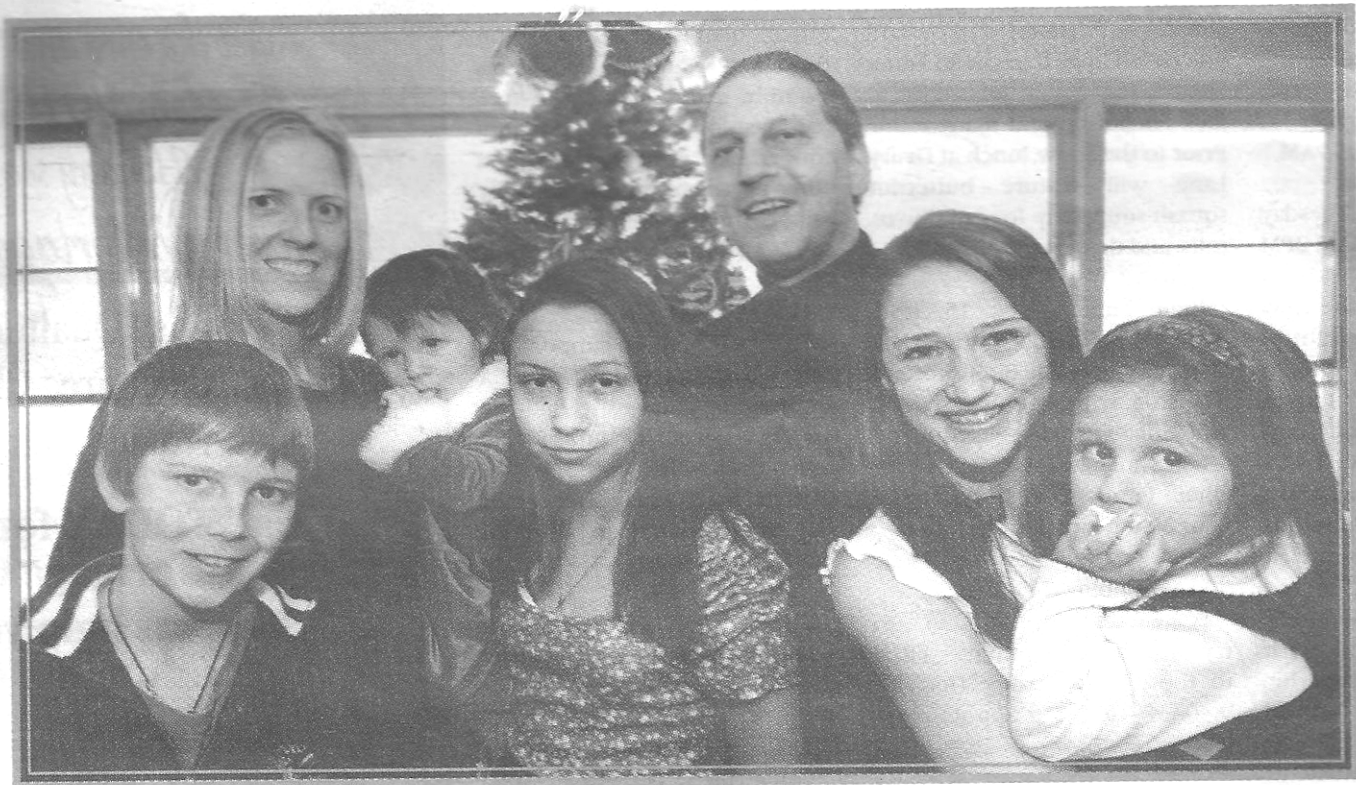
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Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

OLD MEDICATIONS, OTHER PRODUCTS FOUND IN WATER SUPPLIES

Chicago, Illinois – The majority of Americans take some kind of medication, either a prescription drug or over-the-counter product, and use products such as lotion, cosmetics, laundry detergents, and cleaning products on a daily basis. Every day the average adult uses nine personal care products that contain 126 unique compounds that could enter our water.



These materials and other common household items, known as pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PPCPs) are now finding their way into water supplies. Recent studies by the U.S. Geological Survey and environmental groups found chemicals such as steroids, non-prescription drugs, and insect repellents in 80% of streams and 93% of groundwater sampled.

