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Culture
Heritage
History
Language

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota
Established 1980

MinneHyeLites

No. 160 Summer 2021

ACOM LAUNCHES ITS FIRST POST PANDEMIC IN-PERSON PICNIC

SUNDAY, JUNE 27, 2021 3:30 pm

At the Home of Terry McGibbon & Nairy Digris - BACKYARD
1703 Skillman Avenue West, Roseville, MN 55113

RSVP to confirm your attendance: yekibdos@gmail.com

Deadline to Register: Tuesday, June 22, 2021

**Rain or Inclement Weather - PICNIC WILL BE POSTPONED
ensure your email is included in your RSVP so you are notified**

Questions: Call 651-639-9346



Recommended Criteria for attending the Picnic:

Be fully vaccinated against Covid

Masks are optional if fully vaccinated

Masks are mandatory if NOT vaccinated

Bring a lawn chair with you

Bring your own picnic meal to enjoy

No meat grilling will be available

ACOM will provide beverages and eating utensils

Maximum Capacity 30 people

Registered as of 6/16/2021: 11 people



FINALLY !

Biden recognizes atrocities against Armenians as Genocide

WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) — The systematic [killing and deportation of more than a million Armenians by Ottoman Empire forces](#) in the early 20th century was “genocide,” the United States formally declared on Saturday, as President Joe Biden used that [precise word](#) after the White House had avoided it for decades for fear of alienating ally Turkey.

For the full article go to:

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/biden-recognize-atrocities-against-armenians-043422001.html>

And as a humorous aside:

Hi and Happy Spring to all my ACOM Friends!

It seems that President Biden has the guts to call a spade “a spade”. Hope you are all staying happy and healthy.
Pete I. (Watertown, SD)

This is funny. Translation: “Hey You Look Here! Yes or No! – Tell me – are you going to recognize the Armenian Genocide or not? April 24, 2021.”

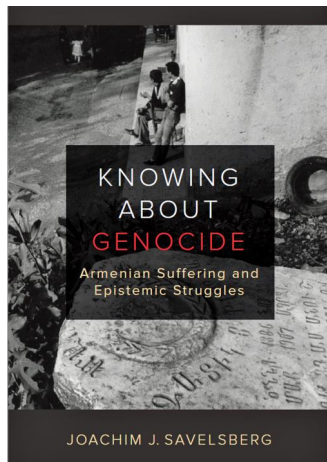


BOOK PRESENTATION BY PROFESSOR SAVELSBERG

On April 20th, 2021, Dr. Joachim Savelsberg presented his new book, *Knowing About Genocide: Armenian Suffering and Epistemic Struggles*.

The book is a sociological look at the complexities that surround the question “How do we know what we know about the Armenian Genocide,” but is written in a way that’s accessible to readers who aren’t sociologists. As a descendant of survivors of the Armenian Genocide, and not a scholar or sociologist, I found myself nodding along to many of the examples and anecdotes in the book.

The central idea of the book is that we know what we know about the Armenian Genocide through sedimentation, experiences and anecdotes piling up over the years, forming our collective memory. After establishing how this knowledge has built up over the years in the Armenian communities (including some examples from Minnesota) through storytelling and rituals, Savelsberg shows how the Turkish perspective of the Genocide was shaped and reinforced



over the years. Next, Savelsberg shows us what happens when these two clash, through public opinion and court cases in France.

Dr. Savelsberg’s presentation gave a brief but excellent overview of his book, and the conversation inspired by it was lively and interesting. As Armenians, our stories about our family’s experiences in the Genocide might be common to us but not common knowledge here in Minnesota. But, as Dr. Savelsberg points out in his final chapter: “In the context of human rights hegemony, efforts at denial yield counterproductive consequences, reinforcing the understanding of the mass violence against the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire as a case of Genocide.”

