
Trumbeta Shqiptare

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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



Inside This Issue:

3-4	President's Message
4-6	Chapter Activities, Scholarship Fund
7-11	69 th AANO Convention Wrap-Up
11-16	Social News, Cultural

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**2014-2015
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Albanian-American
National Organization

December 2014

President's Message

Greetings to all,

With the start of the New Year, the AANO will start its 69th year actively working with the Albanian-American and Albanian-Canadian communities in helping preserve our national identity and help young generations in pursuit of their higher education.

I feel very privileged to be a part of this Organization, and feel very confident that the best is yet to come.

The 68th AANO Convention, held in the beautiful city of Naples, Florida, was a resounding success. My sincere thanks go to the National Board, Board of Governors, and all the Chapters for their commitment and hard work at putting together these conventions. All these wonderful people are volunteers who continue to invest time and resources because they believe in the AANO cause. A very special thanks to the wonderful people of Naples for their fantastic support. In particular, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Naples Convention Organizing Committee, headed by Al Foundos, Dodona Roboci, brothers Romeo and Kostika Terezi, Gezim Malo, Elona Ruci, Brikena Paparusi, Ledia Memaj, Rudina Ruci, Linda Tasho, Tomi Filipi and many others who, unconditionally, contributed many hours of work and resources to

Mesazhi i Presidentit

organize this great event. Besides the beachfront environment at the Naples Beach Hotel, three days packed with activities, including Sunday evening's Boat Ride, and the entertainment provided by one of the top artists of Albanian music, Eremira Babaliu, were exceptional.

One of the highlights of the convention were the children of Naples who entertained us on Saturday evening with some beautiful songs and poems in the Albanian language, followed by the fantastic Albanian Dance Ensemble of Tampa Bay, dressed in different national costumes representing all the regions of Albania and performing dances from every region as well.

I congratulate the 2014 scholarship receipts, **Wendi Guraziu, Eliada Ziraj, Adela Lilollari, Atdhetare Ame, Alio Daci and Katerine Gjonaj**, wishing all of them continued success in their academic endeavors.

Every year the AANO recognizes certain individuals from the Albanian-American community for their invaluable contributions to our communities and to our Nation.

In 2014, we recognized three well-deserving individuals. The recipient of the "**2014 Lifetime Achievement Awards**" went to **Dr. Ferid Murad**.

Dr. Murad was the recipient of 1989 Nobel Prize in medicine.

The recipient of the “**2014 Albanian of the Year Award**” was **Mr. Romeo Terezi**, a businessman from the Albanian Community of Naples, who, for many years, has been a positive force and a major contributor to that community.

The recipient of the “**2014 Community Service Awards**”, was **Dr. Ardian Kraja**, the President of the Albanian Cultural Foundation of Tampa Bay, a community leader who continues to make a positive difference in the ever growing Albanian-American community of Tampa Bay.

Overall, the convention was a successful event where participants had a fantastic time, meeting the vibrant Albanian Community in Naples, enjoying the white sunny beaches, with great entertainment and great atmosphere.

Let’s start getting ready to have some fun in Boston, “**The Hub**”, as the convention, scheduled for the first weekend in August 2015, will be held in downtown Boston. We will be posting all the information about the 2015 Convention on our webpage: www.aano.org.

I thank all of you for your continued support of the AANO, and wish you and your families a Happy and Blessed Holiday Season. May the New Year be a year of good health, peace and prosperity for all.

Me shumë respekt,

John K. Lulgjuraj
National President

Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.



Albanian-American
National Organization

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The Boston Chapter



The Boston Chapter cordially invites you to attend the 69th AANO Convention, to be held in August 2015. We promise a weekend to remember. Mark your calendars now and check our website for convention information.

The Chicago Chapter

The Chicago Chapter had a Holiday Party on November 21st. They had 25 people in attendance and went to a South American restaurant called Rios. A good time was had by all. They are now collecting dues and plan on having a meeting early next year.

The Detroit Chapter

The Detroit chapter did not hold their annual Halloween Party this year due to scheduling conflicts of many members but are planning a get-together after the holidays. They wish all of you a great holiday season and all the best in the new year!

**The National Board wishes
each and every one of
our members a Happy New Year !!**



Albanian-American National Organization, Inc. Scholarship Fund

The 2015 AANO Scholarship application is now available for download on our website.

