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Culture
Heritage
History
Language

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota Established 1980

MinneHyeLites

No. 144 Winter 2016



GAGHANT PARTY JANUARY 9, 2016

The 2016 ACOM Gaghant party has come and gone already! After six good years at the Marriott in Minnetonka, we changed venues to the intimate setting of the Saint Paul Como Dockside Pavilion located on the shores of Lake Como in St. Paul. The room was lit to a level of coziness and comfort for 83 Armenians and friends. A very tasty Louisiana style buffet dinner was



provided and the four-piece band "Music Mundial" played wonderful Armenian and Middle Eastern music for our listening and dancing pleasure.



Newly elected ACOM President Francis Bulbulian introduced the 2016-2017 ACOM Committee members, and specifically asked the three new ones (all first-timers) to come up to the front. He also recognized outgoing members, as the two-year terms completed at the end of 2015.



A silent auction was held with many interesting items, the majority of which were donated by Dr. John and Mignette Najarian, including antique articles such as brass Persian camel bells, braziers, coffee jugs, single Arabian bells, an Armenian plate and many more. Also generously donated were an original painting done by



Laurel Gregorian, and other items gifted by Andrea Johnson, Margaret Favre and Nairy Digris. All proceeds from the auction will help ACOM in its subsidy of the Gaghant party.

Very special thanks to our outgoing President Leroy Erickson for two great years of leadership! Also, to all the board members who devoted much time and energy in finding, organizing and setting up this event. The only complaint heard the whole evening was from Lynne Gildensoph who was not able to dance due to a broken toe....Here's hoping Lynne heals fast so she may join in next time! We look forward to seeing you again next year. As always, feel free to invite family and friends along.



- Mark Wiersbeck



FANTASTIC! A warm and beautiful venue, with great Louisiana cooking. Congratulations to the hard working board members. I think there are some great new recruits to the board for the upcoming year.

- Tom Keljik

I loved Gaghant 2016. It was top-notch in every way - the music, silent auction, food, decor and venue. Although it was a very cold night, the outside temperature was no match for the warmth indoors. Thank you!

- Andrea Johnson

2016 ACOM CALENDAR

| Month | Date | Weekday | Event | Time |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|---|-------------|
| January | 9 | Saturday | Gaghant - Barahantess, Como Dockside Pavilion St Paul | 5:30 PM |
| January | 18 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| January | 18 | Monday | Martin Luther King Day | |
| January | 21 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| January | 23 | Saturday | Genealogy workshop - St. Sahag | 3:00 PM |
| February | 8 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| February | 14 | Sunday | Valentine's Day | |
| February | 15 | Monday | Presidents' Day | |
| February | 18 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| March | 7 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| March | 13 | Sunday | Seventh Session: What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian | 1:30 PM |
| March | 17 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:15 PM |
| March | 19 | Saturday | ACOM Movie Night | 7:00 PM |
| March | 27 | Sunday | Easter Sunday | |
| April | 4 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| April | 14 | Thursday | Ohannesian lecture - Peter Balakian | TBD |
| April | 16 | Saturday | ACOM Movie Night | 7:00 PM |
| April | 21 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| April | 24 | Sunday | Genocide Commemoration | TBD |
| May | 2 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| May | 6,7,8 | | Festival of Nations | |
| May | 8 | Sunday | Mother's Day | |
| May | 14 | Saturday | ACOM Movie Night | 7:00 PM |
| May | 19 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| May | 30 | Monday | Memorial Day | |
| TBD | | Saturday | Music event, w/ cheese & wine reception | 6:00 PM |
| June | 4 | Saturday | ACOM Movie Night | 7:00 PM |
| June | 6 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| June | 16 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| June | 18 | Saturday | ACOM Picnic/Pool Party - Erickson's | 2:00 PM |
| June | 19 | Sunday | Father's Day | |
| July | 4 | Monday | Independence Day | |
| July | 11 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| August | 8 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| August | 28 | Sunday | ACOM Picnic - St. Sahag | 1:00 PM |
| September | 5 | Monday | Labor Day | |
| September | 12 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| September | 15 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| September | 24 | Saturday | Movie Night, Voski Ashoun, Brandy & Wine Tasting | 5:00 PM |
| October | 3 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| October | 20 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| October | 23 | Sunday | Eighth Session: What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian | 1:30 PM |
| November | 5 | Saturday | Cooking Class by Judy O. & Michele A. | 10:00 AM |
| November | 7 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| November | 17 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| November | 24 | Thursday | Thanksgiving Day | |
| December | 5 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |
| December | 15 | Thursday | ACOM Book Club | 7:00 PM |
| December | 25 | Sunday | Christmas Day | |
| 2017 | | | | |
| January | 7 | Saturday | Gaghant - Barahantess, Como Dockside Pavilion St Paul | 5:00 PM |
| January | 16 | Monday | ACOM Executive Committee Meeting | 5:00 PM |

