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Culture  
Heritage  
History  
Language

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota  
Established 1980

No. 153 Fall 2018

## MinneHyeLites

ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA  
PRESENTS

### 38th Annual Gaghanat New Year Celebration

Friday, January 11, 2019

6:00 p.m. Social Hour/Cocktails

7:00 p.m. Dinner

**Location:** MidPointe Event Center  
415 Pascal Street North  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Free parking in front of building  
next to the new Soccer Stadium!

**Featuring:**

Catered dinner by Mim's Café  
Armenian Dance Music by *Music Mundial*  
Dancing  
Silent Auction  
Cash Bar  
Kid's Games

Paid reservations due by: **December 15**

Please use the form on the next page to RSVP and pay  
your 2019 membership dues!

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



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ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA  
PRESENTS

# 38th Annual Gaghanat New Year Celebration

**RSVP form due December 15, 2018!**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**DINNER from Mim's Middle Eastern Café (includes):** Kufta, Falafel, Chicken, Salad, Rice Pilaf, Hummus, Bread, Pakhlava. Cash bar.

Quantity/Total

Adults **\$32 per person** \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children (5—10 years old) **\$10 per person** \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Children 5 and under **Free** \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 0

**Choose 2019 ACOM membership option\*:**

**Standard Family Membership\* \$35 per family --or--**

**Contributing Family Membership\* \$100 per family \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**\*This counts as a tax-deductible donation to a charity for tax purposes**

I/We would like to **donate** to help pay for the musical performance by Music Mundial \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Print and mail this completed form with your payment to ACOM **by December 15, 2018.**

Please make checks payable to Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota (ACOM).

Mailing address: Naïry Digris, ACOM President

1703 Skillman Avenue West

Roseville, MN 55113

For questions, contact: John @ 231-313-1612 or Naïry @ 651-639-9346

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

*Music Mundial* returns to play traditional and favorite Armenian dance music for your listening and dancing pleasure! The four-piece band includes violin, oud/guitar, accordion, and percussion.

No childcare will be available

No refunds after December 31, 2018

## Very Reverend Daniel Findikyan - Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church in America



The Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota wishes to congratulate Father Daniel on his elevation to Primate. We wish our new Primate all God's blessings and wisdom to lead us to more unity and progress for our Armenian Heritage.

Printed below are some notable points made by Father Daniel as reported by The Armenian Mirror Spectator:

### ***New Eastern Diocesan Primate Listening and Learning, Considering Reprioritization***

***June 14, 2018***

***by Aram Arkun in Mirror Spectator***

After detailing Father Daniel's path to where he is today, the author continued:

#### ***Historic Perspective on Armenian Church***

Findikyan confessed that in his first few months in office, he must spend much time listening and learning, for there are many aspects of the Diocesan operations with which he was not involved in the past. He will be meeting with staff at the Diocesan Center, the Diocesan Council, clergy, Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA), allied groups, and various parishes, after which, he said, he can begin to formulate more concrete ideas about how to change, improve and grow.

In a broad way, Findikyan said, he already does have a sense about what type of change is necessary. He said, "One thing is very clear to me...for a long, long time, for many good historical reasons, the Armenian Church was placed in a position of being all things to all Armenians, all things to all people. The Armenian Church was the only structure or entity of the Armenian people that had a global reach. Quite naturally, especially during horrific circumstances like the Genocide, and in other circumstances as well, the Armenians looked to the church for everything, not just for spiritual sustenance but for education and culture...and now of course we live in a different world."

He pointed out that there is the government of the Republic of Armenia and all sorts of Armenian organizations with a global reach now, and concluded, "It is time for the Armenian Church to be a church, to focus its mission on that which has been uniquely given to the Church to achieve, which is the Gospel, cultivating God's people, God's children, building up the Body of Christ...these are the kinds of imperatives uniquely entrusted to the Church and to no one else." If the Armenian Church does not do this, he said, these things won't get done, and, he said, "We will betray what we are at its most sacred center, or, they will be done by other people...and that is not

acceptable. I am the Primate of the Diocese. I have gone over the books. We don't have the resources, neither human nor financial nor spatial, to do everything to which the Armenian people aspire. There are others who can do that work, nation-building and so forth, who are much better equipped, both financially and otherwise, to undertake those kinds of missions."

