

# HellenicVoice

*The Official Newsletter of The Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest*

Volume 2, Number 1 • Published Quarterly by the Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest • Spring 2010

## Houston Hosts AHEPA District 16 Convention - June 17 –20, 2010

This year two of the Houston chapters of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA), Alexander the Great AHEPA Chapter 29 and Daughters of Penelope Achaia Chapter #54, have the honor of hosting the 79th annual AHEPA Family Delta District 16 Convention. The convention will be held June 17-20 at the Hilton Houston Post Oak in the heart of the Galleria area, 2001 Post Oak Boulevard.

The AHEPA organization champions as its mission the promotion of the ideals of Hellenism: education, family and individual excellence, philanthropy, and civic responsibility. There are four separate orders within the AHEPA family: AHEPA, Daughters of Penelope, Sons of Pericles, and Maids of Athena. There are 30,000 members throughout the United States, Canada, Greece and Cyprus, with sister chapters in Australia and New Zealand. Membership is non-discriminatory and is open to anyone who believes in the mission of the organization.

The Delta District 16 region encompasses Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas with approximately 900 members.

Delegates and friends of all ages and professions from the many chapters within the district will be attending this convention. An exciting weekend is planned and is open to the public.

On Friday, June 18, the traditional "Greek Night" will be held at 7p.m. beginning with hors d'oeuvres then the performance of "The Grecian Keys" who are acclaimed for music suited for both Greek and traditional ballroom dancing. It will be a special honor to have the Supreme President of the order of AHEPA, Nick Karacostas, in attendance at "Greek Night." Ticket cost for the evening is \$75.00.

A Grand Banquet and Ball will be held on Saturday evening and will feature keynote speaker Art Poly, President of the AHEPA National Housing Corp. Following the banquet, "The Grecian Keys" will once again provide music for the guests' dancing pleasure. Cost for attending both the Grand Banquet and Ball is \$100.

For any additional information or to purchase

tickets please contact Convention Chairman Pete Kaldis at 832-274-2292 or Co-Chair Mary Verges at 713-562-2664 or Registration Chair Marie Harris at 713-988-5337.



Supreme President of the Order of AHEPA, Nicholas A. Karacostas, Esq. will be our honored guest on Friday, June 18th, 2010 at the 79th AHEPA Family Delta District 16 Convention



## GHPC

Greater Houston Pain Consultants



**Ioannis M. Skaribas, MD**  
 Diplomate in Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine by the American Board of Anesthesiology

Dr Skaribas was born in Itea Fokidos, Greece. He is a graduate of the Medical School of the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki in Greece. Dr. Skaribas trained at Baylor College of Medicine, where he completed a residency in anesthesiology, and a fellowship in pain medicine. He is board certified in both anesthesiology and pain medicine by the American Board of Anesthesiology.

**Conditions Treated**

- Back pain
- Head and neck pain
- Cancer pain
- Arthritic joint pain
- RSD/Sympathetic pain
- Complex pain
- Pelvic pain
- Headaches

**Interventional Procedures**

- Epidural steroid injections
- Sacroiliac joint injections
- Peripheral nerve blocks
- Joint injections
- Trigger point injections
- Facet steroid injections
- Lumbar sympathetic blocks
- Spinal cord stimulation
- Intrathecal procedures
- Occipital nerve blocks

17510 W. Grand Parkway S  
Suite 330  
Sugar Land, TX 77479

1120 Medical Plaza Dr  
Suite 130  
The Woodlands, TX 77380

Phone: (713) 458-4530  
Fax: (713) 458-4630  
www.choosenopain.com

We accept all major insurance carriers as well as Worker's Compensation and Medicare.

## Freedom Remembered Is Freedom Maintained

On March 25th, 2010 the Hellenic Cultural Center hosted a celebration of the heroic and poignant struggle that brought freedom and independence to Greece. After four centuries of Ottoman oppression, the Greeks, in 1821, once again became a free people and established the current Hellenic Republic.