ACOM BIENNIAL ELECTIONS REPORT

ACOM's BY-LAWS read:

ARTICLE VII - QUORUM

One-third (1/3) of the active (paid) membership, in person or by written proxy, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of this organization, except amendments to the By-Laws.

Thirty-three percent of the 2015 ACOM Paid Membership vote approvals were needed to elect the new committee members. Sixty-eight percent responded with unanimous approval, and we are therefore happy to present the following ACOM Executive Committee members for 2016 and 2017.

- President: Francis Bulbulian
- Vice President: Peter Hajinian
- Secretary: Lynne Gildensoph
- Treasurer: Nairy Digris
- Assistant to Treasurer: Bradley Erickson
- Cultural Director: Natasha Vaubel
- Social Director: John Parker-Der Boghossian
- Past President: Leroy Erickson
- Newsletter Editor: Terry McGibbon

Contact: Francis 651-983-6165

VOTERS' NOTES:

Many people commented on the slate of candidates that were presented:

We vote to elect this wonderful roster of people as the board. Yes.

- Laurel and Henry Gregorian

Here are my votes - great slate.

- Tom Keljik

I vote for ALL of the nominees listed for the ACOM board. My only reservation is that they all appear to be way over-over-educated for the tasks involved. Talk about being underemployed....

- Aram Charchian

PAST BOARD MEMBER WRITES:

I am very thankful for my year on the board, for getting to know you all better, for your friendship, and last but not least, for becoming more deeply involved in ACOM, especially during the very significant 2015 commemorative year. It amazes me what this small group of people accomplishes together. Now I am looking forward to the rest of ACOM's 2016 events because I know it's going to be an absolutely fantastic year with both the new and the continuing board members' contributions.

- Andrea Johnson



ACOM 2016 PAID MEMBERS

If you have not yet renewed your membership, and would like to do so, please use the form on the back of the Newsletter to mail your check. Let us know if you are interested in receiving a copy of the Board Member biographies. Email your request to: hyebar@yahoo.com

