



Culture
Heritage
History
Language

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota
Established 1980

No. 138 Spring 2014

MinneHyeLites

2014 Festival of Nations

May 1,2,3,4 2014

This year's annual Minnesota state Festival of Nations will be held in St Paul at the Xcel Center from May 1-4 . The theme for this year's Festival is "Peace among the Peoples." As in past years, in addition to the participation of the Armenian dance troupe in the Festival performance schedules of all four days, the Armenians will have an educational folk art display in the artisan demo section of the Festival Marketplace and Bazaar.

Every year for the past 6 years, ACOM members and friends have helped educate the public about various aspects of the Armenian silk arts and folk designs, and the Armenian role in the Silk Road trade route. Last year's Festival theme was an event-wide focus on children; and for the Armenian exhibit, Judy Ohannesian and Janet Rith-Najarian kept to the theme by creating an exhibit of Armenian dolls dressed in a variety of regional Armenian folk costumes festooned with traditional Armenian silk designs and ribbons. In addition, the exhibit featured live silk worms in various stages of their life cycle, displays of dying and weaving techniques, and an array of hand dyed silk neck scarves for sale. This year, in addition to neck scarves, we will also have larger head scarves available for sale, due to requests from last year's Persian, Palestinian, and other Muslim visitors to our booth, as well for the benefit of other ethnic Orthodox Christians who might like them to wear at church.

Given the Festival theme of "Peace Among the Peoples," our exhibit will feature a look at the varieties of ways women might wear scarves in the Middle East, as well as the common designs and aspects of silk decoration that have come about from Armenia's historic economic trade and exchange of ideas with its neighbors, including the diffusion of natural dyes, block printing with pear wood, silk marbling, and paisley and geometric patterns. Janet and Steve Rith-Najarian and Judy Ohannesian will again take part in staffing the exhibit, but we would love to have the involvement of other ACOM members. Even if



you have never helped at our booth before, nor attended any of our past folk art or silk art workshops, we still welcome your participation to help explain the exhibits, to show off our live silkworms, and to help with scarf sales.

We will be doing some demonstrations of silk painting and printing, and you can also try your hand at that yourself via "on-the-job-training" during quiet moments in the booth!

Costumes will be provided, unless you have one of your own you would like to wear. We are looking for people to sign up for four hour shifts during the Festival hours, for which you will receive a complimentary Festival ticket good for admission to all other Festival events

for the rest of the day. In addition, you will get to share in the proud mission of educating thousands of guests about Armenian history and heritage! (yes, we do get questions such as, "But Armenia no longer exists, right?" or, "Are Armenians Muslim or Jewish?" or, "Is Armenia on the Baltic Sea?") At least ten thousand visitors come to the Festival each day every year, so this is a great opportunity to educate; in addition, the Festival Education staff has contacted us and asked to videotape our display and demo this year, as they have received so many positive comments from teachers and other visitors in the past who I have enjoyed and learned much from our educational outreach. This videotape will be distributed to classrooms around the state, so we are pretty excited!

If you are interested in taking part in our booth this year, please note that there will be no additional pre-festival workshops this year, but you can sign up to help in

the booth anytime May 1-4. The schedule on Thursday May 1 is 9-3, and is primarily for school groups; from 10-3 for school groups on Friday, May 2, then from 4 to 10 that same day for the general public; from 10 am to 10 pm on Saturday May 3, and from 11 am to 6 pm on Sunday May 4. If you would like to participate, or have further questions, please contact Janet at JRith@paulbunyan.net



From our readers

ACOM Annual Report 2013

An excellent report. I read the whole thing and the hard work you and the committee have done to keep the ACOM light burning brighter. Mashalla!

Francis Bulbulian

ACOM Annual Report 2013

Thank you for the thorough and comprehensive report along with all the effort you all put into ACOM

Marty Meketarian

Dear ACOM Friends,

Many, many thanks for the lovely floral arrangement that you sent to me at the time of my surgery. It meant a great deal to me to be remembered by my Armenian community. I am doing well, with treatments planned for January, and a hopeful prognosis.

Warmly,

Jim Gertmenian

To All ACOM members,

A Great Big Thank You for a wonderful fruit basket.

Aida Yaghsejian



Our Sympathy

Sona Plummer passed away on March 12, 2014, after a long illness. Funeral arrangements are not yet finalized but they will be shared with you as soon as they are known. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers.

A memorial service for **Alice A. Tashjian** was held Monday, February 17 at St. Sahag Armenian Church on 203 N Howell St, in St Paul, MN. There was a church service at 11:00 AM, followed by lunch and a memorial fellowship at 1:00 PM.