The celebration began with the traditional Doxology officiated by Father Demetrios Tagaropulos and ably assisted by Psalti Demetrios Panourakis. Many of those present joined in singing the stirring "TH YPERMAXO" hymn. After the Doxology we all sang the Greek national anthem.

Our Greek Consul Alexandra Theodoropoulou addressed this gathering of Greeks and commented on the current fiscal problems in Greece and expressed confidence that these issues will be overcome.

The Consul also elaborated on the Greek war for independence that founded the Hellenic Republic. I was struck by the similarities of the American war for independence in 1776 and the Greek war for independence some 45 years later in 1821. Both fought to overthrow oppressive foreign rule and claim their innate right to be an independent and free people. The principles they fought for then are just as true and relevant today.

All men and women are entitled to – FREEDOM – JUSTICE – HONOR – HOPE. These words are so powerful that they evoke a visceral response—a gut emotion. May it ever be so. We must never forget those who fought, bled and died to give us these precious gifts.

ZITO HELLAS! ZITO USA!

## For All Events Greek –Go To HCC-SW.ORG

For all the Hellenic information in and around the Houston metropolitan area, go to [hcc-sw.org](http://hcc-sw.org). We want to update our site to stay ahead of all Greek activities of our member Hellenic organizations.

Our web master, IannisRemediakis, has volunteered his services to maintain our site and has even patiently trained a few reluctant HCC-SW members to help him keep the information current. When you have an event, such as a lecture, movie, art show, book signing, festival, or anything Greek, please go to [hcc-sw.org](http://hcc-sw.org)'s "contact us" tab and tell us about your event.

Remember our mission: "...to promote an understanding of the rich history and legacy that Hellenes have given to civilization and to present the saga of triumphs and sacrifices that were made."

Our history of events has covered a vast array of Hellenic history and current events. With Olympia Dukakis' "An Evening With Olympia" on November, 20, we will have opened the door to showcasing famous

contemporary Greek personalities. If you know any "famous" Greeks and know how to contact them – please contact us at [hcc-sw.org](http://hcc-sw.org).

### Our New Name...

  
**HellenicVoice**

Our readers have spoken. The most popular name for this newsletter is: "The Hellenic Voice."

We have taken pride in creating this "newsy" letter that promotes Hellenism in and around Houston. HCC-SW has diligently worked to bring you the best in Greek education, entertainment and fun. Join HCC-SW to become a part of the fun and continue to read "The Hellenic Voice."

### HCC-SW Newsletter Editorial Staff

The HCC-SW Newsletter is the official publication of the Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest, is produced by members and friends and issued quarterly. Member organizations include: Consul of Greece in Houston, Alexander the Great Chapter #29, Order of AHEPA, Arcadians of Texas, Cretans of Houston, Daughters of Penelope, Hellenic Enosis, Hellenic Professional Society of Texas, Macedonian Association of Greater Houston, Pancyprian Association of Texas, Inc., and the Marathon Exchange Organization. Postage is Paid at Houston, Texas. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HCC-SW, 3015 Richmond Ave., Houston, TX 77098. For comments, articles, suggestions for articles, and/or news for the HCC-SW Newsletter, please contact one of our Editorial Staff.

**Nick Checkles**  
281.370.2124 • [nscheckles@yahoo.com](mailto:nscheckles@yahoo.com)

**Peter Vossos**  
281.431-5759 • [peterhvossos@aol.com](mailto:peterhvossos@aol.com)

**Mel Mamula**  
832/692-3761 • [mmel@comcast.net](mailto:mmel@comcast.net)

## AHEPA Chapter 29 Charitable Foundation Donates \$500 to HCC-SW

Dr. Nick Checkles, HCC president, accepted a check for \$500 from Chris Ramas, treasurer of the AHEPA Chapter 29 Charitable Foundation. The check was presented at our world headquarters in Houston. HCC is grateful to AHEPA for their strong support of our efforts to keep Hellenism alive in the Houston metropolitan area.

