

EVANGELINE GOULETAS

A True First Lady

BY MICHAEL KARRAS

Most people know that Evangeline Gouletas is rich, smart, beautiful, and Greek-American. Some people may also know that she was the First Lady of New York State during 1981 & 1982. However, few people know that Evangeline Gouletas' story is a rags-to-riches tale that began in 1946 when her parents, Steven and Mary Gouletas, left war-ravaged Greece for a better life in America. They settled in Chicago because Evangeline's grandfather came to the city in 1898

The American Dream

The Gouletas children were still young when they made the decision that life wasn't going to just pass them by, that they, too, would take a big slice out of the American Dream and make it theirs. While Evangeline was earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics at Northeastern Illinois University, she married and subsequently gave birth to a daughter, Maria, named after her mother. After graduating with Masters in Education and while teaching at the college level she was granted a National Science Foundation Fellowship by the Federal Government to pursue graduate work in Mathematics and Engineering at Illinois Institute of Technology. She also pursued graduate courses in mathematics at Johns Hopkins University. She was also selected to work as a Mathematics Analyst-Engineer on the Minuteman Missile Project at Northamerican Aviation in Anaheim, California. Following her work on the Minuteman Missile Project she returned to the field of education as an Administrator of Federally Funded Educational Programs for the Chicago Board of Education. It was during this time, that Evangeline separated from her husband and had assumed all the responsibilities of a single parent.

Twenty years ago she and her



Photographed by Bachrach.



With father Steven, close friend Father Keith Ramey, and mother Mary

brothers, Nicholas and Victor, set aside solid, lucrative careers to form American Invsco Corporation. In a short period of time, American Invsco became the country's foremost developer of luxury condominiums. Among its prize conversions is Chicago's Lake Point Tower, a clover-shaped glass wonder designed by George Schipporeit and John Heinrich, former students of Mies van der Rohe. Today, Lake Point Tower is one of the most commanding structures on the Chicago skyline and as renowned as the Sears Tower. Perched high atop the 70th floor, above all Chicago, sits the Lake Point Tower Restaurant where Evangeline often entertains friends and clients.

Evangeline and her brothers are also partners in Electronic Realty Associates (ERA), one of the largest residential real estate franchise corporations in the world.

A Well Balanced Life

Despite the rigors of the business world, Evangeline Gouletas is also the sportswoman. She's an accomplished equestrienne, an avid skier and loves to play tennis. Did you know that she exercises every day? Faithfully. Perhaps that's why she look the way she does. Sound nutrition also plays a big role in Evangeline's well-being. So much so that she's written a soon-to-be published book. "Engie's Slim Gourmet" a serious

look at highly-nutritious, low calorie meal menus with haute gourmet presentations. Filled with four-color photographs taken at Engie's Lake Point Tower Restaurant, the book is intended to be a gourmet delight for the eyes and a coffee table art piece as well.

Hard Work and Perseverance

Hard work and perseverance: it's as simple and as difficult as that. Recently, in fact the last time I met Evangeline in

New York City, she was lecturing at the Academy of Finance at Bernard Baruch College. Title of the presentation: "Being the Best You Can Be". Most appropriate. Her lectures and workshop are very popular. She is in high demand as a speaker by various professional organizations nationally. What Evangeline has to say not only makes a great deal of sense, she's living proof that it works.

Awards and Honors

Few people know that Engie, as she is known to her friends, is a very proud grandmother of four. She's also a staunch supporter of equal rights opportunity, and justice for all; and a philanthropist. Few are aware of her enormous efforts on behalf of the health, education, and welfare of America's children. After all, Engie started her professional life as an educator, and an educator she remains. Is it any wonder that in 1986 New York LaGuardia Community College established the **Evangeline Gouletas Leadership Award**, an annual honor presented to the individual "in recognition of his or her service to the community and dedication to former New York City Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia's vision of transmitting this city... far greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

The Evangeline Gouletas Scholarship was established in 1987. Given each year at the Governor's Committee on Scholastic Achievement ceremony in New York, the award is endowed in



