

GOLDEN GATE DISTRICT NO. 21

Ahepa *Traveler*

CHAPTERS THROUGHOUT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN NEVADA

Volume 75, No. 2

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF DISTRICT 21 - EST. 1950

Summer/June 2025



“AHEPA TRAVELER (Est. 1950) is published quarterly, four times a year March, June, September and December by Order of AHEPA, 3327 Lake Albano Circle, San Jose, CA 95135.”

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

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

EDITORIAL STAFF - AHEPA TRAVELER

BILL CHRISTIE, Editor

Editorial Staff for
AHEPA and AUXILIARIES
 408 891-9225
 Email: billchristie1@mac.com

Traveler Ads Manager

Dr. Vassilis Zarifis
 Email: vgzari@gmail.com

Daughters of Penelope Traveler Editor

Angie Legakis
 Email: alegakis@yahoo.com

**ARTICLES FOR
 FALL/SEPTEMBER ISSUE
 DUE AUGUST 15, 2025**

**PUBLISHING SCHEDULE
 SEPTEMBER 1, 2025**

Have Ritual Manual . . .
 Will Travel



Can Do:
 Installations
 Initiations
Seminars:
 Chapter Duties
 Membership Drives
 Charity Raffles
 Rituals

“YOUR FULL SERVICE . . .
 DISTRICT 21 LODGE”

Contact District Governor

From the Editor . . .

Greetings!

It’s summer and that brings us to the District and National Conventions. Plan a mini vacation and attend one or both with your families. You will have a great time!

Thank you to those who contributed to this summer issue. Next issue due September - send in your articles by August 15th.

Wishing all a safe and enjoyable summer!

Bill Christie, Editor

In this issue . . .

<i>Up coming events</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>AHEPA District 21 Governor’s Message</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>DOP PDG League Scholarship Cruise</i>	<i>page 5</i>
<i>District Greek Independence Day Celebrations</i>	<i>pages 6-10</i>
<i>District Chapter News</i>	<i>pages 11- 16</i>
<i>Greek American Sports</i>	<i>page 17</i>
<i>National Scholarship Opportunies</i>	<i>page 18</i>
<i>AHEPA Day Recognition</i>	<i>page 18</i>
<i>National Banquet</i>	<i>page 19</i>
<i>Capitol Hill Day</i>	<i>page 20</i>
<i>Attration for the Rugged Nature</i>	<i>pages 21-22</i>
<i>Athens in the Summer</i>	<i>pages 23-24</i>
<i>Panhellenic Internship Initiative</i>	<i>page 25</i>
<i>Golden Gate District 21 Educational Foundation</i>	<i>page 26</i>
<i>AHEPA Hellenic History Tournament</i>	<i>page 26</i>
<i>National Projects</i>	<i>page 27</i>
<i>District 21 Lodge and Chapter Presidents</i>	<i>page 28</i>
<i>Traveler Ads and Sponsorships</i>	<i>page 29</i>

Up Coming Events

June

20-21 AHEPA Family District 21 Convention - Stockton Hilton Hotel - Stockton, California

July

21-26 AHEPA Family Supreme Convention - Disney's World Resort - Orlando, Florida

October

5-12 Daughters of Penelope Past District Governors League Cruise - see page 5



Dust off your Mickey ears, The Order of AHEPA is going back to the happiest place on earth, the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida!

We've got a week full of fun for the whole family that you're not going to want to miss out on! Join us once again at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, where we've secured a special convention rate for our attendees starting at \$199/night plus tax. You know the deal, these rooms are going to sell out quickly, so book now!

<https://ahepa.org/supreme-convention/>



2025 Golden Gate District 21 Convention

Friday, June 20, 2025

Saturday, June 21, 2025

Hosted by

Oakland AHEPA and DOP Chapters

Headquarters: Stockton Hilton Hotel

Stockton, California

Register: ahepa21.org or dop21.org



Governor's Report

Brothers:

It has been my privilege to serve as your District 21 Governor. This past year, thru everyone's efforts and hard work we have fulfilled many goals. Some small and some large, but all working towards promoting AHEPA and Hellenism.

We increased coordination between the Chapters and the District Lodge by having timely Lodge Visitations with every Chapter. All before the end of January.

We have supported our country's veterans by significantly increasing the funding and number of sponsorships of service dogs thru our Dogs for Warriors Project.

The District Scholarship Foundation has steadily increased the number of applications and award amounts to our scholarship awardees. This year the District has been awarded a \$5,000 Grant from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. Next year's goals include improving on applicant awareness, obtaining scholarship sponsors and updating the Foundation By-Laws to reflect current laws and business practices.

The Hellenic History Tournament began as an idea by a few of our members. This year we will hold our first event. Hopefully, it will be the first of many.

What can any of us say about our Award-Winning Publication, The Traveler, other than thank our editor, Bill Christie. Bill wears many hats. Our goals this year are to find some people to wear some hats, so Bill doesn't have to wear all of them. We need a Reporter to report the stories. A Salesman to sell ads and handle promotions. An Office Manager to collect the income from the ads, pay the bills, and handle the day to day to support the editor. Bill, I can't think of a better way to say thank you, than by making sure your baby outlives us all.

Respectfully,

Mark Hallock

Governor

AHEPA Golden Gate District 21



Past District Governors League Scholarship Fundraiser Cruise

October 5th to 12th, 2025

Ports of Call may vary by departure date and subject to weather and other conditions.

