



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF YEREVAN

IWAY's official annual newsletter, 2020-2021



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sevan Baghdjian, President 2019-2021

Dear ladies,

The period 2020-2021 has been a period like no other in our lives. With the worldwide Pandemic and the War in Armenia, we were facing a truly unprecedented situation in our communities. IWAY, true to its goals and beliefs and with its dedicated members, was up to the challenges of these difficult times. We adapted to this new reality with an amazing power of positivity. We continued our bimonthly meetings via zoom, supported our soldiers by donating to "All Armenia Fund: We are our borders" and later in the absence of our annual Christmas Charity Bazaar, we created IWAY4Charity online bazaar which helped us further support our soldiers through donations to "1000plus" and "All Armenia Fund" as well as raise funds for future IWAY projects. The online bazaar could not have been successful without the generous donation of items by IWAY members and IWAY donors.

I cannot describe the feeling of pride and joy that I feel for belonging to such a wonderful association. My sincere thanks and appreciation to all IWAY members for their great spirit of camaraderie. As I pass on the torch to our next President and to the new board, the challenges are still there but together hand in hand we can overcome them.

Thank you and all the best,

INSIDE THIS YEAR'S ISSUE:

Fun time and visits at:

Spa Day

Shushi Carpets

Hinamatsuri

Noy Brandy Factory

Lara Chocolate

**IWAY4Charity online
bazaar**



On 17. April 2021

IWAY held Hanami Festival at ARTtakard



Hanami is the Japanese traditional custom of enjoying the beauty of flowers, "flower" in this case almost always meaning cherry blossoms or plum blossoms.



SHUSHI CARPETS IN YEREVAN

By Lisa Arslanian

On March 31, 2021

A visit to the National museum-institute of architecture after Alexander Tamanyan, to view carpets made in Artsakh was one of the activities carried out by the IWAY ladies on Wednesday March 31, 2021.

The exhibition has a curious and somewhat sad story in the sense that Azerbaijan's attack on Artsakh in September 2020 resulted not just in tens of thousands of displaced people, but also displaced carpets from the Shushi Carpet Museum. These carpets eventually found safe haven in Armenia.

Our activities director Kristina Grigorian had made sure that we would be met at the entrance and accompanied throughout the tour by none other than Mr Vardan Astsatryan himself, the owner of the private collection of carpets and founder of their original home, as well as a charming young Armenian Brazilian lady to give an English language account of the story of these carpets.

Atsatryan explained that as the threatening Azeri forces approached and targeted the city of Shushi, he saw no other choice but to evacuate the woven treasures he and his family had spent a lifetime collecting. The evacuation was conducted during the evening of November 1st, using mobile phone flashlights to avoid being spotted and targeted by the Azeris. Though the rescue vehicle was still shot at, it thankfully made to safety, and the saved carpets went on display at Yerevan's National Museum-Institute of Architecture on February 20, 2021, for a period of three months. Astsatryan was able to save 160 precious carpets, including a 350-year-old silk embroidered specimen from Askeran's Shosh village, however, a further 100-120 were left behind. What was left in the museum, which is now under the control of the Azeri authorities has been looted, according to Astsatryan. Azerbaijan has refused to return any of the 1,500 artworks seized from various museums in Shushi to the Armenian authorities of Artsakh.

Asatryan gave us ample information on the characteristics of Artsakh rugs, he said while the visual vocabulary used in Artsakh rugs can be found in other carpets made in Armenia, one can identify a rug specifically from Artsakh by the carpet weaving technique, the local wool, and the colors and patterns woven into them.

Each carpet tells a story, common motifs in Artsakh rugs include stylized dragons and eagles, ascending and descending staircases, bees as a reference to the matriarchal society in ancient Artsakh, but also feature other animals and even humanoid figures, with large stocky males and comparatively smaller females with pronounced fertile hips.

The symbols abound so do the stories, they are passed down from generation to the other, salvaging these rugs and carpets is salvaging the Artsakh national folklore and preserving its culture.