This approach if followed to its logical conclusion will lead to many changes. He said, "This has very tangible consequences, which in time we will have to consider. We will have to trim the way we do things...We are not going to do some of the things this Diocese has traditionally done." This will be a reprioritization.

The authored continued with Father Daniel's perspective on the Armenian Church in the present century:

#### ***Uniquely Armenian Christianity***

There is also much to be optimistic about in the present situation. Findikyan said, "I believe that the Christian way of life that is uniquely Armenian, for which our ancestors have given their blood, is a very good path .... My goal always has been as a priest, a vartabed, and now, as a Primate, to inspire our people with what is in their blood: it is world class, second to none." This tradition must be studied and articulated, or rather translated into the categories of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, he said.

The first step is to "excavate" it, as it is all in Classical Armenian. The St. Nersess Seminary and the Zohrab Center can play a part in this, and education must be fostered, he said, at all levels, age groups and demographics.

He said that he was not convinced that the old model of education, with Saturday and Sunday schools, inherited from 75 years ago, is effective, while an artificial distinction has been created between Armenian Christian and cultural heritage. "We face grave problems with the Christian formation of our kids and the creation of a generation that can speak or read Armenian," he declared. "This all has to be reviewed very carefully and very soberly and courageously, because to disrupt what we have been doing for decades is risky business."

One option, he thought, might be to raise money to send the youth to Armenia, Lebanon or Jerusalem, but this was a conversation for the broader community to hold. When asked about the possibility of the Eastern Diocese running Armenian schools, he responded that "the question will be, does this fall within the unique prerogative and privilege of the Church, or are there others who can do it better than we can?" Running schools, he said, is not an easy task and the financial costs are great, while there are other bodies like the Armenian General Benevolent Union that are already doing this very well, or the American University of Armenia with its language immersion programs. Consequently, he said, "we have to have the courage to think critically and very objectively to make sure that... we find the best means to do it."

The following is a [Link to Full Article](#)

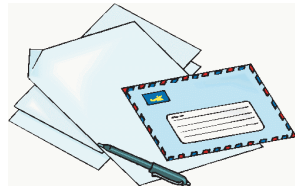




**ACOM WEBSITE**

Remember to continue to check our website:

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

**THANK YOU**

Just now read through the latest newsletter #152--WOW! Lots of great, illuminating articles, wonderful layout (I'm very happy with it, and I don't think it needs any sprucing up).

Thanks for the WONDERFUL fruit basket! I ate everything up (except for the granola bars--saving for my nephew/nieces) with my mom and it was EXACTLY what I was craving.

The mango and pears were especially juicy and sweet. Shad shnorhagalem!

**Kassian Vaubel**

Dear ACOM

Thank you for the kind donation to our education fund.

**Lucy and Max Charchian**

Dear Friends at ACOM Executive Committee,

I was very touched to receive your beautiful flower arrangement. Thank you.

Van started and established the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota with a handful of very dedicated people. Van would have been very proud of you for your persistence and hard work to keep ACOM alive, and promoting and keeping our culture alive.

Good luck and God bless you.

Fondly,

**Vali Kardashian**

Recovering at home and greeted with a very artistically done bouquet of fall color flowers. Itching to get back to my daily routines! Thanks all for the flowers and sunshine. Best to all,

**Tom Keljik**

I did receive the beautiful flowers....Viguen and I both appreciated it SO much....love to all...

**Patty Kardashian**

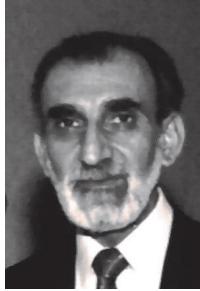
**SYMPATHY**

Our prayers go to Christine Samuelian and Talene Barreto on the loss of TALENE's FATHER..

