

# THE GRAND LEDGER



OCTOBER

Edition 28 | Oct. 2023

# Welcome,



We have already progressed significantly with the preparation of our business plan for 2024. The past week we reviewed the strategic intent of all the teams and provided guidance regarding expectations. As indicated before, automation will be a core part of our plan going forward. As we navigate through the digital age, automation is becoming an indispensable tool, fostering not only increased efficiency but also unlocking

new avenues for creativity and innovation. In the words of Bill Gates, "The first rule of any technology used in a business is that automation applied to an efficient operation will magnify the efficiency. The second is that automation applied to an inefficient operation will magnify the inefficiency." This encapsulates the dual nature of automation: its potential to drastically enhance our productivity when applied judiciously, and the importance of optimizing our processes before we automate them. As we integrate automation into our daily operations, let's take it as an opportunity to review and refine our workflows, ensuring that we're not just doing things faster but also smarter.

I encourage each one of you to embrace this transition with an open mind and a proactive attitude. Let's explore how automation can augment your specific roles, reduce your workload, and provide you with more space for innovation and creativity. Our goal is not to replace the human touch but to enhance it, allowing us to deliver exceptional value to our clients.

  
NICO MEYER  
CEO

## Our Latest Wins:

### **Non-Government Work**

*Tax deadline accomplished!*

### **Government Work**

*Successfully submitted to GSA Schedule*

*City of Cecil, Staff Augmentation*

*City of Newton, Audit*

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# TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Tax Team Extension Deadline

Congratulations to the tax team for successfully completing the tax extension deadline. They worked extremely hard to deliver on time. This was a really tough season and we appreciate of the amount of hours and hard work that went into it. Well done tax team! The admin team was also crucial in ensuring their success, supporting them in keeping contact with clients.



## Audit Team - Tech Mahindra and Gov. Work



Congratulations to the audit team for meeting the Tech Mahindra quarter close deadline. Well done audit team! For our government contracts, our audit team has also been knocking it out of the park, receiving glowing reviews from their government clients. Thank you to Gert, Stephné, Georgia, Katerina O and Dimitris for their success on the Roswell Audit. This was our very first Government Audit, and the financial Manager was very pleased. Shout out to Stephné for her work on the Santee-Lynches audit, too.

CKH Group has successfully submitted all information to the General Services Administration (GSA) for the United States Federal Government. This initiative was led by Nick Catrakilis and required a lot of attention to detail with continuous follow ups. CKH Group's next milestone will be to get approved and for a government entity to 'buy our service' off of the GSA schedule.





## WORK ANNIVERSARIES

### **Greece**

- November 1 - Anastasia Karagianni (1 year)
- November 1 - Katerina Vroulou (1 year)
- November 2 - Alexandros Charalampopoulos (3 years)
- November 14 - Georgia Sergi (1 year)
- November 14 - Vasilika Cami (1 year)
- November 23 - Dimitris Sevastidis (3 years)
- November 27 - Eleanna Pappa (6 years)
- November 29 - Konstantinos Theodorou (2 years)

### **Poland**

- November 2 - Ewa Kaczmarek (1 year)

### **South Africa**

- November 11 - Clayton Seale (3 years)

### **Spain**

- November 1 - Franco Cicchiello (2 years)
- November 5 - Naan Silva (2 years)

### **Ukraine**

- November 1 - Olha Nazarenko (2 years)
- November 1 - Pavlo Kripak (2 years)
- November 1 - Tetiana Artekova (1 year)
- November 1 - Viacheslav Fietisov (1 year)
- November 7 - Anna Ivanova (3 years)
- November 17 - Natasha Krasniuk (2 years)

CONGRATS

# HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST 2023 WINNERS



**MARIA PLATI**

2



Shakira Parker

3



Yvette Hasbrouck

4



Kyle Heyl

5



Kate Kudrenko



# MEET OUR GLOBAL OFFICES

## Presence

Teams in 8 global locations, employing 200+ professionals

## Global Footprint

Strategic geographical positioning of offices to ensure consistent availability to any and all client needs