With Michael Karras and mother Mary

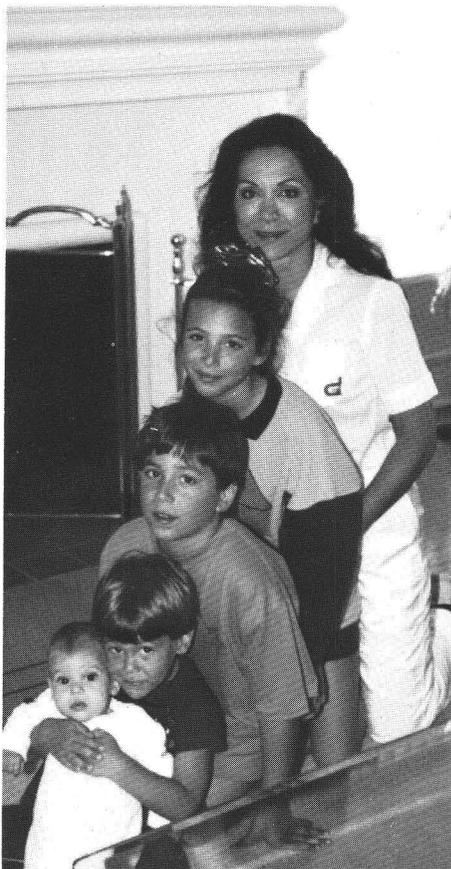
perpetuity by Evangeline as a personal goal of providing education to deserving students of all creeds and races.

Engie has received numerous honors including the ACRMD (Association for Children with Retarded Mental Development), Humanitarian Awards and B'nai B'rith's Great American Award. She's served on the board of the Little Flower Lay Catholic priesthood, and served on the New York City Meals on Wheels Patrons Holiday Committee and the Ronald McDonald House Board of Directors, life member of Hadassah and the Godmother of the Southampton, Long Island, Greek Orthodox church *Kimisis Tis Theotokou* or Dormition of the Virgin, which she named in honor of her mother and her daughter.

Love and respect for parents

When in Chicago Engie spends as much time as she can with her mother who is still mourning the death of her husband. Engie speaks about her father and grandfather with great love and respect:

At 4:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 18, 1990, our family was deeply saddened at



With her four beautiful grandchildren



With Pauline Trigere, Kitty Carlisle Hart, and Happy Rockefeller

the passing of our beloved father, Steven N. Gouletas. We grieve for our loss but not for our father, for he was truly called to his heavenly reward. It is most appropriate to think of his passing as a reward because dad devoted his entire life to love and to the quiet service of God, family, and his fellow man.

Our grandfather, Nicholas, came to Chicago in 1898. My father, Steven, was born in Chicago on February 24, 1915. My grandfather went back to Greece with his family in 1921. He returned to the U.S. for the purpose of organizing things to bring his family back home but unfortunately, he was killed in a car accident. It was then that my father became the patriarch of his family. The family was blocked in by World War II and unable to leave Greece.

The generosity my father lavished on the churches and monasteries he visited both here and in Greece was, at his insistence, completely anonymous. Only God and his family knew what a truly devout and altruistic man he was.

In our memories and in our hearts we, his family, can find a myriad of examples of our father's gentle spirit. As a husband, a father, a grandfather and great-grandfather, this man was beloved by four generations. Each of us, no matter how young or old, will ever allow our remembrances of him to fade. A man of integrity; a man who loved

beauty and nature; a man who shared his business skills, industriousness, and fair-minded philosophy with us; a man who left no enemies, no one who harbored anything but the best feelings for him; a man who made fishing with a grandchild the most important event in both of their lives.... this is the Steven Gouletas we will hold to our hearts. He was truly a unique person.

His courage and determination to always do the right thing fills our hearts with pride and instills within us a legacy to uphold.

In November 1989, the University of the Aegean honored our parents as Outstanding Greek-Americans.

To commemorate our beloved father's devotion to church, family and community, we have established the creation of the **STEVEN N. GOULETAS MEMORIAL FUND** for the purpose of supplying medical treatment to children from Greece and the establishment of the first Greek Orthodox monastery in the United States.

Evangeline Gouletas has been my friend for many years. Despite all the awards, accolades and triumphs, I have always known her to be down to earth, generous, fun-loving, utterly feminine and a wonderfully caring friend. She is without a doubt one of the most polished individuals I have ever known.



