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# Trumbeta Shqiptare

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Volume 104

December 2019

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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](http://www.AANO.org)



*Happy*



*Holidays*



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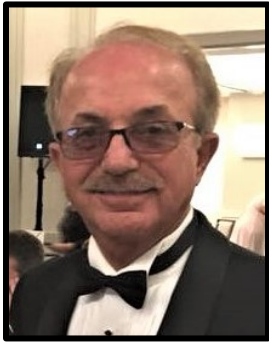
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**2019-2020**  
**NATIONAL OFFICERS & BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

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**Albanian-American**  
*National Organization*

**December 2019**

### *President's Message*

Greetings to all,

I will take this opportunity to extend my sincere Thank You to all for making 2019 a successful year for the Albanian-American National Organization.

In particular, I thank all the members of the Chicago Chapter for doing an excellent job at organizing a very successful Convention. Olga Titos, Chicago Chapter BOG, Lea Betta, National VP, Ariana Jaupi, National Public Relations, and all the members of the Chicago Chapter worked very hard, for many months, and put together a very successful a three-day all Albanian event.

Heartfelt thanks to the Albanian-American Community of Chicago for their support of the Convention and the AANO.

Please join me at extending my thank you to the AANO National Board, Board of Governors, and all the chapters for their hard work and continued commitment to the goals and objective of the AANO. Let us not forget that the AANO is an organization of volunteers. What we do is a labor of love and devotion to the very ideas established 73 years ago by the founders of the AANO.

AANO's founding principle was simple, yet expressive of this venture's lofty purpose: "Sa më tepër Shqiptar të edukuar jemi ... Sa më tepër Shqiptar jemi ne." The more educated Albanians there are ... The more Albanians we are." Through this part of the A.A.N.O. experience, the dreams of

### *Mesazhi i Presidentit*

Koli Kristofor and the thousands of Albanian immigrants who followed him have been realized. The scholarship dollars have served to place the young Albanians not in the factories, kitchens, and stockrooms of our struggling forefathers, but rather to have placed them in the halls of academia, law, medicine, science, and government." -www.aano.org (Who We Are?)

We congratulate the 2019 Scholarship recipients, Cole Premtaj, Allen Park-Michigan; Vanessa Shehu, Meadowbrook-Pennsylvania; Xhorxha Hoxha, Deerfield-Illinois, Sarah Bunjaku, Friendswood-Texas and Ardit Breznica, Schaumburg-Illinois. On behalf of the AANO, we wish them great success.

Congratulations to the AANO's "2019 Lifetime Achievement Award" winner **Mr. Perry Pero**, the "2019 Community Service Award," winner **Mrs. Lydia Mehmeti**, and the "2019 Albanian of the Year Award" **Gazmend M. Kapllani**, PhD. They are special people, well deserving of the awards.

Please mark your calendar for our 2020 Convention, which will be held at the Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue Hotel from July 31<sup>st</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will soon start posting more information about the 2020 Convention on our website, [www.aano.org](http://www.aano.org), where you will be able to make hotel reservations and purchase convention tickets.

In 2020, the AANO will celebrate 74 years of continued work dedicated to the Albanian

Community in North America. I hope you join us to celebrate our 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, in Philadelphia!

We are looking forward to another great year ahead for us.

On behalf of the entire AANO Organization, I wish all of you a Happy Holiday season. May the New Year be a year of good health, success and happiness for you and your families.

Me shëndet dhe lumturi Festat e Fundvitit!

Gëzuar!

*John Lulgjuraj*

**John Lulgjuraj**  
**National President**

**Albanian-American National Organization, Inc..**



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



**Albanian-American**  
*National Organization*

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



**The Albany Chapter** celebrated the holidays at a dinner party on December 9, 2019 at Grappas, an Italian restaurant owned and operated by an Albanian couple who came here from Albania.

**The Chicago Chapter** is proud to say we had a very successful Convention in August. We would like to congratulate our new AANO Queen Klea Gjoni who is a member of the Chicago Chapter. We want to thank our previous AANO Queen Georgya Borova for her reign as the AANO Queen for the last two years.



**National Queen, Miss Klea Gjoni**



As a result of the Convention, the Chicago Chapter has six new members, bringing the total number of Chicago Chapter members to 60. All of our members worked very hard hosting the 73rd Convention and we are busy planning a dinner to celebrate our success.

