



The Hellenic Society Prometheas

Newsletter 56

August 2006

Mark your Calendar:

Prometheas is currently finalizing a number of events for the Fall of 2006. Dates for the following events have been set:

- a. Prometheas Kafeneion, on Friday, September 29th, 2006, 8:00 to 11:00 pm. St. Katherine's Church, live music with *Achilleas and Compania*. More details about this event will be included in the event flyer in early September.
- b. Prometheas Annual Masquerade Dance. Saturday, February 10, 2007 at the DoubleTree Hotel, Rockville, MD. Please spread the word to avoid conflict with other similar events not yet scheduled.

Other Events

For those of us traveling to Greece this summer:

Δελτίο Χορού - 14/06/2006 - Dance Bulletin

1. Θέατρο "Δόρα Στράτου"

Οι ετήσιες παραστάσεις των μαθητών της Σχολής θα γίνουν φέτος: α) Παρασκευή 16/06/2006 ώρα 19.30 τα παιδικά τμήματα, β) Σάββατο 17/06/2006 ώρα 19.30 ενηλίκων, γ) Κυριακή 18/06/2006 ώρα 21.30 ενηλίκων. Τα μέλη μπορούν να ζητήσουν προσκλήσεις γι αυτές και για όλες τις καθημερινές παραστάσεις του καλοκαιριού.

2. Αναπαράσταση παραδοσιακού καστελλοριζιακού γάμου

Από την Ένωση Ελληνίδων για την Οικογένεια και τη Νεότητα (Εν.Ε.Ο.Ν.) στο Θέατρο "Δόρα Στράτου" 21 Ιουνίου 2006 ώρα 19.45. Κέρασμα παραδοσιακό τοπικό γλυκό.

3. Πνευματικό Κέντρο Δήμου Νέας Ιωνίας

Ελληνικοί παραδοσιακοί χοροί, παράσταση στο Θέατρο "Δόρα Στράτου", Λόφος Φιλοπάππου, 26 Ιουνίου 2006, ώρα 20.30

4. Καλοκαιρινό σεμινάριο ελληνικών χορών

Για 18η χρονιά θα γίνει το καλοκαιρινό σεμινάριο του Θεάτρου "Δόρα Στράτου". Απευθύνεται κυρίως σε αλλοδαπούς αλλά μπορούν να το παρακολουθήσουν και Έλληνες που θέλουν να προχωρήσουν γρήγορα. Περιλαμβάνει μάθημα χορού 4 ώρες την ημέρα, παρακολούθηση των παραστάσεων, κεφαλοδεσίματα, ξενάγηση στην ιματιοθήκη κλπ. Δευτέρα έως και Παρασκευή 21-25 Αυγούστου 2006.

5. Φεστιβάλ στο Κρυονέρι Αττικής

Ο Πολιτιστικός Σύλλογος Κρυονερίου Αττικής προσκαλεί στο φεστιβάλ παραδοσιακών χορών: παιδικό 30 Ιουνίου και νεανικό 02 Ιουλίου στο Μπάφι, τώρα Κυονέρι.

6. Σεμινάριο χορού αυτοάμυνας

Θεωρητικό και βιωματικό, στο Γέρακα Αττικής, Σάββατο-Κυριακή 17-18 Ιουνίου 2006, ώρες 12.00-20.00.

7. Μεσογειακό φεστιβάλ στην Κύπρο

Συγκροτήματα μέχρι 30 ατόμων συνολικά (με μουσικούς και συνοδούς) από όλες τις χώρες της Μεσογείου καλούνται σε φεστιβάλ-διαγωνισμό στη Λάρνακα, 26-28 Νοεμβρίου 2006. Προτάσεις με DVD ή VHS. Βραβεία 2000, 1500 και 1000 λίρες Κύπρου.

8. Φεστιβάλ στη Θεσσαλονίκη

Καλούνται συγκροτήματα αποτελούμενα κυρίως από κορίτσια ή γυναίκες, που παρουσιάζουν δημοτικό χορό και δρώμενα, ή μοντέρνο χορό εμπνευσμένο από τον δημοτικό. Το πρόγραμμα περιλαμβάνει επίσης σεμινάριο χορογραφίας κι εργαστήριο παραγωγής.

9. Συνάντηση Χορευτικών Ομάδων Αποδήμων

Με τη συμβολική ονομασία "Αναπάλη" (ένας αρχαίος ελληνικός χορός) θα πραγματοποιηθεί 7-10 Ιουλίου 2006 στο Θέατρο "Δόρα Στράτου". Είναι η πρώτη φορά και θα καθιερωθεί σαν ετήσιος θεσμός για να δείχνουν τη δουλειά τους στο χορό οι απόδημοι. Παραστάσεις για το κοινό θα δίνονται κάθε βράδυ.

