The Knights of Vartan's 101st Grand Convocation and Daughters of Vartan's 79th Grand Convocation was celebrated with more than 230 members and their families, from July 10-13th, 2019 at Harrah's Hotel and Resort, located on Las Vegas' famous strip. This year's Grand Convocation was hosted by Fresno, California's Yeprad Lodge No. 9 and Alidz Chapter No. 8 with help from other California lodges as well as those from Chicago and Washington D.C. One purpose of the Grand Convocation was for delegates from each Lodge and Chapter to discuss and vote on proposals and measures that will affect the Knights and Daughters of Vartan in the coming year. Another was to install the new leaders of both or-
ganizations and pay tribute to the outgoing leadership. The Grand Convocation brought together Knights and Daughters of Vartan from across the country in a spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood. That spirit began for many on Wednesday, July 10th when past and present leaders of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan met in a series of meetings to discuss topics to be addressed during the next twelve months. While meetings were getting underway, the registration desk was a flurry of activity as the staff led by then Past Commander Steve Adams and his wife Past Matron Salpy Adams, welcomed guests and handed them materials they would need for their meetings. As there were no formal events planned for Wednesday evening, many Knights and Daughters spent that time site seeing or attending a show at one of the many hotels on the Strip.

Thursday morning was a time for workshops for both Knights and Daughters. The Daughters of Vartan heard from Past Matron Dr. Lisa Vartanian from California, who interacted with her fellow Daughters in an inspirational discussion about sisterhood. The Knights of Vartan workshop featured Southwestern Grand District Representative Past Commander Jacob Bournazian, who provided real life examples on how members could become more active participants and better leaders in their respective lodges. During the afternoon, the men and woman came together for a presentation on the plans for the Armenian Genocide Museum to be constructed in Glendale, CA. They came together once again early that evening for a reception hosted by Grand Commander Dr. Gary Zamanigian and Grand Matron Diana Tookmanian.

Both groups got down to work on Friday, July 12th as their respective Business Sessions began at 9am. Delegates representing the attending Lodges discussed, and at times debated various proposals before voting on them. During the mid-day break, The Daughters of Vartan hosted a luncheon honoring Grand Matron Diana Tookmanian which gave her the opportunity to thank her fellow Daughters for their dedication and support throughout her two-year term. Luncheon organizers also prepared some fun for their guests in the form of a room sized version of Monopoly which they cleverly named DOVOPOLY.

The Knights and Daughters of Vartan appropriated financial support for certain key initiatives: the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia, the Armenian Charitable Lighthouse Foundation, Scholarships for Armenian American Students, and Scholarships for Students in Armenia attending the American University of Armenia, the Yerevan State University and the National Polytechnic University of Armenia. In addition, funds were allocated to remove the last of the land mines in Artsakh by 2020 with support of HALO. The following projects will continue to be funded: Partnership with CASP (Children of Armenia Sponsorship Program) to benefit needy children in Tavush region; the Armenian Schools Support Project in Armenia in partnership with the World Bank; Grants from the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies; and the Annual Times Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration in New York.

The fun continued well into the night as the Richard Hagopian Band got everyone onto the dance floor during KEF Night Las Vegas. The dancing fol-
followed a delicious buffet meal and the gathering of all the attending Knights and Daughters for a Grand Convocation group photograph.

The last day of the Grand Convocation began with the final business sessions for both the Knights and Daughters. The first of the Installation Ceremonies was held, installing Alice Kalustian from Gayane Lodge in San Fernando Valley as the new Grand Matron of the Daughters of Vartan.

Grand Matron Alice was born in Boston, grew up in Pasadena and was married to Past Commander (PC) Martin Kalustian. They moved to the San Fernando Valley in 1963 where they were active at St. Peter church. She has served as Sunday school superintendent, on parish council, ACYO sponsor, Youth Activity Council, Diocesan delegate and is still active in the church choir. She has also served on the board of the Diocese Choir Association (AACCWD).

Alice has been a member of Gayane Lodge since 1972. She has held almost every lodge position several times and has served as Matron for 3 different years; also as ritual and by-law advisor. She was Grand Treasurer during Past Grand Matron (PGM) Asien Surmeian’s term as Grand Matron and Grand District Representative during PGM Agnes Sahagian’s term.

She volunteers as assistant treasurer and has served on the advisory board for House of Hope- Mer Hooy, a home for disadvantage girls in Armenia since its inception in 2008. Grand Matron’s installation was followed by that of the new Grand Council: Associate Matron (Past Matron) PM Lucille Farsakian; Chaplain Armine Liberatore; Secretary PM Nancy Hammoudian; Treasurer Norma Oganessian; Mistress of Ceremonies PM Barbara Tchalikian; Sentinel PM Nadya Verabian.

Following a lunch break, Knights and Daughters heard from Communications Liaison Gohar Palyan, who traveled from Armenia to attend the Grand Convocation. She updated members on the operations of the Communication Office in Yerevan, thanked members for their many contributions to the digital and print publication, the Avarayr newsletter and using photographs, showcased some of the projects which Lodges across the United States are supporting in Armenia. Following the Communication Liaison’s presentation, Grand Commander Dr. Gary Zamanigian presented awards and honors to lodges that have made a significant contribution to the Knights of Vartan during the past year. This year, a “Senior Knight Recognition Award” was presented to Past Commander Sam Sassounian of Los Angeles for his numerous contributions to Armenia.

Once the honors were bestowed, the second Installation Ceremony began, which installed Steven Adams of Yeprad Tahlij No. 9 in Fresno, California to the position of Grand Commander of The Knights of Vartan. Grand Command-
Continued from previous page

er Steven Adams was born and raised in Fresno, CA, attending local schools and graduating from California State University Fresno with Bachelor and Master’s Degrees in Physics with a minor in Mathematics. He also earned his standard teaching credential and later his administrative services credential. Grand Commander Steven taught math, chemistry, and physics in local high schools and eventually going into administration. He retired from Clovis Unified School District in 2016 as their Administrator for Assessment and Accountability. He now serves as a consultant to school districts throughout California in the areas of spatial and data analysis. Grand Commander Steve grew up in the Armenian Church and began serving on the altar at St. Paul Armenian Church in 1971 and was ordained a Deacon in the church in 1980. He has served as a delegate to the Diocesan Assembly over 20 years during that same time, also serving as an officer of the Assembly for more than half of those years. Grand Commander Steven joined Yeprad Lodge #9 of the Knights of Vartan in 1980, served in different positions up to a member of the Grand Council.

Grand Commander Steven Adams said “The development of our spiritual, cultural and moral heritage must come from within us, there is no outside group who will preserve and grow what we have inherited. While we no longer face the imminent destruction of our people, the principles laid out by our Founding Fathers can and should still be our guiding light. We no longer face extermination, but the culture we have inherited needs to be preserved and now in the new light of independence, needs to flourish in the spirit of a new Armenia.”