**The Detroit Chapter's** annual *"Shqipos at the Tigers"* game took place on July 23, 2019 with 58 people of all ages in attendance and again, a great time. Just like last year, it was the longest game of the year for the Tigers because of so many extra innings! It was a weekday evening and unfortunately did not get over until after 1:00 a.m.! They rallied some support for the upcoming Convention in Chicago that took place the following week and it was a great mingling experience.



*The Alushi Family*



Enjoying the game are Andia Nazarko, daughter of Ferit Nazarko, our former AANO President, and his wife Xheni; and Isabella Turhani, the daughter of Rinald and Ilva Turhani. The girls reconnected after many years at the game. The

parents think they have a very similar picture of them playing at a convention 10 years ago!



*Thank you Julia Black for the great photos !!*



### The Washington Chapter

AANO 73rd Annual Convention in Chicago!! Thank you Chicago Chapter for your outstanding work and hospitality. See you all in our 74th Annual Convention in Philadelphia.



On November 7th, the Albanian Embassy opened its doors again to the public who wanted to know more about Albania. Ambassador, Mrs. Faber, welcomed all the participants in this important event.

Thank you Ambassador Faber for all your contributions.



*Thank you Iris Maluka for sharing your photos !!*

**The Worcester Chapter** welcomes its new member, Pauline Logore, formerly from New York. Welcome to the "heart of Massachusetts."

## Attention Past Scholarship Winners



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

Please send your information to Gayle Orlow ([gorlow@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto:ncapstick@hotmail.com)



*Donations to the Scholarship Fund are  
Tax Deductible*



## 73rd Annual AANO Convention Wrap-Up

*Hilton Rosemont/Chicago Hotel*

*Chicago, Illinois*

*August 2-4, 2019*



Numerous attractions in the area kept convention-goers busy when they were not directly involved in the Albanian-American National Organization's Convention program. The nearby Fashion Outlet Mall, the Rosemont Casino, numerous restaurants, movie theater, and public transportation to downtown Chicago provided options for everyone.

The festivities kicked off Friday night with a reception, cocktails, and hors d'oeuvres. With Albanian music provided by Chicago DJ "ILBO", the evening began with Queen Georgya Borova leading the first valle. Dancers filled the dance floor all night while others established contact with friends and enjoyed the spectacular Cultural Room. Eventually the party moved to the hospitality suite and continued into the early morning hours.

Taking advantage of free time until the dinner dance Saturday night, some families attended the Cubs game at Wrigley Field, toured Chicago, visited the Casino, shopped the Outlet Mall, visited the Cultural Room, or just "hung out" with friends and family.

Saturday evening began with a cocktail hour followed by a formal greeting from our Grupi Arberia dance group as our guests funneled into the ballroom. All dressed up in Albanian costumes, and



ranging in age from 6 to young adults, Grupi Arberia performed later that evening. Demonstrating valles from four distinct regions in Albania, the performance was spectacular. Our thanks to the gracious leadership of dance instructor Altin Naska.

Following a grand entrance by the National Officers and Board of Governors and rousing renditions of the American, Canadian, and Albanian National Anthems by Georgya Borova, the program began. Perry Pero, Chicago Chapter President, and National President, John Lulgjuraj recognized Past National Presidents and Queens in the ballroom. Speeches were delivered by National President John Lulgjuraj as well as National Queen Georgya Borova.

#### AWARDS

Scholarships to Ardit Breznica and Xhorxha Hoxha  
(presented by Gayle Orlow)

Lifetime Achievement to Perry Pero  
(presented by Arthur Pero)

Albanian of the Year to Dr. Gazmend Kapllani  
(presented by Erla Teli)

Community Service Award to Lydia Mehmeti  
(presented by Georgya Borova)

After-dinner valle dancing was led by our National President and Queen Georgya Borova. As part of the program later in the evening, the next Queen of the AANO, Klea Gjoni, was crowned and presented with a banner and bouquet of roses. She will serve as queen for two years. Klea's parents, Jani and Edlira Gjoni, escorted her. Queen Klea Gjoni then began her first valle. Everyone joined in and never stopped dancing. Finally the party moved up to the hospitality suite until the wee hours of the morning.

We thank Georgya Borova for her two years serving as Queen for the AANO.

Sunday's afternoon meeting was exceptionally well attended. We think word got out that homemade Albanian cookies and pastries were on the scene!

#### NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS

President- John Lulgjuraj  
Vice President- Lea Bitta  
Treasurer- Rich Rafail  
Secretary- Gayle Orlow

#### CONVENTION SITE

July 31-August 2, 2020  
Philadelphia, PA

Following the official conclusion of the weekend, traditional Albanian pastries made by members of the Chicago Chapter and coffee were served.

#### 2019 Chicago AANO Convention Co-Chairs:

Lea Bitta, Olga Titos, Diane Pero





## Convention Photos from Julia Black



## AANO Chicago Chapter



The main actor of the film, Kushtrim Hoxha, joined the audience for a Q&A at the end of the screening. The film is a moving and powerful story of a man who sacrifices everything for his family, while Yugoslavia is falling apart (1992), harsh political and cultural repression against Albanians in Kosova becomes the "new policy" of Milosevic's regime, war is raging in Croatia and threatens to spread to Bosnia and Kosova.

Dr. Gazmend Kapllani, Chair of the Hidai Eddie Bregu Program of Albanian Studies at DePaul University, hosted a film screening in Chicago this November. Dr. Kapllani was awarded our AANO Albanian of the Year 2019. Many AANO members attended the film screening.



Dr. Kapllani thanks his wonderful, warm and attentive audience who attended. And says this is just the beginning of a long journey.

He hopes to organize many more events as such. You can stay updated through his social media on Facebook: [Gazmend Kapllani](#). Or email him at [gkapllan@depaul.edu](mailto:gkapllan@depaul.edu)

[www.AANO.org](http://www.AANO.org)

### SUPPORT THE AANO



### ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS IN THE TRUMBETA SHQIPTARE!!

Advertising rates are as follows:

**Full Page (\$200)**  
**Half Page (\$125)**  
**Quarter Page (\$75)**  
**Business Card (\$50)**

For more information, please contact:

**Richard Rafail, National Treasurer**  
**(914) 843-7629**

[rrafail@yahoo.com](mailto:rrafail@yahoo.com)



## MEET OUR 2019 AANO SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



### COLE PREMTAJ

Allen Park, Michigan  
Attending Colby College in  
Waterville, Maine  
Studying Chemistry and  
Engineering



### VANESSA SHEHU

Meadowbrook,  
Pennsylvania  
Attending Bryn Mawr  
College in Bryn Mawr, PA  
Chemistry Major,  
Math Minor



### XHORXHA HOXHA

Deerfield, Illinois  
Attending University of  
Miami, FL  
Accounting and  
Marketing Major  
Political Science Minor



### SARAH BUNJAKU

Friendswood, Texas  
Attending University of  
Texas, Austin  
Major in Math



### ARDIT BREZNICA

Schamburg, Illinois  
Attending DePaul  
University in Chicago, IL  
Major in Cyber Security

[www.AANO.ORG](http://www.AANO.ORG)

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**Albanian-American**  
*National Organization*

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[www.AANO.ORG](http://www.AANO.ORG)

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



## SOCIAL NEWS

### Engagement/Wedding

#### Albany



Angelica Greco, daughter of Paul and Vera Apostol, became engaged this summer to Sean Trestick. A venue wedding is being planned for June 20, 2020. Congratulations and best wishes to all!

#### Chicago

On September 7, 2019, Loren Marcinkowski became Mrs. Jeff Newman. Loren is the daughter of Rick and Cindy Nicholas Marcinkowski. Cindy was National Queen of the AANO from Chicago, as was her sister Cathy Nicholas Balinski and brother, Craig Nicholas, served as Chicago Board of Governor. Loren's brother was an usher, her great grandfather, Nick Nicholas, was a Past President of the Chicago Chapter, and her great uncle, Andy Bitz, was Chicago's first President. The wedding was definitely a huge family affair. We congratulate the couple and send them our best wishes.

#### Detroit

Dr. Megan Chochol and Dr. Guillaume Lamotte had a "second wedding" in Michigan hosted by AANO members Bukuri and Fatmir Adam and their family members for those who could not travel to the wedding festivities in France in June. Both events turned out to be extremely lovely and a good time was had by all that attended. We wish the beautiful couple many years of happiness.

### Babies

#### Detroit

Congratulations to Drita Ramolli Jakupi and Bujar Jakupi on the birth of their first child, a beautiful baby boy named Leo! Proud grandparents are Ali and Abby Ramolli.

