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Haytoug

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION
JULY 2002

ՅՈՒԼԻ 2002

AY

CAMP

serving the generations





The Official Publication
of the Armenian Youth
Federation

ARF Youth Organization
of Western America

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For all Armenian Youth residing in Western America who strive for the national, social and economic liberation of the Armenian people. Haytoug is distributed free of charge within the community. Financial contributions may be made to the address below.

The opinions expressed in the Haytoug publication are not solely and necessarily opinions of the Armenian Youth Federation. Haytoug encourages all Armenian youth to express their thoughts and opinions in this publication.

Submissions for publication in Haytoug may be sent to the address below.

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HRAG YEDALIAN


EDITORIAL

Summer days are once again here. The hot summer sun has begun to shine on Southern California symbolizing the long days of freedom, laziness and relaxation for the thousands of students on vacation. For the Armenian community of California, it is the closing ceremony of the HMEM Navasartian games that marks the beginning of summer. Due to obvious circumstances of summer vacations, organizational activity in the community also takes a break during this period of the year. As people throw "routine" out the window, with it go meetings, volunteer work, and the planning of events. It is true that people need and deserve a break from the hustle and bustle of our everyday fast-paced life, in order to be re-energized for the next year. Yet do Armenian-Americans, particularly the youth, need to give up their activism to enjoy their summer vacations?

Absolutely not. Activism is not a duty or an obligation from which one needs to take a break. Activism is a way of thinking which directs one's way of life. The sense of activism can be carried within the individual no matter where he or she decides to go during summer vacation. It is important that activism can be carried out on the individual level. First, as an active and involved community member, one should always stay informed with contemporary news and issues. One should never stop the process of self-education. Reading newspapers, books, and information from the internet are activities easily accessible even during travel. Second, one should always be aware and lead a conscious life by always asking questions and coming up with conclusions on one's own. Third, one should always be ready to promote activism, social or political, on the community or international level. It is important to talk to people about ideologies, because the exchange of ideas that will inevitably occur is very healthy. Listening is as important as protecting your right to speak out.

Organizations in our Armenian communities offer great tools for active Armenian youth to pursue the Armenian Cause. But it is also important to note that these organizations also offer guidance for the youth to carry out their activism individually, in their own surroundings. It does not take much to tell the story of the Genocide to a non-Armenian friend or to show an Armenian friend ways to become more active.

This summer, whether it be by the poolside, at a picnic, in another country, at AYF camp or a summer school class, take the initiative to practice means of activism as your environment allows.



“Yet do Armenian-Americans, particularly the youth, need to give up their activism to enjoy their summer vacations?”

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Visit the AYF website at
www.AYFwest.org

ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

About The ANCYouth...

The ANCYouth comprises Armenian-American professionals and students. The ANCYouth focuses on and promotes issues of concern to all Armenians living in America today, be it political or social in nature, with the focal point being The recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

The ANCYouth is the forum for activism within the American society. It assists the Armenian people in accomplishing a wide range of cultural, social, and political goals, with numerous projects throughout the year.

The ANCYouth provides an open forum for the exchange of ideas to create greater awareness. It also has its own weekly television program.

The ANCYouth also serves as a bridge between university students and professionals, creating an environment conducive to networking. It also provides opportunities such as internships, leadership workshops, interaction and exchange of ideas with elected officials, as well as participation in local community affairs.

The ANCYouth is affiliated with the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), and its membership represents all aspects of the Armenian communities in America.

The ANCYouth invites all Armenian-Americans to join.

Press Release



(Glendale, CA)-In May 2002 the Armenian National Committee Youth's biweekly television show wrapped its first year of production. The show airs every other Wednesday on channel 55 at 8:00 on Armenian Cable Television (For complete listings, see below). Over the course of the year the show has grown from a half-hour primarily news program, to an hour-long show that now includes a live segment.

First conceived of in May of 2001, ANC-TV is a news program created by the ANCY and maintained by the efforts of university students and young professionals who work as volunteer interns. The program uses contemporary media technology to deliver the most current issues and events that are important to Armenian-Americans today.

ANC-TV consists of news, covering local, national, and international current events. Each show also includes in depth features that have explored such diverse topics as Armenian history, education, politics, and entertainment. Beginning in February, Talar Chahinian's "spotlight" segment was added to the show. This live portion of ANC-TV focuses on introducing the community to local Armenian's who have been influential in their respective fields.

By presenting current Armenian news and issues in a medium and format tailored to the youth, the ANCY seeks to raise awareness of Armenian national issues among the younger generation of Armenian-Americans, with the hope of increasing activism. "We've gotten a very positive response from young Armenians about the show," said Raffi Semerdjian, ANC-TV's Director of Production and Editing. "Our ultimate goal is that through the TV show people will become interested in these issues and begin to get involved in them."

ANC-TV will begin its new season on July 10th, 2002 with new features, segments, and journalists. The show will continue to air on Wednesdays at 8:00 on channel 55.



www.ANCYouth.org

FROM AYF TO ANC & BEYOND: BUILDING POLITICAL BRIDGES

Two longtime AYF and ANC activists have officially been hired as field representatives for newly elected Los Angeles City Councilwoman Wendy Greuel (District 2). Councilwoman Greuel's District covers a broad area, including Tujunga, Sunland, North Hollywood, Studio City and Sherman Oaks.

On June 10, 2002, Naiery Misserlian and Melkon Melkonian began their new posts as field representatives for Councilwoman Greuel. Misserlian will work out of the Councilwoman's Sunland-Tujunga field office, while Melkonian will operate out of the North Hollywood field office. Melkonian and Misserlian have been active within their respective communities for many years and as district residents they bring their experiences and understanding of the community to the Councilwoman's staff.