An applicant must have completed two years of school either in the United States or Canada before the April 15th deadline. Applicant must be accepted into a course of study at a college or university. Applicant must be of Albanian descent and living in either the US or Canada.

Award winners will be notified on or about July 2, 2015 and the awards will be presented at the Albanian-American National Convention in Boston, MA (August 7-9, 2015).

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED
ON OR BEFORE APRIL 15, 2015.**

For more information, please contact me at the address and phone number listed below:

Gayle Orlow
(Scholarship Applications Chairperson)
31057 Rivers Edge Court
Beverly Hills, MI 48025

248-761-1184
gorlow@comcast.net

***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.**

www.AANO.org



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 Lea Bitta
616 North Thistle Lane
Prospect Heights, IL 60070

e.bitta@att.net



**Donations to the Scholarship Fund are
Tax Deductible**

**MEET OUR 2014 AANO
SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNERS**



WENDI GURAZIU

Wendi Guraziu is from Lombard, Illinois and will be attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the Fall of 2014, majoring in Biology.



ELIADA ZIRAJ

Eliada Ziraj is from Livonia, Michigan and will be attending Eastern Michigan University in the Fall of 2014, majoring in Computer Engineering, with a minor in Math.



ADELA LILOLLARI

Adela Lilollari is from St. Petersburg, Florida and will be attending Yale University in the Fall of 2014, majoring in Political Science, with a minor in Biology.

*Congratulations to all of our award winners
and we wish them much success in the future.*



ATDHETARE AME

Atdhetare Ame is from Staten Island, New York and will be attending New York University in the Fall of 2014, majoring in Mechanical Engineering, with a minor in Aerospace Engineering.



ELIO DACI

Elio Daci is from Quincy, Massachusetts and will be attending Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the Fall of 2014, majoring in Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering.



EKATERIN GJONAJ

Ekaterin Gjonaj is from Addison, Illinois and will be attending the United States Military Academy in the Fall of 2014, majoring in Political Science, with a minor in Spanish.

68TH AANO Annual Convention

June 27, 28, 29, 2014

Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club
Naples, Florida



At Friday evening's event, National BOG's and members. From left seated: Nancy Capstick, Worcester; Robin Mertzy Ryan, Worcester Chapter; Ruth Karchenes, Boston. Standing: Shirley Pero, Worcester Chapter, Lea Bitta, Scholarship; Philip Christo, Albany; Olga Titos, Chicago; Rich Rafail, New York, and friends.



Reunion of old friends – Shirley Pero, Nancy Capstick, Olga Titos, Robin Mertzy Ryan



Julia Black, past AANO President and Detroit BOG, with husband Tadd Harburn



Making new friends -- Young AANO members from New York, Worcester, Boston, and Chicago



AANO National Queen Anxhela Mile with new friends



**Adrian Michael and James Michael from
the Boston Chapter AANO**



**The Proгри brothers from Worcester and
Michael brothers from Boston**



**AANO President, John Lulgjuraj, and
his lovely wife Shpresa**



**Saturday Gala main table from left: AANO Treasurer
Rich Rafail; AANO National Queen Anxhela Mile;
AANO President John Lulgjuraj, Shpresa Lulgjuraj;
Chicago BOG Olga Titos; Worcester BOG Nancy
Capstick; New York BOG Jana Foundos; Boston
Chapter President Jim Michael**



Albanian Valle Dancers from the Clearwater Chapter



**Old friends from New York, Chicago, Detroit,
and Worcester**



New friends from New York, Chicago and Boston



Clearwater BOG Metat Idrizi



Leo Luljuraj with his grandmother Donika Dindi from the Clearwater Chapter



AANO's favorite entertainer, Ermira Babaliu, is also a grandmother for the first time this year.



It is no surprise that the Albanian community of Naples, Florida is great, especially with community leaders like Mr. Romeo Terezi (**2014 AANO Albanian of the Year**) and Dr. Ardian Kraja (**2014 Community Service Award**).

Naples was wonderful and thanks to all who made it special.

Shpresa Theodhosi, Boston BOG

[Note: Above photos and notes courtesy of Shpresa Theodhosi. Special thanks for all her efforts.]



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Albanian-American National Organization, Inc.



