



The Youth Newsletter

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PROVIDED BY THE HOMENETMEN EASTERN REGION USA & ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION-
YOUTH ORGANIZATION OF THE ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION

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Armenian Flag Raising Ceremony Held at Fort Lee Borough Hall in Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide

By Tamar Samuelian

On the rainy afternoon of April 22, the Homenetmen scouts of New Jersey, representatives of Hamazkayin Armenian Cultural and Educational Society's N.J. chapter, Sts. Vartanantz Nareg Saturday School students, council members, Fort Lee firefighters, policemen, and guests gathered at the Fort Lee Municipal building to raise the Armenian Flag in honor of the 102nd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire.

This commemorative event was organized by Armenian National Committee (ANC) and directed by Hasmig Deirkrikorian-Aprahamian, co-chair of Hamazkayin regional.

The program was concise, yet multifaceted. The ceremony began with Very Reverend Father Vazken Karayan of Holy Cross Church in Union City, who prayed for peace and prosperity for all Armenians. Nayri Diratsoian led the singing of "God Bless America," followed by Niree Kaprielian who sang the Armenian National Anthem while the Armenian flag was raised. Mr. James Sahagian relayed a message on behalf of the ANC. He stated that Armenians should "continue to fight for recognition, reparations from Turkey, and for human rights for all people."

Although the rain became stronger and stronger throughout the event, the program went on. Nairi Diratsouian recited a poem by Siamanto entitled "The Cry of the Land," translated into English by playwright Dr. Herand Markarian. Tamar Samuelian, played "Giligia" on flute. The piece so moved the audience that they began singing along.

The program concluded with remarks by Fort Lee Mayor, Mr. Mark Sokolich. Sokolich stated that "Armenians are an indispensable part of our day-to-day lives." He issued a proclamation naming April 24 the official day of Armenian Genocide Commemoration, which was handed to a veteran firefighter and Fort Lee resident, Mr. Krikor Khatchadurian, without whose efforts the event would not have taken place.

Thank you to the town of Fort Lee for supporting the Armenian community and the Armenian cause.



Mayor Sokolich with the Homenetmen Scouts

Keep the Promise, Tell the World

By Manoug Mardirossian

The highly anticipated film *The Promise* was released in theaters late April, in what many see as the culmination of decades-long efforts to get mainstream American recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Of course, a film may not be as powerful as the United States President acknowledging that a genocide did, in fact, take place, but can be considered a victory on a smaller—but important—scale; a victory that will surely make a lasting difference.

The Promise was funded by the will of the late Armenian-American billionaire Kirk Kerkorian, who made sure that throughout all of his great accomplishments as a businessman, his lasting legacy would be as the man who made this project a reality.

Protests against the film came even before *The Promise*'s release, as many—mostly Turkish deniers—gave the film negative ratings. The actors, director, and all those involved with the film have done their best, however, appear in the mainstream press to emphasize the cultural importance of the film. Just the fact that the all of the proceeds of the film will be donated to various charities proves the power of *The Promise* and what it means to the public. The decision to donate is unprecedented in Hollywood and further proves that everyone involved in the making of this film is doing it not for the money, but for the lasting legacy it can have.

I recently watched an interview of the two award winning actors Christian Bale and Oscar Isaac, the leads of this film, on a CBS morning show. Both actors, who are highly respected in the industry and have had great success as leads of critically and financially successful blockbusters, had little to no knowledge about the Armenian Genocide before being a part of the film.

I did not find it all that surprising. But what made a lasting impression on me was that in that interview, both Bale and Isaac talked about the shock and sympathy they felt after learning about our story and the pride they felt about starring in the film that told that story. They spoke about how they felt they had a duty to tell American people—as well as the rest of the world—the “story of the Armenian people.” Director Terry George has come out and said that he would like *The Promise* to be used as a historically educational film presented in schools when teaching the Armenian Genocide. Everyone that is a part of this film has done their best to talk about the meaning behind it and the importance of recognition for not only the Armenian people, but for all of humanity.

Throughout all the years that I have attended protests for genocide recognition, or marched as a scout into the Massachusetts State House and stood as our Governor spoke about the importance of recognition. There was one moment, though, that made me truly feel I accomplished something that personally made me feel like I made a difference. Two years ago, on the Centennial of the Armenian



The theatrical poster for 'The Promise' (Photo: Survival Pictures)

Genocide, I was blessed to have the opportunity be a guest on Boston's top Hip Hop/Rap radio station Jamn' 94.5, where I was interning at the time, and speak live on air not only about the Armenian Genocide, but about its ongoing denial. There, I felt I did a service to my people by getting that chance to speak to tens of thousands of listeners on a hip hop radio station, who otherwise probably would have no idea about the plight of our people.