Pictured from left to right are HCC board members and committee chairmen: Iannis Remediakis, Sakis Onisiphorou, Vangie Barrow, Alex Jelison, Anthony Kouzounis, Perry Mavrelis, Nick Checkles, Chris Ramas, Ernie Papavasiliou, and George Kalfoglou. HCC-SW is a 501(c) 3 charitable foundation.



**BYZANTIO**  
[www.byzantiohouston.com](http://www.byzantiohouston.com)

BEAUTIFUL PATIO w/ A VIEW 

**GREAT FOOD FULL BAR**

403 W Gray 713-520-OUZO(6896)



**Shell**

**Jack John Varcados Shell**  
Auto Care ~ Domestic & Foreign  
TIRES • BATTERIES • ACCESSORIES  
STATE INSPECTION • COURTESY VAN

12490 Memorial Dr. • Houston, TX 77024  
713.465.0827 • fax 713.465-7071  
[jjvshell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jjvshell@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.jackjohnvarcados.com](http://www.jackjohnvarcados.com)

 **OPEN 24 HOURS** 

## “The First Victory” is on the Best Seller List -in Houston

It was a night to remember, especially for Dr. George C. Blytas, author of “The First Victory –Greece in the Second World War.” On that Thursday in April, any doubts for a successful reception for his work were erased.

The Fellowship Hall at St. Basil’s church was filled to capacity with Greeks (and those who want to be Greek) from all over the Houston metropolitan area in anticipation of listening to Dr. Blytas discuss his ten year odyssey in researching and writing his book. Mr. Dimitri Zgourides, St. Basil’s president, opened the event and introduced Mr. Gene Rossides, founding board member of the American Hellenic Institute, who gave an impressive introduction for Dr. Blytas.

As George stepped to the podium he became a giant among men—like David with his slingshot. He spoke with the clear confidence of a man on a mission. And, that mission was to explain how Greece, and the Greeks, slowed the Nazi war machine while the Allies prepared to deal with Hitler.

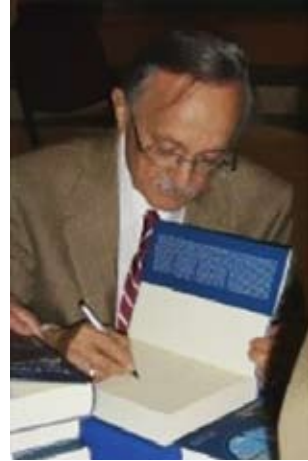
The over flowing crowd was silent and attentive as he made his presentation and the pride was palpable. We witnessed one of our own making history of history. In a word...George was eloquent.

Anecdotes of his research in Greece were the most interesting (to this writer) because he told of returning to his hometown, seeing friends and family, and visiting historic sites that pertained to the war.

Then came the book signing: George sat at the front table and the line of folks extended to the back of the fellowship hall. Fortunately, the hors d’oeuvres were right next to that line, so those waiting enjoyed the hospitality and constant conversation.

The evening was a complete success. Everyone had a good time and George C. Blytas kicked off his U.S. book signing tour with a sellout.

To get the real story, you can buy “The First Victory” by going to [gcblytas@aol.com](mailto:gcblytas@aol.com).



Dr. George Blytas signing his best selling book, “The First Victory: Greece in the Second World War.”

# Dennis' Automotive

## FULL AUTOMOTIVE SERVICES

AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE AND REPAIR  
FOREIGN & DOMESTIC CARS  
PREVENTATIVE & MAINTENANCE  
OFFICIAL STATE INSPECTION CENTER



**CERTIFIED  
AUTO REPAIR**

12,000 Miles or 12 Months Nationwide Warranty



www.DennisAutomotive.com

5741 Westheimer, Houston, Tx 77056 Phone: (713) 977-6143 Fax: (713) 977-9226

## Olympia Dukakis' One Woman Show

*Coming to Houston! November 20, 2010*



It's a done deal! The incredible Olympia Dukakis will be performing her one woman show –“An Evening With Olympia”-in Houston November 20, 2010.

