

THE ART OF MEDITERRANEAN LIVING

# lebanese

MONTHLY  MAGAZINE

**THE CAR ISSUE**

**CRUISIN'**  
with the  
**MOTOR CITY**  
**AUSSIE**

**Jacques**  
**Nasser**

FEBRUARY 2006  
VOLUME ONE  
ISSUE TWO  
USA • FREE

EXCLUSIVE  
**AUTOMOTIVE**  
Special Edition

**Bygones:**

Frank Sinatra,  
Danny Thomas &  
Woodrow W. Woody  
do **Miami**

Also:

Undiscovered Treasure  
**Lebanese Wines**

Souk: My **FIRST CAR**

Remembering  
*Christa McAuliffe*

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THE ART OF MEDITERRANEAN LIVING

# Lebanese

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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The Lebanese American News Agency, Inc.

Farmington Hills, Michigan USA

**LEBANESE MONTHLY MAGAZINE**

TEL +01.248.320.7300 FAX +01.248.848.8804

Email Address: info@lebanesemonthly.com

Website: www.lebanesenews.com

Subscription Rate • USA \$50/yr.

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**M**y first car will always be my baby. It was a gold-colored turbo-charged 1979 Pontiac Firebird Esprit stick shift with T-Tops. The Firebird was a sporty compact car built by the Pontiac Motor Division of General Motors and was characterized by its aggressive styling and affordable muscle car performance. It was only four years old when my parents surprised me with this glorious gift of vehicular transportation as a freshman in college. So many memories remain with me to this day of the times spent driving the streets of Detroit and its suburbs for a total of five years in my Firebird. It can be said that there truly is something about a man and his car.

### Meeting Jacques

I was first introduced to Jacques Nasser by then-Speaker of the House New Gingrich at the Henry Ford Estate in Dearborn, Michigan. Speaker Gingrich, the architect of the successful 1994 Republican Revolution and on a nationwide tour, had stopped through the Motor City the following year to meet with automotive executives. Having first met the Speaker a decade earlier – when I interviewed him for television to talk about his American Opportunity Society – at this event, I was more interested in meeting Jacques Nasser whose name was becoming more familiar to me with his leadership as Chairman of Ford Europe. When the gregarious Jacques walked into the room, talking with a number of Detroit’s top automotive brass from various automakers, he bore a comfortably charming smile with a confident yet charismatic personality. He shook my hand firmly looking me in the eyes and kindly greeted me.



I remember arriving at home that evening and calling my Uncle Elias – a lifetime Ford employee, who always joked that he and Jacques had a great deal in common. Both were born in Lebanon, and then moved to Australia, worked for years at Ford Motor Company, and finally made Detroit their permanent home. He asked me what I thought of Jacques and I responded: “I liked him – I really liked him.” Since that first meeting, I would see Jacques several more times: at the first Inauguration & Inaugural Ball for President George W. Bush held at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC; grabbing a cup of coffee on the run at a Starbucks on Michigan Avenue while he was still CEO of Ford; and at a fundraiser for a friend of mine running for Congress from New Jersey. At each of these meetings, I found him to be dapper, witty and always approachable. Last month, I had the rare opportunity to sit down with Jacques for nearly an hour in the ground level boardroom of his office in Bloomfield Hills. His story is one that many of us can relate to, growing up Lebanese.

### Lift Off

With our inaugural issue out and in the hands of readers, we thought it only appropriate to officially celebrate this premiere edition with an all out Celebrity Magazine Launch Party – and that’s exact-



ly what we did. On January 19 with a red carpet welcome, over 600 people made their way to a star-studded gala event. Erhard Land Rover of Farmington Hills, with its new line of 2006 Range Rovers on display, hosted the celebrity launch to a packed house of party-goers in downtown Farmington Hills near the trendy Novi Main Street Square. The excitement brewing about the debut of our energetic and unique feature newsmagazine premiering in December was palpable as proven by the enthusiastic revelers. But naturally, the atmosphere was electrified with the eager anticipation for the special guest of the event – Detroit’s own Karen Newman. Arriving at the event in true Hollywood fashion, the audience was clearly mesmerized by the radiant and lovely singer and actress.

By then, the crowd had swelled to standing room only, open testimony to Lebanese Monthly’s potential popularity and reach. Also on hand to celebrate were media A-listers, surprise guests, diplomats, corporate leaders, public officials, friends, family and the NGL, though the cover boy himself couldn’t attend – he was jetting back to Detroit from New York City after filling in on-air that morning for Rush Limbaugh. With cameras flashing, all present were set to party and herald the beginning of a new magazine targeted at the Next Generation of Lebanese Americans. Media and guests were treated to sensational Mediterranean Cuisine, Imported Wines and a Chocolate Fountain Tower of Fudge, while renowned jazz musician Eric Watson played through the night performing a range of medleys to entertain everyone’s tastes. The hard work of our Lebanese Monthly editorial team had paid off with the premiere issue, and CHEERS to Lebanese Monthly’s future milestones!



### Something New

The Lebanese Monthly Magazine team has added several new departments to our February issue including a recipe section, letters to the editor and upcoming events. We hope you will be informed, interactive, entertained and come along with us for the ride – it’s going to be amazing – because as Lebanese American actor Danny Thomas once said: **“He who denies his Heritage, has no Heritage.”** 📺

John G. Akouri



## GREAT FIRST ISSUE

I read your first issue of "Lebanese Monthly Magazine" and thought it was great. It is certainly nice to see a publication dedicated to the Lebanese community. I look forward to reading future issues. I am an active member (I also sit on the Parish Council) of the Our Lady of Redemption Melkite Church in Warren and would like to be considered as a guest columnist in the area of financial matters. I have many years of experience as a financial planner and investment manager, and thought your audience would find my insight worthwhile.

Jack K. Riashi, Jr.  
Farmington Hills, Michigan



## BRAVO!

Bravo and congratulations on a job well done on your inaugural issue. I read the publication cover to cover and enjoyed the content and layout. This new publication adds to the other fine Arab publications we are fortunate to have centered in Southeast Michigan. The interview with Paul "W" was well done. However, as a recent first time visitor to his family's hometown (and my own) of Zahle, I encourage Paul "W" to go for it and make the trip. He will be happy and proud he did. Please count me as a new subscriber.

David J. Allen  
Detroit, Michigan



## IMPRESSED

WOW! What a magazine, I am impressed! I just know you are going to do well.

Margaret M. Revels  
Romulus, MI

## ALNM SALUTES

The American Lebanese National Mission (ALNM) is very proud of John Akouri and his commitment to Lebanon and the Lebanese American community. He has been working around the clock for years to promote Lebanon, as a culture, as a society, as a heritage, as a community and as an identity. For that, we salute him and commit ourselves to help Lebanese Monthly become a very successful publication.

Dr. Hamid Kantara  
Houston, TX

## 100% HEARTFELT SUPPORT

I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart. I support you 100% and wish you the best. You picked up the best man for the magazine cover; most people didn't know that Paul W. Smith is Lebanese. Congratulation on your genius mind and love for your heritage. He, who denies his heritage, has no heritage.

Dr. Chucri Kadado  
Farmington Hills, Michigan

## BEAUTIFUL LEBANESE MAGAZINE

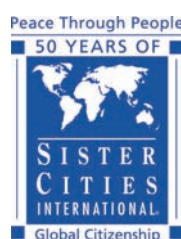
Congratulations! We wish you a successful premier issue and Good luck. I hope our friends in Metro Detroit will support this beautiful Lebanese magazine. Keep up the good work and best of luck in your new journey.

Eddie Michel Fadel  
Miami, Florida

## PUBLICATION CELEBRATES CULTURE

Congratulations on the publication of Lebanese Monthly Magazine. Thank you for providing a beautiful publication that celebrates the coming together of people and cultures. We look forward to seeing many issues that further understanding and goodwill.

Tim Honey, Sister Cities International  
Washington, DC



## EXCITEMENT & BLESSINGS

Congratulations on your new endeavor. I am very excited for you and I sincerely wish you the very best. Please let me know if you need any help with respect to anything. God bless you and your entire family and God Bless your new business venture.

Johnny Oram  
Lansing, Michigan

## HERITAGE PRIDE

I know it's a tad bit late, but I wanted to say "thank you" for the invitation to the Magazine Launch Party. I really think you've done a great job with the magazine and your online link. It's great to have someone out there trying to popularize our heritage and unite us! I'll definitely be looking forward to events to try and get involved in! Thanks again and keep up the great work!

Jeanfieve Asmar  
Toledo, Ohio

## THANK YOU

I wish to thank you for remembering me to attend the reception of January 19th. I certainly hope the upbeat shown at this reception continues on for many successful years. Thanks!

George R. Shamie, Jr.  
Farmington Hills, MI

## EXCITING NEW VENTURE

Congratulations on Lebanese Monthly, we know you will be a success in this exciting new venture. Just want you to know how proud we are of you.

Ken & Libby Dempkowski  
Livonia, MI

## INTERESTING & NEEDED

Congratulations on the interesting new publication you are coordinating. Something that has been needed for a long time and what better celebrity than Paul W. Smith to be on your first cover. We extend best wishes and success on your new venture. Keep in touch and let us know how we can work with you.