Naiery Misserlian is a graduate of the University of Southern California and a longtime member of the Crescenta Valley "Zartokn" AYF chapter. For the past year she had worked as the Programs Coordinator at the ANCA-WR Headquarters. Melkon Melkonian is a longtime member of the San Fernando Valley "Sardarabad" AYF chapter and has served on the AYF's Central Executive. Melkon recently graduated from California State University at Northridge with a degree in political science.

"The East San Fernando Valley Chapter of the Armenian National Committee is proud of Naiery and Melkon," commented chapter chairman Tomas Azaian. "They represent the best of the new generation of Armenian-Americans - they are diligent, intelligent and committed to public services," he added.

"The ANCA-WR is pleased that Councilwoman Greuel has enhanced her staff by bringing on board two capable individuals," explained ANCA-WR Board Member Raffi Hamparian. "We are glad to know that their experiences in the Armenian Community and with the ANC encouragement both Naiery and Melkon to secure very important public sector jobs. Jobs that will help them improve the lives of all the people living in the 2nd Council District," he added.

Wendy Greuel won election to the Los Angeles City Council in a tightly contested race earlier this year. The Armenian National Committee had endorsed Greuel's candidacy and strongly urged Armenian-American voters to support her on Election Day.

"Councilwoman Greuel is dedicated to serving her constituents and becoming a strong voice in her community," stated ANCA-WR Government Relations Director Ardashes Kassakhian. "We are excited to see that she has hired two of our community's best young activists to help her better serve the 2nd District and all residents of Los Angeles."

Advance the Armenian Cause through Political Activism

Are you ready to get involved and work on furthering issues of special concern to the Armenian-American community? Does working with elected officials appeal to you? How about getting involved in the 2002 Elections? What about voter registration and education? Would you like to organize and participate in forums and lectures in your community? Do you want to work to combat Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide and revisionists? Do you enjoy working in education, be it curriculum recommendation or Genocide education? Are you a human rights activist, or do you want to become one? Are you interested in working with a group of people on contemporary issues of concern to Armenian-Americans? Do you just need information or want to learn more about Armenian-American issues?

If you answered yes to any of these questions and are ready to work on such projects, you should contact your local branch of the Armenian National Committee, today!

The ANC, the largest and most influential Armenian-American grassroots political organization, is active in a number of areas and engages in a wide variety of political, social, and educational activities. Working in coordination with a network of offices, chapters, and supporters throughout the United States and affiliated organizations around the world, the ANC actively advances the concerns of the Armenian-American community on a broad range of issues.

In the US, the ANCA has three offices and close to 50 chapters. The ANCA national office is in Washington, DC, and its regional offices are in Watertown, Massachusetts (Eastern Region) and Glendale, California (Western Region).

Get Active!
818.500.1918

the **POWER** *of* **ONE**

Staffwriter

In the few months prior to the arrival of April 24th, as well as the weeks following the day, the Armenian media was full of discussion about various commemorative events organized by different schools, organizations, and parties. Some were usual events that the Armenian community expected every year as a sign of assurance that the Armenian people have not stopped fighting to get Genocide recognition. Others were renovated versions of old events, designed to drive out the redundancy. And yet there were other completely new events added on to the long list of April 24th commemorative plan. Organizations and groups, who had laid dormant throughout the year, rose to mark the occasion. It was as though someone had breathed air into the community which had now become alive.

Yet what did not get covered in the Armenian media was the heroic efforts of individual Armenians, who took the initiative to inform and enlighten their surroundings about the atrocities of the Armenian Genocide as well as the its denial by many nations. One such activist was Lisa Narinian, a senior at Cal State Long Beach. Understanding the importance of educating the student generation of our country, Narinian put forth a project, designed to deliver Genocide information to her university student body. "As an Armenian, it is my duty to bring forth the hidden history of our people," Narinian said. "At my previous college, I was surrounded by Armenians and every April 24 there were information booths and different events like protests and marches for us to take part in. It is a passionate drive that encourages me to do the same on this campus."

Funded by the contributions of her immediate circle of friends and family as well as herself, Narinian prepared and printed flyers containing Genocide information. She also made little red buttons that read "1.5 million". The buttons, in their striking look, created an interest and an awareness about the number 1.5 million and its association to April 24th. The flyers accompanying the buttons, provided the students with the information needed to fill in their questions about the Genocide.

On the morning of April 24th, Narinian, with the help of her friends and some Armenian students for CSLB, set up a booth on campus and passed out this information. Her efforts to fight the denial of the Genocide succeeded in enlightening many young intellectuals. "We should not mimic our government's silence, the 87 years of denial", Narinian said. "It's important that we explain the history of this atrocious crime that is yet to be acknowledged by our country."

Although Narinian later joined in the Little Armenia march and the protest in front of the Turkish Embassy, she felt the need to be active aside from her participation in the community's collective efforts. She saw a need to educate the students around her on campus, and she succeeded in doing so. Narinian's example embodies the true spirit of activism, which is about taking initiatives and not merely taking a participatory stance.



media ■ control

Talar Chahinian

The Americans of our time will never forget the images of September 11th. As the nation watched the unbelievable sight of airplanes flying into the Twin buildings, forcing them to collapse, chills, normally produced only in nightmares, went up people's spines at the thought of the tremendous loss of life. The nation watched the tube with hunger and the media fed. Who will forget the painful images of New York juxtaposed with the one image of a group of Palestinians rejoicing? That was not an accidental presentation of images, but a deliberate gesture by the media to ignite the people's emotions. Our government needed to go to war and needed the people's support. It was up to the media to make the people feel angry, which can lead to hate and eventually the desire for revenge. At this time of great confusion, the main stream media contended itself with playing on the emotional aspects of the attack, without bothering to ask the question why. Why would anyone plan and execute such a horrific attack on life? I felt alone in my surroundings asking this question that the media seemed to ignore. It was the international press and the alternative media that provided discussions about American foreign policy of the last decades and the political history of regions such as Afghanistan and the Middle-East.