A big congratulations to Detroit AANO members, but residents of Fort Myers, Florida, Justin Negip and Averina Cela on the birth of their first child, a baby boy on December 4, 2019. Beautiful Phillip Carter Negip was 7 pounds, 2 ounces and both families (Negips, Blacks, Celas and Turhanis) are ecstatic. He will be loved by many and is the namesake of the late Phillip Negip, Justin's father. Phillip was the nephew of the late Frances Selfo. Justin is a past queen pageant escort and Avi a past queen contestant.



#### Philadelphia

Marinela Prifti and Fred Tsapournas welcomed a baby girl in September. Congratulations!

### Happy Birthday

#### Chicago



On August 5, 2019, a joyous occasion was held in Chicago to honor Perry Pero's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Friends

and family traveled from as far as Massachusetts, New York, Florida, North Carolina, Minnesota, Vermont, Wisconsin and Missouri to celebrate Perry's milestone in a spectacular fashion. Café La Cave in Des Plaines was the perfect venue for the event and was decked out in a first-class manner to greet Perry and his guests. His Excellency Arch Bishop Ilia was present to bless the food as well as wish Perry many happy returns. The food, décor and entertainment were all top notch, as all gathered in one family-style table that wrapped around the ballroom where a five-course meal was enjoyed. The evening was capped by a spectacular surprise thanks to Perry's wife Diane. Knowing his love for particular brands of opera, Diane arranged for Wayne Messmer, a Chicago celebrity known for his speaking, singing and broadcasting, along with three tenors from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to perform a private concert. Everyone danced the night away until the early hours of the morning and it is a night that will not soon be forgotten for those present. A very happy birthday to Perry Pero indeed!

### **Philadelphia**

Betty Subashi celebrated her *85th birthday* in October. Congratulations and we wish her many, many more !!

## ***Get Well***



### **Worcester**

Get well wishes go out to Diana Steffon after her recent surgery. Wishing you a speedy recovery !!

## ***Class Notes***



### **Philadelphia**

Zachary Smith was awarded a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship for his doctoral research at the University of Pennsylvania. He will be in South Africa, Israel, France, and the UK through March 2020.

## ***Career***

### **Albany**

Angelica Greco completed a one year probationary period in a professional position with the New York State Government and is now employed there as a permanent Information Processing Technical Specialist, SG-18. Congratulations on accomplishment Angelica!

### **Washington**

Buta Biberaj wins the Commonwealth Attorney Race in Loudoun County. She is one of the Albanian American community members. Ms. Biberaj moved to the US when she was 2 and a half years old, and lived in the Bronx, New York.



*The AANO Washington DC Chapter wishes Ms. Buta Biberaj the very best in her journey as the Commonwealth's Attorney in Loudoun County!!*

## ***Travel***

### **Albany**

Angelica Greco and her son Christian, along with parents Paul and Vera Apostol, all attended the Washington Convention in 2018 and are all looking forward to attending the 74th convention next year in Philadelphia.



**Detroit**

The entire Premtaj family, grandmother Nake, parents Ellen and Marty, uncle Bazi and even former National Officer Sandy Premtaj and her husband Sam (who reside in Clearwater, FL) travelled to Maine to watch the Colby College football game in October and had an amazing time with freshman Cole Premtaj, AANO scholarship winner, on the team.



Height: 5-11  
Weight: 195  
Year: Freshman  
Hometown: Allen Park, MI  
Allen Park  
Position: LB

***Cole Premtaj***

The Alushi family, Fatmir, Liri, Eliza, and Dea, travelled to Chicago and attended their very first AANO convention, which they very much enjoyed. They intend to be attendees at many more conventions to come. Mirë se erdhe!



**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.**

***Obituaries*****THE MOST REVEREND  
NIKON LIOLIN**

***Archbishop of Boston, New England,  
and the Albanian Archdiocese***



**His Eminence, the Most Reverend Nikon,** Archbishop of Boston, New England, and the Albanian Archdiocese, fell asleep in the Lord on Sunday, September 1, 2019.

Archbishop Nikon was born in 1945, the son of the late Evans J. and Helena P. Liolin. He was raised in a family nurtured in the Orthodox Christian faith and active in the Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America. His father had served as lay chairman and founder in 1947 of the Diocesan Theological Student Fund. For many years, his mother served as choir director at the family's home parish of Saint Nicholas, Jamaica Estates, New York. His brother John, now deceased, served on the parish council of Saint George Church, Trumbull, Connecticut, his brother Billy gave his life serving in the armed forces during the Korean War, while his youngest brother, James, served as lay chairman of the Jamaica Estates parish and member of the Archdiocesan Council's Student Fund. His elder brother, Father Arthur, is Chancellor of the Boston-based Albanian Archdiocese.



