

# Saint Demetrios Well Represented at New Jersey Folk Dance Festival

*Mathew Polites*  
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On January 16th, 17th, and 18th of 2009 the Metropolis of New Jersey hosted the 14th Annual Greek Folk Dance Festival (FDF), held at Saints Constantine and Helen in Annapolis, Maryland. The weekend consisted of a social on Friday evening, the Semi-Final Round of competition and dinner-dance on Saturday, and the Final Round of competition, as well as awards and last year's Best-In-Show performances on Sunday after Divine Liturgy. Our oldest group (Demetrakia I) won Best-In-Show last year and performed before this year's winners were announced.

The Folk Dance Festival (FDF) is comprised of three Divisions: Division I and Division II are competitive, while Division III features the youngest participants dancing solely for exhibition. This year thirty-four groups from fourteen churches from New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia attended, making this FDF the largest in its history with some 500 dancers participating. Every group displayed traditional costumes that correspond with the dances/regions they were representing. The Folk Dance Festival is aimed at reviving the most traditional of Greek dances from specific villages in Greece.

Saint Demetrios was proudly represented with all five of our Demetrakia dance troupes. Demetrakia I competed in the Intermediate Category in Division I, while Demetrakia II competed in the Junior Category of Division II. Also in Division II making their "competitive debut" was Demetrakia III who competed in the Primary Category. At the conclusion of Saturday's performances both Demetrakia IV and Demetrakia V performed in the exhibition presentation.

Our groups were very successful this year. Demetrakia I was awarded "Best-in-Show" for Division I, and Demetrakia II was awarded "Best-in-Show" for Division II. This meant that our groups had the highest combined scores from both of their performances in the Semi-Final and Final Rounds of competition out of all of the churches participating in Divisions I and II. We thank the many dancers, teachers and parents for the countless hours of practice, hard work and determination displayed in preparation for this year's competition. We would like to thank the following instructors:

Demetrakia V - Katina and Hrisoula Mavrophilipos

Demetrakia IV - Maroula Giannaros

Demetrakia III - Irene Giannaros

Demetrakia II - Dimitra and Katina Zozos

Demetrakia I - Emily Liadakis

Also a big thank you to Father Lou and Presbytera Alice for spending Saturday afternoon cheering all of their groups on!