Members of new Grand Council were also installed. It has seven officers, including Grand Commander, and during 101st convocation the newly selected officers were: Grand Commander PC Steven Adams, Lieutenant Grand Commander PC Kevork Oflian, Grand Chaplain PC Raffi Karayan, Grand Treasurer PC Garo Istanboulian, Grand Recorder PC Thomas L. Adams, Grand Master of Ceremonies PC Dr. Dennis Shamljan, and Grand Sentinel PC Ara Karkazian.

The final event of the Convocation was the Grand Banquet on Saturday evening, emceed by Southeastern Grand District Representative Jacob Bournazian. Vocalist Narée Asharian led the audience in the singing of the American and Armenian National Anthems. Knight Rev. Fr. Yeghia Hairabedian from St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church in Fowler, California gave the invocation. The Grand Convocation Committee was introduced by its General Chairman, Past Commander Mark Der Matoian of Yeprad Lodge No. 9. Richard Hagopian again took out his oud and with some assistance from his son on the dumbeg, performed a handful of traditional Armenian melodies. Immediate Past Grand Matron Diana Tookmanian introduced the Daughters of Vartan Woman of the Year, the Hon. Adrienne Kriko-

L to R: Hon. Adrienne Krikorian and Immediate Past Avak Dirouhie Diana Tookmanian
rian, Esq. from California. Judge Krikorian is a co-founder of House of Hope, which funds a residential educational program in Armenia for young girls from poor backgrounds. She also serves as Diocesan Council Chairman for the Western Diocese, the only female to ever hold that position.

Immediate Past Grand Commander Dr. Gary Zamanigian then introduced the Knights of Vartan Person of the Year, Peter Abajian of California. He is the Executive Director of the Paros Foundation, which raises money for humanitarian projects throughout Armenia. He also served as both Director and Deputy Executive Director of the Armenian Assembly of America.

Grand Matron Alice Kalustian and Grand Commander Steve Adams wrapped up the evening's program by each thanking the Knights and Daughters for their dedication and support and for making the trip to Las Vegas. They also looked ahead to a future where the Knights and Daughters of Vartan would play an even greater role on behalf of Armenians both in the United States and in their homeland.

It was only proper that since this year’s Grand Convocation was held in Las Vegas that an Armenian priest from the City would close the program. That priest was Very Rev. Fr. Sasoon Dz. V. Zumrookdian of St. Giragos Armenian Apostolic Church in Las Vegas. After the prayer, the pastor urged everyone to make sure to be in church the following morning.
Avak Tivan 2019 - 2020

L to R: Avak Araroghabed Dr. Dennis Shamlian; Avak Tbrabed Thomas L. Adams; Avak TerSbarabed Kevork Oflazian; Avak Sbarabed Steven R. Adams; Avak Yeretz Raffi Karayan; Avak Argughagal Garo Istanboulian; Avak Ted Ara Karkazian

Avak Khorhourt 2019 - 2020

L to R: Avak Husgchouhie Nadya Verabian; Avak Tbrouhie Nancy Hammoudian; Avak Yeritzouhie Armine Liberatore; Avak Dirouhie Alice Kalustian; Avak Pokh Dirouhie Lucille Farsakian; Avak Kantzagedoouhie Norma Oganessian; Avak Garkabedouhie Barbara Tchalikian.
Grand Convocation in Pictures  By Asbed David Medzorian
Not even the hovering grey clouds could dampen the spirit of the thousands gathered for the Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Times Square on Sunday, April 28, 2019, as the 104th anniversary of the massacres was memorialized in a monumental event sponsored by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan.

Relentless calls for recognition were made throughout the afternoon as speakers, guests and the general public paid homage to the holy martyrs of the Armenian Genocide.

While Armenian songs, dances and voices echoed throughout New York and into the world, top U.S. elected officials stood their ground in their unwavering support of Armenian Genocide recognition. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), who appears at the commemoration year after year without fail, conveyed his fondness for the “wonderful and compassionate Armenian people” and appreciated their presence in the country, stating that “the more Armenians we have in America, the better America will be.”

“A genocide that is not properly defined and remembered will certainly lead to another,” said Senator Schumer, who touched upon the Holocaust that succeeded the Armenian Genocide.

Turning to legislation in the U.S., Senator Schumer expressed his disappointment that the leaders in the White House, both Republicans and Democrats, have not stepped up to officially acknowledge the Armenian Genocide. He made the salient point that the Turkish government did not succeed in its plans to exterminate the Armenian people, noting that now 1.5 million people of Armenian ancestry live in America.

“The Armenian nation has not just endured, but it has prevailed,” said Senator Schumer, who is a co-sponsor of Senate Resolution 150 that calls for the U.S. to commemorate the Armenian Genocide through official recognition and remembrance.

A tireless advocate for the Armenians, senior Senator Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), who earlier this month admonished U.S. Ambassador to Turkey nominee David M. Satterfield for failing to refer to the 1915 atrocities as Genocide, stated that everyone has “come together in remembrance, in reflection and in solidarity.”

Recalling the words of Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during the Armenian Genocide, who described the Turkish authorities of deporting Armenians as a ‘death warrant’ to a whole race, Senator Menendez asserted that today’s diplomats should “not be any less frank when engaging with the Turkish government.”

“We refuse to see the truth suppressed, the facts denied and history revised,” said Senator Menendez. “We will not rest until it becomes the official policy of the U.S. government to recognize the Armenian Genocide here and any place else in the world.”

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Frank Pallone (D-N.J.), pledged that he will continue to push for recognition of the Armenian Genocide and reaffirmed that there has been “tremendous progress” around the world as 30 countries now officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, along with 49 out of 50 U.S. states.

He urged the public to persist in their fight and hold rallies such as the annual commemoration in Times Square in order to achieve official recognition. “Please understand how important it is for you to be here today and how important it is for all of you to continue to support your Armenian advocates and Armenian organizations like the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, because without your help, we wouldn’t be able to make progress on the issues you care so much about,” concluded Congressman Pallone.

By Taleen Babayan
New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), a member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, remarked that the U.S. should “join the chorus of voices across the globe” and recognize the genocide and the “calculating elimination of an entire population.”

Grand Commander and Matron of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, Dr. Gary Zamanigian and Diana Tookmanian elaborated on the significance of commemorating the Armenian Genocide. “Some of our voices and demands have been heard, we need all of our voices to be heard and our demand met. There will come a day, may be not today, may be not tomorrow, but a day in the future that all our voices will be heard…” said AD Diana.