Ann Florence Arzoomainian Martinson

age 88, of Mpls, went home to Jesus on June 5, 2013. Survived by many family and friends. Preceded by husband, Win Martinson and daughter, Susan Miner. Service was Wednesday, Aug. 28 at 11 AM, at North United Methodist Church, 4350 Fremont Ave. N., Mpls. Luncheon followed.

Published on August 26, 2013 Mpls Star Tribune

Margaret Thomassian Johnson

Age 90 Of St. Paul passed away February 7, 2014. US Naval Veteran of WWII (WAVES). Preceded in death by husband, Robert; daughter, Janet (Johnson) White. Survived by children, Andrea (Lowell) Johnson, Mark (Kathleen) Johnson and Marcia Johnson; grandchildren, Molly (Nash), Nicholas, Andrew (Kristin) and Robin (Michael); other relatives and friends. Devoted to her fam-

To ACOM,

Thank you for the kind thoughts and wishes for my recent surgery. We have all enjoyed the food basket! I am on the mend!

Judy Ohannesian

I thought it was a very successful party (Gaghant January 4th). Happy & Healthy New Year.

Jasmine Keller

When ACOM learned that Margaret Johnson was not doing well, a potted orchid plant was sent to her to cheer her up. She sent ACOM the sweetest Thank You card on February 3rd, and it reads: "A simple act of kindness has a beauty all of its own. Only you could have done something so special. Thank you. Margaret." We will always remember her smile and pleasant personality.

"The beautiful orchid that ACOM sent is beautiful and brightened her days. She just loved orchids. Thank you."

Andrea Johnson

Margaret Johnson's daughter

ily and extraordinarily courageous facing cancer, she will be dearly missed.

Congratulations

to **Mariam (Khachatryan)** and **Edwin Galoustian** on the arrival of their first baby boy, Alek, on January 10, 2014. He weighed 7 lbs 1.8 oz and measured 22.5 inches at birth. Our most heartfelt wishes to Mariam, Edwin, Grandma Astghik, Grandpa Stepan, Uncle Harut and Aunt Jackie. ACOM wishes the entire family good health and happiness, and a baby who sleeps long nights.....

to **Rev. and Mrs. James Gertmenian** on the birth of their new granddaughter (in California)

Get Well Wishes

Seda Bagdasarova Our most heartfelt wishes and sincere prayers for a speedy and full recovery.

Marty Meketarian had knee surgery on December 17, went home to recover and is doing very well. Surgery went very well, says Marty. It is good to see you up and around, Marty.

Speedy recovery wishes to **Judy Ohannesian** who had artherosopic knee surgery on December 20th. She took some time to recover and if you see her walk, you cannot even tell she had surgery !

ACOM STARTS A BOOK CLUB

We held the first meeting of the ACOM Book Club on Saturday evening, February 8th, 2014, in the parlor of St. Sahag Armenian church in St. Paul. Attending were Leroy and Cynthia Erickson, Andrea Johnson, and Azad and Karen Mesrobian. Hank Manthei arrived later on. Others expressing an interest in the club but not able to attend were Gloria Faust, Tom Keljik, Peter Hajinian, Francis Bulbulian, Joan Poritsky and Lynne Gildensoph. Peggy Merjanian will not be able to attend the meetings due to a minor problem of geography, but indicated ahead of time that she would like to hear about what books we read and discuss.

Andrea and Karen both described how the book clubs that they are currently members of work. Both clubs meet once a month. Andrea's meets all 12 months of the year, while Karen's skips 3 summer months and December. In each of them, they pick one book each month to read, and then discuss it at the following meeting with the person who suggested the book leading the discussion.

We decided that the ACOM Book Club would meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month at 7PM at St. Sahag. For now, we'll plan on skipping June, July, August and December. All of this can be changed once the club gets fully rolling.

We spent a long time talking about various books. Some of those mentioned were My Brother's Keeper, The Bastards of Istanbul, Passages to Ararat, The Road To Home, various Taner Akçam and Peter Balakian books,

Tom Mooradian's "The Repatriate", Clarence Usher's "An American Physician in Turkey" and Alice Tashjian's "Silence".

For next month's meeting we'll read and discuss Chris Bohjalian's "The Sandcastle Girls". For the following month, the current plan is to read Henri Verneuil's "Mayrig".



Azad strongly requested that we not strictly focus on books about the genocide. I think that all of us agreed with that idea. Unfortunately, it's tougher to find books about Armenia which are not focused on the genocide.