Edward Deeb  
Warren, MI



## GREAT IDEA

I did not see this coming. This is not only a great idea, it is needed and you are the person that can make it all come together! Congratulations and you know you have my support.

Suzanne Sareini  
Dearborn, Michigan

## CONGRATULATIONS

By way of introduction, I am Miss Lebanon Immigrant 2003-2004 and I would like to congratulate you on your new Lebanese Monthly magazine. It is a great way to introduce our culture and especially our people to the public.

Miriam Habib  
Houston, TX

## THREE WORDS

Congratulations!  
Well done.

Fay Beydoun  
Dearborn, Michigan



## WONDERFUL

Your first edition was wonderful. Sure reminds us of the pride we should all feel in our culture. Good luck on your newest adventure.

John Nader  
Chesterfield Twp., MI

## GOOD NEWS

I heard some good news: you and a news-magazine in the making, good luck, I know you can do it! Please send me a copy – I am with you always.

Emily Michael  
Grosse Pointe, MI

## WORK OF ART

The whole magazine was a scholarly work of art. It reveals much interest, research and information on dynamic personalities in our local community as well as the surrounding communities-at-large. It renders much knowledge about our Lebanese Heritage & Culture. I particularly enjoyed reading about Paul W. Smith – I didn't know he was Lebanese. All your articles are thought provoking with human interest. Congratulations, you are off to a great start of a successful magazine – a real booster shot-in-the-arm for the development of American –Lebanese relations throughout the world. I am looking forward with enthusiasm to more exceptional future issues.

Cathy Marr  
Grosse Pointe, MI

### Lebanese motor racing team to visit USA

**LOS ANGELES** – The only top level international motor racing team in the Middle East will be competing in the A1 Grand Prix of Nations race at Laguna Seca, California next month. A1 Team Lebanon with Lebanese drivers, **Khalil Beschir** and **Basil Shaaban**, and a car, which carries each of the flags of the Arab



world, will be in the Los Angeles area in the week prior to the event. Basil Shaaban also has strong links with the USA, having studied at Berkeley College. A1 Grand Prix is a new motor racing series founded by **Sheik Maktoum Hasher Maktoum Al Maktoum**, a member of the ruling family of Dubai. Each of the 25 teams competing represents a country, with the drivers being indigenous to their represented nation. The Series is held over seven months of winter, September – March, traditionally the 'off-season' of motorsport, and follows the sun from Europe to Australia, Asia to South Africa, and South America to North America. Full information on the team is at [www.lebanon.a1gp.com](http://www.lebanon.a1gp.com).



*A1 Team Lebanon Press Office*

### Orthodox Convention attracts 2500 faithful to Michigan

**TROY, MI** – The 47th North American Convention of the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America was recently held in Dearborn, Michigan. The convention was hosted by The Very Reverend **Archpriest Joseph E. Antypas** and the St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church of Troy, Michigan and was attended by 2,500 faithful. It was the first regu-



lar convention held since the granting of self-rule status by the Holy Synod of Antioch by unanimous resolution in October 2003. The General Assembly was attended by 1,000 delegates comprised of pastors, retired pastors, clergy who are full-time department heads, North American and diocesan presidents of organizations, and Members of the Archdiocese Board of Trustees. **Metropolitan PHILIP** (Saliba), Archbishop of New York and All North America, the visiting Metropolitan **PAUL**, Archbishop of Australia and New Zealand, and the six diocesan bishops of the North American Antiochian Archdiocese concelebrated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. – *Antiochian Press*

### Planet Lebanon Conference held in the Dutch Caribbean Island of Curacao

**CURACAO, NETHERLANDS ANTILLES** – The Lebanese International Business Council (LIBC) 5th annual conference was held on the Netherlands Antilles Island of Curacao, with the presence of many distinguished and high-level officials from the Republic of Lebanon, including H.E. **Sheikh Saad Hariri**, and many representatives of Lebanese governmental leaders. Founded by Dr. **Nassib Fawaz**, each year the LIBC holds a conference under the name Planet Lebanon that is held either in Beirut or elsewhere to bring business people and communities together to promote business, hope and peace. LIBC was established in response to the ever-growing need for Lebanese business people around the world to work with each other and support one another in addition to their families, the countries they live in and Lebanon. With 35 offices around the world, thousands of members network with one another and support every Lebanese organization that promotes community and support of Lebanese people abroad and in Lebanon without prejudice to religious or political affiliations, please visit [www.libc.net](http://www.libc.net) to learn more. – *Planet Lebanon*



### Former Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham Launches International Consulting Firm

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Former U.S. Secretary of Energy and U.S. Senator **Spencer Abraham** and former top aides announce the formation of The Abraham Group, LLC, an international strategic consulting firm based in Washington,



D.C. The Abraham Group will provide strategic advice and hands-on assistance for clients seeking opportunities or solutions to challenges arising in the global market. The firm will offer help to U.S. clients in need of counsel in both domestic and foreign markets, particularly, China, Russia, the Caspian, Latin America, Europe and the Middle East as well as assist foreign companies in their U.S. and international operations. The firm's other Principals are: **Joseph McMonigle**, former Chief of Staff at the U.S. Department of Energy and Vice Chairman of the International Energy Agency Board of Governors; and **Majida Mourad**, former Senior Advisor at the U.S. Department of Energy working on international affairs. Each of the firm's Principals has extensive experience working at senior levels in Congress, the Executive Branch and international affairs. The Abraham Group also expects to announce strategic alliances with a law firm and investment bank in the near future. – *Abraham Group*

### Phil Collins plays First Final Farewell Tour Concert at Beirut Center

**BEIRUT** – Festive Lebanon 2005 was born, in the spirit of the phoenix, as an act of faith in Lebanon's cultural specificity, and in its power of creativity and artistic freedom. Lebanon has





always been the leading cultural center in the region and quality, creativity and innovation have always been the hallmarks of Lebanese festivals. In

this light, and in the wake of the recent events, the Baalbeck, Beiteddine and Byblos Festivals, under the auspices of the Ministry of Tourism, reaffirmed their commitment to excellence by recently presenting British pop star **Phil Collins** in concert at the Beirut International Exhibition & Leisure Center. Before a lively crowd of 6000, the concert lasted over two hours as the former Genesis lead singer played his sentimental pop with plenty of spirit and good nature. Many Lebanese figures attended the show including H.E. Prime Minister **Fouad Siniora**. In a spirit of support, Festive Lebanon offered the St. Jude Children's Cancer Center of Lebanon at the American University of Beirut Medical Center all profits generated from this event. – *Beiteddine Festival*

### **To Discover Beauty: The Art of Khalil Gibran Exhibit Opens with Unveiling & Dedication**

**DEARBORN, MI** – With a diplomatic delegation in town from Washington, DC and before a standing room only reception of invited guests and dignitaries, the Khalil Gibran Exhibit opened with an official unveiling and portrait dedication. On display through April 30, the Arab American National Museum will host the exhibition, **To Discover Beauty: The Art of Kahlil Gibran**, Selections from the Collection of the Telfair Museum of Art.

The exhibit features original artworks by the renowned Lebanese American. Although Gibran (1883-1931) is primarily known for his literary works – most notably the celebrated timeless classic *The Prophet* – he



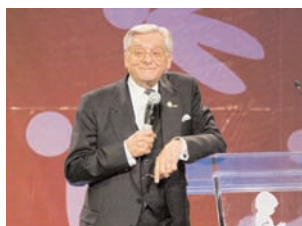
was an accomplished visual artist as well. Incorporating cultural traditions from both East and West, Gibran's artworks integrate the mysticism of his native Lebanon with Western artistic genres including aestheticism and symbolism. In his art, Gibran attempted to reveal to



mankind the eternal truths of existence, often using the human figure as a visual medium. Suggesting a link between the physical and spiritual realms, Gibran's figures lack solidity, seemingly transcending the material world. This preoccupation with the spiritual and the sublime runs throughout Gibran's work, tying his poetry and painting together. – AANM

### **Celebrating St. Jude & honoring a legacy: CEO Richard Shadyac retires**

**MEMPHIS** – Friends, donors, volunteers, family, staff and Board members all were on hand to honor retiring Chief Executive Officer **Richard C. Shadyac** who has served as CEO of ALSAC for the past 13 years. During his tenure, ALSAC has become the third largest health-care charity in America with annual revenues projected to exceed \$420 million this fiscal year. Dinners, roasts, dedications and



awards ceremonies were all part of an emotional week, in which Shadyac's many years of service to St. Jude and to founder **Danny Thomas** were celebrated. The highlight gala at which **Phil Donahue**, the award-winning television talk show host, acted as master of ceremonies. **Marlo Thomas**, **Tony Thomas** and several of Danny Thomas' grandchildren performed a special song and dance routine in tribute to Shadyac. Former President **George H.W. Bush** recorded a special video message in Shadyac's honor, as did singers and songwriters **Amy Grant** and **Charlie Daniels**.

