

## Yerevan, Armenia

Dates: July 12 to 23, 2012

### About Armenia -

Armenia, a beautiful country surrounded by majestic mountains, extinct volcanoes fast-running rivers, and gorges. Armenia, the first Christian nation. Armenia, where history is in abundance as well as its churches and monasteries. Armenia, the country of loving and caring people. Armenia, where if you have never known a person, it will seem as if you have known them all your life. Join Leo Manuelian, the team leader, along with his wife Sona, for two weeks as they work alongside the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA) team. Our goal is to assist FCHA in providing a family a decent roof over their heads. A family who have lived in a domik (steel container) for many years without heat, electricity or proper bathroom facilities.



*Mount Ararat and Khor Virab*

These wonderful, hard working people count on volunteers like us and FCHA to help build them a decent, affordable home. The work depends on what is required at the time perhaps painting, plastering, mixing concrete etc.



*A family's domik*

The trip is a life-changing experience, one that will enrich your soul. Your adventure begins as soon as you land in Yerevan, Armenia. You are picked up by FCHA and driven to the hotel. Once checked in, you are given a chance to catch up on your rest. Armenia is nine hours ahead of the East Coast of the U.S. There will be an FCHA orientation to learn about the organization and the villager family we are helping. You don't speak Armenian? Not a problem. The FCHA team members speak English as well.

Our work day begins at 9:30 am with the FCHA van taking us to the village. We meet and greet the family and then we get down to business. There are numerous breaks, cases of bottled water on hand, and we are always served a fresh homemade lunch. There is music on hand and an opportunity to dance. There is always someone with an I-pod.

We will work for six days and tour for five. The food you eat in Armenia is fresh, has no chemicals added, and is the ultimate in organic food. Your tongue will come alive with the freshness. You will never look at tomatoes,



*Team members pass stones to each other to lay the concrete apron that guides water away from the foundation.*



cucumbers or fruits the same way again. If we are fortunate, we may get to see how lavash is made. This very thin bread is a staple at every meal and it goes with everything. Our meals and our tours are all included. We eat and tour as a team. There is never a lack of food on the table. The restaurants in Armenia are unique and unusual.

After dinner it would be your choice of what activity you would like to do. Some of the team members enjoyed walking back to the hotel and stopping by the water light show at Republic Square. This show is similar to Las Vegas. Just like the Bellagio along with music, which you will recognize. The rooms at the hotel are air conditioned which you will appreciate, as it does get a little warm in Armenia.



On our days off we go touring to see the countryside and various historical areas. Each place has its own very unique history. You will become enthralled with the monasteries and the churches. Then there is another bread called katah, this is a sweet bread made with sugar and butter. It just melts in your mouth. This bread is made by the local villagers in Geghard and you will find none other like it.

I forgot to mention the shopping. The Vernisage is the ultimate outdoor craft/flea market in Yerevan. Here you can buy jewelry, glassware, paintings done by local artists, lace table cloths, Armenian souvenirs, backgammon boards, wood carvings, oriental rugs and so much more. All for the right price and at times even better if you can bargain. So please come and join the team!!!! We welcome you with open arms (the Armenian way). Plan to arrive in Yerevan after 11:00 am on July 12th and depart before noon on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Arrangements may be made for longer stays at additional cost.

#### **Cost -**

The trip will cost \$1,700. This price includes lodging, food, ground transportation, cultural tours, orientation materials, transfers to and from the Yerevan airport (EVN) as a group, and a donation for building materials to FCHA. Participants will need to arrange and pay for airfare to Armenia, passports, visas, and vaccinations.

#### **Team Leader -**

Leo Manuelian lives in New Jersey with his wife of 32 years (Sona) and two daughters (Ani & Lori). He is a civil engineer by profession, specializing in heavy construction (roads, bridges, water works, etc.). He participated in his first trip in 2003 and has been a team leader seven times since. Leo has been involved in volunteer work in the Armenian community since his youth. He is a member of the Knights of Vartan. For more information about this trip, Leo may be contacted at 201-746-0409 or [Levonvi@yahoo.com](mailto:Levonvi@yahoo.com).