Dr. Joachim Savelsberg’s book can be downloaded as a free PDF

<https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520380189/knowning-about-genocide>

Peter Hajinian

ACOM GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION **APRIL 24, 2021**

ACOM's well-attended April 24, 2021 Armenian Genocide Commemorative gathering, held via Zoom, began with a wide-ranging discussion by Dr. Artyom Tonoyan of the origins, course, and consequences of the Ottoman-organized mass murder of perhaps one million Armenians in 1915-18 (and beyond). Artyom Tonoyan, a research associate at the University of Minnesota's Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, and an expert on religion and ethnic conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, also addressed President Biden's recent recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Dr. Tonoyan ended his talk with a discussion of the recent Armenian-Azeri war and the continuing political and social upheavals in Armenia. He offered salient points tying the Armenian Genocide to persistent ethnic hatreds in the region and the dangerous vulnerability of Armenia in today's South Caucasus.

The night concluded with four moving musical performances. Terry McGibbon, an ACOM board member, webmaster, and virtuoso in technical matters, performed Baghdasarian's *Noubar Noubar* on piano. Andy Ylitalo, a doctoral student in chemical engineering at Caltech, sang *Ganchum Em Ari Ari*.



Andy's mother, Caroline Melkonian Ylitalo, a research scientist at 3M, accompanied him on piano. Both Ylitalos are active members of ACOM. Liana Martirosyan Brouillard, who trained at the Yerevan State Conservatory (named in honor of Komitas), and later played with the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony Orchestra and Fargo Civic Opera, performed *Bach/Marcello Adagio, Concerto in D Minor* on violin, accompanied by her daughter, Eva, on the piano.

Ms. Brouillard formerly led the student orchestra at St. Catherine's University. The evening concluded with Mariam Khachatryan Galoustian's performance of *Cilicia* on the flute. A native of Gyumri, like the featured speaker for the evening, Artyom Tonoyan, Ms. Galoustian graduated from the Yerevan Con-

servatory of Music (named in honor of Komitas) and has worked for nearly two decades in the musical world. A former Minnesotan, she now lives in Florida.

In light of Azerbaijan's (and indeed Turkey's) recent attacks on Armenia, the evening was both informative, and extremely poignant.

Steven Usitalo

ACOM Genealogy Session

The first session was held via Zoom on Saturday, February 6, 2021 from 3 to 5 pm and was attended by 18 people interested in learning anything that would help them trace their Armenian roots. Janet Rith-Najarian and Judy Ohannesian were the co-hosts. We are so thankful to have such knowledgeable ladies willing to assist beginners as well as advanced folks working on their ancestry and family trees. The participants expressed an interest in having regular Genealogy workshop sessions that ACOM would organize, where they would have the opportunity to ask more questions and talk about this subject in more detail. As soon as a calendar is set, we will share it with everyone.

ACOM Book Club News

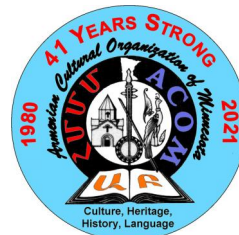
BOOK CLUB UPDATE

Given the continuing risky situation of the pandemic, the ACOM Book Club members have continued to meet virtually every month via Zoom. The regular seven or eight members who participate held their meeting on March 18, and the book for that month was *Istanbul: City of Majesty at the Crossroads of the World* by Thomas F. Madden. Their hope is that by September of this year, everyone will have received their Covid vaccine and they can resume meeting in person again.

If you are interested in joining this group, contact Leroy at: leroy.erickson@minnmicro.com

ACOM 2021 - CALENDAR OF EVENTS - June—December

Questions, Suggestions, email: jpderboghossian@gmail.com
or call ACOM President, John at: 231-313-1612



Date	Day	Time	Type	Event
6/14	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
6/17	Thu	7:00 PM	ZOOM	Book Club
6/20	Sun	1:00 PM	ZOOM	ADE Rehearsal
6/27	Sun	1:30 PM	ZOOM	Armenian Dance teaching
6/27	Sun	3:30 PM	in person	Annual Picnic at McGibbon/Digris in Roseville
7/4			INDEPENDENCE DAY	
7/12	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
8/8	Sun	3:00 PM	in person	Pool Party at Gregorians in Roseville
8/9	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
TBD	Sun	3:00 PM	ZOOM	Social event - Trivia by Mark Keljik
9/6			LABOR DAY	
9/13	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
9/16	Thu	7:00 PM	ZOOM	Book Club
10/11	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
10/21	Thu	7:00 PM	ZOOM	Book Club
11/7			Daylight Savings Ends	
11/8	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
11/18	Thu	7:00 PM	ZOOM	Book Club
12/13	Mon	5:30 PM	ZOOM	Board Meeting
12/25			CHRISTMAS	
12/31	Fri		NEW YEAR'S EVE	

All ACOM meetings and Events are currently scheduled to be on ZOOM until further notice (except as noted).

