

Mirror-Spectator Article About April 27th, 2014 Program



On Sunday, April 27, 2014, under dark clouds and the threat of rain, the Armenian Martyrs' Memorial Committee of Rhode Island commemorated the 99th Anniversary of the 1915 Armenian Genocide at the Armenian Martyrs' Memorial Monument at the entrance to North Burial Ground, Providence, RI. The program opened with the presentation of the flags by the Homenetmen Scouts and with placing of wreaths by the ARS "Arax" Chapter, ARF, AYP, Homentmen, ACYOA, and the Daughters of Vartan in front of the monument. Archpriest Rev. Gomidas Baghsarian from Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church was ill and was not present this year. Rev. Shnorik Souin, Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Rev. Dr. Ara Heghinian, and Reverend Hagop Manjelicain Armenian Evangelical Church performed a requiem service in memory of the 1.5 million martyrs. The combined choirs from the Armenian churches sang our Armenian hymns. Elected officials who were present were, Katherine Kazarian, State Representative, Secretary of State Ralph Mollis, Attorney General, Peter Kilmartin General Treasurer Gina Raimondo and Warwick Mayor Scott Avedisian. Congressman David Cicilline addressed the audience and remarked about his visit to Armenia from which he had just returned. While in Armenia, his congressional group met with Catholicos Karekin and was present at the April 24th memorial ceremony. He is always actively working for the Armenian cause. Former lawmaker and great supporter of Armenian causes, Aram Garabedian spoke and made clear his wishes for a large gathering in Washington next April. Nearly 400 hundred Armenians were present to pay homage to our martyrs and survivors.



Homenetmen Scouts

Pauline Getzoyan and Esther Kalajian who represent the Genocide Education Project, RI Branch, announced their 2014 Genocide Educator of the Year. She is Lisa DerManouelian who is a teacher at St. Peter's School in Warwick, RI. This award includes a \$500 stipend, which is made possible through the donations of the Armenian Martyrs' Memorial Committee of RI and the Armenian National Committee of RI. The committee congratulated Lisa on her award.



(L-R)Terrance S Martiesian, Kenneth C Kalajian, Alexander, Azar (2nd Place Essay Winner), Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian, Joyce Yeremian, Vincent Albert "Buddy" Cianci, Jr, Lori Simonian (1st Place Essay Winner), Steven J Zaroogian

This year the martyrs committee sponsored a state wide essay contest titled: “The history of the Armenian Genocide is well documented, but still a relatively unknown part of world history, both in America and the international community. What is the legacy of this crime against the Armenian people and how has its denial set a precedent for the perpetuation of genocide?” The first place winner was Lori Simonian an 8th grade student at North Attleborough Middle School winning a cash prize of \$200. The second place winner was Alexander Azar, a 10th grade student at Providence Country Day School winning a cash prize of \$100.



A beautiful rendition of “Groong” was played on the duduk by David Gevorkian.



**Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian
Placing Flower on the Memorial in Providence**

Our guest speaker this year was Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian of Middlesex County, MA. He has been in office since 2011 and then elected in 2012. He has served as a Representative in the Massachusetts State Legislature and was a lead sponsor of the annual Armenian Genocide Commemorations. He was actively involved with getting approval of the Armenian Heritage Park in Boston. He was awarded the “Ellis Island Medal of Honor” for his on behalf of the Armenian community and devotion to his heritage and the “Mkhitar Gosh Medal” from the Armenian government for his exemplary service in the field of diplomacy, law and political science.

Sheriff Koutoujian spoke of his Armenian heritage and told the story of his grandparents who suffered through the genocide and how they finally came to America and raised their family. He spoke of the importance of keeping our Armenian language and culture, and at the same time getting a good education and encouraging young people to think about public service. It is important to have more Armenians in public office where they can help our cause. He was a very dynamic speaker and received a standing ovation at the close of his remarks.

The Honor Guards included the Armenian Masonic Degree Team, The Knights of Vartan and the Homenetmen Scouts. It was another heartfelt day and reminding us all to never forget our martyrs and survivors and what the Turkish Ottoman government did to our people.



17th Annual Armenian Youth Day on April 22, 2014

The Armenian Martyrs’ Committee also sponsored its 17th Annual Armenian Youth Day on April 22, 2014 at Egavian Cultural Center during school vacation week. The day was filled with information from the Genocide Education committee, power point presentations about trips to Armenia and Javkhk, cooking and crafts classes, a hands on demonstration of drumming and Armenian drumming and finally an Armenian dance class. Lunch was also provided. Thank you to the Ararat Association for their donation in help funding this program.

Joyce Yeremian
Armenian Martyrs’ Memorial Committee of RI