

InTouch

August 2017



Serving the Hellenic Community since 1922

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

2016-2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE

Viola Vathilakis, *President*

Joanne Bisbikos, *Vice-President*

Betty Giannias, *Recording Secretary*

Christina Milonopoulos, *Treasurer*

COMMITTEE CHAIRS WELFARE

Roula Athanasopoulos

Vicky Nikolakakos

MARATHON

Matina Bisbikos-Priftakis

Viola Vathilakis

MEMBERSHIP

Norma Paschalis,

Sylvia Xistris

SOCIAL

Belle Grivakis,

Christina Maroudas

Mary Pagonis,

Vivian Pamel

CAMPS

Georgia Gotsis,

Christina Maltezos

Bernice Tzicas,

Mary Vosniades

NEWSLETTER, PUBLIC RELATIONS, WEBSITE

Matina Bisbikos-Priftakis

Marina Vasil

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We have just completed the 95th year of the HLBS! The Board of Directors had an extremely exciting and successful year full of activities that enabled us to continue our mandate of assisting the less fortunate of our community!!

September 18, 2016 the Membership Lunch took place at Zante Restaurant! I would like to thank Sylvia Xistris and Norma Paschalis, the co chairs, for working hard in order to give to the 89 members present a very enjoyable afternoon!

Our second event, our major fundraiser, the Marathon Agapi co chaired by Matina Bisbikos Priftakis and myself was held for the 47th time on Saturday November 12, 2016 through CFMB 1280 AM Multilingual. A very sincere thank you to our strong committee of volunteers, Michael Tellides, Rena Papathanakou, Mary Deros and Nicholas Pagonis for their invaluable hard work! Our Welfare Program depends on the success of this event! A big thank you to the co chairs of this program, Vicky Nikolakakos and Roula Athanasopoulos for their commitment to helping all of the families and individuals who call our Help Line!

The Annual Christmas Luncheon co chaired by Mary Pagonis and Christina Maroudas was a wonderful family event which took place on Sunday December 4, 2016 at 40 Westt Steakouse and Bar. It was a profitable event and all who attended had a lovely time. The success of the event ensured that our Educational Assistance Program will be able to give to many children from low in-

come families the tools they need to succeed in their educational goals!

The year ended with our final event the ILIOS GALA, a very classy and successful event which took place on Friday May 5, 2017 at the beautiful Le Windsor!! The co chairs, Dina Kefallinos and Maggie Pagonis, two very enthusiastic new members of HLBS with their hard working committee and the guidance of Belle Grivakis, succeeded in organizing the best ever ILIOS GALA!! The generous proceeds from this fabulous evening will be used to give a wonderful camp experience to many children with special needs and children from low income families.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Board of Directors for their dedication to the HLBS! They give of their time and energy selflessly so that the less fortunate in our community will be able to live a better life!

We really appreciate the great cooperation that we continue to have 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, Deputy Mayor of the City of Montreal and City Councillor for Parc Ex, and other organizations in the Montreal area!

Thank you all for your support and generosity!
Have a safe wonderful summer!

Respectfully,
Viola Vathilakis, President

HLBS UPCOMING EVENTS

Membership Luncheon:
September 17, 2017

Annual General
Assembly:
September 28, 2017

Marathon Agapi:
October 14, 2017

Christmas Luncheon :
December 3, 2017

WELFARE REPORT

CRISIS INTERVENTION – HELPING PEOPLE IN NEED

This year we received more than 1,100 calls on the Help Line.

Throughout the year we helped more than 170 families with food, electrical and medical expenses, rent and clothing. We also referred them to the HLBS Scholastic Committee and the HLBS Summer Camp Program Committee.

The needs are numerous and thanks to our theme to Lift Someone's Spirit, we donated and delivered food, household items and furniture to several families.

At our two Open Houses, at Christmas and Easter, we received 137 families who were in need. During these two events, our HLBS Board Members met with the majority of our clients and we provided a festive meal to all present to celebrate the holidays. We also

distributed food vouchers, clothing vouchers, toys & household items at that time.