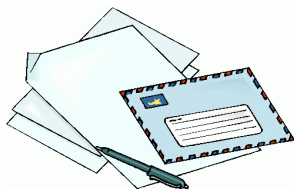
ZOOM Links will be provided shortly before the event via E-mail.

NOTE: Dates and Times are accurate at the time of publishing. For an up-to-date calendar, please visit our Website mnarmenians.org

ACOM WEBSITE

Remember to continue to check our website:

www.mnarmenians.org



FROM OUR MAIL BAG

THANK YOU

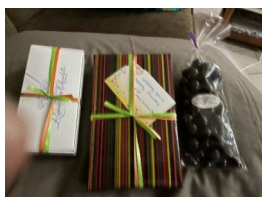
Special thanks to youse guys (NY) who put this newsletter (#159) together. It is terrific. Believe me, your efforts are appreciated by many. Oink,
Aram & Ruth C.

Nairy and Terry, Thanks for the hard work on behalf of ACOM of organizing, preparing and sending out ACOM Newsletter to the Armenian Community. An important ACOM outreach function to the local community. You both are the glue that holds ACOM together!!
Abriss!!

P.S. Thanks to Lynne Gildensoph for the distribution of the Newsletter.
Francis B.

Thanks to the ACOM board for the wonderful surprise I received today! (chocolates for a Speedy Recovery) – Spring 2021
Jim F.

Dear ACOM Board,



Thank you so much for the delicious chocolates and well wishes! Mitchell, Tiago, and I (and Maya - the dog) are all doing well and adjusting to this new way of life. For those curious about the name, we watch a lot of European soccer, especially the Spanish league, and there are a few Tiagos who play. So that's where the idea came from. We also followed Mitchell's family tradition of giving two middle names, one of them, Armenian. Tiago's full name is **TIAGO**

RICHARD HOVANESS ERICKSON. We think his dark hair is the 1/8th Armenian shining through :). Again, thank you all so much for your generosity.
Sarah and Mitchell E.



Hi ACOM Executive Committee,
Very special thanks to you for delivering the lovely bouquet flowers in sympathy for the loss of my sister,
LUCY CHARCHIAN SINKINS.

We were quite surprised when the doorbell rang. The flowers are absolutely lovely and it means a lot to Ruth and me. Long live ACOM.
Aram & Ruth C.

SYMPATHY

Some sad news for Ruth and me. My sister, **LUCY CHARCHIAN SINKINS**, age 79, passed away February 9th 2021 in London, England.

She died from COVID 19 after a brief hospitalization where she was initially expected to recover. She fell ill within three days after getting her first COVID 19 vaccination.

Lucy's husband, John Sinkins, her son Alan, and her parents, Juhar and Sumpad Charchian, preceded her in death. She is survived by two sons, John and Scott, a daughter Laura Alicia, her brother Aram Charchian, and two nephews Paul and Sam.

Aram C.

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of **HENRY GREGORIAN** on May 28, 2021. He was born on May 14, 1924 and passed away in Deland, FL, from complications of Parkinson's and a stroke. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Laurel, his three daughters, May Joan, Nektar and Nairi, their spouses and their children, former wife Philomena, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

ACOM was very happy to recognize Henry at its "virtual" Voski Ashoun event of October 18, 2020 via Zoom, which included excerpts of his playing the violin at various ACOM events in the past. For Henry's full biography, look up ACOM Newsletter #159 Winter 2021.

Henry will be terribly missed: his generosity, his genuine interest in ACOM and anything Armenian, his support and his smile. To Laurel and the entire Gregorian family, please accept our most sincere condolences.

