

Merdinian News

Pursue Excellence

APRIL 2018 • NUMBER 9

Ապրիլեան Ոգեկոչումը Մերտիհնեան Վարժարանին Մէջ

Հայոց Յեղասպանութեան ոգեկոչումը, Մերտիհնեան Վարժարանէն ներս տեղի ունեցաւ տարբեր-տարբեր առիթներով: Ապրիլ 6-ին Վարժարանի Ե.-էն մինչեւ Ը.- կարգերու աշակերտները ուղղուեցան Մոնթեպելլոյի՝ Ազգային Մերտիհնեան Վարժարան, միանալու Լոս Անճելոսի տարածքին գտնուող, բոլոր հայ վարժարաններէն հոն ժամանած աշակերտներու խումբին, անկէ ուղղուելու Մոնթեպելլոյի Հայոց Յեղասպանութեան Նահատակաց յուշարձանը, ուր յաւուր պատշաճի կոկիկ յայտագիր մը ի գործ դրուեցաւ բոլոր ներկաներու մասնակցութեամբ: Հոգեւոր հայրեր շարականներով, յորդորներով եւ աղօթքներով առաջնորդեցին աշակերտները իրենց յարգանքի տուրքը տալու մեր միլիոն ու կէս զոհերու յիշատակին նուիրուած յուշարձանին դիմաց կարմիր ու ճերմակ մեխակներ դնելու: Երկուշաբթի Ապրիլ 23-ին առաւօտեան ժամը՝ 8-ին, վարժարանի տնօրինութեան եւ ուսուցչակազմի միահամուր ջանքերով իրականացած, երկրորդ ու անախընթաց ձեռնարկը տեղի ունեցաւ վարժարանի շրջափակէն ներս: Տիկ. Մարիամ Տէր Պետրոսեանի առաջնորդութեամբ աշակերտները ակնածանքով արտասանեցին ամերիկեան եւ հայկական ուխտերը, ապա Մեր Հայրենիքով ու Տէրունական աղօթքով օրուան յայտագիրը սկիզբ առաւ: Խօսք առաւ Վեր. Սերոբ Մկրտչեանը. ան ըսաւ, թէ Աստուած Հայ ստեղծած է մեզ եւ հետեւաբար երկու առաքելութիւն ունինք. պահել մեր

պայերուն հաւատքը եւ պահել անոնց մեզի ժառանգած լեզուն, պատմութիւնն ու մշակոյթը: Ապա Վարժարանի աշակերտները ծաղիկներ զետեղեցին մեր մանրակերտ յուշարձանին՝ Ծիծեռնակաբերդին կողքին, առաջին եւ երկրորդ կարգի աշակերտները, գլխաւորութեամբ իրենց դաստիարակ ուսուցիչներուն՝ «1915 երբեք նորէն» եւ արդարութիւն պահանջող լոզունքներով ցոյց մը կատարեցին: Ապա Դ. եւ Զ. կարգերու աշակերտներու կատարողութեամբ հնչեցին «Եկեղեցին Հայկական» երգն ու Ծիրազի «Ո՛րն է Պապօ Մեր Հայրենիք» բանաստեղծութիւնը: Գ. եւ Ե. կարգի աշակերտները դրօշները ծածանելով ներկայացուցին այն երկիրները, որոնք ճանչցած են Հայոց Յեղասպանութիւնը: 7-րդ եւ 8-րդի աշակերտները նախ տողանցեցին իրենց պատրաստած նահատակ հայ գրողներու լուսանկարներով եւ Հայկական Վեց Վիլայէթները ներկայացնող տեղեկատու պաստառներով եւ ապա անոնք Տիկ. Ալիս ՏէրԳեորգեանի ղեկավարութեամբ երգեցին՝ «Տեսնեմ Անին ու Նոր Մեռնեմ», «Երգ Կոունկի Մասին», «Վաղուց Թէեւ», «Սարդարապատ» երգերը: Վարժարանի տնօրէնուհի՝ Տիկ. Լինա Արսլանեան իր պատգամը փոխանցեց աշակերտներուն եւ շնորհակալութեան խօսքը ուղղեց բոլոր մասնակիցներուն եւ ի մասնաւորի Տէր Պետրոսեան ընտանիքին, մեր փոքրիկ Ծիծեռնակաբերդի կրկնօրինակի պատրաստութեան համար: Ապա հնչեց «Միասնութեան Ծուրջպար» երգը եւ Մերտիհնեանի աշակերտները, ներկայ ծնողները, տնօրէնուհին, պատուելիները ձեռք-ձեռքի տուած պարեցին ոգեւորութեամբ:

Պատուելի Յարութ Խաչատրեան եզրափակեց յայտագիրը աշակերտներուն կրկնել տալով Պարոյր Սեւակի՝ «Կանք, Պիտի լինենք, Ու Դեռ Ծառանանք» տողերը ու իր աղօթքէն ետք վարժարանը վերադարձաւ իր առօրեային լիացած ու խանդավառ:



CAMP AREV RETREAT

One of the great adventurous opportunities to grow mentally, spiritually, and physically is our biennial trip to Camp AREV. This year, 23 energetic 7th and 8th graders had a blast camp experience at Camp AREV on April 12-14. It started on Thursday morning with a snowball fight, followed by a hike, worship, and introduction to the topic by our guest speaker Pastor Harut Khatchatryan. The next day we had competitive sports tournaments, academics presented by Mrs. Sona about the Armenian Genocide, a talent show, and finally some surfing on our theme topic "The culture of I: Identity, Integrity, and Influence" presented by Pastor Harut. The theme verse was John 1:12: "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." As children of God, if we live a life of integrity, only then we will have a powerful influence on everyone around us... Every topic was followed by question/answer discussion. Finally, on Friday evening we had a fun gathering around the fire pit, worshipping, eating smores, and having a quality time together. Time flew as pastor Harut concluded his message on Saturday morning. We headed back home refreshed, renewed, challenged, and determined to live a life of integrity and great influence! We thank God for a blessed and safe camp experience. We also

thank our school, parents, teachers: Mrs. Sona, Mrs. Lena, Mr. Zorik, and Mr. Fred, Pastor Harut, and the Camp AREV director and staff for this life-changing weekend!



The following are some of our students' thoughts:

"The greatest highlight for me was Pastor Harut's message about identity, integrity, and influence because it was very relatable to my transition into high school."

"I loved partaking in the talent show! I also learned that we have to find our solid identity based on God's image."

"The most memorable experience was the preparation for the talent show. Our talent show skit portrayed God's power in us!"

"I learned how the influence of others impacts us every day of our lives as an Armenian Christian."

"I learned that it is important not to act as a Christian, instead I need to be a Christian!"

"It was amazing seeing snow falling for the first time! During the camp we all bonded together."

PTO

The 8th Parent Breakfast took place on April 5. The topic of discussion was the upcoming PTO events, which included the annual Carnival.



TOWN HALL MEETING

A Town Hall meeting took place at the school hall on April 19 with 36 parents, 8 board members, and 12 faculty/staff members. They discussed the importance of school safety and the amount of homework given to children. Among the new announcements were: plans to add Eastern Armenian in the elementary grades (K-3rd) and the approval to have one more parent representative on the Board of Directors.



HEALTH EDUCATION

On April 20, Drs. Ara and Arpi Festekjian, parents at Merdinian, led an educational presentation about health education to our 5th-8th grade students. We thank them wholeheartedly for providing vital information and guidance to our students.



ATHLETIC AWARDS CEREMONY

The Merdinian Athletic Department concluded the 2017-2018 academic year with the traditional award ceremony on April 27. This year, trophies were awarded to the winners. All participants in the basketball, soccer, track & field, and volleyball received certificates, a special gift from the school, and medals from KAHAM. Pizza, hot wings, and salad were served for dinner by our wonderful committee members. We thank our coach, assistant coaches, MAC committee members, athletes, and parents for their hard work throughout the year!