I created a Google group which will contain email address for all members of the book club. Currently, Andrea, Azad, Cynthia, Gloria, Tom, Peter and I are members. A few invitations to join are outstanding. If you did not get the invitation to join the group, lost it, or didn't understand what needed to be done, but would like to be a member, send a request to

leroy.erickson@minnmicro.com and I will add your email to the group. The purpose of the group is to allow us to exchange comments on the books or the meetings without having to remember a dozen or more email addresses. To use the group to send out a message, simply send the message to; "ACOMBookClub@googlegroups.com".

Note that you cannot send a message to the group unless you are a member.

Leroy Erickson ACOM President



Fuller Center for Housing

On Sunday, March 23, 2014, Gohar Palyan from the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia, visited Minnesota's Armenians and shared with us the accomplishments of the past almost 6 years of this organization. Her presentation described the living conditions of some Armenians, an estimate of the number of homeless people in Armenia, the various building projects Fuller Center has completed or are in progress, partnerships FCHA has with various organizations (like Heifer International, the Red Cross, U.S. Embassy, and many others) and how they benefit the people of Armenia. She also reported that since the founding of Fuller Center in Armenia, 278 families have been helped. She reminded us that Fuller Center Armenia offers interest free loans to families so as to make it possible for more young families to build a home so they can remove themselves from over crowded conditions or from disease-laden temporary homes (domiks).

During Gohar's presentation, folks in the audience smiled and clapped when they saw themselves or their neighbors pictured. It felt like a celebration of all the hard work done by so many of those who were present - efforts that helped Armenian families improve their standard of living. She reminded all of us of the support we have given to Fuller Center Armenia, both through St. Sahag Church and from ACOM as well. From sponsoring a complete house, to sending members of our community to do the

labor, to holding concerts and Voski Ashouns to raise funds for home building - we have a very vibrant, supportive community, and as a group, we are making a real impact in Armenia.

One surprising fact was that over the years that Cynthia has been leading teams (since 2004), she has brought 78 people to Armenia to work on building houses. It was quite a surprise to learn that fact!!

At the end of her presentation, Gohar showed photos of her climb last Summer to the top of Mt. Ararat and told us about her experience doing that. It was something she decided to do to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the Fuller Center in Armenia, and she did it in honor of all the FCHA volunteers and supporters around the world. She also had the Fuller Center flag that she had carried with her to the peaks of both Mt. Ararat and Mt. Aragats (the highest peak in Armenia). At the end of her presentation, we gathered around the flag for a group photo.

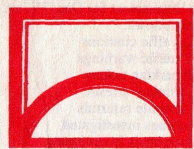
Thank you, Gohar, for traveling to Minnesota to share your good news and updates about the Fuller Center's work in Armenia.

Cynthia's team will be leaving for Armenia in June. If you are interested in joining her group to build homes, contact her very soon, as her team is almost full. You can reach her at Cynthia.erickson@minnmicro.com or 651-917-1818.

Interesting Coincidence....

ACOM Executive Committee members were sorting through old files and lo and behold, up popped an article on **Charlie Kourajian from Jamestown, ND**, dated January 3, 1997. When ACOM invited three speakers in November 2013 to talk about "what it was like growing up Armenian in", Charlie's

brother, Art Kourajian from St. Paul, was one the speakers. By extreme coincidence, the fact that Art's brother was Mayor of Jamestown, ND a while back came up in the conversation, and sure enough, the article surfaced as a sequel to that conversation. Very interesting to read.



The Jamestown Sun

January 3, 1997 Friday

Jamestown, North Dakota 58401

Volume 71, Number 156

Price 50¢ - By Carrier 33¢

Kourajian new Jamestown mayor Council expected to decide Jan. 6 how it will fill vacant city council seat



Charlie Kourajian

SUN PHOTO BY John m. steiner

Charlie Kourajian, who has served on the Jamestown City Council for 22 years, was named mayor Thursday to fill the one and a-half years left in former Mayor Frank Chase's term.

Chase resigned effective Wednesday to take a job as marketing director with a firm in Long Island, N.Y.

Under the city's five-member

modern council system, the council chooses one of its members to finish an unexpired term for mayor.

Kourajian, 66, was first elected to the city council in 1974, and served on both the former 12-member council and the new five-member system.

"I'm excited about it and looking forward to the challenge for the next year and a-half," Kourajian said. "We certainly have a lot of things to follow through on."

But the council decided to wait until at least Jan. 6 to decide how to pick someone to fill the council seat Kourajian leaves open. The new council member would serve one and 'a-half years.

The council can appoint a new member, but it would need to wait 15 days, which would take it to about Jan. 17. Or it can call a special election.