JAPANESE GIRL'S OR DOLLS DAY

Learning about Japanese Culture, by Varditer Harutyunyan

On the 24th of February 2021, IWAY ladies celebrated the Japanese Girl's or Dolls day known as Hinamatsuri, along with the ladies of IWA of Georgia who joined in via zoom.

IWAY member Yoko Shimo hosted the celebrations at her home, which she had decorated with Hina dolls (Emperor and Empress).

Hinamatsuri is one of the five seasonal festivals marked in Japan. It is celebrated on the 3rd of March of each year. The Japanese prepare well ahead by decorating their homes, hotels and shops with Hina dolls. Tradition says that the decorations and figurines should be lined up in seven rows and placed according to a set rule, each at its a special designated place.

The dolls are handmade, their prices vary according to their quality. In ancient times, when the Japanese observed the lunar calendar, the festival was also known as "The Peach Festival", as peach trees blossomed during the festival season. Nowadays the Japanese commemorate by using artificial peach flowers in their decorations.

Hinamatsuri is one of the favorite festivals in Japan, special dishes are prepared to mark the day; Yoko Shimo kindly prepared some Japanese Sushi and Sakura mocha, with an Armenian twist to it. Authentic Sakura mocha is usually covered with Sakura leaves, but as we do not have sakura leaves in Armenia, Yoko covered it with wine leaves, the taste was similar. Each one of the ladies brought along a dish, there were Japanese, Armenian and Syrian food laid on the table making of the event a real international one.

Varditer introduced the ladies to the history and customs of the Hinamatsuri festival explaining that it dates back to the "Heian period" in the 8th century, she also talked about the song especially sang on the occasion of this festival. Our IWAY ladies had a go at singing the Japanese "Uresii Hinamatsuri" song.

The event was full of activities, making Japanese origami (paper folding) crane and flamingo was one of these activities, Yoko, then introduced us to the "singing bowls vibration therapy", which is known to have a relaxing and stress reducing effect, Kristina Grygoryan tried it on her head, and Hermine Sargsian on the body.

The event was full of joy, lively, high on emotions, laugh and positive energy. No one wanted to leave Yoko's home. Thank you everyone for participating and special thanks to our lovely Yoko for organizing this event, and informing us more about Japanese culture.



NOY BRANDY FACTORY TOUR

By Jenny Krikorian

On March 24th IWAY Ladies made a visit to Noy Yerevan Brandy Factory. The tour was accompanied by a guide, who explained perfectly everything in details, the history of the factory, the museum, the tunnel and etc. Tours are educational experience. It was interesting to have a tour in the wine brandy factory to know the secrets of making brandy, and visiting cells to see oak barrels and breathe the smell of wine.

The Yerevan Ararat Brandy Factory was founded by the Armenian merchant and philanthropist Nerses Tairyan in 1877, within the territory of the former Erivan Fortress. First, he started his industry with wine production. Soon after, he started to produce Armenian brandy as well.

Noy is a leading Armenian brandy production company in Yerevan, Armenia. Currently owned by Gagik Tsarukyan's Multi Group Concern.

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The interesting part was in the cell we saw a tunnel, which was used for bringing the grapes to the factory. We had a degustation of old wine backing in 1939, and 2 kinds of brandy.

IWAY ladies had an amazing time in a cozy atmosphere.

Armenian brandy or cognac has participated in different expos, competitions and received many different medals.

IWAY ladies left the factory with satisfaction and contentment.



MASTER CLASS AT LARA CHOCOLATE

Became a Tradition to Visit Lara Chocolate Annually





WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATING IN SPA

By Jenny Krikorian

In Armenia from 8th of March to 7th of April is a celebration month for women. It's called Women's month. International Women's day is a great opportunity to indulge yourself with necessary care you need. Whether you had a tough quarter or they are looking for a day of self-care, Spa is one of the perfect place to unwind and rejuvenate yourself.