## Expertise

Utilizing local talent to ensure dynamic expertise and the most accurate results

## MSI Global Network

250 legal and accounting member firms located in over 100 countries. Access to network firms to enhance local technical expertise



South Africa



Atlanta



Greece



Ukraine



Poland



Germany



Spain



Azerbaijan

# SOUTH AFRICA

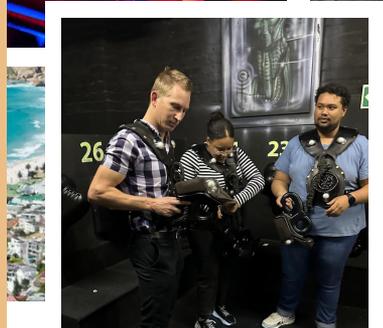
Since its establishment in 2014 to support the US headquarters in Atlanta, the Cape Town office has brought together a diverse pool of accounting, finance, and consulting talent.

## Cape Town, South Africa



### Lazer Tag!

Every month, the CT Office has formal training on varied topics of interest with the whole team. This training is usually done via Teams but for this month we decided on taking a different approach.





## October in South Africa

While the rest of our offices are beginning to bundle up for the fall, the South Africa office is starting to see warmer weather, with spring in full swing, and summer on the horizon. Now is an excellent time to see wild flowers blooming all across South Africa, or go whale watching as whales migrate from Antarctica to warmer waters.



## BIRTHDAYS

November 20 - Jaco Botes

November 27 - Kathrynne Wenn



Shakira dressed up as the very scary 'load shedding' for Halloween!

# ATLANTA

Atlanta, Georgia is home to CKH Group's headquarters. The company's head office smoothly manages the work of its international network while giving autonomy to the firm's local offices worldwide.

## Atlanta, Georgia



**Happy Birthday Katerina!**  
And welcome to our visitors in the Atlanta office.

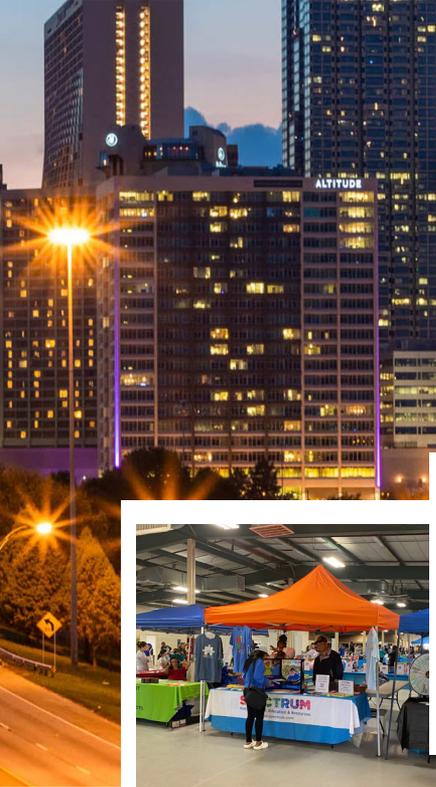


## Kevin Jenrette Golf Tournament

Roger Nixon along with John Goss, Gert Du Plessis, and Hank Brady attended this golf tournament held to honor Kevin Jenrette, and raise money for the scholarship in his name.

# GGFOA Conference

The business development team attended the Georgia Government Finance Officers Association conference in October. They were able to speak to government entities in Georgia, and followup on those identified in our local visits.



The Atlanta Office supported one of our clients by sponsoring the Autism Spectrum Run!

**BIRTHDAYS**  
November 15 - Ji Liu

# GREECE

In 2018, our Italian SME (subject matter expert) relocated to Athens, GR in order to set up an additional European center that would cater to additional EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) projects. Since then, CKH has also opened an office in Lemnos.

