



*Culture  
Heritage  
History  
Language*

**Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota**  
Established 1980

## *MinneHyeLites*

No. 140 Winter 2015



### **1915-2015 —100 Years to Remember**



**Happy 35th Birthday ACOM !! February 1980 - February 2015**

## **2015 Festival of Nations Armenian Presence**

Once again, it's almost time for the annual Minnesota Festival of Nations! The dates this year are Thursday April 30<sup>th</sup> to Sunday May 3<sup>rd</sup>, with all events held at the River Centre in St Paul, MN. For more info about the Festival of Nations, see their website at this link:

<http://www.festivalofnations.com/>

Minnesota Armenians are among 98 different cultural groups who participate in the annual festival.



Thanks to members of the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota, Armenian culture is on display through two venues at the festival: numerous dance performances daily by the Armenian Dance Ensemble, led by

Nairy Digris and Terry McGibbon, as well as an educational folk art booth in the Artisan Demonstration arena of the cultural Bazaar and Marketplace, staffed by members of our ACOM Artisans Guild. Our exhibit is slightly different each year, but focuses on some aspect of Armenian arts and the Silk Road trade route.

Please join us at the Armenian Exhibit



who would like to learn and demonstrate our craft. No experience is necessary, as all on-the-job training is provided! In exchange for working our booth for a four-hour shift, you will also receive a pass to

get in free to the entire festival for a whole day. There are a number of shifts available, please let us know if you can help! Costumes must be worn while in the booth, but we can provide them if needed. Please contact Janet at [jrith@paulbunyan.net](mailto:jrith@paulbunyan.net) if interested, or for more information. We would be pleased to schedule you for a four-hour shift at your convenience, and hope you can join us!



*(Continued on page 15)*

## From our Readers

### THANK YOU

Dear ACOM Group and Executive Committee,  
So many memorials came to the churches mentioned in Laurence's obituary that we will include your donation to honor his work with Landowners' Association of North Dakota, preserving farm and ranch owners' private property rights.  
Thanks for your kindness.

**Vi Reimers and family**

### GAGHANT, January 2015

It was our first Gaghanant and we both enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. The musicians were fabulous. To my ear, it sounded as though they have played Armenian music all their lives. I think Music Mundiál (the band) will be a strong draw for future Gaghanant parties. Lowell and I also thought the food was very good. I spent so much time talking that I barely finished one plate of the hot buffet dishes and missed all the cookies except the mini chocolate eclairs - which were delicious. I thought the space was a lovely setting, with a nice touch of understated elegance.

**Andrea & Lowell Johnson**

Thank you. It was a lovely evening. Your efforts are appreciated.

**Adrienne Hayes**

We all had so much fun last night. You did a wonderful job of organizing the event. I enjoyed the live band very much.

**Judy Ohannesian**

This year's party was great, also the food. My grandkids ate and went for seconds - that was a first. Thanks. The band was also very good despite the loudness.

**Azad Mesrobian**

Thanks, Nairy. We (the band) all thoroughly enjoyed playing for your event and very much enjoyed learning the music. We will keep you informed. Please thank Terry again for all his help.

**Tim O'Keefe & Music Mundiál**

Thanks to the following people who donated various items towards the Silent Auction at Gaghanant and to those who bid on them and purchased them. Your contributions helped defray a portion of the band cost: Adrienne Hayes, Francis Bulbulian, Alarica Hassett, Nairy Digris

**Chorbishop Sharbel Maroun, St. Maron's Catholic Church, Minneapolis, on South Dakota recognizing the Armenian Genocide:**

Amen!!

Great job and thank God that justice is on its way. Keep up the good work in honor of the millions who offered their blood for our faith.  
God bless you.

**Abouna sharbel**

### CONGRATULATIONS

To Mark Wiersbeck who started a new position in the Tax Department at United Health Group in Minnetonka on Monday, November 3, 2014. He will be processing 1099s and working on projects. It's a very good move for him! Best wishes from all of us, Mark.

Harut and Jackie Khachatryan are the happy and delighted parents of Angelina, born November 2, 2014 at 4 pm, weighing 3 kg 400 gr (about 7 lb 8 oz). ACOM wishes to congratulate you all, wishing good blessings on your new baby. Grandpa Stepan and Grandma Astghik are very excited to have a granddaughter who lives in town.

Congratulations to Kristi Rendahl for successfully and "officially" defending her doctoral program dissertation. We join in your happiness, Kristi, and wish you the best of luck!

### SPEEDY RECOVERY

ACOM wishes **Amy Samelian** a very speedy recovery hoping that she continues to do very well after her surgery in September 2014.

Good wishes to **Aida Yaghsezian** for a complete recovery.

Executive Committee members of ACOM join to wish **Adrienne Hayes** a warm "Get Well Quick" following her knee surgery.

Speedy recovery wishes go to **Sam King**, Jim Gertmenian's wife, who underwent surgery in January 2015.

