

Food for Thought

Greek Australian Women's Network



**Quarterly Newsletter
Issue 8
December 2007**



In this edition:

T ogether,	From the Editor	Page 2
H ellenic women	President's Report 2007	Page 3-4
I nspire	Carer Issues: By Maria Zissimos—Toscas	Page 5-6
N urture and	Handy Tips for Water Saving	Page 7
K indle	DVD and Movie Reviews	Page 9
T houghts of	Members' Profiles	Page 10
A ustralian	Photo Snippets	Page 11
N etworking		
K inships		



FROM THE EDITOR

Dear members, welcome to the December edition of the Food For Thought Newsletter. I hope that you will find it interesting and informative. I know very well that the festive season is approaching and (once again) us women have to run around organising family gatherings, holidays, even our children's school arrangements for next year. Good luck to everyone.

Before giving you an outlook of what follows I would like to extend my gratitude to Konstantina Gerolymou and congratulate her for putting together the September edition in my absence. Her reviews' page is always my favourite one.

I think that it is of profound importance for all members and non-members to know about the achievements of FFTN in 2007. That is why our President's report is published fully in this edition. Maria Zissimos—Toscas, a regular contributor to our newsletter, is looking into carer issues with a "twist", in other words, from the Greek Australian perspective. Following that and on the pretext that a very warm summer lies ahead of us, an informative article on how to save water during the hot summer months, we feel that interests everyone. Our members' profiles, a standard feature of our newsletter, follow and our last page is dedicated to a review of our last function with photos as well as some reminders for our future functions. In closing special thanks go o all our contributors. Merry Christmas, enjoy your holidays and have a healthy and creative New Year.

Eugenia Pavlopoulou

CURRENT FFTN COMMITTEE 2007			EDITORIAL COMMITTEE		
<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Area of work/profession</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Area of work</i>
Varvara Ioannou	President	Education/ HR Health and Wellbeing Program Manager	Eugenia Pavlopoulou	<u>Newsletter</u> <u>Editor</u>	Media /Journalist
Lynda Moraki	Vice-President	Aviation/Pilot			
Marie Spiroulis	Treasurer	Medical/General Practitioner	Konstantina Gerolymou	Assistant Editor	Education/ Journalism
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Barbara Yerondais	Fundraising	Construction/Architect			
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Anthoula Paraskeva	Public Relations	Communication/Interpreter			
Konstantina Gerolymou	Assistant Editor/ media officer/ website maintenance	Education/Journalism	Georgia Prattis	Member	Consultant

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2007

The Year At A Glance

The Food For Thought Greek Australian Women's Network is built on diversity principles and encourages diversity of thought and interests. The Committee is reflective of the diversity principles that the Network was founded on and meets monthly. Our aim is to empower our members in the areas of work, family, health/wellbeing, language and culture. For this purpose we organise networking forums over dinner with a motivational speaker relating to one of the dimensions mentioned above, produce an e-newsletter, have a website, organise a philosophy cafe and run an informal mentoring program.

2006- 2007 is the sixth year of the Food for Thought Greek Australian Women's Network.

Major achievements consisted of a more active committee, resulting in increased attendance at the five networking forums held. Three of these forums were offered free of charge to our members.

We fundraised \$2,000 for the Young Action on Breast Cancer Network to help the group organise a conference for young women diagnosed with breast cancer.

Four issues of the newsletter have been produced and we have been able to maintain and develop our website. The visits to the website have doubled.



NETWORKING FORUMS

The networking forums have a development focus and are a good opportunity for learning and networking. They are run on a Friday night at a restaurant that offers a separate room. Yiannis Tavern, the Greek Community Building, Vic Health and the Cyprus Community premises have been utilised this financial year. Attendance varied from 60- 200 people. The cost remains low and it covers the food, drinks and development.

The following networking forums took place:

- Building Resilience for Health and Happiness

Speaker: Stuart Taylor, Director Resilience Institute

Date: 11 August 2006 - (60 people attended)

Venue: Vic Health

The aim of this networking forum was to raise awareness about the importance of resilience and provide some tips of how to build resilience.

Resilience is a key competence to help you live and work with and ultimately reach out to your full potential. "...more than education, more than experience, more than training, a person's level of resilience will determine whether he succeeds in life." Harvard Business Review May 2002.

The guest speaker Stuart Taylor, Director of the Resilience Institute was extremely motivating, engaging and funny and spoke not only from an academic point of view but from a first-hand experience having recovered from cancer.

