
Trumbeta Shqiptare

Volume 103

June 2019

The Official Publication of the Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.



“We, American citizens and Canadian citizens, of Albanian descent and others interested in Albanian-Americans, desiring to form and perpetuate a federation and promote its objectives and principles; to effect a perfect and harmonious understanding between ourselves and others, to promote the cause of good citizenship in the country in which we live; to stimulate the spirit of good fellowship and good cooperation; do hereby establish and ordain these By-Laws.”

Please visit us at: www.AANO.org



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**2018-2019
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Albanian-American
National Organization

June 2019

President's Message

Greetings to All,

I hope all is well with all of you with the hope of seeing many of you in Chicago, for our Annual Convention, which starts on Friday, August 2nd.

All of us at the AANO, in particular the wonderful members of our Chicago Team, are hard at work preparing for our Annual Convention and our 73rd Anniversary Celebration.

What can we expect at our Annual Convention? Besides the opportunity to make new friends and rekindle old relationships, we can expect three days of all Albanian fun.

On Friday night, August 2nd, cocktails & hors d'oeuvres with plenty of music, dancing and fun.

On Saturday, August 3rd, Scholarship Breakfast and visiting our Albanian Cultural Room. In the evening we will have the Award Banquet Dinner, starting with the Cocktail Hour from 6-7 pm, followed by Dinner and Dancing and the presentation the AANO's new Queen. During our Award Banquet we will also announce the 2019 Scholarship Winners as well as present the 2019 AANO's Annual Awards to selected individuals for their valuable contribution to the Albanian-American Community.

Sunday, August 4th, as always, the Board will have their closed meeting in the morning and the

Mesazhi i Presidentit

open meeting in early afternoon, for all of you to participate, when we will elect the New Board.

The Chicago Team is working hard to put together a Sunday afternoon fun event, and as soon as all the details are available, we will post them on our web-page, www.aano.org.

As the Chicago Team, headed by the Board of Governor from the Chicago Chapter Olga Titos, and National Vice President, Lea Bitta, helped by the Chicago Chapter members, who, year after year, dedicate time and resources to the AANO, are working very hard to prepare our next Convention. One may wonder why all of these wonderful people in Chicago and throughout the country continue, with enthusiasm, to dedicate time and resources to the AANO, and why we ask all of you to join us each year for our conventions. The answer is that all of us consider our commitment as a labor of love, as we strongly believe in the ideals of this organization, which has been consistently functioning for 73 years. We believe the mission of the AANO, which is to:

- Perpetuate & celebrate Albanian Traditions & Customs
- Encourage friendship & unity among all Albanian-Americans
- Educate the general populace of the majesty of being of Albanian descent

- Supporting the educational pursuits of Albanian-American youth through our Scholarship Fund

This mission is worthy of our support.

We are a unique and peace-loving nation, with a rich history and culture, unlike any other nation in the European continent. We are the descendants of the Pellazgo-Illyrians, the oldest inhabitants of Southeast Europe, with a unique language, culture, and traditions, that can be easily traced back to our Pellazgian forefathers. We believe that this unique culture and these customs should be preserved and celebrated.

Therefore, we believe that perpetuating and celebrating our culture, building friendships and unity, educating others about the majesty of our decent, and helping our youth, our future, to pursue their educational endeavors, are worthy goals and reasons to do all we can to dedicate our time and resources to keep this mission moving forward.

I am looking forward to seeing many, or even better, all of you at our Chicago Convention, promising that you will have a great time and enjoy this great event. So, mark your calendar for August 2-4, 2019 in the city of Chicago for lots of Albanian fun, and then get on our website, www.aano.org, make your hotel reservation, and get your convention tickets.

Me shumë respekt,

John K. Lulgjuraj

National President

Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.



Albanian-American
National Organization

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The Albany Chapter recently met and elected officers, and plans are in the works for an event prior to the July 4th holiday.

The Chicago Chapter wishes to invite all of you to celebrate the 73rd annual AANO Convention in Chicago at the Hilton Rosemont - Chicago O'Hare Hotel for a fun filled weekend ... casino, short train ride to the city, golf, discount shopping mall, etc.

Sunday Event -- AANO bus ride to Navy Pier. Navy Pier opened recently with remodeled game stations, restaurants, a rooftop bar/restaurant, the double ferris wheel and much more.

We look forward to welcoming all of you to our Convention!

The Detroit Chapter is in the process of planning their annual and very successful "*Shqipos at the Tigers*" game.. Plan on great pictures to follow in the next issue.

And, speaking of the Detroit Tigers ...