68th Annual AANO Convention



Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club Naples, Florida



The Convention opened Friday night with President John Lulgjuraj and Queen Anxhela Mile welcoming everyone to Naples. Opening night was held in the Everglades Room which overlooked the Gulf of Mexico. Ermira Babaliu was the featured singer with her band. DJ Kraja also provided entertainment. The background on the scholarship recipients were on display in the room. Carving stations of food were provided. There was lots of dancing and rekindling of old friendships and making of new ones.

Saturday brought more sunshine and time for attendees to hit the beach or go exploring in Naples. Saturday night's main event was preceded by a typical Florida downpour. The event was held in the main ballroom (River of Grass). The cultural display was available across the hall. During the program, there was both a singing group and a dance group from Clearwater. The formal ceremony was kicked off by the Chairman of the convention, Richard Rafail. He thanked the people of Naples for their warm hospitality and help in organizing the convention. National President, John Lulgjuraj, addressed the audience. That speech was followed by comments from the AANO National Queen, Anxhela Mile. Finally, Lea Bitta on behalf of the AANO Scholarship Fund, addressed the audience and introduced one of this year's scholarship recipients, Elida Ziraj, who came to the podium and personally thanked everyone for their contributions to the fund and how it has helped her. Awards for

deserving Albanians were officiated by Vice President, Nerita Veliu. Lifetime Achievement was given to Dr. Ferit Murad. The introduction was made by Julia Black. The Albanian of the Year Award was given to Romeo Terezi. That introduction was made by Al Foundos. Dr. Ardian Kraja was awarded the The Community Service Award. Introduction was made by Metat Idrizi. The evening continued with dancing to music provided by Ermira Babaliu and her band. There was a silent auction for the benefit of the Scholarship Fund that was very successful.

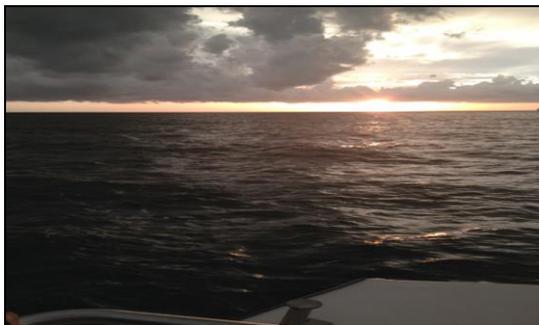
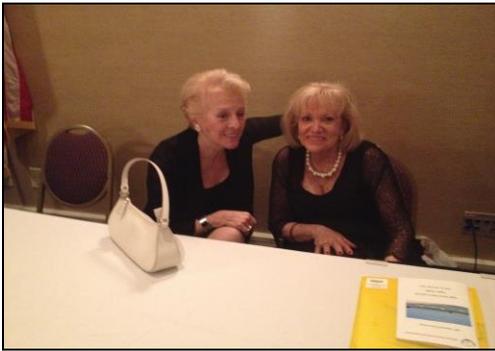
Sunday concluded with the open meeting in the afternoon where the new officers were elected and the site of next year's convention was chosen. The National Officers for the up-coming year are: John Lulgjuraj, President; Nerita Veliu, Vice President; Eliada Ziraj, Secretary; and Richard Rafail, Treasurer. The delegates voted for Boston to be the site of our next convention. The convention was officially closed and everyone in attendance at that time enjoyed coffee, tea, cake and ethnic pastries.

For those who chose to stay Sunday night, there was a boat ride that went through the canals of Naples and out to the Gulf of Mexico to view the sunset. It was a great ride with a fun group and produced some impromptu singers on the boat.

Thanks to Rich Rafail for his contribution of this Convention Wrap-up!

Following photos courtesy of Nerita Veliu





SOCIAL NEWS

Birthday/Anniversaries

Worcester

Greg and Kathy Vasil celebrated their 25th Wedding Anniversary and Kathy's 50th Birthday on a 5-day trip to Bermuda over the 4th of July, along with their children Kristina and Michael. Kristina is entering her senior year of high school at Wellesley High and Michael is entering his freshman year at Boston College High School.



Babies

Detroit

Congratulations to Butch Ramolli and his wife Zena on the birth of their first child, a beautiful baby girl named Sophia. They, and all of their extended family, are extremely happy. We wish her a long and happy and healthy life.