- Speak up - Make your voice heard – incorporating the AGM (free event)

Speaker: Christopher Gogos, Managing Director, Neos Kosmos (60 people attended)

Date: 17 November 2006

Venue: Greek Orthodox Community Building of Melbourne and Victoria

The aim of this networking forum was to explore the role of the ethnic media in promoting multicultural principles in view of the underlying issues of racism behind the controversy of citizenship, refugees, asylum seekers, and the backward steps towards assimilation, monoculturalism and monolingualism.

(continued page 4)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2007*(Continued from page 4)***- Sharing stories about living with breast cancer****Guest speaker:** Mary-Macheras (150 people attended)**Date:** Friday 16 March,**Venue:** Yiannis Tavern on Breast Cancer.

The aim of this networking forum was two fold:

Firstly to raise awareness about breast cancer and promote the excellent work of our guest speaker Mary Macheras Magia is doing by supporting other breast cancer survivors through the Young Action Group on Breast Cancer. Secondly to fundraise for this group in order to help them organize a conference to bring together young women who are breast cancer survivors? We raised \$2,000 for this group.

- "What Men Don't Talk About"**Guest Speakers:** Maggie Hamilton and Nick Theophilou**Date:** Friday 20 April 2007, Greek Orthodox Community of Melbourne and Victoria – free event for members (60 people attended)**Venue:** Greek Orthodox Community Building of Melbourne and Victoria

The aim of this networking forum was to provide an avenue for discussion about relationships with the view to better understanding the men in our lives: father, brother, son, lover, partner, grandfather, uncle and friend.

This Networking forum was one of our most successful events in terms of impact and feedback that we have received for a while. It is very satisfying to hear that our members have been helped to improve their relationships and have increased their understanding of their partners given the inspiration and the practical tips our two speakers provided.

- "What every woman should know about breast and ovarian Cancer "**Guest speaker:** Dr. Helen Zorbas director of the National Breast Cancer Network,**Date:** Sunday 27 May. (200 people)**Venue:** Cypriot Community Building

This was the second in a series of seminars on the subject of breast and ovarian cancer targeting older women. As the seminar was aimed at educating older women about breast and ovarian cancer we approached the Cultural group of the Cyprus Community and the Greek Australian Cultural League.

This partnership proved very useful and we were able to talk to around 200 women at the Cypriot Community building. Cathy Alexopoulos and Mary Macheras Magia added to the success of this function sharing their own stories battling ovarian and breast cancer.

e- NEWSLETTER (<http://www.fftn.org.au/Pages/eNewsletter.htm>)

The e-newsletter was launched to mark the 5th year anniversary. The aim of the newsletter is to encourage member dialogue and contributions. There are 4 issues a year which provide a diverse mix of stories/news. We take the opportunity to report on the Networks' activities, profile our members, and provide book and film reviews, interesting new research material and information and other news of interest to members including poetry and recipes.

The editorial Committee consisted of Maria Zissimos founding editor 2006, Eugenia Pavlopoulou – editor, 2007, Konstantina Gerolymou, Dr Georgina Tsolidis, Georgia Prattis and I (Varvara Ioannou)

WEBSITE (<http://www.fftn.org.au>)

The website became live in January 2006 and has consistently increased the number of hits per month. It is easy to navigate. It includes information of how to join, why join the network, the history, past & current and future networking forums, the philosophy café, testimonials and the quarterly e-newsletter.

Varvara Ioannou

Carer issues in the Greek Australian Community: Points of discussion

By Maria Zissimos –Toscas*

One of the most important issues facing Greek Australians of our generation is caring for the elderly. Who would take care of mum and dad? How? How long? Who would pay? Who has the time? All these and many more are amongst the most frequent asked questions of second generation Greek Australians. These are the same people who are already caring for a young family. Hence one more justification of the name "the sandwich generation".

Carer issues arise in many contexts, across a broad range of age-groups and circumstances like:

Ageing population:

Looking after elderly with a range of health problems

- Disability – Physical or mental: Caring for someone with a disability (e.g., a child with autism or Down's Syndrome, an accident induced disability, a disability due to illness such as renal failure etc).

- Life threatening illness: Caring for someone facing an illness like cancer. This applies at any age, not just the ageing population.

In the meantime awareness of available carer support services is low amongst the Greek Australian community according to anecdotal evidence.

Many are not aware of:

- How and where can the services be accessed, (Short term/long term, in home/respite services)
- The benefit and/or value of accessing support

"ANYONE ANYTIME CAN BE A CARER. CARERS DO NOT CHOOSE THIS ROLE THE ROLE OUT OF NECESSITY CHOOSES THEM"

- The impact of caring for someone has on the person they care for and their family

Additionally, seeking help is often perceived to be a weakness and carries a negative connotation.