The HLBS helped five single mothers with new born babies, five burials and seven new immigrant families from Greece. We were also very fortunate to find employment for twelve individuals.

The requests for assistance were numerous. Here are a few examples: help was given to: A single badly abused mother who was left homeless with 2 children and expecting a third baby, a new immigrant family with a child who has special needs, a couple with 3 children under 12 where the father lost employment, a senior citizen abused and abandoned by her children who was living in terrible conditions and a single father diagnosed with cancer raising 3 children under 11 .

The HLBS works very closely with the Shield of Athena, the HCGM Social Services, Filia, Le Centre Generation d'Emploi, and several Church Philoptochos in Montreal and vicinity.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Board Members and to our generous supporters who donated to the "Marathon Agapi", the main fundraiser for the HLBS Welfare Committee.

Your concern and generosity enabled us to carry out our goals for the HLBS Welfare Program "crisis intervention".

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

SUMMER CAMPS REPORT

The HLBS Camp Committee consists of Mary Vosniades as treasurer and advisor, Rena Christopoulos, Georgia Gotsis and Bernice Tzicas. Since we had our first meeting in the month of January we have been quite active contacting various organizations, schools, CLSCs and the HLBS Welfare Committee asking their help in finding eligible children who would benefit from a camp experience.

What is our evaluation/selection process... ?

The family income has to be less than \$35,000 which is considered low income. When a child is referred to us we contact the family and evaluate the situation. We also ask for the family's tax assessments to verify that they are low income. Once approved by the Camp Committee, the child's parent goes and registers the child and has the invoice sent to the HLBS. The child is free to choose whichever camp he/she wishes to attend. The selection process is long with many follow up calls made to organizations, schools and also to the parents.

This summer, to date, we have 70 children attending the camp of their choice.

- 49 children attending day camps such as PEYO, HCGM, Loisir de L'Acadie, Centre de Sablon, etc.; sports camp such as Panellinion Soccer Camp and an arts camp such as Ecole de Danse Mari Mullen
- 18 children will attend Camp Edphy, a multi activity sleep-over camp
- 3 children will go on a flight to Disney for one day organized by the Air Canada "Dreams Take Flight" Program
- 3 physically and/or mentally challenged children will attend Camp Massawippi, a special needs camp. Camp Massawippi accepts campers 6 to 30 years old to a fully accessible environment with adapted activities.

As I am writing this report, our Camp Program is still going strong and registering children. There is no question that Summer Camps are a great way to keep kids happy and active once school is out. These kids would not be happily going to camp this summer if it were not for the "Ilios Gala" held in May of this year.

On behalf of the Camp Committee I would like to extend our gratitude to the Ilios Gala Chairs and their Organizing Committee for a successful event allowing us to finance the children's camp experience.

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

ILIOS GALA REPORT

Our Annual Ilios Gala in support of our Summer Camp Program was held on Friday, May 5th, 2017 at the magnificent Le Windsor. As always, the main reason for the success of our event, is the continued support and generosity of our Gala patrons.

Our prestigious Patrons list this year includes George Alexopoulos – Belden Canada Inc., Ernie Grivakis – VVS Films, Chris & Alex Karambatsos - Karambatsos Avocats/Lawyers, Dr. Andreas Nikolis - Victoria Park Medispa, Vivian & Peter Pamel, Anastasia Nakis & James Papadimitriou, Nadine Renaud-Tinker- RBC, Renno & Vathilakis Avocats/Lawyers.

We are both humbled by the incredible generosity and thrilled at the enthusiasm of all of our Patrons who thoroughly enjoyed themselves all evening, making our Gala a fun evening and an incredible event.

Our Gala was again held at Le Windsor, which provided a wonderful, warm and elegant setting, starting with wines and InBalance Smoothie Cube specialty martini-

graciously donated by George & Cheria Kyres, an oyster bar and photo booth in the majestic Peacock Alley and dinner and dancing in the stunning Salon Versailles. This year's blue theme was reflected in the lighting and highlighted by truly elegant tables adorned with blue hydrangeas and orchids.

