

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM REPORT

It is with much satisfaction that the Educational Assistance Program volunteers, namely, Joanne Bisbikos, Norma Paschalis and Marina Vasil, along with assistance from Roula Athanasopoulos and Vicky Nikolakakos, co-chairmen of the Welfare Committee, announce that 100% of the monies allotted to our committee from proceeds of the 2016 Christmas luncheon have been disbursed to help children in our community. Since March 2018, we have started to use the funds from the 2017 Christmas luncheon which of course will continue to be used once the new school year begins.

These funds have been used this year to assist with the following activities and expenses:

- **Nutritious school lunches**
- **School daycare supervision**
- **Consumable school supplies**
- **School uniforms**
- **Saturday morning Greek classes**
- **Educational related medical expenses not covered by medicare**

Most of the requests received this year came to us during the

months of August and September which of course is the beginning of the school year. However, requests are received during the course of the year.

With the help of other departments of the Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society, the Shield of Athena Family Services, the English Montreal School Board, La Commission Scolaire de Montréal, La Commission Scolaire de Laval, Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board, the Lester B. Pearson School Board, École Socrates – Démosthène and the Socrates Educational Foundation, we were made aware of children whose education could be enhanced through our financial aid. Also, as parents find out about our program, they contact us directly. As a committee we assessed the needs and acted appropriately in the name of the Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society.

We are encouraged by messages of thanks from the parents of the children we help, as well as the knowledge that these children will have a better chance of success.

Joanne Bisbikos, EAP Chair

PUBLIC RELATIONS

HLBS has been serving the Hellenic Community since 1922!

PR is all about raising awareness about who we are and what we do for the Greek community at large. Building relationships and communicating with people and organizations is key. Publicity is a great way to inform our membership, as well as everyone in our community about all our activities and our upcoming events to promote our cause.

As you know, you can log on to our website at: www.hlbs.ca to connect with our organization online to read about our History, News & Events, the BOD, Photo Gallery, HLBS Programs, Major Sponsors, etc. and how to contact us. Just log on to check it out! There is also an HLBS page on Facebook.

We work closely with the Hellenic Community and the Greek media to promote our events. We continue to have a very good relationship with Michael Tellides at CFMB radio, Mr. Christos Manikis, publisher of the BHMA, Mr. George Guzman, publisher of Ta Nea, as well as with Jenn Campbell, Social Columnist of The Gazette. Veronica Redgrave acknowledges our Ilios event in the Westmount Independent newspaper. We also connect with the Greek television media. We thank them all for their continuous support.

Fundraising and donations are our main sources of revenue. We must all help the HLBS achieve its goals by supporting and participating in its efforts to benefit the community.

We look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming events,

Matina Bisbikos-Priftakis,
PR Chair

THE HELLENIC LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

Welcomes any donations in lieu of flowers or for any special occasion.

Please direct your donations to:

The Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society,
C.P. 94, Mount Royal, Quebec, H3P 3B8



InTouch

August 2018



Serving the Hellenic Community since 1922

SOCIÉTÉ D'ENTRAIDE DES FEMMES GRECQUES
HELLENIC LADIES BENEVOLENT SOCIETY
ΦΙΛΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΚΟΣ ΟΡΓΑΝΙΣΜΟΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΔΩΝ ΚΥΡΙΩΝ

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& Joanne Bisbikos

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What an exciting and successful 96th year of HLBS. The Board of Directors worked extremely hard to ensure that we continue assisting the less fortunate of our Community.

Our membership drive in the form of a Luncheon took place at Palace Reception Hall on Sunday September 17, 2017. Sylvia and I were the co chairs for this event. Sylvia made sure that our 90 Members present had a wonderful and fun time. A huge thank you to Sylvia for such a pleasant day with gifts and prizes for the HLBS members!

