



2023 BOSTON MARATHON®
WREATH CEREMONY

April 13, 2023

Consulate General of Greece in Boston

2:53:19

BOSTON: THE ATHENS OF AMERICA

Message from the Consul General of Greece



*Hon. Symeon Tegos
Consul General of Greece in Boston*

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2023 Boston Marathon Wreath Ceremony.

Today the Boston Athletic Association will receive four gold wreaths, cut from olive trees in Marathon, Greece, as a symbolic gift from the people of Greece. The olive wreath tradition represents all the indispensable ideals for which the citizens-soldiers fought in Marathon over 2,500 years ago: freedom, individual dignity, and the power of democracy, all of which remain relevant today. This tradition, and simple but potent symbol, connect the ancient with the modern world.

It is an honor to be part of this ceremony and the 127th running of the Boston Marathon, a race for all humankind that transcends time and reminds us all of what really matters to humankind and our progress.

Symeon Tegos

The Consulate General of Greece in Boston represents Greece in New England. It is a bridge between Greece and the United States and the Greek-American community, providing consular assistance and services, and spearheading a series of initiatives for the promotion of business, cultural, scientific, sport, and cultural ties between New England and Greece.

Consul General Symeon Tegos is a career diplomat with over 22 years' experience on a diverse range of issues, including the United Nations, Latin America, bilateral relations with Turkey, and human rights. Previous assignments include the Greek Embassy in Santiago de Chile, the Greek Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York City, US, and the Embassy of Greece in Ankara, Turkey. The last 3 years he served as Director of the Political Affairs Office of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Thrace, Greece.

Boston Athletic Association

United States 1896 B.A.A. Olympic Team members. Standing: T.E. Burke, T.P. Curtis, E.H. Clark. Seated: W.W. Hoyt, S. Paine, J. Graham, J.B. Paine, C.A. Blake.



The Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.) is one of the nation's oldest athletic clubs, established on March 15, 1887.

As a non-profit organization, the B.A.A.'s mission is to promote a healthy lifestyle through sports, especially running. The B.A.A. is committed to a world where all people can access and benefit from running and an active lifestyle.

At the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896, Greece conceived of a 26-mile race following the route of the ancient Athenians in order to remember the Battle of Marathon. There was no official U.S. Olympic team in 1896. But, there was a B.A.A. team that would make up the majority of the American delegation.

The B.A.A. athletes dominated the first Olympic Games, winning 6 of the 11 U.S. team's first-place track-and-field medals. In fact, the first gold medal at the Games was won by B.A.A. athlete James Connolly in the hop, step and jump.

The entire B.A.A. squad was in the Olympic Stadium to watch the dramatic finish of this new Marathon race, which was the final event of the Games. Representatives of the B.A.A. came home inspired to create a similar long-distance running race in Boston. The B.A.A. established the first "Boston Marathon" the next year in 1897 and held it on Patriots' Day, thus connecting the new race with the Battle of Marathon, the Modern Olympic Games, and the day we celebrate the courage of our own American citizen soldiers, the Minutemen, who stood up in 1775 to an enormous military power to win our American liberty.

This year marks the 127th running of the Boston Marathon, recognized as the oldest annually held and most historic marathon in the world. Approximately 30,000 athletes from all 50 U.S. states and more than 100 nations will gather for this year's event, running from Hopkinton to Boston in the footsteps of many decorated champions. Upon reaching the finish on Boylston Street, all will receive the coveted unicorn finisher's medal. Four athletes will be proclaimed champions and will be presented special gold-dipped olive wreaths courtesy of the Alpha Omega Council and the Consul General of Greece in Boston on behalf of the people of Greece.

"It is an honor to guide the Boston Athletic Association as we embark together on our next chapter, building upon our 135-year history," said Jack Fleming, B.A.A. President and Chief Executive Officer.