Archbishop Nikon pursued his elementary and secondary studies in New York City, where he developed an abiding interest in the theatre arts, securing leading roles in several high school productions, and in the biological sciences.

Tonsured to the Order of Reader by His Eminence, the late Metropolitan Theophan Noli, Archbishop Nikon studied at Saint Vladimir Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, New York; Iona and Concordia College, New Rochelle, New York; and the New School for Social Research and Political Science, New York City.

In 1967, he married the former Sarah Arthur, his childhood sweetheart. Together they shared a ministry in which she devotedly served as choir director after his ordination to the Holy Diaconate by the late Bishop Stephen Lasko on July 5, 1969, and to the Holy Priesthood the following day. During his 33-year ministry, Bishop Nikon was well known for his pastoral acumen and broad-based ministerial sensitivity and experience, having served as rector of two parishes of the OCA's Albanian Archdiocese: Saint Nicholas Church, Southbridge, Massachusetts, and Saint Thomas Church, Farmington Hills, Michigan.

In addition to his pastoral ministry, Archbishop Nikon served as President of the Greater Detroit Council of Orthodox Churches and Chaplain for the Wayne State University Orthodox Christian Fellowship. He is also credited with administering a health and hospitalization insurance plan for area clergy. He also appeared on numerous live television and radio programs, broadcasting to the faithful and those interested in the Orthodox faith. Notably, he was a project coordinator for "The Voice of Orthodoxy," established by New England's Russian Orthodox Layman's League, and he served as editor of "The Vine," the newspaper of the Albanian Archdiocese, and Dean of the Great Lakes Deanery.

On July 25, 2000, his wife, Sarah, reposed in Father Nicholas's arms following a bout with cancer. His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius presided at her funeral.

Prior to his consecration, Bishop Nikon spent time at Saint Tikhon's Seminary and Monastery, South Canaan, Pennsylvania, extending his studies, where he was tonsured to monastic orders prior to his episcopal consecration.

Archbishop Nikon was consecrated Bishop of Baltimore and Auxiliary to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius, on Friday and Saturday, May 24 and 25, 2002, in conjunction with the annual pilgrimage to Saint Tikhon Monastery.



Archbishop Nikon was nominated as Bishop of Boston at the Albanian Archdiocesan Assembly at on October 10, 2003 and the Holy Synod elected him Bishop of Boston on October 22, 2003. He served as administrator of the Diocese of New England and was elected ruling bishop during the fall session of the Holy Synod in October 2005. He was installed with a new title as Bishop of Boston, New England and the Albanian Archdiocese by His Beatitude Herman at Holy Trinity Cathedral in Boston on December 16 and 17 2005. In addition to his archpastoral leadership of his own dioceses, he served as locum tenens of the Diocese of the South from February 2011 until March 2015.

Archbishop Nikon was elevated to the rank of Archbishop on May 9, 2012.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife Sarah (Arthur) Liolin. He is survived by his devoted & loving brothers The Very Reverend Arthur Liolin and his wife Margaret of Milton, MA and James Liolin and his wife Christina of NY; in addition he is survived by many nieces, nephews, grandnieces & grandnephews.

May Archbishop Nikon's memory be eternal!



**Philadelphia**

**Ann (Notskas) Gjoka** passed away on October 30, 2019 at the age of 89. She was born in Labova, Albania and moved to America in 1939.



Ann was the daughter of the late George and Hariklia (Kiki) Notskas. She was the wife of the late Joseph K. Gjoka. Ann is survived by her children, Joanne (Robert) Everett, Mark (Sandi) Brassell, her grandchildren, Laura (Matt) Jones, Krista (Matt) Sherwood, Andrea Brassell, her great-grandchildren Joshua, Elijah and Baylie, and sister, Linda Notskas.

Ann was a devoted member of her church, longtime member of the ladies club, and valued member of the St. John's Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church choir.

**Worcester**

**James Kosta Prifti**, 87, passed away on July 30, 2019. He was born in Worcester, the son of Kosta Dh. Prifti and Margarita (Dini) Prifti.

