

inside

this issue...

Neighborhoods of the World	1-2
More Guest Instructors	3
A Visit to Concordia University	4
Spotlight	4-5
Youth Group End of the Year Event	5
Youth Group Reflections	6
Picture Gallery	7
Future Performances	8



HELLENIC FOLKLORE SOCIETY

606 Greendale Rd.
Glenview, IL 60025
847.657.0958
e-mail: orpheus@ohfs.org
www.ohfs.org

Tax-exempt
Not-for-profit
Organization

Yannis Economou
847.657.0958
Director/President

Kostas Economou
847.729.3406
Instructor

Marianna Gudmundsson
847.967.5103
Artistic Director/Vice President

Bessie Kouchoukos-Grosso
773.286.5132
Youth Group Coordinator

The Newsletter for friends and members of OHFS

Vol. 18, Issue No. 2, Summer 2012

Orpheus Takes Chicago on a “Greek Journey in the Windy City”

For the second year in a row, the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society participated in the “Neighborhoods of the World” event at Chicago’s Navy Pier. The impressive performance series, which takes place in the magnificent Crystal Gardens, highlights and celebrates the diverse ethnic neighborhoods of Chicago over the course of several weeks. Sunday, March 4, was devoted to celebrating Greece and Orpheus was asked to represent Chicago’s Greek American community.

It was standing room only in the Crystal Gardens and the feedback from audience participants and Orpheus members was overwhelmingly positive. Everyone who was there was able to experience an afternoon of great music, dancing, food and *parea* in one of the city’s most magnificent venues.

The six-story glass atrium, with a 50-foot arched ceiling and a beautiful indoor, one-
Continued on page 2



The Orpheus Music Ensemble provided the live music for the entire performance at Navy Pier. Above, the brass section of the ensemble performs selections from the Macedonian region.

Continued from page 1

acre botanical garden houses more than 80 live palm trees, gorgeous flowers and dancing “leapfrog” fountains.

The Consulate General of Greece in Chicago collaborated with the National Hellenic Museum to present the five hour event called, “A Greek Journey in the Windy City”. The event, which was free and open to the public, included a variety of performers and vendors with many different elements for the audience to explore and enjoy.

The program started with an “intro to Greek dance”. Orpheus members demonstrated some popular Greek dances, such as Kalamatianos and Hasaposervikos, and broke them down so that audience members could participate and join in the fun. Later, Orpheus members, dressed in colorful traditional Greek costumes, presented a variety of dances from the islands and mainland Greece. The newly formed Orpheus “Nea Genia” dance group performed a suite of dances from Thrace, joined by guest musician Petar Aleksiev on the

gaida. The Orpheus Music Ensemble accompanied the dancers with live music, and also played several other sets throughout the afternoon. Musical selections included songs from Macedonia, Epiros, Thrace and the island of Chios. The program ended with a bouzouki set, featuring such dances as Karsilamas, Zeibekikos and Hasapikos.

The event offered another opportunity for Orpheus to collaborate with the Chicago Hellenic Choir. Under the direction of Eftihia Papageorgiou, Orpheus members, along with members from the Chicago Hellenic Choir, presented a medley of popular Greek songs such as, “Athina”, “Ta Kavourakia”, and “Ta Paidia tou Peiraia”. Toulia Georgakopoulos, Director of External Affairs, at the National Hellenic Museum was the master of ceremonies once again. Ms. Georgakopoulos kept the fun going, while introducing little known facts and trivia about the strong Greek influence that helped make Chicago the incredible city that it is. During the short breaks between performances, everyone had a chance to sample delicious Greek cuisine, wine and olive oil from a variety of Chicago restaurants and businesses. Kids got to enjoy some arts and crafts projects and were supplied with scissors, cardboard and plenty of crayons and glue to create their own shields, straight out of Greek mythology.

It is always a pleasure performing for a primarily Greek crowd, since the unspoken connection to the audience is undeniable. However, performing for a predominantly non-Greek crowd is somewhat different and rewarding in another way. The opportunity to reach a different audience and make them aware of and to educate them about our background and heritage is a wonderful and special thing, and the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society is proud to have the opportunity to do so.

To see pictures and video from this event, please see our website, www.ohfs.org or visit us on Facebook. 📷



Members of the Orpheus Nea Genia group performed a suite of dances from Anatoliki Romilia at Navy Pier.



Orpheus members, along with members from the Chicago Hellenic Choir, presented a medley of popular Greek songs as several audience members sang along.

Orpheus Welcomes Guest Instructors

2012 seems to be the “Year of the Guest Instructor” at Orpheus. In January, we had the pleasure of welcoming guest instructors, Kostas Mitsis from Epirus and Agis Tsakalakos from Messinia. This past May, Orpheus welcomed two more well-known instructors in the world of Greek folk dance: Joe Graziosi from Boston, Massachusetts and Dr. Christos Papakostas from Epirus, Greece.