PPCPs commonly enter the environment through excretion by humans and domestic animals, disposal of unneeded or expired PPCPs by flushing them down a toilet or drain,

bathing and swimming, discharge from municipal sewage systems or private septic systems, and other accidental discharge. There are currently no drinking water standards for PPCP compounds.

To help keep these compounds out of water supplies:

- 1) Never flush unneeded or expired medications down a toilet or drain, especially if you use a septic system.
- 2) Find out if any pharmacies in your community will take back unneeded or expired medication or if a take-back program exists.
- 3) If no local take-back program exists or other disposal methods are unavailable, alter the medications in some way (such as adding water to pills, or grind them up and throw away with kitty litter or coffee grounds) remove all identifying information from containers and place them in the trash.
- 4) Use personal care products sparingly, completely and according to label recommendations
- 5) Only purchase as much medication as you reasonably need.
- 6) Consider using products with ingredients that are more likely to biodegrade harmlessly in the environment, such as vinegar, lemon juice or baking soda.



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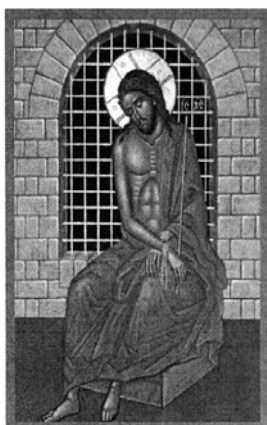
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Bishop Demetrios of Mokissos is a staunch advocate for the abolition of the death penalty, and has worked tirelessly in this effort. He was spiritual advisor to Andrew Kokaraleis, the last prisoner executed in 1999. Following Kokaraleis' execution, Bishop Demetrios became more active in the movement to end the death penalty. He has served as President of the Illinois Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and is still a member. On March 9th, 2011, Bishop Demetrios was present when Governor Pat Quinn signed legislation to end the death penalty in Illinois.



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The inimitable John Catsimatidis

As he expands his real estate business, the billionaire mogul mulls a mayoral run.

MR. MAYOR?: John Catsimatidis has the billions to campaign for the job he sought briefly in 2009. Does he still want it in 2013?

Red Apple Group's gritty headquarters on 11th Avenue and 56th Street does not even hint at the vast fortune controlled by the company's



owner, John Catsimatidis. The cramped elevator in the six-floor former warehouse is ancient and temperamental. Instead of artwork, newspaper circulars and advertising specials from the firm's Gristedes supermarket chain line the reception area walls. And Mr. Catsimatidis' desk, which stands in an open room alongside other executives, is cluttered with foot-high stacks of papers.

"We are just short of hoarding here," joked his assistant, Matt Wanning.

Mr. Catsimatidis' \$4 billion empire includes vast real estate holdings, an oil refinery, an aviation business, and a chain of 32 supermarkets in Manhattan. But the man of means prefers to play up his humble roots as the son of Greek immigrants whose father worked in low-paying restaurant jobs.

"I might be working on a billion-dollar deal and these guys are busy buying a truckload of Coca-Cola," he said in a recent interview at his office. "I sit here in the middle because I'm a working man. I keep in the action."

The narrative has served him well—and may be dusted off again if Mr. Catsimatidis runs for mayor of New York City in 2013. He an-

nounced his candidacy in 2009 and then withdrew it when Mayor Michael Bloomberg changed the term limits law to allow himself to run for a third term.

Reviving supermarket brand

As he considers his political future, Mr. Catsimatidis, 63, is hardly winding down his career. Always on the hunt for new business deals, he has a keen eye for spotting opportunities in distressed markets and is willing to wait, sometimes decades, for his investments to pay off. And though his supermarket business—where his fortune began—is in decline, he's reintroducing his long-defunct Red Apple brand to cut costs and appeal to consumers looking for lower prices.

Real estate has been the bedrock of his financial success. Mr. Catsimatidis bought his first building in 1977, and, today, Red Apple Group owns more than 300 properties across the country, mostly outside of New York City. Many of his holdings are convenience stores and gas stations.