Arrangements are currently underway to establish a venue and weekend program so that the maximum number of Houstonians, and Texans, can see her performance.

Olympia Dukakis is an accomplished actress, director, producer, teacher, activist and most recently, author with her best-selling memoir “Ask Me Again Tomorrow.” She received an Academy Award in the Best Supporting Actress category, the New York Film Critics Award, the Los Angeles Film Critics

Award and the Golden Globe Award for her work in the Norman Jewison film “Moonstruck.”

Dukakis lives in New York City with her husband, actor Louis Zorich. They have three children, Christina, Peter and Stefan and four grandchildren: Isabella, Sofia, Luka and Erlinda.

The Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest is the proud sponsor of this event and the committee promises to make this an evening to remember.

## HCC-SW EVENTS

Twenty-Ten will be a year to remember in the history of the HCC-SW. In twenty-oh-nine, October became Hellenic Cultural Month in Houston with four Greek events: The Original Greek Festival, The Trojan Women, the Greek Film Festival, and the start of our lecture series on “Hellenism,” with Dr. Paul Taiganedis

Our lecture series continued, in conjunction with AIA, when Dr. John Hale explained the Legend of the Delphic Oracle. This year we ll also hear from the Cypriot Ambassador, and the founder of the American Hellenic Institute, Gene Rossides, as our lecture series continues.

The Nicosia Musical Society will be performing in Houston June 24-26. Then in September, in conjunction with AIA, there will be a lecture on the Cretan Trade Routes and will feature Minoan cooking with Greek chef Nikki Rose.

November 5-7 will feature the Greek Film Festival in conjunction with the Museum of Fine Arts. Also in November the highlight of 2010 –“An Evening With Olympia.”

We are striving to bring the very best in Hellenic entertainment and education so we can create a museum dedicated to Hellenic culture.

**Are you paying too much for your  
Employee Benefit Program?**

**We can reduce  
your cost by 25%!**

**Let us custom design an HRA for you!**

*Klene and Bratsakis*

Employee Benefit Specialists

**LONNIE KLENE, CBC,FLMI,ACS**

*lonnie@corebenefits.net*

**JIM BRATSAKIS, CLU,ChFC,LUTCF**

*jim@kleneandbratsakis.com*

**14339 Torrey Chase Blvd, Ste F**

**Houston, TX 77014**

**713.869.6286 • kleneandbratsakis.com**

# Geography and Greek Identity

by ALEXANDER BILLINIS

*Reprinted from the January 2005 edition of the "Greek-American Review". The author is a banker who received degrees from Georgetown University of Foreign Service and American University Law School. He is currently authoring a book on the modern Byzantine "Successor States" of Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria.*

One often hears that "Geography is Destiny," and I would agree that geography plays as central a role as culture and religion in creating a people. Greece occupies the southern, Aegean part of the Balkan Peninsula along with 2000 islands, which lie mostly in the Aegean archipelago. The country's "center of gravity" lies in the southern part of the country, ipso spatially in the same area as the main centers of Ancient Greek civilization and culture. Geography, as much as linguistics and sentiment, dictated that the Greece that extracted itself out of the Ottoman clutches would call itself, and be considered, the successor to Ancient Greece.

Geography, however, is not the only factor. The Byzantine historical and religious legacy is fundamental to the Greek identity and excludes Greeks or other Balkan peoples who lived outside the Byzantine culture or who converted to Islam. Romiosini (loosely defined as "Byzantine-hood" or (East) "Roman-ness,") is the sine qua non of Hellenism. Orthodox religion and a Byzantine past constitute a pre-requisite for the Hellenic identity. This religious-national link, already solid in the Byzantine Era, continued under Ottoman rule as the conquering Turks divided their subjects into millets (nations) where the primary criterion was religion. Thus, all Orthodox (regardless of language and geographic origin) formed the Rum Milleti (the "Roman (Byzantine) Nation").