For the first time our main fundraiser, the Marathon AGAPI took place earlier than usual, on October 14, 2017, from CFMB 1280 AM Multilingual. Bernice Tzicas and myself were the co chairs and Matina Bisbikos Priftakis was the treasurer. Our Honourary Committee was comprised of the following supporters of HLBS: Mary Deros, City Councillor for Parc Extension, Rena Papathanakou, and Demetris Yantsulis. A tremendous thank you to our Marathon Sponsors : Canadawide, Centreville Volkswagen, Tapis National, PA Supermarche, Salamina, Scotia Wealth Management, RTC-EMSB & 2 Anonymous. A very sincere thank you to our strong committee of volunteers and Michael Tellides, Soula Tellides & George Stevens. A big thank you to all of our supporters, you helped some members of our Community live a better life!

The Annual Family Christmas Luncheon was co chaired by Maggie Pagonis and Dina Kefallinos and took place on Sunday December 3rd, 2017 at 40 Westt Steakhouse and Bar. This celebration funds our Educational Assistance Program. It was a

profitable event and all who attended had a very holiday time. The success of this event ensured that many underprivileged children and children from low income families will succeed in their educational goals.

What an ILIOS GALA! It was a fabulous evening with excellent entertainment! The co chairs Maggie Pagonis and Cheria Kyres, along with their creative, hard working committee, the magic voice of Nitza Melas, professional circus acts and the experience and guidance of Belle Grivakis produced an event that surpasses all our expectations. This year the proceeds will fund two of our programs that help underprivileged children and children from low income families. Many children will attend day and sleep away camp this summer and many more children will see their educational dreams, become reality.

A very sincere thank you to the Members of the Board of Directors for their commitment to the HLBS. Without your hard work and perseverance we would not be able to succeed in our mission.

We continue to work closely with our partners in our Community: The Shield of Athena, The Social Services of the Hellenic Community of Greater Montreal, Filia, The Philoptohos from all the churches, Mary Deros, City Councillor for Parc Ex. and other organizations in the Montreal area.

The Children and the HLBS thank you all for your support and generosity!
Have a safe, peaceful summer!

Respectfully,

Viola Vathilakis, President

HLBS UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual General

Assembly:

September 20, 2018

Membership Luncheon:

September 30, 2018

Marathon Agapi:

October 20, 2018

Christmas Luncheon :

December 2, 2018

WELFARE REPORT

This year we received more than 1,200 calls on the Help Line.

Over 240 people, individuals, seniors and parents with children were helped throughout the year with food, utilities, medical expenses, rent and clothing. Families with children were referred to the HLBS Educational Assistance Program committee and the Summer Camps committee.

Thanks to the response received to 'Lift Someone's Spirit', we delivered food, household items and furniture to several families.

"ENCOURAGED" thank you messages were received from our recipients: Helping people, Changing lives: "PARIGIORIA KAI ELPIDA" TO SOME ONE IN NEED.

At our Christmas Open House, Santa Claus put a huge smile on the children's faces when he gave them their Christmas presents.

At our Easter Open House, we surprised all the children attending with a decorated Easter candle (lambada) and chocolates and they rewarded us with their brightest smiles!

During our two Holiday "Open Houses" the

CRISIS INTERVENTION - HELPING PEOPLE IN NEED

HLBS also provided parents with children, individuals & seniors with a festive meal to celebrate the holidays. In July we invited our recipients to visit the HLBS office to assess their needs and they were treated to a Pizza lunch. At the said events, we also distributed food vouchers, clothing vouchers, toys, household items and care packages containing cosmetics and hygiene products.

We were also very fortunate to find employment for 8 individuals.

We had many requests: here are a few examples of assistance provided to:

- 1) 5 new immigrant families from Greece;
- 2) 4 families who required financial help with burials;
- 3) a single father who became unemployed while caring for his elderly mother and young child;
- 4) a new immigrant family caring for a child with special needs;
- 5) a single father diagnosed with cancer with children under 11 years old who recently passed away; HLBS continues to help his children.

- 6) a single mother diagnosed with cancer with 2 children under 10 years of age;
- 7) a senior taking care of her grandchild after her single daughter was left homeless.

The HLBS works very closely with the Shield of Athena, the HCGM Social Services, Filia, the *Centre Génération Emploi*, and the many Church Philoptochos in the greater Montreal area.

