



# Center for Agribusiness and Rural Development **MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

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## CARD STAFF VISITS ARTSAKH



In the weekend of September 9-11, 2011, CARD staff organized a visit to the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Despite the main aim of the trip to go sightseeing, have a rest and socialize, there were some missions to be completed.



On the way to Shushi the staff made a short stop to clean the area around the roadside monument which symbolizes Mountain Ararat. All the litter was cleaned and removed to sanitary packages; new garbage bin was installed to make the travelers dump the waste into it instead of polluting the environment. If every person minds his/her actions and does not throw the litter out of the car window or into the nature, the surrounding environment will be more or less preserved from artificial vulnerability.



The next stop was Shushi, which lies en route to Stepanakert when passing Lachin corridor- a city which throughout the centuries had developed into an important commercial, cultural and educational center and given the region dozens of outstanding Armenian musicians, historians, writers and engineers.

CARD staff lit a candle in the newly renovated Christ the Holy Savior Cathedral of Shushi (1868-1887) one of the most spacious Armenian ecclesiastical edifice; visited the remnants of Shushi fortress –which has a very strategic importance. Due to its geographical disposition, natural inaccessibility, it has served as a defensive fortress for the Armenian inhabitants of Veranda region.

During the next two days, CARD staff visited the capital Stepanakert and Gandzasar Monastery (which means Treasure Mountain in Armenian) of 10-13<sup>th</sup> century situated in Martakert region, near Vank village, and which is the seat of Artsakh's Archbishop.



Before the departure, CARD paid a floral tribute and laid a wreath at the memorial of the Killed Soldiers of Karabakh.



## NKR PRIME MINISTER MEETS WITH CARD STAFF

On September 10, 2011, during the trip to NKR, CARD staff was invited to Prime Minister Ara Harutyunyan.

Mr. Harutyunyan presented the current situation of the country in the field of agriculture, economy, politics and culture as well as talked about the development of tourism in the country and reconstruction of touristic areas. Besides, he told CARD staff the history and strategic importance of Shushi and future visions connected with the development of the city.



As for many of CARD employees it was the first visit to Karabakh, they shared with their impressions about the country, its historic monuments, churches and nature. Mr. Harutyunyan welcomed CARD's initiative to choose Artsakh as a point of destination for spending the weekend. He said it should serve an encouragement for many companies to organize similar trips, which is a good example for developing tourism among Armenians. He also answered to the questions of the participants and wished everyone a happy stay in Stepanakert.

## CARD STAFF EXPLORES CAVES INHABITED IN 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

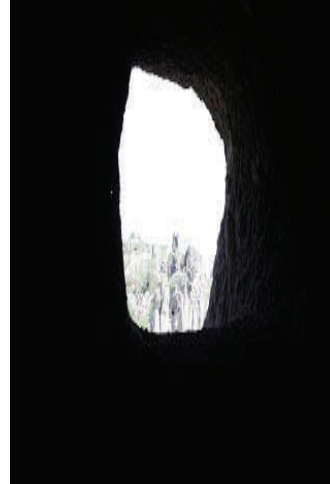


On the way back from the weekend trip to Karabakh, CARD staff made a stop in Khndzoresk village of Syunik marz.

The new village of Khndzoresk was built in 50s of the past century. The Old Khndzoresk was known as the biggest village of Armenia at the end of the 19th century. Apart from the role the village has played in the history of the country, it is famous for the canyon and rock formations that are many centuries old and most of which served as cave-houses.

People have lived in these cave dwellings up to 1958, when Armenia was far an industrially developed country. The instinct continuation of their family line was established so deeply in people of this city during millenniums, that they ignored all achievements of science and continued to live in caves. In 1913 there were 1800 houses, 7 functional schools out of which 2 were parochial and 5 were private.

There were 4 churches in the city: St. Hripsime, St. Tadeos, Church of Anapat and Old Church. In the old graveyard of Khndzoresk, Mkhitar Sparapet is buried - the hero of Armenian nation from the first quarter of 18th century who fought against Persian and Turkish invaders.



Only after 50s cavemen moved to the village carrying the cave stones with them to build their houses in the more or less densely inhabited area. Today these caves are used as stables and warehouses, whereas if cleaned and properly advertised they could have become one of the most popular touristic attractions in Armenia, where tourists can witness the remnants of daily life of the 20th-

century's modern cavemen. However, local population is not inspired with the idea of developing tourism in this region, since they are afraid of losing the "taste and smell" of the picturesque heritage.