But looking for alternative media voices takes effort, whereas mainstream media is easily accessible. And thus a new sense of public opinion was formed that celebrated the bomb-

ing of another country regardless of the civilian loss that would be caused on their side. I watched in fear as people filled the streets holding up the American flag and chanting "Bomb 'em". How can anyone so confidently give a verdict for death addressed to an indefinite target, without really having asked the questions of "why"? The answer once again would be mainstream media.

In the past eleven months, a destructive chain of events has followed one another on the stage of world politics. The attack of September 11th, the War on Terrorism, the conflict between Palestine and Israel, the threats between Pakistan and India all make the idea of peace seem very far and unattainable.

Now more than ever it is important to be conscious not to fall under the hypnosis of media control. With the internet, accessing the international press and independent magazines has become extremely easy. Znet.org, indymedia.org and alternativerradio.org are great alternative sources. Listener sponsored radio, like KPFK, are free of corporate control and can offer news and discussions from a different angle. Books by Noam Chomsky, Edward Said and Howard Zinn are full of new perspectives. There is an alternative. It is very important for people not to limit themselves to mainstream media, especially in times such as these, when public opinion can mandate a change of action by government leaders. Awareness is the key to peace.

haytoug

PERSPECTIVE

EVITDƎPƎ2ƎƎƎ

Lissed Soukiassian
Western Region Participant

I had just gotten home from a crazy day at work. As usual, I checked the mail. I had received a letter from the AYF Central Executive. The letter was about a Tri-Regional Leadership Seminar. I read the letter and it sounded rather interesting, but I knew I couldn't afford it and filed it in my AYF folder. The letter saw light once again when I read it at our chapter's ("Roupen") Regular Meeting. A lot of people were interested. I thought that was great, but the only reason most were interested was a trip to Boston. After some coaxing, I thought it would be an incredible experience for me. I decided to apply for the seminar, sending along my essay explaining why I thought I should be accepted to participate. A week later I got a call informing me that I was going to Boston as a participant from the West Coast in the Leadership Seminar.

After shopping for luggage the day before my departure, the day had finally arrived. I was excited and couldn't sleep the night before. On the plane, I was thinking about what was awaiting the eleven participants and what I was going to get out of the week-long stay. After a five hour bumpy flight and we landed in Boston. It was cold and raining. After an hour in traffic and several toll road stops, we arrived at Camp Haiastan in Franklin, Mass.

After a good night's sleep I was prepared to meet the participants from the other two regions (Canada and Eastern US) and to hear the ten educational lectures during the course of the week.

During the course of the week we received nine educational lectures, which included: Jirayr Buedjikian who spoke about the current situation in Armenia, Khajag Mgrditchian who spoke about the Armenian media and public relations, Aram Hamparian who spoke about the Armenian National Committee, Garo Moumdjian who spoke about the ARF Ideology, Hayg Oshagan who spoke about organizational leadership in the AYF and ARF, Raffi Hamparian who spoke about political involvement and organizational motivation, Mourad Manoukian who spoke about ARF history, Viken Hovsepian who spoke about the strategies and political orientation of the ARF, and Mher Karakashian who spoke about the ARF vision and identity. During the



course of the week there was a round table discussion about the AYF and its future. Towards the end of the week we were treated to a tour of Boston, visiting the Armenian Library and Museum of America, and the Hairenik Building.

Well the week long seminar has come to an end. I definitely will leave with a new attitude and a new mindset. I have a new attitude, vision, and a sense of appreciation for the organization that I belong to; the Armenian Youth Federation, the Youth Organization of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation.

The friends I made here will forever be in my heart, each one special in their own way. I had one of the best experiences of my life by making new friendships and being educated about the issues to which I will be dedicated to forever.

I would like to thank Canada, Eastern Region, and Western Region Central Executives for organizing a successful Tri- Regional Leadership Seminar.

Visit the ARF Shant website at
www.arfshant.org

special

Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages Fun Pages

Did you know that:

There are between eight and ten million Armenians in the world.

There are between 500,000 and one million Armenians in the United States, with between 30,000 and 50,000 in the metropolitan Detroit area.

The city of Yerevan (originally called Erebuni, now the capital of the Republic of Armenia) has been continuously inhabited for over 2,700 years? Only a few cities, which include Jerusalem and Damascus (the oldest such city), are older.

Armenia was the first country to be officially converted to Christianity (301 traditional date, 314 revised date: both dates pre-date 391, the year the Roman Empire became officially Christian).

Armenian was the eighth language in which the Bible, either in full or in part was written (following Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Gothic, and Latin)? The Armenian translation, a complete one finished in A.D. 433, is considered to be the "Queen of Translations." Armenians are the first people (other than the Hereros) to suffer

genocide in the 20th century.

Armenians built churches in a gothic style of architecture a century before it first appeared in Europe.

Chess champion Garry Kasparov, gambling mogul and part-Chrysler owner Kirk Kerkorian, retired pathologist Jack Kevorkian, singer Charles Aznavour, and Cher are all Armenians.

The best man at Richard the Lionhearted's wedding on Cyprus during the Third Crusade was Armenian (Levon/Leon Rubenid).

Armenian was the eleventh language to be printed on the moveable type press (in 1511 or 1512, following Latin, German, Greek and Czech.