The real question then is whether Hellenism, or, more accurately and inclusively, Romiosini, would be so identified with Ancient Hellenes if the country's center of gravity had been Macedonia, Thrace, or the Sea of Marmara, or the Pontus? The question is now totally academic, but each of these regions historically has had a claim on Hellenism from a civilization, economic, political, and cultural viewpoint. Each of these regions constituted core areas of the Byzantine Empire, with large, vibrant cities, and dense populations of Byzantine Orthodox.

## How different would Greece be?

What do I mean? Well, in 2002 my wife and I drove across the Nestos River from Macedonia into Thrace, on the main road from Salonika to Constantinople,

which is now home to a large Turkish Muslim minority. Once, however, it was the heartland of the Byzantine Empire, located on the main road from Salonika to Constantinople. The remains of several Byzantine cities dotted the Macedonian and Thracian landscape, only increasing as one moved from Western to Eastern (Turkish) Thrace, to Constantinople. For well over two thousand years, the largest Greek-speaking Orthodox population in the world lived in this area, a fact that persisted well into the Ottoman era and which ended – abruptly, in the 1920's with the Asia Minor catastrophe and the expulsion of Orthodox Byzantines from Eastern Thrace, Pontus, Smyrna, and other parts of Asia Minor.

These Greeks of Thrace and those along the Asian shores of the Sea of Marmara had a different identity than the inhabitants of the Peloponnesus, the inner Aegean islands, and Attica, the lands that eventually formed the core of the Greek state. For one thing, the Northerners were more Byzantine in their orientation, more directed towards Russia and Black Sea states in their commerce than with the Mediterranean, and less tied to the notion of a resurrection of Ancient Greece. Instead they dreamed of a restoration of universal Byzantium. While they felt a certain degree of condescension to the Slav and Kartvelian Orthodox of the Black Sea basin, they also had a keen sense of shared civilization with them.

The same could be said of the Pontic Greeks, a Byzantine civilization with deep, distinctive geographic and cultural depth on the northern Black Sea coast of Asia Minor, and with diasporas in all of the Black Sea littoral cities. The Pontic Empire of Trebizond succumbed to the Turks in 1461, making it the last independent Byzantine state. Pontic language, culture, cuisine were all distinctive and noticeably different from Peloponnesian and Aegean fare. For example, Pontic Greek differs from standard demotic Greek at least as much as, say Serbian from Bulgarian. As for cuisine, I always refer to my brother-in-law's family, Pontics from Kavalla, who use more butter than olive oil in their incredibly rich cuisine. Why? Geography. Olives cannot grow on the north coast of Asia Minor, their ancestral homeland, so other ingredients prevail. Similarities in cuisine exist in Bulgaria, but the differences often have

Visit [www.demeris.com](http://www.demeris.com) and



**THE BEST MEAT MAKES THE BEST BARBEQUE**

2911 S. Shepherd 713.529.7326 ★ 9552 Her 713.6

## The Pancyprian Association of Texas

is pleased to welcome

### "THE NICOSIA MUSIC SOCIETY" FROM CYPRUS

**Sunday, June 27, 2010  
11:00 a.m. at the Martell Hall  
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral**

Co-sponsored by  
**The Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest**  
For more information call 713.630.0029

OIL CHANGE • TUNE UP • TRANSMISSIONS • BRAKES • SHOCKS  
A/C • LUBE • ELECTRICAL • ALIGNMENTS • COURTESY RIDES  
MAINTENANCE • STATE INSPECTION • FOREIGN & DOMESTIC



## Steve's Automotive

5215 Richmond Ave • Houston, TX 77056  
**713-622-2588**

HOURS OF OPERATION  
M-F 6:45am-7pm • Sat 6:45am-6pm  
Closed Sundays



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

## ONE'S A MEAL

GREEK & AMERICAN FOOD  
**OPEN 24 HOURS**

### ONE'S A MEAL GREEK VILLAGE

812 Westheimer  
713.523.0425  
[www.onesameal.com](http://www.onesameal.com)



# 2500th Anniversary of the Battle of Marathon

The 2010 Athens Marathon will celebrate this milestone in Greece's history, and 24 marathoners from Houston will be participating in this event. The Houston-Athens Marathon Exchange will again be sponsoring an all-expense-paid trip for two runners from Houston (Carol Schmidt and Mark Girouard), having run the Houston Marathon four hours or under and chosen at random by computer. One couple from Houston, also participating in the race, will be celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary, and are excited to be able to share this experience together commemorating two very special events.