Congratulations to Amanda and Sam Majszak on the birth of their third child, Isadora Sylvia, in July. She is a beautiful little girl and we wish her a long and happy life.

May God bless all our new little ones with a long and healthy life. Për shumë vjet!

Academic & Class Notes



Boston



Congratulations to Harilla and Marie Theodhosi on the graduation of their youngest son, Nikola Adam Theodhosi, from Londonderry High School on June 13, 2014. Nik is one of the top 10 students of his graduating class of over 400. His family, his grandmother Theodhosi and grandmother Belliveau, aunts, uncles and all of his cousins wish him well. Nik started at Temple University in Philadelphia this past fall and was awarded a full scholarship, majoring in Mathematics and Actuary Science. His grandfather, Spiro Theodhosi, Professor of Mathematics who passed away before Nik was born, would be most proud that his 5th grandson follows in his footsteps.

Worcester

Theresa Aston, granddaughter of Athina Leka Aston and Daniel Aston, earned her Master of Science Degree in Professional Communications from Clark University in Worcester on May 18, 2014. She received a 4.0 GPA and was inducted into Alpha Epsilon Lambda Honor Society of Graduate Students. We are very proud of her accomplishments. Her Albanian heritage was not far away as her roommate of 4 years mother came from Korça. Another classmate's parents were also from Korça.

Career Moves



Worcester

Michael Rouvina and his wife Abigail Murray are pleased to announce the opening of their law firm, **Murray & Rouvina, PLC**, a full-service law firm specializing in probate/estate planning, business law, family law, animal law, and alternative dispute resolution. Michael, the son of Tom and Janet Rouvina, most recently worked as in-house counsel for Textura Corp. in Deerfield, IL. He received his law degree from Pace University School of Law and his bachelor's degree in political science from Syracuse University. Anyone wishing to contact Murray & Rouvina can do so at the following: 1011 West Maple Street, Suite 140, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. Phone: 269-459-9113 or www.zoocitylawyers.com.

Get Well Wishes

Detroit

Get well wishes to Bukuri Adam who has been recovering from a total knee replacement. She was a trooper at the Convention in Florida and is already back to work despite the operation being quite major. We can't wait to see Bukuri dancing again at next year's convention.

Obituaries



Boston

Henry Vasil passed away on November 20, 2014. He leaves behind his wife Louise, sons Michael and Peter, 2 grandchildren, and sister Dianna Kaplanes of Worcester. He was predeceased by his brother Nick and sister Barbara Belisle, also of Worcester.

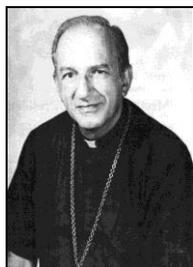
The Vasils were longtime members and supporters of the AANO, and Henry "Hank" played an important role in the many AANO Basketball Tournaments over the past years, serving as both a player and a coach. Our sincere sympathy to his family.

Detroit

Condolences to the family of Xhafer Elezi who was a longtime AANO supporter. He died in July after a long and successful life. He accompanied us to many conventions, including ones in Detroit and Las Vegas, and was a very integral and important part of the Albanian community in Detroit and elsewhere. He will be missed so much by those who loved him. May his memory be eternal.

Condolences to the family of Hasan Premtaj who passed away suddenly at the age of 90 on November 29th. He and his family, also longtime supporters of our organization, attended many conventions including the one in Albania in 2006. We all want to live our lives like this sweet man who was cleaning his own gutters on the day he died and had just cooked Thanksgiving dinner for his entire family two days earlier. He was loved and respected by many people and was one of the people instrumental in the beginning of the Albanian Teqe in the United States. He will be greatly missed.

Worcester



The Very Rev. Spero L. Page passed away on July 2, 2014 at the age of 84. He was predeceased by his wife Mary in 2011. Fr. Spero leaves 3 sons, Gregory, Stephen, and Paul Page, 2 sisters, Janet Wahl, and Anita McMillan, and a grandson, James Peter Page. He was predeceased by his brother Thomas.

Born in Detroit, Michigan, Fr. Spero was the son of Peter and Magdeline (Ratsi) Page, graduated from the seminary, and became the pastor of St. John Chrysostom Church in Philadelphia. He then began his long pastorate at St. Mary's Assumption Albanian Orthodox Church in Worcester in 1976. He was known for his caring leadership and clever wit. He also enjoyed sports, and retreats with the church children's group. He will be truly missed by all who knew him ... a gracious and gentle man.