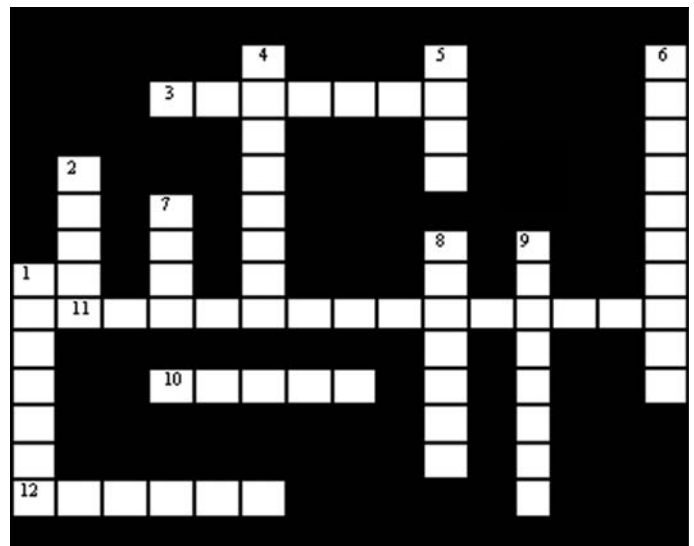
This information was taken from the following website:
<http://www.umd.umich.edu/dept/armenian/fastfact.html>

Down

1. Publication of the Armenian Youth Federation.
2. What is the main theme of Saroyan's Obituaries?
4. Represents the blood of our people old and new.
5. How many symbols are on the zinanshan?
6. Where is AYF Camp's permanent home?
7. Unity and Cooperation
8. On the zinanshan the _____ represents knowledge and intelligence.
9. What was the name of the campground in which this year's tri-regional was held?

Across

3. The city of Yerevan was originally called _____.
10. Strength and longevity.
11. The shovel represents _____?
12. Armenian churches were built in what type of style?



Language Fun Facts

Staffwriter

As a sequel to our last issue's Language Fun Facts, where we compiled a list of borrowed words from other languages, in this issue, we decided to compile a list of Armenian expressions, which may translate oddly into English. Below you will find the expressions in Armenian, their literal translation into English, and either an explanation or an equivalent expression found in the English language. It is important to note that the "he" found in the translations is used for practicality. The third person singular is not gendered in the Armenian language.

Վրադ լենոն կը քամէ	He'll squeeze a lemon on you = He's better than you (in something)
Գլովսդ մի առնէր մի երթար	Don't take your head and go = Don't wander off
Կռնակդ կը քերովի (կոր)	Is your back itching? = Do you feel the need to say something/do something?
Աչքդ տասը բաց	Open your eyes ten = Be very aware
Վրաս գրէ	Write on me = "Yeah right"
Ծոռ նստինք շիտակ խօսինք	Let's sit crooked and talk straight = Let's speak the truth
Միրտս փրթաւ	My heart broke off = I got scared
Փորս քշեց	My stomach drove = I had diarrhea
Մովսս սարաւ	My smoke turned off = I got tired
Նոզիս ելաւ	My soul came out = I got exhausted
Գլովսս գնաց	My head went = I got a headache
Քիթս փրթաւ	My nose broke off = Something smelled awful
Չայնս քաշուեցաւ	My voice withdrew = I lost my voice
Աչքդ լոյս	Your eyes light = Congratulations!
Սեղաննիդ միշտ	Your table always = Thank you for dinner/ May your table always be plentiful
Չեռքերուդ թալար	Your hands ever-fresh = Great job (cooking, making something)
Չայնդ կտրէ	Cut your voice = Shut up
Քիթդ քերանդ մէկ կ'ընեն	Your nose, your mouth, I'll do one = I'll punch you in the face
Աչքը ծակ է	His eye has a hole = He's greedy
Տուր որ կու տաս	Give that you give = Give it all you got
Ես լեպ ըսեմ, դուն լեպեպու հասկցիր	I say "leb", you understand "leblebou" = We're on the same wavelength
Օր մըն է կ'անցնի (կոր)	It's a day, it's passing = Days are passing in a banal manner
Լաւ ըսենք, լաւ ըլլանք	Let's say good, let's be good = Let's answer optimistically so that we'll be well
Գլովսս արդովեցիր	You ironed my head = You gave me a headache
Ականջիդ օդ թող ըլլայ	Let it be an earring to your ear = Always remember this advice
Բերանս մազ բուսաւ	Hair grew in my mouth = I repeated something so many times
Գլխուս վրայ	On my head = No problem (usually in response to a favor)
Աչքս ստաւ	He got into my eye = He impressed me
Դուն քեզի եկուր	Come to yourself = Come to your senses
Ինքզինքդ ծանր պահէ	Keep yourself heavy = Keep yourself composed
Մէկը բռնէ, միւսին զարկ	Grab one and smash into the other = They're "dumb and dumber"
Վրաս մի քալեցնէր	Don't make it walk on me = Don't pull that lie on me
Քիթս ինկեր է	He's fallen from his nose = He looks exactly like him (a child to a parent)
Օձիկս թոթունցի	I shook off my collar = I cleaned my hands of a situation



DRO

(1884-1956)

Staffwriter

Born in the town of Igdir in Surmalu, Dro (Drastamat Kanayan) was destined to become a great leader of the Armenian people. First a Dashnaksakan, then an oil and sugar merchant Suren Effendy; Suren Effendy became the leader of the Volunteer Regiment; he later became a road-building contractor; the builder then became a top military commander in the Ararat region. As commissar, he was the highest-ranking commander in the Land of Ararat.

From his first days in school, Dro showed very little interest in books and traditional schooling. He was a bright individual, but his attention was directed elsewhere. He was more interested in playing games and being around the military barracks. He was captivated by the military in general, especially by their military exercises with guns and horses.

