



*Long Beach Chapter  
Ahepa #342*

*and*

*Daughters of  
Penelope Minos #159*

*Hosts of the*

*76<sup>th</sup> El Camino Real  
District #20 Convention  
Grand Banquet*

*Program*

*June 8, 2007*

*Marriott Hotel  
Long Beach, California*

# *Program*

## American and Greek National Anthems

Welcoming Remarks . . . . . Nickolas Edwards, Toastmaster

Invocation . . . . . Father John Roll  
Assumption Church of Long Beach

# *Dinner*

## *Introductions & Speakers*

Georgia Gastouniotis . . . . . District Governor #20  
Daughters of Penelope

Peter Triantafyllos . . . . . District Governor #20  
Order of AHEPA

Georgia Psychogios . . . . . Grand President  
Daughters of Penelope

Lois Kotzambasis . . . . . Grand Governor Zone IV  
District #20 Grand Liaison Daughters of Penelope

Andreas Kyprianides . . . . . Consul General of Cyprus

Dimitris Caramitsos-Tziras . . . . . Consul General of Greece

## **Periclean Award Presentation to Nikiforos Valaskantjis**

Remarks from . . . . . Peter Triantafyllos, District Governor #20

Presentation Ahepan of the Year  
Peter Triantafyllos, District Governor #20

Presentation Ahepan Life Achievement Award  
Dr. John Triantafyllos, M.D., District Lt. Governor #20

## *Dinner Menu*

Salad

Roast Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus

Red Roasted Potatoes

Vegetables • Rolls

Dessert

Coffee (Regular and Decaf)

and Assorted Teas

## *Ahepa #342 Chapter Officers*

President . . . . .	Louie Kouremetis
Vice-President . . . . .	Nicholas G. Karidakis
Secretary . . . . .	Thomas J. Soupos
Treasurer . . . . .	Tasos T. Papas

## *Daughters of Penelope #159 Minos Chapter Officers*

President. . . . .	Catherine Vackrinis
Vice-President . . . . .	Amelia Ladas
Secretary. . . . .	Catherine Prineas
Treasurer . . . . .	Fonya Gillmore

## *Biography*

**Nikiforos Valaskantjis** was born on May 12, 1941 in a cave on the island of Samos, Greece, where his mother was seeking refuge from a German air raid. She interpreted his early birth as a good omen and named him Nikiforos, meaning the bearer of victory.

Despite his somewhat traumatic beginning, Nikiforos' early life followed the path of a typical young man in post-World War II Greece. He did well in school and graduated from the Merchant Academy. This milestone was followed by his enlistment in the armed forces, where he chose to serve his country in the Air Force. Upon completing his military duty, Nikiforos pooled together his hard-earned money and opened a leather business. Unfortunately, tough times followed and he was forced to sell his business.

At this point, Nikiforos made the momentous decision to make his future in America. Risking all that he had, Nikiforos joined the merchant ships in hopes of one day reaching the United States. For three long years he toiled on the ships before finally reaching San Pedro, California in 1966. Nikiforos managed to leave the ship but unfortunately was caught and shipped back to Greece within a year. However, Nikiforos would not be deterred in the pursuit of his dream. In 1968, after two years of hard work he once again arrived in the United States, this time as a legal resident.

Employing the business sense, work ethic and determination instilled in him as a young man, Nikiforos was able to establish himself in the business world and achieve an impressive record of success in restaurants and real estate development. Along the way, he met and married Georgia Kokkinides and had three sons: George, Perry and Peter. Both parents have passed on to their sons the values that they hold most dear: honesty, diligence, determination and, most of all, a profound sense of gratitude toward God and the country that has given them so much.

A lifelong active supporter of the Greek Orthodox Church, Nikiforos was invested as an Archon (Depoutatos) of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 2002. In 2006, Nikiforos was honored and received recognition for his many services in support of St. John the Baptist Church in Anaheim. He was also honored by Saint Nectarios Church and Shrine in Covina for the same reason in 2004. In 2005, Nikiforos was recognized for his dedication and generous donations by the Pansamian Brotherhood "Pythagoras" of New York. In 2001, the American Hellenic Council honored Nikiforos with The Theodore Saloutos Award.

Nikiforos currently serves as president of the parish council of St. Nectarios Church in Covina, California. He also serves as a board member of St. Nicholas Ranch and Retreat Center.