10. Συνάντηση Χορευτικών Συγκροτημάτων

Η 5η Συνάντηση Χορευτικών Συγκροτημάτων θα γίνει στο Θέατρο "Δόρα Στράτου", Λόφος Φιλοπάππου, τις Δευτέρες 4 και 25 Σεπτεμβρίου 2006. Δεκτές δηλώσεις συμμετοχής μέχρι να συμπληρωθεί το πρόγραμμα.

11. Παγκόσμιο Συνέδριο

Στο εορταστικό 20ο Συνέδριο προσκαλούνται ιδιαίτερα οι "πρωτοπόροι": όσοι είχαν συμμετάσχει στα παλαιότερα Συνέδρια (ακόμα και αν στο μεταξύ έχουν εγκαταλείψει το χορό). Θα χαρούμε πολύ να τους ξαναδούμε και να τους τιμήσουμε. Όσοι έχουν επαφή μαζί τους παρακαλούνται να τους ειδοποιήσουν.

Dance Bulletin 14/06/2006

1. Greek Dances Theater "Dora Stratou", Students' performances, 16/06/2006-18/06/2006
2. Presentation of the Traditional Castellorizian marriage, Greek Dances Theater "Dora Stratou", 21/06/2006
3. Greek folk dances, Greek Dances Theater "Dora Stratou", 26/06/2006
4. Summer Courses on Greek Dance, Greek Dances Theater "Dora Stratou", 21/08/2006-25/08/2006
5. Festival at Attica, Krioneri, Attica
6. Self-Defence Dance Seminar, Attica, 17-18 June 2006
7. Mediterranean Festival in Cyprus, 26-28/11/2006
8. Festival in Salonica
9. Meeting of Dance Ensembles in the Diaspora, 07-10/07/2006
10. Gathering of Dance Ensembles, Athens, 4 and 25 September 2006, invites ensembles.
11. 20th World Dance Congress, Athens 25-29/10/2006

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Misc News

THE WASHINGTON TIMES
Commentary
Greece and the Balkans

By Alexandros P. Mallias

Ambassador of Greece to the United States.

July 11, 2006

Greece's involvement in the Balkans is not new. Even before the foundation of the modern Greek state, the idea of a Balkan cooperation existed. The idea of a Balkan Federation, which Greece would lead, was conceived, toward the end of the 18th century, by Rigas Velestinlis, a man inspired by the ideals of freedom and democracy. Rigas visualized a Balkan region where people could move freely from country to country, where trade would be conducted without barriers, a region of prosperity for its peoples.

Now, more than 200 years after its conception, this idea, modified to some extent, is to become a reality. The Balkans are now at the doorstep of the European Union. Greece gave a historic boost to the Western Balkans' legitimate European aspirations at the 2003 Thessaloniki Summit, during its EU presidency.

Greece devised a long-term policy based on three solid pillars: (a) integration of the countries of the region into the EU and NATO, (b) economic development and investment and (c) regional cooperation.

The integration of Greece's neighborhood into the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions, upon fulfillment of specific criteria and conditions, has become our policy's fundamental strategic goal. In January 2007, Bulgaria and Romania will be the first Balkan countries to join the EU. Greece was the first among its EU partners, in the mid-'90s, to advocate Bulgaria's and Romania's accession. European integration and the prospect of EU membership is the strongest single soft power mechanism for encouraging reforms, consolidating democracy, establishing the rule of law, strengthening institutions and eventually bringing economic prosperity.

Greece has become a leading investor in the Balkans, with investments of more than \$10 billion, and the generation of 200,000 new jobs. The volume of trade between Greece and its Balkan neighbors is more than \$4 billion. In addition, Greece launched in 2002 a five-year development aid initiative called the Hellenic Plan for the Economic Reconstruction of the Balkans, which amounts to a \$670 million program, and aims at promoting the economic development of Greece's neighboring Balkan countries.

Many problems that the Balkans face are common to the countries of the region. It is therefore natural to deal with them in common. Regional cooperation is essential for ethnic reconciliation, to increase regional ownership and allow the Balkan countries to address, in a coordinated manner, issues of mutual concern. Greece was the driving force in revival of the South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) in the 1990s. It has gradually evolved into the only genuine scheme of cooperation in the Balkans, acting at the same time as the region's authentic voice.

Now, in 2006, we are about to witness the closing of another chapter in the history of the Balkans, begun by the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. Montenegro's peaceful

secession from its state union with Serbia and the settlement of Kosovo's status will be the epilogue of this chapter.