Council members Jim Exner and Gordie Christianson said they're leaning toward appointing a new council member.

Council member Pam Phillips said half the public comments she's received favor appointment, while the rest are for a special election.

Kourajian said he would prefer a special election, since there's several people interested in holding the seat.

City Auditor Jeff Fuchs said it would probably take five weeks to six weeks to seat a new council member if the city holds a special election.

But an appointed council member could begin work immediately, which Kourajian said is one argument in favor of an appointment.

The new member would provide a full council in time for a Jan. 20 hearing on increasing tax increment financing for a proposed downtown supermarket.

Kourajian, who is retired and drives bus part time, said he wants to get the council members more closely involved in day-to-day city business, but plans few other changes.

He said he plans to continue the regular live radio reports about city business that Chase started. Kourajian may also continue the live TV program Chase also began on Cable Services in Jamestown.

"He certainly made people aware of city government and got them involved..and we wish him well in his career," Kourajian said.

The council also approved sending the state a resolution favoring locating a proposed state medium security prison at the State Hospital in Jamestown.

"I'm excited about it and looking forward to the challenge for the next year and a half."

Charlie Kourajian

ACOM COOKING DAY WITH JUDY OHANNESIAN MANTI MAKING



Under the tutelage of Chef Judy Ohannesian, 14 adults and 2 young boys gathered on Saturday, March 29th, to learn how to make manti, an Armenian "comfort food" as Judy rightfully calls it. In about two hours, we cut up sheets of dough into 1 inch

square pieces, filled them with meat, pinched the ends of the little boats and baked them. Later on, we enjoyed the fruits of our labor for lunch, topping the manti with sumac and home-made madzoon. It was delicious, and altogether, a simply wonderful experience. Judy's shortcuts are extremely effective and we were all sent home with the recipe as well as bags of cooked manti to enjoy for a later meal.



MARGARET JOHNSON - a biography

Margaret Elizabeth Thomassian Johnson was born January 10, 1924 in Minneapolis. Her parents, Daniel Theodore Thomassian and Esther Amalie (Bjerke) Thomassian, were teachers who met in Aiken, MN. Daniel was from Afyon, Turkey and had arrived in the US in 1913 at age 19. Esther was born in Minneapolis to immigrants from the Oslo and Akershus areas in Norway. Margaret was their only living child.

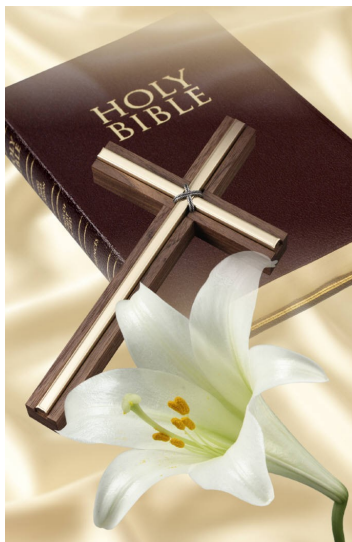
The small family moved around for Daniel's teaching positions, residing in Great Falls, MT and Appleton, MN before returning to south Minneapolis in 1934, where they lived with Esther's sister in the Bjerke family home, right kiddy-corner from Augsburg College's Old Main. The Thomassians were poor during the Depression years but Margaret said she never realized it. She was happy and dearly loved.

Margaret was co-Valedictorian at South High School. She attended the University of Minnesota and graduated with a major in journalism and a minor in French. After graduation and during World War II, Margaret enlisted in the WAVES, a branch of the Navy. She was assigned to work at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in New York City. Later in her life, she wrote an essay about her WAVES experience. This sentence is quintessential Margaret: "Before I went to New York I had an undelineated idea of New Yorkers as somehow anatomically different from people in the Midwest. I was a bit surprised to learn they really were not that different."

On September 3, 1947, Margaret married Robert Carl Johnson, whom she had known since junior high school. A chemical engineer, Robert's jobs took them first to Niagara Falls, NY, where Margaret worked as an advertising writer at a department store until Andrea was born; then, to Memphis, Tennessee, where Mark and Janet were born; and in 1955, back to the Twin Cities, where Marcia was born.

Bob and Margaret built a house in W. St. Paul, happy to raise their children close to their parents in south Minneapolis. Margaret taught Sunday School, participated in League of Women Voters and Garden Club, and took classes in social work at the U. She worked for a time as a teacher's aide in the newly-formed Head Start program, until it was decided that those jobs would go to people with a financial need.

Margaret and Bob traveled together to Buenos Aires to meet Margaret's father's nephews and their families. Margaret's parents were by now deceased and it was a joy for her to meet her Armenian first cousins in person. Her father, Daniel, had only been able to re-connect with his biological family via letter after leaving Turkey.