Now, with his eye on profiting from a buoyant New York rental market, he's turning into a residential developer. His first projects are in downtown Brooklyn, where for the past 25 years he has owned properties that were home to everything from fast-food restaurants to a parking lot, on a three-block stretch. He bought those low-rise buildings, located across from Metro Tech Center, from Long Island University when the neighborhood was rough, he said, and "you needed a security guard to collect the rent."

Over the years, he tore the properties down, and last year completed The Andrea, a 95-unit building at 218 Myrtle Ave. He is planning to develop two more apartment buildings there.

With his "Ocean Dreams" proposal, he intends to build three residential towers on

land he bought on Coney Island, and, more recently, has been talking to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital about constructing residential rental units for doctors and nurses on an empty lot he owns near the hospital.

"Instead of owning a one-story building, we are going to have an average of 20-story buildings," Mr. Catsimatidis vowed. "It's all about the highest and best use of our real estate."

In his supermarket business, Mr. Catsimatidis is trying to get his timing back. Gristedes' \$250 million in revenues represents only about 5% of Red Apple Group's sales, yet it is the business he's known for, and where he made his first million at age 25.

In the past decade, those traditional supermarkets have been hit with competition from Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Fresh Direct and other progressive grocers, which, he says, have a competitive advantage because they are nonunion.

Gristedes is struggling to break even and continues to shrink. "It's obvious we shouldn't be in this business anymore," he said. "I do it for my employees, not for myself."

Mr. Catsimatidis said he plans to open more Red Apples in New York and is considering replacing some of his faltering Gristedes stores with the brand. Gristedes operates only in Manhattan.

"I was having a little fun," Mr. Catsimatidis quipped. "We had a bad store there that wasn't making money." The Union Square Gristedes store has since closed.

He is also ready to take on Wal-Mart if the retail powerhouse gets tax breaks to open in the city. "I've instructed my lobbyists to stay on top of the situation to make sure Wal-Mart is not getting special treatment," he said.

And he can't resist an opportunity to acquire an ailing rival, either. Mr. Catsimatidis has a history of buying companies that are in financial distress, hav-

ing scooped up a bankrupt United Refining Co. in 1986. Indeed, oil has become the real profit center for the company.

United Refining, based in Warren, Pa., owns 366 service stations and convenience stores branded Kwik Fill, Red Apple Food Marts and Country Fair. Stores in Pennsylvania, Ohio and upstate New York have posted 23 consecutive profitable quarters, Mr. Catsimatidis boasted. United Refining's third-quarter sales in May were \$808 million.

In sickness and health

Making money and lots of it has been a constant theme in Mr. Catsimatidis' life. His ability to spot opportunities led him to turn a personal medical crisis last year into another venture. After undergoing a kidney transplant, a result of his struggle with diabetes, he began looking at medical companies.

Over the last six months, Mr. Catsimatidis has invested in at least three: Medgenics, Cerecor and ContraFect, which are producing cutting-edge drugs to treat everything from severe coughs to superinfections.

He also uses his Midas touch to help politicians he supports. In his office, there are hundreds of photographs of him next to members of Congress and heads of states, including U.S. presidents at Camp David. He was one of Bill Clinton's biggest financial boosters in the 1990s.

It's clear that public office holds a great fascination for him—and perhaps the one goal that remains elusive. He is vague when asked about whether he will run for mayor of the city.

"I don't necessarily want to be mayor," he said. "But I love New York City and I don't want it to go downhill. If we can't get someone who is really qualified to do a good job for our city, then I may do something about it."

Republican party leaders are urging him to run and at least one person who has held the job insists he'd have a good shot at it.

"He's got the experience to be mayor," said Rudolph Giuliani, citing the executive's financial savvy and ability to lead a multibillion-dollar enterprise. "People will underestimate him as a candidate. But they will be making a mistake if they underestimate him." SOURCE: CRAI'NS

