

**Anastasios (Ernest) Antonis considers the United Arcadians of San Francisco #35 and the Pan Arcadian Federation of America to be part of his soul - he is a member and past president and vice-president for over 30 years!**

**Anastasios (Ernest) Antonis** was born and raised in the town of Karitsa, Laconia, Greece. His beloved mother, Panayiotia Antoniou, was born and raised in the mountain village of Kounoupia (Kinourias), Arcadia—a land steeped in culture, history, and the enduring spirit of Hellenism. His father, Christos Antoniou, was born and raised in Karitsa, Laconia, and passed away when Anastasios was just three years old. With tremendous strength and perseverance, Panayiotia raised nine children on her own during incredibly difficult times in Greece. She worked hard to keep the family together, protect them, and surround them with love and guidance despite the hardships of war and loss. From this foundation, Anastasios learned early the values of resilience, unity, sacrifice, and the importance of caring for others.

He was raised with a deep sense of Hellenic pride, cultural preservation, orthodoxy and duty to family and community.

On December 25, 1952, Anastasios arrived in the United States together with his brother Paul Antonis, settling in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he worked as a farmhand for his aunt and uncle. Though young and far from home, he embodied selflessness from the start—sending back nearly 98% of his earnings to support his family in Greece. That spirit of giving never left him. Two years later, he moved to San Francisco, California, where he began building the life and community he would come to cherish for decades. Later in life, their eldest brother Lambros Antonis moved from Greece to San Francisco to join them, further strengthening the presence and bond of Arcadians in the diaspora. In 1968, Anastasios returned to Greece, where he met his beloved bride, Adamantia, in the town of Geraki (Sparta). They married in June 1968 and later settled in San Francisco. Together, they raised two daughters, Patricia and Anastasia, continuing the family legacy with love, strength, and pride. They have two wonderful sons-in-laws. Anastasios and Adamantia are proud grandparents of four beautiful grandchildren, who carry on the Greek values, culture, and Hellenism that have always been central to their family.

Despite working tirelessly—often two jobs, seven days a week—Anastasios remained committed to community and heritage. When introduced to the Pan Arcadian Federation of America and the **United Arcadians of San Francisco Chapter No. 35**, he joined with honor and pride. Through the years, his dedication only grew. He eventually served a total of 10 years as Vice President and President of the chapter, where his leadership is a lasting and meaningful impact and strong contributor and current member!

During his presidency with **United Arcadians of San Francisco Chapter #35**, the chapter grew from 46 members to 106, driven by Anastasios' passion for connection and purpose. He understood that being Arcadian was not just about celebrating tradition, but also about giving back. He represented the chapter proudly at many conventions, including those in San Francisco,

Long Beach, Utah, Oakland and Greece. One of the greatest honors of his involvement was serving as a delegate at the Pan Arcadian national convention in Tripoli, Greece—bringing his lifelong journey full circle. Under his guidance, the organization also hosted regular social events, including breakfast club gatherings, membership dinners, the annual Vasilopita (New Year's Bread Cutting), and the beloved annual fundraising dinner.

At every annual dinner, the **United Arcadians of San Francisco Chapter #35** paid tribute to the legendary Arcadian war hero, General Theodoros Kolokotronis, whose leadership led to the first major victory of the Greek War of Independence. It was Kolokotronis who led the Greek army to drive the Turks out of Tripolitsa, marking a pivotal moment in the fight for freedom and national pride. Anastasios felt deeply connected to this legacy and believed it was essential to keep this history alive for future generations.

These events often featured Greek musicians from Arcadia, bringing a true taste of Greece to the Bay Area and fostering deep fellowship among members. One of Anastasios' favorite traditions was marching proudly in the Greek Independence Day Parade on March 25 through the streets of San Francisco, alongside fellow Arcadians and a float that celebrated freedom, culture, and unity.

His commitment to philanthropy extended far beyond local efforts. Under his leadership, the chapter supported numerous charitable initiatives in both the United States and Greece. In Athens, they helped fundraise for and contributed to the creation of a food bank, created discounted food programs, and paid utility bills for families in need. They helped raise funds for hospitals in Tripoli and helped contribute toward the purchase of medical vehicles and ambulances, ensuring vital care could reach those in need. The Chapter also awarded scholarships to students pursuing higher education. When natural disasters struck, such as the devastating floods on the East Coast of the United States, the chapter responded swiftly with support and financial relief.

Anastasios and his beloved wife, Adamantia, personally contributed to the Pan Arcadian Federation of America's efforts to support **the Pan Arcadian Hospital in Tripoli, Greece**—an institution close to their hearts. Their giving was always done with humility, love, and never sought recognition for his efforts. He always has a smile on his face, and carries himself with grace, dignity, and respect for everyone he met. A true gentleman, he is deeply respected by others and equally appreciative of all who have worked alongside him in the spirit of unity. Anastasios has also been honored with a special award by the organization - A recognition that reflects the deep appreciation and respect of his peers.

He often says, "It takes a village "Μια χωρια"— make things happen." He firmly believed that the strength of the community came from everyone working together, lifting one another up, and never forgetting where they came from.

In closing, **Anastasios (Ernest) Antonis considers the United Arcadians of San Francisco #35 and the Pan Arcadian Federation of America** to be part of his soul. To him, this is

more than an organization—it is a family. He has a deep zest for life, a boundless love for his heritage, and a powerful hope that the work of this organization will live on for his children, his grandchildren, and the next generations to carry forward.

May his example be a guiding light, and may the Arcadian spirit continue to thrive forever.