ACOM Board

ACOM wishes to express its sympathy to Terry McGibbon on the loss of his sister, **MARY PAT**. She had been battling COPD and finally lost the battle in June 2021 a few days before her 70th Birthday. May she rest in peace.

ACOM Board

(Continued from page 5)

CONGRATULATIONS

Twenty 3M employees honored for exceptional volunteerism. For 34 years, the 3Mgives Volunteer Award has celebrated 3M volunteers who go above and beyond to make their community a better place. 3M honored 20 employees from around the world for their volunteerism in 2020. From coaching robotics teams to being a wish granter for Make-a-Wish Foundation to serving as a volunteer paramedic, these individuals supported a wide variety of causes. To recognize their outstanding service and positive impact on the lives of others, 3M Foundation is donating \$3,000 to each awardee's nonprofit of choice – totaling \$60,000 in financial support for community organizations. Congratulations to our 2020 3Mgives Volunteer Awardees!

We congratulate **CAROLINE YLITALO**, division scientist in Minnesota, United States, who was honored for her dedication to helping girls and under-represented students advance in STEM. She has volunteered with numerous science encouragement programs, including the Twin Cities Regional Science Fair and 3M Young Scientist Challenge, and many of her mentees have gone on to pursue STEM degrees in college. In addition, she is the president of the Minnesota chapter of the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR).

ED KVARNES and NANCY GOSSELL celebrated their first wedding anniversary at the end of February 2021. Ed has been a regular member of ADE - the Armenian Dance Ensemble of MN - for many years and continues to rehearse with the rest of the team every other week on Zoom! Our heartfelt wishes for happiness and health to both of them.

MARK WIERSBECK retired on March 19, 2021. He was at UnitedHealth for more than six years and before that worked at Cargill for almost ten years. Mark worked in the Tax department for both companies, specifically with the 1099 process at UHG. Wishing you good health and happiness, Mark!

COMMENTS ON “WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING MARRIED TO AN ARMENIAN”

Very Interesting. Enjoyed the discussion.
Martin A.

Thank You. It was very interesting.
Steven U.

Thank You.
Peter H.

Shnorhagalutyun all ! SO wonderful and enlightening !
Kassian V.

I really enjoyed the interviews yesterday afternoon & I think you did a great job with the questions.
Francis B.

COMMENTS ON GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION

My thanks to Naïry and Terry for yesterday's ACOM Remembrance, for all the time, energy and skill it had to have taken to make all the necessary arrangements and technical demands. You both are the mainstays of our cultural community and its most generous guardians. I am grateful to you for your devoted service.

Joan P.

Thank you Artyom for the insightful discussion and Naïry and Steven for organizing. We have to go to the church commemoration, but we are honored to have been invited to play and look forward to watching the performances on the recording.

Caroline Y.

I have to leave. Thanks to Naïry, Terry, Artyom and all the wonderful musicians! Terry, I had no idea ! (piano playing)

Joachim S

Thanks so much to Naïry and Terry for all their work behind the scenes and Naïry for leading our program. Thanks also to our speaker and each of the musicians. We have such a great community to celebrate!

Marty M.

Thank you everyone, I need to go. WONDERFUL program!

John P.DB

Thank you everyone. I have to leave now and go to the Church for the commemoration service there. Thank you Naïry and Steven one more time.

Artyom T

SPEEDY RECOVERY

JIM FAVRE had his right knee surgery (the left one was done in 2020) replacement done this past Spring 2021. He is home controlling the swelling and straightening his leg with all the necessary physical therapy goals. No problems so far.


(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Jim, we are very happy to know that all went well. You will be totally ready to enjoy this Summer!

DICK DOLAN (FL) celebrated his 83rd Birthday on March 4, 2021. Many Happy Returns Dick!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY DICK !

At the same time, his daughter Michele Dolan wrote:

 **Michele Dolan**
19h · 🌐

Prayers please, for my Poppa, [Dick Dolan](#)! It's his 83rd birthday tomorrow, and he's having open-heart surgery at 9 am. Pray for many more good birthdays. UPDATE 2:45PM only 2 bypasses were needed and they are successfully finishing surgery. He should be headed to icu recovery ward within the hour. He is still intubated and sedated at this point. Your prayers are working! GOD is good!



