

1
2 MINUTES OF WOMEN'S GUILD CENTRAL COUNCIL (WGCC)
3 MEETING OF FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, MARCH 22-23, 1996
4 AT ST. VARTAN CATHEDRAL COMPLEX, NYC
5

6 MINUTES OF THE FIRST SESSION
7
8

9 Members present were Yn. Patricia Buttero, Julie Ashekian, Ann
10 Ajemian, Yn. Anahid Kalayjian, Nevart Marashlian, Yn. Aurora
11 Jebejian, Araxy Gokberk and Yn. Violet Kasparian. Marilyn Larkin
12 was absent.
13

14 The meeting was opened with a prayer by Deacon Aren Jebejian at
15 11:15 a.m. Julie Ashekian made the motion to accept the minutes of
16 the previous meeting as corrected. Seconded by Ann Ajemian.
17 Accepted.
18

19 The treasurer, Ann Ajemian, was called upon for her report. On the
20 Annual Treasurer's Report for 1995, Ann asked that the total
21 expenditures be changed from \$14,595.00 to \$14,583.58. The actual
22 amount in the checking account should be \$5,789.84. Therefore, the
23 total that the Women's Guild has is \$13,548.80. Attached to and
24 made part of these minutes is the treasurer's report covering the
25 period January 1, 1996 to March 20, 1996.
26

27 The Assistant Treasurer, Yn. Anahid Kalayjian, next reported on
28 dues received. She sent letters to all Guilds requesting payment
29 of 1996 dues by March 31. To date, only 8 Guilds have sent in
30 their checks. Yn. Violet Kasparian reported that she had spoken to
31 the Chairman of the St. John's Armenian Church of Greenfield, WI to
32 find out why there had been no response from them for three years.
33 Mrs. Helen Kaishian stated that she had been Chairman for past two
34 years. No one was willing to accept chairmanship. Therefore, Mrs.
35 Kaishian, using the title of Coordinator, has assigned an
36 individual to chair each of their affairs for the coming year. She
37 also reported that they have never collected dues. Yn. Kasparian
38 suggested that Mrs. Kaishian send the WGCC a list of the women who
39 actively participate in their affairs and include a donation to the
40 WGCC to show they are interested in the work of the organization.
41 Mrs. Kaishian will see what can be done.
42

43 Yn. Aurora Jebejian questioned why there was such a small number of
44 members listed for the Worcester, MA Guild. It was pointed out
45 that Marilyn Larkin is Chairman of this Guild. There has been five
46 deaths in the group recently and, also three members have dropped
47 out because of illness.
48

49 Ann Ajemian, Treasurer, informed Yn. Anahid Kalayjian that the St.
50 Mary's Guild of Livingston, NJ had paid their 1995 dues. Mrs.
51 Ajemian has received and deposited the check. Yn. Pat Buttero,
52 Chairman, requested that the Treasurer inform the individuals in

1 charge of other areas, i.e. dues or Women Saints Day, whenever she
2 received money for their accounts.

3
4 Yn Anahid Kalayjian reported that with these additions the total
5 dues received for 1995 was \$3,602.00. This means that there were
6 1,801 dues paying members in the Guilds in 1995.

7
8 Yn. Aurora Jebejian handed each WGCC member a new, up-to-date list
9 of Chairmen of Guilds. She is still trying to find out the name
10 and address of the Chairlady for the Guild at Holy Cross Armenian
11 Church in NY. Eighteen annual reports have been received from
12 various Guilds. Copies of these reports will be given to the WGCC
13 member who has the parish as its liaison in order that the Liaison
14 may keep abreast of happenings.

15
16 Yn. Jebejian requested that each member look over the new
17 Chairmen's list to verify correctness. If any corrections need to
18 be made, please give said corrections to her in writing.

19
20 Yn. Pat Buttero, Chairman, reported that a check and cover letter
21 had been sent to the ACYOA for their booklet. A thank you note was
22 received from Meline Kasparian, ACYOA Central Council Chairman.

23
24 THE LIAISON REPORTS.

25 Yn. Anahid Kalayjian reported that in St. John's Church, Miami, FL
26 where Fr. Oshagan Gulgolian is pastor, Mr. Alex Manoogian made a
27 \$200,000.00 donation at the groundbreaking ceremony when the
28 Vehapar visited. St. David Armenian Church hosted a big event for
29 the Vehapar, in Boca Raton, FL. Yn. Aurora Jebejian reported that
30 the Miami Guild is reorganizing.

