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*Culture
Heritage
History
Language*

Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota
Established 1980

MinneHyeLites

No. 170 Spring 2025

**ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
REMEMBRANCE SERVICE**

DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2025

St. Sahag Prayer Service: 6 pm
Refreshments by ACOM: 6:30 pm

Location: St. Sahag Church
203 N. Howell St., St. Paul

Join us as we come together in remembrance of the 1.5 million lives lost During the Armenian Genocide. Through prayer, reflection, and unity, we honor their memory and stand for justice and peace.

We also reflect on this day and Celebrate the resilience of the Armenian people.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE ST. SAHAG PRAYER SERVICE AT THE KHATCHKAR. AFTER, LIGHT FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED IN THE CHURCH, HOSTED BY ACOM.

WELCOME

ACOM welcomes **DER NERSES KRAJEKIAN** and his family to St. Sahag Armenian Church!

The following was published in the St. Sahag Church bulletin and tells us about the Krajekian family:

“A native of Syria, Der Nerses (Dn. Serop) comes to us from Saint Sarkis Armenian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. His deep commitment to biblical teaching, pastoral care, and community outreach has been evident in every ministry he has led. We believe that Der Nerses’ pastorship will continue to guide us in spiritual growth and strengthen our community bonds. His vision aligns perfectly with Saint Sahag’s mission to offer salvation to everyone through the distinctive experience of the Armenian people.

ACOM extends its warmest and heartfelt welcome and congratulations to Der Nerses, his wife Sevan, daughter Meghry (17) and son Aram (19). They will return to Minnesota to join Der Nerses after the children finish their academic school year.”



CONGRATULATIONS

DER YEPREM KELEJIAN

Honored by the Interfaith Community

A longtime pastor of the Eastern Diocese, he received a special honor from the Racine Interfaith Coalition (RIC), for his lifelong ministry, and his advocacy of justice and compassion.

Der Yeprem Kelegian was bestowed with RIC’s annual “Outstanding Community Service Award,” in a ceremony on February 8, in Racine, WI. The award citation expressed gratitude and love to Fr. Yeprem, praising his “years of service as the leader of our vigils, activities, and celebrations,” and acknowledging him as “the true conscience of our mission in the Racine community.”

RIC is a collaboration of 28 faith communities working together in the region in various social outreach, educational, and civic causes. Among its members is our Diocesan parish in Racine, St. Mesrob Church, where Der Yeprem served before his retirement.

Said Der Yeprem “I was humbled and surprised by the honor, but in accepting it, I gave thanks to all the other people for the incredible work **they** do - because **they** are the church.”

ARCS Minnesota Scientist of the Year Award

We are excited to honor **CAROLINE MELKONIAN YLITALO**, PhD, as the 2024 ARCS Minnesota Scientist of the Year. Caroline had a distinguished career as a senior scientist at 3M. A prolific inventor with over 100 issued and pending patents, Caroline is an expert in respiratory protection for healthcare workers. Her collaboration with the CDC and FDA during the pandemic has been invaluable. Additionally, she is deeply committed to promoting science education among underrepresented students as a board member of the Twin Cities Regional Science Fair.



Armenian Wedding

ANDY YLITALO and ANAHID TELFEYAN

Married at St. Sarkis Armenian Church, Charlotte, NC January, 2025



ACOM BOOK CLUB Changing Structure and Planning



Please look for an email from Kassian Vaubel with the new details on the ACOM Book Club. This will go out to the ACOM membership list.



ACOM Cinema Saturdays



The following two movies were shown this year

Forgotten Leaders - *Anastas Mikoyan*
Exploring the Life and Legacy of *Anastas Mikoyan*

In addition, many of us had the pleasure to attend the showing of *Monsieur Aznavour* at the Main Theater during the International Film Festival week.

ACOM CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2025

Questions, suggestions, email:
ACOM President Kat Keljik at: k.j.keljik@gmail.com

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT
Apr 14	Mon	5:30PM	ACOM Board Meeting
Apr 17	Thur	7:00PM	ACOM Book Club
Apr. 24	Thur.	6:00-8:00	Genocide Commemoration
Apr. 27	Sun	12:30PM	Ohanessian Chair Lecture
May 12	Mon	5:30 PM	ACOM Board Meeting
May 15	Thur	7:00 PM	ACOM Book Club
May18	Sun	2:00 PM	ADE at Hayden Grove
May TBD	Sun	1:30 PM	What Was It Like Growing Up Armenian
Jun 5	Thur	7:00 PM	ADE at Village Shores
Jun 9	Mon	5:30 PM	ACOM Board Meeting
Jun 19	Thur	7:00 PM	ACOM Book Club
Jun 22	Sun	1:30 pm	Annual ACOM Picnic