- **Day 1:** San Francisco, California
Oct 05, 2025 | Depart 04:00 PM
- **Day 2:** Day At Sea
Oct 06, 2025 |
- **Day 3:** Victoria, Canada
Oct 07, 2025 | 02:00 PM To 11:00 PM
- **Day 4:** Vancouver, Canada
Oct 08, 2025 | 07:30 AM To 07:00 PM
- **Day 5:** Seattle, Washington
Oct 09, 2025 | 08:00 AM To 10:00 PM
- **Day 6:** Day At Sea
Oct 10, 2025 |
- **Day 7:** Day At Sea
Oct 11, 2025 |
- **Day 8:** San Francisco, California
Oct 12, 2025 | Arrive 07:00 AM

Join the Past District Governors League of The Daughters of Penelope - District 21 for a 7-day cruise of the Pacific Northwest on board the Ruby Princess out of San Francisco. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the PDG Scholarship Program.

Expedia Cruises has set up a group to give us the best pricing and manage the reservations.* Pricing will be based on the current market price. We will always get the BEST available rate at the time of booking.

Rooms are still available... Call for Pricing!

* Prices are subject to change based on availability and the current Princess Promotional Offers. Prices are based on Double Occupancy.

(209) 609-0573
4755 Quail Lakes Dr. Suite B
Stockton, CA
gropalidis@expediacruz.com

CST: 2152622-40

For cruise booking information,
call Gus Ropalidis:



San Jose Commemorates Greek Independence with Flag Raising Ceremony - March 21, 2025

By Jacqui Argyres, Daphne 29 President

The City of San Jose held a Greek Flag Raising Ceremony at City Hall Plaza to commemorate the 204th anniversary of Greece's independence. The event, hosted by San Jose Vice Mayor and District 9 Councilmember Pam Foley, brought together the Greek-American community and local leaders to honor this historic occasion.

Organized by the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) and the Daughters of Penelope (DOP), the event featured distinguished guests, including His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos and His Grace Bishop Ioannis of Phocaea of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, Dr. George Zioulas, AHEPA Supreme Governor, Region 8, Linda Belba, Daughters of Penelope Grand Governor Zone IV, Athena Hallock, DOP District 21 Governor, Mark Hallock, AHEPA District 21 Governor, The Honorable Grigorios Tassiopoulos, Consul General of Greece in San Francisco, and Nicolaos Theophanous, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cyprus.

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos addressed attendees, stating, "Today, as the Greek flag rises, it carries with it a great legacy that speaks to all people who cherish freedom. It reminds us that democracy is strongest when it is rooted in moral and spiritual principles. It calls us to remember that faith and patriotism are not opposed, but together, they sustain the soul of a nation."

To commemorate the occasion, Vice Mayor Pam Foley presented a proclamation from Mayor Matt Mahan and the San Jose City Council recognizing March 25 as Greek Independence Day.



"It was an honor to host the Greek Independence Day Flag Raising at City Hall and celebrate Greek Independence Day with our vibrant Greek community here in San José. The Greek American community has played a vital role in shaping our city's cultural and economic landscape, and their contributions continue to enrich our diverse community. This celebration is a reminder of the values of freedom and democracy that Greece has given to the world, and we proudly recognize the lasting impact of Greek heritage in San José." said Vice Mayor Foley.

As a further tribute, San Jose City Hall's iconic glass rotunda and tower are being illuminated in the colors of the Greek flag for seven days. This symbolic gesture serves to celebrate and recognize the importance of Greek heritage within the community.

Dr. George Zioulas emphasized the significance of the occasion, stating, "Since its inception in 1922, AHEPA has consistently honored the spirit of the Greek Revolution of 1821, which embodies the pursuit of freedom, cultural preservation, and collective action. This revolution, a crucial moment in Greek history, reflects the values that AHEPA upholds: the importance of community, the celebration of heritage, and the commitment to civic responsibility." He also expressed his gratitude, adding, "On behalf of AHEPA, I want to extend my thanks to the City of San Jose and Vice Mayor Foley for their continued support and for helping us celebrate this important day in Greek history."

Distinguished local Greek-Americans attending included Dr. Vassilis Zarifis, AHEPA Silicon Valley Chapter 251 President, Joanna Dunn, Daughters of Penelope Past Daphne 29 President as well as current chapter President Jacqui Argyres.

Linda Belba shared, "As Daughters of Penelope, we were honored to celebrate Greece's independence and the lasting impact of Greek culture on our community. Our mission to preserve our heritage and uplift others through service has never been more important. As we gathered in San Jose to commemorate this day, we were grateful to Vice Mayor Pam Foley and the City for recognizing the significance of Greek history in shaping our shared future."

The Greek Orthodox community was well represented by Reverend Fathers James Kumarelas

and Nebojsa Pantic, along with a large group of parishioners from St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in San Jose. The celebratory atmosphere was enhanced by a performance from the St. Nicholas dancers, who showcased traditional Greek folk dances.

Father James Kumarelas spoke on the event's deeper significance, connecting it to both Greek history and faith, stating, "Our celebration of Greek Independence is a spiritual, cultural, and universal festival, joined together with our Greek Orthodox Church's feast of the Annunciation. It is fitting that we reflect on this "announcement" to the world, as it reminds us where our roots of Democracy are planted, of Hellenism, embodied in the ethos of the Greek people, and of the fight for freedom, of which we here in America can all understand."



Photos: Panayiota Good



Chapter President Jacqui Argyres, Chapter Secretary Petros Balaskas, Nicolaos Theophanous, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cyprus, His Grace Bishop Ioannis of Phocaea of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of San Francisco, Chapter President Dr. Vassilis Zarifis, His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos. Kayci Bi Tassiopoulos The Honorable Grigorios Tassiopoulos, Consul General of Greece in San Francisco, Vice Mayor Pam Foley, Linda Belba, Daughters of Penelope Grand Governor Zone IV, , Athena Hallock, DOP District 21 Governor, Mark Hallock, AHEPA District 21 Governor, Past Chapter President Joanne Dunn, and Dr. George Zioulas, AHEPA Supreme Governor, Region 8.