During their trip to the Chicagoland area, Joe and Christos paid a visit to Orpheus’ Thursday night practice location in Northbrook. Joe is a long-time friend of Orpheus and has visited Chicago several times and has presented workshops for the dance group over the years. Joe has an extensive background in Greek folk dance and has graciously shared much of his knowledge and expertise with Orpheus.

Christos is originally from Larisa, Thessaly and has a diverse background which includes folklorist, choreographer and dance instructor. During Thursday night’s practice, Christos demonstrated a variety of dances from the regions of Drama and Thessaly to the youth group, Nea Genia group and adult group. Some of the dances Christos demonstrated included: “Syrtos”, “Hasapia”, “Ramna”, “Na Deis Kale Yiayia” and “Teska”. This was Christos’ first workshop with Orpheus and we look forward to more collaborations in the future.



Group shot at the end of a very energetic dance workshop with guest instructor Christos Papakostas.

Additionally, Christos and Joe presented a workshop for a folk dance group in Evanston, Illinois. Orpheus members were present for this workshop as well, and got a double dose of dance as several more folk dances were demonstrated that night. All of the workshop sessions were informative, interesting and entertaining as those who participated can certainly attest to. The material presented will be a valuable addition to Orpheus’ ever-expanding repertoire!

To see pictures from the workshops, please visit our website, www.ohfs.org or find us on Facebook. ☐



Christos Papakostas demonstrating Greek folk dances to members of the Orpheus Nea Genia and adult groups.



Orpheus Director, Yannis Economou with Christos Papakostas and Joe Graziosi.

Orpheus Visits Concordia University

They say you learn something new every day and, while this holds true for many of us, this statement most certainly applies to those still in school. Recently, Orpheus members got the opportunity to pass on some knowledge to a group of college students at Concordia University in River Forest, IL.

On April 23, the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society gave a presentation on Greek folk music, costumes and dances in Professor Christian Hauser's "World Music and Cultures" class. Orpheus has given similar presentations at Concordia University throughout the years and always looks forward to this appearance as it is quite different from their usual performances.

The lucky students got a crash course in Greek culture and traditions as they relate to folk dancing. Orpheus director, Yannis Economou, gave a presentation on the different types of Greek folk dance, including a brief historical outline and highlighted key elements and characteristics of dancing. Several Orpheus members, assisted in the presentation by demonstrating a variety of dances representing different regions in



Orpheus members pictured with Professor Christian Hauser (second from left) and Concordia University students at the conclusion of the presentation.

Greece. Music group members, Eve Monzigo, George Lawler and Adam Papadolias were also present and talked a little about some of the instruments they played, including the toumbeleki, laouto and santouri.

As the presentation was winding down, a few Orpheus members addressed the class and gave a short speech about what "being Greek" means to them. Later, there was a Q&A section, where those students who were brave enough to raise their hand and ask a question were rewarded with an official Orpheus baseball cap! The night ended with a

group Hasaposerviko, where many of the students seemed to be naturals at Greek dancing.

Professor Hauser was pleased with the presentation and how well it was received by the students (who, by the way, kept the dancing going in the hallways after the class was over) and promised to renew our visit during next year's class. See you next year, Concordia! OPA!

To see photos from this event, please visit our website, www.ohfs.org or find us on Facebook. 📷

spotlight on Orpheus dancer...

Louisa
Dimopoulos



Hometown: Palatine, IL

Parents/Family From: My mom is a Swiss farm girl from Wisconsin and my dad is from Serres, Greece.

Time Dancing with Orpheus Group: 9 years.

Thoughts on Dancing: As soon as the music begins, I imagine myself there, in the horio. I dance with friends and family, surrounded by the wind, the sea, the sunset, and the ekklisaki nearby.

Favorite Dance: My favorite dance, not only because of the steps, but because of the music, is Syrtos Karystias as well as all dances from Crete, Anatoliki Romilia,

Orpheus Youth Group Celebrates the Close of the 2011 – 2012 Year

On Sunday, May 20, friends and family of the OHFS' Youth Group gathered at St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Des Plaines to celebrate yet another successful End of the Year event. Highlights included island and mainland dances and songs; live music courtesy of the Orpheus Music Ensemble; presentation of graduation certificates, certificates of achievement to the music group members; the Dina Sianis merit awards, and speeches by graduating members of the Youth Group. After the performances, everyone lingered in the church hall, mixing and mingling and enjoying a buffet of treats and refreshments.

The performers, gave animated, energetic performances, accompanied by the Orpheus Music Group. The End of the Year event is a culmination and demonstration of the kids' hard work and dedication, and is perhaps, the most anticipated performance by children and parents alike.