**Randy Owen** of the country music group **ALABAMA** and co-founder of Country Cares for St. Jude Kids®, was featured praising Shadyac in a special video tribute on Shadyac's life. Others who honored Shadyac were Shadyac's sons, **Tom Shadyac**, the acclaimed film director and producer, and **Rick Shadyac**, a Washington D.C. attorney. **Joseph Asseily**, vice chairman of the board of the Children's Cancer Center of Lebanon traveled to Memphis to extend his thanks to Shadyac and read a letter from **Nasser Chammaa**, chairman of the board for the Lebanon Clinic, who was unable to attend. St. Jude announced that the ALSAC Tower, the first building constructed after the original hospital, would be renamed the Richard C. Shadyac ALSAC Tower. In addition, Memphis City Councilwoman **Barbara Swearingen-Holt** announced that a street that runs through the St. Jude campus would be renamed Shadyac Avenue.

*St. Jude Communications*

### **LACC Leadership Luncheon hosts Butler, Rogers**

**SOUTHFIELD** – The Lebanese American Chamber of Commerce welcomed US Senate Candidate **Keith Butler** in December, and US Rep. **Mike Rogers** in January to its monthly Lebanese Leadership Luncheon series. Both men joined Chamber members as well as Lebanese American business and civic leaders at a private



lunch hosted by **Edward Moussawer** at Kabobgy Lebanese Cuisine. Topics of discussion ranged from local to international issues focusing on the Lebanese community. Congressman Rogers discussed his trips to the Middle East and delivered a speech on his "Principles



for Expanding Freedom Abroad" followed by a Press Conference. Keith Butler reiterated his support for a free, sovereign and independent Lebanon - a pledge he first made before hundreds of Lebanese Americans gathered to celebrate the 9th Annual Lebanese American Club of Michigan Trailblazer Awards Banquet in November. The series events were co-sponsored by Auxilia-USA, and the Lebanese Information Center. *LACC Press*


### **Actor Tony Shalhoub to be honored at Lebanese gala in Washington, D.C.**



**WASHINGTON, DC** – The American Task Force for Lebanon (ATFL) 2006 Gala Awards Night event will be held this March 16, 2006, at The Fairmont Washington Hotel. According to Executive Director **George Cody**,

the honorees this year include Emmy and Golden Globe winner **Tony Shalhoub**, who stars as 'Adrian Monk' on the hit television series *Monk* and **Charles Elachi**, Director of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Last year the ATFL honored prolific songwriter and entertainer **Paul Anka** with a lifetime achievement award for his career spanning the world and over 900 songs. The award was bestowed upon Anka due to his outstanding achievement in the field of entertainment and lending pride to Lebanese worldwide in recognition of one of their



sons. Anka's mother Camelia was from the town of Kfarmishki, and according to him, was the one who kept him connected to his Lebanese roots. In 1999, then Lebanese Prime Minister **Salim El Hoss** presented Anka with a 'medal of honor' when he performed at the Forum de Beyrouth. Anka reveres his family heritage as well as his ethnic one as the two are plainly intertwined in his mind. When speaking of his Lebanese background, Anka, who is deeply connected to his Lebanese heritage, believes it is a heritage for which we can be proud. – *ATFL* 

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### Maronite Order of Blessed Virgin Mary

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Telephone: 734.662.4822  
Fax: 734.662.4822  
Website: [www.ordomaronitabmv.org](http://www.ordomaronitabmv.org)

### Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Church

4133 Calkins Road  
Flint, Michigan 48532  
Telephone: 810.733.1259  
Fax: 810.732.2760  
Website: [www.ololmi.com](http://www.ololmi.com)

### Our Lady of Lebanon Shrine

447 Highway No. 77 North  
Leamington, Ontario Canada  
Telephone: 519.326.8291

### Our Lady of Redemption Melkite Church

29293 Lorraine Avenue  
Warren, Michigan 48093  
Telephone: 586.751.6017  
Fax: 586.751.1877  
Website: [www.olrmelkite.com](http://www.olrmelkite.com)

### Saint Anthony Maronite Parish

280 Talbot Street East  
Leamington, Ontario, N8H 3W1 Canada  
Telephone: 519.322.2282  
Fax: 519.322.1640  
Website: [www.stanthonysparish.com](http://www.stanthonysparish.com)

### Saint Charbel Maronite Parish

1010 Highway 3  
Oldcastle, Ontario N0R 1L0 Canada  
Telephone: 519.966.3817  
Fax: 519.250.0745

### Saint George Orthodox Cathedral

3754 Woodley Avenue  
Toledo, Ohio 43606  
Telephone: 419.475.7054

### Saint George Orthodox Church

2160 East Maple Road  
Troy, Michigan 48083  
Telephone: 248.589.0480  
Fax: 248.589.1325  
Website: [www.stgeorgeoftroy.com](http://www.stgeorgeoftroy.com)

### Saint Joseph Melkite Church

1913 S. Rundle Avenue  
Lansing, Michigan 48910  
Telephone: 517.485.4053

### Saint Mary's Christian Orthodox Church

3212 West Twelve Mile Road  
Berkley, Michigan 48072  
Telephone: 248.546.0880

### Saint Michael's Melkite

585 N. Mill Street  
Plymouth, Michigan 48170  
Telephone: 734.414.6110

### Saint Peter's Maronite Church

166 Tecumseh Road West  
Windsor, Ontario N8X 1E9 Canada  
Telephone: 519.973.7240  
Fax: 519.252.5238  
Website: [www.stpetersmaronitechurch.ca](http://www.stpetersmaronitechurch.ca)

### Saint Rafqa Maronite Mission

14221 Levan Road  
Livonia, Michigan 48154  
Telephone: 586.826.9688  
[www.maronite-heritage.com/html/saint\\_rafqa.html](http://www.maronite-heritage.com/html/saint_rafqa.html)

### Saint Sharbel Maronite Church

31601 Schoenherr Road  
Warren, Michigan 48093  
Telephone: 810.826.9688  
Fax: 810.826.3521  
Website: [www.stsharbelwarren.com](http://www.stsharbelwarren.com)

### Tawheed Center of Farmington Hills

29707 West 10 Mile Road  
Farmington Hills, Michigan 48336  
Telephone: 248.426.7360  
Website: [www.tawheedcenter.org](http://www.tawheedcenter.org)

### Windsor Islamic Association Mosque

1320 Northwood Drive  
Windsor, Ontario N9E 1A4 Canada  
Telephone: 519.966.2355  
Website: [www.wiao.org](http://www.wiao.org)

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### Abundant Life Arabic Lutheran Church

19100 Ford Road  
Dearborn, Michigan 48128  
Telephone: 313.336.0036

### American Muslim Center

21110 Outer Drive  
Dearborn, Michigan 48124  
Telephone: 313.565.9314  
Fax: 313.565.9315  
Website: [www.amcdearborn.com](http://www.amcdearborn.com)

### Basilica of St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox

18100 Merriman Road  
Livonia, Michigan 48152  
Telephone: 734.422.0010  
Fax: 734.421.9220  
Website: [www.thebellsostmary.com](http://www.thebellsostmary.com)

### Cathedral of St. Maron Maronite Church

11466 Kercheval Street  
Detroit, Michigan 48214  
Telephone: 313.824.0196  
Fax: 313.824.6418  
Website: [www.saintmaronchurch.com](http://www.saintmaronchurch.com)

### The Islamic Center of America

19500 Ford Road  
Dearborn, Michigan 48128  
Telephone: 313.593.0000  
Fax: 313.582.0988  
Website: [www.icofa.com](http://www.icofa.com)

### The Islamic Center of Greater Toledo

25877 Scheider Road  
Perrysburg, Ohio 43551  
Telephone: 419.874.3500  
Fax: 419.874.9123  
Website: [www.icgt.org](http://www.icgt.org)



# An hour with Jacques Nasser

by John Akouri and Liz Kaadou

*Highly regarded as Ford's engine of change and then-Leader of a Cultural Revolution with a pedal-to-the-metal leadership style and flair, Jacques Nasser brought a charismatic personality to Detroit's automotive scene. On the heels of last month's North American International Auto Show in Detroit, the dynamic and driven Lebanese Aussie spent an hour with Lebanese Monthly Editor John G. Akouri to talk about cars, family, heritage and life.*

**JOHN G. AKOURI:** Let's start at the very beginning, how did your journey from Lebanon to Australia begin?

**JACQUES NASSER:** My dad had traveled fairly extensively when he was growing up and had visited the US. He lived in the US for a short period and also visited Europe. Then the Second World War broke out so he was back in Lebanon. In the early fifties, he decided that there were better opportunities outside of Lebanon and looked at several alternatives including coming back to the US, going to Canada, New Zealand, Argentina, or Venezuela and finally narrowed it down to Australia. So he and my mother and my brother and I all found ourselves on a ship heading to Australia and 20 some days later arriving in a country where we really didn't know anyone. It was an experience—and I could say Australia was a brilliant choice because it was a young, very energetic, growing country - and still is. I look back on it and I think that I had the best of all worlds frankly, because we were in a peaceful, prosperous country where your success in the future was based on merit and not history or anything else. It was based on what you could do and what you could achieve and the opportunities looked boundless, particularly in the fifties in Australia. At the same time, we were a very close family. It was probably easier for my brother and me because we spoke Arabic in the house. My father of course had lived in English speaking countries before so his English was very good, and my mother had to learn English, so it was a real mixture of all different cultures and worlds.