California State Assembly Passes Resolution 35, Recognizes March 25, 2025 as Greek Independence Day

On Monday, March 24th, Supreme Governor of Region 8 George Zioulas accompanied the Brothers of Sacramento Chapter 153 at the California State Capitol to witness Resolution 35, to recognize March 25 as Greek Independence Day in the State of California, be passed unanimously by the Assembly.

Resolution 35, authored by assemblymember and Greek-American Diane Papan, commemorates

the 204th anniversary of Greece's rebellion against Ottoman rule and celebrates the enduring principles of democracy and freedom shared between Greece and the United States.

"As we commemorate Greek Independence Day, we honor the bravery and resilience of the Greek people throughout history," said Papan. "Their struggle for independence and their steadfast commitment to democratic values continue to inspire us."

We applaud our AHEPA Brothers who played an integral part in the organization of this event.



George Koumis, CS; Evangeline Mallas; Nick Alexander, CP; Katherine Koumis; George Zioulas, SG R8; Alexander Mallas, PSG R8; Diane Papan, Assemblymember (San Mateo); Mark Hallock, DG; Chris Frangos, PDG; Vassilis Zarifis, DS; Demos Papadopoulos, PCP; Vivia Papadopoulos, Artemis #5; Christos Papadopoulos, Sacr. Chapter; Vasilios Voudouris, Sacr. Chapter (not in the picture)

Nevada State Senate Presents Proclamation Honoring Greek Independence Day

Nevada Legislature raised the Greek Flag on March 25, 2025. On Thursday, March 27 Senator Ohrenschall presented a Proclamation on the Nevada Senate floor honoring Greek Independence Day.

Brother John Copoulos attended both events.



St. Basil's Greek Orthodox Christian Church Art Contest 2024-2025

By Kathy Leles

St. Basil's Sunday School Recognition & Scholarships' Program was held on May 18, 2025. Enthusiasm abounded, as Sunday School students received certificates & awards. Scholarship presentations were given by AHEPA & Daughters of Penelope (DOP) members.

Daughters of Penelope members also presented the Third Annual DOP & Sunday School Art Contest certificates and awards to participating students. Acknowledgement & appreciation items were given to staff, judges, and the religious community.

Anastasia Cook (Sunday School Director), and Kathleen Farros-Hoepfner (DOP Secretary & Art Contest Chair), coordinated the annual art contest, along with the Sunday School teachers. The Art contest was open to Sunday School students, and the youth of St. Basil's Greek Orthodox Christian Church. Art was inspired by the individual lessons taught by the Sunday School teachers, with work being reproduced in calendars and greeting cards. Proceeds go to the DOP Scholarship fund. Processing Stories of the Bible by creating art inspired by the stories, is an additional approach to youth understanding and keeping youth connected with the teachings of the Orthodox Christian Faith.

Thank you to the judges, Mary Carroll-Bundy, Gayle Maduros, and Georgianna Rishwain. Art (that remained anonymous for fairness) was judged, in two Divisions. First, Second, Third, and Honorable Mention places were given.

Art Contest certificates and awards were presented by Kathy Leles (DOP President) and JoAnne Panagopoulos (DOP Marshall & Sunshine Comm.). All participating students were presented with certificates and an art/craft item.

Congratulations to all the students for the heart-felt work.

Division I

First Place-Juliana Hanania

Second Place-Bassam Hanania

Third Place – Ethan Gordora
Honorable Mention – Senay Corfu
Honorable Mention – Peter Naweem

Division II

First Place – Salinna Corfu

Second Place – Syrus Jeffrey Cook

Third Place – Skylar Matthew Cook

Honorable Mention – Maria Hanania

Thank you, Parents, Sunday School Director-Anastasia Cook, & Teachers- Samira Bitar, Maria Karapanos, Sali Graham, Anjelina & Veronica Falcinella, and Presvytera Angie Sotiras, for your encouragement of student's art and allowing time for the art lessons in the classroom.

Thank you, Father Pete and Presvytera Angie and Father Gabriel and Presvytera Iulia for your support!

Looking forward to the 2025-2026 Art Contest that will begin in September, 2026.

Card sets are for sale through Daughter's of Penelope during Coffee Hours or by contacting Kathy Leles kleles@att.net or Kathleen Farros-Hoepfner kfarros@gmail.com to order.

Final printing will include-June 2025-May 2026.



Daughters of Penelope Sparta Chapter Paint and Sip Event

Our first annual Daughters of Penelope Paint and Sip event was a huge success. It was held at the Consumnes River Farm Winery owned by Elena and Nick Panos on Saturday May 17. Over 20 women came out from Stockton, Elk Grove, Modesto and Tracy to paint a wonderful scene depicting Greece and enjoying everyone's

company. Winners from the raffle were Vicki Papachristos and Teri Blum. Proceeds from this event will go towards the non profit organizations we support in our area. We thank everyone who attended and look forward to another Paint and Sip in the fall.



AHEPA Family of San Jose . . . Fundraising

As every year, the San Jose AHEPA Family organized a fund raising event at the Community Center of St Nicholas Church.

This year the event was planned two weeks after Easter, on May 2, so we can offer different entertainment and food options. After some debate, we organized a Comedy show with our well-known Hollywood Comedian, Angelo Tsarouchas. The professional set up of theater quality sound and performance lights was provided by our Brother Alex Mallas. He was also contracted to be the main DJ for after the show Greek music and dancing! Interesting fact, I found out at the event that Mr. Tsarouchas grew up in Canada and has served as a President of our AHEPA Montreal Chapter in the past!