I cannot speak for all those Armenians that live in the United States, but I can speak for myself. I grew up learning about the Armenian Genocide and the horrors of 1915. I grew up understanding how every year, our President—no matter who may be standing in that position—refuses to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and refers to it only as “mass-killings.” I grew up knowing I had an obligation that was given to us by our parents, Armenian teachers, priests, and community members, to keep a promise to continue to advocate for Armenian Genocide recognition.

If you educate one person, they will pass on that information and the beautiful cycle of awareness will continue.

This weekend tell your friends, tell your co-workers, your neighbors—heck, tell a random person on the street. Tell them to go and watch this film.

Tell them to tell the world our story.

Tell them to keep the promise.

Until the day the whole world knows the truth, you must carry it with you

By Katia Ariyan

All your life, they will tell you that it doesn't matter.

They will tell you that the bones have been scattered, that the bodies have crumbled. They will try to convince you that you are chasing some elusive and insignificant desert wind. They will point you to their more pressing problems.

When you are six, you will sit cross-legged in front of the television, and they will tell you how ridiculous and illogical and obsolete you are and they will offer you words about timing and time passing and you will hear them and you will cry for the first time about something other than scraped knees or broken toys. After that you will swear that you'll be the one to make them acknowledge you, and that you'll see the day they do.

When you are ten you'll be old enough to hear more stories, and you'll learn how your great-grandmother carried her dead baby brother across the desert and you'll learn what your great-aunt's tattoos mean and you'll learn how your great-grandfather had sat watching the earth, waiting for his father to come up. And you'll learn that they took the sons from trembling arms and took the sun, bleeding, from the sky.

When you are fourteen you'll give a presentation at your school, and though you'll have red paint under your fingernails and fried glue peeling from your palms, your teacher will ask, why do you care so much, you were born in America weren't you?

When you are sixteen you'll grip candles and pile flowers and construct cardboard memorials, and vow to see your land sown with pomegranate seeds again.

When you're eighteen, someone will tell you that it wasn't a big deal, that it was so long ago, that you should get over it.

And when you object, people will ask you why it still matters, and when they ask you that, you'll need to tell them.

That's when you'll say how so many years ago, they washed out the river with your blood, and they filled the sand with your bones. That they feasted on your bodies like roaches as you fought against the ground to escape. That they shot at and spat on your corpses as they lay in undignified heaps. That they scraped out the words on your back and on your arms, that they used their knives to carve out your eyes, that they broke your neck with their chains. That today they chisel away at your body, and they eat at your borders like acid, and that they lie through their rotting teeth, and that they say you are insignificant.

Until the day the whole world knows the truth, you must carry it with you. Take it wherever you go, slung over your hip like your great-grandfather on his sister's. Do not mistake it for a burden.

Midwest Junior Winter Olympics

By Talar Aroyan

When I first joined AYF, I didn't know what to expect. Over the years, my friends would complain and beg me to join, but I wouldn't budge. But then the day came and I finally decided to make the commitment. I was excited to be a part of all the cool and fun events that would take place throughout the years. That first event that I got to experience was this year's Junior Winter Olympics, hosted by the Chicago "Ararat" chapter.



I asked my friends what it is about and they explained the whole thing to me. They told me what we do, how it goes, and about their past Olympics. I didn't know how the whole thing would pan out, so I just hoped for the best. We first went to the gym and I saw all the Detroit and Racine members. It was so nice to see everyone bonding and having a blast with the other members. We played many rounds of basketball and then came to our church. We played board games, socialized, danced, and ate a ton of food.

My favorite part was the dancing. The older Seniors from Detroit put on Armenian music and danced away. Right when that happened, everyone else joined in. It was such a fun time. Others were also outside playing basketball and soccer or on the playground. Everyone had such a fun time that it was so hard to leave at the end of the day.

My first event that I got to be a part of as an AYF member was magnificent. It was fun to see people from different states come together and meet new people during the span of one whole day. Even though we aren't as lucky as the East Coast because of their bigger chapters, we were still able to experience the same thing they were able to experience. CAC and the Chicago Seniors did a very nice job in planning, and we owe it all to them. My first time at JWO will be a moment that I will never forget.

New Jersey AYF Ice Skating Social

By Kiya Ariyan

On April 8th, 2017, the New Jersey Arsen AYF chapter's annual ice skating event was held at the Fritz Dietl Ice Rink in Westwood, NJ. My three sisters and I attended the event and of course had a blast, as we do every year. Members of all ages attend and everyone collaborates and enjoys the night. From watching skating races, to trying to prevent falling over during the photo, the event is something that all members enjoy. AYF ice skating is definitely something that no one should miss!



Book your rooms for 2017 Navasartian Games Today!

We are pleased to inform you that the website for the 2017 Navasartian Games in Providence is up and running! The website is at www.navasartianeusa.com, and you can find information to book rooms at the hotel and about the athletic venues. Through the website, you can also purchase entertainment packages and submit ads for the Ad Book.

