



Culture  
Heritage  
History  
Language

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota  
Established 1980

# MinneHyeLites

No. 150 Fall 2017

ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA

Presents

## 37th Annual Gaghanat New Year Celebration

Friday, January 12, 2018

6:00 p.m. Social Hour/Cocktails

7:00 p.m. Dinner

**Location:** MidPointe Event Center

415 Pascal Street North

St. Paul, MN 55104

Free parking in front of building

### Featuring:

Catered dinner by Mim's Café

Armenian Dance by *Music Mundial*

Dancing \* Silent Auction \* Cash Bar

\* Activities for the young \*

Paid reservations due by:

**December 15, 2017**

Please go to the ACOM Website

to obtain the form to RSVP and

pay your 2018 membership dues!

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



Բարի կադանդ եւ ամանոր

## ACOM Sponsors a Cooking Class With the St. Sahag Women's Guild

On Saturday, November 18, in the kitchen at St. Sahag Armenian Church, participants were treated to the ins and outs of making Armenian foods based on Eggplants. The results were great and tasted marvelous. Thanks to Judy Ohannesian for leading the class in their preparations. The recipes were taken from the new "Every Day Armenian" cookbook.



Professor and Students

## ART EXHIBIT: "ARDENT NATURE: ARSHILE GORKY LANDSCAPES, 1943-1947"

An exhibit of paintings by the Armenian painter, Arshile Gorky (1902-1947) is currently showing in New York City at Hauser & Wirth's Upper East Side space and runs through December 23.

Organized by Gorky's granddaughter, Saskia Spender, the thirty-plus paintings from multiple collections "span some of the happiest and saddest days of his life." Gorky had recently married a young woman from Virginia and set up house in rural Connecticut. His work from this time demonstrates a "return to the natural world," reminiscent of his earliest memories of his childhood home on the shores of Lake Van. When the Museum of Modern Art asked Gorky what factor most influenced his art, he replied: "The fact that I was taken away from my little village when I was five years old yet all my vital memories are of these first years. These were the days when I smelled the bread, I saw my first red poppy, the moon, the innocent seeing."

One sees a shift in Gorky's style in the exhibit, from thickly-applied paint and precise forms, to oils thinned with turpentine and a soft watercolor look. Like many great artists, Gorky's life ended tragically, his health failing, his will to live gone. Yet these paintings, completed before his drastic decline, burst with his love of life.

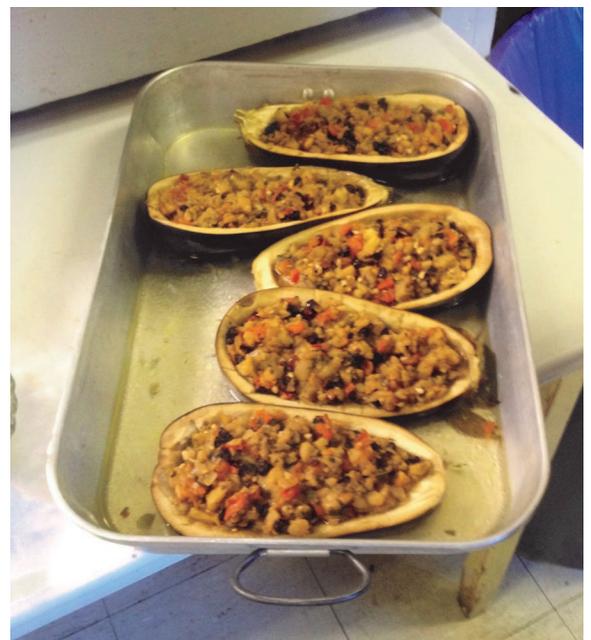
Andrea Johnson

From a NYT article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/07/arts/design/arshile-gorky-hauser-wirth-review.html? r=0>

(Phrases in quotes are from the article.)

Some Class  
Results

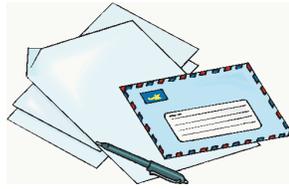


Mmmm Good



## ACOM WEBSITE

Remember to continue to check our website: [mnarmenians.org](http://mnarmenians.org)



## CONGRATULATIONS

To **Dr. Joseph Tashjian** who retired earlier this year from St. Paul Radiology. We wish him happiness and good health in his new venture.

In the meantime, ACOM wants to make sure to recognize Joe's accomplishments throughout his entire career at St. Paul Radiology. He was named Top Doctor by Mpls./St. Paul magazine: Top Doctor 2014, Top Doctor 2015, Top Doctor 2016, Top Doctor 2017.