In 1982, Bob died suddenly on a business trip. In 1984, Margaret moved into a condo building in St. Paul at the corner of Grand and Grotto. She joined College Club, where she served on the board and was a charter member of the Poetry Committee. She participated regularly in activities at Plymouth Congregational Church, which she had joined with Bob. She also connected more closely with the Armenian community through ACOM and had a plaque placed on a pew at St. Sahag Armenian Church in honor of her parents. Among her activities, she enjoyed volunteering at Travelers' Aid and United Hospital. She also mentored a school-age girl in St. Paul and sponsored a student in India. She played bridge regularly, a passion that would last the rest of her life.

Margaret enjoyed many trips in the US and abroad, alone and with friends. She was close to her cousin in Oslo who was a little older. Two memorable journeys were a trip to Turkey, where she left her tour group to go to her father's hometown, Afyon, and a trip to Armenia. Margaret was an intrepid risk-taker. Once, in Old Jerusalem, a shopkeeper on the street motioned to her to come into his shop. She did. He closed the door, beckoned to her to sit down, and served her tea. They did not speak a common language. When Margaret felt it was time to go, she thanked him and left.

Margaret was blessed with four grandchildren whom she adored: Molly, Nick, Andy and Robin. Her happiest moments were with her family. Her sense of humor was quirky and well-timed, often leaving the rest of her family dissolved in laughter.

Margaret attended a grief group for years after the death in 1999 of her daughter Janet. In 2007, Margaret was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. She became a regular at MOCA, an ovarian cancer support group. When, in 2009, her first oncologist told her further chemotherapy would probably not help her and suggested hospice, she went to San Francisco with Elderhostel, visited her granddaughter there, returned home and changed to a new oncologist. She lived another 4 ½ years, staying very active, including a foray into tap dancing. She died on February 7, 2014 at age 90.

By Andrea Johnson



"WHAT IS A POEM?"

A poem should flow along easily
like a country stream in springtime
curving around leafy bends
and over submerged secrets.

A poem should bloom like a flower
each petal in its perfect place
exposing its beauty to the world.

A poem should rain down freshly and freely
affirming and fulfilling
because it is needed
and because it is so

and because without it
the world would be barren and sere
without grace.

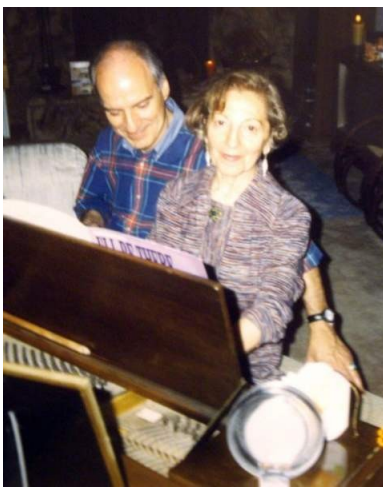
A poem should climb a mountain
and expose the breathtaking view.

A poem should go to the end of the rainbow
and discover the treasure there.

A poem should color the world
and turn up the volume of the universe.

A poem should go where no one has ever gone before.

----- Margaret E. Thomassian Johnson -----



1998



1996



2001



2013

**Revisiting ACOM
History ...**

Pictures Courtesy of
Todd Abrahamian



1994



2000



1995



Gaghant 2014

More than 80 members of the local Armenian community gathered at the Minnetonka Marriot on January 4th, 2014, for this year's Gaghant celebration. We all enjoyed a wonderful buffet dinner culminating in pakhlava for dessert (commercial, but acceptable). After the dinner, Arthur Kourajian's *Gnu Woodwind Quintet* provided a musical treat, the St. Sahag church Sunday school students helped us to remember that children make Christmas so much more enjoyable, and the Armenian Dance Ensemble gave a few lessons in how to do traditional Armenian dancing. To finish it all off, Terry McGibbon and David Grigoryan provided us with a nice mix of traditional and modern Armenian music for people to dance to.

The new members of the ACOM board were introduced, which includes Leroy Erickson as President, Francis Bulbulian as Vice President, Gloria Faust and Lynne Gildensoph as Cultural Co-Directors, and Bradley Erickson as Assistant Treasurer. Re-elected committee members were: Tina Adamek as Secretary, Nairy Digris as Treasurer, Adrienne and Michelle Hayes as Social Co-Directors. Tom Keljik moved into the Past President position while Mark Keljik was finally allowed to retire from the board.