Heartfelt wishes to **Elizabeth Plummer** who underwent an extensive back surgery. We hope your recovery will be quick, Elizabeth, and successful.



## In Memoriam—Laurence Reimers

Cynthia Erickson's father, Laurence Reimers, died in the morning of October 20, 2014, at age 91. He was surrounded by Cynthia, her mom, all of her sisters, and one nephew. (The sons were not present but harvesting.) ACOM expresses its most sincere sympathy to Vi Reimers, Cynthia, her family, her siblings and all their relatives.

Laurence Wilbert Reimers 91, Jamestown, ND Born Sunday, October 7, 1923; passed away, Monday, October 20 at his home.

Laurence was born at home on the shores of Dry Lake, North Dakota, near Bordulac on Oct. 7, 1923, the eldest child of Ella Emily Augusta Fredericka (Scharf) and William Martin Reimers.

He spent his youth and attended schools in Carrington, Grace City, Gray Township, Courtenay, and graduated from Wimbledon School in 1941. Because a hail storm wiped out his college fund crop, he stayed on the family farm managing the Yorkshire Hog operation from a new desk given him by his parents - a desk that remains as a family heirloom. By the end of the next season at the close of the Great Depression, Laurence was able to purchase his first quarter of land. Along with his three brothers, he continued operating from their family farm, and they experienced farming's transition from teams of horses & steam threshers, to diesel engine tractors, to today's GPS-guided machines & agricultural drones.

As a young man interested in purebred livestock, Laurence developed flocks of purebred Suffolk sheep, traveling as far as Chicago in the 40s to exhibit his finest. In the 1960s, Laurence pioneered the breed of North Country Cheviots to North Dakota, a Scottish breed which had only been on the North America continent in Canada for one year. This new breed caught the attention of North Dakota State University, who purchased breeding stock from Laurence to develop their own flock (Google it).

Laurence exhibited sheep and swine for many years at the North Dakota Winter Show as well as at other state and county fairs and livestock shows around the area. In the early 1950s before married life settled him down (and pre-Interstate Highway Act), Laurence was involved with escorting / transporting oil company representatives to meet area landowners by use of his snowplane.

In 1955, Laurence married Viola Abrahamian of Jamestown, ND and they settled on a farm near the shores of Spiritwood Lake. They moved to Ashland Township to farm on his great-uncles homestead in the Courtenay-Wimbledon area where they raised their 5 children and taught them the value of honest hard work. Upon return of his sons to farm, Laurence set aside his own ambitions and devoted his life to his sons success.

Laurence inspired his children to appreciate the beauty of shooting stars and Northern Lights; the treasure of finding Native American artifacts in the soils; and learning the local lore of the Spiritwood Lake area. He loved pickled herring, strawberry ice cream, and as a youth he engaged in whole-

some mischief as a past time. He enjoyed square dancing, bowling, hunting, fishing and attending auctions. His keen vision helped to save many a Killdeer nest as he farmed the land. And he appreciated the energy required from the Earth to produce the full bloom of a peony.



Laurence loved the Lord, and he served God, the Original Environmentalist, by producing fruits from His Earth. He tended the Zion Lutheran Church cemetery where his ancestors were buried, was a confirmed lifetime member of St. Pauls Lutheran Church in Wimbledon, and attended United Presbyterian Church in Jamestown for some 40 years.

He was involved in many community activities and served on the Gray Township Board and the Wimbledon School board; he served the Boy Scouts and led 4-H Clubs; he was a member of the Stutsman County Farm Bureau, later serving as president and on their National Sheep Advisory Board. In his retirement, he served on Landowners Association of North Dakota board, and was active in the restoration of the Midland Continental Railway Depot and Peggy Lee Museum.

Laurence was very proud of his German heritage, and enjoyed the James River Genealogy Society meetings and North Dakota history. He traveled from Alaska to Mexico to Europe. He wore a yarmulke to the Wailing Wall in Israel, rode a camel in Egypt, he waltzed in the ballroom at Catherine's Palace in Russia, and celebrated with his wife their shared birthday on one of their trips to Armenia.

Laurence joined his family in heaven on Monday, Oct. 20 at home in the presence of family, who later that day welcomed his new great-great-niece, Ella. The stars shined so brightly on Monday night and later there was a meteor shower for the Earth he loved and left.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Viola, and five children: Cynthia (Leroy) Erickson, Roseville, MN; Dale (Mary Ellen) Reimers, Jamestown; Margery (Dwight) Kendall, Jamestown; Ann Marie Reimers (Ed Daly), Port St Joe, FL; James (Deborah) Reimers, Jamestown; 18 grandchildren Christopher, Bradley, Mitchell, Douglas, David, Daniel, Mason, Tristan, Talisha, Orin, Deondra, James, Jacob, Isaac, Andrew, Josiah, Hasmik, Artur; eight great-grandchildren; sister Darlene Loebrick, Tucker, GA; brother Floyd (Elaine), Palmer, AK; sisters-in-law Ruby and Joanne, and brother-in-law Ellis Fluetsch, and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, sister Elaine, brothers William and Henry, and his niece Gwen.