**RACHEL CHARCHIAN**

ACOM members were very saddened to learn of Ruth and Aram Charchian's daughter-in-law, Rachel's passing on July 24, 2018. After a 13-month battle with AML, Rachel passed into the presence of her loving Savior Jesus Christ, surrounded by 14 family members and Pastor Toby. She is survived by devoted husband, Sam; children, Max and Lucy; parents, Rich and Rose Ann Meier, EP; brothers, Kurt (Kristin), Prosper, TX, Marc (Molly), Blue Earth, MN; parents-in-law Aram and Ruth Charchian, EP; brother-in-law, Paul (Roxie), Plymouth; also nephews, Mason, Matthew,

Coleman, Caleb Meier; nieces, Shawna Gower, Elsa Meier, Audrey Charchian; godparents, Jerry & Lynn (Brendle) Stellick, Tyler, TX; uncle, Mark (Susan) Brendle, LaCrosse, WI; aunts, Jean Meier Hanson, LaCrosse, WI, Jeanette Meier (Ted) Reece, Madison, WI; cousins, Renee Urban, Dan Breidel, Wayne Hanson, Kirsten Stellick, Jeff Stellick. Rachel was a graduate of Bloomington Jefferson HS and St. Olaf College and an employee of Cigna. In lieu of flowers, donations for the children's education may be directed via paypal to [scharchian@hotmail.com](mailto:scharchian@hotmail.com) or by check to the family.

**TOM ABRAHAMIAN**

Long time ACOM friend, Committee Member and supporter, Tom Abrahamian, passed away Friday morning, July 27, 2018. He had been ill for a long time. ACOM extends its sympathy to Tom's wife Virginia, children Todd, and sister Viola Abrahamian Reimers and niece Cynthia Reimers Erickson and family.

Thomas Abrahamian, born January 7th, 1929, formerly of Jamestown, ND passed away on July 27, 2018. Tom graduated from the University of North Dakota and moved to Minneapolis to begin his career as an accountant from 1957 until retiring in December of 2012. Tom was a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church and that's where he met and his wife, Virginia Pufahl on November 18, 1961. He was an active member in the church and served as deacon. Tom enjoyed fishing, baseball, a smart joke, and a good cup of coffee.

Tom is survived by his wife Virginia, daughter Lisa, and son Todd; sisters Viola Reimers, Margaret Rogers, Helen Eva Holmes, and Catherine (Dan) Igielski. Tom was preceded in death by his mother Katherine, father Melkon, brother Hovanness; and sisters Martha, Mary Ann 'Susie' Kerner, and Alice Gregory.

Funeral preparations were provided by Washburn McReavy and Memorial services were held on May 11, 2019 at 10am at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1200 Marquette Ave. Mpls. MN 55403. This is where Tom and his wife Virginia first met and later married. The whole family grew up there. This was their home and still is, and encompasses a large part of several communities whom they met over the years. Tom and Virginia embraced this place and all their friends from different faiths and backgrounds.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Westminster Presbyterian Church, Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Research, or the Volunteers of America.

**ARMINÉ BOYADJIAN**

We regretfully share the news of the passing of another long time ACOM member, ARMINE BOYADJIAN.

Arminé died peacefully on July 22, 2018 at the age of 90. She was preceded in death by her father and mother, Edward and Araxy Boyadjian. A native of Minneapolis, Arminé graduated from Washburn High School in 1945 and received a B.A. from the University of Minnesota in 1951. Arminé worked as a secretary for a number of companies throughout her career; Dayton Hudson's, the

(Continued on page 5)

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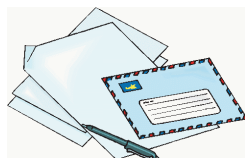
Department of the Navy, Midwest Federal, Westminster Presbyterian Church and the Minneapolis Athletic Club. Private burial at Lakewood Cemetery, memorials preferred to donor's choice.

#### HRATCH BERBERIAN

ACOM extends its sympathy to Shoghig Berberian and her family on the loss of her father, HRATCH BERBERIAN who passed away on August 15, 2018 in Richfield, MN. Hratch Berberian graduated with a Master of Music degree from the Boston Conservatory. Hratch performed and toured with the Boston Pops Orchestra. From 1967 to 1996 Hratch served as Professor of Music at South Dakota State University in Brookings

#### CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER

It is with deep sadness that ACOM announces the passing of Christopher Plummer, Elizabeth Plummer's beloved brother. Chris had been ill for a very long time and we share Elizabeth's sorrow and offer her our sincere condolences and prayers.



#### ROBERT PETERSON

Condolences to Art Kourajian and his family on the passing of his brother-in-law, Art's sister Helen's husband, Robert Sherwood "Pete" Peterson.