Maria Anton and Isabella Mourgelas were this year's recipients of the Dina Sianis Merit Award. The award recognizes the recipients' achievements and dedication in perpetuating the folk song and dance traditions of their ancestors. Additionally, graduation certificates were presented to several members of the Youth Group who are ready to move forward and transition into the Nea Genia group.

Throughout the event, some of the graduating Youth Members had the opportunity to give short speeches, recounting their experience with

the dance troupe. A common theme among the sentiments expressed was the kids' gratefulness and fulfillment in being able to learn more about their heritage and background and furthermore, being able to perpetuate our rich Greek culture and traditions through their singing and dancing.

The goal of the Orpheus youth group program is to expose and promote the Greek folk song and dance tradition to the younger generations. For more information about the Orpheus Youth Group, Music Group, or other inquiries, please visit our website at www.ohfs.org. ☐



Youth members performing the dance, "Pyrgousikos" at the Youth Group End of the Year event.

Pontos, and of course Baedouska.

Most Vivid OHFS Memory: Dancing at all the Greek festivals, and especially in Greektown towards the end of the summer.

Favorite Greek Dish: All of them, but especially Greek salad and patates, taramosalata, and melomakarona for dessert!

Favorite Place in Greece: Ahh it's hard to say. I love Greece as one place—the sugar doughnuts we ate on the beach, the songs we sang outside at night while a friend of ours played guitar, the churches, the little markets, and villages.

Hobbies/Sports/Other Interests: A little bit of everything—all sports, singing, drawing flowers,

origami, playing piano, making cheesecake...

Nobody knows I: Collect key chains.

Best childhood memory: Flying through the cornfields on my mom's family farm in the John Deere gator. We were playing hide-and-go-seek, trying to spot the rest of our cousins on the other gator before taking off again. What fun!!

The perfect weekend would be: Probably doing everything I love—Greek dancing, chanting, playing sports, spending time with those I love...and riding horses bareback too!

Someone I'd like to meet: All my ancestors...my yiayias, papous, grandmothers and grandfathers. ☐

Orpheus Youth Members Look Back on Their Time with the Group

Each year, at the Youth Group End of the Year event, the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society recognizes members from its Advanced Youth Group who graduate and go on to become members of the Nea Genia group and eventually, the Adult Group. During the event, some of the graduating members address the audience with speeches reflecting on their time with the dance group. Below are excerpts from speeches made by a few of the Orpheus 2012 Youth Group graduates.

~~~~~  
Maria Anton

It's unbelievable how quickly 5 years have gone by since the time when I took my first steps with Orpheus. When I first started with Orpheus, the only dances I knew were, "Kalamatianos", "Tsamikos" and "Hasaposervikos". Thanks to Orpheus, I have learned several more traditional Greek dances from various regions of Greece. Besides knowledge, I've also acquired many memories from my time with Orpheus and I would like to tell you about some of the more memorable ones.

The Orpheus 20th Anniversary performance is particularly significant to me. It was an unbelievable experience. Another noteworthy memory for me is my participation in the AGDC competition in 2010. That weekend, I definitely felt as though I were a part of the large Orpheus family. Finally, a singularly outstanding memory for me was the trip that my family and I took, along with members of Orpheus, to the beautiful island of Chios.

~~~~~  
Christina Fitsalos

When I was asked to write this speech, I knew I couldn't pass up the opportunity but still felt skeptical. If a person is asked to call on a memorable

experience, more comes to mind than just the words we use to describe it, because let's face it, there are only so many words in comparison to the detailed emotions people feel. There are feelings that don't even have names put to them yet. That is what Orpheus is to me.

We saw Orpheus' 20th anniversary performance which of course gave my dad the brilliant idea of "Hey! Why don't you join Orpheus?" and follow his footsteps from when he used to be in the troupe. The next Fall, I found myself in Kosta's beginner's class where I would make friends and memories that would last a lifetime and here I am now 3 years later thanking my dad for that push in this direction. Orpheus helped bridge a connection to my culture.

~~~~~  
Anthony Kossowski

It is hard to believe, that I have been dancing with the Orpheus Youth Group for five years now. As I stand here today and reflect on the past five years, there are so many memories that come to mind. Today, I would like to share with you, what being part of Orpheus really means to me.

I am so grateful to all my instructors who taught me so many different

kinds of Greek dances from so many different regions of Greece. Not only did they teach me how to dance, but through song and dance I learned so much about my Greek heritage, traditions, and culture. I am so proud to be Greek and to be a part of the Orpheus family. I hope the friends I have made here at Orpheus will always remain my friends! I am looking forward to joining the "Nea Genia" next year.

~~~~~  
Isabella Mourgelas

My experience in Orpheus has been great! Even though I started a little late, I was extremely excited to begin. I remember my first day; I wore shorts, not a skirt and felt extremely out of place. By the second lesson however, I had made friends and learned the dress code. At the time, the best thing about Greek dance was being able to miss an hour of Greek school to get to the north side on time. Later, it became about the great dances, songs, and friends.

