



January, 2025

A.G.B.U. Alex & Marie Manooagian School

Southfield, Michigan

Hello, Readers:

Welcome back to another edition of the Ararat Middle School Newspaper. The newspaper staff and I are pleased to bring you news of what's happening around Manooagian School. There always seems to be exciting events happening in and around our school. It is our goal to share these events with you along with pictures we have taken along the way. Please feel free to reach out to any of our reporters or to me if you have any ideas you would like to share. Also, we are looking for contributing writers: Do you have an opinion you would like to voice? Do you have pictures or artwork you would like to share? Get published. Send your piece to mpupa@manooagian.org. The Ararat Middle School Newspaper staff wish you the best 2025 year ever!

Best Regards, Mrs. Pupa



Newspaper Staff

Lillyana Akrawi
Emily Demircioglu
Mary Donigian
Rosaria Elias
Danavella Kalabat
Kohar Karapetian
Lourdes Najar
Vana Shihadeh
Tamar Souss
Andreea Szabo
Alena Yaldo



RECOGNITIONS

Caught Ya Cards

By Lourdes Najor

Two drawings took place for students who were rewarded with a Caught Ya Card. Target \$5 gift cards were awarded to the following students:

Sixth Grade:

Armen Avedissian
Marta Dorosh
Arseniy Hurko
Laurayna Najor
Sofia Pikhunyk
Gianna Rubino

Seventh Grade:

Zaven Andonian
Olivia Francis
Alexandra Ilchyshyn
Cameron Jappaya
Anton Tymura

Eighth Grade:

Mariya Volyshyn

The second drawing winners were:

Sixth Grade:

Armen Avedissian
Isabel Flisnik
Vartan Karapetian

Seventh Grade:

Laura Ashkarian
Mourad Bagdasarian
Joseph Elias
Cameron Jappaya
Diran Rasho
Oleh Ginko

Eighth Grade:

Sophia Sabalo

Students get the opportunity to receive a caught ya card when they are showing how to be a leader, helper, risk taker, friend, or supporting other people around the school. Congratulations to all the winners!



RECOGNITIONS

Mrs. Twal

By Danavella Kalabat

Mrs. Twal is our amazing middle school science teacher who also teaches speech class as one of our mini courses. She entered the teaching field of science because she loves simplifying difficult concepts for students. Mrs. Twal helps us learn by using hands-on activities and thoroughly answering our questions to allow us to understand the concepts better. Mrs. Twal also loves teaching speech because she thinks communication is a fundamental skill to have. Her goal is to positively impact students and inspire us to learn more.

Though this is only her second year as our middle school teacher, she has been an educator for over ten years. When asked, Mrs. Twal said that if she wasn't a science teacher, she would be a lawyer. Mrs. Twal, we're so glad you are here at Manoogian School!

My Michigan Hero

By Staff

Last October the eighth grade class wrote essays for a competition on who their hero was. The students who chose to participate were: Lillyana Akrawi, Emily Demircioglu, Mary Donigian, Danavella Kalabat, Kohar Karapetian, Veronica Kucheinyk, Tamar Souss, and Andreea Szabo.

The results just came in. This year's winner is Kohar Karapetian. Second place went to Veronica Kucheinyk and third place went to Danavella Kalabat.

Kohar's essay now moves on to the next round which competes with other first places school winners in Michigan. Kohar's essay is on the next page.

Spelling Bee

By Staff

S-p-e-l-l-i-n-g-B-e-e.

That's right! The Manoogian Middle School Students participated in this year's Scripps 2024–2025 Spelling Bee. The top three spellers from the sixth grade were: Armen Bassmagian (1st), Daniel Pashtetnik (2nd), and Sofiiia Pikhunyk (3rd). From seventh grade: Mourad Bagdasarian (1st), Denys Lyshohir (2nd), and Catherine Ayar (3rd). From eighth grade: Lourdes Najor (1st), Chris Slewa (2nd), and Armen Bassmagian (3rd).

