



Fostering Goodwill & Friendship,  
Supporting Philanthropic Projects  
Furthering Knowledge  
&  
Understanding of Armenia

## IWAY Newsletter 2019-2020



## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Readers,

During this past year, it has been an honour and a privilege to serve as IWAY's President and work with a group of wonderful and dedicated ladies.

Through our joint efforts, we have succeeded in fulfilling IWAY's goal of helping and improving the lives of women and children living in border villages of Armenia. Last year's two projects in Armash and Noramarg villages and this year's two projects in Aygepar and Verin Karmiraghbyur villages are good examples of our achievements.

IWAY's projects would not be possible without the kind support of all those who have contributed throughout the years to the success of our Christmas Bazaar which is our main fund raising event.



Alongside working on our projects, we have always found time to enjoy each other's company in various cultural outings and activities, which are abundant and easily accessible in a country like Armenia that has so much history and culture.

At IWAY, we all look forward to continuing our great work and to a bright and prosperous future with an increasing network of members and support.

Best Regards,

Sevan Baghdjian

President 2019-2020

## IWAY Traveling to Tavush to Visit Selected Projects

By Gohar Palyan

The work of IWAY is to support projects involving women and children in border villages. Before starting to finance any project IWAY members visit the selected projects in regions to verify the need.



On 15 November 2019, IWAY board members took a day long trip to Tavush region. This region in northeastern part of Armenia has the longest border with Azerbaijan.

IWAY selected two projects in Tavush region, both very close to the border. One of the projects included 16 windows in 8 classrooms on the second floor of Aygepar community public school. The school is located just a few km away from the Azeri border. In fact, the main entrance of the school is under the direct view of an Azeri military post. To create some security the school built a wall next to the building to cover the dreadful view. Last year the first floor windows were replaced by another organization. The second floor was in great need to have the windows replaced as well, since wind was blowing through cracks during the cold winter months and it was difficult to keep the classrooms warm. But there were not funds available to complete it.



Upon our arrival at the high school, the students started to perform patriotic songs, poems and dances especially for us. Our ladies were enjoying the special performance with tears. These children really see a whole different world, living near a border zone with frequent shooting. After the performance, we had a tour of the school building to see the windows that needed to be replaced, the classrooms where children learn every day, including the newly established ARMATH engineering laboratory. After the tour IWAY ladies had time to socialize with the school teachers.





Next stop was in Veryn Karmir Aghbyur village, again near the border. The school principal and teachers met us with enthusiasm and took us on a tour at the school. The ladies were shocked to see the very old chairs and desks that were still in use at the school.

It was obvious that these chairs and desks would need urgent replacement. IWAY voted to provide 50 new desks; The Armenian School Foundation (ASF) funded the rest of the desks as well as more furniture for the school. After touring the school facility, IWAY ladies had time to socialize with the school teachers to learn more about the needs and plans.

Next stop was at the vocation school of Berd. This institution applied for some financial support as well and was on the waiting list. The school has been merged with another school and has three buildings in the town, one of these has no restrooms. IWAY thought that it was not as urgent as the other projects.



It was later in the evening that we arrived back in Yerevan full of determination, emotions and joy of the mission that IWAY will carry.

## **IWAY Christmas Bazaar** by Jenny Krikorian

A traditional Charity Bazaar has been organized by IWAY for years.

Each year, there are hundreds of visitors coming to the event to discover different cultures through various national costumes, international products and meeting people of several origins.

IWAY Christmas Bazaar took place on December 1st 2019 at Ani Plaza.



IWAY Charity Christmas Bazaar is IWAY's biggest fundraiser; it has become the largest and most visible event from IWAY's events.

The purpose of the bazaar is to raise money to provide financial assistance and all proceeds from the bazaar goes towards supporting border villages.

Some highlights from our 2019 Christmas bazaar. This annual event has been enjoyed every single year for many years.

Christmas Bazaar had a wide variety of handicraft, Christmas decorations, jewelry, homemade cookies and many different amazing items to buy.

There was also a Magical Santa's Grotto for all the kids to take picture with Santa, and each kid got their share of chocolate as well. At the end, there was Lottery and we had more than 100 prizes.

Preparing Christmas Bazaar is a challenge and IWAY surely did it successfully.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this Bazaar magical with sharing music and entertainment.



