

AHEPA Caravan Continues...

Supreme President Ike Gulas, accompanied by Executive Director Basil Mossaidis, embarked on the second road trip in an effort of invigorating interest and increasing membership. The total trip spanned over 2000 miles and covered Districts: 1, 4, 11, 12, &13.

On October 24, the Indianapolis AHEPA Chapter 232, hosted a dinner for Supreme President Gulas. Chapter President John Melanopoulos accompanied by Past Supreme President Nick Smyrnis and about 12 AHEPA chapter officers. Brothers met and discussed programs and events on Chapter 232's calendar and asked questions about AHEPA National.



Supreme President Ike Gulas flanked in the center by Past Supreme President Nick Smyrnis (left) and Chapter President John Melanopoulos

The next morning the Supreme President visited AHEPA Management Headquarters near the very first AHEPA Housing project, in Indianapolis. AHEPA Apartments 232 was completed in 1983 and began the legacy that now has close to 5000 units in 83 buildings across the United States.



After visiting with the management office, the Supreme President visited AHEPA 232 apartments and met with some of the residence and facility managers. After the visit the caravan continued to Chicago and District 13.

Upon arrival in Chicago, Past Supreme President A. Steve Betzelos, Supreme Counselor John Galanis and Supreme Governor George Pantazelos greeted the Supreme President. President Gulas was an invited speaker at the Hellenic Professional Society of Illinois. The event took place at a posh establishment in downtown Chicago. After some light refreshments and introduction, President Gulas spoke about the changing face of AHEPA and how it was important that the members of the HPSI join AHEPA today. Supreme Governor Pantazelos reports that 20 membership applications were filled out and completed that evening. Brother Pantazelos went on to say that, *“Events like this advance the mission of AHEPA, Ike is to be commended for his vision and dedication to AHEPA. We are proud to have him visit District 13.”*



Ahepans welcome Supreme President Ike Gulas

After the event, the President of the HPSI organization, Tom Gregory, invited the AHEPA leadership to dinner in Greek Town. After a few hours of fellowship, the “new” brothers promised to assist in developing a renewed interest in AHEPA and get as many HPSI members to join.

The next day it was non-stop driving from Chicago to Canton, Ohio. While driving the Supreme President took some time to answer emails on his portable computer which has service 24/7. Also, he called a few districts to set up future meetings and thank others for their hard work on the Greek fire relief efforts. Upon arriving in Canton, we were met by the Brothers of District 11. Supreme Governor Phil Giavasis was our host, along with Brother Tassos Callantzis of the Canton AHEPA Chapter. Additional brothers from area AHEPA chapters in Akron, Warren, Cleveland and Massillon, came to assist and participate at the initiation and joined the Supreme President for a social hour in the AHEPA home in Canton. *“We were very pleased that our young and vibrant Supreme President took time out of his schedule to visit us here in Canton. We are humbled by the visit.”* Supreme President officiated over the initiation of the new brothers.



Supreme President with the new initiates of Chapter 59

During the social hour, which followed the initiation, Warren Zeus Chapter 88 presented Supreme President Gulas with a check for the AHEPA Greek Fire Relief effort.



After the events in Canton came to a close, the Supreme President continued his journey to Pittsburgh, PA. Overnight in the “Steel Town,” Brother Gulas woke up to a breakfast meeting with Past Supreme President Louis Manesiotis. Brother Manesiotis congratulated President Gulas on his victory and the two discussed President Gulas’s vision for the future of AHEPA. Brother Manesiotis reminisced about his days as Supreme President.

After the brief meeting with the Past Supreme President, President Gulas visited the Western District 4 Leadership Conference attended by the Pittsburgh, Altoona, Ambridge, & Canonsburg AHEPA chapters. District Governor John Mesogitis served as host of the event, where details of the year’s events unfolded and programs, which dealt with membership and scholarship, were discussed. Joining the workshop was Supreme Governor Colonel Nicholas Vamvakias.



District Governor Mesogitis and members of his Lodge give reports

After the leadership conference was completed, the area chapters all participated in the initiation of the new initiates to the Pittsburgh AHEPA chapter. Supreme President Gulas officiated over the proceedings, assisted by Brothers: Bill Roomeliotis, Louis Peronis, Anthony Drakos and others.



Meet the new initiates of District 4

After Supreme President Gulas administered the oath to the new initiates, District Governor Mesogitis said that *"Ahepa is alive and on the move in the POWER District and we are proud that Ike chose to visit us during his caravan. He has done a great thing for AHEPA."*

On Sunday, after a short trip from Pittsburgh, the caravan arrived in a beautiful Cincinnati, OH. After checking into the hotel, the Supreme President chose to tour the city. The AHEPA was hosted in one of the city's oldest and most famous restaurants, the Boathouse, by District Governor 11 Alex Anderson, District Lt. Governor Carl Hollister and Cincinnati Chapter President George Kalemanis. Supreme President Gulas highlighted the membership program for the year and thanked the Cincinnati AHEPA family for its support of the AHEPA Greek Fire Relief effort. *"Thank you for taking the time along with Supreme President Ike Gulas to visit Cincinnati. I am certainly in the camp that AHEPA HQ is in the right hands. Please call on me if I may be of assistance,"* said District Lt. Governor Hollister.



Supreme President Gulas speaks of current issues and Grand Treasurer Elaine Sampanis of the DOP, and District Governor Alex Anderson look on.

President Gulas and the caravan continued to Louisville, KY the next day, however, the president continued to review and follow-up on the previous visits. The enthusiasm and excitement by meeting with the chapters was invigorating and it showed as the President only increased in energy and vigor.



Chris Kounas of Louisville, and the members of the Louisville AHEPA chapter graciously hosted the Supreme President. The Supreme President visited and discussed with those assembled about programs and plans for the 2007-2008 year, which included the 86th Annual AHEPA Supreme Convention in Greece, the AHEPA Journey to Greece and the aggressive membership campaign and totals, to name just a few.

“ We would like to thank the Supreme President Ike Gulas and Executive Director for visiting our small chapter. We have tried for years to keep Hellenism alive and appreciate the fact that you took time out of your schedule to spend one night with us. This will definitely give us the needed shot in the arm we need to find more members and try harder to preserve AHEPA in our town,” said Chris Kounas, Louisville, KY

The final stop in the second caravan found the President visiting Nashville, TN, home of the Grand Ole Opry and the Parthenon. The Nashville Parthenon is the only exact replica of the

Parthenon in existence. AHEPA may develop a way to host a fundraiser on the property. After meeting with members of the Nashville AHEPA, the Supreme President left for home completing a week-long tour of the country. One can only wait in anticipation, where and when, the next caravan will take place. Always promoting the AHEPA of the future, by paying respects to the AHEPA of the past!