Petros Balaskas, John Kardaris,
Angelo Tsarouchas, Alex Mallas,
Dr. George Zioulas, Dr. Vassilis Zarifis,

I want to thank all those who contributed to the success of this event, Nick Pries, Elias Papadokonstadakis, George Zioulas, John Kardaris, Jacqui Argyres, Elizabeth Fkiaras, Laurie Sahines, Joanne Dunn.



Joanna Dunn, Angelo Tsarouchas,
Dr. George Zioulas. Dr. Vassilis Zarifis

Our trusted and experienced food and drink coordinators went above and beyond the planned appetizers, providing a buffet of many meats and side dishes. The fully stocked bar was serving drinks with a pause during the 80-minute performance!

Although the online ticket sales started in late February, and with sales at every coffee hour on Sundays, we got 75 out of the 200 tickets sold during the very last 6 days before the event! I guess the word-of-mouth travels slow!

Everyone was very pleased with the comedy performance, the overall event, and asked us to repeat it soon!



Angelo Tsarouchas on stage



Standing ovation at the end of
Angelo's performance

By Dr. Vassilis Zarifis, Chapter President

AHEPA Family of San Jose— AHEPA Day

Every year AHEPA Day is celebrated across the US honoring the long service to the communities of all AHEPA and DOP families. In his annual Encyclical from the Archdiocese of America, his Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros remarked: “Today is our annual observance of AHEPA Sunday, a day when we recognize both the interdependence of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America with the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, and also the many achievements that AHEPA has accomplished in its 103-year history. AHEPA represents the aspirations of the Omogeneia around the Nation and indeed the world, and it expresses these hopes and intentions with dignity and grace...”.

In San Jose the AHEPA Family, as every year, offered artoklasia for the well-being of its members, koliva for our departed Brother

and Sisters, and sponsored the well-attended coffee hour. Furthermore, we showcased the organization’s commitment to supporting Hellenic education linked with the Church supported Greek Language and Sunday schools. Ten graduates were honored with certificates and monetary awards by both AHEPA and DOP Chapters. The recent graduates were: Angeliki Tsaboukos, Chryssa Karakekes, Konstantinos Kouretas, Milton Pagonis, Niko Vathis, Petros Kougiouris, Foti Armeniakos, Lambros Panayiotopoulos, Marianthi Panayotopoulos, and Thodoris Matheou. The award ceremony took place inside the Church following that day’s services, as shown in the picture after the awards. The Silicon Valley AHEPA President gave a short speech and highlighted additional educational opportunities with the District Level scholarships and the AHEPA sponsored Journey to Greece educational program.



Daughters of Penelope Urania Chapter News

Daughters of Penelope Urania #290, San Mateo Celebration Luncheon on May 31, 2025

By Claire Gagas, President

We enjoyed a beautiful luncheon honoring our Past District Governor, Alicia Frangos and Past President, Matina Polakis. We also honored our 2025 Daughter of the Year, Barbara Karvelis. In addition, we recognized our past presidents through the years: Kalliope Fousekis, Sophia Fonti, Demetra Sperow, and Angeliki Sperow Trujillo. Our sisters received beautiful plants.

Also, we celebrated all of our sisters who have been members for many decades, presenting them with gorgeous, long stem orange roses. Congratulations to all of our sisters! We appreciate your love and dedication to our Urania Chapter! A special thank you to sisters Irene Chapralis and Maria Vavuris for coordinating our amazing luncheon, complete with beautiful centerpieces, flowers, gifts, a cake with DOP logo, a fruit platter, and more! We appreciate all you did to make this luncheon so special. We are truly blessed with a loving sisterhood!



Jayn Feyling, Eddie Christoforides, Virginia Coppock



Maria Vavuris, Claire Gagas, Irene Chapralis



Alicia Frangos, Irene Chapralis, Carol Karkazis



Effie Kalafatis, Vivian Gavros, Cathy Pereira, Tasis Morrison, Mary Anagnostou, Cathy Zamenes, Emmy Denton



Barbara Karvelis, Angeliki Sperow Trujillo, Christina Longinidis, Matina Polakis, Demetra Sperow, Claire Gagas, Alicia Frangos, Kalliope Fousekis

Initiation and Meeting for Urania #290 San Mateo—April 26, 2025

By Claire Gagas, President

We are thrilled to announce that we initiated another new member into our Urania Chapter during our April meeting, which was attended by over 20 sisters! We welcome Angela Sakkos to our loving sisterhood, and we are excited that she has joined us. We also celebrated the birthdays for sister Mary Zongus and Virginia Coppock. We wish you both many more amazing years! Many thanks to all of our sisters for their love and dedication to our Urania chapter.

In Memoriam
Daisy (Despina) Fernando: February 26, 2025
Danae Leontiades: May 13, 2025



New initiate Angela Sakkos and Claire Gagas



Front: Tasia Morrison, Mary Fiorontinos, Angela Sakkos.
Back: Jayn Feyling, Valerie Vasilakos



Birthday gals Virginia Coppock and Mary Zongus (Marina Fitzgerald in back)



Two Yale Hoop Legends Meet

By Nick Tsiotos

John Poulakidas The Greeks believe H Mira Einai Gramanee that “Fate is Written.” This was so true this season for Yale’s men’s basketball team destiny. Yale star John Poulakidas 25-point performance helped defeat the Cornell Big Red, 90-84, in the Ivy League tournament championship game. This victory would qualify Yale for the NCAA March Madness. The eagle-eyed guard Poulakidas would shoot 7- for -7 the second half and win the Most Valuable Player Award.

