

Notes & News

●President Demetris Christofias on 31 January presented the joint winner of the 2010 Nobel Economics Prize, **Christoforos Pissarides**, with the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III, Cyprus' highest award. Dr Pissarides had returned from the London School of Economics (LSE) to take up the Marfin Laiki Chair at the University of Cyprus. He also accepted appointment as a member of the new board of the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) in Limassol.

●The biggest EU-funded research project ever, with a budget of €4.6 million, has been undertaken by Cyprus, with the participation of the Archaeological Research Unit of the University of Cyprus. Known as the **New Archaeological Research Network for Integrating Approaches (NARNIA)**, the four-year interdisciplinary project has as its main objective the training of young archaeologists in conducting research on ancient Eastern Mediterranean material cultures and material categories, including ceramics, metals, glass and mosaics.

●Cyprus' Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment Minister Demetris Eliades on 20 January signed the **Pact of Islands** linking over 60 European islands in 12 groups in the task of combating the negative effects of climate change. Also known as the Isle-Pact Project, the alliance was created on an initiative by the Outer Hebrides in Scotland and is co-financed by the Directorate General for Energy of the European Commission. Committed to developing local sustainable energy action plans to help to meet EU emissions targets, the Pact hopes eventually to extend its scope to all islands in Europe.

●British pop star **Boy George** on 20 January returned a valuable 18th Cypriot icon to the Church of Cyprus, which had been stolen from the Church of Agios Charalambos in the Turkish-occupied area. Boy George had purchased the icon from a London dealer in 1985, unaware of its provenance. In a recent Dutch television interview, however, the icon was spotted on his living room wall, following which representations were made for its return. This was accomplished



*Beautiful fragment... The Icon of Christ returned to the Church of Cyprus by Boy George.

in a ceremony at a Greek Orthodox church in north London, with Bishop of Neapolis Porfyrios, the Church of Cyprus' representative in Brussels, receiving the icon from Boy George.

●Cypriot chef Savvas Savva won the Gold Award for **Junior Chef of the Year** on 17 January at the 9th International Gastronomy Festival held in Istanbul. Born in Larnaka in 1986, Savvas Savva specialises in traditional Cypriot cuisine and has won many distinctions in cooking competitions in Cyprus and abroad. He received a bachelor of science degree in professional culinary arts from Derby University in the UK.

●The Governor of the Cyprus Central Bank, **Athanasios Orphanides**, was on 20 January elected to the steering committee of the new European Systemic Risk Board (ESRB) for a period of three years. The ESRB has been set up by the European Union to bring greater regulation to the banking and



*Important appointee... Cyprus Central Bank Governor Orphanides will help to regulate the EU financial sector.

financial sectors in light of the post-2008 global credit crunch.

●The latest excavations by a Russian team at the **Roman site of Vlou** to the north-east of Anogyra village in Limassol district, as reported by the Cyprus Antiquities Department on 4 January, have found the remains of a large building of 200 sq metres that was probably part of a rural sanctuary dedicated to the god Apollo. The work is being carried out by the Institute for the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences under the direction of Dr V.A. Goroncharovskiy.

●Three sites in Cyprus have been added to the **EU's "Natura 2000" network**, which consists of some 26,000 protected areas across the 27 member states with a total area of over 850,000 sq km, representing 18 per cent of the EU's land area and forming the largest such network in the world. The new Cypriot sites are: the Paralimni Lake wetland near Famagusta, a seasonal lake noted as the home of the rare Cyprus grass snake *Natrix natrix cyprica*; Oroklini Lake near Larnaka, where black-winged stilt



*Flamingos on Larnaka Salt Lake... An existing "Natura 2000" site in Cyprus.

breed; and the Faros lighthouse area at Kato Pafos, which is a key wintering ground for greater sand plover.

●The number of **deaths in road traffic accidents in Cyprus** in 2010, at 60 compared with 71 in 2009, was the lowest since the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, according to figures given on 19 January by Police Chief Michalis Papageorgiou. There was also a 9 per cent fall in the number of serious injuries resulting from traffic accidents. Chief Papageorgiou attributed the noticeable improvement in both counts to efforts by the police and other authorities to make Cypriot roads safer. On 7 January Communications and Works Minister Erato Kozakou Marcoullis had launched 2011 as Year of Road Safety, with the focus on campaigning against driving under the influence of alcohol. □

Sporting highlights

Sports writers' awards. The awards for 2010 by the Cyprus Sports Writers' Union took place at a special ceremony in Nicosia on 24 January. The grand prize was awarded to the Anorthosis Famagusta Football Club as it began its centenary year, having been forced by the Turkish invasion and occupation of Famagusta in 1974 to play for more than a third of its life in Larnaka.

The award for male athlete of the year went to skeet shooting champion George Achilleos, whilst double Commonwealth gold medal winner Chrystalleni Trikomiti took the women's award for her performances as a rhythmic gymnast. Swimmer Karolina Pelendritou won the award for best Paralympic athlete for the fourth year running. The team of the year award went to Omonia of Nicosia for winning the Cyprus football league. □

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