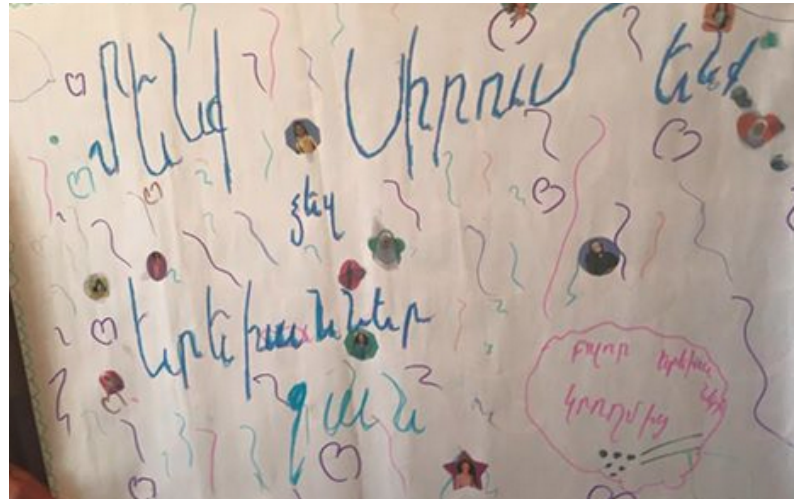


WARM HEARTH

In the Small Corners

Seeds of Change

So many of you have reached out to us with concern for the ways that the residents have been treated by the neighbors. Beginning in May, our staff members and residents began to reach out to the neighbors, extending kindness and offering their open hearts. And as often happens when we are vulnerable in this way, some of the neighbors have responded with love and kindness in return. After some initial efforts made on our side,



a group of neighborhood children brought over a poster (pictured above) decorated for the residents. This group of children are coming over to play with the residents now. A few neighbors have even invited some residents to dinner in their homes. After the isolation of the past few years, this is transformative. It does not escape me that these changes required openness on our part. They required the initiative and courage of our staff and residents. Even though our residents and staff were innocent, a change in them was also necessary. It can be tempting to wait for changes to come, when what is actually required is a willingness to try again, a willingness to be kind despite someone else's unkindness, and a willingness to believe the best of people. The work of Warm Hearth is definitely to care for people with disabilities but it is also to transform the community around us (both in Armenia and in other countries) beginning with ourselves. I recently sat around Janet and Araik Garibyan's table with a group of shining people from Los Angeles who care for and support our work with abandon and passion. And I was reminded that this work also transforms communities a great distance from Armenia. The work of Warm Hearth is one that asks us to be vulnerable, to reach out again and again, to find the common ground between ourselves and the residents *and* the neighbors who shunned them for a time. It asks us to believe that small (and sometimes large) changes can come about, but that these changes begin in ourselves.

Sincerely Yours,

Natalie Bryant-Rizzieri

Founder & Executive Director





Davo

Davo (pictured above) is one of the residents who came to us on his own, after living on the streets and after the death of his mother. For many reasons but also due to the fact that he did not grow up with any of the other residents, he is often on the fringes of home life. Through careful work, we are trying to find ways to include him more and to make him feel a part of the group and to help him heal from the loss of his mother and the violence he experienced living on the streets. Some of his favorite activities include painting and building legos.

Our 2015 Goals: sustainable and loving care for our residents and a home that is increasingly independent.

Friends of Warm Hearth, Inc.
PO 1081
Flagstaff AZ 86002
T. (928) 607.7025

www.friendsofwarmphearth.org
info@friendsofwarmphearth.org
www.facebook.com/friendsofwarmphearth

Your kindness sustains our residents, our hearts and our home.

We are grateful to **Maral Avakian** (London), for volunteering at our home for two weeks in August. An experienced psychologist, she was able to bring expertise, sensitivity and most importantly *herself* to the home. The residents and staff received her with openness and she made a lasting impression on them as well.

We are grateful to **Janet and Araik Garibyan** (L.A.) as well as all those who supported them to make the Dinner Circle possible. We were able to raise around \$2,500 for our home through the generosity of a small group of people. Thank you for such a beautiful night.

Two young women of Armenian origin, **Sophia Colello** (CA) and **Shoushana Kaprelian** (AZ), have taken our residents' cause and made it their own. Sophia will represent Warm Hearth at the Oakland St. Vartan's bazaar in October and Shoushana has initiated a fundraiser on our behalf, selling bracelets with the colors of the Armenian flag to her community.