Tadd Harburn had an amazing experience at the Detroit Tiger fantasy baseball camp at the end of January in Lakeland, Florida, playing a week of baseball games being coached by the World Champion 1984 Detroit Tigers team. A few of his fans went to see his weekend games. Those college baseball skills kicked back in and he was 4 for 5 with a lot of RBI's for his first five at bats!



Pictured by his side is No. 1 fan and wife, Julia Black

Julia Black got a chance to meet up with **Tony Dovolani** in mid-March and finally present him with the *“Albanian of the Year”* award that the AANO had for him from a few years back. Tony was a very gracious recipient and posted the award presentation on his live Twitter feed for thousands of people to view.



He said he could not wait to show it to his dad. In honor of the occasion, Tony wanted Julia to take a picture with him in a dance pose! Keep on dancing and making the Albanians proud Tony!



The Washington DC Chapter working closely with the Albanian Embassy in DC. On May 4, 2019, the Albanian Embassy in DC opened the door to more than 4,500 citizens of Washington, DC for the fourth consecutive year to communities, visitors and citizens in the Greater Washington area.

This event took place under the Passport DC Program, a one-month program that introduces the diplomatic community in Washington, along with the diverse culture and traditions of each country.



Visitors from the DC area waiting to enter the Albanian Embassy



People around DC area waiting for the 2019 Winner



Outside the Embassy



2019 Winner



2018 Lottery Winners



Albanian Embassy opens the door to many visitors



Dancing Valle Shqiptare



Traditional Costume



I Love Albania

Attention Past Scholarship Winners



We would love to know what you're doing !!

Please send your information to Gayle Orlow (gorlow@comcast.net) and list the year that you won your scholarship, where you attended school, your major, and what has transpired since. If you like, attach a photo.

We enjoy keeping up to date on our Scholarship recipients.

*If you would like to make a donation to the
AANO Scholarship Fund, please send your
contribution to:*

AANO SCHOLARSHIP FUND

**c/o Nancy Capstick
15 Ellis Drive
Worcester, MA 01609**

ncapstick@hotmail.com



*Donations to the Scholarship Fund are
Tax Deductible*



Hilton Rosemont/Chicago O'Hare
5550 North River Road
Rosemont, IL 60018

It has been 7 years since the AANO Convention has been to Chicago. While some things have stayed the same, many have changed, and we are very excited to invite you all to the 73rd Annual AANO Convention! While you may have been to the "Windy City" once or twice, we can guarantee you haven't seen it all! The Chicago Chapter has selected a special new venue and activities that have not been a part of previous conventions. We hope to see you all there!

Culture – Fellowship – Scholarship

The AANO is a non-religious, non-political organization established in 1946 to perpetuate and celebrate those special things which comes from our Albanian heritage.



www.AANO.org



AANO Chicago Chapter



AANOChicago@yahoo.com



EVENT INFORMATION

Friday, August 2, 2019

National Board Meeting in the morning
 Albanian Cultural Room
 Cocktails & Hors D'oeuvres at 9:00 p.m.
 Dancing, music by DJ

Saturday, August 3, 2019

Albanian Cultural Room
 Cocktails 6:00-7:00 p.m.
 Awards Banquet Dinner Dance
 New Queen Presentation
 (Cocktail Attire is Required)
 Music by DJ

Sunday, August 4, 2019

Closed National Board Meeting
 Scholarship Breakfast (must sign up at
 Reservation Desk upon check-in)
 Open General Meeting & Election of Officers
 and 74th Convention Site
 Coffee and Pastries

Sunday Event

AANO Bus to Navy Pier
 The Navy Pier opened recently with remodeled game stations, restaurants, a rooftop bar/restaurant, the double Ferris Wheel, and more!



TICKET INFORMATION***Early Bird Special!*****Before July 1, 2019**

_____ AANO Members **\$165**
 _____ Non-AANO Members **\$180**
 _____ Children 12 & Under **\$80**

After July 1, 2019

_____ AANO Members **\$175**
 _____ Non-AANO Members **\$190**
 _____ Children 12 & Under **\$90**

PayPal payment accepted on AANO.org**PAYMENT RECEIVED BY:****JULY 17, 2019**

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

List ALL names included in your reservation:

Make check payable to:**AANO Chicago Chapter****Mail to:**

Olga Titos
362 Sundance Drive
Bartlett, IL 60103

**AD JOURNAL
COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET**

_____ Gold Page **\$500**
 _____ Silver Page **\$300**
 _____ Inside Cover **\$200**
 _____ Full Page **\$125**
 _____ Half Page **\$ 75**
 _____ Quarter Page **\$ 50**
 _____ Booster Page **\$ 30**
 _____ Add Photo **\$ 25**

