



JOHN GIOURMETAKIS (1925 - 2005)
PAST CANADIAN PRESIDENT, AHEPA

The AHEPA FAMILY and AHEPANS internationally were saddened to hear of the passing of John Giourmetakis, Past President of AHEPA Canada on October 5, 2005.

John was born in Thessaloniki, Greece, spent several years in Austria and later moved to Edmonton in 1955 where he met his wife Erika to whom he was married for forty-nine years. Besides Erika, his immediate survivors include two daughters, Ellen and Gabrielle and a son, Mark. John was involved in several service organizations besides the AHEPA, including the Masonic Lodge, and the Shriners. He also served as president of St. George's Greek Orthodox Church Community in the 70's.

John was initiated in Chapter CJ10 in 1957 where he held several positions with distinction, including that of President. He also held the position of District Governor in District #24 before being elected to the position of Canadian President of the AHEPA. He was a dedicated member of the Order giving untirelessly of his time and energy. He faithfully attended on a regular basis most Annual Supreme Conventions, all District conventions and was widely respected for his commitment to the Order.

Following is an edited version of comments made by Nicholas Spillios, Canadian President at John's Funeral Service held on October 8, 2005.

"It is an honour and privilege to bring the deep felt sympathy and condolences for our departed brother, Past Canadian President John Giourmetakis on behalf of Canadian AHEPANS and the AHEPA FAMILY.

John was Mr. AHEPA to me - a title I bestowed upon him many years ago but one which I personally felt was well deserved. And which I might add he answered to. He was a 49-year-member of AHEPA Chapter CJ10 and was a loyal member of St. George's Greek Orthodox Church whose services he attended regularly, often as a chanter.

When a number of AHEPANS visited him at the hospital on the night before he passed away, he whispered AHEPA to all around him. It was a touching moment for all of us. The Order meant so much to him and he meant so much to the Order. In our chapter he took the responsibility for visiting every ill member of the Chapter and reported back to us on their state of health.

He was known nationally and internationally as a strong voice for our organization. If ever we wanted to know anything about any matter, it was John we turned to. What is the protocol for inaugurating new members? - Ask John. How many delegates are we entitled to at a convention? Ask John. After I became President, I was constantly asked, "And how is John?"

I was his roommate at the AHEPA Stamp Unveiling in Ottawa not long ago. I learned that next to his wife, Erika, and family he loved good food and snoring. He was aware of it and seemed to take pride in it. But he was a lovable snorer.

I would not be President if John had not supported me. In fact, as late as last July at the convention in Boston, it was he who rose to speak on my nomination as ill as he was on the floor. At that time, he remarked to me, "this is my last convention." He instinctively knew that his time had come.

He is going to be sorely missed. His advice was invaluable, his dedication paramount and his presence irreplaceable.

Our condolences are extended to Erika and his family, including his children and grandchildren of whom he often spoke. He spoke often of Erika and recently confided to me, "We've had a good marriage". What greater compliment could a husband make to his wife.

May his soul rest in peace."

John was involved with many service organizations including The Masonic Lodge, and the Shriners in addition to the Order of Ahepa. He enjoyed working with these groups to help others and was also the cornerstone of John G Auto Service, a long-standing automotive repair shop in Edmonton.

The family would like to thank the staff of Station 51 at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for their kind and compassionate care during John's short stay. As well, they would like to thank staff at the Cross Cancer Institute and the University of Alberta Hospital.

Donations may be made directly to the Kids with Cancer Society, #307, 8215 - 112 Street, Edmonton, AB T6G 2C8, or to the charity of one's choice.