Robert Peterson passed away peacefully at 91 years of age on 9/6/2018 in Minneapolis. Bob was born in North Dakota on May 21, 1927. He joined the US Navy in August of 1944 at 17 years old and served as an electrician's mate in the Pacific theatre.

Living a life of dedication to his beloved wife of 71 years, Helen Kourajian, and the activities of his three sons, Bob purchased a home in Tonka Bay, moving to Lake Minnetonka in 1963. When the boys left home, Bob and Helen devoted vacation time to travel. When Bob retired at 55, in 1982, they began wintering in Mesa, Arizona, before returning full time to the Twin Cities in 2013 to be near their family.

Public Visitation was held at Huber Funeral Home in Excelsior Minnesota on Tuesday September 11, with private interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery, on Wednesday, September 12. Robert was proud of his Naval Service, and the family prefers, in lieu of flowers, any memorials to your local Veterans Administration.

### ACOM Current Events Calendar—November-January

Date	Time	Place	Event
11/10 - Sat	7:00 PM	Digris/McGibbon's home	Cinema Saturday
11/12 - Sat	5:30 PM	Mim's Café	Board Meeting
11/13 - Tue	6:30 PM	The Waters—Highland Park	ADE Performance
11/15 - Thu	7:00 PM	TBD	ACOM Book Club
11/25 - Sun	1:00 PM	Ukrainian-American Center—Mpls.	ADE Performance
12/8 - Sat	7:00 pm	Digris/McGibbon's home	Cinema Saturday
12/10 - Mon	5:30 PM	Merriam Park Library	Board Meeting
12/20 - Thu	7:00 PM	TBD	ACOM Book Club
1/11/2019 - Fri	6:00 PM	MidPointe Event Center—St. Paul	Annual Gaghand/Barahantess Party

### Napoleon's Bodyguard was Armenian

Roustam Raza (1783-1845) was a Tiflis-born Armenian who was kidnapped at the age of thirteen and sold into slavery in Egypt. Sheikh Al-Bakri, Cairo's commander-in-chief, presented Roustam to Napoleon. He served Napoleon as a bodyguard and valet until 1814. His posthumously published memoirs (1888) chronicled his years with Napoleon.



# Armenian Dance Ensemble of Minnesota

If you have in interest in Armenian dance, if you have danced in the past, or have never danced but really would like to learn and participate, this would be a good time to give it a try. All the dances are taught, and costumes provided. It is a volunteer activity and we only ask for your time commitment. Rehearsals are typically held on Sundays at 1:00 pm in Roseville. Remember: you do not need to be Armenian to become a member of the dance group, just a desire to learn and enjoy Armenian music and dance.

**Note:** if you wish to perform with the group, you need to purchase your own “character shoes” and be ready to wear makeup and perform without eyeglasses.

For additional information, call Naïry:

651-639-9346 or email: hyebar@yahoo.com



The Armenian Dance Ensemble has been representing Armenian Culture through Dance and Music for over 25 years. Our performances cover a range of Armenian Historic and Modern dances and always include some background narrative on Armenia. This last year the group has performed in many venues—from Festival of Nations and MN State Fair (our largest shows) to smaller gatherings at community centers, senior residences, nursing homes, outdoor parks and church Festivals. Our group continues its work on promoting Armenian Culture through music and dance in our larger Twin Cities community.



ADE at St SAHAG FESTIVAL Sept. 15, 2018

Thank you for dancing at the festival. Your group is wonderful, I am so impressed. I also got to hear you speak about the costumes, which just keep getting better and better.

Judy O.

Thank you for coming with your beautiful new costumes! It adds so much to have your talents and professionalism on our stage every year! It means a lot to ALL of us at Saint Sahag!

Michele B.A.



ADE at the 2018 MN State Fair



ADE PERFORMANCES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

*Comments from audience members after our performances:*

Thank you so much for coming and performing. The music and dancing were awesome! Come again soon.

Your music and dancing was so mesmerizing that I forgot all about myself....

## FEARLESS MOVERS

ACOM items we have in storage needed to be moved to a new storage facility. This move, through the efforts of our intrepid crew, was accomplished in just a few hours.

A great big THANK YOU to the “crew”.