Participants will be given a tour of Athens' highlights; the evening before their departure, there is a Bon Voyage dinner which brings the entire group together to enjoy the camaraderie of sharing their experiences and impressions with new friends, whom they met for the first time at the Houston airport before departing for their marathon adventure in Greece.

Charline Townsend, who participated in the 2008 Athens Marathon and ran the 10K, expressed her

feelings of having been to Greece for the first time:

*"The country is beautiful, the history is fantastic and the people are wonderful. The majority of the people with the Marathon Exchange group were running the full marathon. That was just awesome to me. At that time I was very much looking forward to my 10K race. I started to think that one day I might, just maybe, run a "Full Marathon"—Wow —26.2 miles. The inspiration was there; so, the motivation soon followed."*

Over the past year and half, Charline kept up her training and has now run three half marathons and other races. During that time, she developed new friendships through running, and several of those friends will be accompanying her to Greece in October and anticipating a "great experience for all."

Charline's comments regarding the Houston-Athens Marathon Exchange: "The program is really great. I found the trip to be well organized and the experience of a lifetime. Going back to Greece with the Marathon Exchange was an easy choice for me. I have encouraged others to participate, and I look forward to seeing everyone in Athens."

geographic/climatic origin. The olive is very scarce in Bulgaria, so the Bulgarian "shopsk asalata" a close relative of the Greek salad, substitutes sunflower oil for olive oil.

If we turn back the clock to approximately 1800, in the era before the existence of Greece or any Balkan state (except semi-independent Montenegro), we would find a large concentration of Orthodox Greek-speakers, or at least Orthodox with a "Romios" identity concentrated in an west-to-east corridor from the Adriatic to the western and northern shores of Asia Minor, as well as the remainder of the Balkan peninsula south of this corridor.

The west-to-east corridor, however, also constituted a key part of the Ottoman Empire, where Turks and the Muslim converts rubbed shoulders with the Orthodox. Turkish state power was at its strongest here.

As a result, it was the less productive rocky outcrops of southern Greece, the inhospitable "Mani" in particular, where the revolution against Ottoman rule took hold and survived. Of this west-to-east corridor, roughly comprising the historical provinces of Epirus, Macedonia, Rumelia, and Thrace, Greek state identity had to compete with the military and cultural efforts of the Turks and Bulgarians, who constituted another Byzantine successor state with strong claims to the northern part of this Byzantine zone.

In the same way, Serbian independence followed the path of least geographical resistance. Rocky, arid, inhospitable Montenegro warded off the Turks until the Serbs of Sumadija (today's Serbian heartland) wrested their freedom in the 1830's. Similarly to Greece, modern Serbia's center of gravity, Belgrade and its environs, was very different from the Medieval Serbian Empire, which centered on Kosovo.

However, I will point out one particular element in the Greek identity common to nearly all Greeks wherever they lived – the sea. Greeks – ancient, Byzantine, modern, Macedonian, Pontic, Peloponesian—are wedded to the sea. Whatever the variations of their homelands, Greeks are highly inclined to wrest their living from the sea, whether in the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, Cyprus, or the Italian coasts. Hence if "geography is destiny", Greeks are predestined by the same geography to be seafarers. The sea surrounds the various Asia Minor and Balkan peninsulas Greeks call home, and the sea sustained these people from time immemorial.