After the game AHEPA Hellenic Hall of Fame Chairman Gregory Stamos, introduced present legend John Poulakidas to Yale past legend Steve Leondis. They both greeted each other with a hand shake and embraced each other as fate would have it. Poulakidas won AHEPA’S 2025 William Chirgotis Award for Most Outstanding Hellenic Collegiate Athlete. The sharp shooting Poulakidas scored 1,300 points in his career and ranks 10 th all time for the Yale Bulldogs. Poulakidas has teams from the NBA and Euro League interested in his talent.

Steve Leondis - Steve Leondis is a member of the AHEPA Hall of Fame and has an AHEPA scholarship in memory of his father Anthony. Steve has received many honors in his lifetime, including being inducted into the 2022 Legends of Ivy League Basketball. Steve was selected three times All-Ivy, 1980 Rookie of the Year and scored 1,540 career points ranking him 4th on the Bulldogs all- time scoring list.

Steve Leondis a successful philanthropist founded “Hoops on the Hill,” a not- for- profit organization that encourages and empowers at-risk teenagers and develops their God-given potential. Steve also works with Project Nyame Nsa, dedicated to expressing the love of God to orphans and vulnerable children in Ghana and Zambia, Africa.

This meeting of brilliant Hellenic talent, Poulakidas and Leondis, is one more glorious moment in Greek American Sports History. Special thanks to brother AHEPAN Gregory Stamos who made this meeting possible.



John Poulakidas, AHEPA Chairman
Gregory Stamos, Steve Leondis.



Greek Orthodox Archbishop observes AHEPA DAY

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is pleased to announce a new scholarship program through AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope and their 14 Districts that function across the country. As part of this scholarship program, a total of \$70,000 is being made available for students across the country. With this new initiative, a total of \$400,000 annually from the Archdiocese will assist students with their secondary, graduate, and post-graduate education. Each District Foundation will receive a \$5,000 grant and will determine the scholarship recipients based on the criteria already in use, with an emphasis on helping needs-based students.

Remarking on this this new initiative, His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America said, “The education of our youth is an important goal of our faith. In this way, our Archdiocese can help the very capable AHEPA and Daughters of Penelope District foundations reach Orthodox youth in every Metropolis across the country. I am pleased that this will be an annual program to support the educational needs of our youth, an important ministry of our Church.”

Since their founding, AHEPA and the Daughters of Penelope have been strong supporters of the Orthodox faith and the Hellenic heritage, helping parishes and the Archdiocese with the time, talent and treasure of their organizations and members. Many of these scholarship foundations have been in place for decades and provide scholarships annually to hundreds of worthy Orthodox Christian students for their education.

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America has proclaimed May 18, 2025, as “AHEPA Sunday” in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

The Encyclical, issued by His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros, states:

“Today is our annual observance of AHEPA Sunday, a day when we recognize both the interdependence of our Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America with the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association, and also the many achievements that AHEPA has accomplished in its 103-year history. AHEPA represents the aspirations of the Omogeneia around the Nation and indeed the world, and it expresses these hopes and intentions with dignity and grace.

“Whether it is AHEPA’s commitment to our All-Venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate, or its representation of Hellenic interests in our Nation’s Capital, as well as State legislatures around the Country, AHEPA provides expertise, energy and resources to the issues that are vital to our communities. It partners with our parishes in order to give expression to what is best and brightest in Hellenic and Philhellenic causes within our communities. And its philanthropy and educational initiatives are well known to all.

“Therefore, on this Third Sunday in May, let us recognize our friends and family who make up AHEPA, and acknowledge their positive impact in the life of Greek-America and the world. We are grateful for the courage and resilience that founded this Association of Hellenes, and we continue to marvel at their impact in the lives of our faithful and around the globe.”



Attending banquet from the West pictured clockwise:

District 20 Governor Jim DeDakis,
District 22 Governor George McClure,
Supreme Governor Region 8
Dr. George Zioulas,
Past District 21 Governors
Alicia and Chris Frangos, and
Maria Leonard District 22.

McClure, Zioulas and DeDakis
Ambassador of Greece
Ekaterini Nassika with George Zioulas



AHEPA Family Capitol Hill Day

AHEPA Family Members from all over the globe participated in another successful annual AHEPA Family Capitol Hill Day on May 22, 2025.

The AHEPA family advocates walked the halls of Congress, engaging multiple congressional offices to discuss the vital foreign and domestic policy priorities of the AHEPA family's mission. These include: strong U.S. relations with Greece and Cyprus, holding Turkey accountable for its illegal and provocative actions against U.S. interests, strong investment in affordable housing for older adults, and programs providing lifesaving services to survivors of domestic violence and their families.

Supreme President Savas C. Tsvicos thanked each member of the AHEPA family who took the time out of their business and personal schedules to walk the halls of Congress, knock on doors, and deliver a strong message to policymakers that the American Hellenic community is active and

engaged in the policies, foreign and domestic, that matter most to our mission and our community.

The Supreme President also called attention to the relaunch of the AHEPA Grassroots Network and encouraged members to join if they had not already. If you would like to sign up for the Network and receive updates regarding legislation that affects you, please visit the link below.



Attending Capitol Day - Supreme Governor Region 8 and PDG District 21 Dr. George Zioulas (pictured left) and Past District Governors Chris and Elisa Frangos (pictured top right).





By George Zioulas, SG 8

What a flat, dull place the world would be without mountains. Formed over millions of years by relentless movements of the planet's crust, squeezing and lifting land upwards to the sky, mountain ranges make up about a fifth of the Earth's surface. With their ever-changing weather, ravaging winds and freezing temperatures, mountains provide very different environments and unique wildlife that's adapted to live life on the craggy slopes, barren snow-caps or alpine meadows. As the water towers of our world, mountains store and deliver water to

Greece, the third most mountainous country in Europe after Norway and Albania has more than 300 larger or smaller mountains, which covers some 80 percent of its landmass. At one end of the backbone of Greece are the peaks of Varnountas and Grammos and on the other the Pindos range, and its part majestic Olympus, home of the gods, just north of verdant Pelion. And then it's south, down to Taygetos in the Peloponnese and on to Asterousia in southern Crete.