The Knights and Daughters of Vartan have sponsored the Times Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration since 1985. This year the event was co-chaired by Tigran Sahakyan and Ari Minnetyan, under the guidance of Chairman Emeritus Hrant Gulian.

Arranged and Professor Nairy Beylerian compellingly led the program. McOmber was recognized for his decade of service to the Times Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration and was presented with a special certificate of recognition and a Knights of Vartan medal.

The results of the 2019 Knights and Daughters of Vartan International Armenian Genocide Essay Contest were announced: first-place, Andrew Panosian of La Crescenta, CA, who is a freshman at Glendale Community College; second-place, Janae Garine Kamajian of Indian Shores, FL, who is a junior at University of South Florida-Tampa; third-place Lilit Arsenyan of Yerevan, Armenia, who is a freshman at Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences. This year’s question of how creative expression—literature, music, cinema, visual arts—has enhanced the students’ personal understanding of the Armenian Genocide delivered thought-provoking responses from applicants who live around the world.

Astghikner Junior Ensemble of St. Gregory the Illuminator Mission Parish in Brooklyn sang the Armenian and American anthems and Hayr Mer, under the leadership of Maria Sahakyan, as the students of the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School of Bayside, NY and the Hovnanian Armenian Day School of New Milford, NJ sang a medley of Armenian patriotic songs, under the guidance of their principals, Seta Tavitian Megherian and Shaheh Tashjian, respectively. The Yerevan Dance Ensemble of St. Gregory the Illuminator Mission Parish made a special appearance.

The opening remarks and prayer were delivered by Zaven Khajian, Executive Director of the AMAA. The invocation was made by Archbishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Primate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Church of America, and the closing prayer by Very Rev. Fr. Maramon Kiledjian, representing Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. Other clergy in attendance included Nurhan Becidiyan, of the Roman Catholic Armenian Eparchy of America and Canada.

Statements were made by co-sponsoring organizations. The Armenian Radio Hour of New Jersey, led by director Vartan Abdou, streamed the event live in video format worldwide, reaching more than 50,000 viewers with the assistance of his dedicated volunteer staff.

Students of the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School
Remarks on Commemoration of the 104th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

by Asbed Zareh Beylerian

Members of the Clergy, Elected Officials, Ladies and Gentlemen,
I am humbled - to stand before you, and before this monument of respect and remembrance of the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide. We gather to remember today - we remember the great calamity of a century ago, but we also remember the indomitability of the human spirit. I am also mindful of the significance of this gathering taking place here, under an American flag, and next our Bergen County Courthouse, an edifice dedicated to justice. So we also remember to be thankful. Yes, it is appropriate that this commemoration also express our Armenian Community’s thanks and gratitude to our neighbors and fellow citizens in Bergen County and all of the United States. We bow our heads to the memory of 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide, and also rise in pride to salute our flag and this nation’s commitment to truth and justice.
This is the 104th Anniversary of April 24, 1915, the beginning of the first modern Genocide. We have entered the second century since that other date which lives in infamy. Yes, there are almost no witnesses left, but make no mistake, the Armenian Genocide - and yes, it is absolutely, unequivocally, and very plainly a Genocide - will never lapse into forgotten memory. This Genocide has been established - and I can tell you - will forever continue to be revealed - by scholars, historians, documentarians, and anyone in search of the truth. Many of us here heard the stories firsthand, from our parents and grandparents. I heard those stories. These truths will transcend time and resist any effort to suppress them - and by the way, these truths include the extraordinary humanitarian efforts by the people of these United States to help so many desperate Armenians. The Ottoman Empire committed a Genocide against the Armenian people, yet its successor governments continue to flippantly ignore this plain truth. Well... anyone can choose to put their head in the sand. You can choose to "un-know" history, but as any victim of any crime anywhere can tell you, ignoring the victim is a perpetuation of the crime.
I mentioned that the present government of Turkey chooses to “un-know” history. I purposely used this word - “un-know”. This came about from a personal experience. A few years ago, I had the privilege of visiting ancient Armenian lands in the Republic of Turkey - and by the way, to give credit where credit is due, I am very thankful to the Turkish people for having allowed me - an Armenian descendant of Ottoman citizens - this privilege. On the last day of this trip, I spent the morning in the Ottoman Military Museum in the Harbiyeh district of Istanbul. I encourage anyone to visit - for many reasons, but particularly because of a very meaningful phrase etched across the top of the stage in the museum’s large auditorium. It is a quote from Mustafa Kemal, also known as Ataturk, the founder of the modern Turkish Republic. It is there in letters writ large, in both Turkish and English. I’ll give you the English word for word: Nations who are unaware of their history are obliged to die out. I was fixated on the phrase, as a live Mehter band - that’s an Ottoman military band - filled the air with the woodwind and drum sounds of the Ottoman Empire’s glory days. Beautiful sounds - made me wonder how many of my ancestors marched to the tune of those sounds. Most importantly though, it was stark reminder, that here, in the heart of Istanbul, in the heart of Turkey, right on the wall, stood another plain truth: Na-
tions who are unaware of their history are obliged to die out.
Unaware of their history. This is what the current Turkish nation does every day. It cannot remain so. I humbly invite the Turkish people to heed the very words of their revered founder, and step up to being aware of their history.
Unaware of their history. It cannot remain so. I humbly invite, in particular, the present successor of Ataturk, President Recep Tayib Erdogan, to heed those words. President Erdogan, you are the leader of a proud nation. You owe it to be brought in the path of true history - to be aware of its history.
Unaware of their history. It cannot remain so. I humbly invite all people, of all nations and of all creeds, to keep the memory of the Armenian Genocide in their hearts and in their minds, and to call on our Turkish brethren to step up to being aware of their history.
As I mentioned earlier, this commemoration must include our salute to the United States. Many of us here today, myself included, began our lives in foreign lands. Many of us, again myself included, are walking examples of that famous “American Dream”. All of us Armenians gathered here are able to stand here today, as a people and as a community because we are also proud Americans. We are proud to be here, we have thrived here, and we love to contribute to this great nation. I proudly swore an oath to the Constitution of the United States three times in my life: Upon becoming an American Citizen, upon becoming an Attorney - yes I do know my way around that building there - and again upon being commissioned as an Officer in the United States Army. It is a privilege to be a part of this nation of laws, and of dedication to truth and justice. So, on behalf of the Armenian community of Bergen County, on this so-significant day to all Armenians, it is with great humility that I take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to our nation. Chnragaleni America - Thank you America.
Thank you all, thank you for being here, and for never forgetting. And God Bless this beautiful nation - the United States of America.