To **Artur Hakopian and Nina Papiyeva**, as well as big sister Lia Lilit, who welcomed baby girl Maya Tatev. She arrived August 16, 2017 weighing 7 lbs 3 oz, and 19 inches long. Both mom and baby are doing well, and "Maya is adapting to her little sister's crying in the middle of the



night..."



To **Hasmik Ter Vardanyan and Albert Siu** on the arrival of their first baby boy, Rylan Yervand Siu, born on July 13, 2017 in Maple Grove, MN, weighing 6 lbs 11 oz, and 19 inches long. His middle name, Yervand, is Hasmik's paternal grandfather's name.



Congrats also to grandparents **Gayane and Bobken Ter Vardanyan** in Jamestown, ND, to **uncle Arthur**, to **great-aunt Vi Reimers**, to **cousins Ericksons and Abrahamians**.

## THANK YOU, ADE DANCERS

They loved you ! They are asking to have you back !  
*The community at Sholom Senior Residence in St. Louis Park*

What a great performance! You do such a great job. Thank you. Many thanks for all you do for the community.  
*A.H.*

Thank you all dancers for your wonderful program this afternoon and to share with you how touched I was to watch Sita smile, appreciate and deeply enjoy the music and your dances. You brought so much pleasure into the room to all those who live there and those of us who were visiting.

Thank you  
*J.P.*

Mignette and John Najarian for their generous and continued support of ACOM ! We truly appreciate it.  
*ACOM Executive Committee*

ACOM , My mom just received a Gourmet Basket from ACOM a few minutes ago congratulating her on her very special birthday. Looks wonderful, from the photos I've seen. Thank you all so much!  
*Cynthia*

ACOM Board, thank you so much for the flowers! What a pleasant surprise in the middle of our hectic day!!! Nina and I are very touched, please pass our thanks to all board members. By the way, we not only had a new baby (as if that's not enough to keep us busy :) but also are moving to a new house :))) Bought a new place, sold our town home.

Anyhow, once again, thank you for the nice surprise. The flowers arrived yesterday to our current home and today we are taking them to the new house!  
Have a nice day and see you soon!  
*Artur Hakopian & Nina Papiyeva*

ACOM Committee Members: thank you all very much for the beautiful flowers you guys sent to us. I am happy to be part of ACOM and introduce Rylan to Armenian culture. We will definitely be bringing him to many ACOM functions.  
Love,  
*Hasmik, Albert, Rylan*



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**Vi Reimers**, the ACOM Executive Committee wants you to know that we all join to wish you continued good health and happiness, in particular on this very special Birthday of yours !

A special birthday party was organized in Vi's honor by her family. In attendance at her 90th birthday celebration were Charlie Kourajian (former mayor of Jamestown, ND and a brother to Art), Mary (Kourajian) Werner (Art's sister), Gayane and Bobken (who have attended many ACOM events) and two of Vi's sisters and one brother in law, who came from the Seattle area. That's on top of the dozens of friends from the Jamestown and Wimbledon area. Among the many things to eat were stuffed grape leaves and bourma, which tended to disappear pretty quickly. The birthday cake was made to look like a real suitcase.

Vi enjoyed her birthday party and so did all her family and friends.

## SYMPATHY

ACOM expresses its condolences to **Susan Keljik (Jeff)** and her entire family for the loss of her mother, Joan Griffiths, who passed away in Burnsville on September 18, 2017 at the age of 99. A funeral service was held on September 27 and she was buried at Ft. Snelling.

