

President's Message



Dear Fellow Evrytians,

Spring is here and the world renews itself. It has been one year since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. Let us hope the worst is behind us as we look forward to restoring a normalcy to our lives. Throughout the lockdowns and restrictions, the Velouchi has continued to perform its duties and responsibilities, has adapted new ways to hold meetings and conduct business, and continues to work with our representatives here and in Greece to help our fellow Evrytians by providing academic, medical and charitable assistance wherever possible.

I would like to take this time to remind you of our Velouchi Scholarships. Please encourage all graduating high school seniors and college students to apply by the deadline of May 21, 2021. All applications must be completed and postmarked by this date to be considered. Please view the Velouchi website for more information or call the national office with any questions.

Associated with the scholarship program is our Annual Raffle Ticket sale. The raffle provides the prime financial support for our scholarships. You should have all received a ticket in the mail by now. This year's sale is very important. Total financial expense for scholarship awards and prizes is approximately \$50,000. Due to the difficulties and confusion of last year's events, we only sold about 300 tickets, putting us \$20,000 short of our scholarship obligation. Please consider mailing in your donation to support this worthwhile program for our youth. If you have not received a ticket, would like to buy an additional ticket, or know someone else who is not a member who would like to purchase a ticket, please contact your local chapter president. The grand prize this year is again \$10,000 to be drawn during our General Assembly meeting.

Our last general assembly was held by Zoom conference. Although we

are not sure to what extent we can hold a convention this year, we would still like to hold a physical meeting so that we can get together and see each other face to face. Unfortunately, it is still too early to know if we can do this. If we are able to hold a physical meeting, it will be held in Greenville, SC, during the weekend of June 12-13, 2021. We are waiting to learn more on how we can hold such a meeting and to what extent possible. We will announce more information in May.

As is customary before the general assembly meeting, your chapter officers will be reaching out to you to collect membership dues. Please assist them in their efforts by paying your dues, which provide needed funds to the Evrytian Association to continue its philanthropic mission here in the United States and in Greece. Your dues help support our program of Children with Special Needs, and also provide financial assistance to individuals and families in need.

This is a very special year for all Greeks throughout the world. March 25, 2021 marks 200 years of Greece's independence from the Ottoman Turks. The celebration of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Virgin Mary gave inspiration to the Greek fight for freedom, bringing to a boil the long simmering desire for Greek independence which was supported by countries throughout Europe and the world, our young America included, causing a stir of emotion that could not be contained. 400 years of slavery erupted in a quest for liberty by the poorly equipped Hellenes, many marching forward with only a sword in their hand and a cross around their neck, drawing their strength from the Panagia Theotokos and standing up to the more powerful Ottomans with a zeal that could not be matched. Their undying faith in God and the fire in their hearts to be free inspired many philhellens to join their cause. Although the war for independence ended victoriously years ago, the battle still continues to this day religiously and politically, as is evidenced by the suppression of our holy Patriarchate in Constantinople and the intimidation by the Turks under Erdogan to our islands in the eastern Aegean Sea. We must steadfastly support our beloved homeland as she continues to defend her independence, and never forget the sacrifices of our heroic forefathers who gave so much to gain freedom. Our beautiful blue and white flag, faithfully displaying the pure white cross of our Savior, has proudly flown over Greece for 200 years and must continue to do so, regardless of any adversity it may face. "Η Ελλάδα ποτέ δεν πεθαίνει. Δεν την σκιάζει φοβέρα καμια.

As we approach the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, I wish everyone a Good Easter! May we all rejoice in this season of renewal, recommitting ourselves to our faith and rededicating ourselves to helping our fellow man. Καλό Πάσχα!

Ζήτω το Έθνος! Ζήτω η Πατρίδα! Ζήτω η Ελλάδα!

*With patriotic love and respect,
James N. Chulkas, National President*

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