It seemed like everyone enjoyed a wonderful evening. Our thanks to the management staff at the Marriott and all of the ACOM members who helped out for making it such a wonderful event.

Leroy Erickson
ACOM President



ALICE TASHJIAN



Tashjian Alice A.

A memorial service for Alice A. Tashjian was held Monday, February 17 at St. Sahag Armenian Church on 203 N Howell St, in St Paul, MN. There was a church service at 11:00 AM, followed by lunch and a memorial fellowship at 1:00 PM.

After a full life, Alice passed away on her 92nd birthday on January 19, 2014 in St. Paul. Her parents, husband of 62 years and two brothers preceded her in death. She is survived by her sons, Joseph (Kay) in St. Paul; Edward (Dawn) in Hickory, NC; Christopher (Barbara) in River Falls, WI; and daughter Francine (Tim Lundgren) also in St. Paul. She leaves behind 11 grandchildren and many friends.

Alice was born in 1922 in Binghamton, NY. She moved to Minnesota in 1959 and raised her family in Rochester. After moves to California, Japan, and Princeton, she returned to Minnesota to be closer to her children and grandchildren.

Alice taught at the college level for 27 years at Syracuse University and Rochester Community College. She taught

English, mythology, Minnesota folklore and pioneered feminist perspectives, the precursor to women's studies. Later in life, she devoted energy to selecting applicants and endowing scholarships for women from abroad trying to get an education in America through the AAUW (American Association of University Women). She was an avid gardener and lover of all living things.

As her legacy she has endowed the Tashjian Bee Discovery Center at the Arboretum at the University of MN. All her life she had been the voice of the underdog and the disenfranchised and when she learned of the plight of the honeybee, she became its strongest supporter.



In lieu of flowers at her memorial service, she requested that contributions be made to the Bee Discovery Center so that the world would have flowers in perpetuity.

Modified from an Obituary published on February 5, 2014 in the Star Tribune of Minneapolis

News About Minnesota Armenian Community Youth

Andy Ylitalo, currently a freshman at Stanford University, was first place winner at the 2013 MN State math league tournament. In addition, the Minnesota department of Education awarded Andy the Scholar of Distinction designation in three categories: Math, Science and STEM. He was the only student in Minnesota to receive this high level of recognition. Andy also was one of eight students in the nation to be recognized by the National Gallery for America's Young Inventors for his patented invention "Windows of the Future".

Max Ylitalo won the silver medal in the energy category at the international science fair that took place in Houston, TX in May 2013. As the youngest student participating at the fair, Max was selected "flag bearer" carrying the American flag onto the stage during the opening ceremony. Max's science fair project: "Food or Fuel: Can Cassava or Arrowroot Replace Corn in the Production of Ethanol?" won an honorable mention at the Genius Olympiad: An international science and art fair that took place in New York in June. In addition, Max's science fair project: this year "Waste Reduction for Energy Production" won top awards at the Twin cities regional science fair advancing to State and to two international science fairs in May.

Ben Rith-Najarian is currently the Pastor and Deacon-In-Charge of St. Sarkis Armenian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. He and his wife, Danielle DerAsadourian, have lived in Charlotte since this past September, after Ben fin-

ished a two-year pastoral internship with St. Leon's Armenian Church in Fairlawn, NJ. Danielle is a first grade teacher at a local Charlotte elementary school, and she also works with youth programs at St. Sarkis Church. Ben will be fully ordained and installed as the St. Sarkis parish priest in Autumn, 2014. He graduated from St Nersess Seminary in 2010, after which he and Danielle spent a year living and working in the Armenian Quarter in Jerusalem. True to his Minnesota roots, Ben gets outdoors as often as possible to go fishing, hiking and kayaking in the Charlotte area, which is possible year round in the mild Carolina climate.

Leslie Rith-Najarian is currently a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology PhD program at UCLA, specializing in the prevention and treatment of adolescent stress and depression. Recreation therapy and service dog therapy are two of the treatment modalities that interest her, and she recently wrote an article about dog therapy (see link: <http://www.psychologyinaction.org/2013/12/30/dogs-currents-trends-in-clinical-psychology/>) She graduated from Harvard University in 2012, and worked for one year in the adolescent psychiatry program at Boston Children's Hospital, before relocating to Los Angeles for graduate school. In her free time she enjoys rock climbing with the mountaineering club, and is a member of the UCLA gymnastics program.

Armenia and Armenians in the News

Rare collection of antique Ouds for sale

This Oud Collection of John Bilezikjian consists of priceless examples of 2 Master Luthiers, Onnik Karibyan an Armenian living in Turkey during the first part of the 20th Century who died in 1976 and Emmanuel Manol a Greek Luthier who Mr. Bilezikjian feels is the Father of the modern day Oud. Manol was born in 1835 and died in Turkey in 1915.