ACOM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
DAVED NAJARIAN

The Najarian family has another facet to their story that is one of sweetness, coolness, and creaminess - ICE CREAM!



Starting from an article that appeared in the St. Croix news, [Nelson's Ice Cream Shop](#), ACOM wanted to follow up on the family's history by interviewing Daved Najarian (Dr. John Najarian's grandson) who runs Nelson's Ice Cream Shops and more recently Nellies Ice Cream.

Alarica Hassett took on the pleasant task of interviewing Daved Najarian Via ZOOM. The video recording and a transcript of the interview are available on the ACOM Website. (mnarmenians.org)

Link to the video is [HERE](#)

Link to the Transcript is [HERE](#)

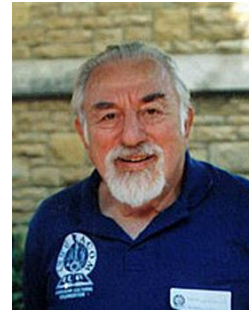


FIRST VAHRAM KARDASHIAN
COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD
TO DR. JOHN NAJARIAN

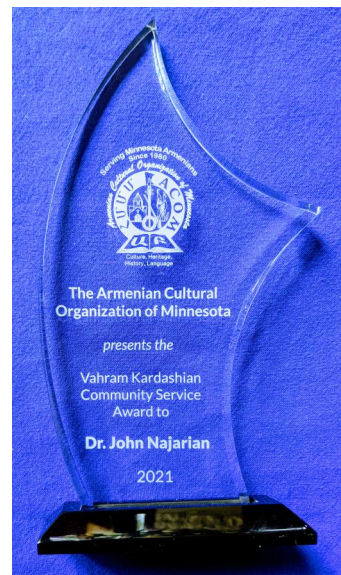
The award honoring Dr. John Najarian was presented to his son **Pete** (picture below) during ACOM's 2021 Virtual Gaghant Celebration. The inaugural Vahram Kardashian Community Service Award was awarded posthumously to Dr. John Najarian, always striving to do the best for people.



Vahram Kardashian (1927 – 2017)



Vahram Kardashian had many passions in life, science, history, reading, photography, celestial navigation, inventing, and, perhaps most importantly, Armenia and its community wherever it may be. Vahram recognized the importance of having not only a Cultural Armenian Community but also a Faithful Armenian Community and with that awareness, he shared himself with others so that the community could grow, prosper, and remain.



Community News

“WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING MARRIED TO AN ARMENIAN”

Since 2012, ACOM has been introducing a number of Armenian community members and their spouses in presentations that have been informative and at times, extremely entertaining, while telling us about themselves, their years of growing up as an Armenian, or their lives and challenges of being married to an Armenian. So far, we have held 13 sessions of “growing up Armenian” and 3 sessions “being married to an Armenian”. If you are interested in participating in either one of these presentations, please let us know via email and we will put you on our next program.

Email: yekibdos@gmail.com

ARMENIA NEWS

Pope Francis declares February 27, 2021 as St. Gregory of Narek Day

By the decree of Pope Francis, February 27 will be celebrated in the Roman calendar as the day of remembrance of **St. Gregory of Narek (Grigor Narekatsi)**, Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Church, the Armenian Embassy to the Holy See reports.

It will be included in the calendars of Catholic churches all over the world, the books of the liturgy and the texts of the liturgy will be updated.

On February 23, 2015, the Pope awarded the title of “Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Church” to the medieval Armenian clergyman, theologian, poet St. Gregory of Narek.

Pope Francis thus confirmed the decision of the Congregation for the Saints of the Holy See, according to which Gregory of Narek deserved the highest ecclesiastical award.

*Public Radio of Armenia
February 2, 2021*

GARY & SUSAN LIND-SINANIAN

We have been teaching folkdance since 1976; Armenian, Assyrian and Arabic. Nowadays just Armenian. Our museum is in Watertown, MA, just west of Cambridge, about 11 miles from downtown Boston. The museum (ALMA) was founded in 1971 (50th anniversary this fall) and we've both worked there since 1986. If you go to the museum website at <https://www.armenianmuseum.org/>, you can also see us in the virtual section teaching dance, embroidery, talking about artifacts, etc. We're also on YouTube.