On behalf of the Welfare Committee, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the Board members, members at large and donors for showing such kindness and compassion. A sincere gratitude to our generous supporters who donated to the 'Marathon Agapi' the main fundraiser for the HLBS Welfare Program.

Your concern, love, support and generosity enabled us to carry out our goals for the HLBS 'crisis intervention' program - giving a smile to people & children in need.

A BIG THANK YOU!

**Vicky Nikolakakos
& Roula Athanasopoulos,**
Welfare Co-Chairs

SUMMER CAMPS REPORT

"CHILDREN HAVE TO BE EDUCATED,
BUT THEY HAVE ALSO TO BE LEFT TO EDUCATE THEMSELVES" - ERNEST DIMNET

The HLBS Summer Camp Program's aim is to assist children in the Greek community to attend summer camp whose families lack the means to do so. The experience of attending a camp helps open many new opportunities for these young children as well as helps develop their independence, decision-making, social and emotional skills, character building and value, in an atmosphere of creativity and enrichment.

Camp is a learning experience to take away for a lifetime. It helps build confidence and academic strength in kids. Our aim is to try and keep children off the streets and in a safe environment while also giving their parents a much needed respite from their constant and, most of the times, overwhelming care demands.

The HLBS Summer Camp Program supports many activities in many camps:

1. Camp Edphy in the Laurentians offers youngsters a two or three-week sleep-away experience giving them the opportunity to enjoy summer sports.
2. Children participate in community sports or arts programs at the day camps of the Hellenic Community of Montreal, PEYO, Ecole de Dance, & many others.
3. Camp Massawippi, CARE, Summit, and MAB-Mackay nourish

physically challenged young people to participate in camp activities with the care suited to their special needs.

With your partnership and generous support, we are pleased to report that during the 2017 summer, HLBS spent \$40,000 subsidizing seventy-three children to various camps of their choice: forty-nine children went to day camps; three special needs children of which one suffers from cerebral palsy, one blind child, one paraplegic & mentally challenged child; eighteen went to sleep-away camp. Three children participated in Air Canada's "Dreams Take Flight" program which takes children for a magical one day visit to Walt Disney World in Florida.

I would like to thank Mary Vosniades, Camp Treasurer and Rena Christopoulos who was on the phone constantly with the parents. A special thanks to the HLBS Secretary, Victoria Pavlou who has kept tight control of everything.

On behalf of the children & their families, I take this opportunity to say Thank You to the organizing committee of the Ilios Gala.

We must take pride knowing that we are making an incredible difference in children's lives and bringing lasting change to those who need it most.

Bernice Tzicas, HLBS Camp Program Coordinator

MISSION: HELPING THOSE IN NEED

The Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society (HLBS) is an independent, chartered, non-profit organization, founded in Montreal, Quebec in 1922, with the mandate to help the disadvantaged within our community. Since 1922, the HLBS has assisted thousands of families and individuals in need of financial support through the disbursement of funds generated through its various fundraising activities

XMAS LUNCHEON EDUCATIONAL FUNDRAISER

The Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society's Family Christmas Luncheon was held on Sunday, December 3, 2017 at the fabulous 40 Westt Steakhouse in Pointe Claire

It was a sellout event where 243 adults and 26 children enjoyed a warm and festive celebration. We were so pleased to reach record attendance, knowing so many families came to enjoy a wonderful kick-off to this important family season.

Our very generous host, Stephanos Hinoporos and his staff welcomed all with a luscious vodka fruit punch which they enjoyed while contemplating which of the beautiful items on the Silent Auction tables they might offer as gifts to friends and family.

During our always delectable dinner, our enthusiastic volunteers sold raffle tickets for beautiful Christmas Baskets. We also raffled-off a gorgeous fur-lined Alpaca Wool cape, most graciously donated by Angela Argiriou of Elysée Furs. This year, we were graced with beautiful young models who seemed to float through the restaurant wearing stunning fur jackets, vests and accessories offered at preferential rates. Fur sales both during and following the event brought additional contributions to the HLBS. A heartfelt thank you to Elysée Furs for this generous gesture and to our volunteers for modeling.