# VOSKI ASHOUN (GOLDEN AUTUMN)



## Jewelry, Weapons and Gods: The Story of Urartu, The Land of Ararat.



Dr. Chuck Hajinian, co-founder of the Armenian Numismatic and Antiquities Society, presented a talk on artifacts from Urartu at ACOM's Voski Ashoun celebration. The presentation covered a brief overview of the late-bronze age Urartian state as well as the symbolism and iconography found on the silver and bronze pieces on display. All

of the pieces on display were dated between 1500-900 BC, and were found in modern day Armenia.

The collection included jewelry, such as a necklace made up of carnelian, bone, cowry shells and turquoise pieces dating from 11th-10th century BC. The Urartians were known for their metal work, and on display were copper bronze pieces with fine hammered out images of their zoomorphic animals and gods, dating to the 6th and 7th century BC. Speaking of gods, there was a silver plaque on display dating from early 9-8th century BC that



URARTU NECKLACE  
Carnelian, Bone, Turquoise  
Circa 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Century BC



featured the Urartian war god Haldi, their chief god. Also on display was an array of weapons that date from 1500 BC, pre-dating Urartu according to the Armenian Ministry of Cultural Affairs which helped identify and date the items.

Dr. Hajinian touched on the importance of these artifacts in our shared Armenian heritage, proving the Armenians have ancient roots around Mount Ararat, and that many of our cultural artifacts were lost due to the Genocide. He also pointed out that these artifacts were proof that the Armenians were living (and going to war) around the same time Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments.

There was much discussion during and after the talk, and we all enjoyed the wine and cheese refreshments in the atmosphere of the Keljik Rug Store. Much thanks to the Keljiks and ACOM for the hospitality.



Pre-Urartian  
Weapons



Keljik Oriental Rugs  
A perfect setting for Dr. Hajinian's presentation



Detail view of Silver Plaque  
Haldi and Arubani depicted



## Charles Aznavour, the 'Frank Sinatra of France', dies aged 94



*From the Story printed in The Guardian Mon 1 Oct 2018*

*By: Ben Beaumont-Thomas in London and Kim Willsher in Paris*

The French singer Charles Aznavour – often hailed as his country's Frank Sinatra – has died at the age of 94.

Aznavour, who was born Shahnour Varinag Aznavourian in Paris to Armenian parents, sold more than 100m records in 80 countries and had about 1,400 songs to his name, including 1,300 he wrote himself. He was sometimes described as the French Sinatra because of his stirring, melancholic style.

He left school aged nine to become a child actor and went on to have a successful parallel acting career, most notably appearing in François Truffaut's new-wave classic *Tirez Sur le Pianiste* (Shoot the Piano Player), Claude Chabrol's *Les Fantômes du Chapelier* (The Hatter's Ghost), and the 1979 Oscar-winning film adaptation of Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*.

His singing career was forged in occupied Paris during the second world war, performing in cabarets as his parents secretly worked with the resistance, hiding Jews, communists and others in their apartment. "French is my working language but my family language is always Armenian," he said in 2017.

Aznavour opened for Édith Piaf at the Moulin Rouge and the popular singer was an early adviser – and flatmate. "I brought her my youth, my madness; she loved my whole jazzy side," [he told the Guardian in 2015](#). She advised him to have a nose job, only to declare, "I preferred you before" after the surgery.

He is one of the most celebrated exponents of the French "chanson" form – easy-listening songs with vivid lyrics, rich in storytelling, emotion and humour. One early song, 1955's *Après l'Amour*, was banned on French radio for its depiction of a couple basking in post-coital happiness. 1972's *What Makes a Man*, meanwhile, is sung in the persona of a gay man who faces down homophobia to declare: "Nobody has the right to be the judge of what is right for me." He became perhaps best known for his gloomier numbers – the director Jean Cocteau once quipped: "Before Aznavour, despair was unpopular."

His biggest hit in English was *She*, a 1974 romantic ballad in which Aznavour confronts the equal joy and strife in a relationship, nevertheless declaring "the meaning of my life is she". It spent four weeks at No 1 in the UK singles chart, and was

also recorded in French, German, Italian and Spanish. The song got a second lease of life when it was covered by Elvis Costello for the soundtrack to the 1999 film *Notting Hill*, reaching No. 19 in the UK. Aznavour's only other solo hit in the UK was with *The Old Fashioned Way*, which reached the top 40 in 1973.