With Olympia Dukakis and brother Nicholas

She has a most appealing way of listening carefully to what someone is saying, then answering decisively with complete candor. If she doesn't know the answer to a question, she will say so. And then will proceed to ask questions until she has the answer. (Isn't it interesting that smart people are not afraid to admit they do not have all the answers?) When she says she is going to do something, Evangeline does it exactly as promised, come rain or shine. She doesn't dawdle. She's one of a rare breed of individuals... a person of her word!

Recently, I had the opportunity to sit down with Evangeline and pose a number a questions. My queries have no particular rhyme or reason nor are they meant to provide a specific answer. They simply serve to support my belief that Engie's life has been extraordinary, and that most of us would be fascinated upon meeting her, and could, quite possibly, learn something from her. I know I have!

What do you love and what do you avoid in life?

—“I love my family, my God, and my friends, of course, but I also love who I have become as an adult. As far as

avoiding things in life, I try to take life head-on and avoid nothing that presents itself to me. That takes quite a bit of discipline but I believe that avoidance destroys character and meeting life head-on builds character. I have to admit, though, that people with negative attitudes are not tops in my datebook!”

With what sort of people do you surround yourself?

—“People who care about others and are confident enough to pursue greatness. As my brother says, ‘If you want to fly like an eagle, you must surround yourself with eagles.’ ”

Would you prefer to reside in Chicago, your hometown, or New York, your adopted city? What draws you to both?

—“That's a question that's impossible to answer! I love both cities for their fantastic architecture, the amazing variety of ethnic cultures and myriad of social and cultural attractions. But, I also love Athens and Paris and Gstaad and Palm Beach! Let's just say that my home travels with me in my heart and I enjoy life to the fullest wherever I am.”

Obviously, you love to travel. Where have you been and why? Where have you not been but desire to go?

—“I have been to Europe and Asia and across the U.S.A. many, many times. Usually the trips are for business but every time I travel I look at it as a pleasure trip as well. I travel primarily to learn more about this beautiful world we live in. To not travel is to deny yourself the knowledge and wisdom of a global experience. So often we see our problems here in the U.S. as difficult to overcome. If one has a true global vision, one sees a completely different perspective. Where have I always wanted to go? When it's January in New York or Chicago, the idea of Tahiti is quite appealing. Maybe someday I'll indulge myself!”

What are your thoughts about Greece of today?

—“Much as America remains a symbol of hope in the minds of others far from her shores, Greece remains a symbol of vitality, warmth, and comfort to me. I often dream of the homeland of my heritage and am filled with pride for her.”

What caused you the most anguish and frustration in your life?

—“As I reflect on my life, it seems that the problems I had, the situations that I had to overcome were very frustrating at the time. But, I have to say that the most frustration and anguish I ever felt was when I was the First Lady of New York. As part of my duties I was involved in many charitable efforts to improve the quality of life in the state. I saw so much work to be done in terms of providing education to the underprivileged, getting nutritional food to the poor and shelter for the homeless. Even though we were able to make considerable progress in solving these dilemmas, I wanted to solve all of these problems at once. When I see injustice, poverty, and ignorance and know that these things can be alleviated, my sense of humanity demands that something be done *at once*.”

Have you ever expressed an interest in pursuing a political career?

—“Well, not publicly, anyway! I think I can be far more effective in creating positive change if I remain in the private sector. Would you vote for me?”

Do you believe that you always did what you wanted to?

—“Certainly not! I always want to be the very best in everything I do and I always want to improve.”

If you had the opportunity to begin your life over, what would you choose to study?

— “I never look back; always forward!”

What does your work in real estate mean to you today and what are your future plans for Chicago and elsewhere?

“Real estate is my vocation and a means to allow me to continue my philanthropic work and other interests. As for my future plans for Chicago and other cities, well, I can guarantee that they’ll be interesting news when they happen!”

How can we all help the people who suffer, especially the children? What can each do?

—“Over the past decade my company, Electronic Realty Associates (ERA), has contributed over \$12 million to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. It is my personal pledge that we will continue that contribution until we eliminate that horrible disease from the world. I would rather not discuss my personal donations and contributions in public. They should remain anonymous. Each of us should support established relief agencies, charities and organizations that seek medical cures and care for others in need. The amount is inconsequential; the act of giving is what counts. And when you give, say a prayer of gratitude for being allowed the opportunity to contribute.”

What do you cherish most in your life beside your work?