Honoring the Armenian Genocide’s 104th Anniversary

By David Medzorian

On April 25th, Knights and Daughters from Ararat Tahlij No. 1 and Arpie Otyag No. 9 joined the scores who gathered in Heritage Park in Boston to remember the victims of the Genocide. As the sun went down and the thermometer dropped, a program of inspirational words and music began. Following a procession by Clergy and Homenetmen Scouts, Armenian students performed both The Star Spangled Banner and Mer Hayrenik as the crowd joined along. Master of Ceremonies Sevag Khatchadourian then introduced the Sayat Nova Dance Company, who performed two dances to rousing applause. The first featured speaker was Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Stephen Kurkjian. He was followed by Pam Steiner, Senior Fellow with the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health. The final featured speaker was Ekhlas Ahmed, a refugee and a civil rights activist from Darfur, Sudan and Co-Founder of Darfur Youth of Tomorrow. The musical program featured Marina Kavkalian who performed a medley of music by Komitas on the 150th anniversary of his birth. Following remarks and acknowledgments by Michael Demirchian, Head of the Armenian Genocide Commemoration Committee, the program concluded around 9pm.
Physician Dr. Lawrence Najarian Named 2019 Ellis Island Medal of Honor Recipient

Submitted by Leo Manelarian

Dr. Lawrence V. Najarian, a physician, humanitari-an, and proud Armenian American, and an Asbed of Bakradouny Tahlj, received the 2019 Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Awarded annually to a group of distinguished American citizens who exemplify a life dedicated to community service and extraordinary accomplishments in their field, Dr. Najarian was one of ninety-four medalists recognized this year. Sponsored by the Ellis Island Honors Society (EIHS), the organization’s 34th awards ceremony medal presentation was held May 11, 2019 in the historic Great Hall, the original registry room and the gateway for 12 million immigrants to the U.S., and where guests celebrated the evening in front of the iconic view of the Statue of Liberty.

Dr. Najarian accepted the Ellis Island Medal on behalf of his grandparents who came through Ellis Island in 1921. Like other survivors of the Armenian Diaspora, they were forever grateful for the opportunity to flourish in a new country and were honored to become American citizens, a fact that is gratefully acknowledged by every succeeding generation.

Commenting on his award, Dr. Najarian said, “I am humbled by this recognition. I am deeply grateful and accept this award on behalf of so many people. For my grandparents who came to this country through Ellis Island with the hope of opportunities creating a new life for their family and community. And, for the many volunteers I am privileged to work with who have committed themselves and use their talents to do so much for so many people. I truly believe when people work together, we can accomplish so much more than we would accomplish individually.”

The gift of citizenship has been repaid many fold. His parents, high school graduates, worked hard to send him to college. Today, Dr. Najarian is a board-certified ophthalmologist and founder and medical director of the Bedminster Eye and Laser Center where he has ministered to communities for 30 years. He is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine and completed his training in ophthalmology at New York University Medical Center, Moorfield Eye Hospital in London and Emory University.

For more than 30 years, he has served on voluntary faculty teaching ophthalmology residents at New York University and New York Eye and Ear Infirmary. He also lectures for Columbia University’s Continuing Medical Education Program.

He is the recipient of The Arnold P. Gold Foundation Gold Award which recognizes healthcare professionals who provide compassionate, collaborative and scientifically excellent patient care.

He has served since 2006, as President of the Armenian American Health Professional Organization (AAHPO), a multifaceted, volunteer-led, 501(c)3 medical philanthropy. AAHPO provides health care services and education to underserved populations in the tri-state area and in Armenia, medical mentoring and workshops, emergency consultations and counseling.

Dr. Najarian also served on the Board of the Armenian Eye Care Project, which recently honored him with a Silver Award for his service to patients. He currently serves on the executive board of the Armenian Medical International Committee.

Through these organizations, he has led and participated in multiple medical missions to Armenia, helped to organize and chair international medical meetings, facilitated the donation of a $1 million microsurgical training laboratory in Yerevan at which several generations of eye surgeons have trained and supervised the training of physicians who provide much needed care to previously underserved, rural villages of Armenia.

Past Ellis Island Medalists include seven U.S. Presidents, three world leaders, several Nobel Prize winners and countless leaders in industry, education, the arts, sports and government as well as everyday Americans who have made freedom, liberty and compassion a part of their life’s work.
Congratulations Letter to 
Primate Bishop Daniel Findikyan

Dear Bishop Daniel,

On behalf of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan of the Mid-Atlantic District (greater New York / New Jersey), may I take this opportunity to officially congratulate you on your recent elevation to Bishop of the Armenian Church. As only the second American born clergyman in history to be consecrated Bishop and the first to ascend to the Primacy of a Diocese, the past 12 months have clearly been glorious for you personally and our beloved Eastern Diocese in particular.

We were filled with joy on your election as Primate at the annual Diocesan Assembly in White Plains in May 2018 and the past three weeks, as the faithful watched the beautiful ceremonies in Holy Etchmiadzin followed by last weekend’s Soorp Badarak in St. Varten Cathedral and your vision for the Body of Christ going forward, you have clearly proven to be a man of intellect, prayer, fidelity and pastoral zeal. Even at this early stage, you are an outstanding example of a modern Bishop - intelligent and working wonderfully with both youth and older faithful alike. We are confident in your tremendous capacity to take our Armenian Church forward in challenging times.

As we filled the headquarters of the Eastern Diocese on Saturday May 18th for your “Antranig Badarak” in the New World, we could not help but fondly remember the oftentimes difficult but ultimately fulfilling half century journey in creating St. Varten Cathedral. From an idea generated by former Primate Archbishop Tiran, of Blessed Memory, to that wonderful day in late April 1968 when the “dream” was blessed by the Catholicos of All Armenians, the Knights of Vartan were the soldiers of our Lord in naming the Cathedral after our patron saint to populating the entirety of the original and succeeding organizing committees to acting as ushers at the first Soorp Badarak to collaborating with the Diocese annually every Vartanantz Day to “standing guard” till today and into the future in our shared sacred task. We are proud indeed that the Knights and Daughters of Vartan have been there for this Diocese, yes the “gold standard” of Dioceses in the global Armenian Church. We pledge, direli Arachnort Srpanz Hayr, to continue our sacred mission.

We pray for you and again heartily congratulate you.

Asking for your blessings,
Tigran Sahakyan
Commander of Mamigonian Lodge No. 18 & Chair,
Mid-Atlantic Interlodge Conference

Knights and Daughters of Vartan Show Their Support in 
Greek Independence Day Parade

By Ohannes John Tercan

On Sunday April 14, the Greek Independence Day Parade took place along Fifth Avenue in New York City. There was a large Armenian Contingency who marched in the parade and had its own float. This group was led by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan. The Knights of Vartan started marching in this parade over 25 years ago.