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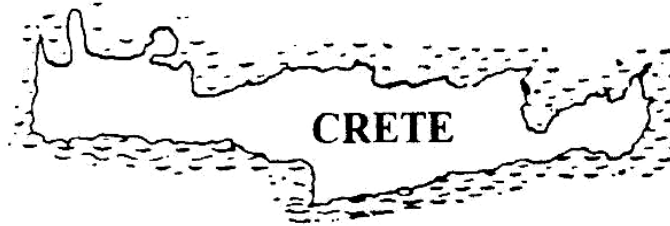
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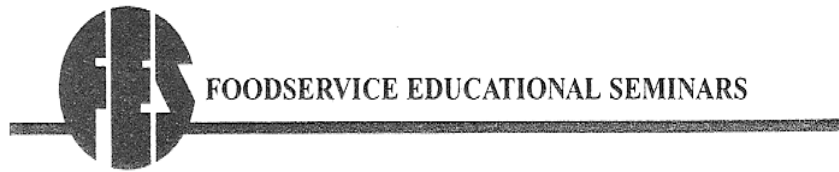
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37th Anniversary and Annual Dinner Dance

The UHVA is an organization dedicated to addressing issues that are vital to our members by actively participating in political and community affairs, and by establishing close relationships with our elected officials. UHVA encourages Greek-Americans to become productive citizens by exercising their rights and responsibilities, and by respecting the rights of others, In addition this organization dedicates a large part of its work toward strenthening the friedly and historic ties between the people and the governments of the UNited States and Greece.

The United Hellenic Voters of America have served the Greek American Community and Illinois voters at large for almost four decades. Through their honorable goals of education, promoting citizenship and participation in the political process, they have brought important issues to light and encouraged the betterment of many citizens. They also have served to bring ideas to the attention of public servants.

the “Omogeneia” congratulates all the people who were honored at the 37th Anniversary dinner Dance, especially the Hall of Fame recipients for their contributions to the Greek American Community, heritage and culture.



Dr.Dimitrios Kyriazopoulos,Honorary National Supreme Chairman and Founder and Prof. Nick Kouruklis.



From L. to R. Bill Kanetis. Dr. Maria Bakalis, Tom Diamond. Dr. Dimitrios Kyriazopoulos,Tom Kostopoulos, Nick Pappas.



Hall of Fame recipient Judge Charles P. Kocoras and Dr. Dimitrios Kyriazopoulos.



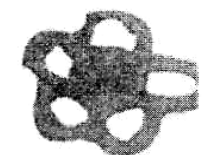
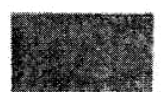
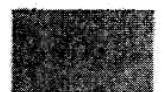
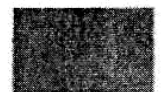
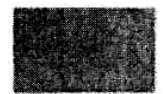
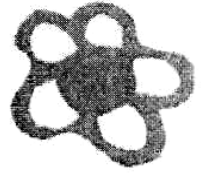
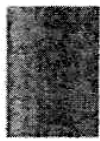
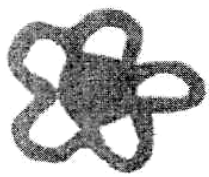
From L. to R.: Nick Goudanis, Dr. Dimitrios Kyriazopoulos, Prof. Nick Kouruklis, Judge Kotaras, Tom Kostopoulos, Gus Kostopoulos.



Hall of Fame recipient Prof. Nick Kouruklis accepting the honor.



Dr. Dimitrios Kyriazopoulos and Hall of Fame recipient Judge James Booras



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του Ελληνοαμερικάνικου Οργανισμού Εστιατόρων

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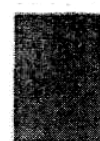
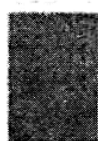
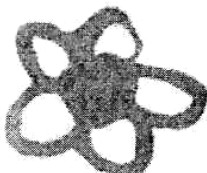
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Beans in Greek Cooking

Gigantes, olive oil, roasted red peppers, pasturma all combine to make this fresh, and are almost always eaten shelled in stews, especially with artichokes, and in omelets.



Fresh beans. In late spring a host of fresh beans, including string beans, butter beans, runner beans, fresh black-eyed peas, flageolets, and cranberry beans, which are usually shelled and often frozen for use in hearty winter stews, make their appearance at the farmer's market. Most fresh beans in the Greek kitchen are cooked as "lathera"—over low heat for a long time with tomatoes, potatoes, and a lot of olive oil. Fresh black-eyed peas, called ambelofasoula in Greek, make for a delicious salad, with a little garlic and some fresh herbs.