On Kosovo, especially, Greece, with strategic interests at stake, has contributed concrete ideas both within the EU and within the framework of the Greek-U.S. strategic partnership. We need a win/win or at least a win/no lose solution, which will have the support or at least consent of both Belgrade and Pristina.

Greece opposes partition of Kosovo. We cannot afford to have a Kosovo divided exclusively along ethnic lines, or to have Kosovo annexed by or united with any neighboring country or part of a country. We cannot have our region integrated into the European Union while, at the same time, we promote a solution that perpetuates division. We want to see a solution for a multi-ethnic and multicultural Kosovo based on European standards and values.

A new chapter will soon open; a chapter which will be remembered by generations to come as an era of stability, prosperity and cooperation; an era when respect for the different is the rule and not the exception; an era when the Balkans are embraced by the European family, where they have always belonged.

Alexandros P. Mallias is ambassador of Greece to the United States.

Washington Forum on Trafficking in Persons praises Greece's progress

A forum on the Trafficking in Persons was co-organized in Washington on Monday, July 10, by the Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), and the Greek Embassy to the US, during which extensive reference was made to the progress achieved by Greece in recent years in combating the phenomenon.

Particular emphasis was placed on the "scope of the problem in Europe and the appropriate regional response". The discussion was moderated by adjunct professor of law and executive director of the SAIS's The Protection Project (TPP), Dr. Mohamed Mattar. Other panelists included head of the US state department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP) Ambassador John Miller, Greece's ambassador to the US Alexandros Mallias, and the Geneva-based non-governmental organization (NGO) Terre des Hommes head of mission in Albania Thierry Agagliate.

Ambassador Miller stressed that confronting the problem was a challenge for the entire world, including the US, regardless of whether a nation was a country of origin, transit or destination of the victims of this modern-day form of slavery -- as people trafficking is described -- which needs to be abolished.

Miller noted the progress achieved in combating this phenomenon, particularly in Europe, and made special mention of the case of Greece which, he stressed, had been

upgraded this year in the State Department's annual report on Trafficking in Persons globally, given the improvement in its performance via the approval of strict legislation and establishment of protection centers for the victims, the government's cooperation with NGOs and its public awareness campaign.

He also praised Ambassador Mallias' personal and family interest in the issue, given that the elder of Mallias' two daughters, Leonora, is Terre des Hommes' Project Manager for abused children in West Africa.

Ambassador Mallias, in turn, stressed that even more important than the approval of legislation was its effective application, and described the recent bilateral agreement signed between Greece and Albania as a model in combating trafficking in persons.

Mallias outlined in detail the three relevant laws passed by the Greek Parliament, and stressed the importance of the systematic briefing of the public, as well as that of regional cooperation.

He further read out a message by Greece's foreign minister Dora Bakoyannis on the country's commitment to facing down this criminal activity, which was a serious violation of human rights and an offense to human dignity, and on the measures that have been taken by the Greek State for the prosecution of people traffickers and protection of the victims, in cooperation with NGOs.

Agagliate outlined the Terre des Hommes activities in Albania, and its steps for protection of some 1,200 Albanian children which, since 2003, have fallen victims to human trafficking rings that force them into begging, mainly in Greece.

The Protection Project (TPP) is a human rights research institute based at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, D.C., established in 1994 to address the issue of trafficking in persons as a human rights violation. In addition to its continuing commitment to the issue of trafficking, TPP focuses on promoting universal human rights values throughout the world by engaging in academic research and conducting training, exchange, and fellowship programs. Currently, TPP's work thus focuses on trafficking in persons and child labor, women's empowerment, state compliance with internationally recognized human rights, human rights education, and capacity building for civil society, particularly in developing and transition countries.

TPP is a member of the War Against Trafficking Alliance.

Sparta periodical - Discovering ancient Greek and Spartan history (UK)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Sparta in UK (ISSN 1751 0007) is a print periodical strictly educational for the professional presentation of the ancient Greek and Sparta history. The editorial board which consists of novelists and professional teachers - independent scholars - first introduced a year ago.

The Sparta's Journal (ISSN 1747 0005), the electronic free full-text periodical for the original study and research of Spartan and Messenian world.

The main aim is to publish written material by individual scholars, advance students and history lovers as well as original artistic material by artists who are inspired by the ancient Greek heritage. The endeavour centres in English speaking countries and focus to strengthen the presentation of our common cultural legacy. Currently, it seeks individuals and/or organizations - institutions that can support and contribute to the periodical production.

Please visit the website here: <http://www.sparta.markoulakispublications.org.uk/>

I would be very interesting to hear your suggestions and comments as well as your will support that publishing educational endeavour.

Please feel free to contact me for further details.