The Armenian participation in this parade is important for two reasons. First, it helps fortify our relations with the Greek Community who share so many cultural similarities and political objectives with the Armenians. Second, and most importantly it helps us reach a very large audience with our message. “Turkey is Guilty of Genocide &104 years of Turkish lies” and we must make sure everyone hears this.
Activities from Ani Lodge of Washington D.C.

By Sbarabed Kevork Marashlian

Celebrating Komitas’ 150th Anniversary

On June 1, Dikranouhie Otyag sister Dr. Naira Babayan and Mr. Vasily Popov, presented a concert celebrating the legacy of one the founders of Armenian music, Komitas, at the Mansion at Strathmore. The sold out event included patrons of the Armenian American community of the greater Washington, DC area, as well as other music enthusiasts.

Knights of Vartan Participate to the 104th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide Commemorations

On April 24, 2019, at 7:00 PM, a ceremony of Wreath Laying at the Khachkar of the Armenian Embassy took place and followed by the 104th Anniversary Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. GDR Jake Bournazian representing Knights of Vartan gave an outstanding speech of the day, emphasizing the necessity of united work in order to realize the nationwide recognition of the Armenian Genocide. He also encouraged the Armenian Youth to get involved in local politics and congratulated the scouts for the work well done.

All Rise! The Court is in Session!

Ani Lodge and Daughters of Vartan Dickranouhie Otyag presented to the community Tekeyan Cultural Association’s “Mher Megerdchian” Theatrical Group of New Jersey, who performed the play “All Rise! The court is in session”, a drama by one of Armenia’s prominent playwrights Berj Zeytounian. The play recounts the trial proceedings of Soghomon Tehlerian who avenged the extermination of his nation and his family by shooting Talaat Pasha in Berlin, on the 14th of March 1921. An audience of more than 250 people watched and heard about our history and applauded for a long time at the end. The play was a perpetuation of the Armenian culture and the group travelled to Washington, DC to present the play pro bono, without seeking any material reward.

Knights of Vartan used this opportunity to raise funds for the purpose of donating Army boots to students at the Military Lyceum in Armenia, where more than 200 students live and study.
20 Years of Membership

Knights and Daughters of Vartan had their last meeting of the year on June 11, during which Former Commanders Varoujan Varoujanian and NS Arthur Satian received their 20 year membership medals from ND Clara Andonian and NS Sarkis Satian. Also, our new member, Raffi Kevork Nersessian was introduced and Dirouhie Malvina Brown presented the coming events for the year 2019-2020. Dinner was prepared by GRAND Chef NS Sarkis Satian and lodge members served to our ladies.
*From left Dirouhie Malvina Brown, ND Clara Andonian, NS Varoujan Varoujanian, Sbarabed Kevork Marashlian, NS Arthur Satian and NS Sarkis Satian.*

St. Mary Armenian Church Spring Festival

St. Mary Armenian Church Spring Food Festival took place May 17-19 2019. Knights and Daughters of Vartan organized shifts in order to prepare the foods two months in advance from meat cutting to cooking Armenian foods. During these three days two members Kirkor Bolat and Zvart Bolat were on hand full time assisting the Parish Council and the Women’s Guild in every aspect of the works. In the photo, NS Sarkis Satian helping to sell Armenian wine during the festival.

Floral Mart At The Washington Cathedral

The two days of Flower Mart exhibitions ended at the Washington Cathedral on May 5th. Dikranouhie Otyag and ANI Lodge sisters and brothers worked hard to prepare Armenian delicatessens, attend and facilitate the sale of the goodies and promote the Armenian name to more than two thousand people who crossed the Armenia pavilion, or stopped or bought baklavas and goodies.

Daughters of Vartan also were in hand and helped Ambassador Varuzhan Nersesyan’s wife Narine Malkhasyan for the preparation and providing the cost of the Armenian section of Flowers exhibition inside the Cathedral representing the country of Armenia.

The Brave One

This was the title of the lecture and Armenian Genocide Commemoration organized by The Jerair Nishanian Foundation (JNF) at the St. Mary Armenian Church Hall on April 26, 2019. For this event professor Taner Akcam was invited to present his latest book, “The Killing Order of Talat Pasha and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide.”

Prof. Taner Akçam took the floor acknowledging the efforts of many influential Armenian individuals who had been a tremendous resource for him, especially Mr. Kevork Marashlian, Commander of Knights of Vartan Ani Lodge, AskedMr. Stepan Ohanian because of his assistance with translating his articles to Armenian, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, The Jerair Nishanian Foundation who invited him for the event and sponsored the translation and publication of the book released two days ago in Yerevan, Armenia.

Prof. Akçam mentioned that the book is part of a larger project. He provided an informative presentation sharing the many obstacles he had faced to obtain copies of the telegrams, deciphering the codes and recreating the documents that proved the killing orders of Talat Pasha to annihilate the Armenians.

At the end of the presentation the attendees were treated of Armenian delicacies prepared by the dedicated and talented ladies of Daughters of Vartan and St. Mary Women’s Guild.
Consecration of Cross at The Armenian Apostolic Church At Hye Pointe

By Asbed David Medzorian

A brand-new Armenian Church in Massachusetts’ Merrimack Valley now has a brand-new Armenian cross to adorn its steeple. The cross was consecrated on June 20th, the gift of the Boston, Massachusetts based Knights of Vartan Ararat Tahlij and Arpie Otyag. Many of the Lodge and Otyag members were on hand with their families as Bishop Daniel Findikyan consecrated the large gold cross which now stands proudly atop the Haverhill, Massachusetts area church. This was Bishop Findikyan’s first visit to the church since recently being elected Primate of the Armenian Church of America’s Eastern Diocese. Also participating in the consecration service were Armenian Church Pastors from across Massachusetts as well as the Dean of the Saint Nersess Armenian Seminary in New York.

During the early evening service, the cross was held upright by NAS Nigoghos Atinizian and Sbarabed Argishti Chaparian of Ararat Tahlij. In his remarks following the service, Sb. Chaparian described how, as plans were announced to construct an Armenian Church in Haverhill, Ararat Lodge formed a committee to investigate the plans to determine how best it could help. Sbarabed Chaparian said that once construction on the church began, lodge members saw a once in a lifetime opportunity to make a significant contribution to the new structure. The Sbarabed sited the many personal sacrifices made by members during the fundraising process, including time away from their families and jobs. Ararat Lodge, along with its Arpie Otyag, raised the fifty-thousand dollars needed to cover the cost of the cross that now stands atop the church which overlooks Merrimack Valley.

It was Sbarabed Chaparian who, after thanking the Knights and Daughters for their support and sacrifice, presented the fifty-thousand-dollar check to the Hye Pointe Church’s Pastor, Reverend Father Vart Gyozaulyan. Father Vart, as he is lovingly known by friends and parishioners, thanked Ararat Tahlij as well as Arpie Otyag for their generosity and their continued dedication to the Armenian Church.