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Adamek, David & Tina

Andeweg, George & Jeanne

Asgian, Phil

Baradaran Cafesjian, Kathleen & Jaff

Bulbulian, Francis & Barbara

Charchian, Aram & Ruth

Daniels, Kathleen & Myers, Marcie; Mari

Digris, Naïry & McGibbon, Terry

Dourgarian, Gregg & Mary & Family

Erickson, Leroy, Cynthia, Bradley

Favre, Jim & Margaret

Gauro, Boghos & Lana

Gildensoph, Lynne

Hajinian, Peter, Brooke, Charlie

Hakobyan, Artur & Papiyeva, Nina

Hayes, Adrienne, Jim, Michelle & Lila

Johnson, Andrea & Lowell

Kaye, Alfred

Keljik, Mark & Grantz, Caren

Keljik, Tom & Collins, Jennifer

Kourajian, Art

Mardirosian, Artoosh & Helga

Matossian, Lou Ann

Meketarian, Marty, Mara, Hagop, Armen

Mesrobian, Azad & Karen

Nyholm, Pete, Dana, Sam, Kira, Megan

Ohanessian, Sita

Ohannesian, Judy & Tiffany, Doug

Parker-Der Boghossian, John

Rith-Najarian, Janet & Steve

Samuelian, Christine & Family

Savayan, Peka & Maria; Anderson, Steve

Strichartz, Ariel

Vaubel, Natasha, Carol, Jamaica

Wiersbeck, Mark

Wiersbeck, Sarah

Ylitalo, Caroline, David, Andy, Max

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.

ACOM's 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.

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, costumes provided. It is a volunteer activity and we only ask for your time commitment. Rehearsals are typically held on Sundays., at 12.30 pm. 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.

For additional information, call Nairy: 651-639-9346 or email: hybar@yahoo.com

| Month | Date | Location |
|----------|-------|------------------------------|
| | 2016 | |
| January | 17 | The Wellington |
| February | 28 | Keystone Highland Park |
| March | 6 | Festival of Nations Preview |
| March | 12 | Episcopal Homes |
| April | 7 | Jones Harrison |
| April | 17 | Cherrywood Pointe |
| May | 6,7,8 | Festival of Nations |
| May | 31 | Edina Care & Rehab |
| June | 26 | Shores of Lake Johanna |
| July | 10 | The Langton Place |
| July | 30 | Cerenity Care |
| August | 27 | MN State Fair |
| August | 31 | Centennial Lakes |
| October | 1 | Keystone Roseville |
| October | 22 | Sholom Homes |
| November | 19 | Maplewood Good Samaritan |
| December | 4 | Ukrainian Christmas Festival |

December 2015 Ukrainian Christmas Festival



August 2015 Minnesota State Fair



MINNESOTA'S OWN ALEXANDER KARDASHIAN – One of the Top Kart Racing Drivers in the Nation

Van and Vali Kardashians son, Viguen, daughter in-law, Patty, and grandson, Alexander, have enjoyed a busy and successful year at go-kart tracks and competitions across the country. For those unfamiliar with the sport, kart racing is sometimes described as the purest form of auto racing and can be a stepping stone to various professional racing series such as NASCAR, Formula 1, and Indy Car. It's fast; it's technically challenging; and its adrenaline-producing thrill keeps Alexander and Viguen going back for more. Their racing prowess does not go unnoticed. In fact, Alexander is one of the top ranked drivers in the country and has repeatedly proven to be one of the ten fastest in a number of international events.

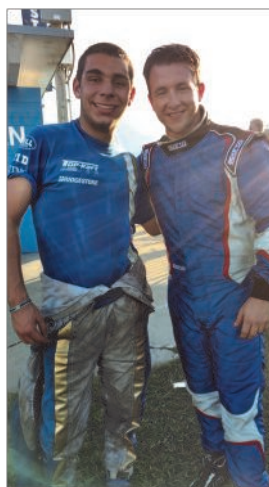
Alexander was bitten by the racing bug at a very early age. Now, 9 years later at the legal driving age of 16, Alexander has earned 11 Northern Regional Karting Association (NRKA) Championships and 3 National Championships. 2015 was particularly successful as he secured 2 National Championships AND 2 NRKA Championships. Viguen did his part by being Alexander's mechanic and driving coach.

2015 also marked the launch of their new business, AMK Race Products. AMK's mission is to promote the sport of karting in a family-friendly, affordable way by selling karts, apparel, parts, and accessories. Viguen and Alexander also provide driver coaching, speed clinics, and trackside support.

Check them out at www.amkraceproducts.com.