On the occasion of March 8th, IWAY ladies decided to spoil themselves and go to Spa. Life is too short to not treat yourself, after all you hard work, being a women itself is the hardest job on earth, so why not celebrate all the little, everyday accomplishments with a treat every now and then? Some of IWAY ladies decided to pamper themselves by relaxing in the salt room, sauna, and Jacuzzi, and last but not least they had a body pilling and massage. Once again the ladies were spoiled by the Spa administration with wine (mulled wine) with cheese and citrus tea with pie.

They enjoyed each other's company and got more close by knowing each other. Everyone had an amazing time and a perfect relax. One more wonderful day for IWAY.



IWAY4CHARITY ONLINE BAZAAR, IWAY CHARITY

By Gohar Palyan

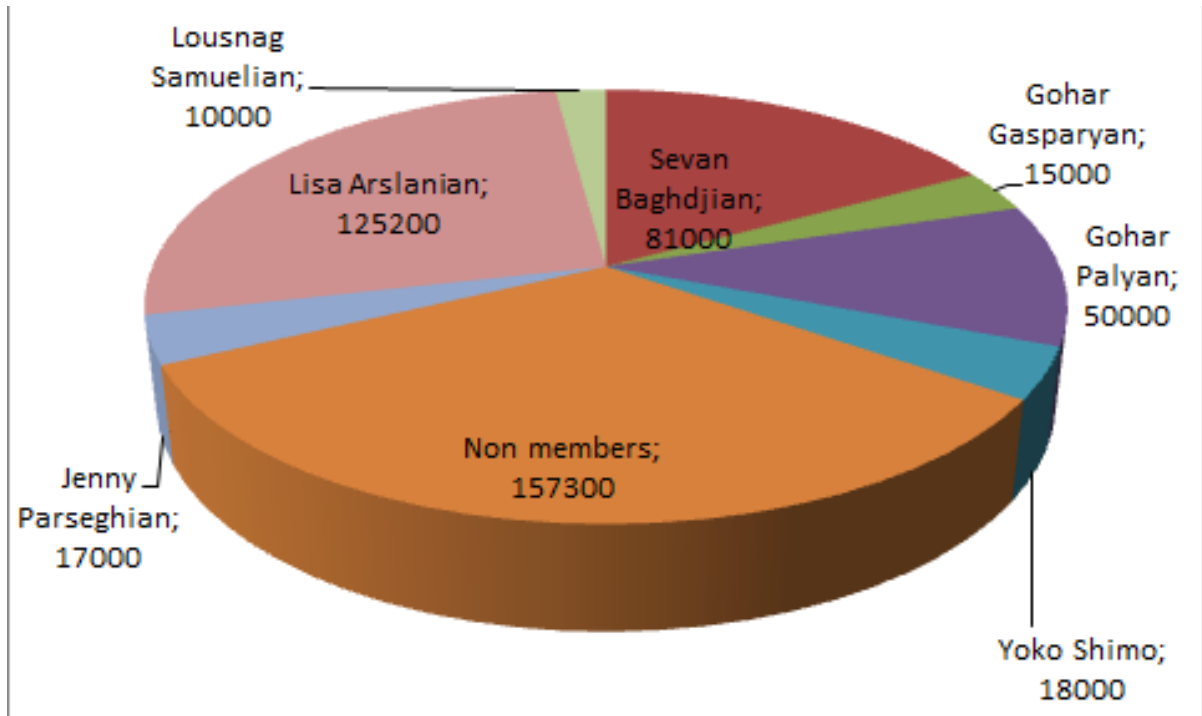
Every year IWAY organizes Bazaar and supports 1-2 projects in the regions for women and children. In 2020, due to COVID and the war, for the project was decided to donate **500,000 AMD to the All Armenia Fund for our rural communities.**

To carry on our mission we organized an online bazaar. <https://www.facebook.com/IWAY4Charity> to raise funds. This was encouraging members and non members to donate nice, brand new items, buyers would buy it by donating to one of charities (All Armenia Fund, 1000+, IWAY), send the receipt and take the item. Currently we continue it but only for IWAY.