Dried beans. These make for delicious, hearty winter fare as well as for great salads.

casserole delicious.

Beans and pulses are among the traditional Greek foods. For eons, these simple, healthful ingredients have been staples of the kitchen, an easy, economical, nutritious way to feed body and soul alike. Although Greeks consume many different kinds of beans and pulses, the oldest are no doubt the broad bean, the chick pea and the lentil, which have been savored all over the Mediterranean since time immemorial.

Following is a short list and description of some of the most popular beans and pulses on the Greek table:

Broad beans. Greek call them koukia. In spring, they come to market

Gigantes. The most popular dried beans are the gigantes, or giant beans, which resemble lima or butter beans but are bigger. These are made into casseroles baked with tomatoes and other vegetables, and sometimes served up simply boiled with a little olive oil, lemon juice and oregano. The best Greek gigantes come from the loamy, damp, mineral-rich soils of Kastoria and Prespes in Northern Greece. Some are PDO (Protected Designation of Origin).

White Beans. Other, smaller white beans are cooked into stews and soups—the national bean soup, which is a melee of navy or cannelloni beans, tomatoes, celery, onions, and often hot pepper.



Dr. Peter J. Panton, a graduate of the Brown University School of Medicine, is certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology, a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, and former president of the Chicago Ophthalmological Society.

Dr. Peter Panton Discusses ALL LASER LASIK

Dr. Panton, What is ALL LASER LASIK?

ALL LASER LASIK combines two vision enhancing technologies that provide an unprecedented level of safety, precision, and comfort. These technologies are: the Ziemer Laser for creating the flap and the WaveLight Excimer Laser for shaping a perfect corneal surface.

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ALL LASER LASIK allows us to treat patients with every type of refractive error--nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism and presbyopia. Problems common to other types of lasers such as glare, halos and decreased night vision have been virtually eliminated with Ziemer-WaveLight laser treatments.

What will I experience during the laser treatment?

Your eye is first numbed with eye drops, then the Ziemer creates a protective flap of cornea which is gently folded back. The WaveLight then reshapes your cornea in a matter of seconds. The protective flap is repositioned where it bonds securely without the need for stitches. By the following morning, most ALL LASER LASIK patients will be able to pass the driver's license test without the need for glasses or contact lenses.

How do I find out if ALL LASER LASIK is right for me?

I invite you to visit the Panton Eye Center and see the Ziemer-WaveLight laser system. Our trained physicians can determine if these exciting technologies are right for you. We are able to evaluate, treat and follow-up our ALL LASER LASIK patients in one convenient location. All of your care will be personally directed by Dr. Panton.

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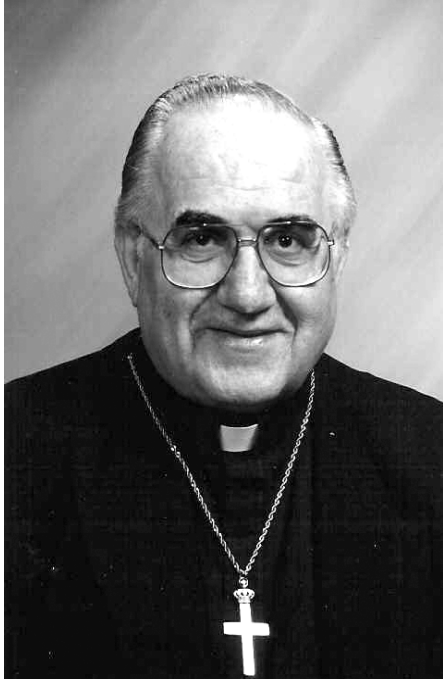


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Fr. Byron Papanikolaou Honored

The Fr. Byron Papanikolaou Koraes Student Assistance fund was recently renamed to honor its past pastor of 52 years of service to the Parish of Sts. Constantine and Helen in Palos Hills, IL. Fr. Byron has overseen the school for over half of its entire life and has dedicated his life's ministry to its preservation and well being.



Koraes Elementary School has served the families in the Greek Orthodox community for 101 years. It is a Greek Orthodox parochial day school which includes prekindergarten through the eighth grade. Additionally, the school has an Afternoon Greek School program on Tuesday and Thursday of each week. In the last ten years, this assistance fund has provided over \$750,000 in tuition aide for students attending Koraes. This year, the fund distributed over \$100,000 of tuition assistance.