Western (bolo) slide ties and your sense of humor were recommended as appropriate at the service and luncheon.

In lieu of flowers, Laurence would prefer you consider a vote for a conservative Party candidate, and the family suggests you plant a peony bush in a sunny spot in your garden. But if you really insist, he would highly recommend a memorial to St. Pauls Lutheran Church in Wimbledon, ND or United Presbyterian Church in Jamestown.





## NEW MEMBERS ON ACOM'S

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 2015

After serving many years on ACOM's Executive Committee as its Social Director, Adrienne Hayes resigned effective December 31, 2014. We are all extremely thankful for all her help and support and will miss her presence at our meetings!

Mark Wiersbeck who also served as social director on the ACOM Executive Committee in the past, has kindly agreed to come back into the same position. ACOM current paid members voted him as Social Director (51/88 = 58% of 2015 membership).

Also, Andrea Johnson, daughter of long-time ACOM member Margaret Thomassian Johnson, was voted onto the current ACOM Executive Committee by the 2014 paid members (75/129 = 58% 2014 membership), in spite of the fact that many of you did not know her. It is our hope that you had the opportunity to meet and chat with Andrea at the annual Gagahant party on January 3, 2015. Andrea Johnson is the new Cultural Director.

Per ACOM's Constitution and By-Laws, one-third of the active membership's vote is needed and "shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of this organization". We are extremely happy that both Andrea and Mark received more than 50% YES votes. We appreciate everyone's effort to support the current ACOM Executive Committee and its mission through his or her vote.

**Also, the \$2,000 expenditure toward the Genocide Centennial Commemoration was approved by the paid membership of 2014.**



Rev. James Gertmenian  
Photo courtesy Plymouth Congregational Church

## Gertmenian prepares to say goodbye

January 13, 2015 By: Sarah McKenzie

Rev. James Gertmenian, an advocate for the homeless and a powerful voice for social justice issues, delivered his last sermon Jan. 25 at Plymouth Congregational Church at Franklin & Nicollet. Gertmenian retired after 18 years serving as the church's senior minister. He is moving to Maine with his wife Sam King where they have enjoyed summers with their family.

### Farewell events held for Rev. James Gertmenian

Saturday, Jan. 24: open house with Gertmenian and his wife Sam King, 2–4 p.m.; potluck with families, 5–7 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 25: Gertmenian's final sermon (services began at 10:30 a.m.); reception followed the sermon.

Where: Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet Ave. So., Minneapolis

### ST. SAHAG WOMEN'S GUILD UPCOMING EVENTS

March 20th - 6 pm - Mijink Service and Lenten Potluck

April 11th - 6 pm - Easter Dinner

May 2nd - Time TBD - Sainly Women's Day honoring all women who perished during the genocide. Service followed by a luncheon at Michele Angell's house.

# Gagant 2015 At Marriott Minnetonka January 3, 2015

**Family**



**Friends**



**Food**



**Music**



**Dancing**



**Peggy Merjanian, Sarah Wiersbeck and her sister during Sarah and Mark's visit to the East Coast at Thanksgiving.**





## Alain Delon, Dustin Hoffman and Adrien Brody to star in a film about Armenian genocide



**YEREVAN, (ARKA NEWS)** - A Russian Armenian movie producer Valery Saharyan is going to make a film about the Armenian Genocide starring Adrien Brody, Dustin Hoffman and Alain Delon, LifeNews says. Valery Saharyan is the CEO of Armenia Production. His grandmother was a genocide survivor. "She jumped into the burning tandoor (a cylindrical clay oven dug in the earth used in cooking and baking) being confident that she would die. But she survived and lived for 111 years, telling all the horrors she saw with her own eyes to me," Saharyan says.

He plans to make Delon a main character of his film titled "Patient", which takes place in a psychiatric clinic in Paris. The protagonist is the Armenian composer Komitas, who after witnessing the horrors of the genocide, was not able to recover from the shock he experienced. He died after staying in the clinic for 20 years.

Saharyan recalls a trip to Armenia with Alain Delon, where near a monument to the victims of genocide the actor was so overcome with emotion that he broke into tears.

Saharyan recently contacted Serj Tankian, the winner of Grammy and former head of the System of a Down, who willingly agreed to write the soundtrack for the future film. The Oscar winner Adrien Brody is supposed to play the main part in the film.



