

THE ORTHODOX POST

November 2014

Volume X, Issue 10



St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church, 181-14 Midland Parkway, Jamaica Estates, New York, NY 11432
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Pastor's Message

by Fr. Nathan Preston

In our faith, God makes Himself accessible to us. We do not pray to some abstract deity or divine force, nor do we lift our hands and voices in service to an idea alone. God, we have been assured, is with us—in our midst. And as a gift for us, He has ensured that we can all know Him in many ways. As Orthodox Christians in particular, we are invited and expected to employ all our senses in the experience and pursuit of God. Sights and smells, hymns we have known from before we could frame ourselves in thought, even the tastes of bread and wine and sweetened wheat—all these things given to us, given over to our use that we may learn to remember who we are in every activity. And we are the children of God. The children of God, who, truth be told, are sometimes spoiled children, discontent with what we have and desiring more only for the pleasure of possessing. So God gives abundantly; knowing of our weakness and proclivity towards acquisitiveness, He gives more. In the iconography of our Church, this is especially so.

Icons for us, the faithful, are far more than decoration or beautification of our churches and homes.

President's Message

by Jim Liolin

An Update – the Semi-Annual Meeting

At the General Meeting in October there were several reports given including the new Sunday School program, the Men's Club activity, Daughters of St. Nicholas, Church finances, and more. But there are a few items voted and reported on that I want to bring to your attention:

- The 2015 Pledge campaign started this October and will finish by November 30th. This is one way we show our commitment to the church and community at large. **The pledges will be blessed on December 7th, the day we will celebrate St. Nicholas with Archbishop Nikon.** More on the Luncheon will follow.

- We were blessed by our sister parish of St. John the Baptist of Boston. All our parishes in the Albanian Archdiocese were sent a gift of \$25,000. Also, one million dollars was gifted to

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Pastor's Message & President's Message</i>	1
<i>Daughters' Corner & Kendi Shqip</i>	2
<i>St. Nicholas Luncheon with Archbishop Nikon</i>	3
<i>New Church Website / 2015 Program</i>	4-5
<i>St. Nicholas Golf Outing</i>	6
<i>Sunday School/September Feast Days</i>	7-8
<i>Merchant Ads</i>	9-11
<i>Major Events & Ushers' Sunday Schedule</i>	12

They are not meant to be appreciated just for their looks. Each one is an opportunity and invitation for us to meet God and be reminded of the special place He has given us by calling each of us to be His own. The icons of the saints are portraits of our brothers and sisters, those who have preceded us in life and faith, and on whose support and whose prayers we still depend. The ranks of these saints are without number; the styles and colors and subtleties of their icons' depictions beyond one human life to track; the richness of meaning and shades of difference in this diverse iconographic array impossible to appreciate fully. As in so

Continued on Page 7

St. George Cathedral. We thank the parish of St. John the Baptist for their generous gift. This was their way of helping the diocese after their Church burnt to the ground.

- Our Church has a new website that is more user friendly and will improve communication to the entire church community. Please check it out at www.stnicholasalbanian.org.

- The Council felt it necessary to preserve the holy grounds at Mt. Tomori in Cypress Hills for those who have been continuous members of St. Nicholas. Therefore the non-member rate was increased to \$6500 effective immediately.

If you have questions concerning any of these subjects contact Fr. Nathan or me.

With your help it is our hope to make the Church an even larger community, spiritually stronger and healthier financially.

KENDI SHQIP

(The Albanian Corner)



by A. Llupa

Nentor, 2014

Kete muaj po japim një lutje që mund të përdoret pas rrëfimit dhe një pjesë nga vjershë "Pellazgët-Shqipëtarët"