These students then competed for the school winner who was Lourdes Najor from the eighth grade! Lourdes now moves on to Oakland School competition. Good luck, Lourdes!

Congratulations to all the winners!

RECOGNITIONS

My Hero Essay

By: Kohar Karapetian

It was 11:41 a.m., December 7, 1988, and 18-year-old Anahid Dilakian sat at the second-floor workstation of a sewing factory in Spitak, Armenia. In a moment, her life would never be the same. The factory shook so severely that many thought a bomb hit the building. It was, as Anahit later learned, a strong earthquake which caused the death of 55,000 people, including her father.

From where Anahit was, the floor opened and swallowed her and the ceiling above. When she regained consciousness, her arm and leg were pinned under a cement block, and she was left dangling. Despair filled her for 17 hours before she heard her brother's voice coming to rescue her. Eight large cement blocks had to be removed, the last one requiring a car jack.

Auntie Anahit had many injuries – internally and externally. Initially the Armenian hospital planned to amputate both arms and her leg. She was not given much hope; her heart stopped three times, and she needed dialysis for three months. But Anahit never gave up fighting.

Searching for a miracle, Anahit's family airlifted her to Russia where she received eight months of treatment. After multiple surgeries and years of physical therapy, the doctors saved her limbs. Anahit's sister then challenged her with a surprise gift, a pair of 4-inch-high heels and a dream to wear them. Eventually with her unbreakable spirit and determination, Anahid found herself walking in those heels. What an achievement!

Back in her Armenian village, Anahit was treated like a disabled person, and this frustrated her. She did not want people to feel sorry for her or to stare at her scars. She was alive, strong, and determined to become even stronger than she was before. So, she decided to move to the United States and start a new life. Americans did not see her scar, so she was not treated differently. In this new and foreign country, she grew stronger, both mentally and physically.

While she has limited movements of her hands, it does not stop her from doing what she wants. She is a nail technician and bakes for her family and community. She is a warrior, and most people she encounters never know the great tragedy she endured.

Auntie Anahit believes people must choose to be positive and happy, regardless of how tragic their circumstances may be. Love and perseverance have helped Anahid Dilakian overcome her challenges, and she has vowed to never be sad about her earthquake experience. Her message is to see the good in everything, to remember that every minute we live is a gift, and to never give up on goals and dreams. She is my hero, and her amazing spirit encourages me to be strong, courageous, and happy in my own life.

CLUBS AND SPORTS

Future City Competition

By Lourdes Najor

While most students were enjoying a snow day, the Future City members attended the competition which was on January 21, 2025. The team members are: Laura Ashkarian, Zaven Andonian, Mark Mykuliak, Oleh Ginko, Eliza Matusinski, Ilona Dorosh, Ilona Antoniichuk, Rosaria Elias, Diana Lesheha, and Lourdes Najor.

This year's theme was to build a floating city since we are losing coastlines due to rising waters. The presenters of the project were Zaven, Oleh and Laura.

This year the team walked away with four awards: Best Integrated Design Award, People's Choice Award, Integration and Sustainable Design in Building Systems Award, and the Don Bramlett Achievement Award.

The team thanks Dr. Torossian and Mrs. Pupa for their mentoring and support. Because of them, everyone had a really great experience and would love to do it again!



CLUBS AND SPORTS

Canned Food Drive

By Danavella Kalabat

The canned food drive at AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School was a huge success. The 5th and 6th graders did an amazing job at donating a large number of cans to Forgotten Harvest. They were awarded with free dress and a pizza lunch.

It is amazing that we have the chance to give back to our community and those in need. We would also like to thank everyone who donated to this important cause. Many families appreciate receiving these meals.