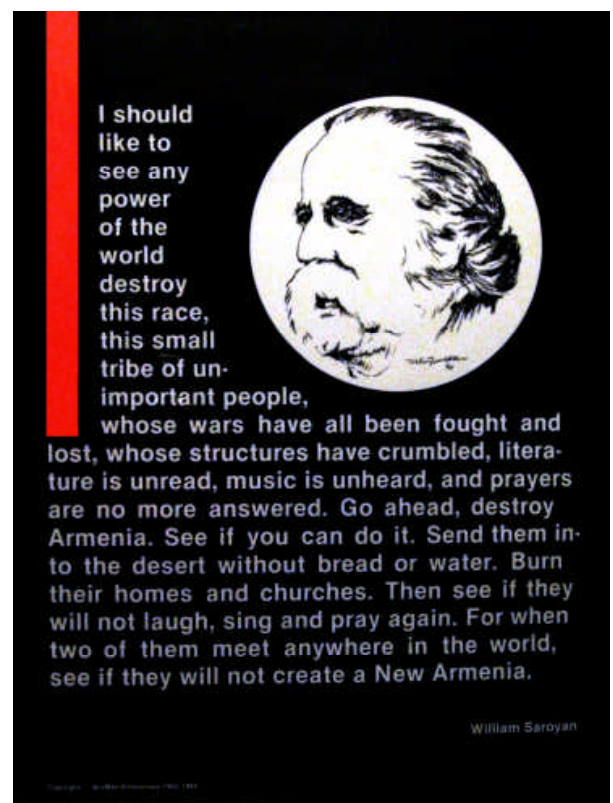
## ARMENIAN GENOCIDE CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION CONCERTS

A special concert took place on **March 5 at the Jerusalem Theatre. The Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra**, under the baton of internationally acclaimed Estonian violinist cum conductor Andres Mustonen, performed a program dedicated to the commemoration of the Centennial of the Armenian

Genocide. The **JSO**, in collaboration with the music festival Perspectives in Yerevan (Armenia), performed music written by the foremost Armenian composers, as well as Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony.

Veteran Armenian composer Stepan Rostomyan, the initiator of the concert, explains that the performance in Jerusalem was the first in a series of international concerts.

"The Centennial of the Armenian Genocide will be noted by remarkable concerts all over the world," he says. "Two dozen renowned musicians will give memorial concerts in the world's most prestigious concert halls through a series of concerts under the title "With you, Armenia," which will start in Israel. Further venues include St. John Church in Tallinn; the Beaux Arts Palace in Brussels; the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg; Carnegie Hall in New York; Santa Cecilia Hall in Rome; Cadogan Hall in London; and Musikverein Hall in Vienna. The roster of top-class musicians includes the Belgium National and La Scala philharmonic orchestras; the Royal Philharmonic and Mariinsky symphony orchestras; Camerata Salzburg; conductors Valery Gergiev, Pinchas Zukerman, George Pehlivanian and John Axelrod; and soloists Evgeny Kissin, Maxim Vengerov, Mischa Maisky, Julian Rachlin and Sergei Nakariakov."





A 17th-century depiction of a coffee house in Europe.

January 24, 2015

## The first European coffee-shops were established by Armenians

It's true – coffee doesn't grow in Armenia. Never has, probably never will. The origins of that drink, today one of the most valuable traded commodities of the world, are to be found in a region of Ethiopia known as Kaffa. The story goes that a goatherd was surprised by the increased energy of his animals after they munched on the beans of a plant. Those beans, roasted and ground, brewed and drunk, turned out to have the same effect on humans.

From Ethiopia, through the Arab world, up through the Ottoman lands, those beans made their way into the hands of the traders and merchants who plied the routes from east to Middle East to Near East to Europe – Armenians included, ar-

guably foremost among them.

The very first coffee-houses in Vienna and in Paris were opened by Armenians. Johannes Diodato (or Hovhannes Astvatsatur, translating “God-given” – a very apt name for someone who pioneered dealing in coffee, as many would agree) led the way in the Hapsburg territories in the late 17th century, while one Pascal opened the first coffee-shop in Paris in 1672, followed by another Armenian, Maliban, that same year. Armenian fashions were in use in decorating the coffee-houses of that time. There is even an example of a coffee merchant referring to himself as “a naturalized Armenian” in a French play from 1696.

There are indications that early coffee-houses in London and in Prague were likewise established by Armenians. The social and political roles that such coffee-houses played in the following centuries are reflected in the café cultures of European capitals going strong until today, and emulated elsewhere on the continent and all over the world.

One word on the word. “Coffee” and its variants, such as “café”, “kaffee”, “qahwa”, “kahve”, or “kofe”, dominate the name of the drink in just about all languages, except for two. One is from the original birthplace of the drink – in Amharic, a language of Ethiopia, it is called “buna” (which is also the word for “coffee bean” in Arabic). And the other is, of course, Armenian, which calls coffee “soorj” or “soorch” (in Western and Eastern pronunciation respectively). The origins of that word, which dates from at least 1787, are not clear. It could be a corruption of “sev choor” or “sev joor”, meaning “black water”, or it could be from the sound made when slurping a piping hot brew.