I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely yours,

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NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO

NPR - A Prayer Book's Secret: Archimedes Lies Beneath

All Things Considered, **July 27, 2006** · Why would anyone pay \$2 million for a tattered book of Christian prayers from 1200 A.D.? The anonymous philanthropist who coughed up the sum in 1998 wasn't lured by the holy writings. He was after the faint ink beneath -- mathematical theorems and diagrams from the Greek scholar Archimedes, who lived more than 2,000 years ago. It's the oldest known copy of his work, but the writings were barely legible. But now, a new restoration technique may make it possible to recover all of Archimedes' original text.

Bathtub Brilliance

As the legend goes, Archimedes discovered the principle of buoyancy in his bathtub, prompting him to shout "Eureka!" Regardless of whether this story is true, Archimedes

was, without a doubt, a great mathematician. Little of his work has made it down through the ages, but what has survived is startling. He writes about infinity -- different levels of infinity, actually -- which is astounding for a scholar from the second century B.C.

Hidden Text

The prayer book is known as the "Archimedes Palimpsest" -- a palimpsest is a document with hidden writing -- and it resides at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore.

"It's the ugliest thing in the collection," says William Noel, curator of rare books at the Walters. "It is also by far the most important text manuscript in a palimpsest that the world knows."

Noel cannot reveal the owner's name; he'll say only that he has a big heart. And a big agenda. He wants every possible word of Archimedes extracted, even though some pages are at the point of crumbling into dust, and others have fallen victim to the ravages of bookworms. ***CONTINUE:***

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5583668>

From Delphi, by Way of Cleveland

FOR a while it seemed that most of the restaurants that promised updated, upscale takes on Greek food merely delivered the same old dishes — grilled branzino, grilled octopus, stuffed grape leaves, moussaka — in fancier digs.

Parea has the branzino (albeit roasted), the octopus (pickled) and the grape leaves (stuffed, as it happens, with lobster). But you won't find the moussaka. And once you've perused the menu and begun to sample its highlights, you'll know that you're indeed encountering something more than a taverna with a better tailor, something beyond Hellas in Hermès.

Not that Parea doesn't have stylish threads. It beckons the downtown cocktail crowd with a sleek, sexy room that devotes more space than usual to the lounge and bar areas and catches the eye with well-chosen flourishes. A few cunningly shaped brick columns mimic the bones of an ancient temple, while orange light fills a cavity in the ceiling and flickers through a sculptured canopy of what look like leaves. It's sunrise at the Parthenon, or maybe sunset at Delphi.

But above all else, it's a fittingly arresting showcase for a sophisticated chef's efforts to recast Greek cuisine by approaching it with atypically high standards, unearthing neglected traditions and finding novel assignments for commonly used ingredients.

The chef's name is Michael Symon, and the tack he's taking isn't unique to him or Parea. It has begun to pop up around Manhattan, most recently at Dona on the East Side, where Michael Psilakis, another chef determined to tweak Greek, is building on his work at Oneira on the Upper West Side.

Parea builds on work from a more distant and even less glamorous place: Cleveland. That's where Mr. Symon, 37, lives, and it's where he opened the restaurant Lola nine years ago.

Lola brought him national culinary acclaim and its contemporary byproduct, Food Network appearances. He did a cooking show, "The Melting Pot," which, he joked, "was very big in prisons and nursing homes." He did a segment of "Iron Chef."

And along the way he opened a second Cleveland restaurant, Lolita, the template for Parea and the training ground for its executive chef, Jonathon Sawyer, who stays put in New York while Mr. Symon toggles between cities.

Much of Parea's menu is devoted to small plates, or mezedes, that cost \$7 each. In place of Italy's crudo or South America's ceviche Mr. Symon presents "spinalo," a term and concept he encountered while rummaging through old Greek recipe books.

He said in a telephone interview that spinalo refers to the unsold, uncooked seafood that Greek fishermen would save and store in salty liquid, lightly curing or pickling it. His present-day riffs on this practice include tuna brined in olive juice and garnished with almond bits and salmon marinated in vinegar and paired with pickled veal tongue.

The latter dish appeared on Parea's evolving menu precisely when an appetizer of pickled lamb's tongue vanished, and Mr. Symon conceded it was an offal transplant of sorts, a slyer attempt to slip diners some tongue, which he needs to keep around for selfish reasons. It's his favorite lunchtime sandwich meat.

Despite their intriguing pedigree, the spinalo dishes proved less memorable than another clever deployment of organ meat, an excellent mini-salad that mingled nuggets of lamb brain, which were crunchy on the outside but molten at the core, with fingerling potato and pickled onion.

