



A Farm School grad looks at the world from his penthouse on the Hudson . . .

THE AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL  
**Sower**

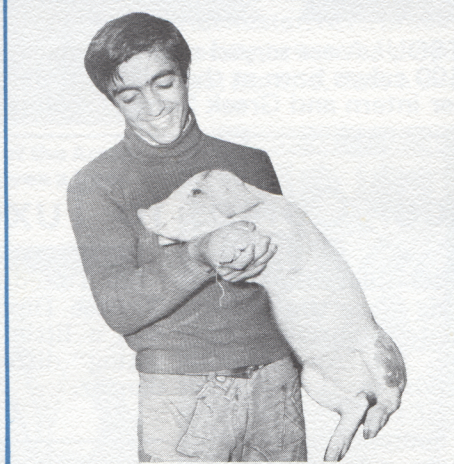
NO. 86

THESSALONIKI, GREECE

SUMMER 1976



The Secretary of Agriculture stops by to roast a lamb and herd a cow . . .



Animals of assorted sizes, shapes and proclivities get tender loving care . . .



and the girl grads get together for a fabulous reunion.

# A Calf Comes Into the World The Hard Way

“A HEIFER IS giving birth in the big barn!” The message spread like Greek fire on a recent afternoon. Students and staff rushed to the maternity pen, making up an audience of 25 curious onlookers. Several students rolled up their shirtsleeves and jumped into the pen to assist the school’s full time veterinarian, Alecos Mihalides, with the delivery.

When a heifer — a young cow is referred to as a heifer until her first calving — gives birth, a problem or two can arise. So it’s best to have a few extra strong arms on the scene. In this case it was necessary to attach ropes to the calf; and with the assistance of the mother and a jack especially designed for this purpose, the calf was pulled into the world.

Immediately upon its arrival, the calf was suspended upside-down for two minutes, allowing the lungs to clear and respiration to begin. After this seemingly rude welcome, the heifer takes charge and the audience disperses.

With the birth of this little (nearly 53 pounds!) bull calf, the dairy records now show 100 calves born within the last nine months. This large number of births allows the dairy department to be much more selective in choosing herd replacements. In addition, it provides a surplus of high quality stock for sale to local farmers wanting to improve their own herds.

Out of the 100 births, a few were the dairyman’s bonus: twins! In fact, the school has welcomed the births of eight sets of twins. A rather miraculous showing was made by “Niftie”, who gave birth to two 92 pound calves, “Betsy” and “Betsoula”.

Panayiotis Rotsios, head of the Agricultural Division, is very pleased with the current calf crop. But his real satisfaction is derived from seeing production increase throughout the dairy. In February alone, milk production saw a 13% increase over the same time last year.

New facilities, careful records and good management have also helped to make the picture even brighter. This will undoubtedly be the best year in Farm School dairy history — until next year.



**BETSY AND BETSOULA** are served a special snack by David Acker. The twins are among 100 calves born at the school in the past nine months. David is a volunteer intern and Greek Summer counselor.

## Belly Dancer Comes to Tuxedo Park

**BOUZOUKI MUSIC** filled the air and mouth watering *meze* touched many a happy palate as springtime was taverna time for American Farm School friends in the U.S. Besides being lots of fun for lots of people and giving many a chance to “talk school”, three gala tavernas added nearly \$10,000 to the annual fund.

In Worcester, Mass., Committee Chairman Peter Morgan was host at an elegant feast at the Castle Restaurant.

In Boston, Trustee Katherine Pappas and David Bird, with a big assist from Hannah Campbell, put on a marvelous Greek evening in City Hall, no less, to help mark Boston’s official Greek-American month of May.

In Tuxedo Park, N.Y., thanks to Trustee Dippy Bartow, the taverna was a little different — the captivating difference being a belly dancer.

## Gold Kist Sends Soybeans to Greece

FOR THE SECOND year in a row Gold Kist, Inc., one of America’s largest agricultural cooperatives, is shipping via Hellenic Lines 15 tons of soybean meal to the school as a “gift-in-kind”.

Farm School Trustee William Gaston, of Atlanta, is Vice President of Gold Kist. Thanks, Bill!

## A Visit to Aphrodite Farm

# Unsmelly Piggery Has Radiant Heating and Modern Plumbing

WHEN TWO BOYS from the Farm School set out to visit Aphrodite Farm recently, they knew they could find it by following their noses. It's one of the largest pig farms in Greece.

But when they arrived, they were amazed to find the pigs and barns hospital-clean and almost odorless.

"Pigs are by nature clean," they were told by the owner, "and so we must give them the right to remain so."

