



Dear Member,

Due to the current circumstances our fifth issue for the fall season will focus on few subjects related to our undergoing activities. This version will only be available in this format and online, sparing papers and printings. Our center remains open, everyday, as usual. Some projects were postponed, some others are maintained.

Because the environment is an integral part of our concern, in the hope of building a better and safer future for the next generations we believe in, we maintain our green concept and ask for your active participation in our photo contest, the **2019 Open Photo Competition**. To be able to participate, we extended the deadline and kept the registrations open until further notice.

Greek Language courses are also maintained. Last month learning has been able to continue, more or less, thanks to the efforts of our devoted teachers and their students, who were able to get their lessons and extra help in various ways, either by following our virtual learning program or with extra homework and even emails. Nevertheless, a make-up plan for the partial loss of classes that occurred during the third week of October is being prepared according to student's availabilities. Our concern is to ensure the teaching and learning of the Greek language at The Greek Community Cultural Center in accordance with the utmost standard. In this turbulent time, we are aware that disruption might continue and not all the students will be able to attend every class. For this reason, teachers will make sure all class materials are captured for the benefit of those not present.

Whatever the future holds, our focus always turns towards our community and we wish all members to remain safe and keep high hopes for our nation. Life is beautiful as long as hope is reborn from ashes.

## NOVEMBER 22<sup>nd</sup>, LEBANON INDEPENDENCE DAY

The National Day of Lebanon celebrated on November 22<sup>nd</sup> marks the end of the French Mandate over Lebanon in 1943, after 23 years of Mandate rule. According to the Article 5 of the constitution of Lebanon: "The Lebanese flag shall be composed of three horizontal stripes, a white stripe between two red ones. The width of the white stripe shall be equal to that of both red stripes. In the center of and occupying one-third of the white stripe is a green cedar tree with its top touching the upper red strip and its base touching the lower red stripe".

It was adopted just prior to independence from France in 1943 and was drawn by MP Henri Pharaon in the Chamber of deputies Saeb Salam's house in Mousaitbeh. Based on the Lebanese geography, the first red represents the Mount Lebanon and the second red represents the Anti-Lebanon mountains and the white represents the Beqaa Valley, which is situated in the middle of the two mountain ranges on the map of Lebanon. The Cedar is a symbol of holiness, eternity and peace. As an emblem of longevity, the cedar of Lebanon has its origin in many biblical references.

**"Death for the Fatherland and Independence is a birth, while life without independence is a death"** words by Said Akl.



## Real Time Facts

### Did you say stress?

According to scientists, stress can affect us in different ways, such as headaches, upset stomach, pain or muscular tension, insomnia, frequent colds and infections... There are three components to the general stress syndrome, the alarm stage, the stage of resistance and the exhaustion stage. The alarm stage is the mobilization of the body's defensive forces when we are facing a stressful situation. It is followed by the second stage called stage of resistance when we fight to adapt and resist the challenging situation. In order not to reach the third stage that is exhaustion, here are some recommendations and practical steps to inspire us in our daily routine and help us manage the side effects of stress.

- ◆ Get enough physical rest: Sleep earlier or take a break/nap. Even 15 minutes in a serene atmosphere with closed eyes can help reduce fatigue. Our brain and body needs a period of recovery to relax.
- ◆ Take some deep breaths and ask yourself what is the wisest thing to do right now.
- ◆ Smiling can help our bodies reduce stress.
- ◆ Eat healthy as much as possible: no skipped meals nor unhealthy snacks.
- ◆ Drink water more often and monitor your caffeine, nicotine, alcohol intake.
- ◆ Engage in physical workout. If it is difficult to go to the gym, you can take the stairs, walk whenever you can, and monitor on your phone your daily activity. Setting a goal is easier to achieve. Exercising helps distress and channel emotions, improves mental alertness and improves the mood.
- ◆ Try to do things you like, such as listening to music, read funny stories...
- ◆ Take care of yourself and treat yourself nicely.
- ◆ Talk about what is bothering you with people you trust. You need support for yourself not just being the support for others.
- ◆ Try to keep a routine for your activities even in times of change.
- ◆ Use social media in a healthy way. Take breaks from checking your phone often and put it on silent mode when you sleep or rest.
- ◆ Playing games such as chess, strategy games, Scrabble... can help reducing stress and spend more time with family and friends.
- ◆ Remember to stand tall. Standing in an upright pose actually helps you perform better under stress according to a study published in the journal "Health Psychology".

### Air purifying plants to detoxify your home

Discover the detoxifying benefits of these indoor air purifying plants:

- ◆ **Peace Lily** is an elegant plant with low maintenance care routine. It removes Formaldehyde (known as human carcinogen) Trichloroethylene (Glue) Benzene (highly carcinogen, found in detergents, pesticides, plastics and synthetic fibers) and Ammonia (found in window cleaners, floor waxes...) Peace Lily needs low to medium light and water once per week.
- ◆ **Aloe Vera** is a healing plant that has multiple uses. Aloe Vera fights Formaldehyde and Benzene from the air. Besides, its soothing gel can come in handy when you get burned due to its high level of vitamin E.
- ◆ **English Ivy** removes airborne mold, Formaldehyde, Trichloroethylene and Benzene.
- ◆ **Spider Plant** is known to remove Formaldehyde, Xylene and Toluene. Make sure it doesn't get too much direct sunlight.
- ◆ **Gerbera Daisy** and **Mother in Law's Tong** have the possibility to remove Benzene, Formaldehyde, Trichloroethylene, Xylene and Toluene.



## Greek News

### Greece's Preveza Opera House made of... empty cans!

**Περιφερειακή ενότητα Πρέβεζας**, is one of the regional units of Greece, part of the Epirus region, facing the Ionian sea.