This Evening's Program



*2022 Evans Chepet, Kenya
(2:06:51)*

A gift from Greece and its people to the Boston Marathon®

Since 1984, the Consulate General of Greece in Boston has presented the Boston Athletic Association with olive branch wreaths to crown the four first place winners of the Boston Marathon.

Each year these wreaths are grown, cut, and hand-crafted in Greece, transmitting Classical Greece's tradition of crowning its victors with olive wreaths to Boston, the "Athens of America."

This tradition traces back to the dawn of civilization, introduced by Herakles as the prize for the running race winner, to honor his father Zeus at the First Ancient Olympic Games. As in ancient times, the wreaths you see today will crown the winners of the 127th running of the Boston Marathon.

In 1984, the Republic of Greece and the Boston Athletic Association formally established The Marathon Wreath Ceremony, in which the Greek people gift to the Boston Athletic Association the Marathon winners' wreaths, hewn from the plains of Marathon, Greece. This gift recognizes the historic ties between Greece and the world's first democracy in Ancient Athens that fought against tyranny, and the birth of democracy and the fight for freedom that rang out of Boston in 1775 and was heard 'round the world. This ceremony was borne from the collaboration of Greek Consul General Christos Panagopoulos, the Boston Athletic Association, Governor Michael S. Dukakis, Lt. Governor John Kerry, Boston Mayor Ray Flynn, BAA Race Director Tim Kilduff, and Peter Agris of the Alpha Omega Council.



*Peres Jepchirchir, Kenya
(2:21:01)*

Order of Events

2021 125th Anniversary Boston Marathon Fanfest, from left, Costa Sideridis, Alpha Omega President, Consul General Stratos Efthymiou, B.A.A. President & CEO Thomas S. Grilk, and Timothy Kilduff, 26.2 Foundation



- ✓ Welcome, Paul Tsitsopoulos, Alpha Omega Council President
- ✓ Introduction, Arielle Mitropoulos, Master of Ceremonies, Reporter, WMUR-TV, New Hampshire
- ✓ Invocation and Remarks, His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Boston
- ✓ U.S. and Greek National Anthems sung by Tiffany Mezitis
- ✓ Greetings from Special Guests
- ✓ Remarks on Boston: Athens of America, Peter Lemonias, Wreath Ceremony Chair
- ✓ The 26.2 Foundation International Marathon Center, Timothy Kilduff, President & Founder
- ✓ Remarks Presentation of the Marathon Wreaths, Consul General of Greece, Symeon Tegos
- ✓ Remarks, Boston Athletic Association
- ✓ Closing / Reception

BAA Chairman Dr. Michael O'Leary with Athens, Greece Mayor Kostas Bakoyannis.



The 26.2 Found



Hopkinton Middle School Hiller Block 5K

At the 26.2 Foundation, we like to say that there is more to a marathon than running 26.2 miles. To do so requires not only inspiration and courage, but also passion, discipline, preparation, commitment, health and sportsmanship.

Those are qualities we celebrate and seek to reflect in our programs, which are designed to promote the sport of marathoning, as well as health, wellness and economic development. Since our inception in 1996 as a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the Foundation's work has ranged from education, fitness and support for the arts, to community and international relations.

Each year at the Boston Marathon we field 'Team Inspire,' making available invitational entries to a small group of runners. The bibs are graciously provided to us by the Boston Athletic Association. Team Inspire's fundraising helps support our initiatives, from the 'Desire to Inspire' speakers' program for local middle-school students; to our marathon sculpture series, recognizing such Boston Marathon 'greats' as Stylianos Kyriakides and Bobbi Gibb. It also helps enable 'The Examined Life,' a program that identifies and sponsors outstanding educators in Massachusetts' MetroWest region, providing them with professional scholarship, curriculum development and community outreach on the history, culture, and accomplishments of ancient and modern Greece.

At the community and international level, our sister-city initiative, linking Hopkinton, Massachusetts and Marathon, Greece, celebrates and leverages the bonds born of history, shared purpose and the democratic process.