Dr. Theodore Thamel passed away on November 30, 2014 after a long battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Tina, daughter, Elizabeth Riecke, son, Dr. Brian Thamel, and their families including three grandchildren. Sincere sympathy to the Thamel Family.



John Lazar passed away on December 8, 2014 at his home. He leaves his devoted wife of forty-nine years, Cynthia, two daughters, Julayne Lazar, and Karlyn Scott and her husband, four grandchildren, as well as his sister Constance Athanas and her husband Michael.



Bessie (Athanas) Spiro, passed away on December 11, 2014. She was predeceased by her husband of 64 years, John, who passed away on July 11, 2013. She leaves her daughter, Nancy Spiro Lisi and her husband Thomas, her sisters, Emelia Thamel, Ann Mitro, and Ellen Brown. She was predeceased by a brother, James Athanas, and a sister, Mary Macewicz.

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

This is an adaptation of an Albanian folktale.

The Son of the Eagle



A mountain is stubborn. You cannot tell a mountain to smooth itself out. Those who draw mountains in pictures as if they are large cones, with smooth sides leading to one point, are wrong. A mountain has many bumps and peaks. It is jagged and tough. Those who live on the mountains must adapt to this. The trees know that they cannot live on flat ground; they and their brothers, the animals, know how to live diagonally. A mountain is stubborn.

The people who live on the mountains in this story are stubborn.

The eagle lives in many countries where there are mountains. The people who live on these mountains, the mountains of *Shqipëri* are like the eagle. They are the children of the eagle. They who live under the sign of the eagle know that the eagle does not bow to anyone. No one tells the eagle to do this, or do that, to go here or go there. If anyone does, the eagle just looks at him through her steely eyes. The eagle is stubborn.

A people who have existed through conquest upon conquest are stubborn.

This story relates how these people became *njerëzit e shqiponjës*: the people of the eagle.

Once there was a boy who lived in those mountains. He lived with his father in a small house, where there were more animals than people, for most other people lived closer to the base of the mountain. He and his father only came down the mountainside once a week, on Sunday. The little boy did not know why he lived on the mountain, and other people lived in a village, but he saw no need to ask, for he was happy there. Whereas you and I get acquainted with teachers and other children our age, his teachers and friends were those people who lived in the mountains. By "people" I mean the trees, and the fresh water brooks, and the animals that lived in the trees, high up where he loved to look.

The boy was raised by his father. He never knew his mother; he remembered from an early age that his father said she was like a mountain. The boy didn't know what that meant, but he loved the sound of it.

The father taught the boy everything; he taught him how to live in the mountain. He taught the boy how to hunt on their mountain; to understand that they hunted like the animals did, that is, without disrespecting the mountain. Do not think for a moment that the father and the son hunted with an air of superiority over the mountain they lived in. No, they were the mountain, and the mountain was they.

"Listen," the father would say to his son every morning.

"Listen to what?" the boy would ask.

"Listen to the mountain. Listen to her sounds-listen to her and love her and understand her."

"Po, Baba." Yes, father.

No one needed to explain to the boy what his father meant- he saw it in his father's eyes.

The boy grew up and became strong. He remembered all that his father taught him. He grew to be the epitome of an intelligent and kind young man. He exhibited all that was fitting for a young man who understood the mountain.

It is beautiful in a way, that Creator decided that the parent should be older than the son. Then the son can grow up and wax as the father wanes. The son can learn humility and gratitude from the waning of his father. When this boy reached his seventeenth year-when he was tall and strong and handsome and wise and kind and good-he saw his father begin to wane. Before the boy reached his eighteenth year, his father lay on his deathbed. The son knelt at his side after the village *prift*-the priest from the village at the base of the mountain-blessed him. The son noticed that his father had the same look in his eye as he had always had-a fierce and yet good look, like that of the eagle-but that the look was soon to withdraw.

The father gestured for the son to come close to his side, and when the boy did, he whispered this into his ear-for his voice was now but a whisper: "*Djalë*, son, I have something to tell you before I depart from this old ship. Of all the animals of the mountain which you admire, which do you admire most?"

The boy promptly replied, "The eagle I have always respected most of all. You know that, *Baba*."

