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The Newsletter for friends and members of OHFS  
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## Summer in Chicago – Greek Style

This summer was an especially busy one for Orpheus members! In addition to performing at several Greek American events, we were invited to share our heritage and culture with some folks who were not necessarily familiar with the troupe or the wonderful world of Greek folk dancing. Summer in Chicago means many neighborhood festivals, picnics and outdoor events, most of them aimed at spreading the city's multi-cultural fun to spectators and participants. The Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society was proud to have had the opportunity to be a part of these festivals, and present a sample of music, dancing and fun—Greek style!

On Thursday, July 1, the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society participated in one of Chicago's most popular summer events: the Chicago SummerDance festival. Chicago SummerDance is an eleven-week festival, showcasing a variety of music and dance styles. It features one-hour dance lessons by professional instructors, followed by two hours of live music and dancing on a 4,600 square foot, open-air dance floor in the Spirit of Music Garden in Grant Park. Chicagoans had the opportunity to feast on a wide selection of treats at, the incredibly popular, Taste of Chicago, and then take a short trip over to the Spirit of Music Garden  
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Presvytera Stefanie Malamis and Nina Katsinis provided the vocals at the SummerDance festival, accompanied by members of the Orpheus music group and a special appearance by the renowned clarinet player, Jim Stoyanoff.

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to kick up their heels and work off all those calories. Orpheus instructors demonstrated traditional folk dances from various parts of Greece, to a very eager and energetic crowd, made up of all ages and ethnicities. After the instruction, the audience hit the dance floor, anxious to show off their new dance moves. The outdoor dance floor was packed with novice and veteran dancers and the energy and fun did not let up until the very end. The Orpheus Music Group played an incredible set and the crowd loved it! A variety of instruments were featured, including the violin, toumbeleki and guitar, with a special appearance by Chicago's own Jim Stoyanoff on the clarinet. Vocals were provided by Presvytera Stefanie Malamis, Nina Katsinis, Katerina Rallis and Christina Grosso, who sang an assortment of popular Kalamatiano and Syrto medleys, keeping the "kefi" going and the audience on their feet non-stop. Other musical selections included several Tsamikos, Zonaradikos, and various other pieces from mainland Greece and the islands. The feedback from audience participants and Orpheus members was overwhelmingly positive. Everyone who was there was able to experience an evening of great music, dancing and socializing outdoors, on a beautiful summer night in the heart of the city.

A few weeks later, Orpheus members made an appearance at the Chicago Folk & Roots Festival sponsored by the Old Town School of Folk Music, in Chicago's Lincoln Square neighborhood. The Chicago Folk & Roots Festival is a two day celebration that attracts 30,000 people for a spectacular array of music and dance performances, workshops, children's activities, and an assortment of locally owned food, drink, and retail vendors. Under the large white tent, Orpheus dancers and members of the music group were greeted by a very energetic and enthusiastic crowd, ready to learn some new dance moves. Similar to the SummerDance event, Orpheus dancers demonstrated several popular Greek folk dances including, the most familiar Greek dance, Hasaposervikos. During this dance, very few people were left sitting in their chairs, as young and old packed the dance floor, chanting,



Several Orpheus members were on the dance floor as well, assisting with demonstrating popular dances such as, Sta Tria, Kalamatianos and Hasaposervikos.



The Orpheus music group got the party started and spectators did not waste any time hitting the dance floor at the Chicago Folk & Roots Festival.

"Step 2, 3, kick, left, kick!" in time to the music. As the hour-long lesson was winding down, participants were not quite ready to leave the dance floor, as they lingered trying to perfect the newly acquired dance moves that were still fresh in their memories.

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 troupe is very well-known in the Greek community, and has been recognized for its many

years of accomplishments and efforts regarding perpetuating the rich Greek culture and traditions for current and future generations. 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.