31
32 Yn. Violet Kasparian reported that she had been invited by the
33 Women's Guild of Sts. Joachim & Anna, Palos Hts. IL to speak at
34 their Women Saints Day luncheon and program on Saturday, March 9,
35 1996. Six Guilds were represented with approximately 100 people
36 attending. We were fortunate that the Primate, Abp. Barsamian, was
37 also present, as well as all the clergy in the Illinois and
38 Wisconsin area. Yn. Kasparian spoke about the work of the WGCC,
39 its accomplishments, as well as giving information about CASP and
40 the School Bags Project. Many of the guests made positive remarks
41 about having a WGCC member present. Yn. Violet suggested that
42 money should be put into next year's budget to allow members to
43 visit various areas in the Diocese and speak to Guild members.

44
45 Yn. Violet visited the Watervliet, NY Guild on March 2 and spoke at
46 their meeting and luncheon. Similar positive remarks had been made
47 on that occasion. The School Bags Project benefited with almost
48 \$1,300.00 in donations.

49
50 Yn. Anahid is awaiting a response from Diramayr Boyajian, Chairman
51 of the Guild of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob, Wynnewood, PA in regards to
52 dues. Diramayr had previously mentioned that a number of meetings

1 had been held with their pastor, Fr. Patee Metjian, regarding the
2 disbanding of the Women's Guild.

3
4 It was pointed out that Diramayr Boyajian should be invited to make
5 the welcoming speech at the opening session of the Women's Guild
6 Assembly on May 3rd in Wynnewood, PA. Yn. Anahid will contact her.

7
8 Araxy Gokberk had membership cards printed with the permission of
9 our Chairman, Yn. Buttero. She distributed some to the churches
10 which had requested them. The rest have been given to Yn. Anahid.

11
12 Araxy Gokberk attended a lenten lunch given by the Women's Guild of
13 Holy Cross Church in Union City, NJ. Most of their members are
14 over 80 years of age. In fact, the woman who made all the koftas
15 was over 90.

16
17 Nevart Marashlian informed the Council that she had received the
18 annual report from the Guild of St. James Church in Westchester,
19 NY, including their membership list and executive officers. The
20 report indicates a healthy Guild. This is a new Women's Guild,
21 established this year. An annual report was also received from the
22 Guild of the Sts. Joachim & Anna Church in Palos Heights, IL.

23
24 There was considerable discussion about Women Saints Day in
25 general. Should we continue the program as is? Can Saints Day be
26 held at any other time of the year? How can the program be changed
27 to attract more people? We concluded that a more in depth
28 discussion must be held, the WGCC must come to some conclusions and
29 then a meeting must be set up to discuss the situation with the
30 Primate. Having Saints Day during Lent, particularly this year, was
31 difficult for many areas because of the bad weather.

32
33 It was suggested that the women of the Guilds participate as much
34 as possible in the program of the day: readings, songs, litany,
35 etc.

36
37 Ann Ajemian reported that the chairlady has changed in the St.
38 Gregory Church, Binghamton, NY, since the previous Chairlady, Alice
39 Bagdasarian has moved to Florida. Also she called the Holy Cross
40 Church of NY and spoke to Mrs. Marie Ourian requesting her address
41 and membership list. No information has been received to date.
42 Ann also wrote St. Paul's Armenian Church in Syracuse, NY. A
43 membership list should have been received from Julie Kulakian.
44 Dolly Shamlan of St. Peter's Church in Watervliet, NY should have
45 sent in their membership list. Ann also called Sylva Karachorlu
46 of St. Gregory's Church in Chicago, IL. Ms. Karachorlu said she
47 would be sending information. Diane Hagopian of St. George's
48 Church in Waukegan, IL has said information would be sent. Nothing
49 received to date. Ann Ajemian noted that she had no address for
50 St. Sarkis Church in Niagara Falls, NY. She was informed that
51 there was no Guild there.

1 Yn. Aurora Jebejian reported that the Houston Guild is "just
2 existing."

3
4 Yn. Pat Buttero informed the Council that Marilyn Larkin will
5 continue editing the newsletter after her term of office is ended.
6 The date for receiving material for the next edition has been
7 changed to April 8th. Marilyn had also informed Yn. Buttero,
8 Chairman, that she would be willing to do the pins. It was the
9 consensus of the meeting that another Council member should
10 continue with that job. Nevart Marashlian will be in charge of the
11 pins after the Assembly.

