



**AMERICAN TURKISH
ASSOCIATION OF
WASHINGTON DC**

MARCH/APRIL 2024

ISSUE 1

**TURKISH FESTIVAL 2023
DEMIR DEMIRKAN**

**CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF
TÜRKİYE**



**THE FUNDRAISER CONCERT
MANGA ROCK BAND
CONGRESSIONAL EVENTS
BY ATA-DC**

ATA *News*

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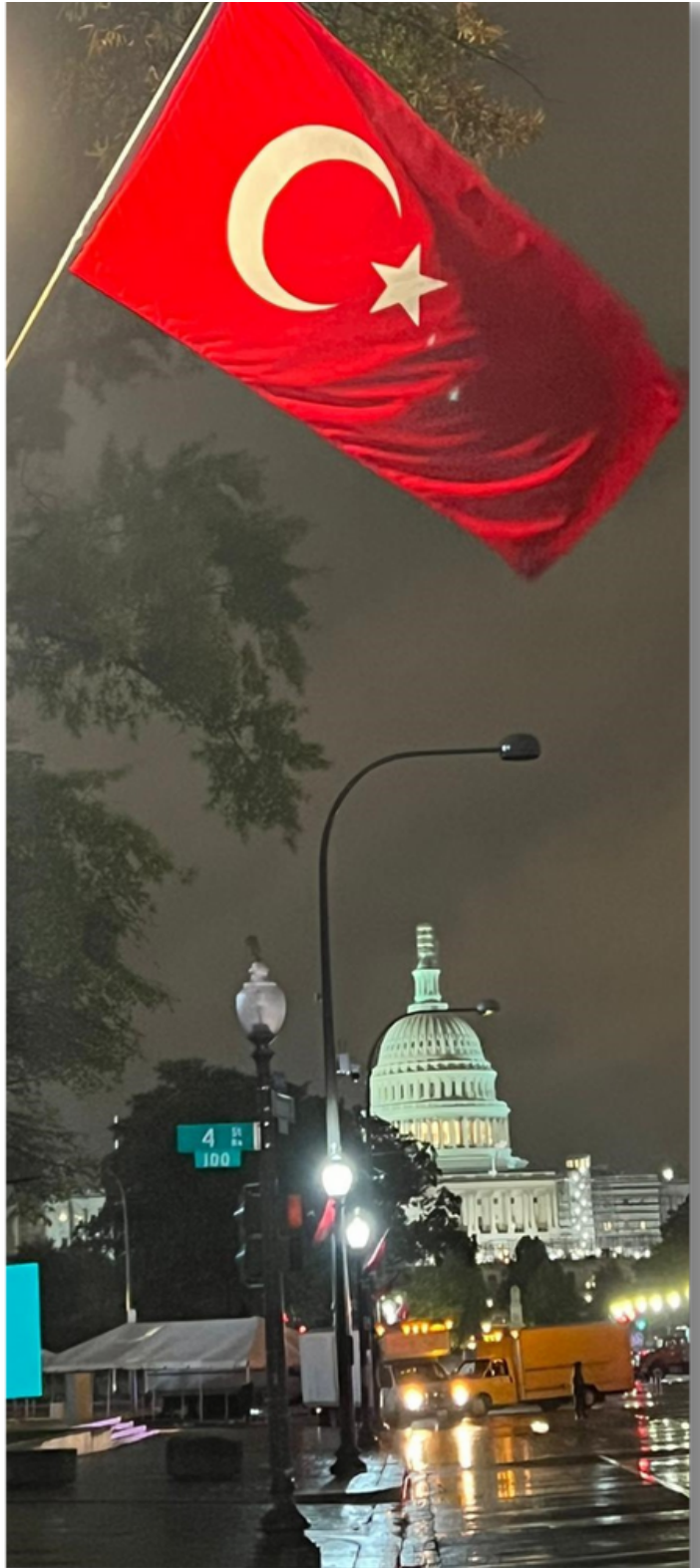
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AMERICAN TURKISH ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON DC

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible support and dedication shown by each one of you to our organization. Your generosity and commitment have allowed us to make a meaningful impact, and for that, we are truly grateful. Thanks to you, ATA-DC was able to provide over \$300,000 to several relief efforts following the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye last year. Events such as the maNga concert were not just amazing evenings, but we also raised \$20,000 in just one night that went towards our efforts to provide prosthetics to children in the devastated region of Türkiye. We also broke the 1,000-member mark during the Turkish Festival in October. Our Turkish community here is growing, and ATA-DC's mission to share our wonderful culture and history can only continue to grow as our organization does.

It was my great honor to serve as the president of our association during the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye. Several of our events focused on this milestone, celebrating one of the most remarkable transformations of a country in the history of the world.

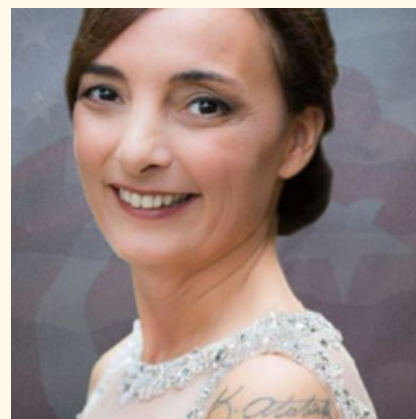
Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities the upcoming months will bring. Our commitment to our mission remains steadfast, and we are determined to build on our successes, innovate, and adapt to meet the evolving needs of our community. The relaunch of this magazine is just one area where we will be improving our community and communications.

Throughout the challenges we faced, your unwavering support has been our guiding light. Together, we will continue to focus on and strive for positive change. I invite each of you to join us on this journey as we work towards an ever-greater ATA-DC. Whether through volunteering your time, making a donation, or spreading the word about our cause, your involvement makes a difference. Your attendance at events, bringing friends and family together, and sharing in cultural understanding all are part of what makes ATA-DC such a great organization.

Thank you for being part of our family. Together, we can continue to achieve great things and make a lasting impact on the community. I look forward to being with you all at our upcoming events.

Sertap Schreffler

PRESIDENT OF ATA-DC



turkish festival

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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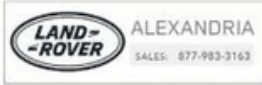
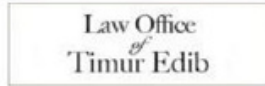
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FRIENDS OF THE FESTIVAL



WHAT OUR SPONSORS SAID

American Turkish Association of Washington, DC (ATA-DC) plays such an essential role in the Turkish American community that Roqos (roqos.com) feels honored to sponsor some of its many award-winning cultural and educational activities. As the founder and CEO of Roqos, I feel honored to be one of the sponsors of the annual Turkish Festival.

SEZEN UYSAL, ROQOS, INC

Turkish Festival serves as a vibrant celebration, offering attendees a rich tapestry of Turkish art, music and cuisine. Through this event, ATA-DC not only showcase the cultural heritage of Türkiye but also create opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding and ATA-DC accomplishes this with an all-volunteer group of people. It is truly a remarkable effort and service to the community.

GIZEM WHITE, GASTROTOLIA

WHAT IS NEW?

Hello ATA-DC Friends,

I am thrilled to share some incredible news as we embark on a journey filled with new and impactful initiatives in 2024. Your support and dedication have been the driving force behind our mission, and we are excited to take our efforts to new heights.

We are excited to witness the rebirth of the ATA-DC magazine - a space dedicated to fostering community connection, creativity, and collaboration. We invite you to be a part of this exciting venture that will pave the way for a better and an influential Turkish-American community for future generations in the United States.

We are also relaunching our Community Happy Hours where ATA-DC's current and prospective members can meet and connect with each other. These fun gatherings will provide the energy and networking opportunities for our community to collaborate more in business as well as personal lives.