Attraction for the rugged nature.

For the ancients, the mountains were identified with the gods. The Ourea (Ορη) were primordial deities in Greek mythology, children of Gaia alone. They represented the mountains of the world that was known to Greeks at the time. The ten Ourea were Aitna, Athos, Helikon, Kithairon, Nysos, Olympus, Oreios, Parnes, and Tmolus. Pindos mountain range were believed to be the home of the Nymphs, deities who embodied the natural world.

Pindos is the biggest mountain range of Greece, stretching from the Greek-Albanian borders (NW) to the northern Peloponnese (SE). It is roughly 160 km long (100 miles) and is considered the backbone of mainland Greece.

Geologically speaking, the Pindos mountains are the extension of the European Alps on Greek grounds, as the formation of this volcanic mountain range dates to 65.000.000 years ago. The beautiful mountains of Pindos are morphologically enriched with steep slopes and deep canyons, while four long rivers stem from them (Arachthos, Aoos, Acheloos, Pinios). The Pinios river, flowing by the region of Meteora, is the third longest river of Greece (216 km).

The mountains served as vital resources for communities, providing shelter, pastureland, and strategic military advantages throughout history.

Tzoumerka Mountain Range, this part of the great Pindos mountain range, spans across the regions of Epirus and Thessaly, showcasing its grandeur over an area of approximately 700 square kilometers. Its towering peaks, with the highest point reaching over 2,300 meters, provide a dramatic backdrop for the picturesque landscapes that unfold at every turn.

The reverence of Greeks for mountainous landscapes was not merely spiritual. It also reflected the Greeks connection to nature and their understanding of the mountains as places of both beauty and challenge. The rugged terrain fostered a sense of adventure and exploration, leading to a rich tapestry of myths that celebrated these natural wonders.

More information & photos about TZOYMERKA to the link : <https://sites.google.com/view/tzoumerka24/english?authuser=0>



Athens – Europe’s Hottest City – Girds for Tourism Summer Sizzler

By TNH Staff



*Snapshot from Syntagma Square in Athens.
(Giorgos Kontarinis/Eurokinissi)*

ATHENS – Greece is starting to heat up in June after worries that a deadly heat wave in 2024, that killed a number of tourists who went on hikes and kept many in their hotels, was going to keep people away, although the foreign arrivals are still coming in big numbers.

The government said that climate change is a challenge and some travel analysts said tourists could begin seeking cooler countries, with Athens being Europe’s hottest city and attracting more people with its buzzy funkiness despite a reputation for being dirty.

In a feature, CNN reported on the problems the capital – and country – could face for the summer of 2025 that’s expected to bring yet another record of visitors despite the worries that it’s becoming too hot and even dangerous because of the heat.

Temperatures in 2025 hit as high as 111 degrees Fahrenheit in some places and in Athens, where there isn’t an abundance of greenery or trees, there’s little respite for people seeking shade or a cool spot, besides fountains – some of which don’t always have water in them.

One of the hottest spots is one of the most popular – the Acropolis – a hill of marble and the Parthenon which acts like a iron griddle in the summer, with a visitor limit of 20,000 a day but almost no place to sit and no shade, workers last year handing out water bottles.

“Climbing to the top of the Acropolis of Athens, the birthplace of democracy, has always been a feat for the brave. Never more so, perhaps, than in recent summers when the city has sweated through long and perilous heatwaves,” the site said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2025/05/28/travel/athens-heat-greece-tourism-summer>

In the past two years, during peak tourism season, relentless heat has repeatedly forced authorities to shut Greece’s most-visited site during the hottest hours of the day to protect visitors and staff from the heat, it added.

“Standing among the exquisitely-crafted white marble columns of the Parthenon as they reflect the fierce Mediterranean sun can feel more like an endurance test than the fulfillment of a childhood dream,” it added.

Athens has always been scorching in the summer, but never to current levels. It’s the hottest capital in mainland Europe but witnessed record highs in 2024, a situation that’s becoming the new normal, said the report.

SUMMER IN THE CITY

Athens used to be a quick stopover for tourists on their way to the islands but has become attractive for longer stays and with more high-end hotels being built or renovated to accommodate the numbers, getting 10 million visitors in 2024.

That’s one-fourth of the 40 million foreign arrivals in 2024 and despite some fears that overtourism, particularly on islands, is straining resources and the infrastructure, the sector is the country’s biggest revenue engine and the government is reaching out for more, especially luxury resorts and the wealthy.

Athens Mayor Haris Doukas said that, “Building resilience is a matter of survival.” Managing those high temperatures alongside the surge in summer tourists has become a priority, said the report.

For now that means early-warning systems for heatwaves and real-time monitoring of temperature data, along with fountains, air-conditioned cooling centers and making more shady pocket parks.

“Tourists often underestimate the heat, especially those from colder climates,” said Iris Plaitakis, a tour guide who regularly visits the Acropolis. “They don’t think to wear hats or bring enough water. You’re much more exposed to the sun and heat up there because of the higher elevation and

lack of trees and other shade.”

Extreme heat is incredibly dangerous. “Heatwaves are responsible for more than 80% of deaths caused by weather and climate events in Europe,” said Ine Vandecasteele, a European Environment Agency urban adaptation expert.

Athens is not a charming city, ugly concrete structures thrown up after World War II standing next to abandoned, graffiti-covered neo-classical cities and many buildings covered in decades of grime.