For pictures and video of the SummerDance and Chicago Folk & Roots Festival events, please visit our website at [www.ohfs.org](http://www.ohfs.org) or visit us on Facebook. 📷

# Spotlight on Drama, Macedonia: History, Traditions and Culture (Part 2)

Part one of this article explored Drama's rich legacy of song and dance traditions. Part two will focus on costumes, celebrations and other village traditions, in the prefecture of Drama, that go hand in hand with music and dancing. Part one of the article can be found in the Summer, 2010 edition of the Lyra newsletter. To view the Summer edition, as well as previous Lyra issues, please visit: [www.ohfs.org](http://www.ohfs.org)

Today, centuries old customs, practices and rituals are alive and well in Drama, including the folk song and dance tradition. Seven villages have banded together to help preserve the songs and dances of the region. The Petrino Theater in Petrousa puts on elaborate dance performances with approximately 120 performers. Each village has its own costume, with subtle differences evident in the aprons of the female costumes. The aprons are very similar, so that those who are not from the area could not make the distinction; only the native villagers are able to discern the dif-

ference. Silver chains on the female costumes indicated the economic status of the family. The more silver embellishments, the more well off the family was. When Greece was under attack by the Bulgarians, entire villages were destroyed. It was decided that one of the first things that should be reconstructed was the church bell. In order to do this, the women of the villages offered their silver jewelry and belts to be melted down and recast.

In the villages of Petrousa, Pyrgi, Ksiropotamos and Monastiraki, parts of the female costumes changed once a woman got married, specifically the headpiece, apron and belt. In the village of Kali Vrissi, the men's costumes vary in order to show marital status and sometimes age. The typical costume consists of a black hat, black pants, black vest and white *poukamiso* (shirt) and white belt. In times of mourning or when one became a widower, the *poukamiso* and belt changed from white to black. In most areas of Greece,

the traditional headpiece covers the entire head, including the hair. In the villages of Drama, however, the headpiece does not cover the entire head and is supposed to leave some of the hair exposed in order for the hairstyle to be noticed. The front of the head is exposed the width of four fingers so that one could see how a woman had parted her hair. The options were down the middle ("o issios o dromos") or a side part ("o stravos o dromos").

The Epiphany celebration during January 6, 7 and 8 is an exciting time in Drama. The villages of Volakas, Monastiraki, Petrousa, Pyrgi, Kali Vrissi and Ksiropotamos are bombarded with visitors during this time of the year, gathering to enjoy the festivities and partying. Masquerading is very popular during this event with the "Babouyeros" and "Arapi" characters prevalent in all the villages. The Babouyeros from Kali Vrissi is a goat-like character, who makes his way around the village interacting with young and old alike. Dressed in animal furs and skins and wearing a replica of a mask, which was found while excavating ancient ruins at the temple of Dionysus, with lots of jangling bells around his waist, there

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Three ladies demonstrating the hair style, "o stravos o dromos", with their headpiece pulled back revealing the hair parted on the side.



Katerina Asteriou Kavazi and her daughter Georgia pictured with two Arapi masqueraders.

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can be up to 100 Babouyeros characters roaming the village streets.

In Monastiraki, the Arapi starts the Epiphany celebration emerging from an old, abandoned stone building that has been refurbished to serve as the Arapi's "house". With his face blackened and covered in animal furs, he makes his way down the village streets towards the *plateia*, eagerly awaited by the villagers, since his arrival kicks off the dancing.

In Volaka, the Arapi has a slow, deliberate way of moving. Like the Babouyeros character, the Arapi has giant bells around his waist that move rhythmically according to his slow, sharp waist and hip movements. Patience is a must in this village, since it can take an extremely long time for the Arapi to get to the *plateia* and to get the party started! A man dressed as the *gylika* or "bride" is often accompanied down the street by the Arapi, followed closely by the Tsiaousi, a type of a bodyguard, brandishing a stick. Anyone who gets too close to the "bride" runs the risk of being assaulted by the Tsiaousi's stick! The Arapi served yet another purpose: Traditionally, little kids would be

placed on the Arapi's back as a way to cure them of bedwetting.

As we have seen, the folk traditions of Drama are particularly distinctive and interesting. It should be noted that the inhabitants of Drama have nurtured a great respect and maintained a strong hold on their local traditions, through difficult times and despite many close calls with extinction. These traditions are kept alive in part through documentation and research by dedicated individuals who strive to perpetuate the rich traditions and customs of their homeland. One such individual is Katerina Asteriou Kavazi. Born in Drama, Katerina currently lives and works in Prosotsani as the owner of the Epilinos organization, which organizes various cultural events, conferences, theatrical presentations, concerts and many other events. Since 1995, Katerina has been teaching Greek folk dancing to dance enthusiasts around the world. She has also produced publications centering around the folk traditions of Drama. For more information on Katerina and the Epilinos organization, please visit : [www.epilinos.gr](http://www.epilinos.gr)

Orpheus would like to extend a big thank you to Katerina for her support



Katerina Asteriou Kavazi pictured with a Babouyero masquerader

and for providing us with information, details and photos for this article. 📷

# spotlight

on Orpheus  
youth  
dancer...