Lutje pas rrëfimit

O Zot, Ati im, shpëtimtari dhe bamirësi i shpirtit tim, të kërkoj ndjesë për çdo mëkat që kam bërë dhe mar vendim që kurrë të mos të ofendoj Ty me mëkatet, dhe shpirtërisht, të premtoj të vë në rrugë të drejtë jetën time. Më frikëso me ligjet e tua te bekuara, që të mposht oreksin fizik dhe të ndjek një jetë të shenjtë, duke menduar dhe duke bërë gjëra që të kenaq Ty. Të lutem që të më japësh mirësinë e shpirtit tënd të shenjtë, të më bësh të fortë të përballoj çdo punë dhe vepër keqëdashëse, apo fjalë e mendime dhe te evitoj çdo kurth të të ligut. Ndriço zemrën time me Djellin e Drejtësisë Tënde; m'a kthjello mëndjen dhe më kontrollo çdo veprim, dhe duke ndjekur rrugën tënde të drejtë, të fitoj jetë të përjetshme, Amin.

Pellazgët-Shqipëtarët, Butuar për herë
te pare në Bruksel në 1897

...Ne kurdoherë
Burra të ndjere
Edhe të vlerë
Jemi treguar;
Me grekërinë
Dhe me Persinë,
Me gjith' Azinë
Kemi lëftuar.

Me Pirron vamë
Romës i ramë,
Llatint' i vramë
E i tmeruam;
Me Skënderbenë
Tyrqve sa qenë
U dhamë dhenë
Dhe i dëbuam.

Me Lekën vamë,
Muntmë Daranë
Datën i dhamë
Gjithë Azisë
Burr' u dëftuem
Të gjith'i thyem
Përmbys e kthuem
Fron' e Persisë.

Kush i goditi
Posi petriri
E i cfiliti
Tyrqit, barbarët?
Bota s'guxonte
Që t'u qëndronte,
Po kush lëftonte?
Ne shqipëtarët.

Daughters' Corner

By Linda Foundos

The Daughters lent their support to our annual Golf Outing at the registration desk, with the raffle & banquet arrangements. As always, it was a delightful day. Our purpose is to lend a hand where we can to help the life of our St. Nicholas community run as smoothly as possible. The more you put into something; the more you get out of it. It truly is a second family for many. We would love to have your participation.

The Daughters have had great cooperation in preparing for our annual Flea Market/Bake Sale. It is definitely a community effort. By the next issue of the Post, you'll hear of its success. I know our regular neighborhood customers are always so happy to see us & our great bargains!

WISDOM:

Life consists not only in holding good cards, but in playing those you hold well.

He who talks by the YARD and works by the INCH deserves to be kicked by the FOOT.

Eliminate your need for perfection in all areas of your life, and you'll begin to discover the perfection in life itself.

PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENING

DECEMBER 1, 2014

Saint Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church is pleased to offer a preventive health event. Life Line Screening, a leading provider of community-based preventive health screenings, will host their affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings on 12/1/2014. Five screenings will be offered that scan for potential health problems related to: blocked arteries which is a leading cause of stroke; abdominal aortic aneurysms which can lead to a ruptured aorta; hardening of the arteries in the legs which is a strong predictor of heart disease; atrial fibrillation or irregular heart beat which is closely tied to stroke risk; and a bone density screening, for men and women, used to assess the risk of osteoporosis. Register for a Wellness Package which includes 4 vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from \$149 (\$139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. **In order to register for this event and to receive a \$10 discount off any package priced above \$129, please call 1-888-653-6441 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com/community-partners.**

St. Nicholas Day Luncheon with Archbishop Nikon



Sunday, December 7th
after Liturgy
in the Fellowship Hall

Fish Dinner: \$25
Children Dinner: Free

Come and Help us Celebrate our St. Nicholas Feast Day.
As Sponsors, The Daughters' will provide Prizes
to be won through a Raffle!!

**Space is Limited. Tickets will be sold in advance at Coffee Hour
on Sunday, November 9, 16, 23 and 30.**

Buy & Reserve Tickets by Contacting:

Ilia/Agathia Luka 718-456-6582

Robert/Tina Korra 201-338-2002

Edi/Oneda Sera 516-280-4876



New St. Nicholas Church Website

With great excitement St. Nicholas Church activated its new website in October. The new website has a modern look and employs the latest technology allowing for a more enhanced way to communicate. This upgrade allows us to be more mobile device and tablet device friendly too.