100 Years and 100 Facts Project

<http://100years100facts.com>



### ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA

203 North Howell Street ~ St. Paul, MN 55104

#### 2015 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President:	Leroy Erickson	651-917-1818
Vice President:	Francis Bulbulian	651-645-2460
Treasurer:	Nairy Digris	651-639-9346
Assistant to Treasurer	Bradley Erickson	651-917-1818
Secretary:	Lynne Gildensoph	651-690-8621
Social Director:	Mark Wiersbeck	952-220-6695
Cultural Director:	Andrea Johnson	651-323-4140
Past President:	Tom Keljik	651-659-0552

Newsletter Editors:	Peggy Merjanian	952-473-HYEM
	Terry McGibbon	651-639-9346



Despite heavy resistance, at 1:20PM Central Time, South Dakota became the 43rd U.S. state to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

## **SOUTH DAKOTA BECOMES 43RD U.S. STATE TO RECOGNIZE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE**

*Posted on February 26, 2015 Posted in Advocacy (on [www.ancawr.org](http://www.ancawr.org))*

– Legislature Calls on Turkey to End Its Denials and Work for a Just Resolution of this Crime

PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA – South Dakota becomes the forty-third United States state to recognize the Armenian Genocide, with the adoption, earlier today, of House Concurrent Resolution 1009 (HCR 1009), reported the Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region (ANCA-WR).

HCR 1009 designates 2015 as the “Year of Remembrance for the Centennial” of the Armenian Genocide from 1915-1923. It calls for the Republic of Turkey to acknowledge the facts of the Armenian Genocide and to work toward a just resolution. It also encourages the South Dakota school system to incorporate the teaching of the Armenian Genocide in their curriculum.

“Armenian Americans warmly welcome the continued support and solidarity of the citizens and government of South Dakota, a great state that has – since the time of the Armenian Genocide – acted with moral compassion for the victims of this crime,” said ANCA-WR Executive Director Elen Asatryan. “The ANCA-WR and our entire grassroots family collectively thank the South Dakota Assembly for its adoption of this critical resolution and are especially grateful for Rep. Steve Hickey’s efforts to author and lead the introduction of this resolution,” added Asatryan.

Rep. Steve Hickey, speaking in favor of its adoption, noted its timeliness, on the eve of the Centennial, and stressed how South Dakota was historically involved in the relief efforts of the Near East Relief: “South Dakota took on this issue with many people in America and sponsored what was called the Golden Rule Sunday.” Rep. Hickey added that: “Mayor William Tank urged to recognize Golden Rule Sunday and it spread all around

South Dakota. Those who did not have money contributed goods to help the Armenian Orphans.”

Founded in 1915, the currently-named Near East Foundation (formerly known as Near East Relief or NER) is the United States’ oldest Congressionally-sanctioned non-governmental organization which for the first time in American history expressed the collective generosity and humanitarianism of the American People. The NER served as a model upon which future philanthropic organizations, including the U.S. Peace Corps and USAID, and future calls for overseas relief efforts known as “citizen philanthropy” were modeled.

The highly successful Near East Relief (NER) movement literally saved the Armenian nation from total annihilation. Most Armenian-Americans are direct descendants of Armenian orphans and refugees rescued by NER. As a tribute to this magnanimous effort, the ANCA-WR spearheaded its “America We Thank You” initiative to express collective gratitude to the American people for their benevolence which allowed our nation to survive and thrive out of the ashes of destruction.

The citizens of South Dakota helped Near East Relief efforts by raising \$1,000 through the sale of Near East handiwork at the Huron, South Dakota State Fair in 1923.

Additionally, through this booth thousands of people received information concerning Near East Relief’s activities and needs. The campaign in South Dakota’s Corsica district, which covered six townships with entire population of 2,600 people, contributed 489 bushels of corn and \$1,118.35 in cash. Those who did not have money held bake sales and graciously donated the proceeds to assist NER’s efforts.

The Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region is the largest and most influential Armenian American grassroots advocacy organization in the Western United States. Working in coordination with a network of offices, chapters, and supporters throughout the Western United States and affiliated organizations around the country, the ANCA-WR advances the concerns



*(Continued on page 9)*



(Continued from page 8)

of the Armenian American community on a broad range of issues.

While our Government Affairs Director Tereza Yerimyan persistently reached out to educate elected officials about the resolution and South Dakota's proud history in saving the Armenian nation from annihilation through the Near East Relief efforts during the Armenian Genocide, our Community Development Coordinator Simon Maghakyan activated and worked with the local Armenian and Greek communities in South Dakota, who in return swiftly contacted their elected officials and brought truth and justice to the floor of the South Dakota State Assembly.

**We spoke. They listened.**

## Donate

When you give to the ANCA WR you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping us continue our advocacy, community outreach, civic engagement, youth, and development programs.

You can be sure that we will stretch every dollar of your donation and ensure that your voice will be heard through local, state, and federal government agencies and grassroots action on the issues that matter to you most.

The ANCA WR is completely funded by donors. If it weren't for the support of donors like you, we could not do the work that makes you proud. Be a part of it!