My point here is that the modern Greek identity (which we now attribute to all Greeks regardless of geographic origin, including, to some degree, Greek Cypriots) is a function of geography, and more specifically, the geography of the land that became Greece. The rough and arid, yet spectacular olive-laden southern peninsulas of the Balkans became the areas where hardy mountain "klephts" and daring seafarers initially carved out what is now modern Greece. With the backdrops of beautiful classical ruins and the archeological treasure trove of Athens as the capital, Greece naturally emphasized itself as a resurrection of Classical Hellas. Greece, like Bulgaria and Serbia, emerged as successor states of Orthodox Byzantine civilization. From this common clay the Greeks and their neighbors retrieved facts from history and geography to differentiate—and to legitimate—their politics. Where and how they emerged often was a confluence of several factors, but geography was always fundamental—and geography as well, bolstered by cultural and linguistic factors, created the remaining modern, similar yet distinctive Balkan states out of a common set of civilization elements.



## ESCALANTE'S

FINE TEX-MEX

*Hecho a Mano*

*Everyday our family recipes are hand-crafted to perfection. Experience guacamole made fresh at your table. - it's our personal touch that makes the difference.*

LUNCH • DINNER • BRUNCH

Woodway @ Voss  
713.461.5400

Meyerland Plaza  
713.663.7080

Town & Country Village  
713.467.5577

Highland Village  
713.623.4200

Sugar Land  
281.242.1100

WWW.ESCALANTES.NET



**REALTY ASSOCIATES**

**Cheri Checkles, ABR**  
Relocation Specialist  
New Home Sales Specialist  
ccheckles@gmail.com  
www.har.com/chericheckles

9525 Katy Fwy #142 Houston, TX 77024 (c) 281-799-7977 (f) 281-288-8700

# ECC


## E. CHRISTIAN CLARK

GRAPHIC DESIGN • ART DIRECTION • CONSULTING

WEBSITES • LOGOS • BROCHURES • ADS • BILLBOARDS & MORE

801 CLEVELAND, SUITE 3425 • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77019  
832.443.8665 • christian@EChristianClark.com  
[www.EChristianClark.com](http://www.EChristianClark.com)

**PERRY MAVRELIS, ASID**  
Complete Interior Design  
5139 Cypress Spring Drive • Missouri City, TX 77459  
281-208-2360 • fax 281-499-6876 • cell 281-216-1470 • perryasid@aol.com



# Coming to Houston...From Auschwitz

*Soula Molho, was born Chryssoula Stefanides on May 1st, 1924 in Katerini, Greece in a city at the footsteps of Mount Olympus, Macedonia. She has survived what few have lived to tell.*

Soula Molho made it from Auschwitz to America in an incredible journey. Concentration camps, starvation and severe beatings were her daily life for five long years. Yet, from the comfort of her beautiful home in Sugar Land, this gentle Greek woman exudes love for her family, her America and especially for her Greece.

Currently she is in the process of putting the finishing touches on her memoirs of those horrific experiences –“Angels Forever With Me.” It is for those who don't believe the holocaust occurred from an eye witness to the holocaust.

She begins the Prologue with: “I am survivor 82225...” and describes her treks from camp to city to camp with little or no food and death and dying all around her.

But this article is about her journey to America. Upon her release in Lunenburg, Germany, she met her husband-to-be, Charles Molho, a Greek Jew from Thessaloniki. Within five days he asked her to marry him, but she had to have her father's permission. Being a Christian, Soula was not following conventional wisdom for the time –but it would prove to be a lifelong relationship filled with love and joy.

They settled into life after the war in what was left of Germany and soon had two daughters.

In 1950 “...We began to prepare our papers for our

immigration to America. Our sponsor was David Nathan from Galveston, Texas. He brought us to America...in 1951. We can never repay this family for the kindness they showed us.”

They arrived in New Orleans and there “...I kissed the ground,” Mrs. Molho writes. Soon afterwards they moved to Galveston where Mr. Molho opened a restaurant that eventually turned into four restaurants. Here they would have 2 more children, both boys.

In 1972 they moved to Houston where they had a ship supply business on Harrisburg as well as a restaurant and a trucking company. Soula found their house on Beechnut Ave. and made it a home for their family.