The hotel information is the following:

The Providence Biltmore, located in the heart of downtown Providence, will be our headquarters for the weekend. Rooms are available to book for an affordable rate of \$129 for a single and \$139 for a double.

Please call [401-421-0700](tel:401-421-0700), and mention "Homenetmen" for the discounted rate.



If you would like to submit any articles for the Youth Newsletter, please contact us at CEC@ayf.org or Kevork.Ourfalian@gmail.com

Articles must be submitted by the 20th of the month

Upcoming Events

May 26-29: AYF-YOARF Junior Seminar

June 8-11: AYF-YOARF Tri-Regional Seminar

June 16-18: Junior Athletic Games in New Jersey

July 1-4: Homenetmen Eastern Region Navasartian Games

July 14-16: Midwest Junior Athletic Games in Granite City

August 31- September 4: AYF-YOARF Senior Olympics

**Homenetmen Eastern Region Navasartian Games
WEEKEND ENTERTAINMENT & VIP Pass**



**Sunday Night
Dance | July 2nd at
The Providence Biltmore Hotel
KEVORK ARTINIAN
and BAND
& DJ Rams from Boston
Dance starts at 8PM
Dance Prices
\$45.00 Adults
\$20.00 for children under 12**

**Monday Night Victory Gala
Dinner Dance | July 3rd: at
The Rhode Island Convention Center
ELIE BERBERIAN and
BAND
& DJ Rams from Boston
Dinner starts at 7PM
Dinner & Dance
\$75.00 Adults
\$40.00 for children under 12
Dance Only after 10PM
\$50.00 Adults
\$20.00 for children under 12**

**VIP DANCE PACKAGE
(Deadline June 7th, 2017)**

\$80.00 (\$15.00 Savings)
Includes access to both dances without dinner

\$100.00 (\$20.00 savings for adults)
Includes access to both dances and dinner

\$50.00 (\$10.00 savings for children under 12)
Includes access to both dances and dinner

*Children under 4 are free of charge

OUR PRESENCE SHAPES OUR FUTURE.



AYF-YOARF TRI-REGIONAL SEMINAR
AYF CAMP HAIASTAN
6.8.17 - 6.11.17

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84th AYF-YOARF Senior Olympics
Downtown Milwaukee
Hosted by:
Racine Armen Garo
August 31 - September 4, 2017

Did you miss us in 2006? Curious what all the hype was about? Here's your chance to experience (or re-experience) what many have said was one of the best Olympics ever! Plan to attend August 31 - September 4, 2017 for an affordable, hospitable, walkable, diverse and unique weekend that is sure to please. We can't wait to see everyone! Make sure to visit our website at www.ayfolympics.org for the full schedule of events, information on how to purchase a hyepass and information on how to support the AYF by purchasing an Ad in the souvenir Adbook.


BOOK TODAY for only \$120/night (plus tax)!!!
Hyatt Regency Milwaukee: 1-888-421-1442 or <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/AYF2017>
Deadline for reservations is July 31, 2017 (Cancellation policy is two (2) weeks prior to arrival)

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AYF MIDWEST JUNIOR OLYMPICS

DETROIT GRANITE CITY RACINE CHICAGO



WHO WILL TAKE THE GOLD IN 2017

JULY 14TH AND 15TH 2017

<p>Schedule of Events Friday, July 14th - Picnic at 5:30 pm at Township Park, Pavilion A 3Center Grove Rd in Edwardsville, IL There will be soccer, a playground, and lots of Armenian food!</p> <p>Saturday, July 15th - 9:30 am events begin at Edwardsville High School Track, 6368 Center Grove Rd, Edwardsville, IL 62025</p>	<p>7:30 pm Saturday Night Dance in St. Gregory's Hall in Granite City featuring the Nigolian Band from Detroit!</p> <p>Hotels Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Edwardsville - 618.692.7255 (30 rooms available and is right behind the track and near the Friday night activity!) Comfort Inn in Edwardsville - 618.692.5181 (also has 20 rooms available and is down the street from the Track and Park)</p>
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AYF-YOARF EASTERN REGION JUNIOR ATHLETIC GAMES



NEW JERSEY

Hotel Information:
 - Courtyard by Marriott
 Montvale, 100 Chestnut Ridge Road Montvale, NJ 07645
 - AYF rate of \$129/night for Friday and Saturday

Track Information:
 - Pascack Valley High School, 200 Piermont Avenue, Hillsdale, NJ 07842

Swimming Information:
 - Washington Township Swim Club 480 Ridgewood Blvd N, Township of Washington, NJ 07676.

JUNE 16-18, 2017

Saturday Night Activity:
 - The "Junior Victory" dance will take place in the hotel dance hall.

Transportation:
 - will be provided from the hotel and to and from the events for the Juniors.

APPLICATIONS

- Coming soon on the ayf.org website
- Let the games begin!