PayPal payment accepted on AANO.org**Ad Journal Deadline:****July 10, 2019****Make check payable to:****AANO Chicago Chapter****Please mail your payment to:**

Ariana Jaupi
4123 W. 59th Street
Chicago, IL 60629

Send Ad electronically to:**ajuapi11@gmail.com**

HOTEL INFORMATION

Hilton Rosemont/Chicago O'Hare
5550 North River Road
Rosemont, IL 60018

SPECIAL ROOM RATES

Room Rates: \$139.00 (King/ Double)

Petite and VIP Suites Available

Saturday Night Banquet Parking: FREE

Overnight Parking: \$15/night

Reservations: 1-847-678-4488 (mention
"AANO Convention" for discounted rate)

Online Booking: AANO.org

Click Convention tab and:

Book Now with AANO Group Rate

DEADLINE FOR CONVENTION ROOM RATE:

JULY 15, 2019

Due to Lollapalooza, ALL rooms after July 15, 2019 will be released back to the hotel.

Activities for FRIDAY and SATURDAY:

Rosemont Outlet Mall
Rivers Gambling Casino
Golf

"L" Train to Chicago Zoo, Museums,
Millennium Park, Willis
Tower, and more

For further information, check at the AANO
Reservation Desk upon check-in to sign up.



Mirë ardhshi !!

www.AANO.ORG

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Albanian-American
National Organization

GET CONNECTED !!!

VISIT THE
A.A.N.O. HOME PAGE



www.AANO.ORG

If you have information for the Home Page,
Contact David Sosnowski
(630) 618-9111 or dsoz@microthunder.com



Membership to the A.A.N.O. is valid for only one year. If you would like more information about becoming a member, contact your local chapter or look on our web site for a chapter near you.



SOCIAL NEWS

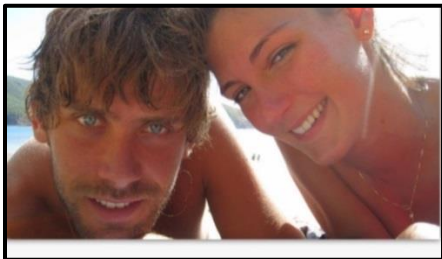
Engagement/Wedding

Chicago



Mr. & Mrs. Rick and Cindy Nicholas Marcinkowski are in the throes of their daughter Loren's wedding to Jeff Newman. The wedding will take place on September 7, 2019 and the couple will honeymoon in Hawaii. The families of Mary and Nick Nicholas, with daughter Cathy and son Craig and Lea Bitta are looking forward to the joyous occasion.

Detroit



Congratulations to Megan Chochol and Guillaume Lamotte, who are finally getting to have their wedding reception on June 8, 2019, in Normandy, France. They chose this site because of Guillaume's relatives and friends and to coincide with the anniversary of the Battle of Normandy so that they and their guests could see and enjoy all the festivities of that as well! Megan attended the recent Washington, D.C. Convention and many of her relatives and friends, also active AANO'ers, such as past scholarship recipient Geraldine Idrizi and her sons; Aunt Lume and cousin Lisa Riza; Aunt Sheriban Bardha; cousins Fatmir, Bukuri and Dashuri Adam; and recent convention attendee Yasmine Akki and her parents and sisters, just to name a few, who will be traveling to this wonderful event and great trip as well! We wish Megan and Guillaume an amazing wedding reception of their dreams. They both recently graduated from medical school and have been waiting for this celebration. We wish all of their friends and family members making the long trek a wonderful vacation. We look forward to seeing pictures!

Happy Birthday

Albany

Happy Birthday wishes to Paul Apostol as he and the Convention both celebrate 73 wonderful years !!

Babies

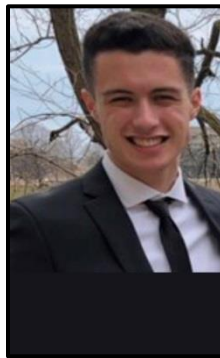
Albany

Christine (Christo) and Steve Prudente's daughter Andrea Satyamoorthy gave birth to her second child, Lila, on April 17, 2019. Congratulations to the entire family.

Class Notes



Detroit



Congratulations to Arton Riza, son of Ray and Luisa Riza, and grandson of Jack and Lume Riza, on his high school graduation with honors from Livonia Stevenson High School and congratulations on his admission to Michigan State University. We know he will do well!

Congratulations to Cole Premtaj on his recent graduation from Allen Park High School with honors and his recent admission to Colgate University. Cole's parents, Marty and Ellen Premtaj, and his grandmother, Nake Premtaj, are so proud of his academic and athletic accomplishments thus far and we all wish him well going forward!