After the wonderful meal, we offered our guests kourambiedes and melomakrona graciously provided again this year by Kamenitsa Bakery.

We can never be thankful enough to all the generous donors whose support contributed to making our event a huge success on so many levels and a big thank you to all who attended and made this event most memorable. We are very happy to report that together, we continue to make a difference and will be investing in educational items for needy children to the tune of **\$8187!** Bravo & thank you to all! We also offer a special thank you to all of the organizing committee for their continued and tireless input and hard work.

Save the date for this year's Christmas Luncheon, already in its planning stages, to be held once again at 40 Westt Steakhouse on **Sunday, December 2nd, 2018.**

**Dina Kefallinos
& Maggie Pagonis,**
Co-Chairs Annual Christmas Luncheon



ILIOS GALA REPORT

Our annual Ilios Gala was held on Friday, June 1st, 2018 at The Windsor Ballrooms. The evening raised the necessary funds to support our Summer Camp Program and this year, also supported our Educational Assistance Program which assists families with their children's educational needs throughout the school year. The assistance provided by these two programs ensures a positive and successful year for many children in need.

The evening would not have been possible without the continued support of our Gala Patrons, which include **George Alexopoulos - Belden Canada Inc., EY, Georgoudes Family, Ernie Grivakis - VVS Films, Karambatsos Lawyers, Nikolas Klimis - Lambert, Klimis & Sakkas Group, Tony Loffreda - RBC, Vivian & Peter Pamel, Papadimitriou Family, The Alvin Segal Family Foundation - Vêtements Peerless Clothing Inc.** We applaud our Gala Patrons whose generosity is truly heartwarming. We were thrilled at the enthusiasm of all our Gala Patrons, who thoroughly enjoyed themselves all evening, making our Gala a fun evening and an incredible event.

The Windsor provided a wonderful, warm and elegant setting for this year's Gala. The event kicked off with a cocktail in the legendary Peacock Alley, where over 200 guests were greeted with a trendy oyster bar generously donated by the **Meletakos family**, an

overflowing open bar, a cool photo booth, and a barrage of biddable items included in both our silent auction and raffle.

Once seated in the Salon Windsor, guests were transported to the mystical world of ancient Greece, a theme conceptualized by **Nitza Melas**, a gifted international performer! Throughout her musical performance, Nitza was accompanied by Alexandros and his band. Nitza also coordinated several acrobatic performances which created a unique "Dinner Theatre" experience for our guests! Our magnificent centerpieces were made of a cornucopia of fresh fruit graciously donated by **Potager St-Eustache**.

Nitza also rendered a heart-warming video presentation of her personal experience with the HLBS and how our organization helped first-hand members of her family. Her testimony reminded us all of the greater purpose we serve as members of this remarkable organization. A very special thank you to Nitza, for her dedication, hard work and warmth which made this event all the more special!!

We had the privilege of welcoming back BT Montreal's **Elias Makos** as our Master of Ceremonies. His enthusiasm all evening and his tenacity as a live auctioneer also ensured our success. Elias auctioned off several items and managed to sell the incredible "Singing Chef" **Davide Bazalli's** catered

Dinner-Opéra Package not once or twice, but 4 times!

The excitement did not stop there. The dancing began early in the evening with lots of "Kefi" and continued through our delicious meal and well into the night.

A special thank you to our 14 young volunteers, who not only welcomed and assisted guests, but sold tickets for several impressive raffle prizes.

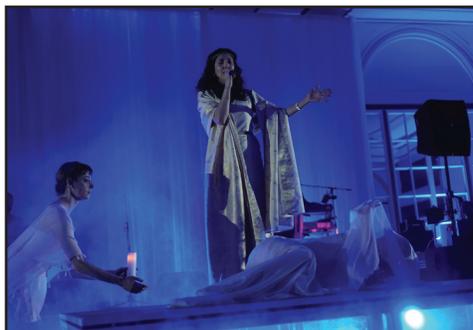
We continued the evenings' pleasures by enjoying sweets graciously donated by **Beaux Gateaux/Kilo**. When all were danced-out, our guests left with a beautiful gift offered by **Ellee Platis of Coty Canada**.