3 Ways to Donate:

Annual Giving—[www.ancawr.org/annualgiving](http://www.ancawr.org/annualgiving)

General Giving—[www.ancawr.org/general-donation/](http://www.ancawr.org/general-donation/)

Monthly Giving—[www.ancawr.org/friends](http://www.ancawr.org/friends)



### THE 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

(St. Paul, MN; March 2, 2015)

The organization **World Without Genocide** will host a program with Armenian scholar **Richard Hovannisian** commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The event will take place on **Tuesday, April 14, 7:00-9:00 pm** at **William Mitchell College of Law Auditorium**, 875 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. The event is open to the public, no reservations necessary. The cost is \$10 public, \$5 students and seniors, free to William Mitchell students. Continuing education credits are available for teachers and lawyers: 2.0 educator clock hours; \$35 for 2 standard CLEs (pending).



*Professor Emeritus  
Richard Hovannisian*

This program marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this genocide and features **Professor Emeritus Richard Hovannisian**, the Armenian scholar and a descendant of genocide survivors, who will speak about the genocide; the survivor communities throughout the diaspora, and strategies to combat Holocaust denial and, a century later, attempts to seek restitution and other forms of justice.

This event is co-sponsored by **ACOM, the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota**.

More information at [www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/events](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/events).

During World War I, leaders of the Ottoman Empire (the region today known as Turkey) perpetrated mass atrocities on the Christian Armenians living within the predominantly Muslim empire. Between 1915 and 1918, an estimated 1.5 million innocent men, women, and children perished in brutal exterminations, torture, and death marches.

**World Without Genocide** at William Mitchell College of Law promotes education and action to protect innocent people, prevent genocide, prosecute perpetrators, and remember those affected by genocide.

Visit [www.worldwithoutgenocide.org](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org) or contact 651-695-7621 for more information.

# First Armenian Float Wins Presidential Award

By Keri Kaligian on January 2, 2015

PASEDENA, Calif. (A.W.)— The Armenian American Rose Float Association's (AARFA) first float—dubbed “The Cradle of Civilization”—won the 2015 New Year's Day Tournament of Roses' President's Award for most effective floral use and presentation. The theme of 126<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade was “inspiring stories,” and paid tribute to the people of the community who “loved unconditionally, persevered courageously, endured patiently, and accomplished much on behalf of others.”

The Cradle of Civilization float presented various aspects of the Armenian community: The art display featured a sculpture of an Armenian woman's head with a traditional Armenian headdress, as well as an apricot and pomegranate tree. A bushel of grapes represented the earliest wine-making facility found in Armenia. A carpet-weaving machine, a traditional Armenian carpet, the Armenian symbol for “eternity,” and an arch were also featured, as representative of Armenian architecture from 4,500 years ago.

Prominent members of the Armenian-American community rode along with the float; they included U.S. Federal Judge Samuel Der-Yeghiayan, the first Armenian immigrant federal judge in the United States; former Pasadena Chief of Police Barney Melekian; Flora Dunaians, a Pasadena resident and founder of the Armenian International Women's Association of Los Angeles; and Jill Simonian, author of the popular “Fab Mom” blog.



The “Cradle of Civilization” (photo courtesy of Armenian American Rose Float Association)



*The Armenian American Rose Float Association float  
“Cradle Of Civilization”  
[www.kansascity.com](http://www.kansascity.com)*

## FOODSHELF DONATIONS

ACOM's food shelf barrel is still in Fellowship Hall along with empty grocery bags.

Please keep in mind the less fortunate and bring non-perishable food items to place in the barrel.

Your donated items will be much appreciated by those who are in need.

ACOM has been regularly delivering bags of food to the Keystone Foodshelf in St. Paul.

Thank You!





## A NATIONAL GO-KARTING CHAMPION

*Alexander Kardashian, 15-1/2, son of Viguen and Patti Kardashian,  
grandson of Van and Vali Kardashian*

**Congratulations, Alexander !!!**



Pictures taken at the evening award banquet.....double champion. Patti (mom) got the honor of presenting the Driver of the Year award. AWESOME evening!



Coming off of the track....celebrating victory



....1st Place....

## SENT TO US BY PEGGY MERJANIAN

I would like you to see a beautiful billboard here in Foxboro/Rte 1 about a quarter mile from Gillette Stadium. I'd like to personally thank all who were part of this display.