In 2023, we introduced a new community education series with the first being an informational seminar on the path to American citizenship. The session was led by our board member and Attorney-at-law, Tolga Ozek. ATA-DC will continue to have these series of seminars as they align perfectly with our commitment to help newcomers engage and adapt to the American way of life. We believe these events will create lasting positive change within our community.

Finally, our commitment to advancing Turkish culture, particularly through its cuisine, remains a top priority for us. We are thrilled to announce the launch of more gastronomy events in 2024, where we will celebrate and showcase the richness of Turkish culinary heritage. As members of the Board of Directors, we firmly believe that by sharing our rich culinary traditions and delightful flavors with diverse communities, we can foster a deeper appreciation for Turkish heritage.

Please stay tuned for more details and updates on these remarkable activities. We are grateful for your ongoing support, and we can't wait to make a significant impact together in 2024!



ATA-DC SECRETARY GENERAL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION AT THE EMBASSY



On March 22, 2024, the Turkish Embassy in Washington, D.C. hosted a momentous event in celebration of International Women's Day, organized by the Bridge to Türkiye Fund (BTF) and the American Turkish Association of Washington, D.C. (ATA-DC). The evening began with an opening speech by ATA-DC board member Demet Cabbar Delgado, setting the tone for an evening filled with empowerment, unity, and celebration. Consular Fatih Ozturk delivered a stirring tribute to the pivotal role of women in politics, highlighting the global presence of 81 female ambassadors representing Türkiye. Following his powerful address, ATA-DC President Sevtap Schreffler took the stage, recognizing the exceptional contributions of women in the community and presenting Ms. Pinar Gwyn with the prestigious ATA-DC International Women's Day Leadership Award on behalf of the group's administrators and members.

The evening took an emotional turn when Ms Gwyn, shared fond memories of her late friend Gizem Kara Batterman, a co-founder of the group and ATA-DC past member, evoking heartfelt moments among the attendees.

One of the evening's highlights was the screening of "Feyza's Kitchen," a documentary directed by Jale Incekol, showcasing a wonderful education project led by three women. Following the screening, attendees were treated to a delightful spread of Turkish culinary delights, generously provided by some of our sponsors: Aynur Kahveci - Chef Aynur Cooks, Atilla Özdemir - Fairfax Bakery, Feride Özkan - Özfeka Catering, and Esen & Cemal Kulak - Anatolian Bistro. The event also served as a meaningful fundraiser, with all proceeds directed to the Bridge to Türkiye's Empowerment Scholarships Program for girls affected by the earthquake in Türkiye. We extend our sincere appreciation to our sponsors Sultan Gonen-Griffith-Thirsty Towels, Nihal Eva Civan - EV A Team, and Emrah Dilsizoğlu - Value Mortgage, for their generous support of the event, as well as to the Turkish Embassy for their hospitality and support.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Her Excellency Damla Güçlü, Ambassador of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, for her presence at the event. The evening concluded with heartfelt expressions of satisfaction from the attendees, who departed with a sense of fulfillment and inspiration. This event marks another significant step towards empowering those in need and showcases the strength found in our collective action. We are thrilled to announce that we raised almost \$5500 in funds, thanks to the generosity of our attendees and sponsors. We look forward to furthering our impact together, in the spirit of unity and compassion.

HAMSI ŞENLİĞİ BROUGHT THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

"Hamsi Şenliği," brought together Turks living in the DMV area, recently completed its third successful year, driven by popular demand. The event garnered significant attention and attracted a sold-out crowd. Attendees eagerly lined up for Hamsi, Turkish Coffee, and Lokma, showcasing their enthusiasm for Turkish cuisine and cultural experiences.

Organized by Kenan Yusuf, the founder of the DMV Turks group, this event created a sense of home for participants, reminiscent of their beloved country, Türkiye. This event also served a noble cause, with all proceeds being donated to Bridge to Türkiye (BTF) to provide educational scholarships for the children of fallen Turkish army officers and soldiers.



WELCOMING THE NEW TURKISH AMBASSADOR SEDAT ÖNAL



Türkiye has appointed Sedat Önal as its new ambassador to Washington, choosing a seasoned career diplomat to work on improving its ties with the United States. Önal, aged 61, previously served as Türkiye's ambassador to the United Nations and brings with him 35 years of experience in the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

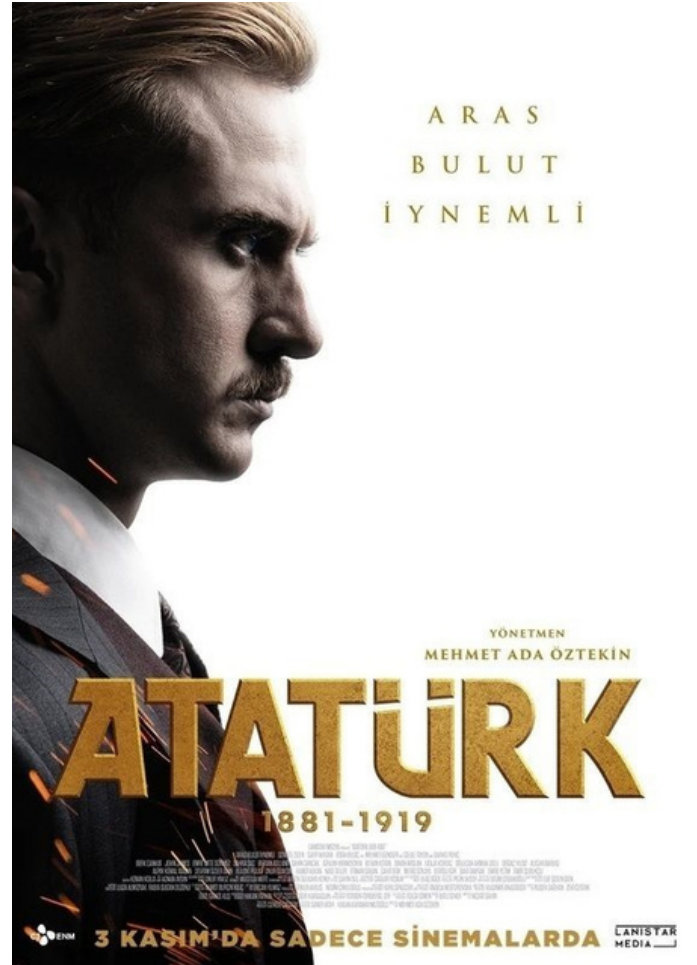
Throughout his diplomatic career at the Turkish Foreign Ministry, spanning three and a half decades, Önal has been actively involved in critical negotiations with high-ranking US officials. Notably, he served as deputy foreign minister under Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu from 2018 to 2023, a period marked by challenging interactions over Syria, Iraq, and military sales.

Önal has also led Turkish delegations to Moscow for the Astana process, which aims to find a resolution to the Syrian conflict in collaboration with Russia and Iran. His expertise in Middle Eastern affairs and familiarity with NATO issues will be crucial, particularly as Washington evaluates its Syria policy, including the potential withdrawal of US forces from the region.

ATATÜRK MOVIE SCREENING IN WASHINGTON, DC

The exclusive screening event of "Revealing Atatürk: Unmasking the Myths of a Visionary" at the US Navy Memorial on November 10th marked a significant moment for both Türkiye and the broader global community. As the nation commemorated the 85th anniversary of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's passing, this cinematic journey provided a rare opportunity to present a nuanced portrayal of Atatürk that emphasized his humanity, vulnerabilities, and struggles.

Through compelling storytelling and insightful commentary, viewers were invited to reconsider their preconceived notions of Atatürk and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges he faced in shaping the modern Turkish Republic. From his visionary leadership to his tireless efforts to modernize and secularize Türkiye, the film highlighted the enduring relevance of Atatürk's principles and ideals.