FIELD TRIPS

- Our first and second graders went on their second field trip this year on April 4. They visited the California Science Center, where they had the opportunity to explore the wonders of science. They investigated ladybugs at the bamboo garden and pond. Children were excited to catch and feel the ladybugs. They

explored live demonstrations and innovative programs of the life process of living things and more.



- Our graduating class visited St. Leon Armenian Cathedral in Burbank on April 17. Mr. Hayk Madoyan gave a tour of the Zorayan Museum located in the lower gallery of the Western Diocese as well as provided useful explanation about the church. Archbishop Derderian welcomed the students. He addressed the topic of solidifying the connection with Christ through prayers. Archbishop Derderian also called upon the students to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and to uphold His sacred teachings. Following the tour, the students had lunch and received special gift bags, which included books of prayers.



GUESTS

The young and talented musicians of the *Names of New Armenia* visited Merdinian on April 18 and left us in utter amazement with their incredible performances! Our teachers, students, and staff were also thrilled for the opportunity to listen to, cheer, and dance with the musicians.



FACULTY

- Mrs. Mayda Baboosian, Mrs. Margarit Meghroyan, Mrs. Lena Ekmekjian, Mrs. Mary Mekikian, and Mr. Fredrick Sayadian attended a special workshop organized by The Armenian National Committee of America Western Region Education Committee on April 7. The workshop concentrated on Armenian Genocide education.
- Mrs. Lina Arslanian attended the "Effective Teachers" webinar organized by the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development on April 10.
- Mrs. Allison Hammond attended the Next Generation Science Standards Workshop on April 13. The workshop was designed to develop knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead the school towards successful implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards including how to help science teachers develop instruction that is dynamic. Specific strategies, tools, and resources were shared to help incorporate the Next Generation Science Standards into our science instructions.
- Mrs. Mary Mekikian participated in Title I, IIA, III and IV meetings organized by LAUSD to learn about funding for professional development and assistance to students who have academic challenges.

SACRAMENTO/ FRESNO TRIP

Off to Sacramento and Fresno, a group of 12 energetic and enthusiastic 5th and 6th graders went on April 12-14. A trip filled with memories and historical information from the American and Armenian past! The trip started on the first day with a visit to the Sacramento Railroad Museum in the historical district of Sacramento, where students learned how the expansion of the American West brought about the railroad transportation for everyday goods, services, mail, and people. The following day the trip ventured off to see the State Capitol, where students learned about the many aspects of California State government. A tour was given of the California State Assembly and the California State Senate during which it was explained how laws and bills are passed. It was followed by a visit to Fort Sutter, which is a historical site in the midst of Sacramento. At this fort is preserved the history of the many people of various cultures as well as life styles and the challenges they had to face in adjusting to their new life in the land of the California Gold Rush. The final day of the field trip gave us more of an insight on the Armenian past. The day started with a stop at the Holy Trinity Armenian

Church of Fresno where we saw a khachkar and were told about the unending spirit of the Armenians. It was then followed by a visit to William Saroyan's bust as well as to the memorial site of Soghomon Tehlirian, who stood up for the rights and beliefs of the Armenian people. Our field trip culminated with a visit to the Fresno State University, where there was a replica of the Armenian Genocide monument in Dzidzernagapert (located in Yerevan, Armenia) for the 1 and half million Armenians who died in the Genocide on April 15, 1915. The trip was a success, and happy moments of learning and friendship will forever be remembered!



PRESCHOOL

Preschool teachers taught their students about the Armenian Genocide, in an age-appropriate way. On April 23, preschoolers participated in the Commemoration events along with the rest of the school by praying and honoring the 1.5 million Armenians who lost their lives.

REV. EKMEKJIAN'S PRESENTATION

Reverend Vatche Ekmekjian made a presentation to the 5th through 8th grade students on April 9.

The Reverend gave an informative overview about the accomplishments of the Armenians in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide.