Viguen and Alexander began their 2016 racing season in Daytona, Florida with solid finishes in 2 highly competitive classes. The highlight of their weekend was racing against professional NASCAR and Indy Car driver, A.J. Allmendinger. Alexander finished directly behind A.J. in each race; finishing 11th to A.J.'s 10th and 5th to A.J.'s 4th in a class of nearly 50 of the fastest drivers in the country.



Alexander with AJ Allmendinger

WKA National Awards Banquet



Viguen & Alexander The Kardashians Crew

CONGRATULATIONS

Tina and David Adamek celebrated their 49th wedding anniversary in December 2015. We all wish you both great health and many more long years of happiness.

CONDOLENCES

To Sylvia Mesroubian and family, to Azad and Karen Mesrobian and family. Our most sincere expressions of sympathy for the loss of your beloved Sam. We will miss his presence at our various events but will never forget his kindness and friendliness.

Sam was born August 24, 1933 in Aleppo, Syria and passed away on January 23, 2016 in White Bear Township. Visitation took place at Sandberg Funeral Home on Tuesday, Jan. 26th. The funeral service was at Woodbury Lutheran Church in Woodbury, MN on Wednesday, January 27th followed by the Interment at Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Mahtomedi, MN.

ACOM NEWSLETTER

A lot of "newsy" news in there. Thanks for your hard work in putting it together.

-*Cynthia Erickson*

Great newsletter, chock-full of news, pictures and summary of events passed. I appreciate the hard work in getting the newsletter out. Bravo!

-*Francis Bulbulian*

Congratulations to all on another excellent newsletter!

-*Art Kourajian*

Another AWESOME issue. One glaring error.....my name should no longer be listed as an editor. Please remove it and give proper credit to Terry and Nairy.....two staunch supporters of not only the newsletter, but anything that has to do with Armenians in the area. Please include this last sentence in the next issue.

-*Peggy Merjanian*

SAVE THE DATES**ST. SAHAG CHURCH UPCOMING EVENTS**

Easter Lamb Dinner - Saturday, April 2, 2016 (tentative)

Armenia Service Project - July 2-17, 2016

All young adults ages 18-30 are welcome to participate. Register by March 20 to secure a discounted rate of \$1975

For more information: www.acyoa.org

Armenian Festival - Sunday, September 11, 2016

ARMENIAN SCHOLARSHIPS

Armenian organizations across the country offer scholarships and fellowships for students of Armenian descent to pursue their undergraduate and graduate degrees. The following link provides you with a good list of opportunities available. What is very helpful on the applications is demonstrated volunteer experience and service to the Armenian community. ACOM can offer opportunities for you to volunteer and serve the Armenian Community! If your student is interested, please contact ACOM Social Director, John, for more information on volunteering: jpderboghossian@gmail.com

<http://thearmenite.com/2015/02/armenian-scholarships-2015/>

FOOD SHELF DONATIONS

Quite a few years ago, ACOM placed an empty barrel for food donations in Fellowship Hall; and it finally got replaced as it was falling apart. There are a lot of empty grocery bags in that barrel. If you are in Fellowship Hall, remember to pick up a bag, take it home, fill it with non-perishable food items and bring it back with you next time. Place the filled bag in that barrel and an ACOM board member will deliver it to Keystone Food Shelf.

Winter time is especially hard for a lot of people, so please be super-generous and think of those who are less fortunate than we are.

THANK YOU !



HAWAII IN DECEMBER

A small ACOM contingent, Margaret and Jim Favre and Andrea and Lowell Johnson, spent the month of December in Hawaii volunteering at a church conference center on the West Shore of Oahu. It was the Favre's fourth time volunteering at the center and the Johnson's first.



The conference center sits close to the ocean in a valley surrounded on three sides by low mountains. The 105 year-old Plantation House is the most prominent building on the grounds. The gated property has old world mahogany trees valued at a million dollars apiece, stately century-old palm trees, and gardens blooming with orchids and bromeliads. Full rainbows typically follow brief misty rainfalls nearly every afternoon.