In 1903, Dro left school to enter a military academy, but before the session began, the Russian Czar issued a decree to confiscate the properties of the Armenian Church. This angered Dro and prompted him to join the Armenian Revolutionary Federation who was leading the uprising against the Czar. He decided to forego the military academy and jump wholeheartedly into combat. As a Dashnaksakan, he joined the haytoug fighting under Nikol Duman's command, against the Tatars in Baku and later in Yerevan.

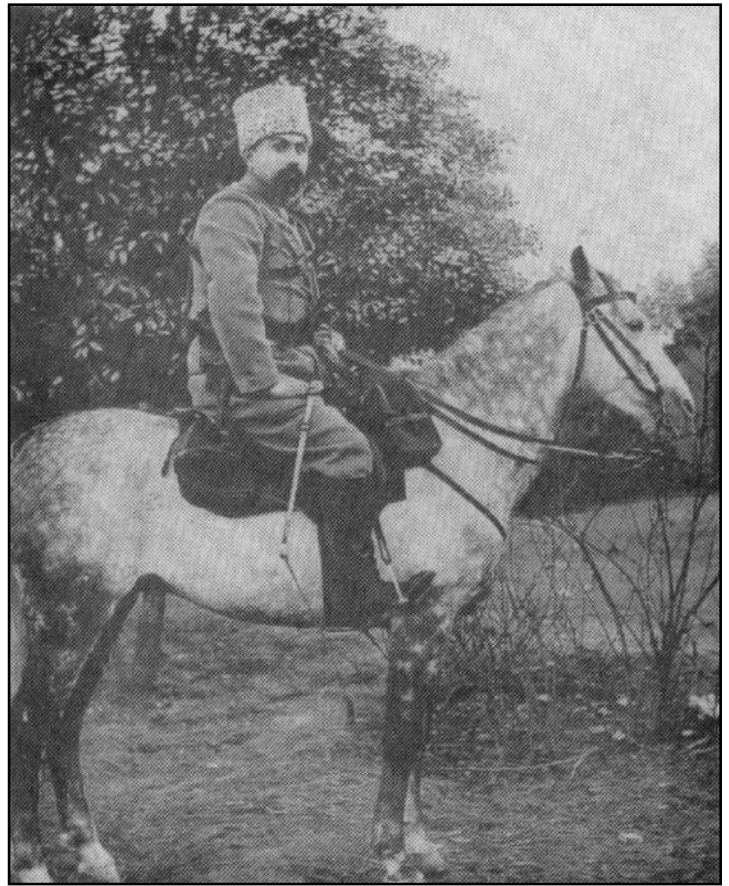
Thus began Dro's military career. Along with Dashnaksakan Khecho, he helped avenge the attacks on Yerevan that killed 25 to 30 Armenians. He led the mobile team that moved up the rear and ambushed the Turks. This success rejuvenated the demoralized Armenian citizens. As a military leader, Dro excelled in each task that he was given; he was an outstanding organizer, and a great leader. He empowered townspeople to protect themselves against raids by organizing them into groups and giving them mild military training.

From 1908 to 1914 Dro was not a militant, but a successful merchant who traded oil and sugar. He operated using the alias, Suren Effendy. Even though he was not fighting he was still working hard to benefit the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. He was a vital communications link at the border of the Caucasus as well as a gun trafficker for the revolutionaries. In 1914 World War I began and with it the intensified persecution of Armenians by the Ottoman government. Dro saw that he was under Ottoman surveillance and could be the next casualty, so he left all his possessions behind and left for Yerevan to lead the Second Brigade.

While leading his brigade, Dro was shot in the chest. His fellow fedayees, including his first officer, Armen Garo, rushed him to a hospital where an operation saved his life; however, it left him with a bullet lodged in his lungs. As a civilian, Dro worked busily as a contractor for over a year. Many of his employees were his fellow fedayees; Dro kept them busy with work and away from immoral activities.

In February 1917 the Czarist regime in Russia crumbled, opening the door to an independent Armenian state. Dro was the leader at Bash-Aparan (famously pictured riding his white horse) where the Armenians won a key battle to earn their independence. Dro had a hand in everything the new Armenian government did. From the birth of the Armenian Republic, to its demise in 1920, Dro had a great hand in Armenian politics and policy.

Regardless of what General Dro did, or when he did it, he always worked for the betterment of the Armenian nation in general. Dro died as an Armenian hero in Boston, in 1956.



Email us at haytoug@mail.com

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Obituaries

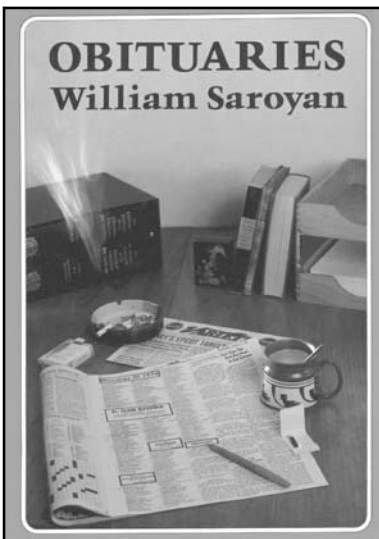
William Saroyan

Staffwriter

William Saroyan was born in Fresno, California in 1908. He was the son of Armenian immigrants. Even though Saroyan left school at the age of thirteen, he remained a prolific reader. In order to support himself he acquired various jobs. He worked as a telegraph messenger, newsboy, farm laborer, and office clerk. This was not typical for a future famous writer. Saroyan drew from his work and life experiences to write short stories, novels, and plays. He also acknowledged his Armenian heritage as an important source of literary inspiration. His talent was first seen in the Armenian-English newspaper called Hayrenik of Boston. "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze" was his first ever publications and was published in 1934. That work helped jump start his writing career. Five years later he had already won the Pulitzer Prize with his play The Time of Your Life. Surprisingly he refused to accept the award and the prize money because he believed commerce should not support the arts and that his play was no better or worse than anything else he had written up to that point in his life. Saroyan's success did not end there. In 1942 he published the novel The Human Comedy, which he dedicated to his mother, and made it into a movie. He even won an Academy Award in 1943 for the best writing of an original motion picture story. Saroyan's popularity flourished through the 1940's and 1950's. Altogether he published more than 60 books during his life.