The owner of Aphrodite Farm is Panayiotis Kalaitzides, a 1929 graduate of The American Farm School. His piggery near Katerini is one of the most modern in Greece. So knowing is he in the ways of pigs that the student has become the teacher. He built his piggery with a lifetime of knowledge based on his Farm School education, and stocked it with the finest Farm School pigs. Now the Farm School goes to him to seek advice and to purchase improved stock.

Mr. Kalaitzides and his daughter Aphrodite, a graduate of the University of Thessaloniki, designed and built the piggery together in 1972. Their designs included an automatic feeding system, heated floors for baby pigs, and a manure-disposal system which leaves both pigs and barns clean and scent-free.

Aphrodite Farm raises about 250 pigs at a time, separated into four modern confinement units. The first is the gestation barn where the sows are mated. Eight boars are normally available. Like almost all modern stock in Greece, the boars are descended from Northern European and American stock.

As Mr. Kalaitzides showed his young visitors about the piggery, they began to see how he had put his practical do-it-yourself Farm School training to work. The second unit is a farrowing barn where the pigs are born and remain for about 35 days, or until weaned. Mr. Kalaitzides designed a radiant-

heating system, with hot-water pipes in the floor, to keep the piglets warm. He even thought to put insulation around the pipes where the sow lies, so she wouldn't get too warm and uncomfortable.

The third unit is the nursery pen, where the pigs are allowed to eat as much as they please. They stay until they are 80 days old or have reached 35 kilos (77 pounds).

Here the visiting students discovered why the pens are so clean and the pigs so un-smelly. Half the floor in each pen is concrete; the other half is slatted. Mr. Kalaitzides puts the water trough on the slatted half, knowing that pigs do their business while watering. The manure falls through the slats, leaving the concrete side dry and clean.

The pigs spend their last four months in the fourth unit. Here it is very dark, to keep movement at a

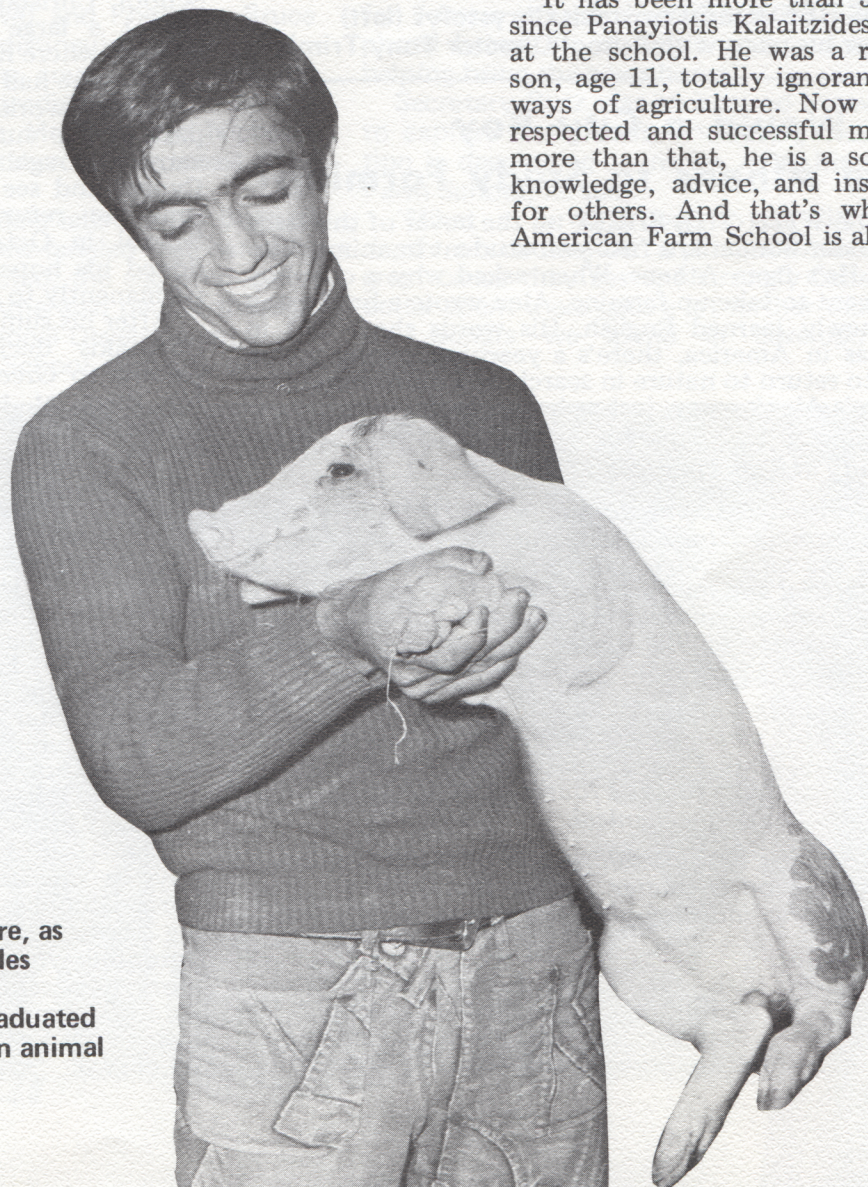
minimum and allow the pigs to gain weight rapidly. Lights are turned on only at feeding time to announce dinner, which is a delicious (and fattening) mixture of grains. Once a pig reaches 90 kilos (198 pounds) it is ready to go to market.