Film screening was sponsored by Yunus Emre Institute

DMV KADINLARI CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The DMV Kadınları (DMV Women's Group) recently celebrated International Women's Day with a spirited gathering in Reston, Virginia. This event brought together Turkish American women from the community for a day of connection, joy, and celebration. Guests were treated to a delightful array of Turkish cuisine, from savory

dishes to sweet desserts. Beyond the delicious meals, the event was an opportunity for women in the DMV area to strengthen bonds and share experiences. Highlighting the fun were raffle giveaways, adding an element of excitement and anticipation to the day's festivities.



DC SOCIAL GROUP MET AT ALA RESTAURANT IN BETHESDA

The DC Social community hosted its traditional February 14th party at Ala Restaurant's new Bethesda location, just before its grand opening. DJ Aydin set the stage and ignited the night. DC Social community extends a warm welcome to everyone in the DMV area, inviting them to connect, support, and strengthen the Turkish community. Through bonding and participation in sub-groups focusing on politics, sports, book clubs, and more, members engage in deeper discussions and foster meaningful connections.

The importance of diaspora connection and mutual support cannot be overstated, especially as we all reside in this vibrant DMV area, far from our native roots.

RUBI NETWORK INITIATION BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



Rubi Women Network hosted a mentoring and networking event for entrepreneur and small business owner women to honor the National Mentoring Month in January. Guest speakers of the workshop and reception were Gizem White, Ayça Karayel and Ladan British. All proceeds from the event benefited the ALIVE program which strives to provide a healthy variety of food to our neighbors in need.

Rubi Women Network is an empowerment initiative dedicated to bringing women leaders together through cuisine and cultural hospitality. The group's aim is to create a supportive community where women gain knowledge, build connections, and thrive.





On March 3rd, 2024, ATA-DC Board of Directors had the privilege of hosting a memorable and Sponsors Appreciation Event, honoring the generous and continuing support of our sponsors and partners who have been instrumental in advancing our mission. The event was a heartfelt celebration of collaboration, impact, and the power of giving back to the community. All the sponsors who provided financial help in 2023 were invited to the event.



WE COULD NOT DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

The Sponsor Appreciation Event venue was in the heart of Washington D.C and graciously arranged by a valuable community member, Gül Güner. The evening started with a delicious spread catered by our very own Aynur Özdemir. It was followed by a warm welcome from our President, Sevtap Schreffler, expressing our gratitude to all the attendees for their unwavering support.

The event's agenda was designed to showcase the significant achievements made possible by our sponsors and to strengthen relationships for future collaborations. One of the highlights of the evening was the heartfelt recognition of our sponsors' contributions. Each sponsor was acknowledged individually, with a personalized token of appreciation presented by President Sevtap Schreffler. This symbolized our deep gratitude for their partnership and commitment to our cause.

Sponsor generosity fuels our mission and enables us to build friendship between the Turkish and American people, reach out to those in need, and create positive change in the lives of those we serve. We look forward to continuing our partnerships, driving innovation, and building a brighter future together.

“ATA-DC PROMOTES TURKISH TRADITIONS AND HELPS IMPART THEM TO FUTURE GENERATIONS. I AM A SUPPORTER OF ATA-DC BECAUSE IT DOES A GREAT JOB OF SHARING THE TURKISH VALUES AND PROVIDING EDUCATION TO YOUNG KIDS. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WORK SO HARD EVERY DAY TO ACHIEVE THESE POSITIVE OUTCOMES”

İSMAIL USLU, THE OWNER OF AGORA RESTAURANT



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YANINIZDAYIZ!

Güvenlik Bakanlığı ve Adalet Bakanlığı'ndaki 16 yıllık tecrübelerimiz, dürüst danışma ve yasalara saygı çerçevesinde etik değerlerinden taviz vermeyen hukuk anlayışımızla sorunlarınıza çözüm bulmak için hazırız. Bizimle doğrudan iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Özlem Büber Barnard, Esq., L.L.M (Virginia, sadece göçmenlik hukuku)



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TURKISH FESTIVAL 2023: STAGE AND BEYOND

The festival goers enjoyed delicious Turkish food and traditional Turkish coffee, while browsing at the Turkish Bazaar including 35 vendors, and watching mesmerizing stage performances



DEMIR DEMIRKAN ACCEPTING HIS PLAQUE ON THE STAGE

BY DEMET CABBAR

October 15, 2023 - a lovely Fall morning in the Nation's capital. Turkish flags, red and white, are dancing like ballerinas, hanging from the streetlight poles along the three long blocks of Pennsylvania Ave, leading to the U.S. Capitol. The smell of the roasted Turkish coffee mixed with freshly brewed Turkish tea is filling the air. Vendors, who have just finished setting up their stands are ready to welcome their first customers. The vibrant colors of the diverse items, including jewelry, ceramics, carpets, towels, soaps, cloths, displayed at the Turkish bazaar are beginning to catch the eyes of the festival-goers. We know the DC Turkish Festival has officially begun when we hear the heart-thumping beat of the davuls. The drummers rise on the festival stage, the backdrop of which makes clear of the main

message of the festival: "Peace at Home, Peace in the World" by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. ATA-DC and the Turkish American Community proudly celebrated the 21st anniversary of the award-winning Annual DC Turkish Festival on October 15 on Pennsylvania Ave NW between 3rd and 6th Streets, only a few blocks from the glorious U.S. Capitol. Proclaimed by DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, October 2023 was also officially the Turkish Heritage Month in the nation's capital presenting full of fun cultural festivities! The 21st Turkish Festival offered a day of free activities including folk dances, live music, authentic Turkish cuisine, fashion, arts & crafts for children. Selected as the "Best Festival" and "Best Cultural Festival" by Washington City Paper readers in the past 12 years, the premier



TURKISH FESTIVAL'S MOTTO THIS YEAR WAS “LET’S GO TURKISH!”

event drew tens of thousands of Washingtonians to the streets to experience Türkiye’s rich cultural history, its culinary delights, and a variety of live Turkish music and engaging folk dance performances.

The festival goers enjoyed delicious Turkish food and traditional Turkish coffee, while browsing at the Turkish Bazaar including 35 vendors, and watching mesmerizing stage performances. The award-winning cultural celebration once again brought together numerous Turkish-style artists, local artisans, and more than 20 authentic food vendors along with more than 20,000 visitors.

In honor of the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic, two special exhibits were featured:

- 100 artworks of modern Türkiye’s founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, hand painted with coffee grounds by Hasan Kale, a micro art master.
- Anatolia, The Land of Mysteries photo exhibit by Resul Celik featuring photographs of the cultural, geographic, and historical treasures of Türkiye.

Live stage performances were a huge audience draw. Diverse and entertaining performances by local and visiting performers emphasizing Türkiye’s role as a cultural bridge mesmerized the visitors. Ankara’s Hacettepe University Youth Folk Dance Group presented breathtaking traditional and modern dances from across Türkiye.

Famous Turkish musician, writer, and composer, Demir Demirkan, the writer of the lyrics of “Everyway That I Can”, the winning song of the 2003 Eurovision Song Contest performed with his band, featuring his most famous Turkish rock songs. “It was a great experience to make some noise and play Turkish Rock in the streets of the Nation’s Capital in front of the Capitol. Thanks for having me” said Demir Demirkan. ATA-DC presented him with a special appreciation award for promoting Turkish Rock music in the U.S. Beginning at age 19, Demirkan has produced and released close to 50 solo and collaborative albums and singles ranging from blues, rock, metal to film and TV series soundtracks composed for symphony orchestras, choirs and Anatolian instruments.