In 1943, 35 year old Saroyan and 18 year old debutante, Carol Marcus, married. They were blessed with two children, Aram and Lucy. The first marriage ended and was followed with a divorce, a re-marriage, and a final divorce. Saroyan spoke for Armenians all over the world and gave worldwide recognition to a people that remained torn from their homeland. He brought to the public an understanding to the Armenian culture and history. During the end of his life he was engrossed with the idea of death, especially his own.

His last book Obituaries was a direct reflection on his life and his inevitable death. Saroyan an interview described the book. "This book is in homage to dead. You are so many, so great, so finished, and we are so few, so silly, so unfinished, and so unfinishable except by that which finished you, whatever it may be called, except death, a trite and meaningless word. Finished then by life? That's the ticket. All aboard, folks." Saroyan urges the reader to except the coming of death so they won't forget to live, to really live. The book is a direct look into Saroyan's famous life as he goes through the necrology of 1976 in Variety magazine. Each name inspiring a train of thought that leads to into his past and his theories about living. With blunt honesty, hope, and aspiration he described the people he knew. The book serves as an autobiography; the experience is one that can bring a great new perspective on life, or death, call it what you want. By analyzing death, Saroyan lives and with it the reader can open his eyes to how he wants to live. Saroyan's opinion on Turks is one that Armenians, especially the youth, in the diaspora should never forget. Ask Saroyan, "Do you hate Turks?" and he will respond, "Good god, I love them, the same as you do, or anybody does, but I wish to Christ their politicians, their statesman if you will, their greatest and most influential souls would demand of themselves now and then something not unlike what all other peoples, even very very primitive peoples, demand of themselves: a sustained and decent concern about coming to the truth about themselves and about all other human being." Saroyan's book about the life, which means about death, is one that every one of you should read.



The New Generation of the ARF

Staffwriter

The Badanegan Youth Organization of the Western ARF is made up of 9-16 year olds. It boasts over 300 members in eleven chapters west of the Mississippi, ranging from Texas to California.

Houston "Dro" Chapter
Glendale "Shant" Chapter
Glendale "Simon Zavarian" Chapter
Crescenta Valley "Karekin Njdeh" Chapter
Orange County "Aghpuyr Serop" Chapter
Montebello "Vahan Cardashian" Chapter

San Francisco "Rosdom" Chapter
Fresno "Kristapor" Chapter
East Valley "Hrayr Tjokhk" Chapter
West Valley "Simon Vratzian" Chapter
West Valley "Arapo" Chapter

The organization focuses on the moral, ideological, and mental development of its members while educating them about international and domestic concerns regarding the Armenian community. The ARF Badanegan Organization holds annual winter seminars at AYF Camp, patriotic song competitions, plays, and educationals. Members also take part in events to commemorate the Armenian Genocide, such as protests, rallies, marches, and recognition campaigns. Along with these activities, chapters also organize various social gatherings, ranging from outings to the movies and kebab nights, to hiking trips and sleepovers. Some members have even participated in trips to Armenia.

Living in a country like the United States, today's Armenian youth faces the everyday challenge of keeping their Armenian identity. Assimilation is a definite threat that must be overcome by our people, in order to preserve our heritage and culture, to ensure its survival for future generations to come.

The ARF recognizes the value and importance of this mission and the role its badanees play in it. It sees its young members as the ones who will eventually become the future leaders and professionals of Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora. For this reason, badanees learn and exchange the ideas and basic fundamentals of the ARF. The strong interaction between the numerous chapters allows for this growth. Whether it is at camp or at central educationals, badanees meet other members to awaken the Armenian spirit within, and to come up with different methods to be useful for Armenia and the Armenian community.

AYF



Camp

Staffwriter

There is a long history that trails AYF Camp that is filled with hard work and determination. AYF Camp was not always at one stationary location nor did it have as many campers and weeks as it does today. It began with a very humble background and blossomed into a camp that has become a staple of the summertime. The numbers of campers were few, and fewer were the number of those willing to donate time and money to AYF Camp. But, because of a core group of dedicated AYF and ARF members the camp strove and reached the magnitude that it is now at.

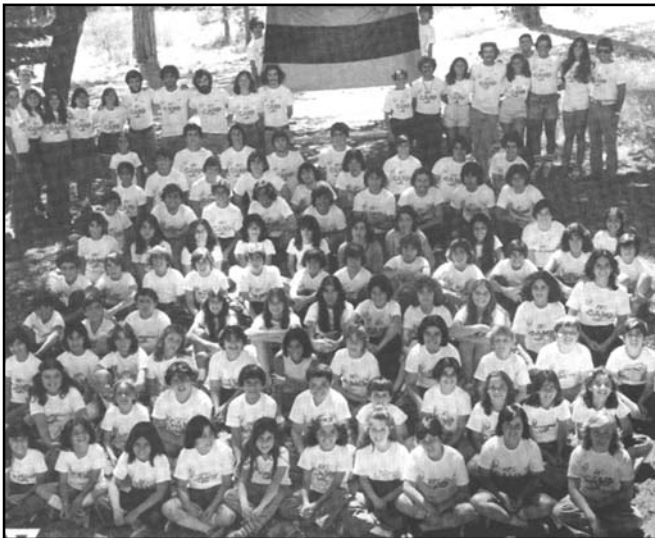
In 1970, its first year, was comprised of 40 campers camping out on rented campgrounds for one week. The following year saw the number rise to 110 campers spread out over two weeks. The year's progress and the campground changed sites yearly. It has been held at Camp Kessab, Lake Big Bear, Santa Barbara, and so on. As years went on the number of campers increased moving away from such small numbers as 40 to 190. AYF Camp gained a great deal of momentum throughout its early years, and had enthusiastic campers return year after year.