## Athens, Greece



The Ap team at the Greece office also attended a Latin Dance Lesson



## BIRTHDAYS

- November 5 - Eda Agian
- November 8 - Georgia Boudrou
- November 18 - Maria Plati
- November 26 - Christos Kleftakis
- November 28 - Giota Vlachou
- November 29 - John Genouzis

The Greece office supported Breast Cancer Awareness by attending a run for health!

# OHI (OXI) DAY

Ohi Day (October 28, 1940) refers to the day when Greek Prime Minister Ioannis Metaxas refused an ultimatum handed to him from Benito Mussolini, the Italian dictator in Rome and ally of Adolf Hitler. The ultimatum demanded Greece's surrender. The prime minister replied with one single word - Oxi (No).



On the very same day, Italian troops launched their military offensive in Epirus, marking the start of the Greco-Italian War and, and therefore,



Greece's entry into World War II. The Axis forces descended on Greece, expecting that it would quickly fall, but the Greek resistance forced Hitler to change his plans. News of Greece's victory flooded the radio airwaves and covered the front pages of newspapers around the globe. A grateful world celebrated - no one expected such a small nation to derail the seemingly unstoppable Axis forces. In his editorial for the Greek

newspaper Kathimerini, journalist Georgios Vlachos wrote: "Today there is no Greek who does not add his voice to the thunderous OHI. OHI, we will not hand over Greece to Italy. OHI, the barbarian will not desecrate our Parthenon!"

From then on, October 28 would be known as Ohi Day ("No Day").



The Greece office got spooky! Here are all our amazing halloween costume contest submissions.

# UKRAINE

The Kyiv office was established in 2016 at a time when few international companies considered the Ukraine as a destination for establishing a back office support for its financial and accounting services worldwide.

Kyiv, Ukraine



caring on a global scale

To apply for assistance from CKH Cares you can reach out to Nick Catrakilis ([nickc@ckhgroup.com](mailto:nickc@ckhgroup.com)) or Kate Kudrenko ([katernak@ckhgroup.com](mailto:katernak@ckhgroup.com))

# NEW HIRES



**Tetiana Kozyr**  
GL Manager

*My name is Tetiana Kozyr. I am excited to join CKH Group Team as GL Manager in Kyiv office. I am Ukrainian, but last 2 years I have lived in Italy. I have 16-years finance, tax and accounting experience, led implementation of FI module SAP4 HANA at JTI, which is the fourth biggest tobacco company in the world. Besides work, I enjoy yoga, trekking and gym.*



**Mariana Senkiv**  
Statutory Accountant

*I have been in accounting for 10 years. Working with data, their analysis and visualization to optimize processes are my areas of interest. I am an effective team player and believe that effective communication is of primary importance to achieve the goals of any project. I spend all my free time with my family, enjoying bringing up my little daughter.*



**Oleksandr Pobedria**  
Junior General Ledger Accountant

*I am ambitious and promising specialist, I strive to develop in the field of finance. I recently received two master's degrees: a Master of Economics and a Master of Laws. After graduating from the university, I worked for a year as an auditor's assistant, and also worked as an analyst at a charity fund for half a year. On weekends, I love to read fiction and motivational books, watch TV series, and also like to walk around the city with friends.*

## BIRTHDAYS

- November 13 - Liliia Sych
- November 18 - Mykhailo Nevechera
- November 18 - Ivan Ilmeyer
- November 22 - Yuliia Golovatiuk
- November 22 - Daria Zamohylnova
- November 23 - Uliana Grozyk

# POLAND

The Poznań office's strategic geographic position allows the firm to solidify its presence in Europe and better serve our customers' needs on short notice. The Poznan office is an integral part of CKH.