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



ACOM BOARD MEMBERS 2024-2025

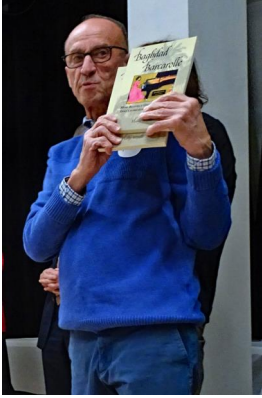
- President: Kat K.
- Vice President: Kassian V.
- Past President: Steven U.
- Secretary: Kathleen D.
- Communications Secretary: Lynne G.
- Treasurer: Naïry D.
- Webmaster & Newsletter Editor: Terry M.
- Members at Large: Mark W., Phil A.
- Board Advisor: Tom K.

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

www.mnarmenians.org

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

ACOM TURNED 45 IN FEBRUARY !!!



We observed this milestone event at Gaghanat, the annual celebration of Armenian Christmas and New Year **On Saturday, January 11, 2025** At the Center for Performing Arts Minneapolis, MN



The CFPA is owned by long-time ACOM member and supporter, **Jackie Hayes**



IN MEMORIAM



SUSAN LIND-SINIANIAN passed away peacefully on April 5, 2025 at Mt. Auburn Hospital.

Susan Marie Sinanian was born in Boston, Massachusetts on November 3, 1948 to the late Harry Sinanian and Margaret (Samourian) Sinanian, and was the sister of Janet Rae-

Sinianian, Marilyn Sinanian Stuart, and Paul Sinanian.

Susan was a graduate of Boston Girl's Latin School, Northeastern University, and Boston College, with a BS in Elementary Education and an MEd in Education of the Visually Impaired. She worked as a house mother at the Perkin's School for the Blind while a student at Northeastern and upon graduation, joined the staff at Perkins, teaching Daily Living Skills at the Keller-Sullivan Building for 42 years, guiding generations of blind students.

Teaching was one of her greatest loves. The other was embracing and sharing her Armenian heritage. Susan was also a noted expert in traditional Armenian folk arts and lectured and taught workshops on Armenian village dances, folk embroideries and costumes, and cooking at camps throughout the United States and in Europe and Asia. She learned these arts through interviews with survivors of the Armenian Genocide. For 39 years Susan also served as the Textile Curator/Conservator of the Armenian Museum of America, where in 1986 she created the textile center to oversee the largest Armenian textile collection in the diaspora. She created numerous exhibitions on costumes, laces, embroideries, and carpets, both at the Armenian Museum and off-site.

We are deeply saddened to share the passing of Susan Lind-Sinianian, a beloved member of the Armenian Museum of America family, on April 5. Born in Boston in 1948, Susan was a passionate educator, cultural ambassador, and expert in Armenian folk arts.

For 42 years, Susan taught at the Perkins School for the Blind, guiding generations of blind students. Her love for teaching extended beyond the classroom, as she embraced and shared her Armenian heritage through lectures, workshops, and exhibitions.

Susan was the Textile Curator/Conservator at the Armenian Museum of America, where she oversaw the largest textile collection in the Armenian Diaspora. Susan lectured and taught workshops



She assisted Ron Marchese and Marlene Breu at the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul, advising the conservation and preparation of historic vestments for a new museum there, and advised in the creation of a museum in Shushi, Artsakh. She presented Armenian culture at a Smithsonian Festival in Washington, and in 2015 she curated an Armenian textile exhibit at the United Nations in New York, which is currently on view at the Armenian Museum of America in Watertown. Susan was an active lecturer, performer, and teacher until health issues curtailed her activities, but in recent years she still managed to participate in the documentation of Armenian dance for the Houshamadyan website and demonstrated embroideries on the website of the Armenian Museum.



[Link to Full Obituary Page](#)

Susan Sinanian on her wedding day in 1977. She was married to Gary for 48 years and he took on her Armenian surname, so their last name became Lind-Sinianian. Also pictured are her brother and sister. Notably, Susan made her wedding dress by hand and it is created in the style of a dress from the Armenian regions of Erzurum and Javakhk.



on Armenian village dances, folk embroideries and costumes. She learned these arts through interviews with survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

[Armenian Museum of America](#)

Very sad news - the passing away of Susan Lind-Sinianian. My heart goes out to her husband Gary and her son Raffi and daughter in law Heidi, to her entire family and to the Armenian dance community. I remember with great fondness the times dancing with Susan and Gary whether at an Armenian dance workshop, picnic, performance or an evening of live music up in Lowell at the Athenian Corner Restaurant. They worked tirelessly at the Armenian Museum in Watertown, MA, above and beyond the call of duty. Susan was a beautiful person, beautiful dancer and a beautiful soul. Memory Eternal.