**JGA:** Early on in your career, what was it that drew you to the automotive industry?

**JAC:** I have always loved cars in every sense - from a product stance, the history of cars, the technical innovation in them and how they have changed the world, I think for the good. But, I was also intrigued as I was growing up and looking for career opportunities. The automotive companies were very interesting to me because they were global. I was extremely fascinated by how brands, cars, national identities, cultures and technology all melded together, all blended together. These were the days when you graduated from college and joined a company and you felt as if that was it; you were going to be with that company for the rest of your life. I wanted to be part of a company that was big enough, broad enough, and deep enough where I could continue to be interested in what that company does over some decades. I was particularly interested in Ford because at that time Ford Australia had a very charismatic leader. His name was Bill Bourke, who was from North America. I was just fascinated with the flair that Bill had for marketing, product, and performance vehicles so I always had a soft spot for Ford. I liked the mixture of the global company, and Ford was very entrenched



in the Aussie at that point and it had this feel of a family company as well. So, it was Ford. I got my first company car when I joined the Ford Motor Company and I thought that was it, there couldn't be anything better.

**JGA:** At that time, did you ever think you would spend over 30 years with Ford?

**JAC:** I didn't join because I thought I'd stay in Ford Australia my whole career. I actually joined Ford because I wanted to have a career with Ford. One of the great advantages of Ford Motor Company is that it gives you the opportunity to have a career in many countries around the world where your passport doesn't matter. If you have the talent and you are prepared to work and be lucky, be in the right spot at the right time, then the opportunities are open for you. I never thought that I'd work and live in 10 different countries with the Ford Motor Company including almost all the major countries in Latin America, Europe of course, and three Asian countries. You know, the Lebanese have tended over a century or so to like to migrate to other countries. When I lived in Argentina, Brazil and also Venezuela, there were large Lebanese communities in each of those three countries. They were very successful communities, and that was an eye-opener actually because I felt as if, maybe, I was embarking on something new and pioneering and different but of course it wasn't.

**JGA:** There is no doubt that a great deal of 'celebrity' surrounded you when you led Ford.

**JAC:** I think CEO's during that period tended to get a lot of publicity, Ford is a company that is very interesting for the media and for people all over the world, and I was a different type of CEO. So it was the combination of Ford being an interesting company and a very different model of a CEO that really put the spotlight on us. I think what I see now whether here in Detroit, in New York, or anywhere else, and there's been a change in emphasis in terms of where the business community stands relative to the rest of the community, which is a positive thing. One of the great aspects of the Ford Motor Company is that it's a company whose integrity, and the integrity of its people, can't be questioned. It's just one of these very ethical companies. Therefore, yes it is a disappointment when you see other companies and leaders of businesses that fail to meet the same standards.



**SAVING AN EMPIRE** – Born in 1912 in Lansing, Michigan to Lebanese immigrant parents, Richard Caleal began drawing pictures of automobiles at the age of seven. Self-taught and passionate about design, Caleal worked at Hudson, REO, Cadillac and Packard before going to Studebaker to become a member of the famed Raymond Loewy design team. In 1946 he began working as a free-lance designer for George Walker, who had been awarded the contract from Henry Ford II for the design of the 1949 Ford. Working on the kitchen table in his small bungalow in Mishawaka, Indiana, Caleal designed and completed his prototype quarter-scale model, which was personally selected by Henry Ford II to become the 1949 Ford. Referred to as "the car that saved an empire," the 1949 Ford helped save Ford Motor Company from financial trouble, and earned Ford an astounding \$177 million profit that year. Moreover, Caleal's hyper-smooth, slab-sided design set the trend for the future of automobile styling.



**JGA:** Where did 'Jac the Knife' originate?

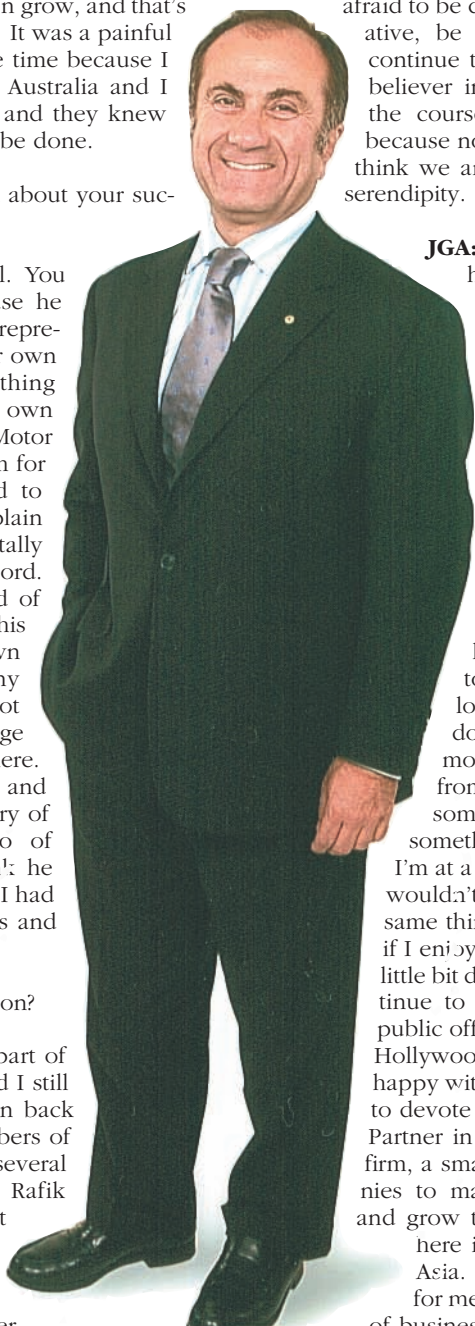
**JAC:** Jack the Knife was about some of the actions that I had to take, and I think that particular name stuck to me in Australia. I went back to Ford Australia after many, many years of not being there, and after spending time in Asia, Europe and Latin America the automotive environment had changed dramatically in Australia. The markets were opening, duty levels were lowered, local content requirements were being reduced, and we went from a very closed market with two or three manufacturers to all of a sudden an open market with competitors we hadn't really noticed before including the Japanese. So it was a very, very different environment, and we had to restructure the operation to be able to survive and then grow, and that's what I had to do. It was a painful thing to do at the time because I grew up in Ford Australia and I knew everybody and they knew me, but it had to be done.

**JGA:** What does your father think about your success?

**JAC:** My father will be 95 this April. You know, it's a strange thing because he always believed that being an entrepreneur and being the owner of your own business was a very noble thing because you could chart your own course. So when I joined Ford Motor Company, I actually didn't tell him for a week or so because I wanted to think about the best way to explain this to him. I'd say he wasn't totally convinced until I became CEO of Ford. Then I think, reluctantly, he kind of looked at it and said well maybe this is as good as running your own business - I think like many Lebanese, because Lebanon was not a country where you could join large companies, they just didn't exist there. So you had to exist on your wits, and Lebanon is a country with a history of almost a merchant mentality so of course he was proud, but I think he would have been equally proud if I had started up my own small business and been successful at that.

**JGA:** Do you ever return to Lebanon?

**JAC:** I was born in the northern part of Lebanon up in the mountains, and I still have relatives there and I've been back many times. I've met with members of the Lebanese Parliament and had several meetings with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri. I think it's a sad thing that we don't have someone like him that is so dedicated to restore stability and confidence in Lebanon. He had a vision, and he was determined, independent, and strong willed, and he knew how to execute very well. So I think certainly Lebanon is much poorer without his influence. I enjoy going back, but it's also sad to see a society that is clearly going through a very difficult adjustment.



**JGA:** What is the secret to your success?

**JAC:** Success means different things to different people. I'm proud to have been born in Lebanon, I'm proud to have been brought up in Australia, I'm extremely proud of the career and the opportunities that the Ford Motor Company gave me, but in many ways our opportunities in life are serendipity. On the other hand, there are certain things that I think are very important to one's success. One is get a good understanding of who you are and believe in that. That doesn't mean that you don't change over time, I think you do, you always try and improve yourself. But don't pretend to be something that you're not. Start with who you really think you are and then build upon that. I think it's important also to have some pride in your own family and your own background but not to let that overwhelm your thinking. When you really boil it down, they're the things that are important, your family and friends, how you feel about what you have contributed to society, and how you feel in yourself. How you think is everything, be positive—even optimistic—if you dare, and think success not failure. Don't be afraid to be different. Be yourself, be creative, be persistent, work hard, and continue to improve. I'm not a great believer in sitting down and charting the course for the next thirty years because no matter how smart we really think we are, a lot of what happens is serendipity.

**JGA:** Where do you consider home, and what are you doing these days?

**JAC:** I'm very comfortable in Detroit, but Australia is always a very emotional home for me. I'm spending a lot of my time in Detroit by choice, and I feel a loyalty to Detroit. I regard home as wherever you happen to be with your friends, wherever that may be, that's as close to home as you can get. I look to the future and I'm having a lot of fun. I'm very happy doing what I'm doing at the moment and the next few years from now I might decide to do something else. If I do, it will be something equally different. I think I'm at a stage in my life now where I wouldn't want to keep doing the same thing over and over again even if I enjoy it. I want to try something a little bit different because I like to continue to learn. I'm not interested in public office, and I'm not interested in Hollywood. For the moment, I'm very happy with what I'm doing, and I want to devote my attention to that. I am a Partner in a private equity partnership firm, a small firm. We invest in companies to make those companies better and grow the companies. We operate here in the US, in Europe, and in Asia. It's a fantastic opportunity for me to learn about a whole array of businesses I just never knew about and yet apply the same business disciplines and experiences that I was fortunate enough to learn over many years. I think life is a continuum and you live every moment and every hour in the best way you possibly can. All I can say is life's good and we are all blessed.