## ACOM 2017 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](mailto:hyebar@yahoo.com)

### **Andeweg, George & Jeanne**

Aram, Connie & George

### **Arslian, Arnold**

**Asgian, Phil**

### **Bulbulian, Francis & Barbara**

Charchian, Aram & Ruth

Daniels, Kathleen, Mari & Myers, Marcie

### **Desteian, John & Savage, Judy**

Digris, Nairy & McGibbon, Terry

### **Dourgarian, Gregg & Mary**

Erickson, Leroy & Cynthia & family

Favre, Margaret & Jim

### **Gauro, Boghos & Lana & family**

Gildensoph, Lynne

Gregorian, Henry & Laurel

### **Hajinian, Peter & Brooke & family**

Hakobyan, Artur & Papiyeva, Nina & family

Hayes, Adrienne, Jim & family

Izmirian, Peter

### **Johnson, Andrea & Lowell & family**

### **Kashian, Darla**

Kaye, Alfred

### **Keljik, Mark & Grantz, Caren**

### **Keljik, Tom & Collins, Jennifer**

Khachatourian, Armineh

Kourajian, Arthur

Kourajian, John & Myrna

Matossian, LouAnn

Meketarian, Marty, Mara, & family

Merjanian, Steve & Peggy

Mesrobian, Azad & Karen & family

### **Najarian, John & Mignette**

Nyholm, Pete & Dana & family

### **Ohanessian, Judy & family**

### **Olesen, Linnea, Dave, Kristin**

### **Parker Der-Boghossian, John**

### **Plummer, Elizabeth**

Pompeian, Edward & Jayne

Poritsky, Joan

Reimers, Vi

Savayan, Peka & Maria, Anderson, Steve

### **Tashjian, Joseph & Savik, Kay**

Usitalo, Steven & Aroutiunian, Margarita

Vaubel, Natasha & Carol & Jamaica

Warren, Melanie & John Bendian

### **Wiersbeck, Mark**

Wiersbeck, Sarah

Ylitalo, Caroline & Dave & family

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

## ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF MINNESOTA (ACOM)

### **MISSION STATEMENT**



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

### CONSTITUTION

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

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

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 an 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 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.

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

For additional information, call Nairy:  
651-639-9346 or email: [hyebar@yahoo.com](mailto:hyebar@yahoo.com)

The Armenian Dance Ensemble has been representing Armenian Culture through Dance and Music for over 25 years. Our performances cover a range of Armenian Historic and Modern dances and always include some background on Armenia. This last year the group has performed in many venues—from Festival of Nations and MN State Fair (our largest shows) to smaller gatherings at community centers, senior residences, nursing homes, outdoor parks and church Festivals. We also performed at the Festival held this fall at the Armenian Church. Overall we have had more than 15 performance days in 2017. Some of the highlights of our year are shown below.



ADE at Minnesota State Fair 2017

Community Events



ADE at Jones-Harrison

10 19 2017



ADE at Wealshire with Sita Ohanessian

09 24 2017

Senior Residences and Nursing Homes



ADE at Centennial Lakes

08 29 2017

ADE Performance Picture Highlights



ADE at Ukrainian Holiday Fest 2017



ADE at Ukrainian Holiday Fest 2017



ADE at Cherrywood Pointe with two new dancers

Festivals



## This week's dream trip: Falling into Armenia's generous embrace

The Week Staff—reprinted from: [theweek.com](http://theweek.com) November 21, 2017

*Each week, we spotlight a dream vacation recommended by some of the industry's top travel writers. This week's pick is Armenia.*



"When you encounter hospitality in Armenia, you're unlikely to forget it," said **Ben Lerwill at BBC**. The rugged, mountainous country has been renowned for its generosity

to outsiders since the days of the Silk Road, when countless traders, soldiers, and migrants passed through its beautiful, rolling landscape. "As long ago as 400 B.C., the Greek general Xenophon brought his troops this way and gave accounts of tables groaning with lamb, poultry, and barley wine." I experienced Armenians' welcoming nature while exploring the Caucasus via marshrutkas, the region's cheap, omnipresent public minibuses. After dawdling too long around the UNESCO-listed monasteries of Debed Canyon, I found myself stranded in Dilijan, a picturesque, forested resort town known locally as Little Switzerland. "A night here would surely be no hardship," but I did need a place to stay.

Using an outdated guidebook, I found a guest-house on the outskirts of town. Nobody answered when I knocked, so I tried hollering "Barev dzez!" — Armenian for "Hello!" I felt a little foolish, but a middle-aged woman soon opened the gates, regarding me quizzically. When I pointed to my guidebook, she smiled and took my elbow, leading me inside. The house hummed with noise and laughter. My host showed me to my room and then pointed to the dining room, mimed eating, and said "19 o'clock." I dutifully appeared at 7 p.m. and found myself swept into an 18th-birthday celebration for the family's eldest daughter. There were 12 of us, and I was the only stranger. "My hand was shaken vigorously, my seat pulled out for me."

What followed was "a heady, hearty, vodka-fueled evening I simply hadn't seen coming." The plates were piled high with huge portions of barbecued pork, stringy cheese, eggplants, olives, radishes, greens with garlic, and lavash, the unleavened flatbread that's a staple of the Armenian diet. Speaking English, the birthday girl told me that I had an uncle on either side of me, and these jovial, thick-limbed men "took it as their duty" to make sure my glass was never empty of oghi, a potent homemade fruit vodka. As the banquet "roared on," the uncles toasted everyone and everything. I was dizzy when the time came for songs and cakes. "The evening ended with bear hugs all round, and linguistically doomed attempts to declare everlasting kinship."

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## ACOM Library

Did you know that ACOM has a library? Over the years (37 and counting!) members have donated many books to ACOM, covering a variety of different subjects. Recently, the library has been re-organized and catalogued (well, most of the books, still working on the Armenian-script ones.) We have accomplished the goal of having the list of books available via the ACOM website and allow members to check books out by submitting requests through the web, email or phone calls. Alternately, if you have access to the "Goodreads" website you can look for the member "Armenian Minnesota" and check out the bookshelf "[acom-library](#)". If the book is listed on the bookshelf "checked-out", then somebody else has it. Otherwise, it's available for check-out.

