THE PUFFERBELLIES *were invited to participate in the Talented "Friends" Variety Show sponsored by the Friends of North Andover Senior Center, held on Saturday, May 12, 2007. The focus of the center is on planning and executing fundraising events to enable the Senior Center to fully meet the needs of the elder population of North Andover for today and tomorrow.*

MEMBERS OF THE *Gashi family said goodbye to friends and family from Verbovc/Vrbovac before they departed for the United States to receive special burn treatment April 30. The trip was coordinated in part with TF Civil Affairs and Shriners Hospital for Children in Boston.*
(Photo by Spc. David House, MNTF(E) Public Affairs)

The Gashi Children from Albania

By HERMES BOYATIS

AGAIN and again we have witnessed the wonders of our Aleppo Children's Transportation Fund. Remember the Chinese brother and sister from a village near Beijing, and others from Canada and Texas? At the Alba Restaurant in Quincy on May 20, a group of Greek Shriners met the owner of two restaurants there, **Leonard (Leo) Keka** and heard a remarkable continuing saga. Five children: **Ardit**, **Arian**, **Ariola**, **Milot**, and **Gonxhe**, from the village of Verboc, Albania, had arrived in Boston on April 30. They had suffered various burns to their faces and bodies in a domestic accident. The following week the same group of diners attended a fundraiser at the Restaurant. The children are now in the hands of specialist surgeons and therapists in our Boston Shriners Burns Hospital.

Leo described all the great helpers and fundraisers that have from the beginning insured the future of the little ones and their parents. The response was endless!

First, in arranging the travel from Albania was the U.S. Military, Sergeant **Edward Vowell**, who prepared this past year for everything necessary for the children and families to reach Boston Shriners Hospital: travel documents from the U.S Embassy in Skopje, Macedonia, and promises of support from Albanian/American organizations (MAAS/BESA).

Next came the Ministry of Health in Kosovo, which covered the travel costs of the airline tickets to Boston for the children and parents.

Casa Monte in Boston's North End has agreed to house the families for a reasonable price. The facilities are clean, furnished, and are within walking distance of the Hospital, public transportation, and downtown Boston.

In addition to the funders already cited, there are many, many more! The Albanian–American Woman's Organization/Motrat Qiriazi in New York; Children's Chance in Connecticut; Holy Trinity Albanian Orthodox Church, and St. George's Cathedral.

Suela Lika, who is in the Bone Marrow Transplant Department of Massachusetts General Hospital will coordinate and oversee the visits of the Gashi family in Boston and will liaise with Shriners Hospital.

We know that the Boston Shriners Hospital has agreed to accept the care of the injured children *pro bono*. Hospital specialists have scheduled the various treatments for each child, including laser surgery, Z-plasty, and continuing follow-up treatments and surgeries for years to come.

We Shriners stand ready to add our donations to the Children's Transportation Fund. In addition, we urge our Aleppo News readers to direct their contributions to Leonard Keka at the Alba Restaurant in Quincy.

What started for your reporter and fellow Greeks as diners in a posh restaurant became a miracle. We will play a major role as funders and helpers for young ones from a continent away!

ALEPPO SHRINERS

Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine
99 Fordham Road
Wilmington, Massachusetts 01887-2148

PETITION FOR INITIATION AND MEMBERSHIP

To the Potentate, Officers and Nobles of the Aleppo Shriners
Situated in the Oasis of Wilmington, Desert of Massachusetts

Please print or type all information:

Full name:_____ Date: _____

Birth Date:_____ Place of Birth:_____ Name of Spouse (*if applicable*): _____

Mailing Address:_____ City/Town:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Home Phone: ( ) _____ Business Phone: ( ) _____

E-Mail Address:_____

I am a Master Mason in good standing in: _____ Lodge, A.F. & A.M., Located: _____
(city, state)

which is a Lodge recognized by or in amity with the Conference of Grand Masters of North America. Furthermore I have resided at my current address for not less than 6 months, as required by the Bylaws of The Imperial Council. I hereby make application to become a Noble of the Mystic Shrine, and a member of your temple. If granted membership, I promise to conform to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Imperial Council and the Bylaws and Ceremonies of your temple.

Recommended and Vouched for on the honor of (if you don't have a sponsor please call 978-657-4202 for immediate assistance):

1. Noble _____ Membership # _____ Print Name _____
Sponsor Signature *(on dues card)*

2. Noble _____ Membership # _____ Print Name _____
Sponsor Signature *(on dues card)*

The fee must accompany the application. Make checks payable to **ALEPPO SHRINERS**. Application for Shrine membership is not tax deductible.

❑ A check for $150.00 payable to Aleppo Shriners is enclosed

❑ I want to pay by credit card: ❑ Master Card ❑ Visa
Credit Card Number:

Expiration Date: Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐

FEE	**$100.00**
FEZ	**$50.00**
TOTAL	**$150.00**

Candidate Hat Size for Red Fez_____

I would like to petition to one of the following Aleppo Temple Units:

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☐ Brass Band	☐ Mounted Patrol
☐ Chanters	☐ Oriental Band
☐ Clowns	☐ Pipe Band
☐ Cycles	☐ Provost Guard
☐ Director's Staff	☐ Ragtop
☐ Fire Brigade	☐ Stewards
☐ Legion of Honor	☐ Temple Guard
☐ Lighting	☐ Transportation
☐ Medical Corps	☐ Swing Band

Please mail completed application and payment in the enclosed, prepaid envelope to:
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99 Fordham Road
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