



May 4, 2004

Songs of Nature, Trees for Life

“Please don’t cut down trees in Armenia. They give us air. Without fresh air we could die. Please keep the wonderful trees and help plant more in Armenia.”

This is how Varteni Jamakorzian, an 8-year-old student from St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary School in Watertown, MA, described her painting. She was among the 200 students ages 7-12 years old from Armenia and the US who participated in the 1st International Youth Art Competition launched by ATP in conjunction with its 10th Anniversary Celebration. This unprecedented art contest was designed to raise awareness of the precarious state of Armenia’s environment and to foster a new generation of environmental stewards.

Competition winning entries, as well as those deserving honorable mention, will go on display in an ATP-sponsored exhibition at the Armenian Library and Museum (ALMA) at 65 Main Street, Watertown, from May 23 to June 12.

Please join us at the opening reception on May 23, which begins at 1pm, when all students will be presented with special certificates from ATP in recognition of their enthusiasm for nature protection in Armenia. The first, second, and third place winners will have 10, 7, and 5 trees planted, respectively, in their honor. Students whose work merits honorable mention will have two trees planted for them.

Art works were required to be produced on 16x22 inch paper and accompanied by a statement in support of the environment from the artist. All artwork is available for purchase, with the proceeds going to the development of an environmental curriculum for Armenian schools.

Participating schools included St. Stephen’s in Watertown, MA, the Moorad School of Providence, RI, and the Sisters’ Academy in Lexington, MA, as well as selected schools in Armenia. All schools will receive a framed certificate acknowledging 10 planted trees in their names. Next year’s contest will be expanded to include many more schools.

The Armenia Tree Project was founded in 1994 during Armenia’s darkest and coldest years with a vision of securing the new Republic’s future by planting trees and protecting the environment. Funded by contributions from Diasporan Armenians, ATP has planted and rejuvenated over 531,000 trees at more than 500 sites ranging from Gyumri to Goris.

Visit our Web site at www.armeniatree.org for more information about our projects. For details about the art contest or exhibition, call ATP Executive Director Jeff Masarjian at 617-926-TREE (8733).