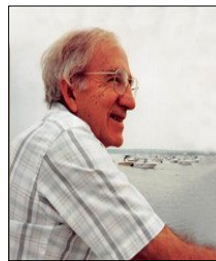
He leaves his wife of 62 years, Dorothy P. (Kiritsy) Prifti; his daughter, Sandra J. Barolli and her husband, Martin of Middlebury, CT; his son, Michael J. Prifti and his wife, Marina of Paxton; his six grandchildren, Amanda Prifti, Lucas Prifti, Alexandra Barolli, Rebecca Barolli, Danielle Prifti and Peter Prifti; and nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his sons, Peter Prifti and David. Prifti and his brother, George Prifti.

**Tefta (Petro) Pojani** passed away on September 9, 2019 at the age of 100. She was the wife of the late George Pojani who passed away in 2008.



She was the daughter of the late Archilles and Thomaidha

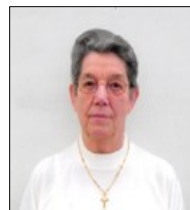
(Tashko) Petro. Tefta leaves two sons, Dennis Pojani and his wife Nancy, and Gregory Pojani and his wife, Tara Devault; a daughter, Nancy and her husband, John O'Coin; five grandchildren, and her good friend and sister-in-law, Florence Petro; as well as many nieces, nephews and extended family members. Besides her parents and husband, Mrs. Pojani was pre-deceased by her brothers Peter Petro and Andrew Petro and sisters, Helen Kiritsy, Olga Annas and Sophia Sundberg.



**Dukagjin "Duke" Kerxhalli**, 93, passed away on November 14, 2019. He leaves his wife, Helen (Joseph) of more than 66 years, daughter Deborah, (Creedon) her husband Paul, sons Jim and Tom, 7 grandchildren, 4 great-

grandchildren, and brothers Steven and George. He was predeceased by brothers Mentor, Kastrioti, and Michael, and sisters Resha (Chekani) and Lily.

He was the son of Thanas and Olga (Laska) Kerxhalli, and served in the U.S. Army where he was off to the Philippines during WWII. Upon his return, he established Duke's Electrical Company, Inc. He will be sorely missed, but never forgotten.



**Louise Veshi**, 89, passed away on December 4, 2019 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

She was the daughter of Peter and Konstance (Stefan) Veshi and is survived by brother John Veshi, several nieces, nephews, great and great-great nephews and nieces. Louise was preceded in death by brother's James, Soter "Cap", and George.

Louise was a devoted member of St. Mary's Albanian Orthodox Church, active in many church organizations. She was awarded the key to St. Mary's in November, 1983 and became the godmother "Ndrikull" to the church.

*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!**

## News from the Albanian-American Community of Tampa Bay (Florida)

Every October, the Albanian-American Community of Tampa Bay successfully participates in the St. Petersburg International Folk Fair Festival, sponsored by the City of St. Petersburg.

The Festival takes place in the beautiful Venoy Park on the shores of downtown St. Petersburg. The Festival was founded in 1975 to celebrate and share Tampa Bay's diverse cultural heritage, where over 50 different communities exhibit their unique culture, costumes, music, foods, etc.

For three days, the visitors of this Festival can experience the beauty of the unique culture, traditional costumes, food, music and dance of different communities representing most continents.



As in previous years, the Albanian-American Community of Tampa Bay actively participated in this year's Festival with a booth full of beautiful displays of Albanian artifacts, food specialties, and lots Albanian Flags.

The Albanian Community Dance Ensemble stole the show, not only with their beautiful costumes representing different regions of Albania, but with the beautiful music and dancing from different regions of Albania.



The Albanian Dance Group from Clearwater



Clearwater National Board of Governor Metat Idrizi and his wife Emine, always helping the cause.

## Run for Albania



Each year the Albanian-American Community of Clearwater, Florida, in honor of the Albanian Independence Day, hosts what has become a popular event for the entire community, ***“Run for Albania.”***





Starting the Run for Albania

On Sunday, November 24, 2019, under mostly sunny skies of Florida, the Albanian community started the run at 10:30 a.m. from Coachman Park, across the Causeway Bridge, ending the run on the world famous Clearwater Beach. In honor of Albanian Independence Day, the two distinguishing colors displayed were red and black, with some blue and gold honoring the Flag of Kosova.