Awards

An Honor Well Deserved ... The Board of Governor for the Clearwater Chapter of the AANO, an active member of the AANO for many decades, and one of the truly active members of the Albanian-American community of Tampa Bay, who never stops working and contributing to our community, Mr. Metat Idrizi, was honored by the **Albanian-American Community of Tampa Bay** for his invaluable contribution to our community.

Metat's commitment and devotion to the Albanian-American community and to the preservation of our identity and culture did not start in Florida. Since the early days, when he arrived in the State of Michigan as a refugee from Greece, Metat and his family were very much engaged in the Albanian-American community, always helping organize and participate in all the community activities.

Metat and his family have consistently participated in all activities when the Albanian-American community's voices were raised denouncing the human rights violations in Albania and Kosova. He has always been and continues to be a strong and ethical voice in defense of democracy and freedom for our Nation.

Contributions to the Albanian-American community have been and continue to be a life-long project for Metat and his family, with many more bright and healthy years to follow.



Metat Idrizi, with his wife Emine, receiving the award presented by Dr. Ardian Kraja of the Albanian-American Cultural Foundation of Tampa-Bay.

This is indeed a much deserved honor and recognition for someone who has done so much,

throughout his life, to help preserve our identity and culture, worthy of our sincere and heartfelt congratulations!

Career

Albany

Paul and Vera Apostol's daughter, Angelica Greco, completed training and probation and became a permanent Salary Grade 18 Information Technology Specialist for the New York State Government. Well done Angelica !!

Milestones



Teqeja e Pare Bektashiane ne Amerike (Taylor, Michigan)

Congratulations to the First Albanian Teqe Bektashijane In America on the celebration of their 65th anniversary on May 5, 2019. The Teqe is still the only one in the United States and it was founded by four Albanian families 65 years ago. Many AANO members in Detroit go there to worship and it was attended by dignitaries from Albania and Washington, D.C. The Teqe has always supported the AANO and its activities, donating its space free of charge for many meetings and activities. Its former leader, Baba Rexheb, loved it when the young Albanian people from all religions would gather there for their activities. We wish the Teqe many years of continued success!

Travel

Albany

Vera and Paul Apostol spent some time in February and March in Daytona Beach, escaping winter's cold weather for the Florida sunshine.



Chicago

Spiro & Liljana Haxhi just returned from a five-week vacation in Albania. They spent their time visiting with family and friends.



Erla Teli recently traveled to the Philippines to distribute solar powered lights. Erla works for a non-profit called Watts of Love, a global organization striving to eradicate dark-ness through solar technology and education. Erla traveled to Sitio Santol, Albunan, and the Ilin Islands to educate those living without access to

electricity how to use their new solar light. These households are spending an average of 30% of their income on alternate lighting methods, most of which are dangerous such as kerosene, gasoline, or open flame.

Erla, along with the rest of her team, distributed nearly 500 lights during their 10 days in the Philippines. Along with distributing lights Erla also conducted field research on the impact of the solar lights by revisiting homes that received lights in the past. There were homes with original lights from 2013 and homes from the last distribution just 4 months prior. One of the light recipients from earlier in 2019 had started a house-front shop where she sold basic goods, purchased a chicken and a goat. In just 4 months she became an entrepreneur and more

than tripled her income as a result of having consistent and reliable access to electricity. Erla feels extremely blessed to work for such an amazing organization and to have had the opportunity to travel through her work. She wants to say a huge thank you to everyone who participated in her campaign to bring lights to the Philippines.



Good work Erla !!

Retirement



After 30 years on City Council, Konnie Lukes opts not to seek re-election in Worcester

By [Walter Bird Jr.](#), Editor [@walterbirdjr/@worcestermag](#)

Posted May 1, 2019 (*excerpted for this article*)
Bill Shaner contributed to this story.

Thirty years. That's just as a city councilor, enough to make her the longest-serving member. When you factor in eight years as a School Committee member, you get to just shy of 40 years on Worcester's political scene for Konnie Lukes. It all comes to an end this year.

Citing family priorities, Lukes will not seek a 16th term. "It was more spontaneous than anything else," the at-large councilor said of the decision. "Anytime I've openly expressed some intentions of not running, I've been talked into running. I've got lots of supporters who think my voice as an independent thinker is needed." You can count her husband Jim among them. "[He] really wanted me to run," Lukes said. "He thinks I have a lot to contribute to the city and my voice will be missed." In the end, she said, "It's a lot of factors. It's a question of what more can I do in the city that I haven't done?"

From School Committee member, to city councilor, to a stint as mayor, Lukes has, to say the least, accomplished much as a public servant. She gained a number of critics over the years, but enough supporters to keep winning re-election. In some years, she was among the strongest performers at the polls.