There was so much excitement in the air that the dancing began early in the evening with lots of 'Kefi' and continued on through our delicious meal and late into the night. We all thoroughly enjoyed dancing to Greek favorites and to the sounds of Paul Chacra and his amazing 1945 band.

An additional and important part of our fundraising was made possible by 12 young volunteers who not only welcomed and assisted guests, but sold numerous tickets for several impressive raffle prizes.

We had the privilege of welcoming Elias Makos as our Master of Ceremonies for the first time this year. His enthusiasm all evening and his tenacity as live auctioneer

also ensured our success. Elias auctioned off several items and managed to sell Davide Bazali's catered Dinner-Opéra Package not once or twice, but a whopping 5 times!

We continued the evenings' pleasures by enjoying a cornucopia of sweets graciously donated by Beaux Gateaux/Kilo, providing us refreshment and some renewed energy to dance even longer into the evening. When all were danced-out, our guests left with a beautiful gift bag with a fragrance set, 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 just shy of \$65,000!

We are already in the planning stages for next year's Gala and hope we can count on your support once again!

Dina Kefallinos & Maggie Pagonis,
Co-chairs



MARATHON AGAPI

The HLBS Marathon Agapi took place on November 12, 2016. As in the past 47 years, it was broadcast on CFMB AM 1280 radio station on free air time. We owe a huge gratitude to Michael Tellides, Producer and Director of the Hellenic Radio Program who, along with Rena Papathanakou, have been dedicated and committed to the Marathon Agapi since 1969.

The Marathon was held under the Distinguished Patronage of the Consul General of Greece in Montreal, the Honourable Nicolas Sigalas. On our Honourary Committee this year we were very happy to have Mary Deros, the Deputy Mayor of Montreal and City Councillor for Parc Ex. and a great supporter of HLBS, Nicholas Pagonis, President of the HCGM, Rena Papathanakou and Aphrodite Salas of CTV. A big thank you to them and the many speakers from the community at large who, through their enthusiastic and passionate words, encouraged the listeners to

support this worthwhile event.

We have raised approximately \$39,000 to help the less fortunate of our community. This amount will be distributed this year, by our Welfare Committee, to help all those who find themselves in a disadvantaged situation.

Our sincere thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who donated 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 Nicolas in Laval, St. Dionysios in LaSalle, St. John the Baptist on Montee St. Hubert, St. Michael and Gabriel in VSL, Evangelismos in Park Ex. and Sts. Constantine and Eleni in the West Island. The support and generous donations of the Ladies of all the Church Philoptohos' was greatly appreciated!

As well, sincere thanks to the members of the

Marathon Committee who gave generously of their time. They ensured the success of this year's Marathon with their great effort and complete dedication.

A special thank you to the following people for their support: Chris Adamopoulos, Director General of Socrates and Demosthenes schools, George Guzman, Publisher of Ta Nea, Christos Manikis, Publisher of The BHMA, John Kokonas, producer of the TV program, Edo Montreal and Costas Kalavriziotis from Odyssey TV Laval.

Our sincere gratitude to our supporters who gave generously in order to fulfill the needs of the underprivileged in our community. Thank you for showing such kindness and compassion!

Respectfully submitted,
Matina Bisbikos-Priftakis
& **Viola Vathilakis, Marathon Co-Chairs**



MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON

At the end of our 2016/2017 year, the HLBS had 150 members. Our annual Membership Luncheon was held on September 18, 2016 at the Zante Central Restaurant and was attended by over 85 members.

Elegant flower center pieces and individual Coty Canada Ltd. "Margarita" products adorned each table and soft background accordion music filled the room. While savoring a tasteful lunch, our members enjoyed the drawing of numerous door prizes and actively participated in purchasing raffle

tickets to test their luck in the drawing of 21 remarkable prizes. Among the many prizes were delightful Baskets such as "Pasta Pasta Amore", "Wine by Candlelight", "Coffee Delight à La Bodum", "Krinos Canada Products" and many generous restaurant vouchers.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the support of Ellee Platis and Coty Canada Ltd. for their donation of bath products and of Litsa Stefanatos for the delicate flower table centerpieces. Also, our thanks to all who

created the beautiful Baskets and to those who tirelessly canvassed for the various raffle certificates. As always, the success of this event is due to our many donors and our members who attended.