Recently 20 gilts (virgin pigs) escaped the fate of the others. They were bought by the American Farm School to help improve the school's own stock. And now the school is considering building a new piggery similar in design to the one at Aphrodite Farm.

When asked what he had learned during his five years at the Farm School that was most valuable to him now, Mr. Kalaitzides said:

"We all tried hard to learn everything we were taught. But there were two things we learned the best. The first was fair play. The second is that it's not enough just to learn — you must learn to *think how* to do something, and then you must *do it*."

It has been more than 50 years since Panayiotis Kalaitzides arrived at the school. He was a refugee's son, age 11, totally ignorant in the ways of agriculture. Now he is a respected and successful man. But more than that, he is a source of knowledge, advice, and inspiration for others. And that's what The American Farm School is all about.



**PIGS ARE CLEAN** by nature, as Student Stavros Kyrambalides learned from the owner of Aphrodite Farm. Stavros graduated this June to begin a career in animal husbandry.

# Cypriot Boys Work Toward Future in Greece



CYPRUS REFUGEE Christakis Chrystofys (left) talks over his plans with School Director Tony Trimis

TWO YEARS AGO in September, 20 boys arrived at the gate of the American Farm School — weary and travel worn by their four-day sleepless journey from Cyprus.

Among the young refugees were Christakis Chrystofys, 17, and his brother Gabriel, 16.

The two boys lived in Kalogria, Kyrenia (where they were born) until the Turks invaded the town on August 14, 1974. They fled with their parents and older sister to the town of Axmea, where they stayed only 15 days. The Turks invaded again. They went on to Xilotimbou and stayed in a refugee camp.

Christakis heard an advertisement for the American Farm School on the Cypriot radio, so he and Gabriel went to the Ministry of Education to apply. A week later they left for the mainland. At the same time their sister left to study in London and their parents moved to Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, where they could find no permanent work.

After his first year at the Farm School, Christakis found a summer job at a large piggery in Larissa, Greece, where he could practice the methods he had just learned.

Gabriel worked at the school for part of the summer, until he had earned enough money to return to Cyprus and see his parents. By the time he returned to the Farm School in October he had abandoned his hopes for ever returning permanently to Cyprus.

After his summer at the pig farm, Christakis decided to bring his parents to Greece. He found work for them at the same pig farm where he had worked, and sent them his summer earnings to pay for their trip. They arrived last October, to find their first real home in over a year. When asked if his parents were happy, Christakis answered, "They are certainly happier here than in Cyprus."

Christakis has another year and a half at the Farm School. After graduation he plans to go into the army and later continue his studies in agriculture. With his American Farm School diploma he can go into K.A.T.E., a higher technical training institute.

The story of the Cypriot refugee boys is one more chapter in the Farm School's tradition of providing homes and education for uprooted young people. For the story of a refugee's son who came to the school more than 50 years ago, see *A Visit to Aphrodite Farm* on page 3.



U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE Earl Butz and his wife arrived at The American Farm School this spring just in time for Easter. Chairman George Post (above) and President Bruce Lansdale welcomed the distinguished visitors.

In the photos on the cover, Bruce and the secretary try on their traditional Farm School hats. Also on the cover, Mr. Butz and Nicholas Martis, Minister of Northern Greece, roast their own Easter lambs.

At left, Farmer Lansdale tells Farmer Butz all about the school's new-fangled egg-handling equipment. As Bruce noted, the egg production unit was a gift of the American people through the Agency for International Development.

Before dinner, Girls School students offered

samples of their special Easter hors d'oeuvres called *Mezethes*. Later the secretary joined hands for a festive *kalamatiano* (which is Greek for "dance around the tether ball"). And in the photo below, he doffs his hat to a lady while helping bring the cows home.