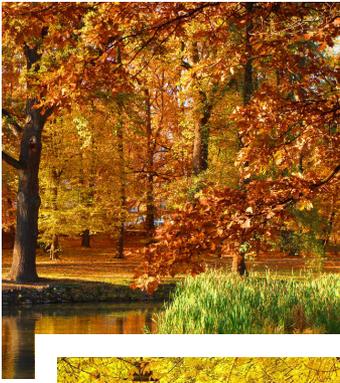
## Poznan, Poland



### Did you know?

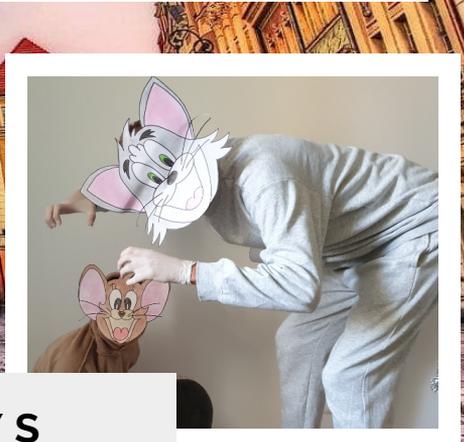
#### **Poznan is world Famous for croissants**

Saint Martin Croissants (known in Polish as Rogale Świętomarcińskie) are sweet croissants filled with almond paste and white poppy seeds. Since 2008, Saint Martin Croissants have been listed as a protected food by the European Union. An authentic rogal świętomarciński, must be made in the city of Poznan and only by trained and certified bakers. A bakery must get an official certificate prior to selling these delicacies.



## Autumn in Poland

The weather in Poland in October differs each year and is difficult to predict – one day you can enjoy sunny weather and the other it's cold and rainy. Regardless of the weather, a stroll through Old Market Square is a great way to get outside and enjoy the varying weather. The changing of leaves also marks 'the Golden Polish Autumn', a remarkable sight across the country.



## BIRTHDAYS

November 24 - Andrzej Badura

# SPAIN

The Barcelona office is one of our newer additions to the CKH Group network. The team supports our other offices and solidifies CKH Group's presence in the EMEA region.

## Barcelona, Spain



Our staff member had a dinner together to celebrate the arrival of Autumn and farewell to Stefan

## La Castanyada

La Castanyada is a traditional festival that is deeply rooted in Catalonia and celebrated on the evening of 31st October and 1st November, All Saint's Day. People eat chestnuts - castanyes in Catalan -, panellets - small balls of almond paste coated in pine nuts -, sweet potatoes and other autumnal produce. You can make panellets at home or buy them in the pastry shops and bakeries of Barcelona.



## BIRTHDAYS

November 26 - Jessica Seyda

November 28 - Renata Aluas

# AZERBAIJAN

Our Azerbaijan team officially has an office space in Baku! It is our latest addition to the CKH Group network. Our Baku team supports a variety of departments including SALT, Augmentation, Special Projects, and GL Accounting.

## Baku, Azerbaijan



### **Oct 18 - Azerbaijan Independence Day**

Independence Day in Azerbaijan, also known as State Sovereignty Day, is celebrated annually on October 18. On this day in 1991, the government adopted the Declaration of Independence of Azerbaijan as the bedrock of the newly established nation. Independence Day in Azerbaijan was a public holiday until 2006, when it was declared a working holiday. Although no longer an official day off, Azerbaijanis still celebrate, particularly in capital city Baku. Azerbaijan's president and governmental leaders officially congratulate the people and organize competitions, concerts and special exhibitions in downtown Baku. Festivities always end with a magnificent fireworks show.



Celebrations in Baku for Azerbaijan Independence Day



## BIRTHDAYS

November 3 - Emil Haytaoghlu

November 7 - Tarlan Ismayilov

# The Kudos Corner

A HUGE kudos and congratulations to my wonderful colleague **Livia Juliani** on her promotion to HR Team Leader. We are incredibly proud of you and all you achieved at CKH. We look forward to seeing you grow to bigger heights! Congrats Livia!



Thank you **Pepi Delimari** for saying the right words at the right moment.

Well done to our **tax teams** for delivering on every return by the tax deadline. This was one of the toughest seasons yet. You guys rock!