## Lebanese Captains of Industry



**Carlos Ghosn** is the president and chief executive officer of Nissan Motor Co., Ltd., a global automotive company with 140,000 employees and \$80 billion in revenue. Mr. Ghosn joined the company as its chief operating officer in June 1999, became its president in June 2000 and was named CEO in June 2001.

On April 29, 2005, Mr. Ghosn was named president and chief executive officer of Renault S.A. in addition to his current responsibilities at Nissan. As head of the Renault-Nissan Alliance, Mr. Ghosn is responsible for two separate companies with combined annual global sales of 5.7 million vehicles.

Mr. Ghosn was born in Brazil on March 9, 1954. He graduated with engineering degrees from École Polytechnique in 1974 and from École des Mines de Paris in 1978.



**Louis Lataif** is leading transformations in management education that uniquely fuses the art, science and technology of business. Under his leadership, a new state-of-the-art home was built for the School. He assumed the deanship in 1991 after a distinguished

27-year career with Ford Motor Company.

In 1981, he was elected a corporate vice president and General Manager of Ford Division, then the Company's youngest officer. Four years later, he was appointed Vice President, North American Sales Operations and, in 1988, was named President, Ford of Europe.

Born in Fall River, Massachusetts, Dean Lataif earned a Bachelor Degree from Boston University and an MBA from Harvard. He holds three honorary doctoral degrees as is a recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Dean Lataif currently serves on the boards of directors of Group 1 Automotive, Inc., Magna Entertainment Corporation, Abiomed, Inc. Interaudi Bank, and The Iacocca Foundation.



**Stephen Yokich** was born in Detroit, Michigan to Serbian-Lebanese parents on August 20, 1935, was always proud of his middle-eastern heritage.

After serving in the United States Air Force from 1952-1956, he returned to Detroit and completed his skilled trades apprenticeship at Heidrich Tool and Die, Oak Park, Michigan. As a committeeman, he became active at Local 155 UAW and in 1969, union president Walter Reuther appointed Steve to the staff at UAW Region 1. He was elected director of Region 1 in 1977 and international vice president in 1980. During his tenure as vice president he served as director of the UAW's Ford Department, GM Department, Skilled Trades Department, Organizing, and Agricultural Implement Department. In 1995, Steve was elected president of the International Union, UAW and served until he retired in 2002.

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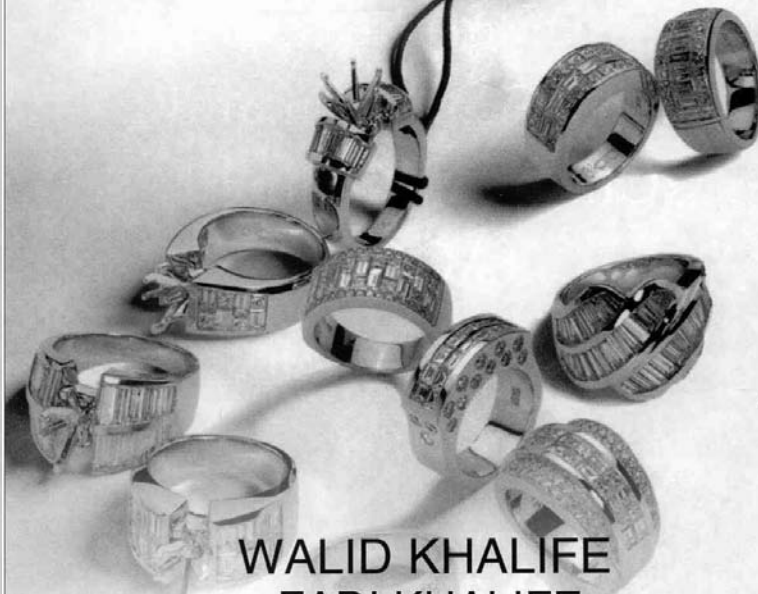
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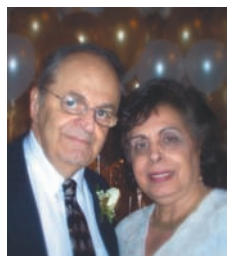
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# MABROUK

## congratulations

**AWARDED** - President and founder of Cellular City Inc. James Akouri was honored for being the first award recipient of the balanced score card sheet winner by Verizon Wireless. This award is given to the best agent that meets and exceeds expectations on sales, customer service, and many other proprietary goals. Since the award's creation in September 2005, Jim has been the sole winner. This statewide traveling award doesn't look like it's going anywhere soon - for five consecutive months Cellular City has successfully retained this title. Look for many new Cellular City's to open throughout Michigan, Illinois, and Arizona.



**ANNIVERSARY** - On the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary and while surrounded by more than 200 of their closest friends and family from throughout the US & Canada, John and Helen Habib officially renewed their wedding vows at St. Sharbel Maronite Church. With four priests officiating the ceremony, many of the original bridal party stood nearby. Guests dined on a veritable feast of Lebanese cuisine, complimented by a champagne fountain and homemade traditional Tripolitan pastries. A

video presentation was shown depicting the past half-century of life's treasures, followed by toasts, speeches and poems.

**APPOINTED** - The Maronite Patriarchate has announced the appointment of Abbot Semaan Atallah as Bishop of Baalbeck, replacing Bishop Munjid El Hachem who was appointed as Papal ambassador to the Arabian Gulf countries. The appointment was confirmed following the blessing and approval of his holiness, Pope Benedict XVI. Bishop Atallah is the first Antonin Abbot to be elevated to this rank since Antonin Abbot Boulos Kassab was made bishop of Tripoli, 135 years ago. Bishop Atallah has held several positions at the Vatican and is fluent in the Arabic, French, English, Italian, German, Latin and Syriac languages.



**APPOINTED** - The White House announced the appointment of Lebanese American and Ohio-native George Selim to the US Department of Justice where he has been assigned to the Office of Community Relations as the Special Assistant to the Director in Washington, DC. For years he has continually demonstrated his deep commitment to initiatives that empower the Middle Eastern American community while advancing their interests. His dedication to public service shapes both his values and vision for a stronger America that brings a new level of distinction and visibility to Lebanese Americans across the nation.



**NEW HOME** - A ribbon-cutting ceremony took place to celebrate the grand opening of the Lebanese American Heritage Club's new headquarters. The evening celebration included Lebanon's Independence Day along with the 24th Anniversary of the Lebanese American Heritage Club. The new building is 4000 square feet, with a large lobby and an event facility equipped with an advanced audiovisual system. The interior design was developed by the architect Hussein Bakri and executed by Bazzo Construction. The design bares a great resemblance to downtown Beirut - from the beautiful carvings on the walls to the statuesque podiums.



**GRAND OPENING** - Where Hunger Meets Its Destiny' is the mantra for Rob Dehko & Samer Thomas who just opened the first HuHot Mongolian Grill in Michigan. At their fresh food line, you're the master of your fate. Accordingly, it was the Mongols' quest to unify the world. Understandably - they were an army on the go, in need of a speedy bountiful meal. Lacking the traditional cutlery, they used their swords to slice thin strips of meat and vegetables, then seared the mixture on their shields over an open fire. This ancient tradition is reborn in HuHot's dining adventure.



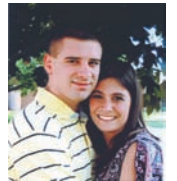
**SWORN-IN** - City Councilwoman Suzanne Sareini was sworn-in last month to begin serving her fifth consecutive term on the Dearborn City Council. She was first elected to the Council in the November 1989 election, when she captured the third greatest number of votes. In 1992, President George Bush appointed Sareini to serve on the Meritorious Rank Review Board for the US Office of Personnel Management. Suzanne Sareini is the proud mother of four children a daughter and three sons and the even prouder grandmother to nine grandchildren.



**NUPTIALS** - Wedding bells will ring next month for Rafeef El-Hajj & Ziyad Samo. The proud daughter of Joanna Ladki of Dearborn Heights, Rafeef is a graduate of both Adrian College and Wayne State University. An extremely enthusiastic graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles with a law degree from the University of California at Berkley, Ziyad is the son of

Manshour & Helen Samo and is a Professor at the University of California at San Diego. The wedding reception will take place in Plymouth, Michigan and the couple will make their home in southern California.

**MARRIED** - While sailing on a Carnival cruise ship in the blue waters of the Caribbean, John Nader is proud to announce that his only daughter Kristin Nader and Jared Stark were wed ship-board just before Christmas in front of 30 family members and close friends. The newlyweds will begin their life together in Oklahoma.



**ENGAGED** - Over the New Year, Jon Nader proposed to Julie Smith. Both work in the field of education. They are planning a November wedding at St. Mary's Church in Armada with a reception at the Club Monte Carlo. Jon Nader and Kristen Nader are both the grandchildren of former Federal Mogul administrative assistant and Warren resident Ann Nader.