One of the best DJs of DMV area, DJ Seyhan was also at the Turkish Festival. Other esteemed local performers included Kardelen Turkish Dance Ensemble, Nomad Dancers, Gulder USA Kazakh Ensemble, Osman Arslan Folk Songs, Ocean Band, Kirmizi Mikrofon, Ahmet Kilic and Metin Bilgic Classical Turkish Music Band.

Turkish coffee tent was of course a visitors' favorite where guests not only tasted Turkish coffee but also had their fortunes read from coffee grinds. Granted by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the festival would not have been possible without the generous sponsorship and support of the local businesses -- as you can see the full list of our sponsors on page 4.

Community members, supporters and our sponsors were especially excited about the Turkish Festival 2023 not only because it is one of the biggest cultural festival in the nation's capital but also it was marking the centennial milestone of Republic of Türkiye.

**“THIS YEAR’S FESTIVAL
WAS ESPECIALLY
SIGNIFICANT GIVEN
THAT THE YEAR 2023
MARKS THE
CENTENNIAL OF THE
FOUNDATION OF THE
TURKISH REPUBLIC”**

***Sevtap Schreffler
President of ATA-DC***

ATA-DC Festival committee and Board of Directors are grateful for this endless support from the community. ATA-DC President Sevtap Schreffler expressed her gratitude in an interview with Anadolu Agency (AA), while the Vice President Gamze Çakmak hailed the overwhelming success of this year's festival, which boasted more than 20,000 visitors.

The festival's notorious highlight was again The Grand Bazaar! Visitors enjoyed exploring the bustling bazaar featuring handcrafted treasures, textiles, and art from Türkiye and discovered unique pieces that show and tell stories of craftsmanship and tradition.



The vendor stalls, arranged as a traditional marketplace called a bazaar, spotlighted authentic Turkish merchandise



ATA-DC'S FESTIVAL FUNDRAISING AT ALA RESTAURANT



FESTIVAL COMMITTEE WORKING AT TURKEVI



VOLUNTEERS HANGING NO PARKING SIGNS

ATA-DC's all-volunteer Festival Committee is launched about 8 months prior to the event and works non-stop around the clock to deliver a high-quality festival that promotes the best of Türkiye, while also building bridges between communities and uniting them over our shared heritage. Intense and long meetings over the months determine many details of the festival site, financing and activities. In order to find the most needed financial support, ATA-DC's fundraising events kick off at least four five months into the festival. The main event for Turkish Heritage Month celebrations also gets underway in the beginning of October.

ATA-DC'S VP GAMZE ÇAKMAK HAILED THE OVERWHELMING SUCCESS OF THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL, WHICH BOASTED MORE THAN 20,000 VISITORS.

DC Government requires organizers to take care of all the details on the field including trash pick up and parking restriction posts. One day prior to the festival day, committee members go and hang these "No Parking" signs to divert the traffic. On the day of the festival, the Festival committee members take shifts starting 1:00am in the morning and by the time the festival officially starts at 11am, some of them have already been there for 10 hours.

This hard-working groups biggest joy is to watch thousands of people, including many families with children, flowing into and roaming through the festival with lots of curiosity and big smiles on their faces, eating, drinking, dancing,, singing, shopping, socializing and experiencing the best of Turkish culture in the heart of the nation's capital. It is when they know all their hard work and efforts have paid off. But their job is not done yet since they still have to break down the festival after all the visitors and vendors are gone.

REPUBLIC DAY BALL

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF FOUNDING OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC



BY GAMZE CAKMAK / FERİHA İŞTAR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ELVAN RAMAZANOĞULLARI
AND DR. DARA KASACI



The celebratory grand ball at Waldorf Astoria, a historical hotel in the heart of DC, was a huge success with unprecedented participation



We marked the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic in splendid fashion, hosting our members and esteemed guests at a magnificent hotel. On October 29, at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in Washington, DC, the ATA-DC board of directors, along with members and guests, came together to proudly commemorate a century of our republic's history with 336 attendees. Shortly after they were made available, the tickets were quickly sold out, highlighting the immense interest in the celebration. The festivities began with a cocktail reception, followed by a delightful dinner, and continued with lively dancing. Adding to the charm of the evening was local singer and ATA-DC board member Büşra Kayı Tarhan, who enhanced the celebration with a repertoire of songs beloved by the founder of the Republic of Türkiye, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

The distinguished speakers of the evening included Dr. Alp Özerdem, Dean of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution at GMU; Mr. Lincoln McCurdy, former president of Turkish Coalition of America and Ms. Sevtap Schreffler, President of ATA-DC. Master of the centennial ceremony was Ms. Özge Övün-Sert, the general secretary of ATA-DC. In his speech, Dr. Özerdem said *"The Republic of Türkiye is a holistic human development project. It was exemplary at the time with its vision of a progressive future and what it has achieved in transforming a war-torn country into a global actor. We owe so much to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, our Republic's founder. Like all of you, I am ready to cherish, strengthen, and carry it to future generations during its second centennial."*

Amidst the speeches highlighting the significance and importance of the day, Congressman Gerald Connolly from Virginia sent his best wishes and expressed his delight at being invited to the celebration. Attendees were also treated to an unforgettable night of tango and traditional folk dances performed during the ball, further enriching the celebratory atmosphere. In the heart of Washington, DC, within the enchanting ambiance of the Waldorf Hotel, the grand Atatürk flag hanging in the ballroom captivated attention throughout the night—an evening we wished would never cease. It quickly became the preferred backdrop for guests seeking memorable photographs, adding to the allure of the festivities.



This year, ATA-DC members and the Turkish-American community celebrated the landmark milestone for the Turkish Republic at the glorious Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Washington, DC on Sunday, October 29, 2023



ATA-DC Board of Directors were called to the stage to salute the crowd. It was a profound moment which ignited a sense of collective pride among the participants

As the night progressed, guests waved the flags and sang marches and songs well into the midnight hours, with DJ Seyhan Duru's eclectic mix of music serving as the backdrop for lively dancing. It was truly an unforgettable occasion filled with national pride. This celebration wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of our esteemed sponsors. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to *Dr. Engin Holmstrom, HALAC Iron Works, Inc., Mustafa Ataç, Roqos Inc., Saltzman and Evinch PLLC, Dr. Esmâ Akin, Lydia Borland, Dr. Petek Dönmez, Esra Ozben, Nur Çalıka, and Aylin-Tarcan Çevik*. As we look ahead, we eagerly anticipate many more years of celebrating our republic with the same level of enthusiasm and camaraderie.





Speakers of the night, Alp Özerdem and Lincoln McCurdy, were nothing short of magnificent, with each word spoken resonating deeply with the spirit of the Republic of Türkiye



**I AM PROUD OF THE RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS BEEN CULTIVATED
WITH THE TURKISH COMMUNITY AND, AS CO-CHAIR OF THE
CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS ON U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS, I LOOK
FORWARD TO CONTINUING THIS FRIENDSHIP WITH ATA-DC**

GERRY CONOLLY, CONGRESSMAN (D)





ATA-DC members and guests captured cherished moments through photographs and videos



Atatürk Society founder Mirat Yavalar and President Burak Şahin were also among the attendees



UNIQUE TASTE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Your ultimate destination for Mediterranean cuisine in Washington DC and Tysons. Immerse yourself in a world of passion as we take your taste buds on a journey through Greece, Lebanon, and Turkiye. Our culinary traditions, handed down through generations, ensure that only the finest spices and flavors grace your plate.

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STRIKING CHORDS, CHANGING LIVES

MANGA'S BENEFIT CONCERT

Award-winning rock group Manga proves the profound connection between art and humanitarianism



BY ELVAN RAMAZANOĞULLARI

PHOTOGRAPHY BY OZGE OVUN SERT

BY ELVAN RAMAZANOĞULLARI

In the grand tapestry of musical activism, few threads are as vibrant and compelling as the initiative taken by the award-winning Turkish rock band, MaNga. With a career that spans over two decades, MaNga has not only secured its place in the hearts of music lovers through its innovative fusion of rock, hip-hop, electronic, and traditional Turkish elements but also through its commitment to social and charitable causes. This commitment is exemplified in their latest undertaking—an electrifying benefit concert aimed at making a tangible difference in the world.