NJHS Mentoring

By Emily Demircioglu

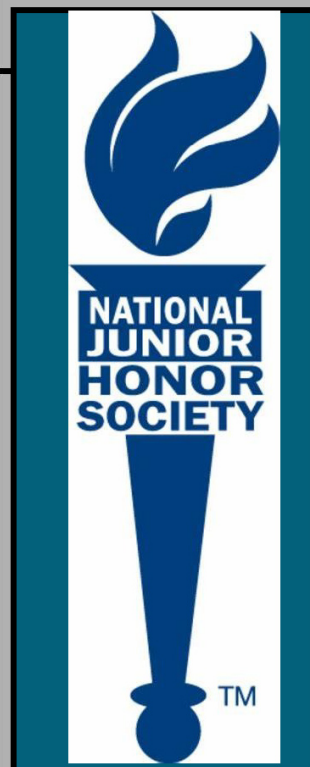
The National Junior Honor Society is glad to bring back mentoring for the elementary and Pre-K Students! Every month, three or four members help out and mentor younger students. NJHS Students bring their positive working habits to teach younger students good habits.

These monthly mentoring meetings are definitely one of the most liked contributions by the National Junior Honor Society. Andreea Szabo, a second year member of NJHS says, "I love working with the little ones; it kind of made me remember the fun times when I was in elementary school."

Robotics Competition

By Andreea Szabo

On November 16, the middle school robotics team had their first competition of the year! They had a great time working together competing against other schools. The team worked very hard to build their robot. According to members who participated, they had lots of fun at the competition and were very proud of their work and happy to show it off!



SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Thanksgiving Feast

By Kohar Karapetian

On November 27, 2024, Regency Manor kindly catered our annual Thanksgiving meal! Chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, and salad was served to all who wanted along with pumpkin pie dessert. Everyone was very happy to not only sit and eat with their friends, but to then go to the gym right after for some fun. This was a fun way to end the school week before our Thanksgiving break.



Hot Cocoa and Donut Sale

By Lourdes Najor

The Middle School Hot Cocoa and Donut Sale was on Wednesday, December 18, 2024. It was sponsored by the eighth grade class during lunch time. The students on the hot cocoa and donut sale committee were Lillyana Akrawi, Emily Demircioglu, Mary Donigian, and Andreea Szabo.

The students who bought hot chocolate could custom order their drink by choosing marshmallows, whipped cream, and sprinkles. It was enjoyable for everyone who bought them. Many students said that they like to have this sale again.



Christmas Spirit Week

By Andrea Szabo

The middle school had an amazing time showing off their Christmas spirit during December's Spirit week. It was held the week before Christmas break. Here are the themes of each day!

Monday: Red or Green
Tuesday: Christmas Accessories
Wednesday: Ugly sweaters
Thursday: White out
Friday: Pajama Day

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Middle School Candy Land Dance

By Alena Yaldo

This year the Middle School Student Council arranged a Candy Land themed dance on November 8, 2024. The dance was from 6:00 to 8:30 pm. Tickets were \$15 each for students and \$20 for guests. Pizza, salad, pasta, and chips were served. Parents, teachers, and the student council helped arrange and set up the dance and serve food. Music was provided by DJ Esso. Overall, the students had lots of fun! It was a great after-school activity for the students.



CMU Field Trip

By Rosaria Elias

On Friday, November 22, 2025, the eighth graders were invited to take a trip to Central Michigan University. This trip was lots of fun.

The student arrived at 9:00 am and given a free t-shirt and a quick breakfast. We had a tour of CMU's campus, and then headed to the dining hall at 12:00 where the students were offered an All-You-Can-Eat buffet. After lunch students attended a presentation and played games like a carpet challenge that involved teamwork.

Overall, the CMU trip was a great opportunity to experience what college is like!



Parfait sale.

By Vana Shihadeh

The Parfait sale was December 13th, 2024, and was operated by eighth grade girls. This sale was set up to help fund the

Eighth grade field trip to Frankenmuth. The sale was open to middle school and teachers. It was a popular sale with the middle school. It was very successful.

