



**HELLENIC LINK–MIDWEST**  
A SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL LINK WITH GREECE  
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## **Sweet Greeks: First-Generation Immigrant Confectioners in the Heartland**

On Sunday, October 24, 2021 at 3:00 pm, Hellenic Link–Midwest presents Dr. Ann Flesor Beck, in an online presentation titled “*Sweet Greeks: First-Generation Immigrant Confectioners in the Heartland*”. Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84283601337>

**The Webinar ID is 842 8360 1337. Further information on how to join this webinar lecture is provided on page 2.**

Greek immigrants to America came primarily from the Peloponnese, subsistence farmers lured with tales of riches and promises of prosperity. Most of the immigration occurred between 1900 and 1915 where it is estimated that one in four Greek males arrived. They primarily gravitated to urban centers, such as New York, Boston, New Orleans and Chicago. In Chicago, like other cities, rather than working for others in factories or slaughterhouses, the fiercely independent Greeks initially worked as bootblacks and shoeshine operators. Eventually, with the relatively least expensive investment of street selling, they became fruit and vegetable vendors. From that beginning, the next step up was becoming a confectioner, a timely niche in American food history. In Chicago, the earlier settlement of two Greek entrepreneurs who had learned the confectionary trade after the Civil War, taught hundreds of first-generation immigrants to become entrepreneurs. Chicago became known as the “Acropolis of the Greek-American candy business.” It is estimated that 70% of Greek candy merchants in America started in Chicago.

Dr. Beck’s book *Sweet Greeks: First-Generation Immigrant Confectioners in the Heartland* moves the narrative from urban centers to the hundreds of small towns across America where Greek immigrants disseminated, often alone, or with few family members. Utilizing her grandfather as the case study in rural America, Ann Flesor Beck draws upon a variety of research methodologies to paint a vivid picture of what first generation Greek immigrants experienced in rural areas, most of whom began as confectioners. Her grandfather, Gus Flesor, passed through Chicago from Ellis Island, and joined a relative in central Illinois to establish his own confectionary and soda fountain. This is a narrative of networking, chain migration, small town distrust and prejudice, conflict with the Ku Klux Klan, and the ability to survive and thrive in a new country.

As a third-generation confectioner, Dr. Beck has taken the research from her dissertation at the University of Illinois to enlighten readers about first-generation Greeks migrating to central Illinois. It is a story that has been replicated throughout the country in multiple small towns and cities. She invites those of Greek ancestry to explore their own family history and discover how the first generation of Greek immigrants contributed to the richness of American life.

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DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR JOINING HLM'S ONLINE LECTURE ON OCTOBER 24, 2021 AT 3:00 PM ON EITHER ZOOM OR FACEBOOK.

1) If you already have the Zoom application ("Zoom Client") installed on your machine, then you go through the following steps:

**A. Click on the webinar link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84283601337>**

A small "Launch Application" screen will appear. The screen will show the following: "Choose Other Application" and "Open Link" and "Cancel"

**B. Click "Open Link"**

A new screen will appear asking for your **email and name**.

If the system asks you to also provide the **Webinar ID**, enter the following: **842 8360 1337**

**C. Once you enter the required information, click "Join Webinar"**

Once you have joined the webinar, familiarize yourself with the set of buttons above or below the screen. One in particular, the "Q&A" button allows you to type questions for the speaker during or after the presentation.

2) If you don't have the Zoom application installed, clicking the above link will take you through an installation process first but since that is rather complicated, we recommend that you install Zoom first on your PC, laptop or tablet.

To **install Zoom** go to the following link:

<https://zoom.us/support/download>

Opening that link points to a download file (see down arrow pointing to the .exe file at the bottom of your screen) that you will have to accept (click on the "Keep" button) and then open (click on the file name) in order to download the Zoom client IF YOU ARE WORKING ON A PC OR LAPTOP.

IF YOU ARE WORKING ON A TABLET, the same page provides a link to **Apple Store** (button named "Download in App Store") for installation on iPad or to **Google Play** (for tablets other than iPad: in that case click on the "Download in Google Play" button)

Once you succeed installing Zoom (we recommend doing that before the event) then you can proceed with steps A, B, and C in the previous paragraph (1), right before the webinar, in order to attend.

3) If Zoom installation fails, either because you are running an old machine with an operating system that does not support Zoom (e.g. Windows Vista or any Windows OS earlier than Windows 7) or an earlier version of your browser, then you can instead attend the lecture that will also be **broadcast live on Facebook**. For that, please go to the Hellenic Link-Midwest Facebook page at the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/helleniclinkmidwest>

at the scheduled time of the event and scroll down as needed until you see the live broadcast underway (it may be at the very top). In order to ask questions on Facebook enter them as a comment in the Comments section underneath or next to the live screen.