**Stephné Kukard** received great feedback from two different clients in the course of one week, Rachel Katorkas from Santee-Lynches and Jean Pinat from Genesys. You are juggling so many deliverables and still exceeding expectations on all fronts. Well done young lady!

**Veronika Babiciute's** attitude is amazing. She is brilliant, active, initiative. Even when I give you a hard time, I still appreciate you a lot!

Thank you, **Hank Brady, Nick Catrakilis,** and **Kate Kudrenko,** for thinking of me while I was going through a hard time with my family's health. I have received such overwhelming support and kindness from everyone, but I was touched by their actions and empathy.

**Shakira Parker** is excellent at her job, knows her field and everything that has to do with her job. Giving more than what was actually asked from her. Collaborative and always available to help you without even asking her.



Thank you to the audit team- **Katheryne Wenn, Terak Ismail, Nigar Haytaoghlu,** and **Daria Zamohlynova** for the hard work to get the Tech Mahindra entities over the line during the quarter close. Well done!

Thank you to **Olha Nazarenko** for her great support and valuable knowledge! Olha is always ready to help and one of the most friendly member of GL team!

Thank you very much to **Oleksii Martinovych** and **Rustam Nazarov** for assisting the CKH audit team on the Tech Mahindra quarter close. We appreciate the effort made!



Thank you **Eon van Wyk** for always being so prompt and responsive even while I know he is busy. I can always trust that Eon will respond in a timely manner, follow up with me, and provide valuable insight. He leads by excellent example.

If you would like to praise a coworker on a job well done, scan this qr code to fill out the form! (can be submitted anonymously)



# Chatting with Franco

A column dedicated to the thoughts and writings of Franco Cicchiello from our Barcelona office. Reach out if you would like to contribute too!



## My Parents Loved Elvis Presley

My parents owned very few records, but I remember that the Elvis albums always played in the house.

This is why, when I was a child, I began to play my own version of his songs on a toy guitar. The show must have been terrible but the couple living on the floor above seemed to enjoy it because they would call me onto the balcony to strum the guitar for them. After the concert, they threw candies down, my reward for the performance.

The lyrics were sung in an unknown language to the audience, although my intentions might have been English but could easily have been Martian. The guitar was not properly tuned and made only one sound - Blam, Blam. This was no problem for a 5 year old eager for candy.

After a couple of songs, a beautiful woman appeared in the doorway of the balcony with a big smile on her face. The woman was my mum, and I was very proud of her. I put more energy into my exhibition. I am sure her smiles and applause had nothing to do with the greatness of my efforts, but that was all I could manage and she was part of my adoring audience.

In any case, if they throw candies at you it is better than rotten tomatoes. After the last song she always said "Franco, come in or you'll get cold!"

Parents are always afraid that something will happen to their children. I remember those times when I'd go out at night, and they would say, be careful. Careful of what, I'd ask myself? It doesn't matter. The point was, they cared so you tried to be careful. While growing up, I continued doing my little shows, and each performance got bigger and better. My mum and dad came to see me perform from time to time. It was nice because they knew me, but a show is different. On stage you are not their child, you are a performer.

The last time I remember my parents sitting together was at one of these performances. They sat together in the front row of the audience. I was 18 years old and, at the time, I was not only a promising comedian but also a student. The show went

well. People laughed like crazy. An audience is cold in the beginning but as the performer finds his way and just one person starts laughing, that person triggers the laughter of all the other people. At the end, all I had to say was, "Thank you. My name is Franco" and they went wild with the applause.

From the stage you can't see all the faces of the audience very well, but I could always spot my parents, and I was afraid their cheeks might burst with laughter and pride. They were red in the face, mouths wide open, roaring with laughter as they joined all the others. Their joyful reactions were not motivated by kindness or love. How do I know that? Because they were very honest and sincere people. If they didn't like the

show, they would not have laughed to do me a favor, that's for sure. So it was a great show! It was my last memory of them together. A happy one.