Those sentiments toward The Ararat Lodge and Arpie Otyag were echoed by Bishop Findikyan. During a dinner and reception that followed the consecration ceremony, the Primate reminded the guests that the cross is a unifying symbol of the Armenian church. He said that even as Jesus hung on the cross during his crucifixion, his arms were outstretched, as if to draw those who were near him even closer. He said the cross is a symbol that Christ wants us all to come together in his name.

Among the scores that came together for the consecration service and dinner were parishioners of the Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, Saint Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church in North Andover, Massachusetts and other surrounding churches, Knights and Daughters from Ararat Tahlij and Arpie Otyag in Boston as well as Knights from Arakadz Tahlij No. 35 in North Andover. Following the dinner, the guests were treated to a performance by the talented Erebuni Dance Ensemble.

Group picture of Ararat Lodge and Arpi Otyag after the event
Alidz Otyag Luncheon at Vintage Press Restaurante

By Sister Sherry Babagian

The Daughters of Vartan of Alidz Otyag have held the South Valley Visitation Luncheon at the Vintage Press Restaurante in Visalia, CA for nearly 25 years. The luncheons are generally held in the spring, and the late ND Betty Farsakian was one of the first chairmen for this event, serving 10-15 years. ND Betty Farsakian turned over the chairmanship of this committee to Sister Sherry Babagian in 2010, and Sister Sherry has been chairman for the past 8 years. The idea behind this luncheon was to give the Daughters who lived in the Fresno area a chance to come south to Visalia once a year for a visitation, because the 20 or so Daughters who lived in the Visalia area always had to drive north to Fresno for the monthly Daughter’s meetings. Today there are fewer Daughters living in the South Valley, but the luncheon is still a very popular event because the Vintage Press Restaurante has an Old World charm and is very beautiful. Guests at the restaurant are treated to delicious gourmet food which is expertly prepared and served with excellence. It is a luxurious experience.

The luncheon this year was held on April 21, and we were honored to have NAD Adeline Arakelian and NAD Melene Ouzounian in attendance. Sister Sherry Babagian, chairman, and her committee members, ND Maral Kismetian and Sister Janet Gomes presented the idea of having a cooking demonstration for the first time prior to the time honored luncheon this year, and this was approved by a vote of the membership. Head Chef and part owner of the Vintage Press, David Vartanian, presented the cooking demonstration of Breast of Chicken Wrapped in Phyllo with Wild Mushrooms Brandy and Cream to the delight of those who attended. Following the cooking demonstration the ladies were served a superb meal beginning with fresh salad and freshly baked bread, the entre of Breast of Chicken Wrapped in Phyllo accompanied by rice pilaf, asparagus and pureed carrots, followed by cheese cake with raspberry sauce for dessert.

Another tradition was honored, that of a raffle following the luncheon. The raffle gifts were beautifully wrapped, and were generously donated by many of the ladies in attendance. Each person attending the luncheon was presented with a raffle ticket when she arrived, and because of the generous Daughters there were enough gifts for everyone. Committee member ND Maral Kismetian decorated all the tables as she has for at least the past three years. This year she brought lovely fresh cut flowers in vases for centerpieces for the tables. Her creativity has been most definitely appreciated. She donated each table’s centerpiece to the person whose birthday was the closest to the luncheon date. Much appreciation goes to Sister Janet Gomes whose support and assistance on this committee has helped everything run smoothly. Much thanks goes to Garkabedouhie Dr. Susie Kalinian who so expertly photo-documented the cooking demonstration. We also give thanks to our Dirouhie Dr. Tamara Shamlian, who encouraged many ladies to attend the luncheon for the first time and with her support the luncheon was a great success.

Yeprad Lodge & Alidz Otyag Kef Night BBQ

For the first time in history, the Knights of Vartan of Yeprad Lodge of Fresno, California invited their Daughters of Vartan of Alidz Otyag to join them for one of their traditional Kef Nights held throughout the year! Chairman Khatchig Mihranian prepared a lovely meal of lulu kebab, pilaf, salad, stewed tomatoes and pevaz on Friday March 22, 2019. The ladies were honored to join the men for a traditional Kef Night held at the Tivan. Following the delicious meal, the Asbeds and Sisters split into their respective rooms for fun and games, including tavloo, poker and a popular game of Bunco organized by the Daughters, complete with card tables, fancy tablecloth, KoV-colored dice, score cards and a video presentation of the rules. The exciting game drew a crowd, even from the men, with prizes for most games won, most games lost and most Bunco’s.
New Tivan Installement of Shooshanig Otyag

By Dirouhie Araxi Bozadjian

On June 2nd, the Philadelphia Shooshanig Otyag held the installation ceremony of the new Tivan for 2019-2020 at the church hall of Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cheltenham, PA.

In attendance were the Tivan members as well as our sisters visiting from Dikranouhie Otyag in D.C., including GDR Louisa Bagdasarian, ND Nairy Pakoyan, ND Margie Satian, and PD Takuhi Hallajian.


We are very thankful for all the support, advice and encouragement GDR Louisa has given us over the last couple of years. It is truly appreciated. All the sisters from Dikranouhie Otyag have been most kind, generous and caring toward our Otyag and our activities. We sincerely appreciate it very much. Our bond is a true sisterhood.

We hope to continue this positive collaboration moving forward and hopefully will even have shared joint meetings between our Otyags in the near future.

A special thank you to Dirouhie Malvina Brown from Dikranouhie Otyag for her letter of encouragement and support, as well as NAD Sona Manueian for her beautifully written message to our Otyag and newly installed Tivan.

After the ceremony, all sisters were invited to dinner at Aya’s Cafe in Philadelphia. It was a lovely afternoon full of joy, gratitude and sisterhood.

Meeting with Avak Khorouurt

By Dirouhie Araxi Bozadjian

Dirouhie Grace, Pokh Dirouhie Araxi and Sister Noel from the Shooshanig Otyag in Philadelphia all drove down to Washington, DC to meet with our fellow sisters of the Dikranouhie Otyag and have a join dinner together with some of the Avak Khorhout members as well.

We had a wonderful time at the Parthenon restaurant in Chevy Chase, MD, enjoyed delicious food, had great conversation with our fellow sisters and were humbled by Dikranouhie Otyag’s generous hospitality.

I would like to thank AD Diana Tookmanian and the Avak Khorhout members, especially Sister AT Taline Kedjijian and Sister AK Barbara Khozoyan for all their support, encouragement and kind words to our Shooshanig Otyag. It was such a pleasure meeting all of you and spending a wonderful evening together.