"My family priorities are paramount right now." She paused briefly before adding, "And I've decided to develop an exploratory committee for president of the United States. Everybody else is doing it, so why not, and age is no barrier." Was she being serious, she was asked. "Don't be surprised," Lukes said with another chuckle.

***Note:** Konnie and Jim Lukes have been long-time members and supporters of the AANO and we wish them all the best in the years ahead.*

Obituaries



Detroit



Gjakë Gojcak, whom many of the AANO members knew as George, passed away suddenly on April 18, 2019 of a heart attack at the age of 52, leaving behind his 7-year-old son, Johnny, whom he had custody of. George will be remembered by the AANO for playing on the Detroit team at several basketball tournaments. He's also the brother-in-law of Tringa Gojcak who is a past recipient of the "Albanian of the Year" award. George will deeply be missed by his family, his customers, and the Albanian community in Detroit and beyond.

Worcester



Nicholas Spiro passed away on December 17, 2018 at the age of 82. He leaves his wife Eva (Alex) Spiro, his daughter Deborah Spiro, sister Virginia Schutte, and sister-in-law Helen Demetri. He is predeceased by his parents Cleo and Lavrendia (Xhixho) Spiro.

Nick Served in the United States Marine Corp Reserves and is a graduate of Northeastern University and Helena College. His greatest passion

was cooking for his family and he enjoyed traveling with his wife to Europe on many wonderful vacations.

Editor's Comment: *On a personal note, Nick was instrumental in my early years of putting together the Trumbeta Shqiptare and spent many hours helping me with "cut-outs" and "pasting" long before I became proficient with the computer. Nick was an extremely talented artist and always signed his work with the name, Koli. We will miss his wonderful sense of humor and his warm personality.*



Loretta (Dono) Mertý passed away peacefully on Christmas Day, December 25, 2018 at the age of 87. Loretta is survived by her husband of 65 years, Theodore Mertý, her children, Harry Mertý, Robin Ryan, and Kimberly McCrohon and her husband Steven. She also leaves three brothers, Norman Dono, Danny Dono and his wife Doris, and Arthur Dono, as well as Godchildren Dean Theodore and Melissa Giles, and several nephews and nieces.

Loretta was the daughter of the late Nicholas and Vrisdha Dono. She was a graduate of Commerce High School and was happy being a stay at home Mom caring for her husband and children. Loretta was a life member of St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church, its Women's Guild and choir. She loved to work tirelessly for her church especially on the Festival Committee for many years and was noted for making hundreds of spinach pies with her lifelong friends. She loved to cook or go on a good shopping trip. She was most happy when she was sitting at her kitchen table with her family and friends. Loretta will be sadly missed.



Pauline (Stevens) Cane, 86, passed away on January 4, 2019. She is survived by her daughter, Stephanie Woolard and her husband Seth, her sister, Elsie Gartsu and her husband, Thomas; two granddaughters, several nieces and nephews, and grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

She was the daughter of Lambi and Theodora (Kocilari) Kacimbro Stevens. Pauline had worked in

customer service for several area banks and was an active member of St. Mary's Assumption Albanian Orthodox Church, the Daughters of St. Mary, served as past vice-president for the parish, and was a tireless volunteer at the church, including the biannual Albanian Festival. She was also a long-time volunteer at Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.



Anna (Mitrus) Boyatzí passed away on January 12, 2019 at the age of 91. Anna was born in Permet, Albania and moved with her parents to Istanbul, Turkey where she married her husband, Thomas before coming to the United States. She is survived by her son, Louis and his wife, Dottie, her daughter

Margarita Dempsey and her husband Frank, her two granddaughters, Alexandra Bruneault and her husband Corey, Elena, and her great grandson, Nolan. Anna worked at the Broadway Restaurant and later she and her husband Tom became owners of a sandwich shop, and then Boyatzí's at Holden Hills. She was a gracious hostess and her table was always laden with delicious foods.

Victoria (Naum) Peters passed away on February 1, 2019. Her husband Louis Peters died in 1957. She is survived by her son, Gary Peters and his wife, Linda; two daughters, Barbara Moore and her husband, Brett and Lee-Marie Fadavi and her husband Abbas; eight grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and many nephews and nieces. She was predeceased by two brothers, Sotir and Vangjel Naum and two sisters, Dhora Terova and Helen Soter.



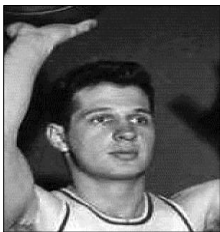
She was born in Drenova, Albania the daughter of Pandi and Dimitroula (Christo) Naum. She operated Peters Market for several years and later had a career in textiles before retiring. Vickie had been an active member of St. Mary's Assumption Albanian Orthodox Church, its Women's Guild, the Daughters of St. Mary, the Drenova Society and volunteered at many of the church activities, especially the Albanian Festival.