Zucchini keftedes, or fritters, achieved a similar textural dynamic — a crisp surface giving way to a spongy center — with a less divisive ingredient. But cubes of cured pork belly, tossed with roasted beets and toasted pistachio nuts, were all crispness, all crunch. Neither of these starters should be missed.

Parea's dishes varied widely in their degrees of obvious Greekness, though either yogurt or feta was never far from the picture, serving as the base of a dip or the creamy centerpiece of a sauce. Mr. Symon doesn't treat these mainstays as clichés to be spurned, the way a vainer chef might. He regards them as clutch players to be recruited for, and bent to, his own pleasurable purposes.

Fig joined yogurt and tempered its sourness in a silken sauce for beautifully grilled loin of lamb, one of many strong main courses.

tzatziki accompanied that branzino, which was also coddled by sweet onions. These accessories were a welcome departure from the usual capers, and the dish's gooey opulence defied the spare cleanness of many a branzino around town. Mr. Symon had wrapped the fish in grape leaves before roasting it, and the payoff was pudding-like flesh.

A sauce with yogurt and veal stock enriched braised veal, which was rolled in a spiral around sausage made from ground veal and pork. And whipped feta skirted a boneless half-chicken that had been roasted to succulent perfection and cut into round wedges of ideal thickness.

Was the feta too salty? Depending on the amount in a given bite, it could be, underscoring a tendency at Parea for some flavors to be too emphatic. The dish that combined lobster and grape leaves had an excessive tartness, and used an increasingly tired trick, adding a dissonant delicacy to something humdrum.

An array of cured meats hewed to a Greek tradition of spicing — with nutmeg and cinnamon, for example — that Mr. Symon described as aggressive. I'd call it downright bellicose.

The mezedes concept recurred with desserts, all portioned modestly. The pastry chef, Jodi Elliott, turned out a decadent rice pudding with a strong vanilla character, grapes and almonds. She displayed a deft touch with pastry in a glorious, custardy concoction called a phyllo milk pie. "Greek doughnut holes," on the other hand, were dreadful — chilly, chewy.

But by the time several companions and I got to them, we had bigger troubles. Our voices were shot. Although the word Parea means "group of friends," the restaurant retards their conversation, becoming so loud on crowded nights that it's necessary to bellow or even pantomime. Perhaps Parea should change its name. What's Greek for charades?

And can you hear, through this din, what Mr. Symon has to say? Yes, because his food speaks clearly and persuasively, articulating a repositioning of Greek cuisine that's not just tongue — er, lip — service.

Parea - 36 East 20th Street (between Broadway and Park Avenue South); (212) 777-8448.

<http://events.nytimes.com/2006/07/05/dining/reviews/05rest.html?pagewanted=2>

Connecticut Journal

Cheeseburger, With a Side of Democracy

MARIA AOSPOROS is from Sparta — so you know she's tough.

For 25 years, the revivifying City of Stamford has coveted the site of her plainspoken anachronism of a diner, with its Grecian blue banquettes, the obligatory boxes of miniature Frosted Flakes atop a glass case containing the obligatory rice pudding, and a rooftop sign that promises: "CURLEY'S WELCOME 24 HRS OPEN."

But the 59-year-old Ms. Aposporos fended the city off, her biggest victory coming in 2002, when the Connecticut Supreme Court ruled that her diner could not be taken by eminent domain just so a private developer could build apartment buildings. She said the city had offered her \$233,000 for the property, but she wanted more — like \$800,000.

Fighting City Hall, though, was not a piece of cake and cost more than \$100,000 in lawyer's fees. And the city pulled some tricks out of its sleeve. It put up a chain-link fence around three sides of the diner, blocking access to her rear parking lot and her Dumpster. Then health inspectors issued the diner summonses for not having a proper garbage outlet, but, hey, why have bureaucracies if you can't have a delicious Catch-22 now and then.

She also noticed that the parking enforcers were ticketing her customers for overstaying the sidewalk meters they were forced to use because her lot was sealed off. She herself got 50 tickets, perhaps a record for the owner of a Greek diner with its own parking lot. Now the city has completed blueprints for three apartment buildings that will wrap around her diner, almost literally since the walls will be up against the diner's walls. If the

apartments are built, she won't be able to take garbage out a narrow alley she improvised on the side of the diner.

Although it is hardly the biggest campaign issue, that little diner may prove something of an albatross for Mayor Dannel P. Malloy as he heads into the Democratic gubernatorial primary on Aug. 8. Mistreating little people is never a wise idea for someone seeking votes, particularly if the victim has a story that would make Frank Capra or Preston Sturges salivate. She is not only an immigrant widow and mother of two, but she also raised two boys who were found in a car abandoned in her back lot. She even gives food away to homeless and mentally ill neighbors.