NOTE: ALMA name changed to Armenian Museum of America in 2012 (AMA). Also, Susan & Gary participate in the monthly Armenian Zoom dance session led by Nairy.

URGENT **ACOM NEEDS A WEBSITE DESIGNER**

We would like to make a few modifications to our Website, so if you have that capability and think you have the time and willingness to help ACOM, please contact Terry McGibbon at: hyebar@yahoo.com. Thanks in advance.

MARCHING WITH THE PHARAOHS

Miral Mahilian became a global sensation after her photos heading the mummies parade went viral. Miral's photo carrying the sun disc was on the cover of literally every article that covered the event.

Miral wrote on her social media platforms, So proud and honored to be part of such a historical day. Words cannot describe the feeling of walking along with the great pharaohs at the golden parade.

Miral is an Egyptian model and actress. She appeared in several commercials.

She is Egyptian Armenian.



KOREAN WAR VETERAN VARTKESS TARBASSIAN

Mark W. forwarded some information about his Uncle, Vartkess Tarbassian. Video of Vartkess' Oral History—[LINK TO VIDEO](#)

Text of Vartkess' statements on the visit of South Korean President Moon Jae-in to the U.S.

President Moon, welcome to the United States. We are always ready to welcome a firm democratic ally to our shores and trust you will enjoy your visit to the United States. My name is Vartkess Tarbassian. I served with the 2nd Infantry Division and was sent to Korea as a radio operator. I served with the 2nd Infantry Division in the Iron Triangle. Then I was sent temporarily later to the 3rd Infantry Division as a DMZ Observer Scout. Your country and mine have shown the world that our Alliance has been cemented in blood. Even today, the United Nations, the United States and Korea stand as brothers ready in arms to defend Korea if necessary. We hope to see the peaceful reunification of Korea someday. In any event, we stand together.



“WHAT IS IT LIKE BEING MARRIED TO AN ARMENIAN” – Session # 3

ACOM thanks both presenters, **DOUG TIFFANY** and **STEVEN USITALO** as well as their spouses, **Judy Ohannesian** and **Margarita Aroutiunian**, for agreeing and participating in ACOM's Third Session of "What Is It Like....". The event took place virtually via Zoom on Sunday afternoon, March 7, 2021 at 3 pm. We had a great audience and many people asked the presenters a variety of questions after the session was officially done. Below is STEVEN's information.

STEVEN USITALO ACOM Vice President ~ 1/1/2021-12/31/2021



Born in Finland (Helsinki), my family moved to the US (to Detroit) when I was in middle school. I attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor for my undergraduate degree (in Russian and East European Studies/History) and then did an MA

in Political History at the University of Helsinki, an MA in Soviet and East European Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, and a Ph.D. in History at McGill University in Montreal. My graduate work was in Russian history (specifically eighteenth-century Russian history). I taught as a lecturer (or visiting assistant professor) at McGill for three years and I also taught as a "sessional lecturer" at Concordia University in Montreal.

I'm a professor of history and chair of the History and Social Sciences Department at Northern State University (it's one of six state universities in SD). I've been teaching there since 2005 and chair of the department since 2012.

During one of my sabbaticals, in 2011-2012, I received a Fulbright Research/Teaching Grant to Armenia. Although I was hosted by Yerevan State University, and indeed taught one course there on comparative genocide, I spent most of the year doing research at the Sergei Parajanov Museum in Yerevan.

I've published two books: one on the Russian Academy of Sciences and Russia's "First" Scientist, Mikhail Lomonosov, and the second an edited anthology on Russian and Soviet history (to the collapse of the Soviet Union).

My next two projects are translating a book, from Russian into English, on Sergei Parajanov's years in Tbilisi, Georgia. I also wrote an introduction to this book. The second project is a study of Sergei Parajanov's most famous, iconic, film, *The Color of Pomegranates*. This book will also deal with the nationalism and cultural revival in Armenia in the late 1960s.

I hope to publish the Parajanov book in a series put out by the British Film Institute.