# Armenian Dance Ensemble of Minnesota

## 2015 Dance Ensemble Performances

For further information call Nairy Digris 651-639-9346

Month	Date	Location	Time
January	25	The Wellington	2:00 PM
February	7	Keystone	2:00 PM
March	5	V.A. Home	7:00 PM
March	8	Festival of Nations Preview	1:00 PM
April	7	Episcopal Homes	7:00 PM
April	16	Langton Place	6.30 pm
May	1,2,3	Festival of Nations	
May	26	Edina Care & Rehab	7:00 PM
June	23	The Shores of Lake Phalen	6.30 pm
August	26	Centennial Lakes	7:00 PM
August	30	Cerenity Care	2:00 PM
September	12	Cherrywood Pointe	2:00 PM
October	25	The Wellington	2:00 PM
December	6	Ukrainian Christmas Festival	1:00 PM



### ADE Dancing in 2014 (clockwise from above:)

- At Keystone with Happy Heilman (RIP)
- At Jones-Harrison
- At Centennial Lakes





## **2015 ACOM DUES PAID MEMBERS**

Angell, Michele & Bill

**Asgian, Philip**

Bejanyan, Nelly & Lazaryan, Aleksandr

Bobgan, Harold

Bulbulian, Francis & Barbara

Charchian, Aram & Ruth

Digris & McGibbon, Nairy & Terry & family

Djerdjian, Viken & Nancy

**Dourgarian, Gregg & family**

Erickson, Cynthia, Leroy & family

Esaybegyan, Anna, Sergei & family

**Faust, Gloria & Doug**

Gauro & Cusik, Boghos & Lana & family

Gildensoph, Lynne

Hakobyan & Papyieva, Artur & Nina

Hayes, Adrienne & Jim

Johnson, Andrea and Lowell

**Keljik & Grantz, Mark & Caren**

Keljik, Jeff & Susan

Keljik & Collins, Tom & Jennifer

**Mardirossian, Artoosh & Helga**

Matossian, Lou Ann

Meketarian, Marty & Mara & family

Mesrobian, Azad & Karen

Mokhtarian, Koko & Joanne

Nyholm, Pete & Dana & Family

Ohannesian & Tiffany, Judy & Doug & family

Plummer, Bill, Elizabeth & Chris

**Reimers, Vi**

**Rith-Najarian, Janet & Stephen**

Wiersbeck, Mark

Wiersbeck, Sarah

Ylitalo, Caroline & David & family

**NOTE:** Boldface type indicates members who have contributed \$50.00 or more to ACOM. Our thanks for everyone's most generous support.

### **ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA (ACOM)**

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**



- 1) To provide programs and events which encourage its members to learn Armenian culture, language, history and heritage.
- 2) To provide programs of Armenian culture, language, history and heritage for the general Minnesota area.
- 3) To provide an environment which encourages participation of all Armenians, their relations and friends who have an interest in Armenian culture, regardless of religious, political or social differences, and to promote harmony among its members.
- 4) To provide periodic gatherings and meetings for the cultural furtherance of the Armenian people, their relations and friends who have an interest in Armenian culture within the general Minnesota area.

#### **CONSTITUTION**

The Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota (ACOM) preserves and promotes Armenian culture, language, history and heritage in Minnesota and the upper Midwest. Founded in 1980 and headquartered in St. Paul, ACOM is the oldest and largest Armenian organization in the state.

ACOM welcomes everyone, regardless of ethnic, religious, or political affiliation, who takes an interest in Armenia and Armenians. Our members include first-generation through fourth-generation Minnesota Armenians, their families, and non-Armenian friends of the community.

ACOMs numerous cultural and social events include Armenian dance parties (barahantess), guest speakers, Armenian language classes, folk dance lessons and performances by the Armenian Dance Ensemble of Minnesota, chamber music concerts by the Armenian Music Ensemble, art shows, summer picnics, and craft sales. ACOM also sponsors all Armenian activities at the International Institute's Festival of Nations, a major regional folk festival held annually in St. Paul. Minnesota Armenians were founding participants in 1932; today, the Festival is ACOM's most visible public venue.

The ACOM office and most activities are in the historic St. Sahag Armenian Church building, at the intersection of Dayton and Howell, in the Merriam Park neighborhood of St. Paul. As an independent, 501 (c)3 non-profit organization, ACOM is supported primarily by membership dues and private donations. Gifts to ACOM are tax-deductible to the extent permissible by law.