As the doors of Capital One Hall opened on the evening of November 24, 2023, it wasn't just the promise of music that filled the air, but a profound sense of purpose and community. This was the setting for a remarkable event, organized by the American Turkish Association of Washington DC (ATA-DC) in collaboration with Bridge to Türkiye Fund (BTF), that transcended the realms of entertainment to touch the hearts and lives of attendees of all ages.

The concert was dedicated to a noble and urgent mission: supporting the survivors of the catastrophic earthquakes that struck Türkiye on February 6, 2023. The tremors not only shook the very foundations of numerous communities but also left an indelible mark on the lives of

thousands. In response, the evening's proceedings were devoted to aiding the Child Amputees of Türkiye Earthquakes (CATE), a pivotal initiative co-funded by BTF, designed to offer a lifeline to some of the youngest and most vulnerable victims of this tragedy.

The generosity of the attendees was palpable, with the concert successfully raising \$16,000. This achievement was further amplified by the kindness of a single donor, whose substantial contribution elevated the total funds to \$20,000. This remarkable sum was earmarked for Project CATE, ensuring significant support for child amputees in Türkiye. Through this initiative, children facing the daunting challenge of navigating life post-amputation are provided with much-needed orthopedic aids, including prosthetics, alongside essential physical therapy and psychological support, all woven together with considerations for their long-term educational journey.

Project CATE stands as a beacon of hope, aiming to shepherd these young survivors towards becoming functional, independent adults who are active and contributing members of society. The project not only addresses the immediate physical needs of these children but also tackles the psychosocial, economic, and educational hurdles they face in the aftermath of such a calamitous event.



The success of the November 24 concert, headlined by MaNga, underscores the profound impact of collective action and the unifying power of music. It serves as a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the boundless potential for empathy and support that communities can muster in times of need. The collaboration between MaNga, the American Turkish Association of Washington DC, Capital One Hall, BTF, sponsors, and the attendees has set a precedent for how art and altruism can join forces to make a tangible difference in the lives of those affected by adversity.

MaNga Band members had a meet and greet after the show with concert goers which was a special and unforgettable moment for fans. Additionally, ATA-DC board members had the opportunity to take the band on some sightseeing tours, showcasing the capital of the United States, Washington DC. A lot of coordination went into the event, and the community came together to host the band, arranging dinners, backstage food delivery, and service, ensuring that the MaNga's experience was as memorable as their performance.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to MaNga, the gorgeous venue Capital One Hall, our sponsors, and all the supporters who made this event not just a success, but a milestone in the journey towards healing and recovery for the young lives in Türkiye. Through music, compassion, and action, the event has sown seeds of hope and recovery, ensuring that the survivors of the February 6 earthquakes are not forgotten but are supported with love, care, and the promise of a brighter future.



“WE SEND OUR HEARTFELT THANKS TO ATA-DC FOR GIVING US THE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP OUR CHILDREN”

FERMAN AKGUL - maNga's Solist





Congressman Pete Sessions (R) and Ms. Gamze Cizreli

BY GIZEM SALCIGIL WHITE

"I AM VERY HAPPY TO BE HERE AS THE HONOR GUEST OF THIS EVENT BY ATA-DC. IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE RECOGNIZED AND SEE SUCH A FANTASTIC GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE IN CHARGE OF PROMOTING TURKISH CULTURE AND CULINARY IN THE UNITED STATES."

GAMZE CIZRELI

Every year, Turkish Cuisine Week is being celebrated between May 21st-May 27th to promote Türkiye's rich gastronomic culture around the world. Thus, ATA-DC took the responsibility to showcase Turkish culinary in the United States during this time.

On May 23, 2023, the ATA-DC Board of Directors was delighted to host the first-ever "Turkish Cuisine Week" reception at the U.S. Capitol Visitors Center through a joint event with Congressman Pete Sessions' office. In celebration of cross-cultural promotion, our board was honored to welcome Congressman Pete Sessions (R-TX), Congressman Robert Aderholt (R-AL), former Turkish Ambassador Murat Mercan, Madam Inci Mercan, State Delegate Ashanti Martinez, Mr. Kevin Craft from Governor Wes Moore's Office of Community Initiatives and other distinguished guests. Our keynote speaker was Ms. Gamze Cizreli, the founder of BigChefs restaurant chain and a global ambassador for gastro diplomacy.

Recognized for their invaluable and active contributions to U.S. Türkiye relations and diplomacy, Congressman Pete Sessions and Ms. Gamze Cizreli received outstanding leadership awards from the ATA-DC Board. Our community members and long-time supporters also joined this cultural celebration in the U.S. Congress. The culinary event was supported by the Turkish Coffee Lady (TCL) Foundation, Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA), Turkish American Cultural Society of Colorado, ATA-Houston, Turkish Women Initiative, Gunay Evinch on behalf of TASC, Straife, and Taskin Bakery. Turkish food were provided by the Anatolian Bistro. Micro art master Hasan Kale's coffee art exhibition featuring modern Türkiye's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was also displayed during the celebration.

Our special guest and speaker Gamze Cizreli has a unique and very successful business experience. Cizreli was born in 1968 as the youngest of three children of an academician father and a housewife mother. Cizreli, who spent her childhood in Ankara, graduated from METU School of Business in 1991. After graduation, she spent some time in defense industry. Changing the sector in 1994, she founded Cafemiz, on Argentina Street in Ankara with her first husband. Later, she founded Kuki, which serves in the pastry sector, and Quick China, which sells Far Eastern dishes. Cizreli, who went bankrupt in 2005, took out a loan in 2007 and founded BigChefs, later became one of the first and very successful Turkish restaurant chain. Gamze Cizreli, also founded Rafine in 2010 and wrap chain called Dorom.co in 2016.



ATA-DC's Gastronomy Event at the US Capitol brought community members together

On November 15, 2023, ATA-DC hosted another successful event, Atatürk Memorial Day, at the U.S. Capitol. This time, in collaboration with Congressman Joe Wilson's office, our community members got together to commemorate the Founder of the Republic of Türkiye, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, one of the greatest leaders of the 21st century. Participants remembered Atatürk with deep respect, and gratitude on the 85th anniversary of his passing. The event also included a special live art show by Hasan Kale and live traditional Turkish music by Ahmet and Selin Kilic. We extend our thanks to former Ambassador Murat Mercan and Turkish-Americans for joining this meaningful reception and Akiyva Grill, Fairfax Bakery, and Turkish Coffee Lady for the delicious Turkish food and coffee.

THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN PETE SESSIONS (R-TX/32ND) HELPED TO ORGANIZE THE GASTRONOMY EVENT AT THE US CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER. ATA-DC BOARD THANKS HIM FOR HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE AS THE CO-CHAIR OF THE CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS ON U.S.-TURKEY RELATIONS



BY NILE NILBAHAR KARAMAN

As part of our cultural education and community-building efforts, ATA-DC has launched a Turkish folklore dance workshop program. We have conducted three sessions to date, the first on October 7, 2023, followed by December 3, 2023, and most recently on March 16, 2024. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our instructor, Yeliz Dingler, a former dancer from the world-renowned Fire of Anatolia dance troupe, for leading these workshops, which have become highly sought-after events by the participants. The workshop series was organized by ATA-DC with the support of the Kardelen Turkish Dance Ensemble. Designed to accommodate dancers of all levels, the workshops featured a dynamic range of dance styles, from Black Sea Horon to Zeybek and Turkish Romani dances. Attendees were treated to an immersive experience that not only enhanced their dance skills but also fostered a sense of unity and joy within the community. Beyond the dance routines, the workshops served as a platform for community bonding, with attendees forming new connections as they collaborated on choreographies and celebrated each other's progress. The inclusive nature of the event received praise from many, fostering a sense of camaraderie among the diverse group of participants.