All that may explain why Mr. Malloy, who narrowly won re-election last November, is pooh-poohing the fuss, making a virtue out of defeat.

"You can't respond to people who decide they're at war with you when you're not at war with them," he said. "She won, and nobody is looking to take her property."

The fence, he explains, was needed to safeguard construction equipment. The ticketing was not his doing. "I'm the mayor, I don't write tickets," he said.

Other officials have urged the diner's customers to park nearby in a new multilevel garage. But one reason people choose suburban diners is so they won't have to take a twisting walk in the catacombs of a garage and pay several dollars for parking just to eat a cheeseburger.

It is unlikely that any of the city's provocations will defeat Ms. Aposporos. She recalls that the Nazis and the Communists could not stop her father, and the City of Stamford will not stop her.

"They're trying to close me down because I won in Supreme Court," she said in her pea-soup-thick accent. "I spent nickels and dimes to buy this diner. This diner belongs to me and not to the City of Stamford."

What the city has managed to do is turn Ms. Aposporos from a Democrat into a Republican, one who ran successfully in November for Stamford's 40-member Board of Representatives.

"I don't believe in democracy in the way Mr. Malloy runs a democracy," she said. "I believe in different democracy, that it is the power of the people."

Curley's was opened in 1941 by a Swede with an unpronounceable name and a dome of Harpo Marx ringlets. Mrs. Aposporos, who also has a curly crown and wears a large gold crucifix over her décolletage, bought the place with her sister, Eleni Anastos, in 1977. It was 14 years after she arrived in America and 6 years after the death of her husband, Nicholas, a Greek-American who found his bride in his ancestral home.

"He came to marry another woman and fell in love with me," she said.

Her husband's death compelled her to support herself and her two children; hence the diner.

"I don't want to lose my diner," she said. "I have it too long to lose it, and I went through hell to keep it."

Frank Capra would have made sure that that line stayed in the script.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/07/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/09ctcol.html>

THE NEW YORK TIMES

While Lives Are Lost, Another Is Redeemed

THE NIGHT GARDENER - By George Pelecanos

By [JANET MASLIN](#)

Published: July 24, 2006

The prologue to George Pelecanos's new book, "The Night Gardener," is set in 1985. It describes a crime scene in Washington. The victim is a 14-year-old girl, and the police are all over this case, at least temporarily. There is every reason to expect Mr. Pelecanos to do the expected: lead the reader through a tricky, serpentine investigation until the killer is found.

But Mr. Pelecanos is not the usual crime writer. He does not ask questions in the usual way. Instead of concentrating on how and why this girl died, he wonders where 20 years will take the police officers glimpsed in this opening chapter. (Most of the story takes place in 2005.) He wonders how Washington's urban landscape will change. He wonders how the world society will shift when family ties loosen and popular culture gets uglier. He wonders what it means to solve a murder case, if it means anything at all. He wonders how the past germinates into the future.

As part of the ace crime writers team (along with [Richard Price](#) and Dennis Lehane) that has worked on the HBO series "The Wire," Mr. Pelecanos has had experience with stories that involve large numbers of characters and panoramic urban sociology. He also takes the larger cause-and-effect view of factors that contribute to criminal motivation. So nothing that happens in "The Night Gardener" is without context, or without consequences. Like his most recent book, "Drama City," this novel weaves dozens of small stories into one big, overarching one. And like "Drama City" it is heart-in-your-throat gripping from beginning to end.

"The Night Gardener" is another of Mr. Pelecanos's beautifully delineated moral tales, filled with gut-wrenching turns of fate and razor-sharp, boisterously vivid characters. Among all the details of its intricately woven story, one item leaps out: a hat. It belongs

to Dan Holiday, who was a swaggering young cop in 1985 but has since descended into alcoholism and denial.

Holiday makes regular visits to bars in the daytime but never admits to being drunk. The way he sees it, he's just tired.

Holiday is still a man in uniform: a dark suit and a white shirt. He could be dressed for any number of professions if the hat in his car were not a dead giveaway. It is a chauffeur's hat; Holiday drives visiting big shots around Washington. (Mr. Pelecanos has some fun at the expense of an author on book tour.) Translation: There is no particular reason for Holiday to get up in the morning. His ambition died when his police career ended in disgrace.

The internal affairs investigation that brought down Holiday was led by Gus Ramone, Holiday's straight-arrow partner. Ramone is a family man facing many of the problems Mr. Pelecanos chronically dramatizes. He worries about how to keep his kids out of trouble. He is white and his wife is black, so the whole family knows its way around racism and hypocrisy. The Ramones send their son, Diego, to a mostly white Maryland school in a neighborhood where "Celebrate Diversity" is a phrase seen on bumper stickers. "Unless diversity is walking down your street on a Saturday night," Gus remarks.