All that adds up to making it, as the site said, like “a concrete heat sink with limited green spaces – it’s one of the least green cities in Europe and the second-most densely populated after Paris. To complicate things, Greece, and Athens in particular, is home to one of the oldest populations in Europe, a demographic at risk from extreme heat.”

Since 2021 Athens has had a “chief heat officer” to promote and coordinate adaptation and resilience strategies, as it began focusing on nature-based solutions to reduce the heat-island effect, which sees cities becoming much hotter than the surrounding natural environment.

“In just over a year we have planted 7,000 trees which is difficult in such a densely built city. We want that number to reach 28,000 in four years. We are also establishing green corridors,” said Doukas. “Athens is rethinking urban infrastructure, redesigning roads and selecting heat-absorbing materials.”

Resilience-building initiatives include the creation of detailed heatwave maps that enable targeted interventions. Among them is the creation of a microforest, Greece’s first, in Kypseli, Europe’s most densely populated neighborhood.

NOT EASY BEING GREEN

“The goal is to lower perceived temperatures by 5 degrees Celsius within five years by creating targeted microclimates,” said Doukas.

In the neighborhood of Halandri – where there are more trees – a second-century Roman aqueduct to irrigate green spaces and cool neighborhoods has gained much attention. “The aqueduct transports water that would otherwise go to waste,” said project manager Christos Giovanopoulos. “When the new pipelines are operational this summer, we’ll save 80,000-100,000 cubic meters annually.”

From above, Athens is a sea of cement buildings

with almost none having greenery on top to reduce the heat that’s reflected and rebounded. Some of the concrete has to go, said Juanjo Galan, an Associate Professor of Urban Planning at Spain’s Technical University of Valencia.

“Like Valencia, Athens will have to break some concrete, invest in green infrastructure and heat-absorbing materials. It will take some time but can be done,” he said. Athens long ago covered over three rivers that otherwise would have provided some cool, as well as rivaled cities like Paris, London and Budapest.

Athens has a coast that’s been called the Athens Riviera but most of that has been taken over by private businesses allowed by governments to lease public beaches in violation of the constitution, ignored because it brings in money.

There are few municipal swimming pools for the public, children and people who can’t afford to get to the beach – where businesses charge them for umbrellas and seats and have taken over the prime spots.

The 8-billion euro (\$9.14 billion) development of the abandoned Hellenikon International Airport on the coast is also going to provide an urban park but it was supposed to be only a park before a 2010-18 economic and austerity crisis turned it toward being for commercial use, especially for the wealthy.

What public beaches there are in Athens are cheek-by-jowl with crowds elbow-to-elbow some luxury resorts have built walls unlawfully keeping the public from accessing better public beaches.

“Real estate prices along the coast have hit the roof, with many prime Athens properties now in the hands of big international investors and others transformed into boutique hotels and global luxury chains that pull in more visitors,” said CNN.

“Those same hotels are installing aircon and swimming pools to keep their guests cool in a city with already stretched power and water supplies,” catering to the rich and as tourism in 2024 bringing in more than 21 billion euros (\$23.97 billion.)

“People come from all over the world to understand, and experience, the cradle of Western civilization, to see where Aristotle and Plato walked, where the first modern Olympics were held,” said Plaitakis, the archaeological guide. “This cannot be recreated. And it will always bring people to Athens.”



INTERNSHIP INITIATIVE

2025-2026



ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR AN INTERNSHIP?

The PanHellenic goes “Beyond a Scholarship” for its Scholars and PanHellenic Young Leaders by providing internships through our Internship Initiative. We are pleased to be partnering with amazing companies to provide internships for high-achieving young professionals across the nation

Become a Panhellenic Young Leader and Meet with our Director of Alumni and Internships to discuss your internship search today!

BOOK A MEETING WITH THE DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI AND INTERNSHIPS



ARE YOU A COMPANY LOOKING TO FIND GOOD QUALITY INTERNS?

BECOME A PARTNER COMPANY



Discover New Talent: Tap into a pool of skilled young professionals ready to bring their perspectives to your company.



Make a Lasting Impact: Help shape the next generation of professionals in the Hellenic community by providing mentorship and real-world experience.

VIEW OUR LISTINGS/LIST YOUR INTERNSHIP HERE:



TO REQUEST A MEETING, OR FOR ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT GEORGIA TSAKOS AT GTSAKOS@PANHELLENICSF.ORG



Golden Gate District 21 Educational Foundation



Please consider a donation to our AHEPA District 21 Educational Foundation and receive a tax deduction as we are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

Also we would like to ask you to consider bequeathing to our Foundation as part of your estate planning. We would like to increase our Scholarship Awards as costs for students have skyrocketed.

Consult your tax consultant for the benefits of a donation and/or a bequeath to our Foundation.

Additional projects to be considered with addition of donated funds . . .

- Sponsor the AHEPA Journey to Greece program for our District youth.
- A Hellenic History Tournament financed through our Foundation.

Donations to the Foundation can be mailed to:

AHEPA DISTRICT 21 FOUNDATION
% Chris Frangos
P.O. Box 447
Millbrae , CA. 94030

Thank you for your consideration,

Chris Frangos. PDG
Chairman
Golden Gate District 21 Educational Foundation

AHEPA Hellenic History Tournament



Jeopardy-style tournament for 8th Grade and High School students

- *Two 3-member teams compete against each other in a double-elimination format*
 - *District's winning team competes in the National Convention competition*
- *All questions and answers are taken from the Hellenika book by T. Peter Limber (1997)*
- *Topics cover the entire period of Hellenic History, from antiquity to modern times*
 - *Local AHEPA Chapters would sponsor or endorse each team(s)*
 - *Each member of the winning team is awarded \$1000 plus a scholarship award*
 - *Each member of the runner-up team is awarded \$500 plus a scholarship award*
- *Any student can join who is in grades 8-12*
 - *Students are allowed to participate in more than one tournament*

The tournament is popular on the East Coast and in Canada. Golden Gate District 21 would like to host a local tournament when enough teams are formed.