It took three years to collect over 30,000 recyclable cans to create one of the most impressive Opera houses, measuring thirty meters long and eight meters high. The "Opera of Water and Dreams" is a fully-fledge opera venue with a total surface of 200 m<sup>2</sup>. The opera stage is located on Pefkakia Beach and hosts a series of events which are all free of charge. The Opera was created and built by the artist Leandros Spartiotis, an architect who is also a photographer, woodworker, and owner of the largest private art galleries. Mr. Spartiotis who owns also this opera, explained that the priority was to send out a message that it is possible to create art at low cost and promote reusing and recycling through creative exploration.



### Stephanos Tsitsipas, becomes the youngest ATP finals champion in 18 years!

On Sunday November 17, the Greek player Stephanos Tsitsipas rallied to beat Thiem, 6-7 (6), 6-2, 7-6 (4) collecting the biggest title of his career. The 21-year-old Greek bounced back from dropping a tight first set in the final by racing out to a 4-0 lead in the second, and then held off his Austrian



### Greece 2<sup>nd</sup> in World for Blue Flag-Awarded Beaches in 2019

opponent's comeback in the third. P.M Mr. Mitsotakis, who attended the match, congratulated Tsitsipas.



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## Memories, memories...

A wink from the past, bringing back memories alive!

Some of us might have lived those moments, some others may be too young. This section dedicated to the past helps the new generation discover how their parents or grand parents used to live.

In this issue, we selected from our archive a picture from 1958, at the Greek Embassy, for the National Day, and another one taken in 1983, on the same occasion.

*We would highly appreciate your contribution helping us keep those memories alive by sending us documents, photos or articles from your personal archive.*



## Hellenic Ship F453 SPETSAI



## Hellenic Ship

### F453 SPETSAI

The Greek Embassy together with the Greek Community of Beirut and Beirut Marathon, had planned on the occasion of the Beirut Marathon race, which was to be held on 10 November, to bring the Olympic flame lit from Marathon town (Μαραθώνας) and the specially made olive wreaths destined to the winners in Lebanon, aboard the Hellenic Ship the frigate SPETSAI. While the Beirut Marathon race was cancelled due to the circumstances facing our country, the SPETSAI Frigate, under the command of Commander **Panagiotis Katopodis HN**, docked at the port of Beirut and stayed there for four days.



HE Mr. Francesco Verros, Greek Ambassador to Lebanon with Commander Panagiotis Katopodis HN, Commanding Officer HS SPETSAI



Commander Panagiotis Katopodis HN,  
Commanding Officer HS SPETSAI

Commander **Panagiotis Katopodis HN**, has been appointed as Commanding Officer of HS SPETSAI, since August 2019. He was born in Athens in 1975. He graduated from the Hellenic Naval Academy in 1997 as an Ensign (graduation rank 1<sup>st</sup>) and the Naval Post Graduate School (Monterey, CA USA), where he acquired two Master of Science Degrees: "M.Sc. in Electrical & Computer Engineering" and "M.Sc. in Applied Physics" (Weapon Systems Engineering). He has been awarded with all medals and commendations provided by his rank and the posts he has served, on board: MEKO Class Frigates, Fast Attack Crafts (Super Vita & Combattante-III Class), in various divisions, including tours as Department Head in Operations, Weapons and Electronic Systems Engineering, as well as Executive Officer (XO). He was appointed, as Commanding Officer (CO) of Super Vita Class Fast Attack Craft HS ROUSSEN from 2013 to 2015.

His various ashore assignments include:

- Hellenic Naval Academy, as instructor in the Directorate of Naval Education.
- Hellenic Navy General Staff, as staff officer in the Plans & Policy Directorate (NATO-EU Relations, International Relations).
- Hellenic National Defense General Staff, as staff officer in the Executive Office of the Chief of Defense.

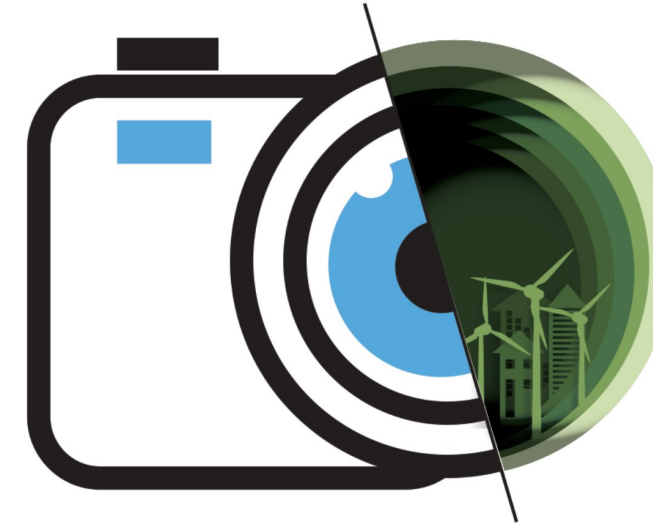
He speaks English fluently (Cambridge University Certificate of Proficiency). He is married and a father of two children.



## Get your cameras ready.

OPEN PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST 2<sup>nd</sup> EDITION

# 2019



The competition is organized by the **Greek Community of Beirut** as part of their green sustainability campaign. To convey their message, the theme of this year's contest is "Green". Registrations start on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September until further notice. For additional info kindly call 01 493467/8 or send an email to [info@greekcommunity.org.lb](mailto:info@greekcommunity.org.lb)

Questions or comments? Kindly use the following:

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Website : [greekcommunityofbeirut.com](http://greekcommunityofbeirut.com)

Facebook : **Greek Community of Beirut (Official Group)**

Instagram account: **greekcomm.**