



# Newsletter

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## In this issue

Greetings to All  
November Trip-Exciting  
Armenians that Interacted with us.  
Support Youth Projects  
2019 Annual Dinner at Der Dutchman  
AmazonSmile Foundation

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## Greetings to All from Richard Funt, Director

Welcome to our third newsletter for 2019. In the past 60 days efforts have moved forward exponentially! Our membership has grown, our annual dinner and silent auction at the Der Dutchman were both informative and motivating; we connected with many important people who will assist with our work in Armenia.

During recent travels to Armenia, we found our partners enthusiastically behind their government. There is more government funding for programs since corruption has declined; they are pleased their economy is doing well. It was just 18 months ago that Joe and I marched in the streets with the citizens of Armenia in the Violet Revolution. Yerevan is thriving with new shops. We traveled from Yerevan to the second largest city, Gyumri, and viewed many improved streets and shopping areas. Yet, the rural communities continue to be poor. We heard stories of poverty and malnutrition. In the village of Lukashin, Armavir Marz, we were met by our partners and are ready to begin our initial project with youth. Please read about our success story in the following articles.

## We have a story to tell! November 2019 Mission/Business trip

Our Qatar airline plane landed in Yerevan around 1:30 AM on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Joe and I left Columbus 33 hours before our arrival. At breakfast we met a reporter from Switzerland, who was writing a report on Nagorno-Karabakh, an independent area governed by the Republic of Artsakh with Armenian citizens; it is in dispute with Azerbaijan. The next morning we met reporters at breakfast from Azerbaijan. The four reporters had two body guards with them. We had a good discussion, learning their view of the US (which has a good relationship with them) and their view of the conflict with Armenia. They also have a good relationship with Israel because there are several Jewish communities that originated in Russia and moved to northern Azerbaijan and Baku after World War II.

## The people of Armenia which interacted with us

Tatev was our interpreter. She was our interpreter 10 years ago when we were near her village on a mission trip; that group refurbished a village library. Since that time, she came to America and received her degree in International Studies at Ohio Wesleyan. She was a tremendous asset in understanding the new government and the enthusiasm that existed. Our visit and our mission was enhanced by Tatev.

Gohar, director of the UMCOR Foundation, told us of their work which is everywhere in Armenia. They have a medical van which helps to improve the health of rural communities. She and her staff were pleased to receive our gift of \$3,000 for coats and shoes for the children in the villages. UMCOR Foundation continues to be a vital source of assistance to the rural communities. Gohar urged us to help Nune with her program.

Nune, Director of Green Lane Agriculture Assistance Program and Director of the Green Training Center, told us of her recent expansion of her work. Nune received training under the USDA/Map program and has been active on a private basis for the past 15 years. She and her office are assisting us with Youth Programs in Lukashin. I have visited and assisted Nune since 2004. We had soil tested for her new land purchase next to the Green Training Center.

Tigran, Deputy Agriculture Minister and Ministry of Economics worked with David Slusser under the United States Department of Agriculture /Marketing Assistance Program in 2004. He and David worked with improving milk production and milk quality. Since then, he worked with CARD for nine years. He has been with the Ministry for one year and has established an advisory committee, of which Green Lane will be a member. I was with USDSA/Map in 2004; he and I agreed that the program had a great impact on Armenian Agriculture. He asked for our Strategic Plan.

Vardges, president of the Lukashin Agricultural Association CC, met with us and the youth of the village of Lukashin concerning their willingness to be a part of the Youth Program. He discussed with them the type of projects that could be in their club. The youth were excited and expressed their interest in several projects.

We also met with the Deputy Governor of Armavir Marz (province). We learned that Lukashin is a part of a six-village consolidated school system

In summary, the people that we met will have a profound effect on our future work in Armenia. Joe and I were sad to leave our wonderful friends.

### **Support Initial Youth Project**

During this holiday season, we are seeking funding/support of our initial Youth Project. We will be offering 4-H type projects for youth 9 to 19 that will be reviewed at the Green Lane Fall Festival in September. Our goal is to raise \$100 per person and we intend to have 100 members. Projects will include, but are not limited to flowers, fruit trees, animals, drones/STEM type projects, health, woodworking, sewing, art, etc. Make checks payable to The Armenian Children's Support Fund and send to Richard Funt, 1877 Stockwell Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43235.

### **2019 Annual Dinner at Der Dutchman**

Thirty-six people attended the Annual Dinner at the Der Dutchman in Plain City, Ohio. Shirley Brooks-Jones, our guest speaker, encouraged us to continue our work as a charity for the children of Armenia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Shirley presented many examples of her efforts in providing scholarships for high school students in Newfoundland.

During the annual meeting, Mike Ridge was nominated and elected to the office of Vice President of the board of the Armenian Childrens Support Fund. He replaced Joe Clase. Joe will remain as a close advisor to the board.

It was announced that the US Congress passed the long awaited recognition of the Armenian genocide. There was much joy expressed as this recognition has taken many years to be achieved.

The Silent Auction raised over \$500. Further \$3,000 was donated for shoes and coats for children in Armenia.

The 2020 Annual Dinner is scheduled for November 6, 2020 at the Der Dutchman in Plain City.

### **AmazonSmile Foundation**

We have registered with the AmazonSmile Foundation to receive 0.5% of sales of certain items. When customers sign up for amazonsmile they are asked to click on our link (<https://smile.amazon.com/81-4090695>), they are asked if they wish to support the Armenian Children's Support Fund.

### **Important Dates**

February 5 to 16 – trip to Armenia to establish Youth Projects

September 4 to 15 – trip to Armenia to Attend Youth Project Roundup at Fall Festival

November 6 – Annual Dinner at Der Dutchman in Plain City

Uplift Armenia is a project under the Armenian Children's Support Fund a 501 (c) (3) Charitable Nonprofit Corporation which has a long term goal of providing an opportunity to all people through education. Make checks payable to the Armenian Children's Support Fund; send to Richard Funt, 1877 Stockwell Drive Columbus OH 43235.