Izaki

**Hometown:** Chicago

**Parents/Family From:** Neda, Messinia and Vasta, Arkadia (Grandparents)

**Time Dancing with Orpheus Group:** 4 years

**Thoughts on Dancing:** "Anyone who says sunshine brings happiness has never danced in the rain" - Anonymous

**Favorite Dance:** Although I don't have a favorite dance, it's between Pidihtos, Koulouristas and Ikariotiko

**Most Vivid OHFS Memory:** My most vivid memory would be Orpheus' trip to Greece in 2007 (yeah I know, really original...) The one memory that is the

# Orpheus Visits Toronto

By Izaki Metropoulos

Until now, my history with the Orpheus Dance group consisted of one trip with its members. Unlike the time where Orpheus swept Kalamata off its feet with stunning performances and spectacles, this time, the members of the Hellenic dance group once again decided they could learn a thing or two: this time, in Toronto, Canada.

This year four instructors from Greece were invited to teach. Instructor Dimitris Lianostathis demonstrated dances from Evia. Aggelos Nikolaidis, taught us dances from the region of Thrace. Our third instructor was Giorgos Liaros, teaching dances from the island of Paros. And last but not least, teaching dances from Messolonghi was Dimitri Karavasilis. All of the instructors did a great job with presenting the material they had prepared. The dances and songs we learned were very interesting and the instructors were very knowledgeable and eager to share their knowledge and experience with the conference participants.

On Sunday night, the Klironomia dinner dance had finally arrived, naturally bringing with it several talented musicians. Arriving from Greece were Nektarios Kosmidis (violin and vocals), Yiannis Baliakas (clarinet), Tasoula Kosmidou (Gaida, Daouli, Other), and Miltiadis Spyridopoulos (Lauto). Before the dinner dance started, I had the opportunity to play with these famous musicians. All of them shared advice, as well as praise. I'm thankful I had left such a good impression on them: it's a reminder that the culture is alive here in America, specifically in Chicago. The celebration started with

Orpheus taking the stage and singing an acapella version of "Peristeraki", one of the spring time carols sung in the region of Thrace. Following that, were performances from several other dance groups who were taking part in the conference.

After a night of food, dancing, music, and memories, it was finally time to go home. The following morning, I said goodbye to all the teachers, new friends, and musicians, and headed home with the rest of the crew. Klironomia left me with experiences I will never forget. 📷



Orpheus was well represented at the Klironomia dance conference in Toronto, Canada. Members pose for a quick photo in between dance workshop breaks at the University of Toronto in Scarborough.

clearest was when we were passing by a *horio* in a Pullman bus, and we saw a group of old Greek men fighting about something. Although I only got to see them for a good 5 seconds, it was enough time to see one old Greek man pick up a chair and the other pick up a garden hose

**Favorite Greek Dish:** Makaronia kai Kima

**Favorite Place in Greece:** Kalamata, Messinia

**Hobbies/Sports/Other Interests:** I really enjoy playing soccer with friends; playing music and singing; occasionally basketball; debating (I'm Greek, it's in my blood); hanging out with friends; and, for some weird reason, I really like learning more and more about history

**Nobody knows I:** Really want to travel the world when I'm done with college

**The perfect weekend would be:** A weekend in my *horio*. It's so peaceful there and time passes by without you even knowing it

**Someone I'd like to meet:** I'd really like to meet Yianni Parios

**Favorite spot in Chicago:** The lakefront has to be my favorite spot

**I am currently looking forward to:** Orpheus' next trip to Greece. The last trip was amazing and I'm sure this one is going to be even better!

**Prized possession:** My violin and acoustic guitar

**Where I heard about Orpheus Dance Troupe:** My mom used to be in the Orpheus Dance Troup back in the day, and Penelope Georgakopoulos, one of the former instructors, informed us about the youth group 📷

# Orpheus Celebrates Youth Group End Of Year Event

By Nina Katsinis

The Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society's Youth Group had another exciting and memorable performance at the annual End of the Year event, this past May. Friends and family members of the Youth Group gathered at St. John the Baptist

Greek Orthodox Church, in Des Plaines, IL, to celebrate yet another successful year of the Youth Group program, as they enjoyed watching their kids demonstrate the fruits of their labor. Highlights included island and mainland dances and songs; live music courtesy of the Orpheus Music Ensemble; presentation of graduation

certificates and the Dina Sianis merit awards; and speeches by graduating members of the Youth Group.