Secretary Butz was on a round-the-world tour to explore methods for increasing food production in developing countries. After his day at the Farm School, he said:

"What a thrill it was to see firsthand the depth of dedication and commitment to the great cause they serve. I strongly believe that a dollar spent there goes a lot farther than most of the dollars we spend in development and assistance."

## Why Would a City Boy Leave Athens to Study Farming?

THE BOY WITH THE SHEEP on the cover of this issue is Alexander Stamatis, a first-year student in animal husbandry. He's from Athens. When asked why a city boy would want to take up farming, Alex wrote a brief essay in his newly learned English. His words show that in Greece as in America, there's a yearning among young people to return to nature in search of a more rewarding life. Here's Alex's essay, just as he wrote it:

*My name is Alexander Stamatis. I come from Athens and I study at The American Farm School.*

*The decision to come to this school and to engage with the farming I took after eighteen years experience of life in the city with the distress and the exhortation to the material and mechanic life which gives you all the comforts making you dead by giving to you disappointment. By coming to this school I get a hope for a new and real life.*

*"Now near the nature which is so rich of life I feel like a free bird which escapes from his cage and returns to the nature. Here I learn how to live because before I was in the cage (the town) I found everything ready and my life became too mechanical.*

*"Now my life in the small society of this school helps me to make good character. I hope that I will get from this school the indispensable provisions for a farming life.*

*I am in the first year class and find that the school has helped me love farming. When I'll finish I would like to live far away from city life and nearer the nature, in other words God, and this is one reason I want to do this farming life."*



# A Boy Learns to Use His Hands, And the School Gains a Trustee

WHEN CHARLES HOUSE, the Director, emerged from under a jeep in greasy coveralls carrying an adjustable wrench, the boy was sure he wasn't going to like the Farm School one bit. After all, village boys like him would be lucky if they never had to work with their hands. But what kind of a school was it where the Director did this?

Spyros Papalexioiu, the boy, was having a look at the school with his father before enrolling in 1946. He had come over from his village of Kolindros, 50 kilometers from Thessaloniki in the foothills of Mt. Olympos. Kolindros is a beautiful village of almond and cherry orchards and is said to be the home of Zorba the Greek.

"It is the Greek mentality," says Mr. Papalexioiu today. "You don't do things with your hands if you can help it. Maybe it dates to the Turkish occupation and envy of the pasha who sat on his rump and did nothing. The Farm School changed my thinking."

It's reported that as an undergraduate Spyros was often in trouble for his pranks. He wrote forbidden letters to the girls at the nearby Quaker school (now the Girls' School) with invisible lemon juice — and sometimes chuckled during prayers in assembly.

Once he was found out by the

## It's On to Law School For Greek Summer Grad

THE GREEK SUMMER program for American teen-agers has its "graduates" too, and we like to keep in touch with them. One "grad" is Luther M. Ragin Jr.

The other day Farm School Chairman George Post had a letter from Luther which said:

"With your encouragement and support, I applied and was accepted at Harvard College. This June I graduate *magna cum laude* with a degree in economics. Next year I will be matriculating at the Harvard Law School and the JFK School of Government in a four year JD-MPP program.

"I really just wanted to say thanks."

To which we can only add that Luther Ragin and "real" Farm School graduates Spyros Papalexioiu and Panayiotis Kalaitzedes (page 3) all made it on their own talents, intelligence and hard work. We are proud to know them.

legendary Theodore Litsas, who decreed 50 swats with a T-square to clear up what he called the boy's "confusion". When Litsas saw Spyros' skinny backside he said, "Go upstairs first and put on your overcoat." This was the beauty of the man, says Spyros looking back.

Pranks or not, Spyros was a fine student. His academic achievements at the Farm School led to scholarships at Worcester School in Massachusetts and then Columbia University. After several years as a maritime engineer — working with his hands — he won his engineering degree from Indiana Institute of Technology in 1963.

Spyros is now President and Chairman of the Board of Control Air, a division of Aeronix. His plant in New Jersey manufactures ventilating and air conditioning equipment, and he is now developing additional plants in Thessaloniki and Sophia, Bulgaria. He also is a Trustee of the Farm School. His experience and knowledge make him uniquely qualified to be a Trustee.

Of all educational institutions in Greece, Mr. Papalexioiu sees the Farm School as having a special place in Greek consciousness. "Greek people really 'feel' the school. They trust it," he says. "It's flexible enough to adapt to a constantly changing Greek society and it offers what Greece is short of: management and technical resources and agricultural skills."