Andrew Laska passed away on February 2, 2019 at the age of 93. Andrew was the son of Michael and Efterpi (Kotnani) Laska. He is predeceased by his wife Ruth and his three brothers, Paul, Peter and George. He leaves five children, Michael and his wife Darlene, Donna and

husband Robert Ingraham, Diane and husband Paul Nixon, Kim and husband David Vitols, and Andrew and wife Megeen Laska. He leaves eight grandchildren and his sister-in-law Violet Laska.

Andy attended the College of the Holy Cross and Worcester State University. He was a member of the 1947 Holy Cross NCAA basketball championship team and later served as the long-time men's basketball and golf coach and athletic director at Assumption College. He was a high school All-New England player; served three years in the U.S. Army Air Forces; is a member of the Assumption College and Holy Cross Athletic Hall of Fames; honored twice as N.E. Coach of the Year; inducted into the NE-10 Hall of Fame; and in 1975 the Laska Gymnasium at Assumption College was named in his honor. Andrew was passionate about family, sports and friendships. His legacy and loyalties are immense and he will be greatly missed.



The 1947 NY Champions of Holy Cross



The Holy Cross Basketball Team in 1949-50 included Bob Cousy, left, and Andy Laska, third from the left.

Andy Laska, Holy Cross and Assumption basketball legend, dies at 93

By **Bill Doyle**, Telegram & Gazette Staff (Feb 3, 2019)

Andy Laska, who played in the same backcourt as Celtics legend Bob Cousy for the 1947 Holy Cross NCAA basketball championship team and later served as the long-time coach and athletic director at Assumption College, died early Saturday morning, February 2, 2019, at the age of 93. ***The complete article and photos can be found at:***

<http://telegram.com/news/20190203/andy-laska-holy-cross-and-assumption-basketball-legend-dies-at-93>



Southbridge: **George Vasil** passed away on April 11, 2019 at the age of 96. His wife of 61 years, Evlogji "Jennie" (Boyatzis) Vasil, passed away in 2010. He leaves his son, James Vasil and his wife Mandy, two daughters, Diana Kocum and her husband David, and Mary Baker

and her husband Mark; six grandchildren, two great grandchildren, and two nephews. He was predeceased by his infant sister, Mary Vasil. George was the son of James and Thomaida "Eva" (Lazar) Vasil.

A US Army Veteran of World War II, George was a charter member of the VFW since 1946 where he served as Board Chair and Post Commander, following a lengthy term as Quartermaster. He had also been a member of the American Legion.

Much of George's service work was through the Orthodox church and its related Albanian cultural groups. This included the **Albanian-American National Organization** – where George was a founding member and one of the original 13 charter signees. He also served as Past National President and Past President of the local Southbridge Chapter.

He was very active in the Albanian American Orthodox Diocese of America and was recognized with the highest service award for a lay person – the Knights of St. George. He loved his church, St. Nicholas in Southbridge and during his 85 years of membership, served countless terms on the parish council including positions of treasurer, president

and chair of many fundraising events. He reorganized the Sunday school program and served as teacher and superintendent, and decades as choir director. Within the Albanian community in Worcester, he had been a member of the Sons of St. Mary's and represented St. Nicholas as a member of the Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches, including Board membership on the Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.



Samuel Kosta Alex passed away suddenly at the age of 77 on May 15, 2019 in Greenwood, SC. He was born in Worcester, the son of the late Kosta and Theodora Alex. Sam is survived by his wife, Michele Dawn Smith Alex, and two

sisters. Eva Spiro and Helen Demetri. A lifelong Boston sports fan, he refereed high school basketball, was an avid runner, and coached both the St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church League Basketball Team and the Worcester Chapter AANO Basketball Team.

Our deepest sympathy to the families of our recently departed former members and friends of the AANO.

**I Përjetshëm Kutimi i Tyre!
May their Memories be Eternal!**



*The National Board wishes
all of our members ...
a Happy and Safe Summer !!*

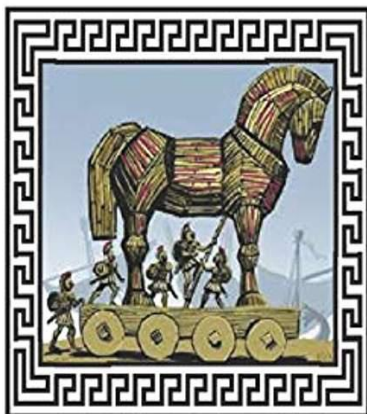


International Festival ...