**ACOM 2015 Calendar of Events**

For further info, call Leroy Erickson,  
ACOM President, 651-917-1818

**Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota**

Month	Date	Weekday	Event	Time
<b>2015</b>				
January	1	Thursday	New Year's Day	
January	3	Saturday	Gaghant - Barahantess, Marriott in Minnetonka	6:00 PM
January	12	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	4:30 PM
January	15	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
January	19	Monday	Martin Luther King Day	
January	20	Tuesday	Centennial Commemoration Steering Committee	7:00 PM
February	2	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
February	14	Saturday	Valentine's Day	
February	16	Monday	Presidents' Day	
February	17	Tuesday	Centennial Commemoration Steering Committee	7:00 PM
February	19	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
March	9	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
March	17	Tuesday	Centennial Commemoration Steering Committee	7:00 PM
March	19	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
March	21	Saturday	Sixth Session: What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian in..	5:30 PM
April	5	Sunday	Easter Sunday	
April	6	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
April	9	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
April	21	Tuesday	Centennial Commemoration Steering Committee	7:00 PM
April	24	Friday	Genocide Commemoration	7:00 PM
May	1,2,3		Festival of Nations	
May	4	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
May	10	Sunday	Mother's Day	
May	19	Tuesday	Centennial Commemoration Steering Committee	7:00 PM
May	21	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
May	25	Monday	Memorial Day	
May	30	Saturday	Music event Gnu Quartet	2:00 PM
June	1	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
June	18	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
June	21	Sunday	Father's Day	
July	3	Friday	Independence Day Holiday	
July	4	Saturday	Independence Day	
July	6	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
July	18	Saturday	ACOM Summer Adventure	2:00 PM
July	26	Sunday	How to get started in Armenian Genealogy and AFTER	1:00 PM
July			Movie Night	7:00 PM
August	9	Sunday	Andy Ylitalo's presentation on Armenia trip	1:00 PM
August	3	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
August	23	Sunday	ACOM Picnic	1:00 PM
September	7	Monday	Labor Day	
September	14	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
September	17	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
September	19	Saturday	Voski Ashoun - Armenian Play	5:00 PM
October	5	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
October	15	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
October	18	Sunday	What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian in .....	1:00 PM
November	2	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
November	7	Saturday	Cooking Class by Judy Ohanessian	10:00 AM
November	19	Thursday	ACOM Book Club	7:15 PM
November	26	Thursday	Thanksgiving Day	
November			Movie Night	7:00 PM
December	7	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM
December	25	Friday	Christmas Day	
<b>2016</b>				
January	2 or 9	Saturday	Gaghant - Barahantess	6:00 PM
January	4 or 16	Monday	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM



(Continued from page 1)

Also, look for us on Facebook, we have a group page for our ACOM Artisan Guide, you can find us and join in at this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/51568988491/> or do a Facebook search for the "Artisans Guild of the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota"



The hours of our exhibit will coincide with the hours of the Festival which are as follows:

#### Student and School Days:

Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

#### Days Open to the General Public:

Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 4:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

If you would like to volunteer in the demo booth, contact Janet BEFORE APRIL 15 at

[jrith@paulbunyan.net](mailto:jrith@paulbunyan.net)

- **Costumes** can be provided
- Any **Four Hour Shift** gets you a free ticket for the day

## Armenian Dance at the Festival

Members of the Armenian Dance Ensemble (ADE) are rehearsing two dances in preparation for the Festival of Nations this coming May.

The first dance that we will present is *Shalakho*. This is a well known energetic dance mostly done by men in Armenia. The ADE version was specifically choreographed for ADE by Ms. Seda Gelenian, a choreographer and dancer from Maryland, who taught our group her own choreography of *Shalakho*. Both ADE men and women are re-

learning this dance, and the music we are using is from Ayas, a band from Yerevan.

Our second dance was inspired by Sayat Nova's piece *Ashkharumus Imun Es Toon* that won the Armenia Music Award on April 6, 2014 at the Kremlin Palace in Moscow, Russia. Naïry Digris extracted some movements from the dance performance at the above Music Award, and also used traditional Armenian steps to compose a choreography original to ADE.

As we know, Sayat Nova was born in 1712 in Tbilisi, Georgia and died at the age of 83 in Haghpat, Persia. He is considered by many to be the greatest ashik (folk singer-songwriter) who ever lived in the Caucasus. He was skilled at writing poetry, singing and playing a variety of traditional instruments.

When you come to the Festival in May, and sit down in the World Stage to watch ADE (and other dance performances), pay special attention to the backdrop that is projected behind the Armenian dancers. Not only will it have a typical landscape scene from Armenia, but in honor of Sayat Nova, you will see his picture which was intentionally added on the left hand corner of the screen.



Below is the current ADE dance schedule for the weekend:

Friday May 1: 11a, 1p, 6p, 8p

Saturday May 2: 3p

Sunday May 3: 4p





Armenian Cultural Organization  
of Minnesota  
Culture, Heritage, History, Language

# ACOM MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

VALID THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2015

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_

STREET: \_\_\_\_\_ City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIP\***  
**MINNESOTA RESIDENTS ..... \$30.00**

☐ **OUT OF STATE ..... \$15.00**  
**(Newsletter Only)**

☐ **CONTRIBUTING ..... \$100.00**

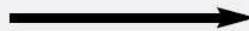
*\*Includes all members of one household*

Comments? \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO ACOM.**

☒ **COMPLETE THIS FORM and**

**RETURN IT WITH YOUR CHECK TO**



☒ **Nairy Digris, Treasurer**

**1703 Skillman Ave. W.  
Roseville MN 55113**

**We appreciate and count on your continued support.**

MinneHyeLites is distributed via EMAIL to those who request it. This saves ACOM considerable printing and mailing costs. If you'd like to receive your newsletter via email, just send your email address to [hyebar@yahoo.com](mailto:hyebar@yahoo.com)

1703 Skillman Avenue West

Roseville, MN 55113



Armenian Cultural Organization  
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*We're on the Web*

[www.mnarmenians.org](http://www.mnarmenians.org)