"Yes, I have always known that. And you know that the eagle lives in the sky-and the *gjarpër*, the snake, lives on the ground. Remember that."

"Po, Baba." The boy was not sure what his father meant, The boy was not sure what his father meant, but he thought he saw a glimmering of its meaning in his father's eyes.

His father closed his eyes in sleep.

After the period of mourning the boy-that is, young man, realized that he could not remain alone in the empty house on the mountain, but he did not know what to do.

One day he was walking on the mountain, beneath the trees that sprouted from the rocky soil. Suddenly, he saw an eagle hovering overhead, with her majestic wings outspread. How beautiful she was! With grace and skill, she came closer and closer to the tree nearest to the young man and alighted on a tall branch where rested the nest of her young. The young man saw that she had in her beak a dead snake, intended as food for her children. Once she had deposited the snake there, she flew away again.

The young man felt an intense desire to observe the eagle's offspring up close, and in order to do so he climbed the tree a bit to get closer to the nest. When he was halfway up the tree, he saw something-the snake was moving! It was not dead! He could see the glint of its fangs, such a different glint than had been in his father's eyes. Thinking quickly, the young man took an arrow from his quiver, and shot the snake with it, using his bow and arrow.

The young man continued climbing up the tree. He was filled with relief when he reached the nest, and saw that he had killed the snake before it could harm the eagle's children.

The young man decided that he would take one of the eaglets with him. After all, he had saved its life.

When he had climbed down from the tree, he was greeted with an awesome sight. He was about to walk away when suddenly the eagle dove from the sky, and, moving within a frighteningly close distance from the young man, abruptly paused in her flight and *opened her beak and spoke to him*. She spoke in a high, shrieking voice that somehow was beautiful: "You monster, you have stolen away my son!"

The man replied: "I have saved him from a greater monster: the snake you brought to your nest was not dead, but alive, and would have killed your son if I hadn't shot it with my arrow."

The eagle replied, "Give me back my child, and I will adopt you as my eldest son, as my most favorite child."

The man could scarcely believe his ears. But, spellbound by the eagle's words, by her glimmering eyes, he handed her the eaglet, which she clutched with motherly affection.

"Go now, and I will guide you. Go now, and I will lead you to victory. Your people will need protection from greater beasts than the one you have just defeated. Come, and follow me."

The young man nodded, and bowed to the eagle before she took to the skies again. He followed her where she went, down the mountain until they reached the base. There she soared higher into the sky, so that she would not alarm the village people, but would still be visible to her pupil.

The man walked into the village and saw that something was wrong. At a closer look, he could see what it was. Two men, wearing the dress and bearing the insignia of the neighboring people who had conquered his region, so close to the border, had tied an old man to a pillar, and were holding a whip, studded with bits of stone, a wicked-looking thing, and were about to beat him with it. What was odd about the sight was that the back of the man tied to the pillar was not bare, as one would expect in the case of a man who was to be flogged. Apparently, the two men had purposely left the man's shirt on in order to make his wounds more painful—the cloth of his shirt would adhere to the gashes the flogging would leave on his back.

The young man knew, from conversations he had overheard during the time he spent in the village during the funeral and burial of his father, that these men were content to let the people live generally as they had lived before the village was occupied, as long as they said and did nothing to protest occupation. Apparently, this man had offended against the invader, and that was why he was to be flogged.

What happened next happened in the blink of an eye, and it had its origin, apparently, in the mind of the eagle. The eagle, who had been circling the sky above the village as if to indicate that that was where she intended for the young man to find his destiny, suddenly dove and swooped down, faster than lightning. She flew right to the two men, and before they could lift the whip to harm the man tied to the pillar, pulled the whip out of the hands of the first man with her talons, and then alighted on the young man's shoulder. The two men, utterly shocked and bewildered, didn't know what to do. How filled with terror and awe they were of this man who seemed to have the eagle as his guardian. They ran from the village and never came back.

The people who lived in the village were shocked at what transpired. For them, the departure of the invader from their village marked a complete victory. Their world was small.

But the young man knew the world was not confined to the village; he knew that people lived in farther-reaching areas of the land. The eagle knew this, too. They had both learned this from the time spent on the mountain, for on the mountaintop one had a magnificent view.

The young man saw that the old man who had been saved was weeping. His neighbors took him inside a nearby house, where he could rest.