**MARRIED** - Mega 80's musician Ron Abraham recently walked to the altar with Bridal Designer Kate Bennett during an outdoor wedding ceremony in Oakland, Michigan at the Twin Lakes Country Club. Following their honeymoon in Maya Riveria the couple now make their home in Rochester Hills, Michigan.



**LAUNCHED** - The Lebanese American News Agency, Inc. officially launched its new magazine Lebanese Monthly at a Celebrity Launch Party held at the Grand Showroom of the Erhard Land Rover of Farmington Hills Dealership. The event drew more than 600 well-wishers and included a special guest appearance by Detroit's own Karen Newman. Guests dined on a Mediterranean feast, imported wines and a chocolate fountain tower of fudge. Publisher & Editor-in-Chief John Akouri expressed his thanks to the Lebanese Monthly Team and all those present who made his dream a reality.



**MILESTONE** - Fifty years have passed since Fouad Akouri first stepped foot on American soil, leaving his beloved hometown of Tripoli, Lebanon. In that time, he married the former Sylvia Jane Assaff, raised four children, and led an accomplished career. He has only returned to the northern port city once since departing for the US. Today, he is happily retired and enjoying his grandchildren Annabella, Jouney and Angelina. In his spare time and when he's not caring for his near Olympic-size swimming pool or vacationing out west, he loves to watch old Egyptian movies featuring his favorite Arabic singer of all time Mohamed Abdel Wahab.



**ELECTED** - The United American Lebanese Federation (UALF) Board of Directors elected Walid Mourad to serve as its President for the year 2006. The UALF is a registered tax-exempt organization.

If you or someone you know has good news to share with Lebanese Monthly readers, please be sure to eMail us at [mabrouk@lebanesemonthly.com](mailto:mabrouk@lebanesemonthly.com). Every effort will be made to include as many entries as space permits each month.

# 20 Years Later...Remembering Lebanese American Astronaut Christa McAuliffe

In 1986 Christa McAuliffe stepped from the classroom into history. As part of a radical new approach by NASA, she was to be the first civilian in space. While her mission on the shuttle ended tragically, her mission as a teacher continues.

An educator whose father, according to ARAMCO, had come to the US from Lebanon, and whose mother's name was Grace George and of Maronite origin, she would perish along with her crewmates when the shuttle Columbia exploded on its ascent toward orbit. The niece of famous Lebanese historian, author and Princeton University professor Philip Hitti, no words could describe the way Americans felt watching this tragedy unfold.



By 1984, space shuttle flights had become ordinary occurrences to many Americans. NASA wanted to rekindle the excitement that had once surrounded the space program. They thought that if an ordinary citizen were involved, a good "talker" who could communicate the excitement of travel in space, the public might once again become enthusiastic. Taking this into consideration, President Reagan made the decision that the first ordinary American to travel on board a space shuttle would be "one of America's finest, a teacher." After all, good teachers have the ability to get people interested and excited.

NASA's media coordinator said, "We're not looking for Superman; we're looking for the person who can do the best job of describing his or her experiences on the shuttle to the most people on Earth." The search finally led to Christa McAuliffe, a Social Studies teacher from Concord High School in Concord, New Hampshire. Her students considered her an "inspirational human being, a marvelous teacher who made their lessons come alive." Often called The Field Trip Teacher, Christa believed it was the hands-on experience that made the most valuable teaching tool. In fact, she called her impending trip on the Challenger The Ultimate Field Trip.

Sharon Christa McAuliffe, the eldest of Edward and Grace Corrigan's five children, was born on September 2, 1948, in Framingham, Massachusetts. While in high school, Christa met Steve McAuliffe. Christa attended Framingham State College, majored in history, and received her degree in 1970. That year, she and Steve were married. Soon after, they moved to Washington, D.C., where Steve attended law school.

Christa taught school until the birth of her first child, Scott. She then attended Bowie State College and earned a masters degree in school administration in 1978. Shortly thereafter Steve, Christa and Scott moved to Concord, New Hampshire, and Christa's second child, Caroline, was born. The McAuliffes settled into an old, three-story house, Steve began his law practice, and Christa stayed home with the children.

Christa's love of teaching soon led her back to the classroom. First, Christa taught at Bow Memorial School, and then moved to Concord High School. Christa was also actively involved in the community - church, a tennis club, the local playhouse, the YMCA and Concord Hospital. In addition, she was a

Girl Scout leader, a jogger and a swimmer.

When the opportunity came to apply to be the first Teacher in Space, everyone who knew Christa told her to "Go for it!" She completed the eleven page application, mailed it at the last minute and hoped for the best. After becoming a finalist, Christa did not think she would be chosen. Some of the other teachers were doctors, authors, scholars. . . she was just an ordinary person. However, she was chosen, out of 11,500 applicants. An ordinary person - to whom ordinary people could relate - doing the extraordinary.

Christa's presence in the space program helped boost public interest and curiosity, and through her participation she became an inspiration to the teaching profession as well. She felt her exposure as the Teacher in Space reflected well on all teachers. Regarding the space program, she said, "A lot of people thought it was over when we reached the Moon. They put space on the back burner. But people have a connection with teachers. Now that a teacher has been selected, they are starting to watch the launches again."

***"I touch the future,  
I teach"***

***— Christa McAuliffe***

Christa began her training at NASA's facility in Houston in September of 1985. At first she was worried that the other astronauts might think she was just along for the ride. She wanted to prove she could work just as hard as they could. But when they met, the other members of the crew treated her as part of the team. Christa trained with them for 114 hours, and when launch time came, she was ready.

Just 73 seconds after lift-off, the space shuttle Challenger exploded, killing all seven astronauts aboard.

While aboard the shuttle, Christa was to have taught two lessons from space. In one she would have introduced each flight member, explained their roles, shown the cockpit with its 1,300 switches and dials and explained how crew members ate, slept and exercised in microgravity. Her second lesson would have explained how the shuttle flew, discussed why people explore space, and reported on technological advances cre-



ated by the space program. Throughout her voyage she was to have kept a journal, inspired by the journals of the pioneer women who left their homes in search of a new frontier. Christa said "That's our new frontier out there, and it's everybody's business to know about space."

Grace Corrigan, Christa's mother, said in her book A Journal For Christa, "Christa lived. She never just sat back and existed. Christa always accomplished everything that she was capable of accomplishing. She extended her own limitations. She cared about her fellow human beings. She did the ordinary, but she did it well and unflinchingly."

On January 28, 1986, her mission in space ended in tragedy. However, her message continues to speak to us today. Christa's motto was "I touch the future, I teach", and she is teaching us still. 🇺🇸

*Partially Adapted from the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium website*

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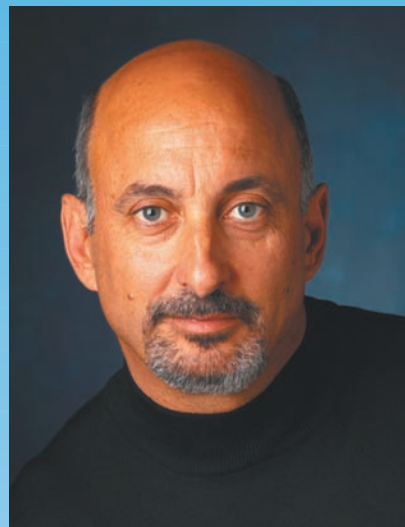
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## Where Are They Now?

# Bobby Rahal



As a boy, Robert Woodward Rahal learned the inner workings of cars. His father an amateur sports car racer and a voracious reader of racing publications, convinced race Officials he was 18 years old (he was only 17) in order to enter his first race, a novice event in Canada. He then went on to capture sports car and Atlantic series championships. He would quit racing for five months after

graduating college to join a Chicago advertising agency, but later returned to the sport in 1976.

He began driving Formula and Can-Am cars and moved into Indy cars in 1982, when he was named CART rookie of the year. In 1986, Rahal won six races, including the Indianapolis 500, where he set records with a 209.152 mph average for the last lap and a 170.722 mph average for the race. He became the first Indy car driver to surpass \$1 million in winnings for a season and won the CART driving championship. He was the champion again in 1987, when he won three races and finished second in five. Rahal won his third driving championship in 1992.

After the 1995 season, Rahal founded his own racing team. He retired as a driver, but continues to operate Team Rahal with partner, CBS LATE SHOW host and racing enthusiast David Letterman. In 2000 he was hired by Ford Motor Company and spent nine months as the CEO and Team Principal at Jaguar Formula One Racing. Today, Rahal owns Jaguar, Aston-Martin, Acura, Honda, Toyota, Lexus, Volvo and Mercedes dealerships -- all in Pennsylvania. He sits on the Boards of Directors of Central Ohio Children's Charities and The Bobby Rahal Foundation. 🏠

### ABOUT BOBBY

Born: January 10, 1953

Birthplace: Medina, OH

Hometown: New Albany, Ohio

Wife: Debi

Children: Michaela, Jarrad, Graham and Samantha

### CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| - 1982 CART Rookie of the Year               | Years: 17                       |
| - 1986 Indianapolis 500 winner               | First Season: 1982              |
| - 1986 CART champion                         | Starts: 265                     |
| - 1986 Driver of the Year                    | Poles: 18                       |
| - 1987 CART champion                         | Wins: 24                        |
| - 1992 CART champion                         | Podiums: 88                     |
| - 1992 Driver of the Year                    | Laps Led: 3,107                 |
| - Only driver/owner to win CART championship | Winnings: \$16,344,008          |
|  | Championships: 1986, 1987, 1992 |

# Lebanese Wines

## A crossroads between the ancient and the present

by Nidal M. Daher, C.S.