This spring Mr. Papalexioiu volunteered his time to hold seminars in management for the Executive Staff, at the school. One day his lovely wife, Lou, took 40 girls from the Girls School to downtown Thessaloniki for an unforgettable lunch.

The Papalexioius live in a towering apartment on the Hudson in New Jersey overlooking Manhattan (see photo on cover). Just recently Spyros was best man for a young friend from his village who got married in America. Appropriately, Spyros brought over the priest from Kolindros for the wedding.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE learned about The American Farm School by reading the article at right. It's reprinted from the May 10, 1976 issue of PEOPLE WEEKLY Magazine by permission; (c) 1976, Time Inc.



Photographs by Paul Vittoroulis



# TEACHER

## AN AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL BEARS THE GIFT OF LEARNING TO YOUNG GREEKS



**Bruce Lansdale, left, director of the American Farm School in Greece, gives a tractor-driving lesson.**

**R**unning a school that has survived Nazi occupation, a civil war, earthquakes and floods makes a teacher expect a lot from his students. Bruce Lansdale, director of the American Farm School in Salonika, Greece, admits it. His unusual institution trains young Greek villagers in all aspects of modern agriculture.

Gazing out his living room window at nearby Mount Olympus, Lansdale recalls, "A Greek philosopher once said, 'Know thyself,' and that's part of the learning process here. A Greek peasant over the centuries was accustomed to saying, 'I'm not to blame' or 'It can't be done.' Our kids say it can be done. If the tractor breaks down, they won't say it's the tractor's fault. They'll repair the darned thing and get on with the job."

Lansdale, 51, is the third director of the 75-year-old school, which was founded by an Ohioan. He spent much of his childhood in the area (learning fluent Greek) because his father, a YMCA official, had been assigned to open a Salonika branch.

When his father was transferred to Rochester, N.Y., Bruce attended its university, where he played football and met his wife, Tad, a cheerleader. (Her

class had so many Elizabeths that she was nicknamed for her hometown, Schenectady, N.Y.)

After the war Lansdale went back to Greece to observe elections and renewed his interest in the Farm School. Returning briefly to the U.S. to earn a master's in rural sociology, he became its assistant director in 1949. By the time Charles House, son of the school's founder, retired in 1955, the institution was en route to its current size—375 acres, a staff of 110 and 200 students.

"We envision Greece becoming the California of Europe," Lansdale says. "The Big Guy up there is practically pointing His finger at us to look toward the future—Greek farmers growing crops year round."

Lansdale is given to language sprinkled with such whimsy as "The Big Guy," "veggies" and "my gal" (as in "If I've made a contribution, it's because of my gal"). But his accomplishments are real. Throughout Greece's military dictatorship and its often tense relations with Washington, Lansdale, still a U.S. citizen, kept turning out the "sergeants of agriculture."

"All our Greek friends—and there are happily many," Lansdale says, "think of us as Greek." □



**Mrs. Lansdale chats with one of the 50 girls who learn home crafts such as weaving and meal planning and preparation.**

**The Lansdales say they miss most their four children, all in U.S. colleges, their U.S. friends and the 'New York Times.'**

# Girls School Grads Get Together for a Gala Weekend Reunion

THE SECOND BIENNIEL Girls School reunion held in late March was a resounding success with 37 graduates on hand for a weekend of fun, and some learning, too.

The most poignant moment was provided by Anna Mitsaka (nee Kefala) from the Class of '48. In an impromptu speech Anna praised the school's program and unchanging spirit, hoping that the spirit "could be spread to all mankind."

From South Norwalk, Connecticut, came Eleftheria Donoulis (nee Rangoussy) with her two adorable small children; she has pursued her interest in weaving while

raising her children.

All told, eleven children — of all sizes — came along to enjoy the festivities.

The two-day program was planned and executed by the entire Girls School staff. It included an all-Farm School recreation program, church service, tea at the president's home, a tractor tour of the school complex (see front cover), a group photo session (below), a sewing demonstration, a weaving presentation... and a great deal of reminiscing, nostalgia and warm affection.



# Sower

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380 Madison Avenue  
New York, N. Y. 10017  
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## THREE GRADUATES

IN THIS ISSUE the careers of three graduates are noted. There's Panayiotis, who took the traditional path and built one of the most modern farms in Greece. There's Spyros, who chose the byroads of commerce and today is president of a manufacturing company in New Jersey. And there's Luther, who has just graduated not from the Farm School but from Harvard. Three people of disparate years and destinies, but three people with a common inspiration — The American Farm School.

St. Andrews Greek Orthodox Church  
760 S. Michigan Street  
South Bend, Ind. 46618