12
13 Yn Buttero read the report sent in by Marilyn Larkin. Marilyn
14 wrote that she attended Women Saints Day at Lawrence , MA at the
15 Holy Cross Church. The Chairman of the Women's Guild, Lydia
16 informed Marilyn that the Guild would be celebrating its 80th
17 Anniversary on June 30th. (Yn. Buttero commented that a certificate
18 would have to be sent) Approximately 175 members and guests
19 attended. She continues writing that the entire church service was
20 done in Armenian, not one word of English was spoken. The guest
21 speaker was the Rev. Dr. Krikor Maksoudian and he spoke in English.
22 Marilyn mentions that she, too, was invited to speak. In her
23 letter, Marilyn states that she contacted Fr. Karekin Kasparian of
24 Westchester, NY, and he will write an article for our next
25 newsletter.

26
27 Yn. Aurora Jebejian stated that the Newsletter must be proofread by
28 a member of the WGCC prior to publication, particularly since
29 Marilyn will no longer be on the Council after May.

30
31 Yn. Jebejian suggested that the last paragraph of Marilyn Larkin's
32 letter, in which she speaks of how the WGCC has helped her make
33 friends and become more active, be printed in the next newsletter.
34 This might urge other women to become involved and to look more
35 positively upon the WGCC. This will be suggested to Marilyn.

36
37 All WGCC members were urged to bring to the attention of their
38 Guilds the availability of Guild pins.

39
40 We were reminded that ads are not to be put into our newsletter.
41 Anything available for purchase may be included in the body of an
42 article.

43
44 Saints Day report was next given by Araxy Gokberk. As of this
45 date no monies have been received from the Saints Day activities.
46 She assumes that all Guilds who were to host Saints Day did so.
47 Two Guilds were not able to host Saints Day this year but Araxy
48 Gokberk was able to reassign them. The St. Mary's, Livingston, NJ
49 assignment was accepted by St. Thomas Church in Tenafly, NJ. There
50 was no reassignment of the New York area, and Fr. Garabed Kochakian
51 was asked to send a Saints Day packet to each church in the area
52 with the suggestion they hold their own Saints Day program. Araxy

1 followed up by calling each of the New York Churches and suggested
2 they do something individually. Araxy attended the celebration at
3 the St. Thomas Church in Tenafly, NJ. She was invited to speak at
4 the luncheon. Approximately 130 people were in attendance. All
5 the New Jersey Churches were represented. It was upsetting to some
6 that the clergy were not present.

7
8 Araxy Gokberk sent out 26 letters in which she included the form
9 with which to report about the Saints Day happenings. This form
10 had inadvertently been omitted from the packets.

11
12 It was unanimously agreed that next year's host Guilds for Women
13 Saints Day be listed in the packet to be given out at the Assembly.
14 This will allow plenty of time to make any preparations which are
15 needed. The Council agreed that the concept of Women Saints Day
16 must be reevaluated with the Primate.

17
18 CASP. Julie Ashekian reported that she had called the Boston firm
19 which did the first audit and asked if their fee could be reduced.
20 They said they would reduce it by \$200.00. At the request of the
21 firm, a check for the full amount was sent to them. They are to
22 send us a check for the amount of the reduction. To date no check
23 has been received. The second audit was done by a firm in
24 Connecticut, no Armenians involved. They charged us half of what
25 the Boston firm had charged us, or \$750.00.

26
27 Julie received a call from Guy Pontillo, the Diocesan accountant,
28 stating that the CASP report had to be on his desk by the 15th of
29 February. Julie rushed to get the audit done, made copies of all
30 necessary documents, went to accountant three times. Julie called
31 the Diocese on the 15 of February and was told it was closed
32 because of Vartanantz Day. Because the Diocese was closed, they
33 faxed the report to the Diocese. The next day she sent the report
34 by overnight mail to the Diocese. Mr. Pontillo never acknowledge
35 receipt of any materials. Julie did phone the Diocese and was
36 told that the papers had been received. When Clement Ashekian saw
37 Mr. Pontillo at the Diocese, Mr. Pontillo told him that the report
38 would not be in the Diocesan Assembly Report. When asked why not,
39 he answered that it had been received late. Upon further
40 questioning, Mr. Pontillo said he should have received the report
41 by January 15. at which time Clement Ashekian responded that he,
42 Mr. Pontillo had told Julie it was not due till February 15. Mr.
43 Pontillo had also told Chairman Yn. Buttero that her annual report
44 was to be in by February 15. Julie very recently spoke to a
45 Diocesan Council member and was informed that nothing had yet been
46 finalized about the Diocesan Report. Mr. Pontillo also mentioned
47 to Mr. Ashekian that what he received was not a complete audit,
48 that some things had been left out. Julie saw Mr. Pontillo at the
49 Diocese the following day. Mr. Ashekian suggested that Mr. Pontillo
50 send out guidelines on what audits should include.