We are very pleased to report that all in all, a wonderful time was had by all and thanks to our Gala Patrons, our guests, our volunteers and our resourceful organizing committee, we were able to raise over **\$80,000!**

We are already in the planning stages for next year's Gala on **Friday, May 31st, 2019**. Mark your Calendars!

Hope we can count on your support once again!

Cheria Kyres & Maggie Pagonis,
Co-chairs



MARATHON AGAPI

For the first time we held our main fundraiser, earlier than other years, on October 14, 2017. It was co chaired by Bernice Tzicas and myself with Matina Bisbikos Priftakis, as the Marathon Treasurer! It was broadcast again on CFMB AM 1280 Multilingual. A huge thank you to Michael Tellides, Producer and Director of the Hellenic Radio Program!

On the Honourary Committee this year we were very happy to have Mary Deros, City Councillor for Parc Ex. and a great supporter, Rena Papatthanakou, dedicated and committed to the Marathon AGAPI since 1969, and Demetris J. Yantsulis, President of Pan Macedonian Assoc. of Canada! We would like to express our appreciation to them and to the many speakers from the community at large who through their enthusiasm and passionate words encouraged the listeners to support this worthwhile event!

A sincere thank you to our Marathon Sponsors: Canadawide, Centreville Volkswagen, Tapis National, PA Supermarché, Salamina, Scotia Wealth Management, RTC-EMSB and two Anonymous Donors.

Our many volunteers deserve our appreciation for donating their time at the various churches collecting donations or taking pledges over the phone at CFMB. Many thanks to the priests of the following churches for taking part in this year's Marathon AGAPI: St. Nicholas (Laval), St. Michael & Gabriel (VSL), St. John the Baptist (Montee St. Hubert), Evangelismos (Parc Ex), St. Dionysios (LaSalle), Sts- Constantine & Eleni (West Island). The Ladies of all the Church Philoptohos' generous donations and support were also greatly appreciated!

Our Marathon Committee members ensured the success of the Marathon AGAPI. It was

through their great effort and complete dedication that we collected \$ 41,496.75 which will help us assist the less fortunate.

A special thank you to the following individuals for their support : Chris Adamopoulos, Director General of Socrates and Demosthenes Schools, Christos Manikis, Publisher of the BHMA, George Guzman, Publisher of TA NEA, John Kokonas, producer of the program EDO MONTREAL, and George Stevens for entering all of our pledges in our data base.

We would like to show our sincere gratitude to our supporters who gave generously in order to help the underprivileged in our community! Thank you for your kindness and compassion!

Respectfully submitted,

Bernice Tzicas

& Viola Vathilakis, Marathon Co-Chairs

MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON



The 2017 Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society Membership Luncheon was held on Sunday, September 17, 2017 at the Palace Convention Centre in Laval and was attended by over 90 Members.

The filled to capacity venue was decorated in a pink and white motif and each table was embellished with a very attractive flower center piece as well as individual Coty Canada Ltd. "Purity Philosophy Products" and "Miu Miu Parfums". The Palace served remarkable appetizers, tasty entrees accompanied with a glass of wine and finished with a most sumptuous dessert.



Lunch was followed by drawings of numerous Raffle and Door Prizes which helped make for a very exciting afternoon. The Ladies participated very actively in purchasing raffle tickets to test their luck in the drawing of many valuable items. Among the many prizes were several delightful Baskets such as "Le Panier's Gourmet", "Greek Mezedes" by Pilaros and "Aegean Delicacies" by Kri-nos. There were also many generous vouchers from well known Restaurants as well as, several other fun and valuable prizes.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the support of Ellee Platis and Coty Can-



ada Limited for their donation of Purity Philosophy Products and Miu Miu Parfums, and of Park Ex Florist for the beautiful floral table center pieces.

As always, the success of this event is due to our many donors and our old and new members who attended. The Committee looks forward to another successful Membership Luncheon on September 30, 2018.

At the end of our 2017/2018 year the Society had 152 members.

Viola Vathilakis and Sylvia Xistris, Co-chairs

