

## **Ani Chapter chooses HASK-Apovian as its sister Chapter in Armenia**

Homenetmen is well and alive in Armenia but functions under the name HASK (Armenian National Scout Movement).

Historically Homenetmen started its activities in Armenia in 1919 during the first Republic of Armenia but in 1921 its activities were prohibited by the Soviet authorities. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and Armenia regaining its independence in 1991, Homenetmen Central Committee started to plant the seeds for the reemergence of the Organization in Armenia. Due to the initiative of some students from Armenia (in particular Vartan Pakhshian) and the Diaspora, scouting in Armenia had already re-established itself in 1989 in Yerevan. The establishment of other Chapters between 1991 and 1995 resulted in the creation of a governing body that is Homenetmen's Board of Armenia.

Homenetmen of Armenia followed the example of other Homenetmen Regions and started to focus on Scouts and athletics. Soon, Homenetmen's soccer team became champions of Armenia.

At the 5<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of Homenetmen in 1991, Armenia's representative Vartan Pakhshian was elected to the highest governing body i.e. Homenetmen Central Committee. During the same General Assembly meeting, it was decided to make membership of Armenian Scouts into the prestigious World Scout Movement (WOSM) a top priority.

In 1993 Homenetmen Armenia presented its scout bylaws to Armenia's Scouting leadership, with a plan of joining the WOSM. The bylaws were adopted but the name "Homenetmen" remained an issue as only national scout movements are accepted as members to the World Scout Organization.

In 1995 Homenetmen's 6<sup>th</sup> General Assembly decided to call its scouting movement in Armenia HASK (Armenia's National Scout Movement). As of that date Homenetmen dropped its name in the homeland and is known as HASK. This is why in Armenia Homenetmen functions only as a Scout organization and no more athletic.

On April 18, 1997 HASK became a full member of WOSM thus giving Armenian Scouts a presence on the international scene. Since then, HASK has prospered into many Chapters in different cities of Armenia.

In 2005 the Central Committee of Homenetmen decided to fortify the link between the Chapters in Diaspora and homeland Armenia by encouraging the concept of sister Chapters. Santa Clara "Ani" Chapter along with Walnut Creek "Gars" Chapter chose HASK-Apovian as their joint sister Chapter.

HASK-Apovian Chapter was founded in 1990 and from the very beginning has played a distinct role in the social life of the people of Apovian. The Chapter is very active ; it organizes camps and expeditions; it has participated in Regional and Pan-Armenian jamborees.

Ani and Gars Chapters are looking forward into a strong relationship with their new sister Chapter in Armenia.