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

The Parent-Teacher Conferences took place on April 5 in the Aram and Anahis D. Boolghoorjian Hall. Sixty-seven percent of our parents attended the conference to hear about their children's progress.



ARMENIAN CULTURE CORNER

This year, Armenians around the world are celebrating the centennial of Sartarabad Battle victory, an important cornerstone in Armenian history. Armenians were able to defeat the Turkish Army and drew the map of today's Armenia. The Sartarabad Memorial in Armenia is a major landmark 25 miles west of Yerevan. The 26-meter-high tower, with its 12 bells, represents the 12 provinces of Armenia including Karabagh, while the 2 bulls represent homeland protection. Its construction, laid on the spot of the battlefield, was inaugurated 50 years ago on May 25, 1968. The architect was Raphael Israelian (1908-1973). Among his other works are popular memorials such as the Arch of Charents on to road to Garni, and the first Genocide monument in the courtyard of Holy Etchmiadzin.



ICE CREAM SALE

On April 25, first graders held an ice cream sale. The proceeds will be used for classroom needs.

LIBRARY CORNER

The Scholastic Book Fair took place on April 10-13 hosted by our librarian, Mrs. Hasmig Shahinian. This year's theme was "Paws for Books" Come. Stay. Read A Great Tale!

The purr-fect books were waiting for all the enthusiastic students to get their paws on them. There were many new titles available to purchase, including fiction, action, non-fiction, mystery, and so much more. The fair is an exceptional opportunity for students to get their hands on new books and increase independent reading as well as adding hundreds of new titles to the school library. We would like to thank all the volunteer parents, students, teachers, and the donors for "All For Books", which provides one book to a needy child for every book purchased. The students whose parents volunteered in the book fair were awarded goody bags full of books, stationary, and posters. We can't wait to see you all next year!



APRIL 24 COMMEMORATION

Over 900 students from the Southern California Armenian schools gathered at the Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument on April 6 in Montebello to commemorate the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The students, who were wearing the special yellow t-shirts for this year's commemoration, walked from Mesrobian School to the Monument with the Montebello Police Department escorting them. "They were like one student body," remarked our Principal Mrs. Lina Arslanian. Fifth through 8th grade Merdinian students, along with Mrs. Arslanian, Mrs. Alice, Coach Zorik, Mrs. Mayda, Mrs. Allison, Mrs. Karinae, Mrs. Sona, and Mrs. Mary took part in this event, which has become an annual tradition. One student from each school led the opening prayers, the Armenian student's pledge, the pledge of allegiance followed by the Armenian National Anthem by all students. After laying flowers in the memory of the victims, Greg Hosharian and his band as well as young Armenian singer, Christopher Arabian performed beautiful songs. The opening and closing prayers were led by clergy from all the Armenian churches. After the ceremony, the students had their lunch on the premise of the monument with a chance to mingle with each other.



Alumni Corner

My name is Shogher Shanoian (née Melkonian), and I was born in Aleppo, Syria. As the daughter of a minister, I was 3 years old when my family moved to Montreal, Canada where I attended École Arménienne Sourp Hagop. In 1995 our family moved to the United States where my sisters and I started attending Merdinian School. Christianity, family, and the Armenian community shaped my life from a very early age. Having attended Armenian Church and school during my formative years has given me a strong sense of belonging to the Armenian Christian community. I graduated from California State

University, Fresno in 2009 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Business Administration – Management Option with an emphasis in Organizational Leadership. My past experience includes clerical work at Morgan Stanley, and Director of Operations of Camp AREV. I am married to Greg Shanoian, and we currently live in Granada Hills, California. We are very active members at the United Armenian Congregational Church where I serve as the Church Clerk. Together we have 3 sons: Peter (7), Paul (4), and Jonah (1.5). I have been a Merdinian parent for 5 years and I love our school! Every time I step foot on this campus I

am reminded of my days as a student, and it is extremely comforting to know that my children are growing up in the same school I once considered a second home.



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