## Lara Chocolate Gallery by Lisa Arslanian



Our experience at Lara Chocolate Gallery was simply a delectable one; it was an enchanted morning that tickled all five senses.

It all began when one day, Sevan, walking around the streets of Yerevan discovered this cute little shop, that had just opened, tucked in the basement of one of Yerevan's old stately buildings on Moskovyan Street. Because the owner Lara was an extremely lovely person and her chocolate extremely delicious and because Sevan had many occasions where offering a box of Armenian handmade chocolate would be highly appreciated, the two ladies struck up a good rapport, hence the idea of having a group of IWAY ladies for a morning of chocolate making and degustation.

There were nine or ten of us, or maybe more, excited, and I am sure, more exuberant than the children Lara usually hosts for chocolate making master classes, the table was ready and set for us with surgical precision: name tags, bowls, moulds, thermometers, disposable gloves, etc.... Block of fragrant chocolates were distributed, dark or milk chocolate according to preferences.

Lara gave us very clear directions on how to melt the chocolate and the ideal melting temperatures for each kind, hence the special accurate thermometers. The melted brown liquid was then poured in a variety of moulds and garnished with nuts, berries and other candy decorations. The moulds then went into the fridge to set, meanwhile, Lara and her team laid down a beautiful spread of a chocolate fountain, sliced fruits and fine Armenian cognac. I am



not quite sure whether it was the fragrant chocolate, the cognac or the kindness of Lara and her team but we all felt so light hearted that we started giggling and singing to our heart's content with Asdghig Panossian leading the chorus to sing "Hey Jan Ghapama, Hey Jan Chocola".

Finally, once the chocolates had reached the desired temperature, we took them out of the moulds and arranged them in pretty packaging. We were a bit naughty as the initial plan was to make the chocolates and sell them at our Christmas Bazaar, but no one resisted the temptation to take our goodies back home in token of a fun morning.



## Armash and Noramarg Kindergartens In Ararat Region

by Asdghig Panossian



Armash village is a border village in Ararat region close to Nakhijevan. IWAY renovated two dormitories and bought mattresses for the children. They have seventy-five children attending the kindergarten.



The mattresses were very old. Two of the rooms where children spent their entire day and slept, had damp walls covered with black mould.



Now with the IWAY Charity project and contribution they have clear renovated rooms and clean mattresses.

In Noramarg village, which is also in Ararat region, there was urgent need for the renovation of the kindergarten canteen, which was in an insanitary condition.

The ceiling had mould. There was a lack of basic utensils, giving rise to hygiene problems IWAY proceeds funded the renovation the canteen and supplied it with new utensils.

In the fall of 2019, IWAY Ladies visited the two kindergartens and found that both were in good condition. The village people are working hard to keep them in a good condition.







IWAY wishes these two kindergartens very successful and prosperous school year.

Asdghig Panossian

IWAY Parliamentarian



### **IWAY visit to Yerevan Historical Museum** by Gohar Gasparyan



One of the privileges of being an IWAY member is visiting different cultural establishments in and out of Yerevan.

For me our visit to The Yerevan Historical Museum was unforgettable, The Museum is located in the newly built building of the Municipality of Yerevan.

Yerevan is one of the oldest still inhabited cities in the world, and in a chronological sense,

the oldest settlement discovered in the territory of the city is the Yerevan Hrazdan Cave near Lake Yerevan. Its oldest first layer dates back to the Musteryan Cycle (100 000-35 000) thousands years ago.

Over 89.000 items are housed today in the Museum representing the material and spiritual culture of the capital from ancient times to this day.

Yerevan is 12th capital of Armenia, Visiting this Museum is mixing your existence with the golden dust of the past present and future history of your city.

### **The Meeting with Samvel Haroyan** by Vera Zakaryan



An interesting meeting of the members of IWAY was with the cultural figure, compiler-publisher, president of “Nairi” Foundation, Samvel Haroyan.

Educated at the Polytechnic Institute, Department of Mechanical Engineering, and Department of Philosophy of The Yerevan State University. In Moscow for many years

in the business field. However, art has always accompanied him in his life. Samvel Haroyan grew up in a family of philologists and this has had an impact on his life and career.

