

## Restaurateur tells 'Ferry Tales'

Son of Hellenic Snack Bar founders tells his own 'Ferry Tales'  
Remembrances of 'comical events' at Hellenic lead to book's publication

[By Rebecca Packard](#)

Once upon a time, in the hamlet of East Marion, there was a son of Greek immigrants named George Giannaris. He was like other boys in many ways, but at least one thing made him and his family special: They owned a popular restaurant. And one of the things that made the restaurant so popular was the ferry traffic. And so it was that from the time George was 10, he was learning how to cook for patrons rushing to or from Orient Point. And by the time he was in his 30s, he'd met enough interesting characters searching for great lemonade and hummus that he wrote a book called "Ferry Tales."

Mr. Giannaris' self-published book has been available for about three weeks and he said he's already sold "a few hundred" copies.



Suffolk Times photo by Judy Ahrens George Giannaris at the Hellenic Snack Bar Restaurant in East Marion with his book "Ferry Tales".

The Hellenic Snack Bar and Restaurant has been central to the Giannaris family for more than 30 years. "I started writing about some comical events at the restaurant," said Mr. Giannaris, who lives in Cutchogue. "I sat down with my mom a few days later and asked her if she remembered the things I was writing about ... and her response was 'No.'â He said he was worried that he, too, wouldn't remember them in 20 years, and he wanted to make sure the family history was recorded for his boys, Yianni and Savvas.

Mr. Giannaris' ferry tales cover memorable characters from the restaurant, humorous incidents and ruminations about toes, bikers and Jesus Christ. The author's parents, John and Anna Giannaris, who founded The Hellenic, as it is commonly known, more than 30 years ago, are understandably central to the book. George Giannaris attributes the success of the restaurant to his father's "gifted palette," his mother's persistence and attention to detail, and the ferry traffic that provides a constant stream of customers, even in the dead of winter.

"The ferry, down the road, affected me on every level," he said. So he named the book after the common theme of ferry traffic that runs throughout the stories.

Mr. Giannaris sought out Booksurge Publishing of Charleston, S.C., a publishing house affiliated with amazon.com, to publish the book. He could have opted to have it reviewed and advertised through amazon.com, but he sees the stories as primarily local and decided to let them speak for themselves.

The manuscript was critiqued by a local writer's group, though. The North Fork Writer's Guild was meeting at the Coffey House Bed and Breakfast next door to the restaurant, and Rick Coffey, one of the owners of the B&B, suggested he submit his manuscript for review. Mr. Coffey's wife, Ellie, the other owner of the B&B, suggested the title. The manuscript also was edited by Mr. Giannaris' former advanced placement (AP) high school English teacher, Teresa Taylor of Greenport, who is now retired.

The book may be local, but it's also available for sale at amazon.com, and Mr. Giannaris said it's been fun to hear that friends living as far away as Austria and Japan have been able to purchase it through the company. Online orders also are available through [www.georgegiannaris.com](http://www.georgegiannaris.com).

The book currently is available at the restaurant in East Marion, and will be available at Martha Clara Vineyards in Riverhead during the month of July. It also soon will be available at the ferry terminal at Orient Point and at the Borders book store in Riverhead, Mr. Giannaris said.

Mr. Giannaris will sign copies of "Ferry Tales" at The Hellenic from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, June 12.