Now to Armenia itself, or my interest in Armenia. First, my wife is Armenian (born in Yerevan), and we've traveled together to Armenia many times over the past 17 years.

The history, modern and pre-modern, of Armenia, and its culture (film, art, music, and literature) are fascinating and well worth anyone's time to try to understand.

All of my wife's family (parents, sisters, uncles, aunts, and cousins) live in Yerevan. My first trip to Armenia, however, was in 1993, when I was on a graduate archival exchange in St Petersburg, Russia, and went on a visit to Armenia.

I thought Armenia particularly fascinating then: it was undergoing rapid, if also chaotic, transformations, and since my undergraduate days in the late 1980s in Michigan, Armenia (and Nagorno-Karabakh) were included in my studies. So witnessing Armenia emerge from the Soviet Union, while I was on the ground, greatly deepened my understanding of Armenia and the Caucasus more generally.

One of my undergraduate instructors (for courses on the Soviet Union, nationalism, and related courses) was Ronald Suny, who then held the Armenian Chair in History at the University of Michigan. It was in his courses that I first was introduced to Armenia academically.

Sergei Parajanov and *The Color of Pomegranates* are one aspect of Armenia that I've focused on in recent years. I also teach a course on Modern Genocide every academic year. This includes "case" studies of the genocide of Native and Indigenous peoples, the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, the genocide of the Roma, Cambodia, and Rwanda.

My first sustained study of the Armenian Genocide was nearly a decade ago. My year in Armenia (and visits since then) deepened my knowledge and interest in the topic. I've attended many workshops at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, where, I might add, I've met other scholars interested in the Armenian Genocide to collaborate with as teachers. I've published several book reviews now on recent works on the Armenian Genocide.

So my great (continuing) interest in Armenia is both personal, and academic. I believe groups like the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota (ACOM) are an effective way to maintain and expand interest in Armenia, and to strengthen community ties in Minnesota. By being an inclusive organization, by being an inviting space for all those interested in Armenia (by Armenia I mean Armenia itself as well as interest in Armenian communities wherever they may be), ACOM can continue to flourish in coming years

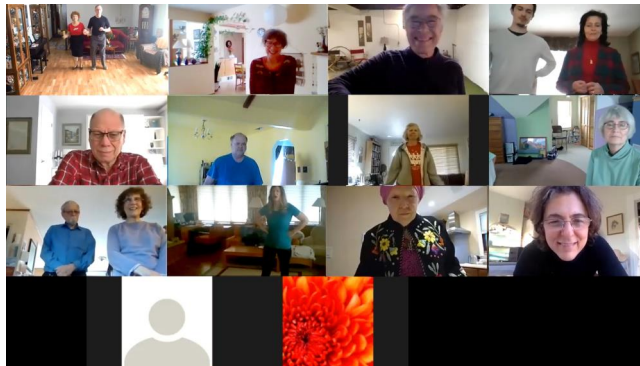
The Armenian Dance Ensemble has been representing Armenian Culture through Dance and Music for over 25 years. If you have in interest in Armenian dance, if you have danced in the past, or have never danced but really would like to learn and participate, this would be a good time to give it a try. All 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 for the time being, on ZOOM. 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.

A Note To Remember When We Start Actual In-Person Performances: 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

ARMENIAN FOLKDANCE LESSONS ON ZOOM

Sunday, August 30, 2020 at 2:00 pm was the first monthly session of Armenian folkdances that I taught on ZOOM. These monthly teaching classes continue on ZOOM on the **last Sunday of each month.** Dance steps are explained and demonstrated, and then the participants are able to do them with the music, in the “comfort” of their own homes. Since these are not choreographed dances, anyone interested in Armenian music and dance is invited to join. ZOOM sessions are now set up for



each month all the way into December 2021 now starting at 1:30 pm.