I also wish to extend our deep appreciation and most sincere gratitude to our Grand District Representative Louisa Bagdasarian. Louisa has been most instrumental in helping our Shooshanig Otyag get back on our feet. For the last two years, she attended our initiation of the new members in November, together with sisters Eva Sahafkian and Mariam Nishanian. She has been constantly supporting and calling us and helping with our meetings, with the protocols, helping us with activities, arranging joint meetings with the Knights, trainings and activities and numerous other acts. Thank you, GDR Louisa for all your hard work and support during this time, and also for arranging this joint dinner with Dikranouhie Otyag. We were so happy to meet Avak Dirouhie and the Avak Khorourt members. It was the icing on the cake.
Annual Mid-Atlantic Tri-Otyag Luncheon

By Dir. Christine Akyemeniciyan

Husghouchie Barbara Chalikian and our Mid-Atlantic GDR Seta Izmirlyan in attendance. Always nice for everyone to get together, enjoying good conversation, good food and sharing laughs. We had a game with prizes for our guests called “Guess What’s in The Box” and our correct guessers won a picnic backpack, essential oil diffuser, spa gift set, and a Google Home Mini. We also did a 50/50 raffle and raffled off a vase full of scratch-off lottery tickets. Thank you to everyone who helped put the event together and congratulations to the prize and raffle winners!

Bob Semonian Foundation Sponsors
Arstvaberd High School Gym

By NS Jack Medzorian

The Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge #1 is proud to announce that the Foundation of the late Ararat Lodge Asbed Robert (Bob) A. Semonian has again responded to the needs of schools in Armenia by sponsoring a project of the Fund For Armenian Relief (FAR) to modernize the gym at the frontier village high school in Arstvaberd. Bob died in 2016, following a long battle during which he pledged to aid Armenia's schools. As a committed, active member of Ararat Lodge Bob was the number one recruiter of new, young Knights of Vartan members for many years.

Other donations by Bob and his Foundation include sponsorship of four kindergartens in frontier villages, a water project in collaboration with the Rotary International, three medical ultrasound diagnostic systems to frontier hospitals and the Women’s Resource Center in the town of Berd.

The new sponsorship in Arstvaberd is to renovate the gym at the Arstvaberd Village High School. This school serves 355 students in the frontier village 3 kilometers from the international border with Azerbaijan. The village is the largest in a cluster of villages on the border with Azerbaijan, known as Shamshadin region located in the Tavush Marz, four hours northeast of Yerevan. Village population is 3,270 with about 985 households.
Example of True Knight of Vartan

By Gohar Palyan

math through interactive after-school classes, exciting competitions, innovative camps and more.

With the help of northeast Knights of Vartan lodges and Grand District Representative Jacob Bournazian, a laboratory was donated in the borderline Aygepar school, Tavush region. The second Armath laboratory was donated by Sbarabed Tigran Sahakyan for the #102 school in Yerevan.

April 17, 2019 was the opening day of the second Armath Engineering Laboratory in Yerevan with the help of the Knights of Vartan. The donor of the project, Sbarabed Tigran Sahakyan of Mamigonian Lodge, visited Yerevan and joined the opening of the event. The director of Armath, teachers from the school, representatives from the municipality and Ministry of Education and Science joined the opening as well. And of course any festivity is greeted with dance and song performed by the children. More than 35 kids from the start will join the classes 2-3 times per week.

Sbarabed Tigran Sahakyan also financially supported an After School Program in the borderline village of Aygepar, Tavush region. Last year, new kitchen furniture, a stove, a refrigerator, canteen tables and chairs were purchased for the school. Since September 1, 2018 this After School Program has been operating with 15 pupils from the second through fourth grades. Many of the parents of these pupils are employed; therefore, it is very beneficial for them to have their children prepare homework with professional guidance. In addition, the children receive complimentary hot nutritious meals in the program.

Continuing his philanthropic projects, Sbarabed Tigran Sahakyan initiated Essay Contests at the Yerevan...
Knights of Vartan Fund For Armenian Studies (FAS) Issues Grants

By N.S. Jack Medzorian

The Fund for Armenian Studies of the Knights of Vartan has issued 8 grants for a total of $6,800 to qualified scholars in Armenian Studies for the quarter ended June 30, 2019. Several grant requests were screened and vetted by a distinguished Academic Advisory Committee in partnership with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, and approved by the FAS Board of Trustees. These grants cover a wide range of topics by International as well as domestic USA based scholars. The approved grants are:

1. Professor Salah Mahgoub Edris, Cairo University to research/translate Armenian Version of “Seven Sages of Sinbad”.
2. Onnik Kiremitlian Oriental Institute Catholic University of Louvain to present paper in Oxford, UK, on Armenian-Syriac cultural relations from recently discovered gems from Syriac literature of Marutha of Tagrit.
3. Dr. Khatchig Mouradian, Columbia University travel grant to present paper in Munich, “Unarmed and Dangerous: “Resistance in Holocaust and Genocide Scholarship” (including relationship to Armenian unarmed resistance).
4. Dr. Milena Oganessyan, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D. C. to conduct research in Los Angeles on life and works of famous Armenian film director Rouben Mamoulian.
6. Dr. Narek Poghosyan, Armenian Genocide Museum Institute to research Lemkin’s archives in New York for project “Study of Armenian Genocide” by Raphael Lemkin.
8. Sipana Tchakerian, University of Paris for field research in Armenia and Georgia on “Cross-bearing four sided Stelae Monuments of Armenia and Iberia in antiquity to high middle ages”. Grants are issued quarterly to qualified scholars in Armenian Research. Proposals for FAS funding should be submitted to NAASR, c/o its Academic Director Marc Mamigonian <marc@naasr.org>. Deadline is the 15th day of the last month of each calendar quarter. For additional information about FAS grants go to website www.naasr.org

Submitted by N.S. Jack Medzorian
Chairman of FAS Board of Trustees

Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences. Since 2016 he has granted awards ranging from $100 to $500 to 26 students as the result of two different Essay Contests. The theme of the Essay that was established in 2018 has been the Armenian Genocide. The winning essay on the Armenian Genocide is read at the NYC Time Square Armenian Genocide Commemoration event held in April which is organized by the Knights of Vartan.

The Knights of Vartan expresses congratulations and deep gratitude to Sbarbed Tigran Sahakyan, the very essence of Asbedootyun, which helps to sustain the Armenian people through service and sacrifice at the start of the 2nd Century of the Knights of Vartan.
Aristakes (Aris) Derderian
(1926-2019)

Aristakes Derderian was beloved husband of the late Rose (Sanossian) Derderian. Devoted father of Mark Derderian and his wife Elizabeth of Rye, NY; Christine Berberian and her husband Richard of North Andover, MA. Loving Grandfather of Peter Derderian and his wife Sevan, Olivia and Paul Derderian, all of NY; Haig Berberian and his wife Mel and Elyse Berberian, all of MA. Great Grandfather of Christian Bedros Derderian. Dear brother of the late Nerses Derderian of CT and Rose Goshgarian of RI. Also survived by many loving nieces and nephews.