With the new capabilities, the website will be used for regular updates on church life and act as a resource for parishioners. Some of the features and content include access to the monthly newsletter (The Orthodox Post) in English and Albanian, schedule of church activities and special events, the capability to make donations online, and a source of information of our church history and the Orthodox faith. We anticipate rolling out more features and increased content as we progress.

A special thank you goes out to Erald Troja for his years of service in maintaining and updating the website whenever requested. Erald's IT knowledge and experience was key in implementing and allowing for a smooth and rapid transition. Thanks also goes out to Fr. Nathan, Damian Peters and Joanne Heiser for their role in taking on this initiative and the developmental phase of the new site.

The Homepage is shown below. Please visit us at www.stnicholasalbanian.org

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ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Welcome to St. Nicholas Church

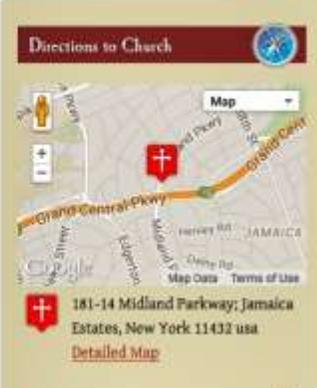


We are a community of believers committed to a shared life, learning to love God, each other, and our whole world through the practice of our faith.

The history of our parish is distinctive and begins with immigrants journeying to this land from Albania filled with enthusiasm and the hope to create a new life. From them we have been fortunate to inherit much. Our current community is a rich mix, a diversity of ethnicities and traditions and languages: Albanians and non-Albanians, young and old, many people from many places coming together to worship and seek God. Like our founders, we look toward the future with hope, and we invite you to come and be part of this.

As Orthodox Christians, we trace the roots of our faith to Christ Himself, Who sent out His disciples into the whole world. They, these saints and holy preachers, taught in the land of our forefathers, and since that time we have sought to preserve the joyful good news they shared. As we proclaim at each service: Christ is in our midst! He is and ever shall be!

Directions to Church



181-14 Midland Parkway, Jamaica Estates, New York 11432 usa
[Detailed Map](#)

Service Schedule

Friday, October 24th
11AM Prayers: Theotokos Joy of All Who Sorrow

Saturday, October 25th
5:00 Vespers

[Monthly Calendar >](#)

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Pledge Program for 2015

October and November is the period of our Annual Pledge Campaign. This is when we in the St. Nicholas Parish Community indicate our expected level of financial support for the next year. We do this by praying and considering our own lives at St. Nicholas; determining the financial giving we expect to make in 2015; indicating it on a Pledge Card; and returning the Pledge Card to church.

Pledge Program letters are currently being mailed to the St. Nicholas Community. As we look into 2015, we see a need to cover expenses of approximately \$145,000. Last year, more than 100 families made a Pledge. Most pledges were in the \$500 to \$3000 range. We ask you to consider making a generous Pledge. Please consider increasing your Pledge over last year's amount or making a first time Pledge for 2015.

The Pledge Campaign will end on Sunday December 7th at our St. Nicholas Day Celebration when all the pledges received to date will be blessed at the end of the liturgy, in a special prayer of joyous thanksgiving. Pledges can be put in the collection basket or mailed to the office as soon as you've filled them out. Please do this as soon as possible.

We appreciate your continued generosity and it is your spiritual, physical, and monetary support that maintains St. Nicholas here for us to gather together as one community.

2015 Pledge Program – Questions and Answers

Q. Does my pledge really matter?

A. Absolutely! Your pledge is a vital sign of your commitment to the church. Like individuals, the church cannot make a budget without knowing what its income will be. More profoundly, your pledge - as an act of giving back to God - is a tangible sign of your gratitude in response to God's grace.

Q. But I always put an offering in the plate. Isn't that the same thing?

A. Plate offerings are always welcome, but they're widely variable, and the church needs to plan. Without a Pledge Card, Pledge Envelop, and related member account, you will not get credit for your donations.