The **Clarkston, Michigan Girl Scout Troop**, which 8-year-old Kile Wilson (pictured 2nd from far left) belongs to, selected a great country to represent and teach others about this year for their county's **International Festival**. The troop is made up of mostly third graders and Alexandra Black Wilson and Rose Black helped teach them about **Albania** and its culture and, with their presentation, helped dress the girls and get them Albanian artifacts. The girls even served lakror to the people who attended. They were the most popular booth at International Day by far! They were a definite crowd pleaser!



Elena Kocaqi



THE WAR OF TROY

A Pelasgian and Illyrian War

The War of Troy: A Pelasgian and Illyrian War

By: Elena Kocaqi, PhD

Available at Amazon

Elena Kocaqi, PhD is a full time professor at the "Alexander Moisiu" University in Durres, and Faculty of Political and Legal Sciences at the Department of Public Administration.

Elena is a graduate of Tirana University in History and Political Science, and holds a Law Degree from the same University. In 2014 she completed a doctorate in History and International Relations at the Centre for Albanian Studies in Tirana. She is fluent in several languages including the English language.

She is an accomplished author and has published several books, such as:

- "The Famous Albans in last 1000 Year". Published in 2006
- "The Role of Pellazgo-Illyrians in Formation of European Languages"- Published 2007
- "Albanian Language a Key to Indo-European Languages" – Published in 2008
- "Albans : Pellazgo - Illyro – Albanians With Word Fame" – Published in 2008
- "Plans to Eliminate the Albanians: How were Greece and Serbia Created within the Albanian territories" - Published in 2009
- "How Did Austro- Hungaria Create Albanian State" – Published in 2012
- "Wilhelm Wied-German Prince in Albania"- Published in 2015
- "Austro-Hungarian Admiration Towards Albania from 1916-1918"- Published in 2016

- "Expulsion of Albanians from their Homeland in the 19th and 20th Century" – Published in 2017
- "War of Troy" – Published in 2019

Much has been written about the 10 year Trojan War, using Homer's writings as the main source, with much focus on deceptive methods used by the Achaeans, the Trojan Horse, to gain access to the city of Troy, with the main protagonist for this conflict being the queen of Sparta, better known as Helena of Troy.

Elena Kocaqi, treats the Trojan War from a historical aspect separated from myths. Elena used the writing of ancient authors, with over six hundred quotations from them. Some of them were contemporary historians, like Dares of Phrygia, who wrote the testimony of the war, historian Dicty of Crete who participated with Achaeans (Spartans) in the Trojan War, historian Dares of Phrygia, who participated in the war on the Trojan side, giving us much broader perspective of the actual event, and in many cases contradicting the "original version" of events as describes by Homer. For example, Helena the queen of Sparta, also known as Helen of Troy, could have been a reason for this war, but, in fact, she was not the real cause of it, because prior to the incident of Helena, Achaeans killed the king of Troy, Laomedon, and took in slavery the princes of Troy, Hesiona.

Based on contemporary aforementioned historians who participated in the war, on both side, the deceptive method of Achaeans to enter the city of Troy, by building the Trojan Horse, may be nothing but a myth, while the true story on how the Achaeans entered the city, thus, destroying Troy, was as the end result of a more sinister plot by a few nobleman of Troy, who were designated to negotiate peace with Achaeans, however, to save their skin, became traitors.

Perhaps the most important research and discovery done and published by Elena Kocaqi, PhD, is the origin of the tribes of the conflict. The war was between Pelasgians and Illyrians, who were the original inhabitants of Europe and Asia Minor. The Dardan dynasty of Troy had direct links with Dardans of Illyria(Kosovo today). According to ancient authors, the Phrygians of Troy were tribes that emigrated from a region around Epidamnus or Durres of today Albania. Almost all tribes of Troy had links with the tribes, known in history, as Illyrians. All the dynasties of Achaeans, with the most important kings as Agamemnon and Menelaus, were ancestors from Pelops of Phrygia, of the same origin as were the Illyrians.

Trojan War, which historically has been treated as a conflict between two tribes of two major cities, Troy and Sparta, Dr. Kocaqi's research show that the Trojan War, based on the number of people involved, its duration and the dimensions of the war, was far greater than a conflict between two arch-rivalry cities. The Trojan War went beyond Troy and Sparta, it included Southeastern Europe, Asia Minor, North Africa and beyond, with 1, 5 million casualties.