Aris served in the Army Air Corps during WWII and was stationed in the Philippines, obtaining the rank of Sergeant. Upon returning home from the war, he began his career in the auto industry, first as a mechanic and later as a dealership service manager. In 1964, Aris joined The Travelers Insurance Company as Fleet Manager, overseeing a nation-wide fleet of automobiles. His role evolved to develop policies and procedures for the maintenance and management of the Travelers fleet. He was also a member of Ford Motor Company’s Automotive Consumer Board.

Central to Aris’ life was his Armenian heritage. He was an active and founding member of St. George Armenian Apostolic Church of Hartford, serving many terms on the Parish Council and the Men’s Club. He also was a proud member of the Knights of Vartan, Gamsaragan Lodge and served in virtually every leadership role at the lodge over the course of his tenure. Aris was also the organization’s New England District Representative for many years.

Throughout his life and into retirement, Aris was an avid gardener and golfer. He could be seen almost daily at West Hartford’s Rockledge Country Club, where he won multiple Seniors Championships, shooting rounds better than his age well into his 80’s. In 2007 Aris was recognized by the Club, being named as the Club’s first “Rock Legend!”

Stevo Tootooian (1931-2019)

Steve Tootooian, Nahkhin Sbarabed of Avarayr Tahlilj, Chicago & Wisconsin, has gone to his heavenly reward.

Steve was born in Waukegan, Illinois in 1931 & spent his early years there & in Dinuba, California before settling down in Chicago.

Right after his high school years he enlisted in The US Navy & served as Machinist Mate for 4 years on board The USS Tutuila during The Korean Conflict, running the vessel’s steam reciprocating engine.

Upon discharge he met his dear Dolores Boyajian. They were married 10 months later & enjoyed 47 years of happiness, raising 2 daughters, Diane Lynn & Denise Ann.

Steve served in a long, busy & fruitful career as Medical Lab Phlebotomist Technician & X-Ray Technician. He was a faithful member of St. Gregory The Illuminator Armenian Church of Chicago.

Steve had other joys in life besides his family, career & church. He loved taking sea cruises so he sailed 23 times on Royal Caribbean Lines. He loved music & entertaining so he often played the harmonica for shows & social gatherings.

Steve was a proud Member & Leader of Avarayr Lodge for 52 years. He created & nurtured strong friendships with his Brothers whom he had known since childhood & with his Brothers of the next generation.

At his service in March Nahkhin Sbarabed Steve Tootooian was accorded Full Knights of Vartan Honors.

Steve was buried with Full Military Honors & with photos of his beloved Dolores & family & friends beside him, his Royal Caribbean Lines Diamond Plus Award Pin in his lapel & his harmonica in his pocket.
Nancy Hovhanesian (1924 - 2019)

Worcester - Nancy (Sahagian) Hovhanesian, 95, passed away at her home surrounded by her loving family. Her beloved husband of 55 years, Garabed Hovhanesian, passed away in 2001. Nancy, the daughter of the late Kalusd and Takoohy (Kourbandjian) Sahagian, was born in Sofia, Bulgaria, and was brought to the United States at the age of 1 year by her parents who settled in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is survived by a son, Jeffrey G. Hovhanesian, and a daughter, Nancy K. Hovhanesian, of Worcester; a brother, Harry Sahagian, and his wife, Alice; a niece, Janet Willey, and her husband, Mark; a grandnephew, Christopher Willey, a great great nephew, CJ Willey, and several cousins. Her nephew, Gregory K. Sahagian, predeceased her.

Nancy graduated (Class of 1942A) from Commerce High School, where she was a Horace Mann Scholar and first honors student for 4 years. She was awarded a scholarship from Clark University which would make her one of the first group of women to attend the college. She turned the scholarship down for personal reasons. One of her first jobs was as a Chemist at Crompton Knowles Loom Works. She later worked as a Personal Secretary at the former Worcester County National Bank & Trust. For most of her life she was a homemaker.

Nancy was a former choir member of the Armenian Church of Our Saviour and a charter member of the Armenian Church Youth Organization. She is a charter member of the Women’s Guild and received its 50-year award. She was also a former board member of the Women’s Guild of the Holy Ascension Armenian Church of Trumbull, CT. She was a member of the Armenian General Benevolent Union. She was a 32-year member and former Treasurer of the Daughters of Vartan, Santoukhht Otyag #5. She was a 56-year member of the Stella Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, and a former board member. She was a member of the Worcester Women’s Club and formerly a board member of the Shrewsbury Women’s Club and a former member of the American Women’s Club of Singapore and the Singapore American Club. She was also a member of the Friends of Hope Cemetery.

Nancy also performed a lot of volunteer work at her former residences. She was world travelled and loved reading and gardening. Her hobbies included bridge and floral arranging.

Sedrak Iskandarian (1933 - 2019)

February 2, 1933 Tripoli, Lebanon- April 26, 2019, Watertown

Sedrak Iskandarian of Watertown passed away on April 26, 2019, he was 86 years old. He was the beloved husband of Sonia (Kharian) Iskandarian. Setrak was the devoted father of Vera Iskandarian and her husband Dan Sandler of Belmont and Seta Iskandarian and her husband Robert Nalbandov of Watertown. Loving grandfather of James & Garen Sandler and Gabriel & Patrick Nalbandian. Dear brother of the late Nishan Iskandarian, Elizabeth Iskandarian & Nazareth Iskandarian. Also survived by 2 generations of loving nieces and nephews. He was a member of Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge Number 1 since 1997.

Funeral services at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St. Watertown on Tuesday, April 30th at 11 am. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend. Visiting hours at the Giragosian Funeral Home, 576 Mt. Auburn St., (Rt. 16), Watertown on Monday from 6-8 pm. Interment will be held at Highland Meadow Cemetery in Belmont. Expressions of sympathy may be made in his memory to St. James Armenian Church.
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Save the Date

Back to Homeland IV
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Official Chronicle of The
Knights of Vartan Brotherhood
Governing Board: Avak Tivan - Avak Khorhout
Correspondents: Lodge and Otyag Councils
Production: Gohar Palyan, Liaison
New Design by David Jamgotchian
Published Quarterly and uploaded to official
website of the brotherhood www.KofV.org
Sbarabeds and Otyag Dirouhies please
assist your members to receive the publication.
Deadline to submit materials for the next
Avarayr (covering August - October, 2019) is
October 12, 2019
Email: KnightsOfVartan@gmail.com