Many people feel reluctant to reach out for help due to cultural barriers (what will others think of them if they send their loved one to respite care etc, how they feel, the expectations of the person they are caring for in terms of how they are cared for). There are also negative perceptions of nursing homes.



Often carers feel ostracized from their extended families or isolate themselves as they do not feel they are understood or supported.

- Disability and mental illness, are taboo topics. Many people feel reluctant to talk about them.

- Broader public health ethno-specific campaigns to educate people in the community, need to take

place

- Awareness of mental health issues needs to be improved amongst the Greek Australian community (For example, many second generation Greek Australians are embarrassed to admit that their parent develops Alzheimers or dementia and often isolate themselves from the rest of the extended family due to confusion about what diseases are contagious – "you cannot catch dementia by visiting someone who has it").

(Continued page 6)

Carer issues in the Greek Australian Community: Points for discussion

By *Maria Zissimos– Toscas* *

(Continued from page 5)

SANDWICH GENERATION ISSUES

Many of the generations Xs are having two sets of caring responsibilities as many are having children later, so they are caring for young children and ageing parents, which places a lot of stress on their family unit and well-being.

There is also family conflict associated with whom is going to look after an ageing parent which leads to more problems:

- Many family relationships deteriorate when a caring situation arises.
- Families need help to learn how to put an action plan that will assist them in managing their caring duties, as often the main responsibility falls on one sibling, even when there are multiple siblings.

Since many carers in the Greek community are "doing it alone", they would benefit from counseling and support because more often than not they feel overwhelmed.

Counseling and support can be as simple as:

- Someone who they can talk to over the phone.
- A person outside of the family with whom they can go out and have a coffee with and chat to, about their situation.
- Someone who can visit them in their home, but focus on the carer and their needs.

Carer burn-out:

The majority of carers are women who volunteer and have little support. As anecdotal evidence indicates there are limited resources for these carers in the community. One carer I spoke to said she had to leave her ageing mother, who was dying from cancer, at home alone to go for an emergency visit to the dentist.

She felt overwhelmed; she had been caring for her mother and mother in law for a protracted period of time and was experiencing carer burn-out.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED

- More ethno-specific carer support like:

More carers who speak Greek or understand the Greek culture and values, both in-home and respite.

- Cross cultural training of carers?

- Respite that caters for a fairly homogeneous group of people from similar backgrounds (e.g. southern European)



-Emotional and financial support for those who care for their loved ones long distance (e.g., in Greece or interstate)

** Maria Zissimos– Toscas is a member of FFTN. Maria studied at Monash University and holds an Honours and Masters Degree in Science. During her 15 years working life she has worked in the public health, research consulting and medical research areas.*

Carers Victoria is a unique organisation whose focus is on the carer. They provide Counseling and support to the carer where many of the other services focus on the person cared for

Do you know someone who is struggling ? please let them know of this organisation.

Telephone: 1800 242 636

If you need a interpreter please call 131 450

www.carersvic.org.au

HANDY TIPS FOR WATER SAVING



Water saving... in the kitchen

The kitchen is a major consumer of water in the home, using around 10% of total household water consumption for cooking, cleaning, washing or drinking.

Some handy tips:

- Avoid wasting drinking water from a running tap, collect it in a bottle or jug and store it in the fridge until it is cool enough to drink.
- Garbage-disposal units use about 30 litres of water per day. Put suitable food scraps into a composter or worm farm rather than down the kitchen sink.

Dishwasher Tips

- Look for dishwashers that have a National Water Conservation or WELS Label. The best water rating achieved by dishwashers currently on the market is 4 star.
- Only use the dishwasher when you have a full load.
- Use the rinse-hold setting on the dishwasher, if it has one, rather than rinsing dishes under the tap.

Top Tap Tips

- When washing dishes by hand, don't rinse them under a running tap. If you have two sinks, fill the second one with rinsing water. If you have only one sink, stack washed dishes in a dish rack and rinse them with a pan of hot water.
 - Use washing up liquid sparingly as this will reduce the amount of rinsing required when washing dishes by hand.
 - Use a plugged sink or a pan of water. This saves running the tap continuously.
- When boiling vegetables, use enough water to cover them and keep the lid on the saucepan. Your vegetables will boil quicker and it will save you water, power and preserve precious vitamins in the food.
- Flow controlled aerators for taps are inexpensive and can reduce water flow by 50%.
 - Don't use running water to defrost frozen food. Ideally place food in refrigerator to defrost overnight.
 - Catch running water whilst waiting for it to warm up. Use it to water plants, rinse dishes or wash fruit and vegetables.
 - If you have a leaking tap, replace the washer or other components as required. Dripping taps can waste 30 – 200 litres of water per day.
 - Insulate hot water pipes. This avoids wasting water while waiting for hot water to flow through and saves energy.
 - Make sure your hot water system thermostat is not set too high. Adding cold water to cool very hot water is wasteful.