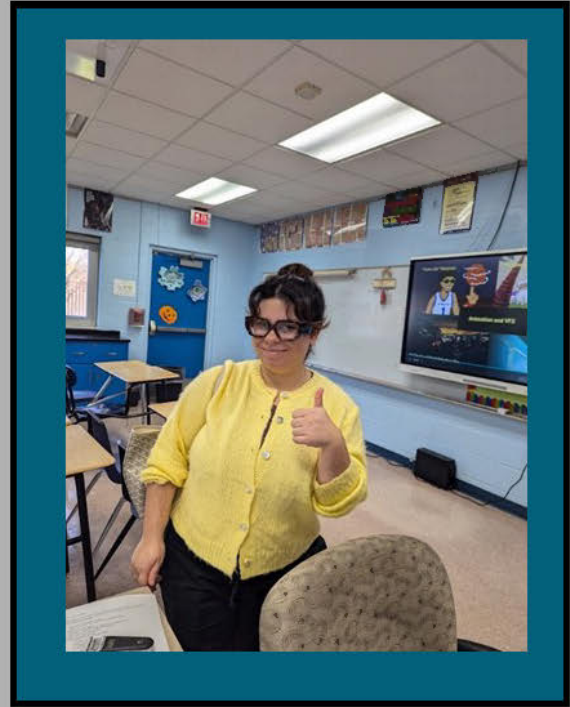
AROUND SCHOOL

A Visit With Carmen Mirachian

-Staff Writer

On November 6, 2024, Mrs. Joanna Holsinger invited Carmen Mirachian, an A.G.B.U. Alex and Marie Manoogian School graduate, an invitation to visit the seventh-grade class for a career discussion on the film industry. Carmen Mirachian has produced short dramas such as *For Your Convenience* as well as directed music videos, including *Tay B x Lil Baby: All Ten*.

Carmen provided background information on how she broke into the field and the requirements necessary to be successful in her field. It was a great thrill to meet her—and for all the teachers to see a student they once taught.



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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Between Borders

By Kohar Karapetian

Summary: This movie is based on a true story about a family of four fleeing Baku, Azerbaijan during the Soviet Union collapsing. After the Petrosyan family witnessing from their apartment an old Armenian couple in which they were friends of theirs being executed by Azeris. They too were almost killed by the same Azeris knocking and banging on their door. So, they packed up as much as they could into some luggage, and went to Volgograd, Russia. In Volgograd, they lived in a poor area, struggled to fit in, and were threatened many times. Then, they met someone in their small community. There, the couple is given an opportunity to come to America. Then, when they overstayed their visit, they ended up in court where they hired a human rights lawyer to help them plead their case into becoming American citizens.



Personal Review:

I really enjoyed this movie. I thought about how lucky I am to open my eyes to a safe and free country. I cannot imagine the hard work and dedication you put towards your life, and the next day, you're forced to leave. Honestly, I can't even think about some Azeri banging on my door ready to kill me because I was a peaceful Armenian living their life in Baku. I also thought about what troubles they went through in Volgograd. What the people there did to them. They were harsh, rude, and cruel. In the end, I do recommend this movie to others.