Over the years he recorded duets with the likes of Sinatra, Elton John, Céline Dion, Bryan Ferry and Sting, as well as the classical tenors Luciano Pavarotti and Plácido Domingo. In 2010, he recorded *Un Geste pour Haïti Chérie*, a song with young French rap stars, to help raise money after that year's devastating earthquake in Haïti.

Another singing partner was Liza Minnelli, with whom he also had a brief love affair, telling the Telegraph [in 2014](#): "She learned from me. She says that herself – or else I would have shut my mouth!"

The French president, Emmanuel Macron, tweeted: "Charles Aznavour was profoundly French, deeply attached to his Armenian roots and known throughout the world. He has accompanied the joys and pain of three generations. His masterpieces, the tone of his voice, his unique radiance will long survive him."

In a second tweet, Macron said he had invited Aznavour to sing at the Francophonie Summit, on 11-12 October in the Armenian capital, Yerevan.

"We share with the Armenian people the mourning of the French people," the president added.

Renaud Muselier, the president of the Provence region of Southeast [France](#) where Aznavour was living at the time he died, said: "French culture has lost one of its greatest. He has left us a priceless body of work rich with more than 1,200 songs. A generous and charismatic singer, he leaves an immense emptiness."

France TV described him as the "last giant of French song" and said his death had left it "orphaned by its doyen and most illustrious ambassador".

The former French president François Hollande tweeted: "Charles Aznavour has just said adieu, but for us he will always be on stage."

Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, tweeted that Aznavour was "A Parisien who became a true icon of French song and a passionate ambassador for Armenia around the world."

At the unveiling of Aznavour's star on the Hollywood walk of fame in 2017, director Peter Bogdanovich said: "Sinatra once said every song is a one-act play with one character and Charles is an extraordinary actor as well as an extraordinary singer."

Aznavour's last interview was broadcast on French television on Friday evening. In it he said he "would die" if he could no longer work.

"Me, I cannot not live and I live on stage. I'm happy on stage and that's obvious," he said. He added: "My sister and I decided we're going to pass 100 years. It's on record. She doesn't have the right to go back on it and neither do I."





## REV. HARRY H. MAGHAKIAN A FAREWELL

Reprinted from People Incorporated's newsletter, *In Touch* Summer 2018

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of the Reverend Harry H. Maghakian on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.

In 1969, Mr. Maghakian founded People Incorporated when he noticed a residence next to his church was sheltering a number of otherwise homeless men. Many were veterans and it was clear that several were masking symptoms of a mental illness with alcohol or drugs. Mr. Maghakian's congregation began to offer those men a place in their church to come for coffee and snacks, and soon this grew to Thanksgiving, holiday meals and other special occasions. At the time there were few organizations in the Twin Cities serving people with mental illness, and Mr. Maghakian's church soon joined with five other congregations to found an organization that eventually became known as People Incorporated.

Mr. Maghakian, an honorably retired teaching elder, was ordained in 1962 after attending McCormick Theological Seminary. He served as pastor to Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church in St. Paul from 1962 to 1974 and was instrumental in creating Liberty Plaza, an affordable housing development. From there, he transferred to the Presbytery of Detroit where he was the Associate Executive Presbyterian until 1979. Mr. Maghakian then transferred back to the Twin Cities Area and served at Valley Community Church, Golden Valley from 1979 until his retirement in 1990. In 1993 Harry came out of retirement and served at Andrew Riverside Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis until 2014.

Mr. Maghakian was living in Minnetonka at the time of his death and is survived by his wife Judy, son Reverend David, daughter Sally, four grandchildren and one great grandchild. A memorial service was held on June 9th at the New Life Presbyterian Church in Roseville, MN. It is requested by the Maghakian family that all memorials be made to People Incorporated



REV. HARRY H. MAGHAKIAN WITH HIS WIFE JUDY AT THE GRATITUDE EVENT

## AN ARMENIAN JOURNEY: SACRIFICE AND COURAGE

Written by: Dick Koch (Nish and Ann called me Dickran)