Q. What is proportional and intentional giving?

A. The Church asks us to recognize the Biblical tithe, 10% of our income, as a standard to which to aspire in our giving. Few people, however, are likely to start tithing all at once. Realistically, most of us may not be in a place to tithe and the 10% standard can seem out of reach. Proportional and intentional giving refers to the private process each of us makes to prayerfully designate some percentage of our income to the church. As we each grow in our spiritual journey we will likely find our percentage increasing, even if we start at one or two percent. When we no longer give to the church whatever we have left over after all of our other expenses - but take a percentage of our income off the top from the beginning for the church - we are being intentional and proportional in our giving.

Q. If I have a very modest income, wouldn't a proportional pledge be too small to make a difference?

A. No pledge amount is too small to make a difference in the parish if it makes a difference to you and the way you live your life.

Q. There are many worthy charities to which I make gifts. How should St. Nicholas factor in?

A. We appreciate that so many of St. Nicholas members support a variety of worthy causes. But consider these two points: As an organization the parish is a small entity. Our parish is almost entirely dependent on the generosity and support of its members both past and present. We do not receive grants from outside sources like many charities. Without the support of all its members the St. Nicholas would not exist. Secondly, and more profoundly, stewardship is not about philanthropy and fund-raising. Stewardship for Christians is about the spiritual journey of giving back what we already acknowledge to be God's grace, given to us abundantly and freely, in our lives.

Q. What does the church do with the money we receive?

A. The Church pays for all our clergy, ministries and programs. Activities include worship, pastoral care, music, youth ministry, all our Sunday school and adult education programs, stewardship and outreach to the wider community. Also the Church pays for the utilities, insurance as well as building and grounds maintenance. This is the time when we, as a community, review our commitments to staff, and to programs to sustain and further develop these ministries for a new year. Without pledges we are unable to make these commitments.

St. Nicholas Church Golf Outing a Success!!!

Once again great weather and a distinguished group of golfers and diners made our 17th Annual Golf Outing a great success!!! As the golfers checked in they received golf balls, cigar, granola bar and water. The call to get on the golf carts came at noon and shortly thereafter; the carts started rolling out to their designated holes.

With the sun shining strong, the challenge to hit that little ball accurately was evasive as always, but then golfers only remember the times when they strike the golf ball...well. The golfers returned to the beautiful clubhouse at the Woodlands Restaurant located on the course with beautiful views all around for drinks and dinner. The addition of several church members joining the evening enhanced the excitement.

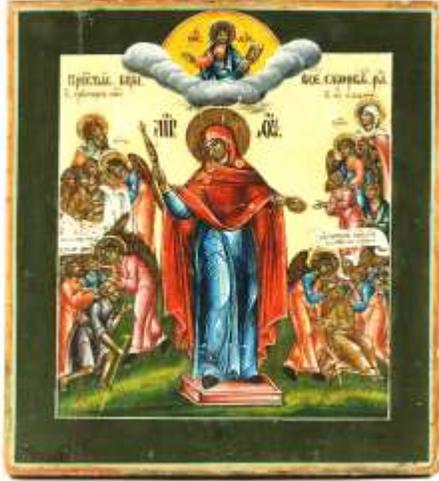
After drinks and dinner, winners were announced and the grand raffle prizes were distributed. All in all, it turned out to be a great success as a golf function with fellowship and also a very successful fundraiser. Everyone left with great compliments for a day of fun and enjoyment.

We want to thank all those participated in this event, especially those who came for the day to work at the outing to make it a huge success, as well as those who worked so hard to bring in the sponsorships and prize donations. It was a job well done by the team.



Pastor's Message – Continued from Page 1

many things, here in the icons of our Church is that superabundance, that too-much, that God has elected to give His people. Not all icons will speak to us all in the same way, and this is alright. Today, I wish to share with you one that speaks to me, one that means for me. If its figures aren't to your taste or its colors a little too gaudy or too subdued, that's fine. Move on, find an icon before which you feel at home, and use it. But take the message and theology of this image, and begin to learn to pray.