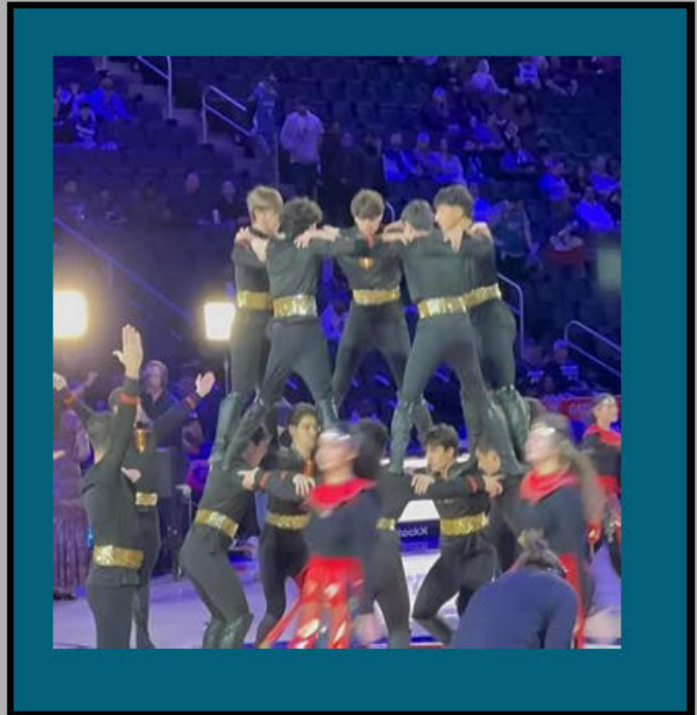
I give this movie a 5/5!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Armenian Heritage Celebration at the Pistons Game

By: Kohar Karapetian

On January 4, 2025, the Hamazkayin Arax Dance Group of Detroit performed during the Detroit Pistons game at the Little Caesars Arena. Celebrating Armenian Heritage Night, the dancers put on a great performance – and so did the Pistons who won their game. It was an exciting and thrilling night.



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Hamazkayin Dance Performance

By Kohar Karapetian

On Saturday, November 16, 2024, the Hamazkayin Dance Ensemble provided an amazing performance! Held at Clarkston High School, a packed house was entertained with songs, dancing, and lights that brought up the crowds' spirits! The dance group has been up and running for about 20 years and practices every Saturday.

Thank you to the Hamazkayin of Detroit and the instructors, Mrs. Nayiri Karapetian and Mr. Dikran Callan.

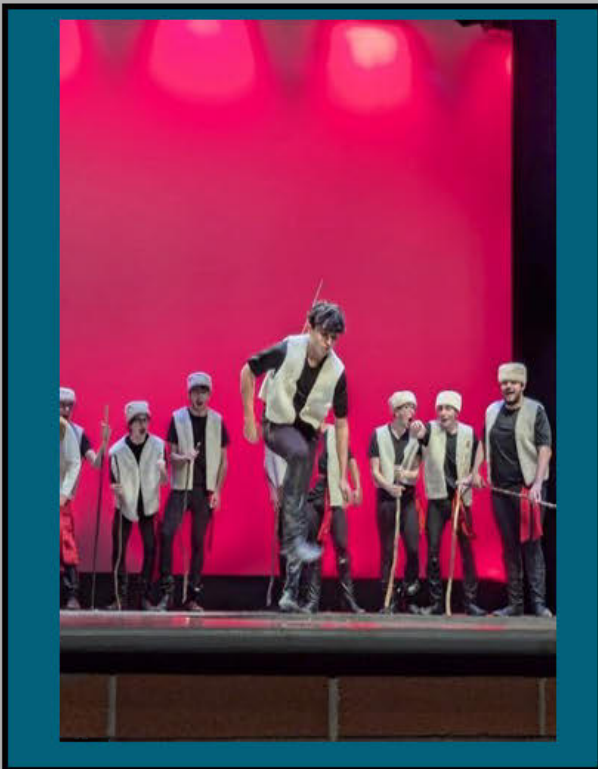
Detroit Hamazkayin Dance Performance:

A Dancer's Perspective

By Emily Demircioglu

On Saturday, November 16, 2024, Hamazkayin had their annual dance performance. From a dancer who danced on stage, I would say it was incredibly fun. I loved the running backstage in-between dances and the fast changing of the costumes. Most importantly, I loved dancing with my friends and having fun while supporting my culture.