For more information please visit <http://www.savewater.com.au/>

POST-MENOPAUSAL WOMEN

The Centre for Clinical Studies is seeking healthy post-menopausal women to participate in a clinical trial to investigate the effects of a new contraceptive transdermal spray applied topically.

Are you post-menopausal?

Are you aged between 45 and 65?

Are you *not* on Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)?

If you responded Yes to these questions and you are interested in participating, we would like to hear from you. Please call for more information on

1800 243 733

Or

Email us at contactus@centreforclinicalstudies.com

Participants may receive financial reimbursement for time and travel.

The trial will be held at the Centre for Clinical Studies, located at Level 5,
The Burnet Building, 89 Commercial Road, Melbourne Victoria 3004.

DISCLAIMER: The above is a paid advertisement

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

If you wish to send an article to be included in the next edition of the newsletter, please email the editor at editor@fftn.org.au by 15th of February. Also please feel free to email us your suggestions for topics that you would like us to consider for future FFTN functions and/or newsletter editions. We require that by submitting an article for an edition, you are giving us permission to use the article in future editions of the newsletter or magazine editions, giving full credit to its author(s). However we do not guarantee that all articles will be published. Please note that the views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual and not necessarily of FFTN members or its committee.

We would also like to hear from you in relation to any events, restaurant or book and movie suggestions. Do not hesitate to send us a review so that we can let others in the network know. And last but not least, we are in the process of collating a business register and we are keen to hear from members who would like to sponsor our newsletter. We will include advertising space in every edition to thank our sponsors.

DVD and Movie Reviews

By Konstantina Gerolymou



Breaking and entering

the latest film by Oscar winner director Anthony Minghella provides more food for thought than your average movie. Then again

Minghella (*The English Patient*, *The talented Mr Ripley* and many more well known movies) is not your average director. Brilliantly written, also by Minghella, the film uses a series of break-ins to demonstrate the complexity of relationships, the emotional trespassing into other people's lives and the snowballing effect of their consequences.

It's the story of Will (Jude Law), an architect, whose office is being broken into by a gang of youth. Will stakes out his place and chases away one of the young men who was attempting to break into his office. He finds out where the young man lives and meets his mother Amira, a widowed Bosnian refugee (Juliet Binoche), under a pretext. A relationship between the two begins and Will for the first time does not look so sure about himself. He's been in a ten year relationship with a woman who has a daughter with a compulsive disorder; this has taken its toll on their relationship. The distance between the two is widening which is evident from the opening scene of the movie. Will, however, soon will found out that his love interest has an agenda of her own.

Jude Law – who was not among my favourite actors until this movie - portrays convincingly Will and succeeds in engaging the audience in his emotional journey but it is Juliet Binoche who steals the performance: her face shows every emotion and struggle, internal or otherwise, and her words delivered right down the line and often like a knife (e.g: "In my country names are like flags").

Breaking and Entering makes no judgements. It is totally engrossing and full of suspense. I could have kept on watching well beyond the two hours of its duration.

Available on DVD.

New releases

Hunting & Gathering

A romantic, enchanting film by French director Claude Berri starring Audrey Tautou in an engaging performance. The movie is about an emotional triangle and the bumpy journey of Camille, Phillibert and Franck to finding fulfilment. The subtext refers to intergenerational relations and caring for the elderly. The movie's most engaging aspect is the total absence of rose-colored glasses to the relationship between Camille and Franck. Each of them carry their own emotional baggage. As he starts to fall in love with her she tries to guard herself against the painful unpredictability of the future and "stabs" him by saying "We drink, we fuck, we don't fall in love". But fear not! The movie does have a happy ending: once Camille realises that it isn't that scary to truly connect to another human being the road seems a lot smoother.