In 1978 AYF Camp found its permanent home in Wrightwood, CA with the help of the ARS Central Executive of the time. A \$20,000 donation was made from the Araxi Proodian estate in hopes to, "Encourage you in your enthusiasm. We hope that the new camp will serve your national goals in providing physical and moral health for your youth." The message was what AYF Camp, with seasoned directors and counselors were aimed at doing. The donation was used to renovate the campground and bring it up to code. Finally, AYF Camp Big Pines was ready and saw its first campers walk down its dirt path on July 23, 1978 for four weeks of fun, education, and bonding for campers.

March 30, 1985 was another major milestone for AYF Camp. During a time of 30 year-fixed loans, several mortgages, and high interest rates, AYF Camp burned its mortgage after seven years of payment. AYF Camp was officially the Armenian Youth Federations'. The camp had gone from 40 campers attending one-week-long sessions to 420 campers attending five week-long sessions.

The activities ranged from over night hikes to archery and everything else in-between. That is one thing has remained the same throughout Camp's history. Even today one can be found at the archery grounds trying their best not to shoot an arrow at another camper, or trailing behind one another on a midnight hike in the woods. Along with these activities there has always been a strong dedication to education, especially in regards to Armenian issues of the past and present. From the early seventies and on camp has had "themed" weeks, such as regions of Armenia and different Fedayees. With the theme come educational for the campers. AYF Camp has always been an environment for the growth of knowledge about causes that affect young camper's lives and the livelihood of the greater Armenian community.

AYF Camp, with such an extensive and positive history, is still striving for better and a brighter future. With every year comes a new group of fresh-faced campers ready to experience a week of educational, activities, and the opportunity to create lasting friendships. Along with the campers comes a group of counselors each week ready to make sure that camp becomes a balanced environment between fun and education. It is with the dedication of both campers and counselors, along with those behind the scenes, that we can insure the camp's longevity.



**July 1977
Week 1**



**August 1995
Week 4**

letter an open

'He set to the task not only the natives but, to prevent them from thinking labor a disgrace, his own soldiers also. With the work divided among so many hands, the enterprise was finished with incredible speed and struck the neighboring peoples, who at first had derided the project as vain, with wonder and terror at its success.'

Utopia (Book II)

Hrag Yedalian

I recently had the chance to read the interesting viewpoints expressed by fellow youth who are seemingly intent upon improving the situation of Armenians throughout the world. One article, I felt, had particularly strong opinions, while not always explicit, about what defines 'Armenianness.' The article that I am referring to was entitled 'A letter directed to all those who are interested in the future generations of Armenians and chiefly to those who are not interested.' In light of this article, I thought that this would be an opportune moment to express my opinions, alongside those of the 'concerned Diasporan,' about an issue that has for the most part remained outside the scope of public discourse: the declining usage of the Armenian language. Almost everyone I speak to about this topic has taken a firm stance about whether the ability to speak, read and write in Armenian has any bearing upon ones status as an 'Armenian.' I am almost certain that you too have had discussions about this topic. The problem lies in the fact that many present a two-sided stance when discussing this issue publicly. How do these apparently unwavering opinions become two-sided when presented in public? Think about who you spoke to last about this topic, what views you expressed, and whether your discussion partner was fluent in Armenian. Chances are that your views were molded according to your partner's knowledge of the language. Therefore, if we think this phenomenon through, it is clear that we all have developed personal definitions of what characterizes an 'Armenian,' the determining factor often being the language issue.

You will not find the article that that I have referred to above in the last issue of Haytoug, or at least not if you search through the articles written in English. The appearance of such an article in Armenian is a great example of how those who claim to be fluent in the language, as the author of the article unquestionably does, perceive the language's role in determining their, and in turn their peers', place within 'Armenian society.'

In the opening sentence the author of the article writes: 'Dear reader, If it has already occurred to you that I intend to preach upon you with this letter, you have not been mistaken.' The author asks the reading audience to think up of all those they know that were born and raised within the Diaspora and to visualize how often those individuals read or write in Armenian. The answer, s/he is certain, will be disappointing. The author then moves to display her main argument (i.e., the fading tie between the Armenian language and the people of the Diaspora) by taking as example the last issue of Haytoug in which only a single article, that of Hampig Sassounian, appeared in Armenian. In the spirit of Sassounian, the author proudly states that 'we [the Armenians] do not perish,' and therefore neither will the Armenian language within the Diaspora. Before continuing in the same fashion, the author expresses her belief that the audience is undeniably on the 'correct path' since they have chosen to read Haytoug.