December is a light month for the center. Eight volunteers stayed in four small apartments. When no retreat groups were on site, we worked on projects such as buildings and grounds maintenance, decorating for Christmas, yard work, and a little furniture repair and sewing. Later in the month, several large groups of Hawaiian

youth arrived for multi-day retreats, and then our work included meal buffet set-up, take-down, kitchen clean-up and housekeeping. Although a full-time cook prepared the food, the teenagers thanked the volunteers profusely at each meal. We were also gratified when one of the pastors commented, "I can't believe how clean you keep it here." In Hawaii, outdoor lanais and indoor screened rooms get dirty as fast as you can clean them due to blowing dust and cute little geckos everywhere.

The West Shore is the poorer side of the island and full of local culture. We heard the old Hawaiian language spoken in conversation, as well as Pidgin, now designated the second official language of Hawaii. Every Friday morning, a gathering of local musicians meets at the Burger King in Waianae to play ukulele, sing, dance hula, and pass around trays of home-made food to everyone present – no Burger King purchase necessary! Truly, the Aloha spirit.

With four vehicles at our disposal, we took in the sights of Oahu in our free time. Jim, Margaret, Lowell and I and two other volunteers enjoyed a Marriott Waikiki buffet on Christmas Day and then we strolled through historic Honolulu, looking at Hawaiian Christmas decorations under a brilliant full moon. I felt the Christmas spirit floating on the soft tropical breeze.

- Andrea Johnson



VOSKI ASHOUN

On Saturday, October 24, 2015, the Gnu Woodwind Quintet performed at St. Sahag Armenian Church in a concert sponsored by ACOM. The group played 10 pieces by various composers, including Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Delibes and others. They finished up with "Flamenco Fantastico" by Burndrett, but in a slightly modified form which included exclamations in the Armenian language by the performers. The performance was wonderful and was well received by an audience of over 50 people. After the concert, there was a reception in Fellowship Hall, which was decorated appropriate to the fall harvest festival, Voski Ashoun. As part of Voski Ashoun this year, we held a tasting challenge: brandy or scotch. The attendees tasted 10-year Ararat brandy and 12-year Johnny Walker Black Label scotch and could not decide which they preferred. For those not into brandy or scotch, we had a selection of a couple of red wines, a couple of white wines and, of course, some Tree of Life semi-sweet pomegranate wine. Thanks to all who attended.

-Leroy Erickson



MIGRATIONS



Inspiration & passion arise from both tragedy and light as renowned designer **Michael Aram** creates his first major public sculpture.

While many people know Michael Aram by his luxury home line available in major retailers like Neiman Marcus, Bloomingdales, and Saks Fifth Avenue, he is also a sculptor, artist, father, and husband. This 6-minute film tells the intimate story of the creation of his first major public work, Migrations, a piece honoring the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. We are there with Michael as he discovers his motivation to create the piece, and we shine a light on his wonderful life – a life afforded by the sacrifices of his ancestors.

<http://www.storyshopfilms.com/migrations/>
(Running Time 6 minutes)

REMEMBRANCE OF SAMUEL MESROUBIAN

On behalf of our family, thank you all for being here today. Dad never wanted anyone to make a big fuss over him, for any reason. He didn't really like parties, particularly those held in his honor, but on the occasions when we made at least a "little fuss" over him, such for his semi-surprise 80th birthday party with several extended family members and a couple of close friends, he very much appreciated it. So today, we'll make a little fuss over him, tell some stories, have a few laughs and shed a tear or two. I'm sure he'll enjoy it.

My father was an ordinary man...at least, he thought so. He grew up in a close, loving family in Syria; worked in the oil fields for four years after high school to earn money for college; came to the United States and earned an engineering degree; married a beautiful woman and raised two (mostly) above-average children.

He didn't cure cancer or invent the longer-lasting light bulb. He didn't amass great wealth, equal to that of a small country. He couldn't teach his son how to repair an automobile or to throw a curveball.