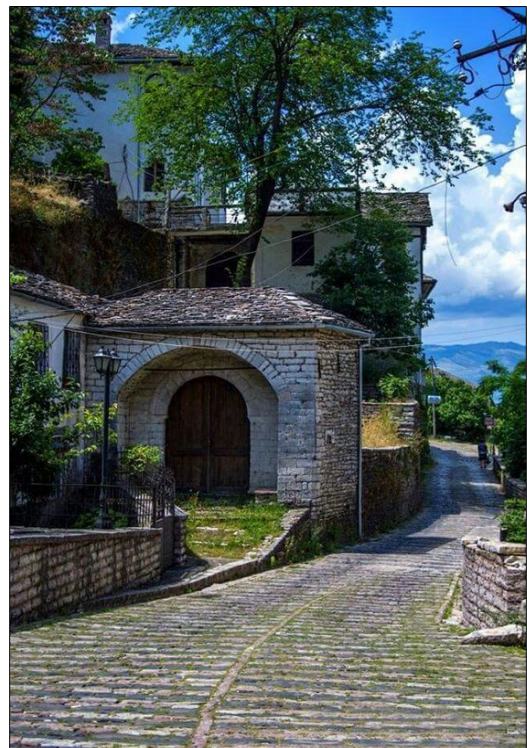


The Idrizi Family  
with Albanian,  
American and  
Kosova Flags.

Happy  
participants,  
"Kuq dhe Zi"



**Klea Gjoni**, newly elected AANO National Queen, invites all of you to our **74<sup>th</sup> Convention** which will be held at the **Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue Hotel** from **July 31 through August 2, 2020**. For more information, don't forget to check our website, [www.aano.org](http://www.aano.org).



## Recipes



### Baked Albanian Spinach Rolls with Feta

**Serves: 16**  
**Prep Time: 30 mins**  
**Cooking Time: 30 mins**

#### INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon oil  
 4 green onions  
 450 g/12.8 oz. frozen spinach  
 2 garlic cloves  
 250 g/7 oz. feta  
 200 g/7 oz. cottage cheese  
 100 g/ 3.5 oz. smetana or crème fraîche  
 2 small eggs  
 salt and pepper  
 3 very large sheet of phyllo dough (more if necessary to obtain 16 rolls) (See note)  
 about 4-5 tablespoons oil

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Thaw the spinach and squeeze it very well to remove the excess moisture.

Preheat the oven: 200 degrees Celsius/400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Chop the onions very thinly and cook them in the heated oil for a couple of minutes. Mix the onions, spinach, grated garlic cloves, crumbled feta cheese, cottage cheese, smetana/creme fraiche and eggs very well. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Place one sheet of phyllo pastry on the working surface. Brush it with oil. Place another sheet on top, brush again and finish with another phyllo pastry sheet. Brush this one as well.

Cut the phyllo sheets in order to get 16 rectangles of about 25x18 cm/10x7 inches. Place one heaped tablespoon of the filling on the lower side of each rectangle. Fold the sides over the filling and roll the pastry starting on the lower side.

Place the rolls on a baking sheet lined with baking paper with the seam facing down. Brush the rolls with oil as well.

Bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Cover the rolls loosely with aluminum foil after half the time if they seem to get too dark.

**Recipe courtesy of**  
**(WHEREISMYSPoon.COM)**

### Albanian Cornbread

By [Sasha Martin](#)



*The cheese and green onion make this cornbread unique. Dense and flavorful, the cornbread makes a great accompaniment to stews.*

**Serves: 6-8**  
**Prep Time: 10 mins**  
**Cooking Time: 35 mins**

#### Ingredients:

1-1/2 cups cornmeal  
 16 ounces cottage cheese  
 4 eggs  
 1 cup chopped scallions, plus 1 Tbsp. for garnish  
 1/2 cup butter (1 stick), melted  
 1/4 tsp paprika  
 1/2 tsp thyme  
 4 ounces feta cheese, chunked  
 1/4 tsp salt

#### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease an 8" square casserole.

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients (cornmeal, cottage cheese, eggs, scallions, melted butter, paprika, thyme, feta, and salt.

Pour into prepared casserole and spread evenly. Bake at 400F until lightly browned and an inserted toothpick comes out clean, about 35 minutes. Garnish with remaining scallions. Serve warm.

NOTE: *This dish is excellent warm, but dries out quickly.*

**Recipe courtesy of**  
**(GlobalTableAdventure.com)**

# Trumbeta Shqiptare



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