



# The Youth Newsletter

## Երիտասարդական Լրագիր

PROVIDED BY THE ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION & HOMENETMEN EASTERN REGION USA

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## 83rd Annual AYF-YOARF Eastern United States Convention Concludes in Waltham



The 83rd Annual Convention of the Armenian Youth Federation, Youth Organization of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (AYF-YOARF) Eastern Region United States took place in Waltham, Mass. on Dec. 26-30, with 31 delegates representing the chapters of the Eastern Region, eight advisors, eight guests, and seventeen representatives of our sister organizations and neighboring regions.

Guest representatives included *ungerouhi* Heather Krafian, on behalf of the Armenian Relief Society (ARS), who discussed the many projects in and out of our homeland. *Unger* Hayg Oshagan, chair of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) Central Committee, discussed the investments the organization makes in its youth and its many programs, not only overseas, but in our own backyards. *Unger* Oshagan discussed the significance of maintaining the organization's successful programs and strengthening new directions and changes that could take place. ARF advisor to the AYF Central Executive, *ungerouhi* Sarine Adishian, stressed that the organization's agenda is the convention's to create, and that change and adapting to it is fundamental to the AYF-YOARF.

Guest Representatives also included *Baron* Dave Hamparian of AYF Camp Haiastan, editor of the Armenian Weekly *unger* Rupen Janbazian, Michael Varadian of the AYF Governing Body, *yeghpayr* Razmik Banosian of Homenetmen Eastern Region, Tsoleen Sarian and *unger* Dikran Khaligian representing the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), a video conference with *unger* Sako Mkrtchian of the ARF Bureau Office of Youth Affairs, and six representatives from the Western United States and Canada AYFs.

The delegates of the Annual Convention, the highest body of the organization, reviewed and analyzed the work carried out by the chapters and committees of 2016, discussed new and unique goals of the organization, and set resolutions preparing the organization's agenda, regionally and internationally for 2017. Discussions included Syrian-Armenian Relief, the Armenian Cultural Association of America (ACAA) Artsakh Fund's Arajamough redevelopment project, AYF Internship in Armenia, our fallen soldiers and Artsakh heroes, the current state and future of Javakhk, membership, junior members, the newly founded Manhattan "Moush" and Bedford chapters, AYF Camp Haiastan, ANCA, and more.

For each day of the convention, delegates started their meetings at 8 a.m. and ended past midnight to accomplish their goals and meet the convention's detailed agenda. Support from local organizations included a kebab dinner at the Papken Suni *Agoump*, hosted by the ARS Cambridge "Shushi" and Watertown "Leola Sasouni" chapters, as well as homemade *choreg* and cheese gift bags from the ARF Boston "Sardarabad" *gomidehutun*.

The 83rd annual convention presented the AYF-YOARF many new resolutions and goals to accomplish in the future—be it in the upcoming year or distant plan; regionally and in Armenia. The newly-elected 2017 AYF-YOARF Central Executive consists of Sosy Bouroujian (Washington D.C.), Kenar Charchaflian (Worcester), Avedis Keshgegian (Philadelphia), Nairi Khachatourian (Greater Boston), Garo Tashian (Providence), Peter Tashjian (Philadelphia), and Araxie Tossounian (Detroit).

## Boston Scouts Continue Christmas Caroling Tradition



As Armenians we are usually accustomed to celebrating 2 different Christmas'. The first of course is with the rest of the world on December 25th. However, the Armenian Church celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ on January 6th. We have learned to treat both equally as days of recognition and celebration. The Armenian diaspora here in America has done a lot of progressive things to keep our culture strong. Everyone does their part in many different ways. Whether you speak the language, you are an active member in your youth organization, or an active member of your church, we all do our best to make sure the Armenian culture is being strongly represented for our generation and those to come.

The Homenetmen organization is known for their strong youth athletic program as well as their equally strong scouting program. The scouts of the Boston chapter do their part to strongly represent our culture, every January 5th, otherwise known as Armenian Christmas Eve. They come together and drive house to house visiting Armenian families in the community that are celebrating the joyous occasion. They joyfully carol to the families singing 3 songs themed for the holiday. The Homenetmen Boston scouts have made this a tradition for over 15 years. With their beautiful Armenian renditions of 'Silent Night' and 'Joy to the World', as well as the song "Khoroot Medz", they bring the Christmas spirit to those families and put a smile on their face.

