

National Philoptochos Society 2016-2018 President's Report



Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos

Elaine Zetes, President

It is with great pleasure that I extend greetings to you from the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Chapters. With the spiritual guidance of His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios, we continue to work together to further the mission of Philoptochos throughout New England.

I am pleased to report on the activities of the Metropolis Philoptochos Board since the last Convention in 2016. The Board delegates returned from Nashville with an invigorated and renewed sense of purpose, inspired by the wonderful sessions and incredible spirit present at the Convention. The delegates shared what they had learned with their Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Board Sisters and in turn, the Board decided it was critical to commit to a more concentrated effort to increase engagement and better share information with the Metropolis Chapters. We chose to employ several methods to achieve our goal: first, we initiated a project to re-design and refresh content on the Philoptochos pages of the Metropolis website; and secondly, we committed to more personal contact with the Chapters throughout the Metropolis.

On Saturday, June 17, 2017, the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos Biennial Conference convened at the Annunciation Cathedral Center in Brookline, Massachusetts. His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios opened the meeting with a prayer and brief remarks, followed by comments from the Cathedral Dean, Rev. Dr. Demetrios Tonias, Cathedral Philoptochos Chapter President Calliope Galatis, and Metropolis Board President Frances Levas.

We were honored to have Social Services Director, Paulette Geanacopoulos, LMSW, present an overview of the National Philoptochos Department of Social Work. She discussed the program and explained how financial assistance grants were made, emphasizing that confidentiality is key. She shared some high-level data in the aggregate, including number of cases by Metropolis, number of people helped, and the dollar amounts granted. After responding to several questions, Paulette concluded by thanking Metropolitan Methodios and the Metropolis of Boston Chapters for their strong support of the Social Services program.

The remainder of the Conference was devoted to matters of business including the 2017-2019 budget, resolutions, and elections. A resolution was passed to establish a new Metropolis commitment, the Metropolis Social Services Fund, to begin in October 2018. A second resolution to increase the Metropolis per capita in 2018 to \$10 was approved. Philippa Condakes, Metropolis Board Advisor, reviewed the election procedures, after which elections were held. Conference co-chairs Irene Stefanakos and Elaine Zetes closed the meeting with words of appreciation to outgoing President Levas, presenting her with a lovely bouquet of flowers, a Philoptochos pin, and a small gift from the Board members.

On September 29, 2017, the new Board gathered for their first meeting of the year and began planning a major fundraiser for Spring 2018. The event was held on April 26th at St. Demetrios Church in Weston, MA, with keynote speaker Yvette Manassis Corporon, award-winning author of *Something Beautiful Happened: A Story of Survival and Courage in the Face of Evil*. Before a crowd of over 250 people, including His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios, Reverend Clergy, representatives from the Greek Consulate of Boston, Metropolis Philoptochos Sisters, and friends of Philoptochos, Yvette discussed the fascinating account of her grandmother

Metropolis of Boston President's Report (continued)

who helped hide a Jewish family on a Greek Island during World War II. In the beautifully decorated setting of St. Demetrios, guests enjoyed an evening of wine, food, shopping, book signing, and sociability. The evening was dedicated to the memory of Fotini Tournas, beloved sister of His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios and life-long supporter of Philoptochos. I am thrilled to report that our event was a resounding financial and social success, with plans already underway for a second author event in 2019.

Proceeds from the April 26 event will benefit the Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos ministries and enable our continued support of: The Metropolis of Boston Camp, St. Methodios Faith & Heritage Retreat Center, and Philoxenia House, as well as other ministries including Operation Housewarming for Homeless Veterans, Pine Street Inn, Holy Trinity Nursing & Rehab Center-Worcester, Hellenic Nursing & Rehab Center-Canton, Hellenic College Holy Cross, and the Metropolis Laity Awards.

In March, the Board was invited to the Ordination of Archdeacon Dionysios Papiris at the Taxiarchae Church in Watertown, MA., followed by a luncheon reception hosted by the Watertown Philoptochos Chapter.

On May 17, representatives from the Veterans Administration came to the Metropolis Center and picked up Operation Housewarming barrels filled with items generously donated by the Chapters. To date, we have provided support to over 600 veterans transitioning from homelessness.

The Metropolis Board is the official host of the Vesper receptions in celebration of St. Andrew (November 29) and Saint Methodios (June 14), and of the Metropolis Oratorical Festival which was held recently on May 5th. We continue to fulfill these duties with much pleasure.

Lastly, the Board, the Metropolis National Board members, and the Metropolis Chapters, have been working diligently to prepare for the 2018 National Philoptochos Convention in our great city from July 1 – 5. As the Convention Hosts, we look forward to welcoming our Philoptochos Sisters and the Clergy Laity Congress to Boston. We hope to delight our guests with a memorable experience reaffirming that *All Things are Possible to the One Who Believes in Christ*.

In closing, I would like to thank: His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios for his continued support, spiritual guidance, and love; the members of my Board who have been and continue to be the best and most enthusiastic team anyone could ask for; and the Chapters of the Metropolis of Boston for their belief in our mission, for their philanthropy, and for their commitment to performing the good works of Philoptochos.

With love in the Lord,

Elaine Zetes

Metropolis of Boston Philoptochos President
& 2018 National Convention Co-chair