Charlie Molho was a successful business man who gave his family the American dream and passed his energy, gift of giving and business acumen to his children. Charlie and Soula were blessed with 4 children, Grace, Beatrice, Joey and Jack. Joey passed away shortly after his father did. Grace, Beatrice and Jack all live in Sugar Land. Grace and Beatrice work together at Beatrice's Medical Management Company while Jack enjoys life as a successful entrepreneur—just like his father. They have all learned to give back to their community following their parents lead to this day volunteering and serving on various not for profit entities. *(Continued on page 7)*

# Let's Keep Our Hellenic Vision Alive

We live in an era of rising expectations and extreme diversity in a shrinking world. At no other time in history has the need for learning about the impact of Hellenism on the world been more relevant than now.

It is the dedicated duty of the Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest to present and promote events and lectures that explain how today's civilization was formed based on ancient Greek ideals. We must not forget the extreme “out of the box” thinking that took place in these ancient times that had such a profound influence on the evolution of human society and western civilization.

The mission of the HCC-SW is to promote an understanding of the rich history and legacy that Hellenes have given to civilization and to present the saga of triumphs and sacrifices that were made. These include the contributions to language, government, arts, theater, architecture, athletics, science, medicine and philosophy. We will also present Greek accomplishments in the post-

classical period and into modern times.

In our recent history we've presented programs that featured prominent Greeks, such as Elia Kazan –film director, Nikos Kazantzakis—writer (Zorba the Greek), and local Greek artists and writers. Our future includes Greek film festivals, our lecture series and famous Greek movie stars such as Olympia Dukakis (scheduled for November 20th). We've featured Greek tragedies by the ancients, performed by contemporary Greek Theatrical Companies.

The Hellenic Cultural Center of the Southwest is made up of many Hellenic organizations that continue to keep Hellenism alive in America. Together we endeavor to present our rich history to our Greater Houston community and the Great Southwest to preserve this legacy.

The world's rising expectations and extreme diversity demand that we remember from whence we came so we can move towards a positive and progressive future.

## Coming to Houston... From Auschwitz

*(Continued from page 6)*

Soula enjoys her seven grandchildren and one great grandson: Jack's children, Charlie Jr, Christopher and Catherine Molho, George and Sara, Beatrice's children and Soula and Georgia, Grace's Children.

The latest addition, Zachary, is Soula's son.

“The Nazis had given me the number 82225. Now, I have my name again. Soula Molho is Free!”



**NIKO NIKO'S**  
Greek & American Cafe

2520 Montrose • Houston, Texas  
Monday - Thursday 10am - 10pm •  
Friday - Saturday 10am - 11pm • Sunday 11am - 9pm

Place a take-out order  
**713-528-GYRO (4976)**

SERVICE CENTER • CONVENIENCE STORE  
CAR WASH • ROAD SIDE ASSISTANCE




OPEN  
**24**  
HOURS

**Varcados Shell, Inc.**  
Domestic & Foreign Auto Care

TIRES • BATTERIES • ACCESSORIES  
STATE INSPECTION • COURTESY VAN

8602 Memorial Dr. • Houston, TX 77024  
713.688.3177 • fax 713.688.5175  
georgevarcados@hotmail.com  
[www.varcadosshell.com](http://www.varcadosshell.com)



*The International Food Market of Your Dreams!*

**Specialty Foods**  
**Phoenicia**

60,000 Sq Feet ♦ Down to Earth Gourmet Food Prices ♦ Exotic Produce  
European, Mediterranean & Middle Eastern Groceries ♦ Award-Wining Bakery  
Imported Cheeses & Meats ♦ Catering ♦ Prepared Foods ♦ Olive Bar  
Bulk Coffees & Teas ♦ Housewares ♦ Unique Wines & Beers  
12141 Westheimer ♦ Mon-Sat 8-9, Sun 8-7 ♦ 281-558-8225 ♦ [www.phoeniciafoods.com](http://www.phoeniciafoods.com)