[Joseph Graziosi](#)

World renowned Greek folkdance instructor

TRIP TO ARMENIA

Dear Friends and Community,

I am excited to announce an incredible opportunity to make a lasting impact and spread love across the globe. I am organizing a mission trip to Armenia to build homes for families in need, and I'd like YOU to be a part of this transformative journey.

Dates: June 28-July 10, 2025

Location: Vanadzor area of Armenia

Mission Objectives:

- Build a safe and sustainable home for an under-privileged family
- Foster cross-cultural understanding and connections
- Inspire local community members

Why Join Me?

- Make a tangible difference in the lives of Armenian families
- Experience the rich culture and history of Armenia
- Build lasting friendships with fellow volunteers and locals
- Create memories that will last a lifetime

Who Can Join?

I welcome volunteers of all backgrounds and skill levels. Whether you have construction experience or are simply passionate about helping others, there is a role for you on our team. All you need is a willing heart and a spirit of adventure.

Contact Us: For more information, please contact Cynthia Erickson at:

Cynthia.erickson@minnmicro.com

or call 651-917-1818.

You can also visit the Fuller Center website at <https://fullercenter.org/upcoming-trips/> for additional details and updates.

Let's come together to build hope, one home at a time. Join us on this meaningful mission trip to Armenia, and be a part of something truly special.

Sincerely,

*Cynthia Erickson,
in partnership with The
Fuller Center for Housing*



SYMPATHY



MAYVA BORANIAN of Edina, MN, passed away peacefully on Feb. 21 2025. Mayva Margaret Boranian was born on June 22, 1931 to Florence Nelson Richards and John Richards on the family farm in Herman, MN. Mayva was raised with 6 siblings and lots

of fun. She also had four older and dearly loved half siblings. She was an FDR era child remembering "Fireside Chats" on the radio, grasshoppers devouring crops, her pony, Buster, and rural electrification. Like her mother, Mayva graduated from Macalester College, St. Paul and attended her 70th class reunion. Mayva was a curious reader, interested traveler, and lover of walking and nature. Mayva taught school in Mahtomedi and Minneapolis.

Mayva and Paul's homes were always full of people from all walks of life and countries. All were welcome. Mayva is forever in our hearts as the matriarch and wise counsel for our Boranian and Richards

family.

Mayva is preceded in death by her husband, Paul; son, John; parents and many siblings. Mayva is survived by her daughter, Mary; son-in-law, Scott Curb; grandson, Josh and his wife, Brooke and the two lights of her life Addison and Charlie Curb who called her "Great Great"; her siblings, Bob (Carol), Dick and Joan (Ken) who call her "Big Sister" still. She is a very loved aunt and great aunt to many. Special thanks to life long friend, John Banks and niece Donna Webb for unending support. A lunch and service will be held in August 2025 at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis. Date and time to be announced. Memorials preferred to Bemidji Boys and Girls Club, STEP of St. Louis Park and Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative.

Twin Cities Cremation 651-645-1233

www.twincitiescremation.com

To send flowers to the family of Mayva Boranian, please visit [Tribute Store](#).

Published on March 2, 2025

CONDOLENCES

ACOM extends its sincere condolences to **JASMINE KELLER** on the passing of her sister, **SETA**, in New Jersey.

ACOM WEBSITE

Remember to continue to check our website:

www.mnarmenians.org

FROM OUR MAIL BAG

These are notes sent by folks who get the ACOM Newsletter.

DYLAN TASHJIAN

I don't know him (personally), but our nephew, **Dylan Tashjian**, just won a Tony as a producer for the play "Stereophonic" on Broadway.

Joe Tashjian

SARKIS BALIAN

Interesting video on Sarkis. Balian dynasty of Architects and their influence in the Ottoman Empire. Gregory Balian who comes to the ACOM Cinema is related to the famous Balian architects.