This year the Boston Scouts had a record number of houses that they visited which further proved and reaffirmed the notion that the Armenian diaspora is still growing and that a small gesture such as caroling at one's house, goes a long way in further reassuring what strong unity the Armenian community has, not only in Boston, but all over the world as well. Most Armenians feel a sense of strong pride when they tell others about how their culture has its own Christmas. They view it as something that makes us unique and special, and just further strengthens that sense of pride we all have for being Armenian.

## WELCOME TO PROVIDENCE!

The Providence Homenetmen Chapter is proud to be hosting the Homenetmen Eastern Region 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Navasartian Games! Join us July 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in Providence, Rhode Island. The Chapter, Steering Committee, and Community are excited to have you and your families join us for a promising weekend filled with athletic competition and social events.

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 or book online here [https://secure3.hilton.com/en\\_US/qg/reservation/book.htm?execution=e1s1](https://secure3.hilton.com/en_US/qg/reservation/book.htm?execution=e1s1).

Please make sure to mention "Homenetmen" for the discounted rate.

We are also excited to announce the entertainment lineup for the weekend! Kevork Artinian and Band will be performing on Sunday night at the Providence Biltmore Hotel and Elie Berberian and Band will be performing Monday for the Victory Gala, taking place at the Rhode Island Convention Center. Please see the attached flyer for Dance Package options!

Stay tuned for more details as we promise to make this year the most memorable ever! Email [navasartian.eusa@homenetmen.org](mailto:navasartian.eusa@homenetmen.org) with any questions and we hope to see you this Fourth of July Weekend!

Be sure to follow the Navasartian Games on all social media to stay up to date. Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/pg/navasartian.eusa> | Twitter @navasartianeast | Instagram – navasartian.east | Snapchat – navasartianeast



## AYF-YOARF Welcomes New Chapter in Bedford

Over 60 community members gathered at the Bedford town center on Dec. 10, 2016, to witness 17 new Armenian Youth Federation (AYF) members take their oaths at the inauguration of the Armenian Youth Federation Youth Organization of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (AYF-YOARF) Eastern United States Bedford chapter.

The evening began with welcoming remarks from *unger* Stephen Dulgarian of the Boston Armenian Revolutionary Federation "Sardarabad" *gomidehutiun*, who thanked the AYF Central Executive for approving the creation of the Bedford chapter. *Unger* Aram Jeknavorian, chairperson of the Lowell ARF "Aharonian" *gomideh*, spoke about the importance of being an *unger* and shared his story of how he became a member of the AYF.

*Ungerouhi* Mimi Parseghian, chairwoman of the Armenian Relief Society (ARS) Lowell "Lousintak" Chapter, reminded everyone that the ARS is there to morally and financially support the new chapter. She also mentioned that she joined the AYF at 10 years old and reassured the new AYF members, that the AYF is about having fun and to not forget to have fun as a member.



Two members of the AYF-YOARF Central Executive—*unger* Hrag Arakelian and *ungerouhi* Nairi Khachatourian—were present to administer the oath. The two discussed the importance of gaining a new chapter for the region, the role of the community, the expectations that the chapter must live up to, and the challenges the chapter will have to overcome.

Khachatourian explained to the new members that the AYF was created to allow an environment for Armenian youth to stay united, remain Armenian, and learn the skills and knowledge needed to join sister organizations in the future.

Arakelian continued by discussing how the AYF provides Armenian youth the opportunity to gain leadership skills. “In school and in other communities, it may be difficult to get exposure to leadership experience because there may be a lot of competition. There may be 2000 students and only 10 leadership positions,” said Arakelian. “Now there are 30 of you and everybody has the opportunity to become a leader.”

The AYF-YOARF Central Executive members also addressed the concern of having a new chapter in a geographic region that already has four AYF-YOARF chapters within a 50-mile radius.

“In making this decision, we [the Central Executive] understood the possible complications that may potentially be created with the New England communities. We definitely took that into account. However, adding a chapter, especially in a community that really wanted one, meant that more life-long friendships would be created, more future leaders of our communities would be created, and more members would be ready to fight for *Hai Tahd* (the Armenian cause). These were just some of the few reasons we concluded that the Armenian community and the AYF would be better off in having a chapter in Bedford and gaining those members who would not have normally joined the organization,” said Arakelian, on behalf of the Central Executive. “It should go without saying that we want all chapters to succeed including Worcester, North Andover, Greater Boston, and Providence. We have tried starting chapters in other communities, but have not succeeded. There is a recipe for success and we want to ensure that the community understands that Central Executive’s intention is to have the Bedford chapter thrive for many years and not be short lived,” he added.