Elizabeth: The Golden Age

A brilliant sequel to **Elizabeth** with the same stellar cast of Cate Blanchet, Geoffrey Rush and Clive Owen joined by another Aussie actor Abbie Cornish in the role of Bess. This movie focuses on Elizabeth's multifaceted role as the queen, the politician and the woman. It gives with remarkable skill the battles that Elizabeth had to give on a number of fronts: the court, the suitors, the international politics, the internal power struggles, the personal intrigues, the minefield of relationships. The loneliness of Elizabeth the woman contrasts sharply and unequivocally with Elizabeth the queen and master politician. She manages to save her throne and her country, although the odds are against her, but she pays the heavy price of being unloved and unfulfilled. The scene which gives her one and only kiss in the movie is heart wrenching. However, Elizabeth the queen soars in new heights. The performances are excellent and Cate Blanchet seems like she can do no wrong.

MEMBER'S PROFILES

ATHENA ZISSIADIS

FFTN Member

**1. I was born in...**

Queen Victoria Hospital (now QV shopping centre).

2. My family originates from...

Ampelokipi Kastoria – both mum and dad are from the same village and mum migrated to Australia in 1955.

3. My three favourite foods are...

Galaktobourekos, Kastoriani Pita, Ladoo (Indian sweets)

4. In my spare time I like to...

Collect blue and white china from antique stores – do some voluntary work with disabled children and enjoy the luxury of being able to do absolutely nothing with nothing to worry about.

5. My favourite holiday destination is...

My house and village in Greece. It's the place where I get smothered in love, visit the 200 Byzantine churches of Kastoria and feel the presence of thousands of years of history.

6. I am currently reading....

The Five people you meet in Heaven

7. Favourite all time film

A Bollywood movie called "Veer Zara" Waterloo Bridge is on the top of my list.

8. I joined the Food For Thought Network because...

There will come a time when both my parents will not be on this earth – this Network is something that will allow us all to come together and remember, learn and keep our culture alive. It will be an important Network to all for support and love as we go through difficult times, a place where we can all come together and have a laugh, learn something new and meet new people.

9. I am passionate about ...

My son would have to come first, teaching him to respect women and human beings - helping disabled children - become accepted and respected citizens in our society – my heritage and my family.

10. I work as a

National Practice Manager for Professional Legal Group and run a practice with 62 happy staff – I say happy because since I came here in February we are all happy.

ANTHOULA PARASKEVA

FFTN Committee Member

**1. I was born in...**

The beautiful Ionian island of Lefkada, Greece. Came to Australia in 1961.

2. My family originates from...

Both of my parents were born in Lefkada.

3. My three favourite foods are...

Avgolemeono, Rizogalo and Ice cream and food as long as I don't

have to cook it.

4. In my spare time I like to.....

Read, relax and have coffee with friends and family in Lygon Street.

5. My favourite holiday destination is...

Europe or Queensland

6. I am currently reading...

Broken Lives by Estelle Blackburn. True story of serial killer Edgar Cookes crimes. He was hanged in Western Australia

7. Favourite all time film

Madam X, the original with Lana Turner. I would appreciate a copy if anyone has one.

8. I joined the Food For Thought Network because...

Initially as a social event. I attended function on domestic violence and from then became a committed member and now committee member. Serious life topics handled with sensitivity—very important for all of us.

9. I am passionate about ...

My family, my friends my work and helping others less fortunate than me.

10. I work as an

Interpreter for 30 years. It has been immensely satisfying and although not as busy now days I will continue to work for as long as I can—I prefer to be out than in.

We Always Have a Great Time

October 19th was an informative night full of happy faces and moving surprises. Our speaker, Rolland Naufal, provided our guests with first hand experience, backed by international tours and research in the area of ageing well. Some of the issues he explored in this highly informative session were directions on aged care development and possible future paths that Australia could follow on aged care facilities. The Dutch model, which included groundbreaking arrangements and settings for the elderly and their families, had a profound affect on his thinking and future career directions.

The audience responded positively to the ideas he introduced. Mr Naufal was impressed with the level of participation, the vitality of the participants and the interest his talk generated.

In the meantime we all had the opportunity to mingle with friends and make new ones.

The highlight of the night was when Anthea Sidiropoulos, one of our committee member's, surprised her mum who was turning 80 on that particular day.

1. The FFTN Committee (from left) Anthea, Jane, Konstantina, Varvara, Lynda, Marie, Barbara, Eugenia, (absent Anthoula)

2. Anthoula Paraskeva (centre) with friends

3. Athena Zissiadis (second right) with friends

4. Mrs Sidiropoulos was caught by surprise when the 100 guests wished her Happy 80th Birthday!



End of year celebration! All Welcome!

DATE: Thursday 20 December

VENUE: Railway Cafe & Bar, Platform 1, Middle Brighton Station (off Church St), Brighton, from 7.30pm. **BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL**

CALL: Anthoula on 0419663257 or Railway Cafe on 9610 6260