If you would like to check a book out, send an email to [Leroy.erickson@minnmicro.com](mailto:Leroy.erickson@minnmicro.com). I'll make ar-

rangements to meet you somewhere to hand the book over and get it back when you're done.

Currently we have 82 books available. There are about another two dozen books in the library, but they are printed in Armenian script and I haven't had the opportunity to get the names and titles translated so that they could be added to the catalogue. Sometime in the (near?) future that will be done. Also, ACOM has many video and audio recordings. These will be added to the catalogue and also made available.

If any of you have any old books that you think other ACOM members might be interested in reading and you would like to donate them to the library, we would be happy to accept them.

So, happy reading!

**Leroy Erickson**

By Erica Paulian Tiffany

Daughter of Judy Ohannesian and Doug Tiffany \* November, 2017

**The backstory: How did this happen!?**

I taught English in South Korea for three years. I returned home to Minnesota to be with my wonderful family and in the process, I decided to go to grad school at the University of Minnesota. Last spring, I was nearing completion of my Master's degree in Second Language Education at the University of Minnesota. I attended a job fair for new teachers at the Minneapolis Convention Center. At the job fair, I was very nervous to make small talk with recruiters from popular schools in Minneapolis, so I did a few practice interviews with schools I wasn't really considering in order to boost my self-confidence. After some schools in Arizona begged me to work for them and some schools in rural Minnesota too... I wandered around and talked to Hopkins (who contacted me later about an ESL position)...after that, I walked around to the Swedish booth called "Internationella Engelska Skolan" and signed up for an on-the-spot interview. At the end of the day, I interviewed with the CEO of the company. I told her about my experience teaching in South Korea for three years and she viewed it as an incredible asset. She was also eager to hear about my boyfriend, Aaron. I handed her both of our resumes, telling her that I have a K-12 license in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Spanish, but I was more interested in being a Spanish teacher and Aaron was a licensed English Language Arts teacher. She told us that we would be fast-tracked into their system and would be contacted within the next week by a principal. As she promised, I was contacted by my current principal in Nacka, Sweden, a district of Stockholm. Aaron and I had a Skype interview at the same time. The principal, a fellow American, told us about the joys of living in Sweden, and the following week, we had a second Skype interview in which he told us we were both offered positions at the school (I would be teaching Spanish and Aaron would be teaching English). It sounded like an adventure for both of us. (I was a little worried about breaking the news to my friends and family, however.)

**Arrival and our experience working and living in Sweden for 4 months**

Aaron, Nacho (our poodle), and I made the move to Nacka, Sweden. When we arrived in August, the sun never seemed to set and would rise again at 3am...but now in November, it starts getting dark at about 3pm. We are doing our best to keep cozy, drinking lots of coffee and eating lots of cinnamon buns. We live close to



the water (the Baltic Sea) with a breathtaking view. We are surrounded by nature too, as there is a National Park called Nyckelvikens nearby. We are able to get around as we have excellent access to public transportation, which includes: the ferry, the bus, the metro, and the commuter trains. We lucked out on a lovely apartment within a 3 minute and 37 second stroll of our school--easiest commute

ever!

I love the way our school is so organized. The staff has even done a great job of creating a curriculum and saving it on a Google Drive so that new teachers over the years can use it and update it. I work in the Modern Languages Department with incredible teachers from Spain and Argentina. I have been working extremely hard in my first year as a Spanish teacher, but I have been given a ton of guidance and support from my co-workers. Aaron is in a similar situation where he has been sharing in Unit Planning for the English Department. We both agree that our co-workers are young, adventurous people whom are very fun to work with. Outside of school we have been spending time with them, and many of them have become great friends--which is very important when living away from home.

Even though Sweden has a high cost of living, we are saving money in other ways because we get free school lunch (which is very healthy, unlike most American school lunches), free work phones and computers, and free health care. We spend about \$100 a month on an unlimited transit pass.

Lately, Aaron and I had the pleasure of hosting a visitor, my mom (Judy Ohannesian) for our short fall break. It was wonderful to be in her company as well as make some Armenian food that I've missed so much, especially rice pilaf.

Recently, I have been quite busy as our school has offered us the opportunity to attend Swedish lessons twice a week at a community college. It is a lot of fun, but Aaron and I are tired. We are looking forward to our winter break, which we will spend in Italy! My younger brother, Harrison, will meet us there on his way to Armenia!





## ACOM MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

Valid January 1 to December 31, 2018

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

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

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

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

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

Contributing..... \$100.00

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

**==>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

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1703 Skillman Avenue West  
Roseville, MN 55113



**We're on the Web**  
**[www.mnarmenians.org](http://www.mnarmenians.org)**