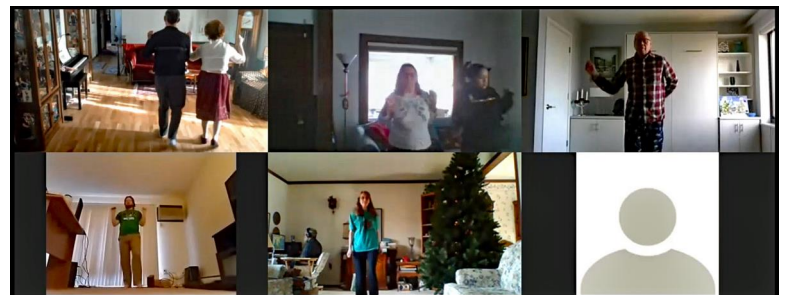
There has been a substantial amount of interest for this event online, and the participants have been Armenians and non-Armenians alike, from all around the US. If anyone is interested in receiving the link in order to participate,

send me an email and I will add your name to the list. The ZOOM invitation will come to you by email about 2 days before the event.

Email Naïry: yekibdos@gmail.com

ARMENIAN DANCE ENSEMBLE (ADE) RESUMES REHEARSALS ON LINE

Since we began our on-line ADE rehearsals on Sunday, August, 9, 2020, members of ADE have been meeting every other week and not only reviewing the dances in our repertoire, but also learning some simpler new Armenian folkdances. It has been a lot of fun to see the friendly faces (without masks) and chat. Rehearsal dates are already set up on Zoom till the end of 2021 in hopes of being able to dance together in person in the not too distant future. Check the calendar in this Newsletter for exact dates.



ACOM BOARD MEMBERS 2020-21

- President:** John P-D.B.
- Vice President:** Steven U.
- Past President:** Naïry D.
- Secretary:** Lynne G./ Patty K.
- Treasurer:** Naïry D.
- Members at Large:** Patty K., Kassian V., Sarah E., Mark W., Annie W., Alarica H.
- Webmaster & Newsletter Editor:** Terry M.
- Board Advisor:** Tom K.

Any ACOM dues-paid member who is interested in serving on the Board is welcome to contact us:

www.mnarmenians.org

Likewise, get in touch with us if you have comments, suggestions or would like to submit an article for an upcoming ACOM Newsletter.

ACOM 2021 PAID MEMBERS

Andeweg, George, Jeanne
 Aram, Connie & George
 Aroutiunian, Margarita; Usitalo, Steven
 Arslan, Arnold
 Asgjan, Phil
 Badman, Jeanne
 Baradaran-Cafesjian, Kathleen, Jaff
 Bulbulian, Francis, Barbara
 Charchian, Aram, Ruth
 Daniels, Kathleen; Myers, Marcie, Mari
 Digris, Naïry; McGibbon, Terry & Hassetts
 Erickson, Leroy, Cynthia
 Favre, Margaret, Jim
 Gauro, Boghos, Lana
 Gildensoph, Lynne
 Hajinian, Peter, Brooke & family
 Hakobyan, Artur; Papyieva, Nina & family
 Izmirian, Peter
 Johnson, Andrea, Lowell
 Kardashian, Patty, Viguen
 Kashian, Darla & family
 Kelegian, Der Yeprem, Judy
 Keljik, Tom; Collins, Jennifer
 Keljik, Mark; Grantz, Caren
 Koch, Dick, Diane
 Kourajian, Art
 Matossian, LouAnn
 Meketarian, Martin, Mara
 Merjanian, Peggy, Steve
 Mesrobian, Azad, Karen
 Ohannesian, Judy; Tiffany, Doug
 Olesen, Linnea
 Parker-Der Boghossian, John; Pounds, Jim
 Pompeian, Jayne
 Poritsky, Joan
 Rith-Najarian, Janet, Steve
 Savayan, Peka, Maria & Stephen A.
 Scallen, Steve, Chacké
 Vaubel, Kass, Carol, Jamaica P.
 Wells, Annie
 Wiersbeck, Mark
 Wiersbeck, Sarah
 Ylitalo, Caroline, David & family

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

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 (Gaghant), guest speakers, folk dance lessons and performances by the Armenian Dance Ensemble of Minnesota, Genocide commemorations, summer picnics, and series of Interviews of Presenters talking about their heritage. 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.

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, 2021

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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Nairy Digris, Treasurer
1703 Skillman Ave. W.
Roseville, MN 55113

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Roseville, MN 55113



We're on the Web

www.mnarmenians.org