NEW STANDARD: DANCE TO GO TURKISH!

Each session in this dance workshop series generally lasts one hour and costs between \$20 and \$30 per session. Participants can register for either one session of their choice or a combined session. For example, in the first workshop held on October 7th, participants learned about Zeybek and Turkish Romani dance. While some enjoyed the vibrancy of each dance in two consecutive sessions, others chose to focus on one of these traditional dances.

ATA-DC plans to continue offering these cultural dance workshops throughout the year. Classes are open to both men and women, and participants must be 14 years or older. Beginners and intermediate-level dancers are welcome, and prior dance experience is not required to attend these sessions.

About the Instructor: Yeliz Dingler is a graduate of the Ankara State Conservatory, a veteran of the Turkish National Folk Dance Ensemble, a former dancer with Fire of Anatolia, an instructor, and a choreographer. With over 20 years of experience teaching and choreographing Turkish folk dances, she brings a wealth of expertise to the workshops.

500-YEARS OF HISTORY: TURKISH COFFEE

In honor of the 12th Turkish Heritage Month, ATA-DC hosted a full-house documentary film screening featuring the 500-year old Turkish coffee culture at the Reston Community Center on October 22nd, 2023. Produced by the Turkish Coffee Lady Foundation, the documentary film called "Turkish Coffee Tales of Anatolia" which is composed of special shootings featuring "Dibek" in Mardin, "Mirra" in Şanlıurfa, "Menengiç" in Gaziantep, "Saffron" in Karabük, "Mastic" in İzmir, "Coffee brewed on ash" in Nevşehir, "Coffee brewed on sand" in Ankara, and the "Traditional Turkish coffee" in Istanbul was very well received by the audience.

During and after the event, guests enjoyed delicious Turkish coffee and authentic desserts while Micro coffee art master Hasan Kale presented a live show. Kale mesmerized all the attendees with his paint of a miniature Istanbul silhouette. For the finale, five guests received surprise raffle gifts including a complimentary coffee art workshops and a coffee reading session.

On behalf of the ATA-DC Board of Directors, we extend our deepest appreciation for the Turkish Coffee Lady Foundation's continuing support in promoting gastrodiploamacy and its effort to have December 5th to be recognized as the World Turkish Coffee Day.



SUNAY AKIN IN WASHINGTON DC

On February 11th, Sunay Akin took the stage with his latest show "CUMHURİYET YOLUNDA" at the Nolan Art Center. Organized by ATA-DC, the event served as a unifying force, bringing together our vibrant community in celebration of Türkiye's rich cultural heritage.

A fascinating journey through history, Akin's narrative not only honored the nation's past but also ignited a sense of collective pride, leaving an indelible mark on hearts and minds. It was a true testament to the power of literature and storytelling.

Following the inspiring performance, which benefited ATA-DC's Atatürk School, attendees had the privilege of engaging directly with the author during the book signing ceremony. Akin signed his book "Şiirli Yastık" (published in 2021) for the audience.

“COMMUNITY FIRST” PHILOSOPHY

BY SEDA ARIK

In 2023, ATA-DC introduced a new community education series which focus on various areas of interest for our community. With our first two sessions, *“Understanding the Path to American Citizenship”*; and *“Turkey’s Search for Balance in Foreign Policy and It’s Relations with the West”* being so successful and sought-after, we are looking forward to adding more sessions and different topics in the coming months. In 2024, ATA-DC Board of Directors will decide the topics to be discussed in these series.

Understanding the Path to American Citizenship - Presenter: Tolga Özek

On September 15, ATA-DC organized a seminar titled "Understanding the Path to American Citizenship." The seminar, which received considerable interest, featured Attorney at Law Mr. Tolga Özek, a member of the ATA-DC Board of Directors, presenting the process of obtaining US Citizenship. He also covered topics including Immigration laws and regulations on ways to obtain a Green Card, and meeting citizenship requirements.

Beyond the specific technical aspects, the seminar explored the implications of becoming an American citizen, delving into the rights, responsibilities, and privileges that accompany this significant milestone. Tolga Özek adeptly addressed all questions and concerns, ensuring participants gained a good understanding of the criteria and procedures necessary to embark on this transformative journey. The interactive session, which lasted approximately 2 hours and received great interest, garnered very positive feedback from attendees as well as the broader community.



Turkey's Search for Balance in Foreign Policy and Its Relations with the West - Presenter: Prof. Dr. Sinem Akgül Açıkmeşe

On September 27th, ATA-DC featured another seminar titled "Türkiye's Search for Balance in Foreign Policy and Its Relations with the West" with Professor Sinem Akgül Açıkmeşe, a faculty member at Kadir Has University in Türkiye, as a guest speaker. The event garnered significant attention, drawing a diverse audience from different backgrounds eager to delve into the intricacies of Türkiye's diplomatic landscape..



Prof. Dr. Açıkmeşe's presentation included an insightful exploration of Türkiye's relations with the EU as well as with the United States. This proved to be both enlightening and thought-provoking. This session generated an active and stimulating question period and a lively discussion following the formal presentation. This exchange

underscored the importance of the topic and highlighted the depth of curiosity surrounding Türkiye's foreign policy trajectory and its dynamic relationship with the west. Participants, including American academics who joined the conversation agreed that these seminars would provide a better understanding for everyone.



YOUNG CULTURAL AMBASSADORS PROGRAM (YCAP)

BY TURGAY DABAK

ATA-DC launched the 2023-2024 Young Cultural Ambassador Program for local high school students in October. In its seventh year, the program received 38 applications from high school students who aspire to broaden their horizons about different professions and global issues and to make an impact in their communities by taking a leadership role. This unique program was originally established by ATA-DC in 2017 with the objective of engaging a selected group of high school students in various cultural, and educational activities in order to encourage volunteerism and cross-cultural dialogue among youth. In 2020, the YCAP became virtual and expanded nationally, allowing for high school students from all around the U.S. to apply for the Program. Since 2017 nearly 85 high-school students have participated in YCAP. Through the program YCAs get a chance to learn more about Turkish culture, take part in fun events as a volunteer, while meeting with Turkish American and international community members and start building a network.

YCAs broaden their knowledge and horizon about global issues through weekly presentations by experts in fields such as political science, civic engagement, international development, media and communications, emotional intelligence, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and so on.



ATATURK SCHOOL

ATA-DC's Atatürk School for Children has been teaching the Turkish language and culture to children 5 to 12 years old since 1980. The school operates every Sunday 10 am to 1:00 pm at McLean High School in Fairfax. Children learn about Türkiye, the Turkish language, and Atatürk in a fun, yet structured environment.

Atatürk school continued to move forward with full steam this academic year. The school has 32 students distributed across four different classrooms. Our dedicated classroom teachers are carefully selected through a very competitive recruitment process. Each of our passionate teachers is specifically educated and trained to teach pre-school and elementary school kids and comes with years of valuable experience.

School has already celebrated a number of national days and is currently preparing a celebration for April 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day.



Birlikte Kutluyoruz!



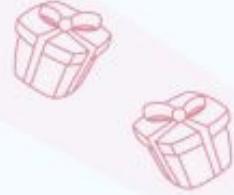
Tarih: 21 Nisan 2024, Pazar | Saat: 11:00 - 13:00

Yer: McLean High School

- * Şiirler
- * Şarkı
- * Dans
- * Müzik
- * Oyunlar



- * Türk yemeği
- * Sihirbaz
- * Bake sale
- * Yüz boyama
- * Eğlenceli aktiviteler



Katılmak isteyenlerin rsvp@atadc.org adresine isim, yaş, ebeveyn ismi ve iletişim bilgilerini Nisan 17'ye kadar göndermeleri rica olunur.