This is the icon of the Theotokos "Joy of All Who Sorrow". It has a storied history of miracles and tragedies, triumph amidst despair. But the more compelling thing about this icon is its image because this forces those who view it to take a role, to take part in its process of prayer. Looking on this icon, we see the Holy Virgin at its center, Christ above her in the heavens, and needy people gathered round about with angels ministering to their problems and their troubles. As our eyes are drawn toward the Theotokos, she gestures upward to remind us that all power, all strength and health and surety, come from her son, from Christ our God. As we gaze at her, we learn also that we are alike to those sorrowful who surround her; we are the needy, the broken, and infirm. Yet in this act of acknowledging our need and entering ourselves into the ranks of the broken, we are invited to

partake of God's strength, His strength so profound and overwhelming that we, in turn, can be helped and healed and begin to serve others. When we claim our need and accept our place within the community of limitation and weakness, then we become ready to serve, ready to stand like the angels and All-Holy Mary giving and subsisting not by our own strength or quickness of mind or wealth but by our readiness to meet God in honest weakness. We can rejoice in our sorrow because God has made perfect this place of need. Blessed are the poor, those who admit their poverty.

Sunday School



Our Church School is changing in some exciting ways. Parents, please be sure to take a look at the information below so that you children can take part.

*Church School will meet on the first Sunday of each month and start at 10am. All children from Kindergarten to 5th Grade are invited.

*Nursery School will meet on the second and fourth Sundays of each month and start at 10:30am. All children four years old and under are invited to attend.

*Please be on time so that your kids don't miss out!

For more information, please get in touch with Fr. Nathan or take a look at the bulletin board halfway down the stairs. See you in Sunday School!



SYNAXIS OF THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL AND THE OTHER BODILESS POWERS –
Commemorated on November 8th (Reading and Icon courtesy of OCA Website)

The Synaxis of the Chief of the Heavenly Hosts, Archangel Michael and the Other Heavenly Bodiless Powers: Archangels Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Selaphiel, Jehudiel, Barachiel, and Jeremiel was established at the beginning of the fourth century at the Council of Laodicea, which met several years before the First Ecumenical Council. The 35th Canon of the Council of Laodicea condemned and denounced as heretical the worship of angels as gods and rulers of the world, but affirmed their proper veneration.

A Feastday was established in November, the ninth month after March (with which the year began in ancient times) since there are Nine Ranks of Angels. The eighth day of the month was chosen for the Synaxis of all the Bodiless Powers of Heaven since the Day of the Dread Last Judgment is called the Eighth Day by the holy Fathers. After the end of this age (characterized by its seven days of Creation) will come the Eighth Day, and then "the Son of Man shall come in His Glory and all the holy Angels with Him". *The Angelic Ranks are divided into three Hierarchies: highest, middle, and lowest.* All the Ranks of the Heavenly Powers are called angels, although each has its own name and position by virtue of their service. The Lord reveals His will to the highest ranks of the angels, and they in turn inform the others.

Over all the Nine Ranks, the Lord appointed the Holy Archangel Michael (his name in Hebrew means "who is like unto God"), the faithful servitor of God, as Chief Commander. He cast down from Heaven the arrogantly proud Lucifer and the other fallen spirits when they rebelled against God. Michael summoned the ranks of angels and cried out, "Let us attend! Let us stand aright before our Creator and do not consider doing what is displeasing unto God!" According to Church Tradition, and in the church services to the Archangel Michael, he participated in many other Old Testament events. During the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt he went before them in the form of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Through him the power of the Lord was made manifest, annihilating the Egyptians and Pharaoh who were in pursuit of the Israelites. The Archangel Michael defended Israel in all its misfortunes. Through the will of God, the Chief Commander Michael transported the Prophet Habbakuk from Judea to Babylon, to give food to Daniel in the lions' den. The Archangel Michael disputed with the devil over the body of the holy Prophet Moses. The holy Archangel Michael showed his power when he miraculously saved a young man, cast into the sea by robbers with a stone about his neck on the shores of Mt Athos.