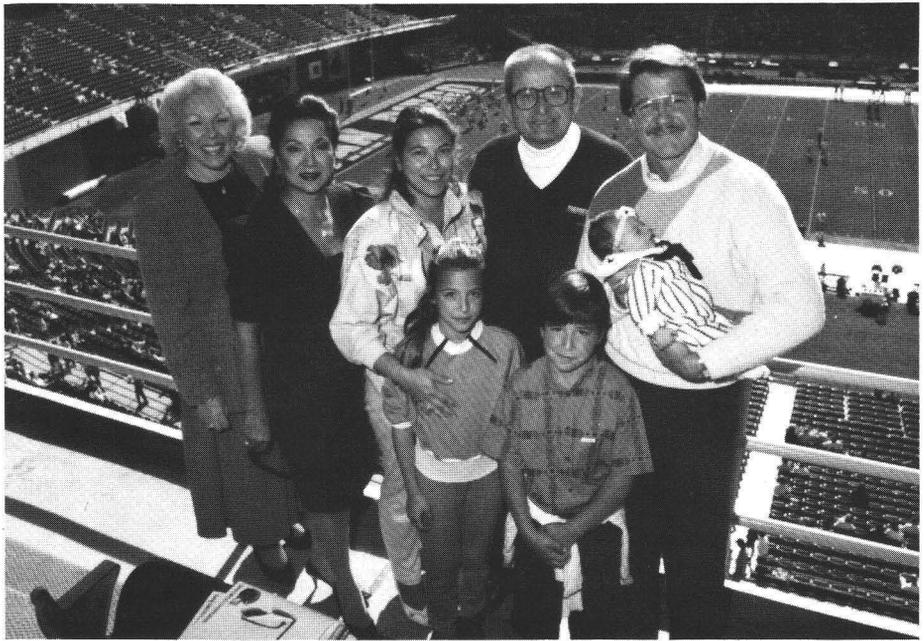
—“My health, my religious beliefs, and my family... these are all things that contribute to a balanced life.”

Tell me about your parents, what they mean to you?

—“They gave me life, wisdom, compassion, and humor. They gave me the potential to be all that I can be. I owe them everything and honor them every day.”

How do you define “family”, and what are your thoughts about yours?

—“My brothers, Nicholas and Victor, and my sister, Irene, are very supportive of each other and, in turn, we are supported by our mother. My dad, Steven, who passed away this past year, was a great strength to all of us and we



With close friend Barbara Cesare, daughter Maria Gouletas Monroe, San Diego Chargers owner and friend Alex Spanos, son-in-law Dan Monroe, and grandchildren.

miss him greatly. I’m quite proud of my daughter, Maria, who lives in California. We visit often and I get a chance to see my grandchildren, which give me so much joy. How do I define ‘family’? I can only define it in terms of total acceptance of one another and selfless love and sharing.”

Are you a religious person? In what senses?

—“Yes, I am. I owe all to my parents and my God. Although I am Greek Orthodox by choice, I embrace all religions as a source of hope and inspiration for all mankind. What a sad world this would be without acknowledgment of our Creator no matter if we call Him Christ or Allah or Vishnu.”

When do you feel totally free?

—“Always. Freedom is a state of mind based on confidence, purpose, direction, and faith. Even when I was a child and we were so impoverished and in the midst of World War II we had to go to bed hungry more than a few nights, I always felt freedom in my heart. My parents gave me that legacy.”

How do you spend your leisure hours?

—“You may not believe this but I really have no leisure time. To me, leisure time is unproductive time. When I am not in the office, I am busy trying to improve myself, physically and mentally. I am quite active with equestrian

training, tennis, swimming, and my daily exercise routine. Whenever I can I try to read my business journals and keep abreast of national trends and topics. For the most part, though, my life is filled with my work, philanthropic responsibilities, and family gatherings.

I’ve heard about your recipes and your fine cooking. What are some of your culinary specialties?

—“You’ll find most of them in a book I’ve created called ‘Engie’s Slim Gourmet’. I’ve studied nutrition quite extensively and have combined gourmet cooking with a completely balanced nutritional menu. Some of the special dishes that I love to make are now being served in my continental gourmet restaurant, Cite at the Top of Lake Point Tower.”

Describe to me the perfume you recently developed and will be presenting to the world very soon.