ATA-DC
AMERICAN TURKISH
ASSOCIATION OF
WASHINGTON DC

100TH YEAR OF THE REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION AT THE EMBASSY



The 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic, celebrated at the Turkish Ambassador's residence, was a vibrant tribute to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's enduring legacy. Bathed in the national colors of red and white, the reception brought together dignitaries, community leaders, and citizens to honor the foundation of modern Türkiye.

Guests savored a culinary voyage through Türkiye's diverse flavors, delighting in traditional dishes provided by Agora restaurant, that celebrated the nation's gastronomic heritage. The air was filled with the enchanting melodies of live music by Busra Tarhan, setting a backdrop of warmth and celebration.

Prominent guest speakers took the stage, each shedding light on the significance of the centenary, sharing insights into Türkiye's journey, and laying out visions for its future. It was an evening that captured the spirit of unity and the strides of a nation looking forward to its future.



MATA'S GATHERING BROUGHT ITS MEMBERS TOGETHER

Maryland American Turkish Association, also known as MATA, organized a celebratory dinner to highlight the significance of the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic on December 2, 2023. MATA members and their families came together and enjoyed the fantastic ambiance of Cazbar Restaurant in Columbia, Maryland where members of the Board of Directors of ATA-DC were also in attendance to share the joy.



MD SISTER STATES PROGRAM LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

The Maryland Sister States Program Event showcased citizen engagement in local and global understanding. With DCMs from various nations, the significance of sister state ties resonated during the event. Contributions from Sevtap Schreffler, Gunay Evinc, East West Café, Fairfax Bakery, Rudy's Restaurant, MATA, ATADC, the Turkish Coffee Lady Foundation, and PR company Gastrotolia helped enrich the experience. Demet Cabbar and Burcu Yuksel of Kardelen danced to Erik Dali enthralled, turning the gathering into a communal celebration. Sister states like Anhui Province, China, Ireland, Japan, and many more, highlighted the global scope. It emphasized the vital role of cultural exchange in fostering a more interconnected world.



ATA-DC'S FIRST VIRTUAL TOWNHALL MEETING TOOK PLACE IN JANUARY

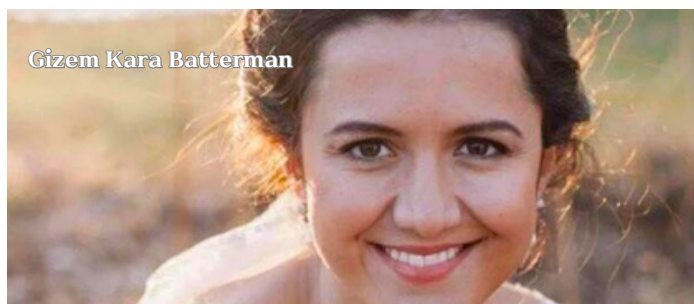


The virtual "Meet and Greet" event hosted by ATA-DC on January 24, marked a significant moment for the Turkish American community in the DMV area. Despite previous delays, the event successfully brought together newly elected leadership, board members, and community members in an online setting, drawing more than 50 participants.

During the virtual gathering, participants gained insights into the organization's plans for 2024, along with a review of the events surrounding the 2023 elections and the reasons for their cancellation and subsequent rerun in a more secure manner. Additionally, suggestions were solicited and discussed for potential collaborative efforts moving forward.

The President and board members, accompanied by election observer Serap Rada, addressed questions and concerns raised by attendees. Notable participants included former board members and representatives from other civil society organizations. Topics discussed encompassed lessons learned, privacy protection, IT security, and the importance of trust systems.

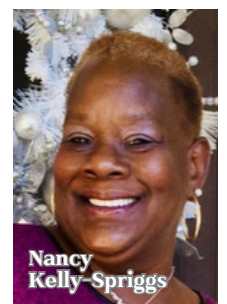
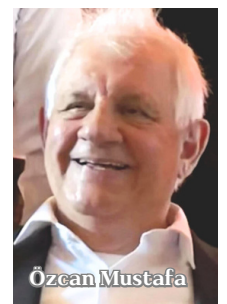
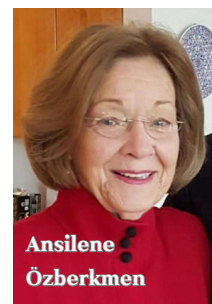
The event concluded with gratitude extended to all participants, and supporters. Overall, feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. ATA-DC is now contemplating hosting similar gatherings more frequently in the future.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHOM WE WILL BE MISSING DEARLY

It is with heavy hearts that we share the news of the passing of some cherished members of our community. Their contributions, kindness, and presence will be deeply missed by us all. While words may fail to fully capture the impact they had on our community, we remember them fondly for their generousities or contributions to the community.

In 2023 and early 2024, we lost Mr. **Ralph Bain**, Oya Bain's dear husband; Mr. **Hayri Berberoglu**, ATA-DC's founding and honorary board member; Mr. **Malcolm R. Pfunder**, ATA-DC's past board member; Mrs. **Ansilene Özberkmen**, the dear wife of Dr. Vacit Özberkmen and a cherished member of our community; Mrs. **Nadir Ömer**, longstanding ATA-DC member; Mr. **Jeff Malet**, longtime photographer for the Turkish Festival; Mr. **Özcan Mustafa**, former President of MATA; Mrs. **Nancy Kelly-Spriggs** mother of our past board member Ebony-Nicole Kelly; Mrs. **Lale Yörükoglu**, another longstanding ATA-DC member cherished by the community; And our young and beautiful **Gizem Kara Batterman**.





GETTY IMAGES

HOW TO RESEARCH AND CHOOSE THE BEST PRESCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD

BY EVA NIHAL CIVAN

Choosing the right preschool for your child is a significant decision that lays the foundation for their educational journey. Preschools play a crucial role during a child's early development, providing a structured environment where they can learn, socialize, and develop essential skills. In this article, I would like to explore key elements to consider when selecting the best preschool for your little one.

By following these steps, you can gather the information needed to make an informed decision about the best preschool for your child. When evaluating preschools, I think it's essential to consider various factors to ensure a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment as this decision will have a lifelong effect on your kids and family.

Remember that each child is unique, so finding a preschool that meets their individual needs and your family's priorities is crucial. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you in the process:

1. Research and Visit

Begin your search by researching preschools in your area. Read reviews, talk to other parents, and seek recommendations. Schedule visits to potential preschools to get a feel for the environment, observe classrooms, and meet with teachers.

2. Curriculum

Assess the curriculum offered by each preschool. Look for a balanced approach that includes a mixed recipe of play-based learning, social development, and early academics. Ensure that the curriculum aligns with your educational philosophy and goals for your child.

3. Teacher Qualifications

Qualified and experienced teaching staff are vital for a preschool's success. Inquire about the credentials and training of the teaching staff. A low and stable student-to-teacher ratio is also beneficial for personalized attention.

4. Facilities and Safety

Take note of the facilities and safety measures in place. A safe and stimulating environment, age-appropriate toys, and a well-maintained outdoor play area contribute to a positive learning experience.

5. Parental Involvement

Consider the level of parental involvement encouraged by the preschool. Some schools value strong parent-teacher partnerships, providing opportunities for parents to participate in classroom activities or attend workshops.