From ancient times the Archangel Michael was famed for his miracles in Rus. In the Volokolamsk Paterikon is a narrative of St Paphnutius of Borov with an account of Tatar tax-gatherers concerning the miraculous saving of Novgorod the Great: "Therefore Great Novgorod was never taken by the Hagarenes... when... for our sins the godless Hagarene emperor Batu devoured and set the Russian land aflame and came to Novgorod, and God and the Most Holy Theotokos shielded it with an appearance of Michael the Archangel, who forbade him to enter into it. He [Batu] was come to the Lithuanian city and came toward Kiev and saw the stone church, over the doors of which the great Archangel Michael had written and spoken to the prince his allotted fate, 'By this we have forbidden you entry into Great Novgorod'."

We invoke St Michael for protection from invasion by enemies and from civil war, and for the defeat of adversaries on the field of battle. He conquers all spiritual enemies.

MAJOR FEAST DAYS IN NOVEMBER



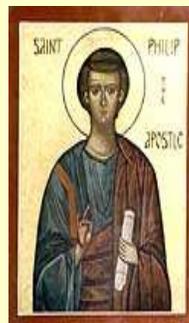
**Saints Cosmas
And Damian**
Nov 01



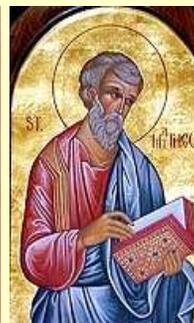
Saint Nectarius
Nov 09



**Martyr Menas
of Egypt**
Nov 11



Saint Philip
Nov 14



St. Matthew
Nov 16



**The Entry of the
Theotokos**
Nov 21



**St. Catherine
of Alexandria**
Nov 24

Ads from Merchants Who Support the Church

Please look at the Ads and support these Merchants by buying goods and services from them, whenever possible.

Tell the Merchant that you are from St, Nicholas Church and saw their Ad in the Church's Monthly Newsletter!!!

For New Ads Please Contact – Tomi Beno at (917) 952-9252

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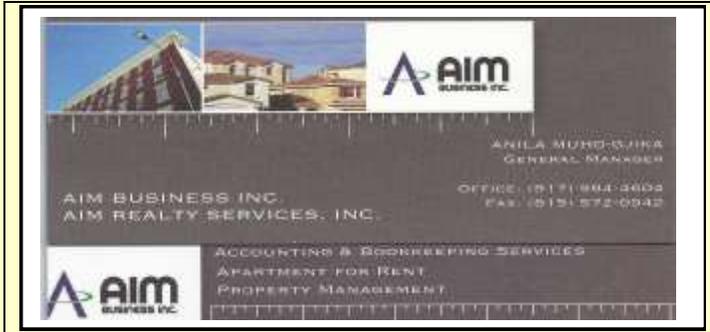
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Major Church Activities and Events

Vespers every Saturday at 5:00 p.m.
November 08, 22 and 29 (except Nov 15)

Sat–Sun, Nov 1 & 2: Flea Market and Bake Sale

Sat, Nov 01: Health Prayers, 5:00 p.m.
 Sts. Cosmas and Damian
Sun, Nov 02: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Sun, Nov 09: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
 Parish Council Meeting after Liturgy
Sat, Nov 15: Start of the Nativity Fast
Sun, Nov 16: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Fri, Nov 21: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
 Entry of the Theotokos;
 Paraklesis, 7:00 p.m.
Sun, Nov 23: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.
Mon, Nov 24: Prayers, 11:00 a.m.
 St. Catherine
Thurs, Nov 27: Thanksgiving Prayers, 10:00 a.m.
Fri, Nov 28: Paraklesis, 7:00 p.m.
Sun, Nov 30: Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. Flag Day Prayers

**Ushers' Schedule
for Sunday Services**
Lista e sherbimit te dielave ne kisha

Nov 02: Stefan BALTADORI / Izzy TSAMBLAKOS

Nov 09: Nasi PAVLLO / Ardian MILE

Nov 16: Jim OSWALD / Tomi BENO

Nov 23: Andrea KUTALI / John JANCE

Nov 30: Robert KORRA / Lou FOUNDOS

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.stnicholasalbanian.org

St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church
181–14 Midland Parkway
Jamaica Estates, New York 11432



Customer Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code