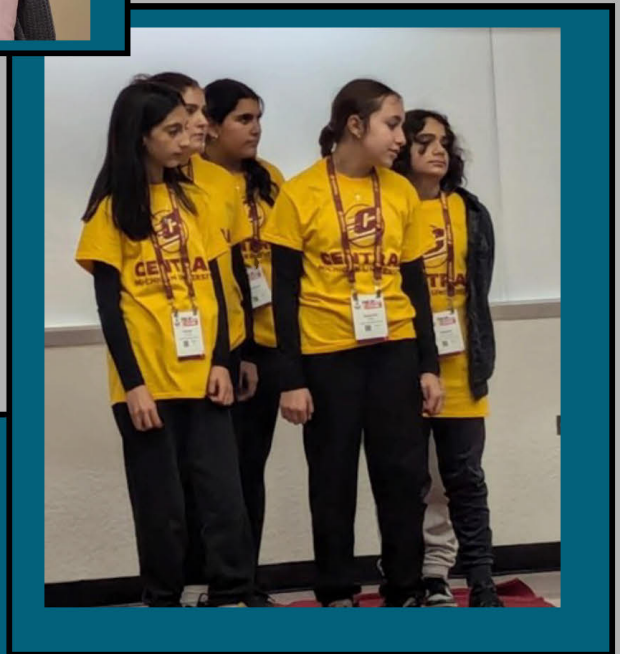
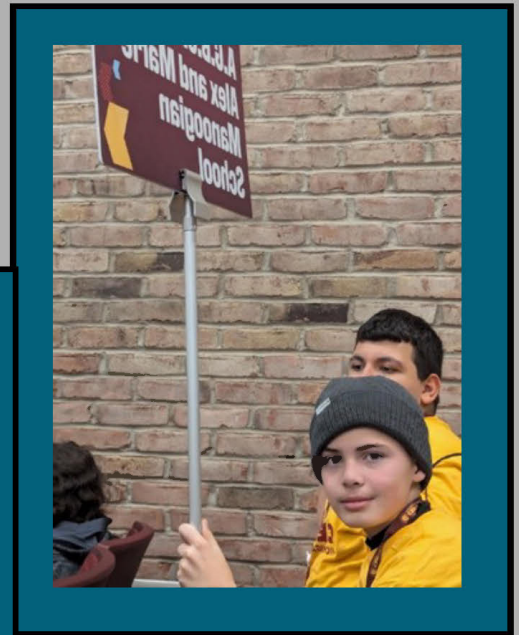
Looking back, the chaos going on backstage is now something we laugh at. I would say the most enjoyable part of the night was being backstage watching the older groups dance. At the end of the performance, all the groups performed a finale dance, making the crowd cheer very loudly. Safe to say, the smile on everyone's face really made me happy and excited for next year!



SMILE!!



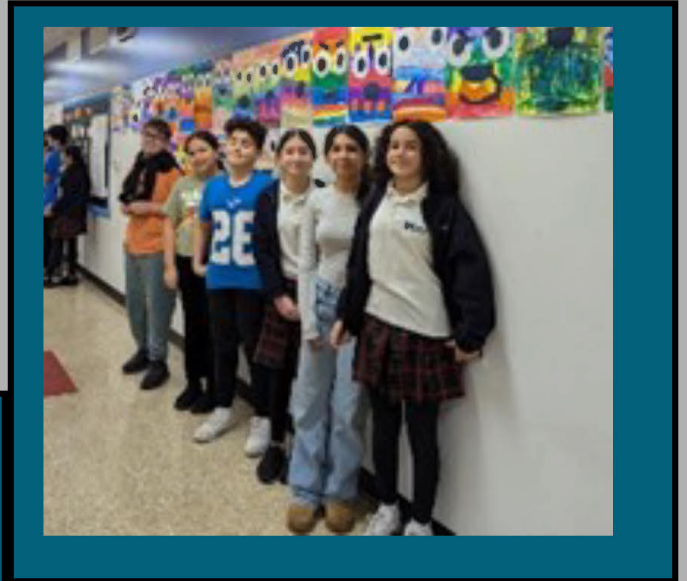
SMILE!!



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