Within the framework of the IWAY series of “interesting meetings” and as an event dedicated to the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Komitas, IWAY invited a guest speaker Samvel Haroyan, an expert in Armenian music and culture.

He has organized many popular cultural festivals in different countries and in Armenia, among which are "Karot/Nostalgia", "My Armenia", "Nairi" festivals.

Samvel Haroyan is the author of more than 30 books, namely 'The National Songbook'-21 volume, the 7-volume 'Pocket Songbook', the 'National Song-365' Songbook, the 'Komitas Vardapet' booklet, he recently published books dedicated to Komitas 'The Magnificent of All Armenian Songs' and Tumanyan's 'All Armenian Poet'..

The annual festivals of song and dance organized by the “Nairi” Foundation have become a tradition.

Also interesting is the newly created “Musical Garden” in Hankavan, created by the “Nairi” Foundation, where nominal trees are planted by prominent cultural figures and art groups and new oak trees are planted there each year in May.

The park also features bronze statues by famous sculptor Yuri Petrosyan, which are about 2 meters high.



The meeting dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Komitas was very interesting for all of us, we discovered a lot about the rich Armenian song art. The audience listened with great interest to the stories of Komitas and Tumanyan

We hope that such meetings will continue in the future and thank Mr. Samvel Haroyan for an interesting meeting.

### **The Ararat Challenge** by Jenny Krikorian



The Ararat Challenge was a video-based crowdfunding campaign set to increase the impact and reach of the Aurora Humanitarian initiative, whose projects combat poverty, improve healthcare and provide education to those in need.

Everyone deserves a second chance and the Ararat Challenge was a call to help and give that chance to people around the world. Armenians are alive today only because some courageous and compassionate people saved their grandparents one hundred years ago. Today we continue to see victims of violence, war and genocide around the world. Most often, children are the first victims of these heinous atrocities.

#Ararat#Challenge was open to everyone and IWAY took a part to participate and be a part of this amazing challenge.

## HIKARI CENTER by Aro Sadakian

Last year on October 11, 2019 Iway's Activity Director Ms. Kristina Gregoryan suggested a visit to the Armenian-Japanese scientific, educational and cultural center.



With a few members of Iway, we visited the center. Mrs. Karine Pilibosyan the director of the institute greeted us warmly.

Mrs. Pilibosyan informed us about the center's activities, including preparing Origami, which we tried.



There were young students getting acquainted with the culture, learning Japanese and different subjects too. Mrs. Pilibosyan with her gracious hospitality offered us coffee and Grand Candy chocolates. We left the center filled with knowledge and appreciation for the Japanese people's generosity towards Armenia.

## The NUR art gallery by Lisa Arslanian

The NUR art gallery is certainly ‘a must see’! The owner and the master Arman Nur is one of the most talented artists one can ever meet.

He is a sculptor, painter, designer and jeweler and his evolving body of work of sculptures and jewelry playfully tap into a broad range of Armenian historical references and mythology.

Not only did our group have the pleasure to visit the gallery and meet with the artist, but the artist himself guided us around his enchanted world introducing his works and highlighting the philosophy beyond each masterpiece.



Nur’s exhibits are displayed on two separate floors, the first floor showcases the jewelry designed and handcrafted by the artist using precious gems and metals, rare alloys that occur in nature as well as ordinary every day elements such as rocks, wood, fibers, feathers, etc. as a testimony to his constant quest to reconnect with nature.

The second floor hosts the artist’s sculptures and figurines, Arman Nur explained to us his world famous “FLY” project and the compassionate and altruistic philosophy on which the idea is based.

He invited us to experience looking at our surroundings through large prisms that simulate the eyes of a fly, he then explained the basic vision of “The Fly”, “If you can love the fly, you can love everyone and everything, and you’ll be able to fly.

In between visiting the two floors, we were invited to an elegant buffet of champagne and gateaux; the whole experience was further enhanced when the staff offered us a hardback catalogue of Nur’s masterpieces and a pastry figurine.

No wonder Arman Nur has such an international standing, his Art Gallery has become a beloved cultural destination in Yerevan. The visit was very enriching and while writing this piece I found it difficult to fit the entire scope of our physical and emotional feelings in just a few lines. The visit was a true delight; it was an honor to have the artist take care of us introducing his art, in his own smart, witty, and mostly elegant way.



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