For our first performance at the Museum of Science and Industry, we sang "Saranta Meres". My mom loved the song so much, she made me sing it all the way home. One of my favorite experiences to date in my life was the trip to Greece with the troupe. I made new friends, and became close to people. My friends at school always get tired of hearing me talk about Greece, at Orpheus I don't have to worry about it. ☐



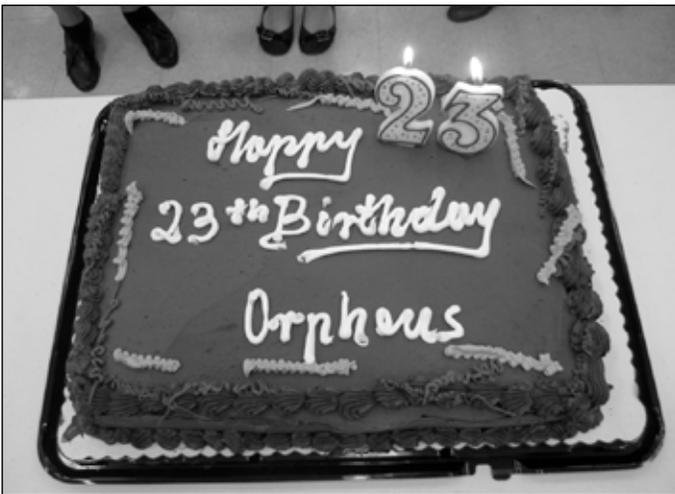
Orpheus youth group graduates proudly pose with their certificates. The graduates are ready to advance through the group and build on their skills as members of the Orpheus Nea Genia group.



The Orpheus "Nea Genia" group performed at the Skokie Festival of Cultures. Orpheus has been part of this festival for over 18 years.



Orpheus members, pictured with Father and Presvytera Kaloudis, at the Chios Society Dinner Dance at the Chateau Ritz. Orpheus members spent some time with Father and Presvytera during the Orpheus trip to Athens & Chios this past summer.



Orpheus celebrated it's 23rd birthday this May. Wow, how time flies!



Orpheus Youth Group members performing for the residents at the Greek Nursing and Rehabilitation Centre.



After the performance, Orpheus members had the chance to meet some of the residents of the Centre and present them with flowers.



Hellenic pride was everywhere at this year's Greek American parade, especially on the Orpheus float as the kids enthusiastically waved their Greek flags.

performance schedule

Performance schedule and times are subject to change. For the latest information visit <http://www.ohfs.org>

Orpheus Soccer Outing

Chicago Fire - Los Angeles Galaxy
Toyota Park
7000 S. Harlem Avenue
Bridgeview, IL
Sunday, July 8
2:00 p.m.

Greek Heritage Night

White Sox Baseball Game
U.S. Cellular Field
333 W. 35th Street
Chicago, IL
Tuesday, July 24
4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Taste of Greece 2012

Halsted Street (Madison to Van Buren)
Chicago, IL
Saturday-Sunday, August 25-26
5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Performance: Sun., August 26, 8:00 p.m.
Come visit our booth!

Orpheus Music Group

Kyklos Hellenic Society Dance
Detroit, MI
Saturday, October 6
8:00 p.m.

America's Greek Dance Competition (AGDC)

Hyatt Regency Woodfield
Schaumburg, IL
Friday-Sunday, October 26-28

McDonald's Chicago Thanksgiving Parade

State Street (Congress to Randolph)
Chicago, IL
Thursday, November 22
7:30 a.m.
Broadcast Live, WGN TV 8:00-11:00 a.m.

Christmas Around the World

Museum of Science and Industry
5700 South Lake Shore Drive
Chicago
Sunday, December 16
4:30 p.m.

practice schedule

Orpheus Adult Group

Thursdays:

St. John Lutheran Church
3020 Milwaukee Ave.
Northbrook, IL

Beginner/Intermediate:

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Intermediate/Advanced:

7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Orpheus Nea Genia Group

Thursdays:

6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
St. John Lutheran Church
3020 Milwaukee Ave.
Northbrook, IL

Orpheus Youth Group: (Sept - May)

Thursdays:

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
St. John Lutheran Church
3020 Milwaukee Ave.
Northbrook, IL

Saturdays:

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
New Church
Multipurpose Room
74 Park Dr., Glenview, IL

Submissions for the Fall issue of Lyra will be accepted until September 15, 2012. We are always interested in educational essays/articles dealing with the subjects of Greek folk dance, folk music, and folk traditions. We continue to accept personal announcements and all other submissions pertinent to the dance troupe and its membership. If an individual wishes to contribute material on a continuous basis, please inform the Editor.

606 Greendale Rd.
Glenview, IL 60025