Those themes also form the cornerstones of our signature project – the creation of an International Marathon Center (IMC) on the Boston Marathon route that will



Rendering of the International Marathon Center, Hopkinton, MA

Visit us online at

ation in Motion

*“It All Starts Here” sign
in Hopkinton, MA*

formally and permanently honor, celebrate and inspire the power of the human spirit and the successes of marathoners worldwide.

Over the last two years, the Foundation has taken that unique vision and concept of a world marathon center and put it into motion. We have:

- Signed a 99-year lease with the town of Hopkinton, Massachusetts for a 19-acre site on which to develop the IMC. The property is located on the north side of Route 135, less than a mile from the Marathon starting line.
- Validated our vision and plan through a rigorous economic-impact analysis conducted by ConsultEcon.
- Worked with GRL Architects to draw up plans for a state-of-the-art, 25,000-square-foot facility that will include not only a world-class museum and hall of fame, but also 11,000 square feet of dedicated exhibit space, an auditorium, library, conference and educational space.
- Collaborated with a HealyKohler, a leading museum design agency, to create a compelling, world-class and interactive visitor experience intended to maximize repeat visitation and sustainability.
- Launched site due-diligence and permitting, which is being spearheaded by the regional civil engineering firm, Beals + Thomas.
- And we are now finalizing the resources to launch a capital campaign.

Ⓡ
Achieving our goals would be impossible without the strong partnerships we’ve forged over the years – especially those with the Alpha Omega Council; the Consul General of Greece in Boston; and the Boston Athletic Association. We sincerely thank them all for their generous support.

*Bobbi Gibb, first woman
to run the Boston Marathon
with her sculpture
“The Girl Who Ran”.*



From Marathon Greece, to Boston, to the World



1920 Winner
Panagiotis “Peter” Trivoulidis

The seminal relationship of Greece to the Boston Marathon has been embodied by Greeks at home and across the Atlantic, Greek-Americans, and others throughout the world. This has been personified in athleticism, in civic leadership and democracy, and in the creation of the charitable run - running for a cause greater than oneself.

In 1896, Spiros Louis, from Maroussi, Greece, won the very first marathon race at the first Modern Olympic Games in Athens.

In 1920 Panagiotis “Peter” Trivoulidis won the Boston Marathon. Trivoulidis had emigrated from Sparta, Greece to the United States in 1914, settling in Brooklyn, New York. He worked as a waiter and trained after hours.

Beginning in 1933 through 1946, noted Massachusetts legislator George C. Demeter introduced the ancient Greek tradition of crowning the Boston Marathon winners with a laurel wreath from Greece. He would wait at the finish line and run alongside the winner, placing the wreath on his head as he crossed the finish line. He also authored the *Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure*, recognized as an important work on the parliamentary process. Demeter was also connected to the great Stylianos Kyriakides, hosting him when he was in Boston for his great victory in the 1946 Marathon.

In 1984, the first annual Boston Marathon Wreath Ceremony took place. In 2010, the winners wreaths were dipped in gold for the first time, to mark the 2,500th anniversary of the Battle of Marathon.

In 2014, Meb Keflezighi, originally from Ethiopia, won the 2014 Boston Marathon. Meb’s connections to Greece started in 1986. Separated by the ravages of war in Ethiopia for many years, in 1986 the Keflezighi family was reunited in Athens, Greece, before immigrating to the U.S. Meb won the Silver Medal at the 2004 Athens Olympic Marathon.

In the decades following Kyriakides’ great victory in 1946, the power of the Marathon in promoting the endurance of the body and the strength of the human spirit continued to grow, as marathons spread and runners exemplifying Kyriakides’ charitable impulse were emulated throughout the world.



George C. Demeter crowning 1945
Winner Johnny Kelley

Stylianos Kyriakides



The Story of A Greek Hero, on the 78th Anniversary of his Boston Marathon® Victory

Boston 1946



In the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin...