If you are interested, or you know someone who may want to participate, contact your local AHEPA Chapter or write to governor@ahempa21.org



AHEPA VETERANS REGISTRATION

AHEPA Medal for Military Service is awarded to all veterans in Honor of their service to the United States.

“The Mission of the Order of AHEPA Veterans Committee is to archive and recognize all veterans of the Order and Hellenic community through sound communication and publication. Furthermore, to conduct fund raising and philanthropic outreach through a cohesive, limited, yet well defined activity that reflects well on the Order of AHEPA and brings credit to the organization at large.”

The AHEPA Medal for Military Service, approved by the 106th Congress, was presented to all AHEPA veterans present at the 34th Biennial Congressional Banquet, March 29, 2000. The Supreme Lodge then encouraged its districts and chapters to present this medal to its deserving veterans unable to attend this banquet. It is this committee’s intent to register AHEPA Veterans and have the AHEPA Medal presented at appropriate events at the District and Chapter levels. Funds collected through this effort cover medal production and other administrative costs to include shipping. Remaining proceeds will be donated to the Wounded Warrior Program annually.

Eligibility requirement for AHEPA Medal for Military Service includes Honorable Service and Discharge. Service includes Active Duty, National Guard, or Reserve status of the United States Armed Forces.

Register online at www.ahepaveterans.org. File a copy with your chapter Secretary after registration is complete. Medals are normally shipped in the fall and in time for Veteran’s Day celebrations in November.



Ahepa Service Dogs for Warriors
ahepa-servicedogs.org



Ahepa Veterans Affairs
ahepaveterans.org

Learn more about
 these and other
 National Projects
 by visiting
ahepa.org

2024-2025
- AHEPA DISTRICT LODGE -
ahepa21.org

DISTRICT GOVERNOR
 Mark Hallock

DISTRICT LT. GOVERNOR
 Dennis Davis

DISTRICT SECRETARY
 Dr. Vassilis Zarifis

DISTRICT TREASURER
 Andrew Ganetsos

DISTRICT WARDEN
 Dr. John Lagios

DISTRICT MARSHAL
 Alexander Mallas. PSG

DISTRICT CHAPLIN DISTRICT ADVISOR
 Steve Miller, PDG Chris Frangos, PDG

DISTRICT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
 Stamus Cocolos

DISTRICT SONS ADVISOR
 Dr. Ioannis Kokkinidis

SUPREME GOVERNOR
 Dr. George Zioulas

- CHAPTER PRESIDENTS -

GOLDEN GATE CHAPTER 150
 Alexander Mallas, PSG

FRESNO CHAPTER 151
 Jim Tousounis

SACRAMENTO CHAPTER 153
 Nick G. Alexander, Ph.D

OAKLAND CHAPTER 171
 Dennis M Davis

STOCKTON CHAPTER 212
 Tom S. Chiarchianis

MODESTO CHAPTER 248
 Stamus Cocolos

SILICON VALLEY CHAPTER 251
 Vassilis G Zarifis

CONTRA COSTA CHAPTER 259
 Petros Priftis

RENO CHAPTER 281
 George N. Pauls

SAN MATEO CHAPTER 392
 Leonidas H. Maheras

2024-2025
- DOP DISTRICT LODGE -
dop21.org

DISTRICT GOVERNOR
 Athena Hallock

DISTRICT LT. GOVERNOR
 Angie Legakis

DISTRICT SECRETARY
 Laurie Sahines, PDG

DISTRICT TREASURER
 Yurie Pauls

DISTRICT MARSHAL
 Sophia Fonti

DISTRICT ADVISOR
 Alicia Frangos, PDG

DISTRICT MAIDS ADVISOR
 Alicia Frangos

GRAND GOVERNOR
 Linda Belba

- CHAPTER PRESIDENTS -

SAN FRANCISCO EOS 1
 Andrea Skoufis

OAKLAND ECHO 4
 Joanne Booros, PGF

SACRAMENTO ARTEMIS 5
 Diane Petersen, PGS

STOCKTON SPARTA 18
 Kathy Leles

SAN JOSE DAPHNE 29
 Jacqui Argeres

MODESTO PHAEDRA 64
 Alike Alexander

FRESNO LETO 71
 Helen Sexton, PDG

RENO ELIS 89
 Yurie Pauls

SAN MATEO URANIA 290
 Claire Gagas

WALNUT CREEK HARMONIA 367
 Diana Vlahos



***Our Mission** - To promote the ancient Greek ideals of Education, Philanthropy, Civic Responsibility, Family and Individual Excellence through community service and volunteerism.*

Support Your Ahepa Traveler by being a Sponsor

Chapter Sponsorships

Individual and Group Tributes

Real Estate Sales and Rentals

Insurance - Business - Life - Health - Home - Car

Computer Services

Investment Planning

Retail Businesses - Restaurants - Food Markets - Home Furnishings

Beauty Salon - Barbershop

Automotive Sales and Service

Travel Services

Corporate Sponsors!

AHEPA TRAVELER ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Quarter Page \$50 per year

Half Page \$100 per year

Full Page \$150 per year

Full Page Single Issue ad \$50

The AHEPA Traveler is published four times a year.

Fall/September - Winter/December - Spring/March - Summer/June

Mail AD (electronic version preferred) and CHECK (payable to Ahepa District 21) to:

Dr. Vassilis Zarifis, District 21 Secretary

Email: vgzari@gmail.com