She was born Ankena Oghegian in 1912 in Ag, Turkey in Eastern Anatolia. In 1902, he was born Nishan Jamgotchian in Harput, Turkey, also in Eastern Anatolia. They were to be married years later in Chicago, Illinois. This is their story:

Ankena (Ann) moved to Istanbul in early childhood with her mother and 4 siblings to escape Anatolia. Her father had been sought by the Army, had hidden in a well, and died of pneumonia. After the older brother Martin left for the U.S., Ann, her two sisters Satanig and Lucy, brother Krekor, and mother Ozniv left when Ann was about 12 years old. The mother bribed Turkish officials in Istanbul and ship officers with the jewelry she had under her dress, and they sailed to Marseilles, France, the Canary Islands, and finally to Cuba. After 3 years in Cuba where allegedly the girls "married" U.S. citizens, the family sailed to Tampa. With financial help from Brother Martin, the family took the train to Chicago. Ann sought a rug repair job at Nahigian Oriental Rug Store and got it after she would repair one of the Owner's rugs for free. He hired her when he could not even find the repair.

Nish had a tougher childhood in Harput where the Turkish cruelty was prevalent. He talked little about his experiences, and escaped to the U.S. with financial help and mentoring from his Uncle B. A. Keljik.

B.A. Keljik had a successful rug business in Minneapolis, Minnesota (featured in a Minneapolis Star Tribune article March 25, 2018). As a teenager, Nish would wash rugs and deliver small ones on the streetcar. He eventually had his own store on Hennepin Avenue and made many buying trips to Chicago. At age 28, he met an 18 year old beautiful Armenian girl (Hai Aghchik) and proposed to Ann with a ring supplied by B.A. Keljik's diamond stickpin. This was 1930. Nish and Ann went to Minneapolis and rented a home in the Linden Hills area.

They eventually moved "around the corner" to a purchased home two blocks from Lake Harriet. They had 5 children Nish, Suzanne, Diane (my wife of 58 years) Priscilla (deceased 2005) and Carol. Ann had her hands full and did rug repair at Home. Nish spent long hours at his oriental rug store but still had time for a huge garden, and Ann canned tomatoes, cukes, etc. for her large family. The children all walked a block to Lake Harriet Elementary, and graduated from Southwest High School.

Nish was also very inventive and devised many hair products and new system for washing carpets. He called it STA-TWIST, and eliminated harsh rotary brushes and instead used deep cleaning solvents, vacuums, and huge

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

drying fans which he put on an old Greyhound Bus.

Nish's other pursuit was fishing at Lake Minnetonka with his buddy Chris Legaros of the Rainbow Restaurant fame. Nish was also a self-taught mandolin and banjo player. The best memory of the children was after dinner he would strum old country music while the children danced followed by everyone singing "You Are My Sunshine".

After a successful, loving life, and 43 years of marriage, Nish died in 1975,



Back – Nish Jr., Nish, his Mother  
Haropsamay  
Front Row L to R  
Diane, Suzanne, Ann, Baby Carol,  
Priscilla

age 73, and Ann died 1985 also at age 73. The children still remember after Sunday school at St. John's Episcopal Church going home to a huge dinner, and after words playing an Armenian card game with love overflowing.

They had 2 Grandsons (Adam Kourajian and Kris Koch) 2 Granddaughters (Kim Koch and Lucia Lindholm) and 2 Great-granddaughters, (Khloe Koch and Ayla Priscilla Kourajian). Diane Jamgotch and I married in 1960, and I was honored to be a part of such a wonderful and cultured family. Thank you Nish and Ann for your love and marvelous story.

## FIRST IN A SERIES

### *What is it like being Married to an Armenian*

*By: Bradley Erickson with introduction by Editor*

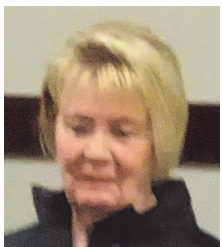
Following a very successful 10 session run, ACOM decided to change this panel-based format to include a new perspective — Odars married to Armenians.



The first session of this series was held on September 30th at 1 pm in the lower conference room of the Merriam Park Library. Panelists for this first session were; Ruth Charchian

(Aram Charchian), Terry McGibbon (Nairy Digris), and Jennifer Collins (Tom Keljik). Moderating the panel was John Parker-der Boghossian.