—“How can you describe a feeling? Imagine a sultry summer day high on a mountaintop meadow in Greece. You are enjoying a picnic of wine and cheese and fruit with your lover. Around you is a wild profusion of flowers, fragrant and full of vibrant life. You close your eyes and let the flowers and warm sun fill you with total contentment. That is what my perfume represents. It is called Wild Flowers of Greece by Evangeline. It will be available in exclusive boutiques



With Gina Lollobrigida

and salons later this year. I believe it's a really wonderful fragrance!"

What is your advice to women in terms of staying young and vital?

—"It certainly helps to have great genes! I take care of myself through exercise, proper nutrition, and moderate lifestyle. One of the most important things, though, is to keep your life in balance at all times. I allocate time to business, to helping others, and to keeping myself physically fit and intellectually aware. That is my secret. Everything else can be categorized as "beauty tips" and those are just superficial makeup ideas. Concentrate on inner beauty and the external beauty will follow."

What is your advice to young people today just starting out in their careers?

—"Never, never give up and never settle for anything but being the best

you can be. Education is vital, intelligence is a must, but unless you have an unquenchable desire to achieve you will never climb to the very top rung of the ladder. One other thing: never be afraid of success even though success is only achieved through risk. Take the risk and never look back."

By whom would you like to be photographed or painted? Of all the artists of the past, whom do you wish could have portrayed you?

—"I would love to have my photo taken by Victor Skrebneski or Marc Hauser or Roberto Shapiro, a very talented fashion photographer working out of Mexico City. As far as having my portrait painted, I would have loved to have been painted by da Vinci or Michelangelo. Just to have been in their presence would have been so thrilling! Imagine the greatness and genius they radiated. Just for a bit of whimsy,

though, I think it would be fun to see what Jackson Pollack would have done with me!"

If offered to you, would you like to play a role in a movie? What role would appeal to you?

—"I always like to try different things! In business and politics, one is always conscious of self-presentation and making exactly the right effect on people, so I think I have had pretty good training. In fact, I *have* been offered several roles in movies. One producer wanted me to play the role of the goddess Athena in an epic myth and, just recently, I was asked to consider a role in a movie soon to be shot in Greece. What role would appeal to me? How about a successful businesswoman who sweeps an incredibly handsome fashion designer off his feet and spends the rest of her life modeling his designs. It may be a bit trite but what a great wardrobe!"

Which writers do you respect and read? Which artists do you admire? What sort of music do you like?

—"I read Jean-Paul Sartre for insight, Louis Busaglia for humanity, Carlos Castaneda for wisdom, and the Bible for inspiration. I love the work of Monet, Renoir, Piet Mondrian, and some of the early work of Delacroix. The tapestries of Jan Yoors are absolutely exquisite. I love opera, and the music of Hadzidakis and Vangelis! Sometimes, when the family gets together, my brothers and sister and I will sing a few old Greek folk songs as well! You didn't ask me but I will add



On horseback



Love for flowers

that I adore the theatre; I have already seen 'Phantom of the Opera' five times — I can't get enough of it."

Who are your favorite heroines? In real life as well as fiction?

—“My mother and grandmother; they shine with courage and character and have lived lives of strength and integrity.”

What is it in people that surprises you? Attracts you? Frightens you?

—“I am always surprised at the resilience of those who face adversity and survive. The tragic storm in Bangladesh that took so many lives; the horror of war in the Middle East; those who live through these things and can rebuild their lives give me hope for the future

and astonish me with the eternal optimism of the human spirit. I am also surprised and frightened at the capacity mankind has for cruelty and inhumanity toward their brothers. A boy is stabbed in a junk-filled alleyway in a city, just for his jacket. A mad man decides to wage war because he covets his neighbor's wealth. That is frightening, and surprising, and so bad. I don't mean to venture too deeply into philosophy, but the dual nature of mankind, good and evil, kind and cruel, is always a frightening thing to contemplate. What attracts me to people? The fact that there are as many different ideas, emotions, and philosophies in people as there are stars in the skies.”

What would you like people to be

saying about you, today and twenty years from now?

—“Hopefully, people would say the same thing: The world is, in some small way, a better place because I am in it, because I have raised the quality of life for someone less fortunate than I. I would like to think that those who know me have been affected positively because of my relationship with them.”

If you had a little private island all your own to which you could escape now and then, what would you stock it with?

Good friends and a Church to contemplate in. I would stock the island with classic literature, Cristal champagne, and my Rolodex just in case I get an idea that just won't wait!”