When I first went back to Lebanon in the summer of 1997 after I had been living in the United States for a little over 17 years, my itinerary included winery tours. Following the conclusion of a visit to Châteaux Musar and Ksara- the leading two wineries at that time and the oldest- I was amazed by their passionate approach to wine making as well as their dedication to producing top quality wine to showcase Lebanese wines abroad.

Ancestrally, winemaking tradition in Lebanon dates back 5,000 years to the time of the Phoenicians, the ancient dwellers of Lebanon. They were tending vineyards, producing wine and extending trade with other major metropolises long before the Greeks and Romans. Noah, Naboth, Jesus Christ, St. Paul, the great Roman Temple at Baalbeck, are all but

few of the evidence that support this fact, And it was here that Jesus would change water into wine, performing his first miracle at the wedding of Cana. Theories even exist to suggest that the Phoenicians from what is now Lebanon distributed a large number of red and white grape varieties as far as Europe, and are ancestors to many of the grape varieties that are planted today.

Although Lebanon today is known more of its majestic cedars as well as a very damaging 16-year civil war, it is blessed with 300 days of sunshine a year, and enjoys a burgeoning industry producing award-winning wines for export to a wide Lebanese communities now living throughout the world, mainly in the UK, Europe and the United States. Most North American wine enthusiasts hardly ever consider

Lebanese wines, but they should seriously reconsider.

Lebanon produces some very fine red and white wines, and presently some 30,000 hectares of vineyards exist, but approximately 90 per cent are devoted to table grapes and are base wine for Arrak (the Lebanese national liquor, an anise-flavored spirit similar to Greek ouzo) distillation. The favorite grapes of growers and wineries are Cinsault, Carignan, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah for reds and for whites Merwah, (similar to Semillon which planted in Bordeaux, France),



Bibline and Obediah. Although wine production is small mostly Chateau Musar and a few other small wineries export some 90 per cent of what is produced.

During my stay, the first winery I visited was Chateau Musar, which was founded by Gaston Hochar in 1930. Hochar had already been a very successful real estate developer building luxury homes for the rich and wealthy, but decided to open a winery with the objective of producing outstanding Lebanese wines. Considering the fact that at that time, very few Lebanese knew about wine and fewer still could afford enjoying it, the decision was bold. He purchased an 18th century castle called Mzar in the outskirts of Beirut and renamed it Chateau Musar. Deep cellars were dug to provide for long cellaring.

I had the opportunity to meet Serge and Donald Hochar as well as the young and ambitious winemaker Tarik Sakr during my visit to Lebanon that summer. The sons of Hochar Sr. are very passionate about their wine. Today Chateau Musar continues to produce fine wines under the management of brothers Serge and Roland, the former of whom markets, while the latter produces the wine. But as everything else in the Middle East roles are never clearly defined, sometimes

Serge makes blending decisions and on occasion Roland will get involved in marketing. Other family members involved in the management of the winery make the day-to-day decisions. My visit ended with an exchange of wine bottles: Serge presented me with a bottle of one of his best vintages of Chateau Musar Rouge, and I reciprocated with a Magnum (1.5 L) of Kunde Estate Red Zinfandel from Sonoma, which is a true representation of an all American wine story.

In the Bekaa Valley, near Baalbeck, lies the Ksara estate, so named because it was the site of a ksar, or fortress, at the time of the Crusades. The Jesuit Fathers acquired the property in 1857 when it was already famed as a vineyard and perpetuated the tradition of winemaking. In particular, they pioneered the introduction of high-quality vines in Lebanon. New varieties, enjoying the exceptional climatic conditions in the Bekaa, were cultivated at Ksara and later at Tanail, an estate of 240 hectares (600 acres) which also belonged to the Jesuit Fathers and which sent all its grapes to Ksara's cellars.

Knowing this amazing winery's particular history, I couldn't leave Lebanon without indulging on a visit to the winery. Hence, I arranged to visit through one of the partners of the winery. The visit began around noon with a tasting and making the acquaintance of the wine maker at a luncheon, followed by a serious tasting. Ksara wines are very popular in Lebanon and found in most restaurant wine lists, unlike Chateau Musar wines which are mostly exported.

Today there is a new generation of wine makers in Lebanon represented by Massaya winery, which is a French-Lebanese collaboration that began as recently as 1998. On the Lebanese side is Sami Ghosn, who was the owner of the Tanail Estate where the vineyards hail from, which is located at an altitude of 1000 m in the Bekaa valley. The French partners are an illustrious bunch: Daniel Brunier (Vieux Télégraph), Hubert de Boüard de Laforest (ex-Cheval Blanc) and Dominique Hebrard (Château Angéus co-proprietor). The first release was from the 1999 vintage, which are clearly wines that have a good deal of ambition to them.

The Lebanese today are following their ancestral Phoenician traditions of being great merchants and have introduced their wines to the world especially in Europe and North America. Many Lebanese who have moved abroad have opened restaurants, which are a great showcase for Lebanese products. Today, more than three million bottles of Lebanese wine are exported to Europe, the United States and Asia. 📍

*Nidal M. Daher is a certified Sommelier and President of Sommelier Connections and Unique Wine Cellars in Bloomfield Hills. He can be reached at 248.852.8800 or [nidal@uniquewinecellars.com](mailto:nidal@uniquewinecellars.com)*





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Roasted Red Pepper Hummus

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- 1 cup chickpeas, rinsed very well
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3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1/2 red pepper, washed and seeded
2 tbsp sea salt
juice of one half lemon
fresh basil to taste



- 1 Soak chickpeas overnight.
2 The next day, place the chickpeas in a pan, cook and bring to boil then let cool.
3 Grill the red pepper for five minutes.
4 Combine all ingredients in a food processor and using long pulses, purée until smooth and slightly fluffy. Refrigerate for at least one hour.
5 Sprinkle the hummus with either finely chopped parsley or Hungarian paprika for presentation, and serve with toasted pita bread or crackers as a dip or spread.

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### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

In the tradition of a 'from the street' beat, we offer our own version by asking a monthly question on the Lebanese Main Street - through the magic of the e-Mail Town Square. This month, we ask readers to share with us MEMORIES OF THEIR FIRST CAR



*My first car was a used, powder blue BMW, I could not even tell you the year. I loved the car for the memories I had in it, not for the car. It was a great time in my life because my niece, Charine was two and my nephew was around five. I would put their car seats in the back, pile them into the car and take them to Chuck E. Cheese and to the park, and I would take them anywhere we could be together. It was the best. The car on the other hand was a nightmare; needless to say I gave it away for free and have never purchased another BMW.*

**Majida M. Mourad, VP  
Partner, The Abraham Group  
Washington, DC**



*My first car was an American Motors 1973 Blue Gremlin with over 100,000 miles on it. The car was given to me by my older brother John my senior year of high school. I drove it until my junior year of college, when my older brother Daniel passed down his Blue 1979 Chevy Impala. The Gremlin was a great car and I have many fond memories. My most memorable experience was during high school graduation, when my then girlfriend, now wife, Colleen fell out of the car after we had pulled out of a Baskin Robbins parking lot. I was mad that I had to ditch my double chocolate ice cream cone to fetch her out of the intersection. (She claims the door was defective, I claim she left it ajar) She was scraped up pretty bad in the leg, but I guess she got over it as we've been together since.*

**David J. Allen  
Wayne County Circuit Court Judge  
Detroit, Michigan**



*When I turned 17, my parents bought me my first car as a high-school graduation present. I had a 2000 Hyundai Elantra in silver with gray cloth interior. I originally wanted the Tiburon, but it wasn't equipped with enough safety features at the time. My dad actually bought out the Elantra up-front thinking that it would be better to own the car since it was my first and I was sure to bang it up! Fortunately, I am proud to say that it didn't have a scratch on it! That little silver car got me through my first few years of college and was then replaced by my current fire-red Tiburon.*

**Jessica Kaadou  
Architectural Designer  
West Bloomfield, MI**



*My first car was a Silver Escort with about 20,000 miles on it. It was passed down to me from my sister who was five years older. I was sixteen years old and just excited to get my Driver's License. My birthday is in February so I was sixteen before most of my friends were. Boy, was I the coolest guy in school! I can recall the first time I drove to the Mall to go shopping with my friends. I was so excited to be able to come and go as I please. I do not remember if that car was ever sold, but I will never forget it. I have fond memories of my Escort because to me it symbolized the beginning of having responsibility and growing up to be a man.*

**Brian Mosallam  
Financial Investment Advisor  
Dearborn, Michigan**



*Shiny, sleek black and oh so feminine is the perfect description of my first car. My parents bought my Nissan 240sx Limited Edition Convertible for me on my sixteenth birthday and it was the only one out there. I was so excited even though my curfew was 10 o'clock. The first time I ever experienced the invigoration of a convertible was with my friend Naheda. I was driving with Naheda on Ford Road, in the smack of winter, when she casually said, "Put the top down." Shocked, I said, "Now!" She assuredly said, "Yeah!" And so, I did. We drove all the way to the end of Ford Road with the heat on "hi". And, with our hands in the air a smile decorating our faces and the wind blowing through our hair I drove and drove. Once you go convertible you can never go back.*