The death of one of Diego's friends sets the book's present-day plot in motion. The Night Gardener of the title leaves his victims in community vegetable gardens, and the new killing is linked to the one in the prologue that way. At the end of the book Mr. Pelecanos lists young victims of Washington's Freeway Phantom, who killed them in the early 1970's. His story celebrates the kind of dedication that would keep a detective on a case that cold.

"The Night Gardener" has its own rogues' gallery. Mr. Pelecanos has a fine way with a felon, and he chillingly captures the blowhard mentality of the would-be criminal. This book's resident troublemaker is Romeo Brock, whose Vandyke beard and pointy ears give him a devilish appearance that he cultivates further by wearing red. "Brock called himself Jamaican but had never set foot on the island," Mr. Pelecanos writes. "He was as American as folding money and war."

Mr. Pelecanos keeps the reader rapt for nearly 100 pages as he puts all the pieces of this puzzle in place. Finally it becomes clear how the novel will coalesce. Holiday will find the body in the garden and make a 911 call to the police. Ramone will know who is calling. In an elegantly succinct gesture, Holiday will take off that chauffeur's hat and get back onto the Night Gardener's trail.

The truth about what happened ultimately defies some of the characters' most basic assumptions. And it gives Mr. Pelecanos yet another kind of tragedy to explore.

If the least convincing aspect of "The Night Gardener" involves the victims' names, which are all palindromes (Eve, Otto, Ava, Asa), the most authentic touches are small ones. Mr. Pelecanos knows exactly what Diego's room would look like; exactly how a

team of investigators would use Mountain Dew as part of the interrogation process; exactly how an officious new assistant district attorney would miss the point of what those investigators do.

He knows how the gentrification of Northeast Washington would create a no-man's-land just outside it. And he knows the sights and sounds of a neighborhood in transition. "Roofers hauled shingles and tar buckets up ladders, and real estate agents stood on the sidewalks, nervously aware of their surroundings as they talked on their cells," he writes.

In "The Night Gardener" Mr. Pelecanos reiterates what he has long believed: that we are what we eat, drink, suffer, love, hear and see. Alcohol and junk food are virtual characters in this book. Cruelty leaves a lasting impression. So do strong family ties and a work ethic. Yet in the midst of these kinds of certitudes the police must do their work in a moral limbo. It's tough for them to eke out small victories. It's even tougher to let the larger ones go.

NATIONAL REVIEW on line

What's In a Name?

Macedonia's unresolved title has been an obstacle to Balkan stability.

By Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

On May 8, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) for the first time in its history marked Europe Day. A few weeks earlier, foreign minister Ilinka Mitreva met with ambassadors of NATO countries to emphasize her country's serious aspirations to become a member of the transatlantic security network.

A candidate country for European Union membership since December 2005, and lobbying for a positive signal from the NATO summit in Riga this fall, FYROM is actively preparing to become a full member of the international community. But one crucial precondition of this process is still missing — the country is still referred to by its transitional name, FYROM.

As a senior member of the House International Relations Committee and dear friend of the Greek people, I am troubled by the unresolved dispute over the name used to identify this West Balkan nation. Finding an internationally acknowledged name could bring substantial stability to the region and pave the way for further integration of FYROM into the international community.

Since FYROM declared its independence in 1991, it has asserted its right to be recognized as the Republic of Macedonia. Greece has objected to this name, saying it causes confusion with regard to the Greek region of Macedonia. Even though Greece and the FYROM have been consistently consolidating their relationship, and Greece, being FYROM's leading trade and investment partner, just recently confirmed its support for FYROM's EU membership, the name issue continues to be an irritant.

This dispute has slowed Greece's efforts to help FYROM through far more consequential problems in the region. Greece, recently referred to by Condoleezza Rice as America's "best friend in the Balkans," is the region's giant in terms of democracy, economic investment, security, and stability. Over 3,500 Greek firms are already operating in the Balkans; Greek investment exceeds \$10 billion and trade exceeds \$4 billion; and Greece's GDP is twice as large as the combined GDP of the six other Balkan countries. Greece's full engagement will be necessary for success in the Balkans.

It is now time to solve the only serious obstacle remaining: the name issue.

I welcome the Bush administration's efforts to deepen their diplomatic engagement in the Balkans, as illustrated by Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, when he testified on Capitol Hill earlier this year. As former U.S. ambassador to Greece and former U.S. ambassador to NATO, Burns knows the Greek and Balkan sensitivities involved in the name issue very well.