All the levels of the youth group demonstrated a wide selection of songs and dances from various regions of Greece. The Beginning Group performed a suite of dances from mainland Greece; the Intermediate Group, a suite from Anatoliki Romilia; and the Advanced Group a suite from Pontos. All of the groups were accompanied by the Orpheus Music Ensemble, led by Eve Monzingo and George Lawler.

Jillian Economy and Yannis Avgerinos 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, we had several members of the Youth Group graduate and move forward into the Adult Group. We are very proud to have these young members continue their participation and learn as they grow with the Adult Group.

Throughout the event, four of the graduating Youth Members had the opportunity to give short speeches, recounting their experience with the dance troupe and to offer their thoughts on what it meant for them to participate in the Orpheus Youth Group. 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.

All in all, the End of the Year event was another joyous occasion to celebrate all our young dancers and encourage them to continue expanding their knowledge of their Greek heritage and most of all, have fun while doing it. We look forward to another successful year in the 2010-2011 Youth Group! Congratulations to you all! ☐



Yannis Economou, Dr. George Sianis and Bessie Grosso present the Dina Sianis Merit Award to Yannis Avgerinos and Jillian Economy.



Friends and family gathered at St. John the Baptist Church to cheer for and support the youth group dancers at the annual End of the Year celebration.



Members of OHFS Advanced Youth Group participated in the 2nd annual America's Greek Dance Competition (AGDC), held in St. Charles, IL this October. The group performed dances from the island of Corfu and Anatoliki Romilia and placed second in the Junior division.



OHFS music group members, George Lawler and Angelo Angelos, accompanied the dancers with live music during the Corfu suite. Orpheus also received an AGDC costume award for the Corfu costumes.



Orpheus dancers performing the dance "Syrtos" from the island of Paros in front of a packed audience at the annual "Taste of Greece" festival in Chicago's Greektown.



Orpheus members were featured on the WGN Channel 9 morning show segment, "Around Town" with Ana Belaval, which focused on Greektown and the construction of the new National Hellenic Museum.



The 2010 -2011 year is off to a great start for the OHFS youth group, as the kids pose for a group shot on the first day of practice at the Northbrook practice facility.



Kids from the youth group's Saturday session gather together for a "photo op" at the Glenview practice location.

# performance schedule

## 76th Annual McDonald's Thanksgiving Day Parade

Thursday, November 25  
Downtown Chicago along State Street  
Chicago, IL  
8:00 a.m.

## Christmas Around The World

Sunday, December 12  
Museum of Science and Industry  
5700 South Lake Shore Drive  
Chicago, IL  
4:00 p.m.

## Vasilopita Celebration

Saturday, January 29, 2011  
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
2350 Dempster Road  
Des Plaines, IL  
6:00 p.m.

## Chios Society Dinner Dance

Saturday, February 26, 2011  
Chateau Ritz Banquets  
9100 N. Milwaukee  
Niles, IL  
8:00 p.m.

## Orpheus Youth, End of Year Event

Sunday, May 15, 2011  
St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church  
2350 Dempster Road  
Des Plaines, IL  
2:00 p.m.

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

# practice schedule

## Orpheus Adult Group

### Beginner/Intermediate:

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

### Intermediate/Advanced:

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

### Every Thursday at:

St. John Lutheran Church  
3020 Milwaukee Ave.  
Northbrook, IL  
*(one mile north from the  
intersection of Lake/Euclid  
and Milwaukee Ave.)*

## Orpheus Youth Group: *(September through May)*

### Every Thursday at:

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

### Every Saturday at:

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
New Church  
Multipurpose Room  
74 Park Dr., Glenview, IL  
*(one block west of Shermer/Glenview Rds)*

**Youth Group:** Members ages 10-14 (Northbrook and Glenview locations).

**Beginners:** Members with little or no previous dance experience.

**Intermediate:** Dancers who have shown progress in the beginners' class attend the last hour of practice. At the discretion of the instructors, the intermediate level dancers will be practicing in a separate line.

All dancers, especially beginners, are encouraged to obtain a personal CD of the music used for performances, in order to practice on one's own and become accustomed to the music. Please provide Yannis or Kostas Economou with a blank CD.

Submissions for the Winter issue of *Lyra* will be accepted until January 15, 2011. 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.

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