These Ouds are some of the finest examples, are in pristine condition and have all original pieces, including tops and bellies for each instrument. They all have hardshell Oud cases as well. They are considered historical pieces and should be admired and cared for as such. In some cases Mr. Bilezikjian has owned these Ouds for some 50 + years.

Please note these are high-priced antique, but playable, "collection items". Please contact John Bilezikjian directly (<http://www.dantzrecords.com/contactjohn.html>) Also, any tips or leads to museums that may possibly be interested in acquiring any of these are appreciated.

Retelling David of Sassoun: An Interview with David Kherdian

If you are interested in reading this story, please check out the link below.

<http://www.armenianweekly.com/2014/02/12/retelling-david-of-sassoun-an-interview-with-david-kherdian/>

Armenian Arsen Avakov Elected as Ukraine's Interim Interior Minister

Following recent events, as a result of which Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich was stripped of his powers, the Ukrainian Parliament elected opposition lawmaker Arsen Avakov as interior minister on Saturday until the formation of a new coalition government.

Avakov takes over the powerful post after lawmakers on Friday dismissed Vitaly Zakharchenko, an ally of embattled President Viktor Yanukovich, following two days of carnage in the capital, Kiev.

Arsen Avakov was born on January 2, 1964 in Kirova town (Kirovskiy district which is now Binagadinskiy district) of Baku (Azerbaijan) into a military family and is of Armenian ethnicity.

Since 1966 Avakov has been permanently residing in Ukraine.



OSCARS, Sunday, March 2, 2014

In case you didn't catch it, during the Oscars on Sunday night, Ellen DeGeneres ordered pizza during the broadcast and passed it out to the actors and actresses in the crowd. The funny thing is, it wasn't a setup. She actually did have somebody call in an order. A regular pizza delivery guy thought that he was delivering three pizzas to a group of writers, but then, he was suddenly walking out into the crowd in the middle of the Oscars program.

The pizza delivery man? **Edgar Martirosyan** of Big Mama's and Papa's Pizzeria.

The owner? **Ararat Agakhanyan**.

Edgar got a \$1000 tip. Good for him !

ACOM DONATES TO ST. SAHAG SUNDAY SCHOOL

Last Fall, ACOM board members sorted through their files and decided to donate to St. Sahag Sunday School multiple sets of copies of various subjects for teaching kids, be it the Armenian alphabet, listing of various musical instruments, basic dictionaries, etc. These sets were prepared and arranged when ACOM taught Armenian language lessons a while ago, but since there is a Sunday School that teaches language now, ACOM decided to donate all of these teaching sets for their use.

An appreciation Thank You email was received from the Parish Council on behalf of St. Sahag.



Armenian Dance Ensemble of Minnesota

2014 Dance Ensemble Performances

For further information call Naïry Digris 651-639-9346

Month	Date	Location	Time
January	16	The Shores of Lake Phalen	6.30 pm
February	16	Keystone Communities	2:00 PM
March	16	Festival of Nations Preview	1:00 PM
April	6	Maplewood Good Samaritan	2:00 PM
April	22	Sholom Home	6.30 pm
May	2,3,4	Festival of Nations	various
May	13	Edina Care & Rehab	7:00 PM
May	18	The Wellington	2:00 PM
May	24	Cherrywood Pointe	2:00 PM
June	19	Jones-Harrison Residence	7:00 PM
June	26	Rose Pointe Senior Living	7:00 PM
August	13	Centennial Lakes Park	7:00 PM
August	24	MN State Fair	12-5 pm
September	23	Episcopal Homes	7:00 PM
November	11	Sholom Home	6.30pm
November	30	Ukrainian Christmas Festival	1:00 PM



ACOM has placed a barrel in the Fellowship Hall along with empty grocery bags on the side.

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

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!