Stylianos Kyriakides competed in the Olympic Marathon for Greece, placing 11th. There he met and became friends with fellow Berlin marathoner, Johnny Kelley from Boston. Just a few years later, Kyriakides was back in Greece, where he narrowly survived the Nazi occupation of Greece. With the Greek Civil War following on the heels of World War II, and with thousands of his war-torn countrymen dying from starvation, Kyriakides felt compelled to run the Boston Marathon in 1946, not for his own personal success, but to draw America's attention to Greece's condition after its heroic resistance to Nazism. In 1946 Kyriakides travelled to Boston, but he was so emaciated from lack of food in Greece that Boston doctors advised him that he should not run because he could die. Nevertheless, Kyriakides chose to run. According to a newspaper report, he was running neck and neck with Kelley nearing the finish line, when an old man shouted from the crowd, "For Greece, for your children!", motivating Kyriakides to pull away and win the race in 2:29:27, a new record time. According to Life magazine, he shouted "For Greece!" as he crossed the finish line.

Nearly a million people greeted Kyriakides on his return to Athens in May 1946, when he arrived with boatloads of food, medicine, clothing, and other essentials donated by generous Americans who read of his cause and victory.

His story has inspired generations of runners, and he is remembered as one of the greatest figures in the history of the Boston Marathon and American sports. He is considered the very first in a long line of charitable runners - those who run for the good and for virtue.



Timothy Kilduff, 26.2 Foundation President, presenting Commr. Evans in 2018 with replica of Kyriakides' winning 1946 Boston Marathon jersey, with Ceremonary Chairman Peter Lemonias.

The Other Marathon By HERBERT GOLDER

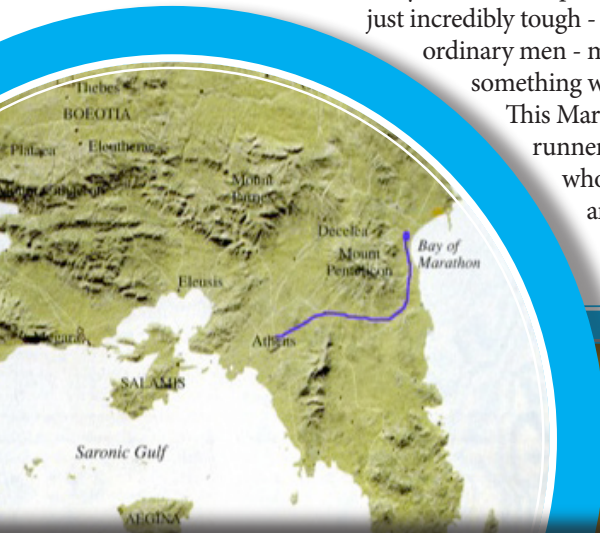
Herbert Golder is Professor of Classical Studies and Editor in Chief of "Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics" at Boston University

This year, we commemorate the 2,513th anniversary of the Athenian victory at the Battle of Marathon. In both substance and in symbol, this victory is one of freedom over tyranny. Had the Persians, who ruled the greatest empire ever known, won the day, the world we now inhabit might never have come to be. Athens would have been but another subject territory of Persia, rather than the birthplace of the liberal habits of mind from which Western Civilization arose. Without pausing to think about that celebrated victory, people the world over know Marathon by the twenty-six mile race named after it, the reenactment by amateur and world-class runners of Pheidippides' famous breathless run from the battlefield to Athens to announce the Greek victory, after which he instantly dropped dead. But only Plutarch tells this story.

Herodotus has Pheidippides running all the way to Sparta (a good deal further away than Athens) for the purpose of summoning its help - which help was not to be forthcoming. But the real "marathon" was surely those twenty-six miles that the Athenian soldiers ran, after inflicting heavy losses on the Persians by fighting an exhausting and ferocious battle, still fully loaded with armor and carrying all their heavy gear, some of them badly wounded, back to Athens to protect it. There was no time for celebrating or resting. One setback wasn't likely to deter the King of Persia.