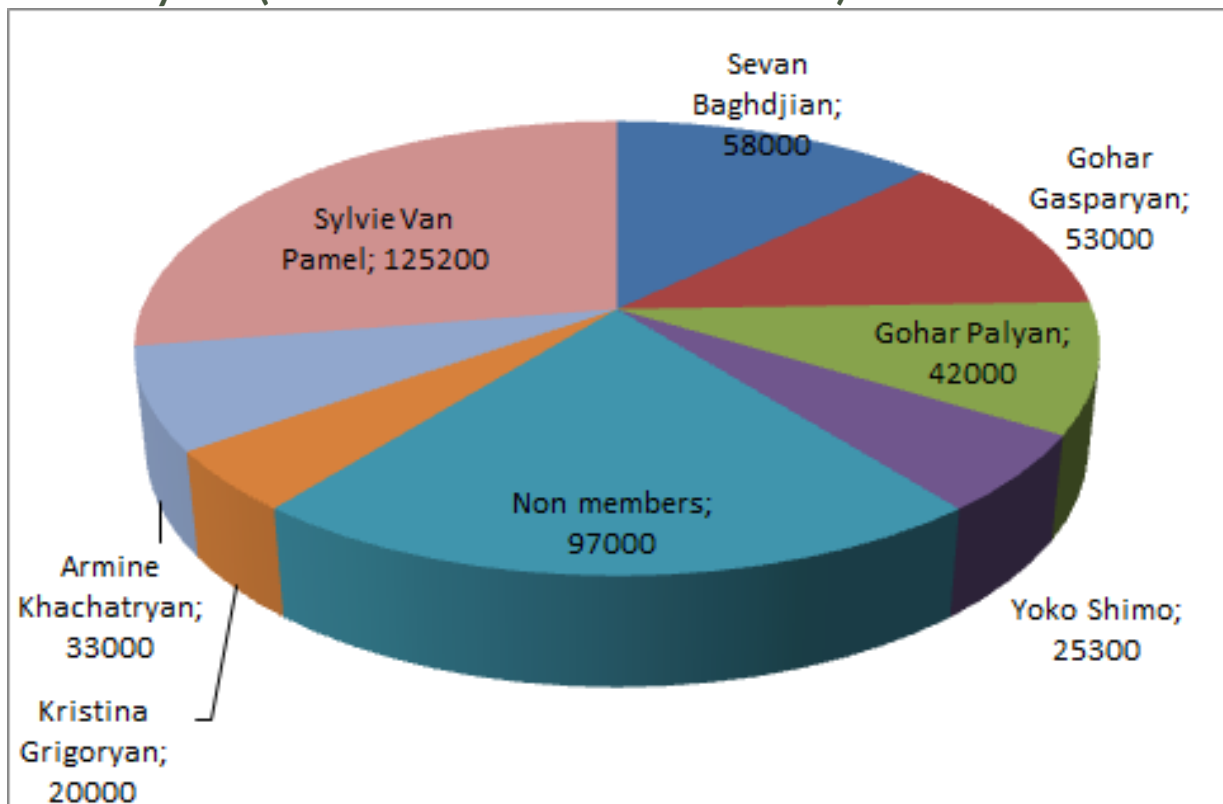
So far 473 500 AMD was raised, where 120 000 AMD to Armenia Fund, 135 000 AMD to 1000+ foundation and 218 500 AMD to IWAY (this included 200EU and this amount is in IWAY income file as well.)



Some of the sold items during the online bazaar.



Item Donors (with items sold) above
and Buyers (who became direct donors) below



The Online Bazaar is continuing. Anyone interested please visit IWAY4Charity on FB or contact Gohar Palyan.

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This issue is compiled by Gohar Palyan and Elen Palyan