



February 17, 2015

Dear Members,

The weekend of February 13-15 was the weekend we were all looking forward to. It was the Southern Federation's midwinter conference coinciding with Valentine's Day. The event was hosted by the The Cedar Club of Atlanta and it was very well organized and attended by around 250 people from different Lebanese and Syrian clubs. Several activities were held during the three days that involved all ages. There was a singles' party, Arabic language lessons, Dabkeh classes and the highlight was the Dinner & Dance party on February 14. The evening included a fun ceremony in which married couples were invited to renew their marriage vows, followed by a hilarious rendition of the Southern Federation's song, "Kibbe Nayyeh and Koussa Mihshi," which is sung to the tune of The Battle Hymn of the Republic. The evening went on until the late hours with everyone dancing to the music of an Arabic band.

While four people from our club attended the Southern Federation convention that was held in Houston last July, 16 members attended the Atlanta convention and all had a wonderful time. We had sufficient free time to visit famous Atlanta attractions, such as the CNN Headquarters where we took a tour of the building and learned how programs and news are transmitted to the public. Some others visited the World of Coca-Cola museum which takes visitors back to over 100 hundred years since this product was created. Others enjoyed shopping at the famous Lenox Square that was across from the hotel.

Our President Lamia Hanna and NC State VP for the Southern Federation Tony Bikhazi attended a meeting chaired by Sami Nassar, VP of the Southern Federation, where discussions were exchanged by club Presidents and State VPs on how to improve our involvement with our communities and ways to attract and increase the membership in the clubs and the Southern Federation.

We would like to announce that the Southern Federation's upcoming summer convention will be held in Memphis during the July 4 weekend, with tours planned to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Graceland, Elvis Presley's mansion that is now a museum. Details of the summer convention will be emailed to all members and will be placed on the website soon. Let us plan on attending and enjoy our camaraderie and interaction with members of other clubs that belong to the Southern Federation. We look forward to having a large number of the MPC members attend the convention in Memphis. Fun time and Happy Days ahead.

*Tony G. Bikhazi*

*NC State Vice President of the Southern Federation of Syrian Lebanese American Club*