When I went to University I had to choose between acting and studying and I chose the second because I thought I was more likely to be a successful student. It had nothing to do with trying to please my parents.

I liked financial certainty more than the uncertainty of show business, and that directed my choice. My parents never tried to influence my decision. That said, I loved my parents so much that I always tried to be the best possible son. I did not choose them, and they did not choose me, but they were the only ones I had and every single word or action of theirs has been to my advantage and my benefit. Always.

Antonio died on the 4th of September 2006 and Maddalena on the 21st of October 2023. Many years apart, but they are together now and as I try to imagine what they are doing, I think of them sitting together, smiling in the audience, watching and enjoying my show.

Who knows if they are having as much fun now, but sooner or later I will find my way there, and maybe I will see them laughing again. If heaven and the angels join their laughter like that one night long ago in a little theater, I will be happier again.

Ciao, I have loved the time we had together.



# Local Favorites - ATHENS

## Employee Recommended Activities

1

### **BENAKI MUSEUM**

Benaki Museum was founded in 1930 from Emanouel Benaki. Currently it accommodates a Cycladic exhibition. It also has events, educational programs, and much more.



2

### **EPIDAUROS**

The ancient theater of Epidaurus was built by the architect Polycleitos. Epidaurus is the most important ancient place of worship of the god Asklepios with a maximum capacity of 13,000 - 14,000 spectators.



3

### **STAVROS NIARCHOS**

Stavros Niarchos was a Greek shipowner, businessman, art collector and founder of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. It accommodates collections, events, theater, and more.



4

### **VARVAKIOS AGORA**

Varvakeios Agora is a municipal market in the 1st municipal unit of the City of Athens which owes its name to the benefactor Ioannis Varvakis. It is an organized neighborhood market



5

### **ASTEROSKOPIO**

The National Observatory of Athens Ästeroskopiio, is the first research center of modern Greece and is located opposite the Acropolis, under the hill of Asteroskopi, from which it got its name.





## Communication Lessons:

### Establish/Reinforce Organizational Identity

Organizational identity consists of the mission, purpose, and values of an organization and expresses why the organization exists and what it values most. Some organizations do it well and some don't. It is important that we all reinforce our organizational identity.

- **Define Purpose:** Why does CKH exist in a meaningful way?
- **Articulate Values:** What differentiates CKH from others and our competition? Our values which are truly essential to our overall success (Stay Grounded, Support Your Team, Shake The Tree, Never Stop Growing, Reach Higher). A good list of values is no more than five and we should model them daily and hold each other accountable to these values.
- **Check Performance:** Check yourself as a leader. Are you demonstrating purpose fulfillment and adherence to values so that those who work alongside you will emulate each one as well?

### Connect To the Big Picture

Do you know and understand the purpose of what you do each day? Duke quotes Peter Senge by saying, "If any one idea about leadership has inspired organizations for thousands of years, it's the capability to hold a shared picture of the future we seek to create." Many organizations struggle with explaining what the organization is trying to do holistically and how all the activities within it relate to the big picture. Members of high performing teams don't ask questions like: What is going on here? Why am I supposed to do this? Does this really matter? When you understand and connect to the big picture those questions go away.

Organizational Planning has 3 distinct tiers: 1) vision 2) strategy and 3) objectives and tasks. Vision tells the organization where it is going. Strategy tells everyone how we will get there. Objectives and tasks (Daily-Weekly-Monthly) are activities that support and give a clear line of sight to the strategy.

- **Connect Purpose, Vision, Strategy, and Tactics:** Communicate and align these often. Start with organizational identity, followed by a vision of the future and a strategy to get there so that the team understands how his or her activities support the big picture.
- **Envision Success:** Describe what you see in the future and ask your team to do the same. Engaging your team will foster creativity and help them produce solutions that support the big picture as well as ultimately enabling them to become more efficient.

-Roger Nixon, VP of Business Development



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