The young man jumped on top of a wooden platform that stood in the middle of the village. From his position there he shouted, "Good people, you have seen what has been done to the invader here in this village. But this is not the end to the struggle. We must unite to drive the

invader away from all the other villages, all the towns, all the cities. And the mountains will be our guide."

That night in the village there was a celebration which was also a going-away party, for the young man had selected the youth of the village to join him in a journey to the nearest city. There, during a battle in which the eagle remained ever soaring above the small army, the invader was defeated. The same happened again and again, as the young man's forces became more and more strong, and they moved farther northward.

The day came when the army defeated the last stronghold of the invader, in a city in the North. In that city, on a day when the mountains seemed to be visible to the young man from wherever he was, as if the mountains came on the breeze, he walked off on his own to a part of the city away from his men's encampment.

There, near some large evergreen trees facing the direction of his own mountain, he sat and thought. As he sat, the eagle soared overhead, circling the sky some distance above. Close up she was a beautiful brown-gold color, but higher up she looked black.

The young man sat there, staring at his guardian. As he did so, he found it harder and harder to look away from her. And as he sat there staring, her appearance began to change. Before the young man could realize it, she was no longer a brown-gold animal with one head.

She was now black and had two heads.

As the young man stared, he heard a voice which sounded remarkably like his father's, but was different in some way—somehow the young man knew it belonged to someone else. He knew it was not the voice of his eagle; for some reason he felt it was someone who had not even been born yet—even whose great-great-grandfathers had not yet been born. Yet this man's voice was woven out of the same fabric as the young man's father's voice, and that of all who yearned for a people free from the foreigner.

The voice said: "Follow the eagle, my son, and you will see all that is meant for you and for your people."

Suddenly, the eagle fell from the sky. But as she fell, she was transformed. She was no longer the three-dimensional shape of a bird in flight—she was now a large flag, wide and rather long.

And this flag bore a black, two-headed eagle on a background red as blood, awesome to behold.

Not knowing what to do, but acting on the words of the eagle and the voice he had heard, he took the flag and put it on like a cape.

Dressed in this way, the young man walked back to the encampment of his men, and stepped onto the platform in the center.

Without having received any order (from the young man, at least), every single man in his army walked out of his tent and towards the platform, until there was a sea of soldiers standing before him.

The young man called out to the assembly of soldiers, "The one among you who would most willingly die for the cause, step forward and onto the platform."

Almost immediately, a man who had been standing towards the front of the crowd stepped forward, and climbed up onto the platform. He was close to the age of the young man with the flag, and the young man noticed the gleam in the eyes of this volunteer.

The eyes of the eagle.

The commander of the army said, "Climb to the top of that tree next to this platform, with this flag."

Without hesitating at all, the volunteer did this.

Once the volunteer had climbed to the top of the tree, the young man suddenly took an arrow and shot it towards the man on the tree, and performed a similar action with a second arrow.

For a moment, the shocked men in the crowd thought their leader meant to kill the volunteer. But that was not his intention.

The young leader had not been aiming for the volunteer; he had been aiming for the flag. The two arrows pierced the flag in such a way that the flag was now pinned to the tree, in the manner of a flag on a flagpole.

In this way the red flag with a black, two-headed eagle came to fly above the young leader's camp.

It was underneath this flag that the young man planned strategies to drive the invader from the land.

At last, there came a point when the invader had completely been driven from the land, and the people became a nation.

There came a day when the people came to the young man and said to him, "We want you to be our king."

Our hero replied, "Do not be silly. I am unworthy."

Before the people could answer in protest, a shape appeared in the clouds above him.

It had the appearance of an eagle.

The young man saw the sign in the sky, and said, "I am unworthy, but I will not be ruling; the eagle will."

The people would later recount that as he said this, the eagle in the sky suddenly was seen to be holding an object in its talons. Upon further sky-gazing it was seen to be a crown. The eagle dropped the cloud-crown, and it fell farther and farther down the dome of the heavens until, light as a feather, it landed on the young leader's head. It was no longer a cloud. It was now a real solid crown, but it did have an airy quality.

The young man was speechless, but the people were not. Again and again they cried out: Long live the king-Long live the king-Long live the king!

But the young man smiled and shouted: Long live the eagle!

And the people took up that cry, which has echoed ever since.