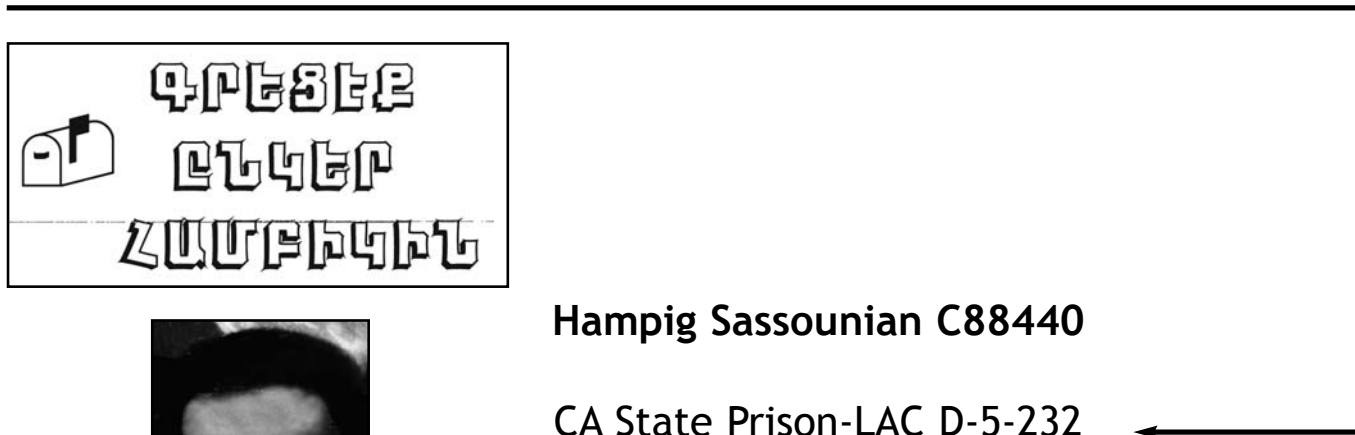
The author of this article both explicitly and implicitly suggests a number of points. 1- something must be done about this dismal condition; 2- those who know how to read and write Armenian do so infrequently; 3- the Armenian Youth Federation provides the youth with the 'correct path'; 4- the ability to speak Armenian defines whether one is really an 'Armenian' or not.

In regards to the first two points, the author does little to not only offer a preferred solution to this situation, but to try to comprehend the reasons for the decline of the popularity of the language. She assumes that those who know how to, should naturally put the language to use. The keys that would unlock the reasoning behind these broad assumptions lie in the hands of the author. We can only ask for further clarity.

The third point mentioned above is a fundamental issue when trying to understand how the polarization between 'us and them,' or between all those who know the language and consider themselves as 'real Armenians' and between those who do not and are, in the eyes of the in-group, not really Armenians, develops. The reference to the 'correct path' simply means that the author thinks that since the reader has his or her hands on a Haytoug, it would probably be safe to say that they subscribe to the thoughts and beliefs of the AYF (this only serves to point out the limited circulation of the magazine itself!). This belief, combined with the fact that the reader obviously knows how to read Armenian, would classify him or her as a 'real Armenian.' The author should be aware that instead of fixing the problem, this self-righteous attitude when displayed in large numbers as is currently done, would only serve to push away many youths who show interest in Armenian issues, but cannot comfortably fit into the scheme of such organizations. This is particularly true when those who display interest do not know how to speak Armenian. The solution to this condition is two-fold: 1- those who perceive themselves at a higher-level than many others because of their command over the Armenian language need to cool down. The reason for the massive majority of the cases in which a Diasporan has the opportunity to learn the language is mere chance. My parents never consulted me about their decision to send me to an Armenian school. The reasoning of individuals who place themselves at a higher pedestal than those who do not know the language is similar to a son who receives millions of dollars as inheritance, losing half of it in failed businesses, but who nonetheless prides himself for his self-perceived financial genius, since he is after all a millionaire. On the other hand, there are dozens of non-Armenians around the world who have learned krapar (Armenian used in ancient and especially religious texts). Should they be considered to be Armenian? I do not think that the author would think so, which only proves the fact that Armenian is just one of the many languages, like French, Spanish and Chinese, that people use to communicate with; 2- those who feel like outsiders, because of some imposed language barrier, should pursue their interests within Armenian affairs regardless of how the 'real Armenians' view them. People have different opinions and often do not take the time to understand the consequences of such beliefs. These ideas lead to the deterioration of the conditions within the Diaspora.

The fourth point is the main issue at hand. To display the absurdity of placing language as a pre-requisite for the ability to call one's self an Armenian, it is useful to look at the thousands of youths who know the language. How many of these individuals can you name that completely disassociate themselves from Armenian society? Do they work harder or have purer intentions than those who cannot read or write Armenian? Or is it a matter of something that cannot be explained; the fact that those who can speak the language 'really understand' what it is to be an Armenian? I see the matter as not how, or in this case in what language, it is expressed, but what is actually being expressed. A person of Armenian descent living in the Diaspora has the choice to determine his or her 'nationality.' She can as easily choose to be an American as she can Armenian, or, as is often done, a combination of both. Therefore, the question of 'Armenianness' is ultimately an intimate issue. While passing through various stages of development, some individuals choose one label as opposed to another. This choice is definitely not a matter around which society can impose its regulations.

In her closing sentence, the author equates the loss of the language to the demise of the Armenian people. What better proof of this, as the author might think, than the fact that my response to the article was written in English! Unlike the wishes of the author and the many individuals with similar thoughts, I do not see important topics such as the role of language within the Diapsora at the center of closed debates that are restricted to those who are fluent in Armenian. As, I have clearly stated above, this type of approach (oh, well we know these things and we'll teach them to those that don't) will only serve to distance the many youth who wish to become involved in Armenian issues and studies. The term 'Haytoug,' as the author states, is defined as a member of a revolutionary grouping. Let us, like the name of this publication suggests, join the group that will revolt against the narrow-mindedness that diverts the Diaspora's attention from important issues to injurious name calling and labeling.



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