I view the undersecretary's engagement as a positive signal that the U.S. will return to a more balanced approach to the name dispute. In November 2004, the Colin Powell-led State Department decided to suddenly change its policy and recognize FYROM as "The Republic of Macedonia," a step which caused great dismay to Greece. NATO, the EU, and the U.N. continued using the name "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia."

In a letter I recently sent to Secretary of State Rice, I noted that "it is important that our government return its focus to solving this difficult name issue and to helping officials in FYROM understand now that their domestic vote issue has passed, they must move back to sincerely trying to find a name that is acceptable to both sides."

An American engagement makes sense for a number of reasons. The Administration's switch in title recognition for FYROM was not a change of principle. All along the U.S. has maintained that FYROM's final name should be acceptable to Greece, and we have encouraged the U.N. and others to maintain that position.

In March, the Greek government also accepted as a basis for negotiations a title presented by the Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary General, Matthew Nimetz. He recommended "Republika Makedonija" for domestic use and "Republika Makedonija-Skopje" for international use.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has played a small but symbolic role with regard to the Global War on Terror and our mission in Iraq. FYROM employs troops in Iraq and also supports the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

The U.S. has encouraged FYROM's preparations for NATO membership by signing the Adriatic Charter initiative, which underlines Albania's, Croatia's, and FYROM's dedication to strengthening their individual and cooperative efforts to intensify and

hasten domestic reforms which enhance the security, prosperity, and stability of the region.

As a member of the Hellenic Caucus, I have co-sponsored various pieces of legislation encouraging the involved parties to find a mutually acceptable name for the FYROM. One such bill received more cosponsors than 97 percent of 809 House resolutions introduced in the 109th Congress. For the benefit of FYROM and the benefit of the region, the U.N.'s proposal should be accepted as a basis for serious negotiation. I am confident that Greece and FYROM can negotiate a mutually acceptable win-win title for both countries.

Peace and stability in the Balkans are crucially important to the United States, and resolving the FYROM name dispute will be an essential step toward this goal.

— *Congresswoman [Ileana Ros-Lehtinen](#) is a senior member of the House International Relations Committee as well as the Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia.*

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Νέα Υόρκη, 23 Ιουλίου 2006

Αγαπητοί συνάδελφοι και φίλοι μας,

Εύχομαι να περνάτε ένα όμορφο και δροσερό καλοκαίρι όπου κι να βρίσκεσθε!

Θα ήθελα να σας υπενθυμίσω τη συνάντησή και τη συνεδρίαση μας στους Δελφούς τον Αύγουστο στις 18, 19 και 20 Αυγούστου.

Εκεί στο πλαίσιο της 17^{ης} Ετήσιας Συνάντησης του Ελληνο-Αμερικανικού Εθνικού Συμβουλίου, θα συζητηθεί το θέμα της Ελληνόγλωσσης Εκπαίδευσης στις Η.Π.Α. με τη συμμετοχή της Ειδικής Γραμματέως Παιδείας Ομογενών και Διαπολιτισμικής Εκπαίδευσης (ΠΟΔΕ) κ. Ισμήνης Κριάρη.

Θα ήταν ευχής έργον για όσους από εσάς βρίσκεσθε στην Ελλάδα να παραβρεθείτε στην ιστορική αυτή συνάντηση κατά την οποία η Ομοσπονδία Ελληνο-Αμερικανών Εκπαιδευτικών θα αδελφοποιηθεί με την Ομοσπονδία Ελλήνων Δασκάλων «Δ.Ο.Ε.» ανοίγοντας έναν διάυλο επικοινωνίας και συνεργασίας με τους εν Ελλάδι συναδέλφους μας.

Εκτός από τις εργασίες του συνεδρίου, το Ελληνο-Αμερικανικό Εθνικό Συμβούλιο συνδιοργανώνει με τον Δήμαρχο Δελφών κ. Παναγιώτη Καλτσή Διεθνές Συμπόσιο με θέμα «Γνώθι Σ'Αυτόν» με σκοπό την Αναβίωση της Δελφικής Ιδέας και της θεσμοθέτησης ετήσιας συνάντησης των απανταχού Ελλήνων και Φιλελλήνων στην γη του Απόλλωνα.

Διεθνούς φήμης καθηγητές και διανοητές θα αναπτύξουν διάφορες πλευρές του θέματος με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στην αξία της Ελληνικής Παιδείας, γλώσσας, αξιών και ιδεών.

Σας επισυνάπτουμε σχετικές πληροφορίες. (Το πρόγραμμα τελεί υπό διαμόρφωση)
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Στέλλα Κοκόλης, Πρόεδρος