But from the time he was old enough to go to school, until well after he retired from the daily grind, he worked to give his best effort at every challenge laid before him and to provide as comfortable a life as possible for his family. I'd say that makes him a little more than just ordinary.

Dad lived in Chicago after he arrived in America and went to school to become an engineer. He also learned about American baseball and – perhaps as a foreshadowing of his future as a MN sports follower – he became a Cubs fan and attended games at Wrigley Field. He has shared stories of the occasions when the game itself was not particularly riveting and he was entertained by the gambling going on around him in the bleachers, where people bet on the results of each inning, what each player might do or the results of each pitch, in addition to the final score of the game. He renewed his interest in the "Cubbies" when we got cable TV in the 80's and turned his children into part-time Cubs fans, as well.

He enjoyed classical music – Mendelssohn was his favorite, but we didn't hear much of it around the house. He loved classic movies – one of his favorites was *The Quiet Man*, with John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara...and he looked forward to watching *The Bishop's Wife* every Christmas. He often would tell me about a movie he was watching by referring to the actors in it, but when I'd ask the name of the movie, he couldn't remember! (I later learned to always have Google handy when talking to him on the phone.)

I can't think of a single time when Dad wasn't there for us when we needed him. One of my earliest memories is Sheree and I sitting on the curb in front of our house in New Ulm on a warm summer day, waiting for him to come home from work, upon which he would greet us with a smile and big hugs.

Throughout our childhood and teenage (and young adult) years, he always seemed to be home in time for dinner or to go to parent-teacher conferences or to attend my sister's and my athletic events & music concerts.

I never knew, until much later in life, that when Sheree and I were very young and we lived in New Ulm, Dad would wait until we went to bed and then go back to the office for a couple of hours...years later, when we lived in Maplewood, he often brought work home and set up a card table in the family room to work after we went to bed – perhaps because we lived further away from his workplace and it was inconvenient to go to the office...or perhaps because our bedtime was now a bit later than when we were 8!

Dad almost never had a bad word to say about anyone. He had more patience in his little finger than I could ever hope to have and he let almost everything just roll off his back. And I don't recall ever hearing anyone say a bad word about him (friends, co-workers, etc.). He rarely cursed and when he did, it was under his breath...or in another language. Perhaps the only times I heard him speak badly about another person was when he was watching sports on TV and he called an athlete "eshek" or "dungaluk" (the Turkish words for "donkey" and "stupid") for making a bonehead play! Apparently, Armenians are too nice to have those words in their own language. :)

He took immense pride in his children, but didn't like to brag about them unless someone else asked him about significant events such as their college/law school graduations, new jobs/promotions, or various personal accomplishments.

His grandchildren were his ultimate joy...He always perked up when they were around and he never missed one of their dance recitals or school events.

Sometimes I wish Dad could have been a little more selfish...more willing to take better care of his own health and get more joy out of life for himself. Even through his final weeks, he was just always so concerned for our well-being – our jobs, our finances, our health – and when we confirmed that we were doing well, he'd say, "That makes me very happy."

My father taught me the importance of a good education, the difference between right and wrong, and that if I worked hard and was a good person, good things would happen for me. Of course, he proved to be right.

Looking back, those lessons were far better gifts than a car on my 16th birthday and a lot more useful than knowing how to throw a curveball.

We will certainly miss his physical presence in our lives – his smile; his dry, sometimes politically incorrect, sense of humor; the accent he never really lost that made us look at each other and ask, "What did he say?"

But we can take solace in that as long as we remember him, he'll never really be gone.

So rest in peace, Dad. We'll miss you, but we'll see you again.

- *Scott Mesrobian*

SAMUEL MESROUBIAN 1933-2016

He was the first born of Armenian Genocide survivors, Marie Aynilian from Aintab and Haroutune Mesrobian of Samsoun, present day Turkey. He grew up in the village of Kirikhan in the district of Iskandaroun, better known in biblical times as Antioch, present day Hatay in Turkey.

