



# Notable Notes

The Electronic Newsletter of the Southeastern Federation of Greek Orthodox Choirs and Musicians — September 2009  
[click on http://www.sfgocm.org/news](http://www.sfgocm.org/news)

## Annual Federation Conference a Screaming Success (yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!!!)

### New Photo and Video Feature

If you have any pictures or videos, please send them on to [leonk@bellsouth.net](mailto:leonk@bellsouth.net) and I'll upload them onto the site. **To view them and many other photos, especially from the 2009 Conference in Winston-Salem, please visit it by clicking on [this link to our photo site](#).** Your choir can have its own album as can any special events simply by letting Leon Karahalidis know. Please full advantage of this site!



### President's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, Christ is among us!

I hope all of you who went to the choir conference in historic Winston-Salem, North Carolina, enjoyed it as much as I did.

For those of you who didn't attend, each meal had a theme and decorations to match. We were treated to Moravian food at the banquet Saturday night, including traditional Moravian music and the host committee wore Moravian clothes. Very unique! The youth choir performed a skit written and directed by the Youth Choir Director, Winston-Salem's own, Connie Beskas Marshall. I am still getting e-mails and phone calls from parents and grandparents telling me how wonderful the program was and how much their children enjoyed the conference and want to come again.

We had many guests. Cecelia and Costa Kourtis came all the way from Long Beach, California, the San Francisco Metropolis. But Orlando still claims them. Maria Keretsis, National Chairman of Administration for the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians, who is from the Eastern Federation, brought nine "Kypros Groupies", including Nick Kyrus' parents.

Our beloved Metropolitan Alexios was unable to join us as he was detained at the Patriarchate, so he sent Fr. Gregorios Tatsis to be with us as his representative.

The SFGOCM Board can't say enough about Fr. Demetri Kangelaris, Scott, "the Energizer Bunny", and Chairman Virginia Moutos. They did an outstanding job. Thank you again!

We realize that you all are waiting for news and dates from Holy Trinity in New Orleans, but we must understand that they are dealing with an important international visit from our Patriarch and over 100 international dignitaries. Please be patient.

Your faithful servant in Christ,  
Margaret Sarafoglu  
SFGOCM President



### Spotlight on Leon Melissas

Leon Melissas is a young looking, 53 y/o, director of music for 31 years. Raised in Charleston, SC, working in the restaurant business with his family, he studied and played music throughout his young adult life. Graduating from The Citadel, where he studied Business, Music, and Education, he began a successful career in both the Food Service and the Music industry.

Playing and managing a professional Top 40 Beach and Show Band for over 20 years, he found time to dedicate his services to his church. Under the guidance, teachings, and leadership of Rev. Fr. Nicholas Trivelas, of blessed memory, Leon became Director of Music for the Greek Orthodox Mixed Choir in Charleston, SC for many years. Soon thereafter, he resurrected the Charleston Male Chorus, which he still directs to this day.

Now living in Atlanta, GA., Leon Melissas is so musically talented that it's hard to believe he holds a rather high position in the Food Service



Industry, traveling all over the country. He still finds the time to play his saxophone in the Annunciation Cathedral Orchestra, sing in the choir, and Found and Direct the new Men's Choir in Atlanta. Whew! He and his lovely wife, Mary Tena, promote their children's participation in choirs as well. This is dedication to our faith, isn't it? We are proud to have Leon in our midst and invite him to join us in the

SFGOCM conference in New Orleans in 2010! See you there!

Rosemary Hendrix  
Atlanta



### A South Florida Pan-Orthodox Choir Event

As we all approached Winston-Salem in July, Matushka Ellen Gvosdev of St. Nicholas OCA Church in Fort Lauderdale fell asleep in the Lord.

Formerly the choir director, Matushka Ellen stopped being able to perform that function about 10 years ago. She was much beloved by her parish and others in the Orthodox music scene in South Florida.

The Russians have a 9-day memorial in addition to those that we commemorate. Margaret Sarafoglu, Tony Rodolakis and I joined the choir in her honor for that day. +Father Kirrill was very moved by our gesture and we decided that we would try to get some more singers to join their voices for her 40 day memorial, which we did on August 30. Kathy Chapekis of St. Mark's in Boca Raton, Kathryn Sapnes of St. Sophia (both altos) and Zoran Polic of Christ the Savior OCA in Miami Lakes (tenor) joined Margaret and Leon Karahalidis and the whole of St. Nicholas' regular choir for this special occasion. While the tunes and sometimes the language were quite a challenge for the non-Slavs representatives of the Pan-Orthodox Choir, we did our best, adding voices to each vocal section, enabling their "sing every part" guy, Mark Karahalidis (yes, Leon's brother) to sing bass with me. Zoran Polic, the tenor from Christ the Savior, knew the Slavonic words and music, so it was a breeze for him.

**Not too early for a worthy student to apply for the Scholarship 100!**

[Click here for the Scholarship 100 Application form!](#)



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