[Sarkis Balian - First Star Architect for the Ottoman Empire](#)

Francis Bulbulian /Kassian Vaubel

JADEN AGASSI

Son of tennis superstars joins German baseball team

Just saw this and I thought I'd pass along. Like some of us, he was blessed with both Armenian and German ancestry. [Jaden Aggasi - Video](#)

Mark Wiersbeck

Very interesting that he did not pick his dad's and mother's tennis profession. They were both number one tennis players in the world for a long time

Francis Bulbulian

CAFESJIAN ART TRUST MUSEUM

A new curatorial team has taken over the reins at the Cafesjian Art Trust in Shoreview. KATHIE CAFESJIAN BARADARAN, the museum's founding trustee and daughter of the late philanthropist and art collector Gerard Cafesjian, has taken on the role of museum CEO. Previously, the role of curator and executive director were both held by Andy Schlauch, who quietly departed the museum in August 2024. See Video for more information

[CAFESJIAN Museum - New Curator Team](#)

TIGRAN HAMASYAN CONCERT

Parev all,

I wanted to report back on the fabulous Tigran Hamasyan concert at the end of April. The Fine Line was absolutely full -- HUGE turnout! In addition to our ACOM ticket "winners", Tom and Jennifer, Margarita and Steve, me and my friend Erica, we had a LOT of other Armenians.

These included, the Tonoyan family, the Nyholm



family, the Ghanoums (Faris, Cynthia, Rina), Mara Meketarian and friend (in the expensive seats!), and Avo and Katie Toghromadjian and a bunch of other local Armenians I don't know--at least 15.

The concert is part of an ongoing project which will include a documentary film. And there's a game you can play too. Find out more at:

www.bird1000.com

Kassian Mmabatho Vaubel

ARMENIAN CYMBAL MAKER - ZILDJIAN

Avedis Zildjian was an Armenian alchemist and metalsmith who founded the Zildjian Company, the world's oldest and most renowned manufacturer of cymbals. Born in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul), Avedis discovered a secret alloy that produced a unique sound, blending durability and musicality. Initially intended for military use, these cymbals gained immense popularity among musicians, leading Avedis to shift his focus to music.

In 1623, he established the Zildjian Company, which became synonymous with high-quality percussion instruments. The name "Zildjian" itself means "cymbalsmith" in Armenian. Over the centuries, the company has remained a family-owned business, crafting cymbals that are iconic in the music world, used by legendary drummers and orchestras. Avedis Zildjian's legacy lives on as a symbol of Armenian ingenuity and global cultural impact.

Kassian Vaubel

From a Facebook Post

GENEALOGY BY RUTH CHARCHIAN

Discover Your Armenian Roots – Free Personalized Genealogy Coaching Provided by ACOM

Are you interested in tracing your Armenian ancestry but not sure where to start? Whether you're just beginning or looking to take your research to the next level, we're offering personalized genealogy coaching tailored to your needs free of charge!

What makes this unique? You will do your own research with the guidance of an experienced genealogist. Learn how to use valuable tools and resources to uncover your family's story, while receiving expert support every step of the way.

What you'll learn:

- Ancestry.com Navigation & Resources: Learn to navigate this powerful platform to uncover vital records.
- FamilySearch.org: Master this free resource to trace your lineage back for generations.
- Newspapers.com: Discover how to use historical newspaper archives to piece together family events.
- GEDMatch.com & DNA: Understand how DNA testing can help unlock deeper connections to your Armenian heritage.
- Facebook Armenian Genealogy Groups: Connect with others on this unique platform to share resources and experiences.
- City Directories: Learn how to use these to find ancestors in the community, and track their movements.
- Land Records: Understand how historical land documents can provide valuable insights into your family's past.

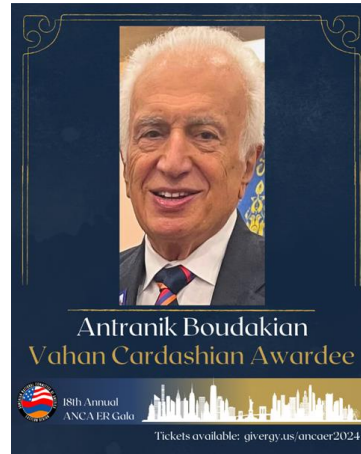
This offer is available for a limited number of people, so sign up today to secure your spot and start your journey to reconnect with your Armenian heritage!

Contact us now to book your coaching sessions. With expert support, you'll be empowered to uncover your family's story one step at a time. (Need a contact person's detail inserted.)