The Committee looks forward to another successful Membership Luncheon with all of you on September 17, 2017.

Norma Paschalis and Sylvia Xistris,
Co-chairs



X-MAS LUNCHEON EDUCATIONAL FUNDRAISER

The Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society's Family Christmas Luncheon was held on Sunday, December 4, 2016 at the fabulous 40 Westt Steakhouse in Pointe Claire.

It was a sellout event where 188 adults and 21 children joined the fun in a warm and festive atmosphere. We were so touched to see so many families enjoying themselves!

Our most generous host, Stephanos Hinoporos and his staff welcomed us with a luscious vodka fruit punch which helped stave off the winter chill of the day as we perused the wonderful items on the Silent Auction tables all the while buying raffle tickets from our young volunteers with a hope to win one of the fabulous Christmas Baskets which adorned the restaurant.

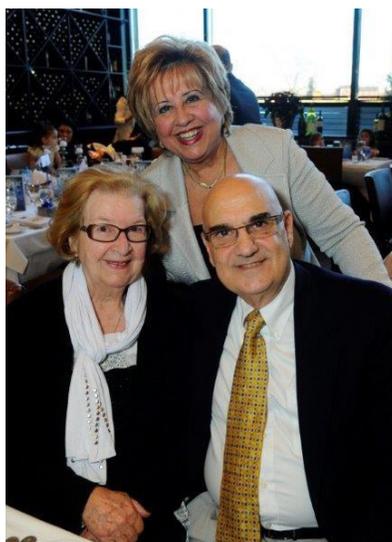
We also sold Christmas stockings to adoring parents and grandparents which were graciously personalized with a child's name by Christina del Corpo and our spirited "sales person" Vicky Nikolakakos managed to sell every single one of them!

During the delicious and abundant dinner we were entertained by the enigmatic "Vassilis" who reminded us of all our favourite Greek melodies and "kalanta". After the wonderful meal, we offered our guests kourambiedes and melomakarona graciously provided 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.

A special thank you to all of the organizing committee for all their input and hard work.

We look forward to seeing you at our next Christmas Luncheon which will be held once again at 40 Westt Steakhouse on Sunday, December 3rd - hold the date!!!!

**Christina Maroudas
& Mary Pagonis,
Co-Chairs Annual Christmas Luncheon**



EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM REPORT

It is with great satisfaction that the Educational Assistance Program volunteers, namely, Joanne Bisbikos, Matina Bisbikos-Priftakis, Aristia Scodras, Marina Vasil, Viola Vathilakis and Mary Vosniades along with assistance from Roula Athanasopoulos and Vicky Nikolakos, co-chairmen of the Welfare Committee, announce that 90% of the monies allotted to our committee this year from proceeds of the Christmas luncheon have been disbursed to help children in our community. We have used these funds to assist with the following activities and expenses:

- **Nutritious school lunches**
- **School daycare supervision**
- **Consumable school supplies**
- **School uniforms**
- **Extracurricular activities**
- **Educational related medical expenses not covered by medicare**

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, Socrates School and the Socrates Educational Foundation, we were made aware of children whose education could be enhanced through our financial aid.

As a committee we assessed the needs and acted appropriately in the name of the Hellenic Ladies Benevolent Society.

We are encouraged by letters 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 & Marina Vasil

PUBLIC RELATIONS

PR is all about building relationships and raising awareness about who we are and what we do - serving the Hellenic Community since 1922.

Communicating with people and organizations is key. Publicity is a great way to inform our membership, as well as the community at large, about all our activities and our upcoming events.

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!

At this time, I would like to give a special mention to Makis Papadopoulos, creator of the HLBS Website. He volunteers his time in updating and maintaining our site. Thank you very much Maki! 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 at our local Greek newspaper the BHMA, Mr. George Guzman at Ta Nea in Laval, as well as with Jennifer Campbell of The Gazette, who publishes our upcoming events in her Social Calendar. 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 & Marina Vasil, Co-Chairs, PR & Newsletter

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