At Landmark Center
Urban Expedition—Armenia 2013



At Patrick's Cabaret 2007



At Festival of Nations 2012



At Hennepin County Government Center
Summer on the Plaza 2009

2014 ACOM DUES PAID MEMBERS

Adamek, Tina & David
 Amirikian & Seleznova, Bagrat & Inna
 Andeweg, George & Jeanne
 Angell, Michele & Bill
 Aram, George & Connie
Asgian, Philip
 Bobgan, Harold
 Bulbulian, Francis & Barbara
 Charchian, Aram & Ruth
 Clarke, Barbara
 Desteian & Savage, John & Judy
 Digris & McGibbon, Nairy & Terry & family
Dourgarian, Gregg & family
 Erickson, Cynthia, Leroy & family
Faust, Gloria & Doug
 Favre, Margaret & Jim
 Gauro & Cusik, Boghos & Lana & family
 Gildensoph, Lynne
 Gregorian, Henry & Laurel
 Grigoriants, Olga
 Hakobyan & Papyieva, Artur & Nina
 Hayes, Adrienne & Jim
 Hayes & Carlson, Jackie & Mike & family

Keljik & Grantz, Mark & Caren
 Keljik, Jeff & Susan
Keljik & Collins, Tom & Jennifer
 Keller, Jasmine
 Kocharian & Davtian, Armen & Marine
 Kocharian & Grigoryan, Mariam & David
 Kourajian, John & Myrna
 Manthei, Deb
Mardirossian, Artoosh & Helga
 Matossian, Lou Ann
 Meketarian, Marty & Mara & family
 Mesrobian, Azad & Karen
 Mesroubian, Sam & Sylvia
 Mokhtarian, Koko & Joane
 Ohannesian & Tiffany, Judy & Doug & family
 Savayan, Peka & family
Tashjian & Savik, Joe & Kay
 Wiersbeck, Mark
 Wiersbeck, Sarah
 Wilberding, Tim & Helen
 Yaghsezian, George & Aida & family
 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.

Ruth Charchian Joins ACOM Board

Congratulations and thanks to Ruth Charchian who agreed to become ACOM's new Social Co-Director as of March 1, 2014. She was voted in unanimously by all ACOM active paid members. ACOM wishes to thank Michelle Hayes who resigned from her Executive Committee duty as Social Co-Director due to personal reasons. Michelle's support and contributions to ACOM over the years are greatly appreciated.

ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA

203 North Howell Street ~ St. Paul, MN 55104

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President:	Leroy Erickson	651-917-1818
Vice President:	Francis Bulbulian	651-645-2460
Treasurer:	Nairy Digris	651-639-9346
Secretary:	Tina Adamek	751-425-2315
Social Co Directors:	Adrienne Hayes	612-866-4277
	Ruth Charchian	952-941-5005
Cultural Co Directors	Lynne Gildensoph	651-690-8621
	Gloria Faust	612-272-8978
Past President:	Tom Keljik	651-659-0552
Newsletter Editor:	Peggy Merjanian	952-473-HYEM

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 I 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.

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota Calendar for 2014

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

Month	Date	Event	Time
January	4	Gaghant - Barahantess, Marriott in Minnetonka	6:00 PM
January	14	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
February	8	First Gathering for Book Club	7:00 PM
February	11	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
March	11	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
March	13	Book Club	7:00 PM
March	23	Presentation on Fuller Center for Housing: Gohar Palyan	1:00 PM
March	29	Cooking Class: Judy Ohannesian makes Manti	11:00 AM
April	8	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
April	10	Book Club	7:00 PM
April	24	Genocide Commemoration	7:00 PM
May	1,2,3,4	Festival of Nations	
May	6	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
May	8	Book Club	7:00 PM
May	17	ACOM Past Presidents' meeting	1:00 PM
May	18	What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian in	1:00 PM
June	10	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
June	12	Book Club	7:00 PM
June		Music Event	
July	8	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
July	19	Summer Adventure at Dave & Tina Adamek	12 noon
August	10	ACOM Picnic	1:00 PM
August	12	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
September	9	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
September	27	Voski Ashoun	5:00 PM
October	9	Book Club	7:00 PM
October	14	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
October	12	What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian in	1:00 PM
November	4	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
November	13	Book Club	7:00 PM
November	15	Movie Night	7:00 PM
December	4	Armenian Jewelry Presentation: Paul Tacorian	6:00 PM
December	16	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM
	2015		
January	3	Gaghant - Barahantess, Marriott in Minnetonka	6:00 PM
January	13	ACOM Executive Committee Meeting	6:00 PM



*American Cultural Organization
of Minnesota
Culture, Heritage, History, Language.*

ACOM MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

VALID THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2014

NAME(S): _____

STREET: _____ **City/St/Zip** _____

Phone: (_____) _____ **E-Mail Address:** _____

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIP*
MINNESOTA RESIDENTS \$30.00

OUT OF STATE\$15.00
(Newsletter Only)

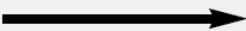
CONTRIBUTING \$100.00

**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@q.com

1703 Skillman Avenue West

Roseville, MN 55113



*American Cultural Organization
of Minnesota
Culture, Heritage, History, Language.*

We're on the Web

www.mnarmenians.org