

ORRAN HOLDS ITS THIRD ANNUAL BENEFIT BANQUET TO BUILD AN ORRAN CENTER IN VANADZOR

Orran's third annual benefit gala banquet convened on August 15 at the Marriott Armenia Hotel as part of Orran month at the Marriott. The fund raising event was organized to collect funds for the construction of an Orran center in Vanadzor.

"Never before had the majestic hall of Tigran Mets embraced so many generous beneficiaries who had assembled with a firm resolution to help those in need" remarked Hasmik Baghdasaryan, marketing director of Orran. In attendance were representatives of reputable organizations such as VivaCell, HSBC, Cascade Bank, Coca Cola, Hovnanian International, Armenia Tree Project, Yerkir Nairi Tours, Avedis TV, Children of Armenia Fund, Tigran Mets Publishing house, and many others.

Distinguished diplomats and international officials included Charles Lonsdale, Ambassador of the UK; Reena Pandey, Ambassador of India; US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Pennington and his wife Amberin Zaman; Bushra Halepote, representative of UNHCR; Consul Abdel Mohsen Shafey of the Egyptian Embassy; and Mr. Hovsep Seferian of the Brazilian Embassy with his wife Mrs. Knarik.

The master and mistress of ceremonies were Nazareth Seferian and Madlene Minassian, old friends of Orran. After brief welcoming remarks by Board Advisor Susan Yacubian Klein and Orran Acting Director Heriknaz Harutyunyan, Archbishop Sebouh Chuljian, Primate of the Diocese of Gugark of the Armenian Apostolic Church explained the growing social hardships of this city and urged the guests to support the work of Orran. Armenia's Minister of Labor and Social Welfare Arsen Hambartzumyan

underscored the need for government and NGOs to work together to eradicate poverty in Armenia.

Perhaps the most moving testimony was from the destitute and disadvantaged citizens of

Mr. Ralph Yirikian, General Manager of VivaCell urged entrepreneurs to support charity by giving back at least 1% of their annual profits. Mr. Yirikian's call for assistance was



Right to Left: Armine K. Hovannisian, Arev Petrosyan, Armik and Ralph Yirikians with the painting purchased by the Yirikians

Vanadzor who travel to the capital every weekend in search of assistance. Heghine Teroyan holding the hand of her six-year-old son, pled: 'Please help us to have an Orran in Vanadzor so we do not have to travel to Yerevan every time to get help for our families.'

The first major donation that was announced came from Mr. and Mrs. Krikor and Anna Krikorian, of London, for \$250,000. Mr. Krikorian's story of his survivor grandmother who urged him to help Armenia if he ever became successful touched the guests and struck a familiar chord with most of them. In their turn, Mr. and Mrs. Krikorian were pleasantly surprised to receive a special ice decoration with their names etched on it and donated by IceDeco.

answered with generous donations from Mr. Vahakn Hovnanian, Dr. Garo Armen of New York, Mr. Petros Aslanian of Dubai and Mr. Hovig Kurkjian who had traveled from Saudi Arabia to be present at the annual gala.

As the guests enjoyed the delicious dinner and drinks donated by the Ijevan and Maran Wineries and by Coca Cola, and as they familiarized themselves with the list of donated items so nicely presented by Mineh Printing, an auction superbly hosted by Mr. Jonathan Stark, CEO of Cascade Bank, followed the evening's entertainment provided by the international gold medal-winning Avedis Choir and by reputable artists Mr. X, Arthur Ispirian and Irina Oulikhanova. Among the items auctioned by

Mr. Stark were a gobelin work made by Krikor Kankanyan, a beneficiary of Orran, ski chalet accommodations in France, a carpet donated by the Megerian family, paintings by Mariam Marukhyan, a 14-year-old artist who had won in the annual UN competitions, dinner for two compliments of Dolmama, a roundtrip ticket to Vienna compliments of Austrian Airlines, Yerevan accommodations for one week compliments of Briony Krikorian, and one night at the Tufenkian Heritage Hotels compliments of the management. After Ms. Zaman secured the carpet with a generous bid, she explained, "We have no children of our own and so we are happy to help children who are in need."

Ralph Yirikian's philanthropic bid of \$70,000 for a painting created by artist Arev Petrosyan

called "For You Only" was the highlight of the evening. This is the third year that Ms. Petrosyan has donated a fiberglass painting with gold and silver leaves. This year's

painting, measuring 150cm by 90cm, featured a clover collage symbolizing the Holy Trinity. Upon the purchase of the painting, the artist presented Mr. and Mrs. Yirikian with a certificate of ownership.

The celebration continued into the late hours with the music of Aftershock and its master DJs Hakop Barseghian and Mihran Krikorian.

Armine K. Hovannisian, who founded Orran eight years ago with her husband Raffi K. Hovannisian, first Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic and founder of the Heritage party, summed it up: "Every year, we see growing support for our work, which comes to prove that a new culture of social responsibility is taking root in Armenia. I am glad that our mission of helping families in need has found such generous and honorable partners. Today we were able to raise half the cost of building the new Orran center, and we pray that we will be able to raise the rest so that we can create a warm haven for the children and elderly of Vanadzor."



Mr. and Mrs. Krikor and Anna Krikorian presenting a check for \$250,000 to Orran founder Armine K. Hovannisian