Note: This story was written by Zachary Erickson for his English class based on the book, "*Cultures of the World*" – *Albania*, by Mary Lee Knowlton. Zak, who attends Quincy High School in Massachusetts, is the son of Jon Erickson who was a member of the Worcester Chapter AANO and it's Basketball Team many years ago, and great-nephew of your Trumbeta Editor.

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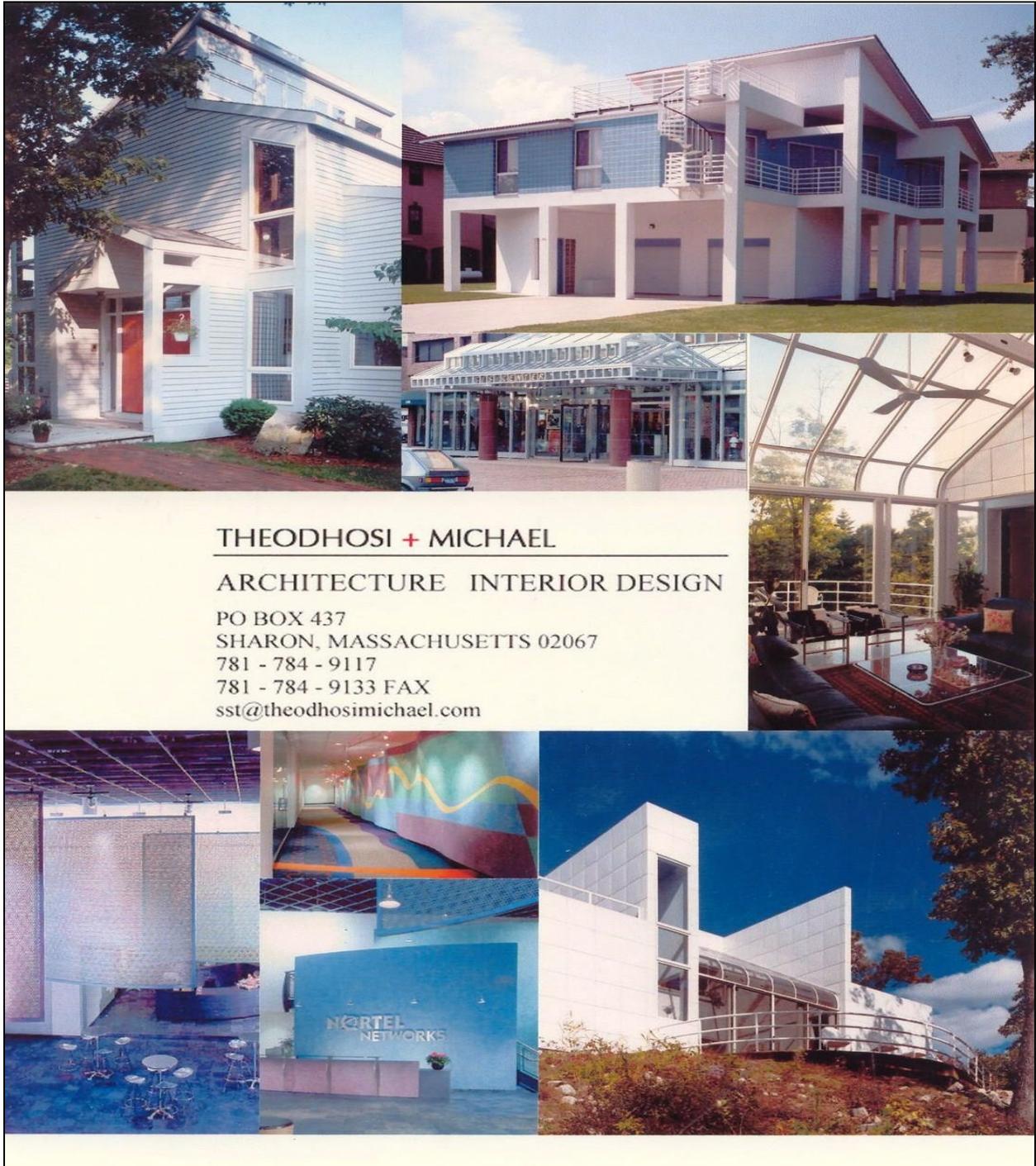
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