6. Philosophy and Values

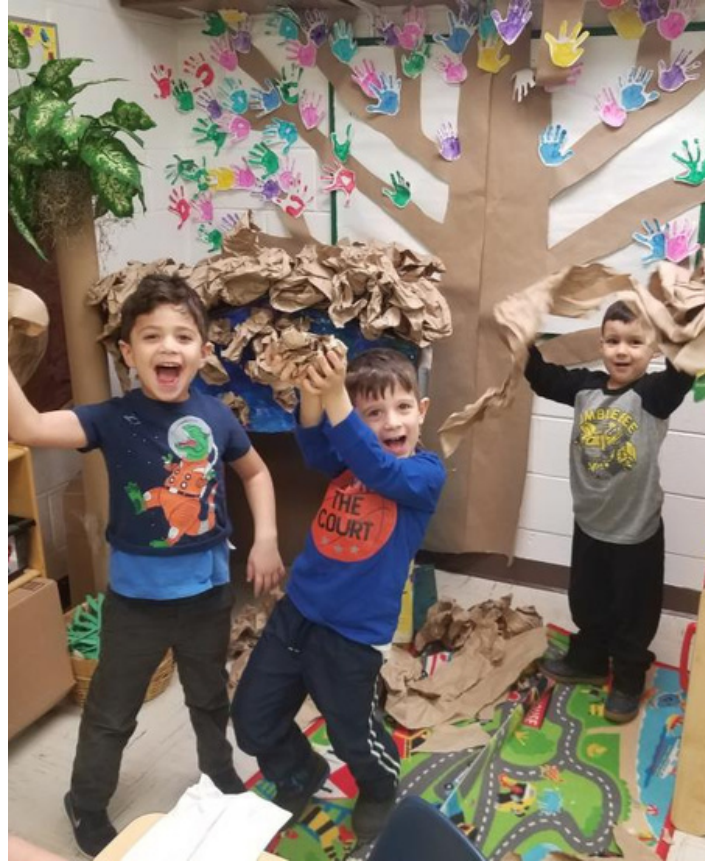
Choose a preschool that aligns with your family's values and educational philosophy. Whether you prefer a Montessori, Waldorf, or traditional approach, finding a school that resonates with your beliefs can enhance your child's overall experience.

**TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND
PRIORITIZE WHAT MATTERS MOST
TO YOU AND YOUR CHILD WHEN
MAKING THE FINAL DECISION.
VISITING MULTIPLE PRESCHOOLS
AND ASKING THOROUGH QUESTIONS
WILL HELP YOU MAKE AN INFORMED
CHOICE TAILORED TO YOUR
FAMILY'S NEEDS.**

I would also recommend to evaluate the preschool's communication policies and practices. Regular updates and parent-teacher conferences can provide insights into your child's progress. Always, look for a preschool that promotes diversity and inclusivity, fostering a welcoming environment for all children and families.

Also remember, selecting the best preschool for your child involves careful consideration of age requirements, application timelines, costs, and various qualitative aspects. You should start the research process at

By taking the time to research and visit potential preschools, you can make an informed decision that sets the stage for your child's early education and development. Remember, each child is unique, so choose a preschool that caters to their individual needs, interests, and learning style.



A longtime ATA-DC member, Eva Nihal Civan has been living in the DC metropolitan area for more than two decades. Eva worked as a school teacher for several years then changed her profession in 2017. Now, with over 7 years of experience in residential and commercial real estate arena, Eva helps her clients to find the best property.

She has extreme empathy while helping all clients whether they are first time home buyers, a luxury home buyer, or investors. Eva strongly believes that every purchase and the sales should be also a good investment.

While her passion is to read and learn more about real estate and investments, being a mother of three wonderful kids is her first and most important motivation to do better in life. Eva Nihal Civan is also a keen supporter of ATA-DC. With her firm, she was kind enough to sponsor many of our events and activities including the Turkish festival and annual republic ball.



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EASTER BREAD (PASKALYA ÇÖREĞİ)

- Soft Butter – Yumuşak Tereyağı 130 gr (0.5 cups)
- 1 Egg - Yumurta
- Sugar – Şeker 150 gr (0.6 cups)
- Instant Yeast - Kuru Maya 10 gr (2 teaspoons)
- Milk – Süt – 350 gr (1.5 cups)
- Flour – Un – 550 gr (2.5 cups)
- Mahleb – Mahlab – 2 Çaykaşığı/Teaspoon
- 2 Egg yolk/yumurta sarısı
- Sliced almonds/ Dilimlenmiş badem

Mix warm milk, butter and sugar together. When it is completely mixed, add the eggs and yeast, mix and leave them to rest for 2-3 minutes. Add the premixed flour and mahlab to this mixture and mix for 1-2 minutes. Put this mixture in a separate bowl, cover and leave it for 30 minutes at room temperature. Take the risen dough and knead it for an additional 1 more minute. Portion the dough into 50 gram pieces and roll each into a ball shape. Knead these dough rolls into long rope shape. Braid 3 ropes by braiding on top of the center long piece. Pinch ends to seal and tuck under. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 60 minutes. Preheat your oven to 190 degrees / 375 F. Brush egg yolks and sprinkle with almonds. Immediately bake it in the oven for about 20 minutes.

Important Notes: If you use hot milk instead of warm, your yeast will activate very fast and the yeast will go bad. If the milk is cold, the fermentation period should be extended. It is sufficient that the butter is only softened, so letting it sit for 1 hour at room temperature is enough. There may be differences from oven to oven, you should adjust the cooking time accordingly. If the Easter bread/Paskalya is not fermented well before baking, the dough won't bake inside and will burn outside. The fermented product is on average 2 times the size of the original dough. As soon as brushing the egg yolks, product should be baked without waiting. If Active dry yeast is used instead of Instant yeast, take some warm milk, stir and wait a couple of minutes to activate the yeast before mixing.



Ilık süt, tereyağı ve şekerini birlikte karıştırın. Tamamen karışınca yumurtaları ve mayayı ekleyip yeniden karıştırın ve 2-3 dakika dinlenmeye bırakın. Bu karışıma önceden karıştırdığınız unu ve mahlab'ı ekleyip 1-2 dakika karıştırın. Bu karışımı ayrı bir kaba alıp kapağını kapatın ve oda sıcaklığında 30 dakika bekletin. Mayalanan hamuru alıp 1 dakika daha yoğurun. Hamuru 50 gramlık parçalara bölüp her birini top şeklinde yuvarlayın. Bu hamur rulolarını uzun ip şeklinde yoğurun. Ortadaki uzun parçanın üstüne 3 adet ip örüp örelim. Kapatmak ve altına sıkıştırmak için uçları sıkıştırın. Örtün ve iki katına çıkana kadar yaklaşık 60 dakika bekletin. Fırınınızı önceden 190 derece / 375 F'ye ısıtın. Üzerine yumurta sarısı sürün ve üzerine badem serpin. Hemen fırında yaklaşık 20 dakika pişirin.



Püf noktalar: Ilık süt yerine sıcak süt kullanırsanız mayanız çok çabuk fermente olacak (aktifleşecek) ve maya bozulacaktır. Süt soğuk ise fermentasyon süresi uzatılmalıdır. Tereyağının sadece yumuşatılması yeterli olduğundan oda sıcaklığında 1 saat bekletilmesi yeterlidir. Fırından fırına farklılıklar olabilir, pişirme süresini buna göre ayarlamalısınız. Paskalya çöreği pişirmeden önce iyi fermente edilmezse hamurun içi pişmeyecek, dışı yanacaktır. Fermente ürün orijinal hamurun ortalama 2 katı boyutundadır. Yumurta sarısını sürer sürmez ürün bekletilmeden pişirilmelidir. Yaş maya yerine, aktif (kuru) maya kullanılacaksa bir miktar ılık süt alın, karıştırın ve karıştırmadan önce mayanın aktif hale gelmesi için birkaç dakika bekleyin.

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