Khachatourian then elaborated on the lessons learned from the past. “Although we are very excited to have Bedford join the AYF community, it must be understood that it takes a lot of work to create and sustain a successful chapter,” said Khachatourian. She stressed that it is vital that many members of the community volunteer their time to guide the chapter because the Central Executive has seen many other chapters dissolve due to their dependence on one individual. Khachatourian also stressed that parents need to value their junior’s involvement with the AYF just as they value their child’s education.

The Bedford AYF chapter does not yet have a name. The 2017 AYF-YOARF Central Executive and the Bedford chapter members will name the chapter in unison.

## HOMENETMEN LEBANON WINS AT THE BUZZER

On Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, the Homenetmen Beirut BC team (8-1) took on Louaize (5-3). It was a battle between two of the better teams (Homenetmen in 1<sup>st</sup> place, Louaize in 4<sup>th</sup>) of the Lebanese Basketball League, the top professional basketball division in Lebanon.

The game was played at the Tenjoukian Stadium, which is the home stadium for Homenetmen and also known as the “Orange Hell” because of the very popular and passionate fans of the team.

Homenetmen beat out Louaize the first time these teams met back in December in very tight matchup 75-72. The second time these teams played would not be much different. It was an even matchup through-out and with 1.7 seconds left, the game was tied 83-83 with Homenetmen having possession.

Homenetmen inbounded the pass right around mid-court. Elie Chamoun caught the pass at the three point line and pump-faked his first shot to send the defender flying past him and set him up for a clean look at a three-pointer. With the crowd waiting in anticipation, Chamoun buried the shot to give Homenetmen the victory 86-83!



## AYF-YOARF Eastern U.S.: The Year Ahead and Years to Come

We would like to wish our fellow *ungers* and community members a happy, successful, and prosperous New Year and a Merry Christmas. With 2017 well on its way, the Armenian Youth Federation-Youth Organization of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (AYF-YOARF) Eastern United States has set a plan for the coming year that will reenergize our members and strengthen our efforts to further our cause.

Three of the major discussions at the 83rd Annual Convention revolved around the longevity of our junior organization, the importance of our international presence, and the consistency of our senior membership. Realizing the importance of these three aspects in regards to our organization, we want to remind our membership to focus on these as they work throughout the year.

As discussed at the Convention, the junior organization and our junior membership are the most important elements of our organization. The education that our 10-16-year-olds learn within their *badanegan* years in the AYF is, in reality, planting the roots for the future of the organization and the Armenian people. For these reasons, high importance will be placed on strengthening the junior programs, including education and recruitment.

Also, high priority will be given to our international programs and overall image.

Our members and *hamagirs*(supporters/sympathizers), as well as the community at large, must come together to support the great programs we currently have in Javakhk, Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabagh/NKR), and Armenia.

We are proud of the work that has been achieved over the past few years and strive to improve on them, so that we may better the future of the homeland and the diaspora.

Lastly, reenergizing our senior membership is yet another high priority. We are as strong as our members and we must rise together to tackle the challenges approaching us as a region in the year ahead and in years to come. Our region aims to implement AYF-YOARF programs in a way to attract and retain more members to strengthen our organization.

We look forward to the year ahead.

*Ungeragan Cherm Pevnerov,*

Central Executive

AYF-YOARF Eastern United States



**PHILADELPHIA AYF HOSTS  
NATs 2017**  
February 17-20 ♦ 3 NIGHT EVENT

**Friday:**  
DJ Mikey at Embassy Suites Hotel

**Saturday:**  
Monarch Lounge and Bar  
Northern Liberties Philadelphia

**Sunday:**  
Kevork Artinian and Friends

**Athletic Games held on Saturday & Sunday  
GYM LOCATIONS TBA**

**Hotel:**  
Embassy Suites, Philadelphia Airport  
9000 Bartram Ave, Philadelphia PA 19153

2 Double bed suite with pullout queen \$139.00 a night  
King size bed suite with pullout queen \$119.00 a night

T: (215) -365-4500 - Mention "AYF" for discounted rate

 

**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