If you are interested, please contact Ruth:
ruthcharchian@outlook.com

New York community advocate ANTRANIK BOUDAKIAN to be honored with ANCA Eastern Region VAHAN CARDASHIAN AWARD

Lifelong Hai Tahd activist and Armenian community leader Antranik Boudakian will be honored with the Vahan Cardashian Award (**Vahan is a cousin of our Vahram Kardashian, the main founder of**



ACOM and the driving force bringing St. Sahag Church to the Twin Cities) at the ANCA Eastern Region (ANCA-ER) Endowment Fund 18th Annual Gala on October 19, 2024. The gala, which will bring together hundreds of Armenian activists and friends to celebrate the accomplishments of the ANCA-ER, will include an open bar cocktail recep-

tion, a curated silent auction with one-of-a-kind items from the homeland and an awards program accompanied by a seated dinner.

The Vahan Cardashian Award is presented annually to a supporter of the ANCA-ER who demonstrates sustained commitment and involvement in the Armenian American community and its issues. Boudakian will join a long list of ANC activists previously recognized with this award, including Ken Sarajian, Barkev Kaligian, Joseph Dagdgian and Andrew Kzirian.

Boudakian, a child of Armenian Genocide survivors and lifelong member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), was born and raised in Aleppo, Syria, alongside his brother Krikor and sister Zabel. He attended Haigazian Elementary School with tuition support from the Armenian Prelacy and the Armenian Relief Society. In 1964, he moved to New York, where he married his wife Marion Marshlian, to whom he has been married for 59 years. Together they have three children, Gregory, Liza and Seta, and eight grandchildren. He is the owner of Lorilil Jewelers in Forest Hills, New York.

Boudakian has been instrumental in advancing Armenian causes through New York politics. For years, Boudakian has hosted fundraising events for local pro-Armenian politicians, including members of the U.S. Congress, the mayor and borough president, at his home in Queens. Boudakian was awarded the "Knights of Cilicia" medal by the Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia for his years of service raising funds for the Armenian Prelacy and encouraging local involvement in the church. He was also the New York sales ambassador for the ACAA Armenian Heritage Cruise for two decades and has supported ARF and Armenian Youth Federation programs.

"The ANCA is the best hope we have of helping Armenia from the United States. Seeing new generations of activists stepping up to continue the work gives me so much joy and encouragement. I am relieved to see that the Hai Tahd will never die," Boudakian said.

Reprinted from "The Armenian Weekly" September 20, 2024

We would like to dedicate this Newsletter to the memory of **SUSAN LIND-SINANIAN** who will always be present in our minds and each time we hold a Dance Session on ZOOM. We will miss her so much !

ADE DANCE REHEARSALS Sundays at 3 pm : yekibdos@gmail.com

Sunday afternoons, at 3 pm in Roseville.
Interested in joining the group? email: yekibdos@gmail.com

The Armenian Dance Ensemble finished their 2024 performance year at the annual Ukrainian Holiday Festival. ADE has been dancing at this festival since 2013, missing only the Covid years. Always a joy to be invited and dance for this festival.

The dance group then started its 2025 season with a performance at 7 Hills Senior Living. This is a new venue for us and is located in the historic Hill District in St. Paul. Our performance was well received and appreciated. We were able to teach some of the ambulatory audience a simple Armenian dance that was also done by seated audience members. Great fun for all.



Our next performance was at the Episcopal Home Chapel. A good audience and a fun afternoon.



ACOM 2025 PAID MEMBERS

If you do NOT SEE your name below, then you have NOT renewed your 2025 membership.

You can still send in your membership by filling in the form on the back of this newsletter and mailing it to the address on the form.

You can also use

PayPal, accessible from the website.

THANK YOU !

Andeweg, George & Jeanne

Asgian, Phil

Broberg, Greg

Bulbulian, Francis & Barbara

Charchian, Aram & Ruth

Daniels, Kathleen; Myers, Marcie, Mari

Digris, Nairy; McGibbon, Terry & Hassetts

Erickson, Cynthia & Leroy

Favre, Margaret & Jim

Gauro, Boghos & Lana

Gildensoph, Lynne

Hakobyan, Artur; Papyieva, Nina & family

Johnson, Andrea & Lowell

Keljik, Kat; Earley, Matt

Keljik, Mark; Grantz, Caren

Keljik, Tom; Collins, Jennifer

Kourajian, Art

Lents, Nicholas; Francis, Walter

Matossian, Lou Ann

Meketarian, Martin, Mara & family

Ohannesian, Judy; Tiffany, Doug

Pompeian, Jayne

Rynda, Kelly

Savayan, Peka, Maria; Anderson, Stephen

Usitalo, Steve; Aroutiunian, Margarita

Vaubel, Kassian and Family

Wiersbeck, Mark

Wiersbeck, Sarah

Ylitalo, Caroline, David & family

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, 2025

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
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