The format was similar to the original series where the panelists were asked a series of questions about their own lives and their experiences being married to an Armenian.



**RUTH CHARCHIAN** – Married to Aram for 54 years. Knew nothing of Armenian identity before meeting Aram, and was surprised that Armenian identity meant so much to Armenians. Only Armenian she'd heard of before Aram was on Johnny Carson. She valiantly tried to convince Aram to take her name upon marriage, but he wouldn't become Aram West.

She had Scotch/German heritage, but didn't feel a connection to those national identities. She observed from her mother- and father-in-law exactly how strongly Armenians value their Armenian identity. She also learned about an old Armenian raisin poultice when her young son

had an infection, and this episode helped her to trust and accept the ways of the Armenian people. She learned also the historical significance of the Armenian people that resulted in the Genocide rather than them just assimilating into the Ottoman Empire.

The one thing she hates the most about the Armenian culture is how patriarchal it is. Aram once stated "Get me a peach," and she knew she had to correct that flaw right away. What she has learned to like about Armenians is that they always seek out other Armenians, often helped by the "-ian" at the end of the last name. Armenians are always welcoming to other Armenians.



**TERRY MCGIBBON** – Married to Nairy Digris for 22 years. Only knowledge of Armenians was the phrase "Remember the starving Armenians." Terry Grew up with a Catholic identity, in a community including Irish people, though he personally has Scottish, Irish, English, French, Czech, and German heritage.

Considers himself an ABC. Terry strongly dove into folk dancing, and experienced, through that, a wide variety of cultures. He met Nairy at folkdancing, and dove into the deep end of the Armenian culture, learning about culture, food, dance, and music. He gets told that he's "More Armenian" than Armenians. The number one thing he's learned about Armenians is that they are fiercely Armenian, and he finds that it's likely tied to the national conversion to Christianity that occurred in 301

(Continued on page 11)



(Continued from page 10)

AD.

One thing he finds surprising in the Armenian community is that when conversing, Armenians look like they are in serious confrontation getting louder and more animated, but then they sometimes break out in laughter. He has observed that this is similar with other Eastern European cultures. Another thing he's noticed is that the first thing you hear at the door is "Can I get you something to eat?". What he likes the most is the natural hospitality, general warmth, cultural pride, and the food. He is a happy and satisfied ABC. Although he has not switched his Christmas from 12/25 to 1/6 (since his wife is also Catholic), as a bonus, he is allowed to extend Christmas to a full 12 days of celebrations.



**JENNIFER COLLINS** – Married to Tom Keljik for 16 years. She knew nearly nothing of Armenians before meeting Tom. She grew up in an ethnically homogenous community, and first encountered Armenian culture in

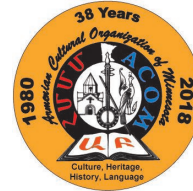
grad school in Chicago, when an Armenian technologist took her to Sayat Nova and she tried things like tabouli and hummos. She has Swedish and Irish heritages, and didn't have much connection besides Swedish Meatballs and St Patrick's day.

The number one thing she's learned about the Armenian community is how pivotal the Genocide is to the Armenian community. One thing she dislikes about Armenian culture (or maybe just Tom) is the need to find the Armenian connection in everything: baseball, movies, school. If the identity isn't so focused, then maybe we'd all get along. She likes how the community is very welcoming. She also likes Armenian time and that Armenians always like wine.



## 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.

Aside from monthly "open" board meetings, ACOM's numerous cultural and social events include:

Armenian dance parties (barahantess), guest speakers, folk dance lessons and performances by the Armenian Dance Ensemble of Minnesota, monthly book club meetings and Cinema Saturday shows, chamber music concerts, art shows, cooking classes, pool parties and summer picnics, and panel discussion series about local Armenians and "Odar" spouses. 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.

Most ACOM activities are held in St. Paul Public Libraries, at Keljik's Rugstore, or in people's homes. 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 MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

Valid January 1 to December 31, 2018

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

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


☐ Household Membership ..... \$35.00  
*Includes all members of one household*


☐ Out Of State..... \$15.00  
(Newsletter Only)

☐ Contributing..... \$100.00

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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 Complete this form and  
Return it with your check to



Nairy Digris  
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Roseville, MN 55113

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**We're on the Web**

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