Elena Kocaqi, PhD, in her book's preface, regarding the use of word "Greek", when describing the history of the Trojan War, writes, "The use of the term Greek, by later historian in reference to Achaeans, Danaans and Pelasgians, is not correct from the historical point of view, for at the time of the War of Troy no Greek or Hellene names were used among Achaean tribes. As explained in this study, the Achaeans are of Pelasgian descent, and from tribes that are known as Illyrian tribes, or the Illyrian-Thracians. The term Greek emerged hundreds of years after the War of Troy, and is mentioned by Aristotle when referring to the "country of Dodona and the Achaeans, as a river which has often changed its course". The original names in the translation of the history, from the ancient Koine (Old Greek) into Latin, the names of Achaeans, Pelazgians and Dannans had been replaced with the all encompassing name "Greeks".

These changes did not stop only in the Latin translation, but have continued in translation from Latin into English and other languages. As an example, we see these changes in the text translations by A.S. Kline and Brooker Moore. In the translations by Samuel Garth and John Gryden, the term Pelasgian, as is found in the original text, is deleted, and replaced with the only term "Greek". In the Brooks Moore version, names such as Achaeans and Danaans, which appear in the original Latin versions, he replaces these names with the term -Greeks-. Furthermore, she writes, "This is what has happened, especially in modern translations of other ancient works. The translators have, perhaps, not grasped the significance of the correct use of the names, however, a translator has the ethical obligation to faithfully stick to the original version of history. In all cases, replacement of terms Pelazgian, Danaan and Achaean with the term Greek is inexcusable, at such changes, knowingly or unknowingly, result into distortion of historical facts".

As one can easily imagine, certain circles in the Balkans did not welcome this publication and are continuing to downplay the significance of Elena Kocaqi's research. However, as she has stated in many

occasions, including during a recent visit to the US, 100% of the book is based on the information left to us by the ancient historian, in particular those who participated in the Trojan War.

Perhaps this is just the beginning of the true and accurate history of the Balkans being revealed!



Troy – Ruins of an Ancient City

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Recipes

GRANDMA'S ALBANIAN CABBAGE STEW – MISH ME LAKRA



Recipe courtesy of
“When Feta Met Olive with Donika”

What you will need:

- 1 cabbage
- 1lb (less/more) stew meat (beef or lamb)
- 1 onion
- 2 tsp paprika
- 2-3 heaping teaspoons tomato paste
- 2-3 heaping teaspoons red pepper paste*
- salt
- olive oil
- 1/4 tsp red chili flakes (or more if you like)
- 1 bay leaf

Add stew meat to the pot and allow to cook with a little oil on low heat, covered. This allows the meat to become tender. Allow to cook like this for at least 30 minutes, check on it.

Meanwhile, peel outer leaves of cabbage and discard. Remove core, discard. Cut the cabbage into bite size pieces or a bit larger. Rinse cabbage. My mom and grandma like to leave the cabbage in a bowl filled with boiling water for 10 minutes or so, once the cabbage softens, drain.

By the time you do all this the meat is close to being ready. Chop the onion and add to the pot with the meat, add the tomato and pepper paste and olive oil. Add in the paprika and chili flakes. Stir around and when you smell the pepper flakes, add in the cabbage, pour water over it until it just covers the cabbage. Add bay leaf.

Bring to a boil, season with salt and allow to simmer until cabbage is cooked, cook on low to medium heat. It takes about 2 hours for the meat and cabbage to get tender. Discard bay leaf. Once done, enjoy with a fresh loaf of bread.

**If you cannot find pepper paste, you may use more tomato paste and paprika.*

Recipes

REVANI – ALBANIAN CAKE



By Darlene at International Cuisine

Revani ... this dessert is simply delicious. Darlene chose to make it for its use of corn meal as ground corn is a main food source in the northern region of Albania, they use it for baking bread and various types of sweets like this wonderful cake called Revani. It gets its moistness from the syrup, which most of their desserts feature.

INGREDIENTS (SERVES 8)

For Syrup:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 ¾ cups water
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

For Cake:

- 4 eggs
- ¾ cup plain yogurt
- ¾ cup olive oil
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ¾ cups corn meal or semolina
- 3 tablespoons baking powder
- ½ cup pistachios, crushed for garnish
- ¼ cup powdered sugar for garnish
- Fresh mint leaves for garnish
- 1 lemon, sliced for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Make the syrup first so it has time to cool.
2. Bring to boil the sugar and water, stirring often, boil for approx. 10-15 minutes but watch it close, as soon as it starts to get thick take it off the burner and add 1 tablespoon of lemon juice. Let cool.
3. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
4. In a bowl, mix the eggs, yogurt, oil and sugar together.
5. Add in dry ingredients until well blended.
6. Pour into 9x12 greased pan.
7. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown.
8. Cut into diamond shapes or squares.
9. Pour the syrup over the cake.
10. Garnish with pistachios, powdered sugar and twisted lemon slices.

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