After the region was annexed by Turkey from the French, the family moved to Aleppo, Syria when Sam was six years old with his two siblings, Lucine and Ara. I was born in the refugee camp known as "Gurintse camp." Sam lived in the refugee camp until graduation from Aleppo College. The school was an affiliate of the American University of Beirut and supported by the Armenian Missionary Association of America and many American Evangelical Churches in USA.

Sam learned the watch repair art during the summer months from our cousin's husband, Hagop Tabibian, and started his own shop upon graduation. After two years of a struggling business, he took a position as electrical technician with the Iraqi Petroleum Co. in the Syrian desert at an outpost oil pumping station named T4. He had fond memories of the four years he worked at IPC. The idea of continuing his education in electrical engineering fermented in his mind while working with professional engineers from Britain and a highly skilled workforce. He also enjoyed the camaraderie of his colleagues in after-work hours where he played goal keeper for the soccer team, and played tennis like his father.

He would come home from the desert every month or two for rest and spend time with his church friends and take me out for special French pastries. The family couldn't wait for his return home to see his happy face and share in his joy of success. The good life came to an abrupt end when war broke out over the ownership of the Suez Canal in 1956. To show support to Egypt, the Syr-

ian forces detonated the pumping stations to disrupt the flow of oil to Europe. When the war ended, the IPC offered back pay to its workers. With this small sum of money, Sam decided to leave for America to study electrical engineering. The Middle East was no longer in his future. Thus started the exodus of our family to America.

After receiving his electrical engineering degree, his work took him from Chicago to Boston where he met his wife Syliva Daghlian. His life in USA was a happy one and he enjoyed his work wherever work took him. He was blessed with one son Scott and daughter Sherre. He was devoted to his family and made sure that they came ahead of anything else. His two grand-daughters Sarah and Paige were the ultimate gift he received from God.

Sam retired from 3M after twenty five years. At his retirement, he told me that he was satisfied with his work. Everyone he met and worked with liked his cheerful attitude and personality.

When St, Sahag Armenian Apostolic Church was established in St. Paul, he became an active member and served as treasurer for many years. He attended Badarak services very regularly. Until the last week of his life, he told me he was going to Church that Sunday after missing service for few months because of his physical conditions.

I will always cherish the moments when we sang Our Lord's Prayer in Armenian standing shoulder to shoulder.

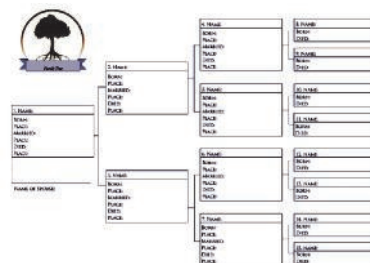
Our Armenian poet, Hovanness Shariatz, wrote "Yete hishadages ge tarami ayn aden yes ge memin" translation " I will die when I am no longer remembered." Now his is united with his younger brother and parents.

The Armenian Community of Minnesota lost a humble, cheerful and compassionate patriot. We will cherish the times we had together and his memory will not fade away.

- Azad Mesrobian



MINNESOTA ARMENIAN GENEALOGY PROJECT



This is an interest group for Minnesota Armenians and friends who are interested in researching and documenting their family history, building family trees, learning about new archival and DNA resources for documenting their past, and creating a genealogy network for the Minnesota Armenian community. We will host presentations,

workshops, and informal help sessions on a regular basis, and post resources and research tips on the group page, and serve as a forum for helping each other! For more information, contact:

- Janet Rith-Najarian (E-mail: riversedge.mn@gmail.com)
- Judy Ohanessian (E-mail: jtohanessian@gmail.com)



American Cultural Organization
of Minnesota
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We're on the Web
www.mnarmenians.org