With the Athenian troops at Marathon, and Persia in control of the seas, Athens was an easy target. And so, weary from battle, they ran all the way back. These men weren't professional athletes. They weren't even professionally-trained soldiers. They were just incredibly tough - and tough-minded - extraordinary ordinary men - men who believed in something - something worth living for and worth dying for.

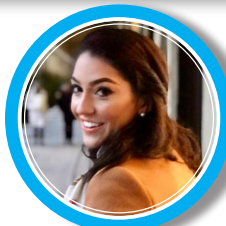
This Marathon Day, let us think not of the great runner Pheidippides, but of the ordinary men who performed a miracle at Marathon and then brought home and saved a dream called Athens.



*26 mile route of the Athenians
from Marathon back home*

Boston Marathon® Wreath Ceremony

Hosted by the Consulate General of Greece in Boston
& Alpha Omega Council, with special thanks to:



Master of Ceremonies:

Arielle Mitropoulos is a reporter with WMUR-TV, New Hampshire. Previously she worked with ABC News in New York. A Wellesley College graduate, she was a recipient of an Alpha Omega Council Agris Journalism Scholarship. Arielle has completed five Boston Marathons.



Alpha Omega Council 2023 Boston Marathon® Runner:

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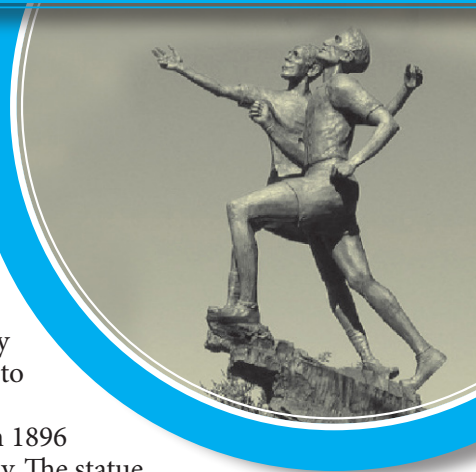
Hon. Symeon Tegos, Peter Lemonias, Chair, Timothy Kilduff,
Nicholas Kourtis, George Leasca, Costa Sideridis
Paul Tsitsopoulos & Nicholas Ypsilantis

Modern-day statue of Ancient Athenian General Miltiades at the Marathon battle site. Miltiades insisted that the Persians be met and fought immediately, rather than risking a siege of Athens, and he devised the winning battlefield tactics.



The Boston Marathon® Wreath Ceremony

*The Boston Marathon
Wreath Ceremony is proudly
supported by the Alpha Omega Council*



“Spirit of the Marathon”

This work at the 1-mile mark of the Boston Marathon in Hopkinton was commissioned by New Balance Athletic Shoe Company in 2006 to mark the 60th anniversary of Kyriakides’ victory. It depicts the first Marathon winner in 1896 Spyridon Louis urging Kyriakides on to victory. The statue was sculpted by Mico Kaufman of Tewksbury, MA, and is hosted at Weston Nurseries in Hopkinton. It will be walking distance from the 26.2 Foundation International Marathon Center. An identical work was also commissioned for Marathon, Greece, sister city of Hopkinton, near the ancient battle site, to mark the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens.

The Alpha Omega Council is a non-profit philanthropic and service organization based in Boston. Its mission is to promote loyalty and patriotism to the United States and to cultivate the ideals of Hellenism by supporting various religious, charitable, scientific, literary, and educational activities throughout the nation. Each year the Council recognizes the achievements of those who have excelled in their professions through its annual Lifetime Achievement Award and Philhellene Award, and also presents the Agris Memorial Scholarships to Greek-American students studying journalism. The Council, together with The 26.2 Foundation, also offers educational programming for middle and high school students focusing on lessons from ancient Greek history.

Since its founding in 1976, the Council has donated more than \$3M to charitable causes.



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