51
52 Julie Ashekian informed us that she later spoke to Judge Gurahian,

1 Diocesan Council Chairman, and told him what had happened. She
2 wanted to know why we had been directed to use a firm in Boston,
3 MA, the Elkart Accounting Firm. If there were guidelines to
4 follow, why wasn't our organization treated like all the other
5 organizations in the Diocese. Julie felt the Council should be
6 aware of what had happened.

7
8 Julie went to Providence, RI, at the invitation of the Knights of
9 Vartan, to speak about the CASP program at a lenten service. She
10 also went to Boston, MA to meet with a gentleman who wanted to make
11 a donation to CASP. These personal visits are more meaningful than
12 a letter. Julie and Yn. Buttero visited the Women's Guild of St.
13 James Church of Westchester, NY. They were the first official
14 program of that Guild and were most cordially received. Julie
15 spoke about the CASP program and Yn. Buttero informed the members
16 about the WGCC. Julie was guest speaker at the Tri City Saints
17 Day which included St. George of Hartford, CT, Holy Resurrection,
18 New Britain, CT, and St. Mark of Springfield, MA. There were
19 approximately 56 people in attendance.

20
21 Julie has been to New York on several occasions. On one occasion
22 she brought money for Mr. Simon Balian to take to Armenia. She
23 has also met with Peter Mahakian to make a pictorial annual report
24 about the work of CASP. This report will be included in the
25 Assembly packet. This report includes the name of every single
26 sponsor and donor.

27
28 Julie has also met with Arto Vorperian regarding the pilgrimage to
29 Armenia. An itinerary has been worked out. Julie showed us a
30 draft of the flyer which will be prepared. At this time we were
31 informed that the grand opening of Boarding School No. 21 has been
32 pushed back, possibly to August. The cost of the trip is
33 \$1,550.00.

34
35 SCHOOL BAGS PROJECT. Yn. Violet Kasparian reported that we now have
36 \$13,315.00 in the School Bags Fund. An order has been placed for
37 the bags from Highsmith. After speaking to a salesperson to place
38 the order, she was able to purchase the bags at \$3.05 each rather
39 than \$4.15.

40
41 PUBLICITY. Nevart Marashlian reported that she sent in an article
42 following our last meeting, which was printed in the Armenian
43 papers. She will send in another article following this meeting.
44 Julie Ashekian will publicize the Pilgrimage to Armenia separately
45 (June 7-17).

46
47 BY LAWS REPORT BY AURORA JEJEJIAN. All revisions and amendments
48 made after the printing of the 1989 By-Laws will be incorporated
49 into the combined By-Laws of the Women's Guilds and the Women's
50 Guild Central Council. The combined By-Laws will be typed up and
51 be presented at the Assembly. Rose Mekenian, Chairman of the By-
52 Laws Revision Committee, joined us for a short while. She pointed

1 out that this revised and combined By-Laws must be presented and
2 voted upon by the Women's Guild Assembly. It will then be
3 translated into Armenian and the whole thing will be given to the
4 Primate and Diocesan Council for final approval. The title page
5 will have the words "Draft Only" clearly printed on it. The final
6 draft will be presented to the Women's Guild Assembly in 1997 and
7 voted upon. Mrs. Mekenian explained why she thought the draft of
8 the new combined By-Laws must be presented to and voted on by the
9 Women's Guild Assembly. In rewriting and reorganizing the By-laws
10 some amendments have been made. Mrs. Mekenian suggested that the
11 delegates take the draft of the By-Laws back to their individual
12 Guilds, who will go over them. The Guilds will then have an
13 opportunity to make suggestions to the By-Laws Committee prior to
14 a given date. The final draft would be sent to all Guilds and
15 Delegates at least 60 days prior to the 1997 Assembly.

16
17 The Council went back to discussing the Agenda for the Assembly at
18 this time. It was decided that the WGCC would have its first pre-
19 Assembly meeting at the hotel at 10:00 a.m.

20
21 Yn Violet Kasparian will write letters inviting past WGCC Chairmen
22 and members of the original Ad Hoc Committee to the Women's Guild
23 Assembly hosted by the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church in
24 Wynnewood, PA. The WGCC would like to acknowledge their
25 participation during the past ten years and will be commemorating
26 this event at the Assembly.

27
28 Yn. Anahid Kalayjian will contact someone in Philadelphia to
29 arrange for a cake celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Women's
30 Guild Central Council.