**Jehan Saleh, M.A.  
Graduate Student  
Dearborn Heights, Michigan**



*The first car that was actually in my name was a blue BMW that I used to drive in Lebanon. However, the car that I really considered my pride and joy and my favorite is the one I actually paid for with my own money, which was a red SC1 Saturn 1995. I got it my first year of Grad school at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, with my first ever bank loan. I love it not only because I went to every music concert with it, to U2 in Kansas, Shakira in Dallas, and Cher in Little Rock, but also because it lived with me throughout my road trip when I graduated, which started with a road trip to South Bend, IN, and then to Detroit, MI, with a final stop in Washington, DC. Unfortunately, by then it was already too old to resist the pressure, and I had to exchange it for a newer car. But it will never be forgotten!*

**Yara Youssef Francis  
Sr. Producer, AlHurra TV  
Washington, DC**



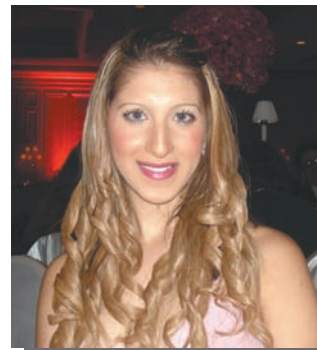
*A Chrysler Seabring convertible that was silver with gray leather interior was my first car. It had a black soft-top that came down every day - even when it was close to winter!! The day I got the car I picked up 4 friends and we just drove around with the top down blasting music. We decided to have a little fun, we all went to the toy store and picked up two squirt guns each. We went to every one of our friend's houses and had them come out to see the new car and when they did, we soaked every one of them!! That was probably the most memorable moment when thinking about the best days in my first car.*

**Suzanne Dehko  
Fashion Account Executive  
New York, NY**



*My cousin returned from his tour of duty (Armed Services) in Berlin and brought back a wonderful VW bug convertible (red—of course). Until then, I had been taking the "cross town" DSR bus to Wayne State University as an undergraduate for two years. So, you can imagine my joy at ditching the bus in favor of my "very own, very first car" at the ripe ole age of twenty. Yes, I was on top of the world. I saved for many years to purchase this gem for the kingly sum of \$300. This was a fortune to me, but well worth it. I got in more fender benders and used more bondo on that car than I'd like to remember, but I also have more fond memories of my first car than any other. Today, when I get overcharged for a fancy dinner, I am fond of saying "this cost more than my first car." Its ok, no one else finds this funny either.*

**Henry W. Saad  
Michigan Appellate Court Judge  
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan**



*My first car was a white Jeep Liberty, which I received at the age of sixteen. It was my first car so I absolutely loved it, and I still do. My most memorable moment about the Jeep occurred at the dealership the day I purchased my car. The dealer asked me if I would like to have my initials put on the car and my first response was "can they be in pink?" At first, the dealer gave me a blank stare and then finally said "of course." I think that made my day because I was sixteen years old with a brand-new personalized car! My most unforgettable memory in my Jeep would have to be when my sister and I took a road trip to Ohio in it. I will always remember the backseat of my car filled with pillows, blankets, an endless amount of shoes and even a cooler (courtesy of my mom). The lease on my Jeep ends this month and I have already started to miss it, but I am looking forward to making amazing, unforgettable memories in my new car!*

**Elizabeth Kaadou  
Student/Editorial Intern  
West Bloomfield, MI**



*A Toyota Camry was my first car. It was a hand me down from my mother. Nevertheless, it wasn't the convertible sports car I was dreaming of, but it was my first car so I loved it! It was a champagne color. Moreover, I liked it because it was reliable and practical. I remember getting in my first fender bender, and just thinking how my mom was going to be so angry. After a couple of years we sold it, and we ended up with another Toyota, which was a Forerunner. I love the Forerunner! I could never see myself driving a low car again. Thank you for including me in your questionnaire.*

**Miriam Habib  
Miss Lebanon Immigrant 2004  
Houston, Texas**



Woodrow W. Woody, Frank Sinatra, Danny Thomas in Miami, circa 1977.



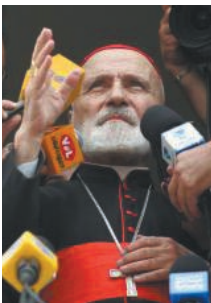
There are global car-makers, racecar drivers, first-time car buyers – and then there are car dealers, and Woodrow W. Woody was one of the best. For

60 years, Woody, as he was affectionately known by all, was not only one of the nation's longest-running but one of the country's largest Pontiac dealers. Starting as an automobile-factory assembly-line worker, he moved on to become a car salesman, a used-car dealer, and then a franchised Pontiac automobile dealer. He had been selling Pontiacs since 1940 and even with his 1912 departure from Lebanon he kept close ties to his homeland. To honor his parents' memory, he built a school and clinic in his native village of Bejderfel. Over the years, he became a local legend, giving \$1 bills to children, donating to charities and making folksy TV commercials with his trademark sign-off, "So long. See you soon. Drive carefully." 🇱🇧

## Upcoming Events

### THIS JUST IN!

**(BKERKE)...HIS BEATITUDE MAR NASRALLAH BOUTROS CARDINAL SFEIR. MARONITE PATRIARCH OF ANTIOCH AND ALL THE EAST** will travel to the United States - specifically Detroit – to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the Eparchy of St. Maron in America and the arrival of its first Bishop, His Excellency Francis M. Zayek. The Patriarch will participate in all activities related to the Anniversary Celebration including a Mass of the Liturgy and a Gala Ball in his honor during the second week of July 2006.



### MEMORIAL SERVICE TO H.E. RAFIK HARIRI

Sunday, February 12, 2006  
Embassy Suites Anaheim South 11767 Harbor Boulevard  
Garden Grove, CA / 714.539.3300

The Future Youth Movement (Tayyar al Mustaqbal) in the United States cordially invites you to the first annual memorial service honoring the life and vision of His Excellency the Late Prime Minister Rafik B. Al-Hariri. For further information please contact the General Coordinator Mr. Walid Nassif at 313.598.0000 or eMail at Nassifinsurance@aol.com

### MARCEL GHANEM TO BE HONORED IN CALIFORNIA

Sunday, February 12, 2006  
Grand Wilshire Hotel Los Angeles 930 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA / 213.688.7777

Marcel Ghanem, the host of the popular TV program Kalam Al Nass, which is very widely watched by the Lebanese and Arab Community all over the world, is to receive the Life Time Achievement Award for Excellency in Journalism. The Award will be given yearly to Maronites who excel in their profession and civil achievements.

### JR. EXECUTIVES FIRST WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, March 01, 2006 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Memphis Smoke 100 Main St, Royal Oak, MI / 248.543.4300

The Detroit Economic Club Junior Executives host First Wednesday informal networking events the first Wednesday of each month. These events have a very friendly atmosphere and the age range is from mid 20's-mid 40's. People are dressed business casual as most come straight from work. There is no cost to attend and no reservation is needed either. You do not need to be a member to attend. Bring lots of business cards! A cash bar and light appetizers are also provided. For more information, visit the Detroit Economic Club website at [www.econclub.org](http://www.econclub.org), email Jessica Wayland at [jwayland@econclub.org](mailto:jwayland@econclub.org), or call 313.963.8547.

### SADR FOUNDATION USA 5TH ANNUAL DINNER

Saturday, March 25, 2006 6:00 pm  
Greenfield Manor 4770 Greenfield Rd., Dearborn, MI 48126

The Sadr Foundation USA is a humanitarian, non-profit organization dedicated to assessing, helping and addressing the basic needs of vulnerable persons and families in Lebanon and the United States and is especially committed to supporting the role of women in our society, obtaining charitable contributions through organized events and projects, and educating the public through activities that promote understanding between cultures and faiths. Approximately one thousand people are expected to attend as individuals, corporations and privately owned companies to raise money for orphans of war who are impoverished and homeless. Visit their website at [www.imamsadrfoundation.org.lb](http://www.imamsadrfoundation.org.lb).

### HAFLI'S / PARTIES

**February 12, 2006 7:00 PM**  
**St. Maron Feast Day Celebration**  
St. Maron Cathedral Banquet Hall, Detroit, MI  
For More information call Rudy Jabbour at 248.910.1011

**February 12, 2006 7:00 PM**  
**Our Lady of Redemption Church Valentines Day Party**  
Barrister Gardens Banquet Hall, St. Clair Shores, MI  
For more information call Andre Daher at 586.306.2639

**February 19, 2006 8:30 PM**  
**Nawal El-Zoghby Concert**  
Caboto Club, Windsor, Ontario Canada  
For reservations please call 519.971.9075

**March 3, 2006 8:00 PM**  
**St. John the Baptist Melkite Church Winter Bash**  
The Souk, Chicago IL  
For more information call JoAnn Fakhouri at 708.691.4461

إذا كنت تتكلم  
اللغة العربية  
فيمكنك  
أن تحظى  
بوظيفة معنا.

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