Orthodox families have made Koraes their school of choice because it is a school of our faith, it has an excellent academic reputation, the Greek language, culture and heritage are taught daily, and the school provides a safe, family-like environment for their children.

Standardized test score consistently fall within the top ranges (90% ile and above). The curriculum is recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education and received high marks in the last state visit in 2009. The technology program is intentionally integrated into the curriculum and hosts a technology lab center and SmartBoard interactive white board technology in each classroom.

Graduates enroll easily into the high school of their choice and go on to receive many more academic honors. Graduates of Koraes are professionals, owners of private businesses, corporate managers, engineers and have become successful in many other professions. They can be found across the United States as well as in Greece and continue to stay in close touch with each other and with Father Byron.

Donations at large are continually needed to meet the costs of running a private school with no additional funding from the state or the federal government. Donations to the fund can be made to:

Father Byron Papanikolaou Koraes Student Assistance Fund
Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church,
11025 South Roberts Road
Palos Hills, IL 60465
708.974.3400

For more information about enrolling your child in Koraes Elementary School please view the website at www.Koraes.org or contact the principal, Mary C. Zaharis, at 708.974.3402.

THANKSGIVING RECIPES

Constantinople Style Spicy Cabbage Salad / Politiki Lahanosalata

This Greek cabbage salad is a classic on the winter table. This colorful salad is a classic Greek winter treat.

6 servings

2 cups finely shredded white cabbage,

2 cups finely shredded red cabbage

2 cups peeled and finely shredded carrot

4 roasted red peppers, seeded and finely chopped

(about 1 1/4 cups)

2 Tbsp. tiny capers

1 garlic clove

1/3 cup/80 ml extra-virgin Greek olive oil

2 Tbsp./30 ml red wine vinegar

1 Tbsp. coarse-grain Dijon mustard

Salt to taste

1. Combine all the ingredients except the oil, vinegar, mustard, and salt in a large salad bowl and toss with a fork to combine. 2. Whisk together the remaining ingredients for the dressing, pour over the salad, toss, and serve immediately.



vasillis stenos

Lentil Soup with Kalamata Olive Paste, Roasted Red Peppers, and Olive Oil

6 to 8 servings. 1 pound /Lentil Soup with Olive Oil is an easy, nutritious, classic Greek dish.

450 g Greek lentils, rinsed and drained, 1 cup extra virgin Greek olive oil, 1 large onion, finely chopped. 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped. 2 bay leaves, 2 tbsp. Kalamata olive paste, 2 – 3 roasted red Florina peppers in brine, drained, rinsed, and cut into thin, small strips, Greek sea salt to taste, Greek balsamic or red wine vinegar to taste.

1. Heat half the olive oil in a large, wide pot and saute the onions and garlic with a pinch of sea salt until they begin to color. Add the lentils and toss to coat in the oil. Pour in 2 liters of water and add the bay leaves.

2. Bring the lentil soup to a boil over medium heat, reduce to a simmer and cook until tender, about 35 to 40 minutes. 10 minutes before removing the soup from the heat, stir in the Kalamata olive paste and add the pepper strips. Adjust seasoning with additional salt. Serve the soup hot, adding the remaining extra virgin olive oil and vinegar to taste.



vasillis stenos



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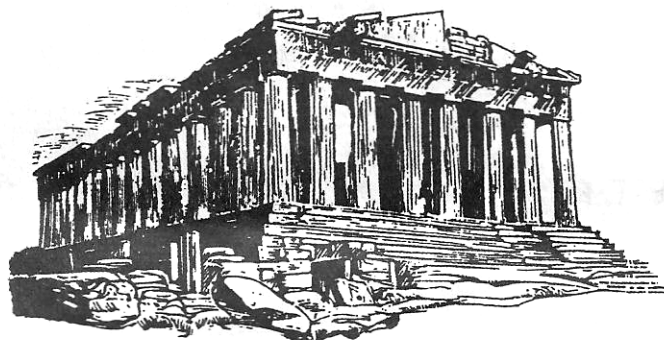
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