31
32
33 This session was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

34
35
36 MINUTES OF THE SECOND SESSION

37
38
39 Fr. Mardiros Chevian opened the Second Session on Saturday, March
40 23, 1996 at 11:00 a.m. Same people were present.

41
42 Julie Ashekian showed us some of the 60 hand knit scarfs which were
43 made and donated by Takouhi Mancogian, 84 years old, for
44 distribution in Armenia to the children in the orphanages.

45
46 The Council went over the annual report which will be presented by
47 our Chairman, Yn. Patricia Buttero.

48
49 Fr. Garabed Kochakian joined our meeting at approximately 12 noon.

50
51 We again went over the agenda for the Assembly with Fr. Kochakian
52 for his comments and suggestions. Yn. Violet Kasparian will call

1 Frank Stoneson requesting that a piano be available in the room
2 where the Women's Guild Assembly will be held.

3
4 Yn. Aurora Jebejian made a motion that \$500.00 be given to the St.
5 Vartan Camp program to be used for tuition scholarships for
6 students who are in financial need for the year 1996. Seconded by
7 Julie Ashekian. Unanimously passed.

8
9 Considerable discussion followed on how to use the funds raised by
10 Women Saints Day.

11
12 One person suggested the possibility of bringing over a well known
13 artist or performer from Armenia. The question was raised if the
14 Diocese would charge us rental of the auditorium. It was felt that
15 the permission of the Assembly should be received and that some
16 research would be done regarding the possibility of a cultural
17 event to raise money to help the WGCC achieve more of its goals.

18
19 Fr. Kochakian suggested that a line item be included in our next
20 year's budget to allow for WGCC members to travel to various areas
21 to do public relations work.

22
23 Chairman Yn. Buttero asked each liason to contact her Guilds to
24 notify them that the deadline for the next Newsletter was changed
25 to April 8th.

26
27 The Council went over the proposed budget for 1996.

28
29 Fr. Garabed Kochakian left the meeting at 1:45 p.m. The Council
30 continued going over the annual report which will be presented by
31 Chairman Yn. Buttero.

32
33 The Primate, Abp. Khajag Barsamian, joined the meeting at 2:25 p.m.
34 We went over the Assembly Agenda with him. We informed the Primate
35 that our guest speaker would be the author of the book "So That
36 They May Live", Catherine .

37
38 The Primate was asked for suggestions on another project for the
39 funds raised by Women Saints Day. He told us that two new paintings
40 were being done for the side altars, one of Mesrob Mashdotz and the
41 other of St. Nersess Shnorhali. The cost of each painting will be
42 about \$5,000.00.

43
44 We informed the Primate of our decision to donate \$500.00 to a
45 scholarship fund for St. Vartan campers. After further discussion,
46 the Council decided they would like to make this a permanent
47 yearly donation. The amount of the donation would depend upon
48 available funds. We will bring this up at the Assembly.

49
50 Yn. Buttero informed the Primate that a list of the host Guilds for
51 the 1997 Women Saints Day will be included in the Assembly packets.
52 She requested that the names of the Saints to be honored be given

1 us in order to include that information. Surpazan will see that
2 these names are provided.

3
4 The date for Women Saints Day will also be provided.

5
6 The question was asked of the Primate whether or not the Women's
7 Guild Central Council could have its meeting at a place other than
8 the Cathedral. For instance, if Surpazan was having a meeting in
9 New Britain, CT in September, could the WGCC meeting be held in New
10 Britain at the same time, or a day earlier. This would allow local
11 Guilds to see the WGCC in action. He responded that this could
12 very well be possible.

13
14 The Primate left our meeting at approximately 2:50 p.m.

15
16 Chairman Yn. Buttero suggested that instead of sending out
17 individual thank you letters following the Assembly, a Good and
18 Welfare Committee be appointed to list all those who should be
19 thanked. This will be presented to the Assembly. Yn. Aurora
20 Jebejian will work with the appointed Committee.

21
22 Yn. Violet Kasparian will write Abp. Torkom Manoogian, the Armenian
23 Patriarch of Jerusalem, requesting a message to Women's Guilds on
24 the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the establishment of the
25 Women's Guild Central Council.

26
27 Yn. Anahid Kalayjian will look into pens with an inscription about
28 the 10th Anniversary of WGCC to be included in packets.

29
30 The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

31
32
33 Respectfully submitted,

34
35 

36
37
38 Yn. Violet Kasparian
39 Recording Secretary
40 April 12, 1996
41
42