

# Buralarda

The Newsletter of Arkadaşlar, Friends of Turkey



Number 44 October 2016

## A Time To Remember: Reunion 2016 September 22–25 2016, Washington, DC

by Peggy Hanson, T-1

We gathered from all over. Separated for most of the past fifty years by location, profession, lifestyle, and family situation, a powerful magnet drew us: memories of service and friends and life together in our “ikinci memleket.” Only this particular group could understand those memories. Only this set of people had shared the magic—and the difficulties and challenges—of Turkey in the 1960s.

We began the weekend Thursday evening in (where else?) an Irish pub in Arlington, Virginia. Straggling in by ones or twos, RPCVs found their groups, ordered drinks, and soon filled the cozy room with eager catch-up chatter and the warmth that comes with meeting old friends. We were 22 again!

On Friday evening the Turkish Embassy hosted a reception. Dressed-up people moved about the room, sipping kavaklıdere

and nibbling sigara börek, and once more talking, catching up. Embassy First Counselor Aydan Karamanoğlu was our gracious host.

And then came the Plenary Session on Saturday, where we experienced a star-studded cast of speakers who took us through a veritable panorama of Turkish affairs and history: Aydan Bey from the Turkish Embassy; Professor Kemal Kirisci from Brookings Institute; Professor Charles King, author of several books including *Midnight at the Pera Palas*; Nevzer Stacey, founder of HasNa, one of our projects; former Kazakhstan PCV Matt Habinowski, now the Senior Turkey Desk Officer at the State Department; and Professor Zafer Parlak, who has been writing a book about the Peace Corps experiences in Turkey.

(continued, next page)



Arkadaşlar members enjoyed an elegant couple of hours at the Turkish Embassy on Friday evening, September 23.

L to R. Left (close) Robert and (back) Sylva Telford Staab (T-9), Al Nemkimken (T-13); middle-left group, Ephraim Frankel (T-9), (back) Diana Pearce and George Wright (T-9s), Sue McHenry Holm (T-13); center, Sibyl Erdman (FOT T-15); right group, John Wintrol (T-2), introducing Zafer Parlak (FOT) to Aydan Karamanoğlu, First Counselor to the Embassy, with Ken Hill (T-9), on right watching.

## The Reunion Had Its Serious Side . . .



A group listening at the plenary session on Saturday.

L to R, back row: Gene Blanchard (T-4), Jack Barkenbus (T-13), Tony and Rita Dunn Carey (T-13), Beverly Ausfahl (T-13), Belgin Barkenbus (staff). Next row beginning in left corner: Susan Haynes Özbek (T-4), Marci Hammer Ebert (T-4), Tom and Kathy Waljeski Kral (T-4), Darrell Zimmerman (T-8), Myles Denny-Brown (T-8). To the right: Jill Diskan (T-4).

(2016 Reunion, continued)

Space does not allow full explanations of what our speakers said. A very quick summary might be:

- Aydan Bey emphasized the importance of US-Turkey relations in the aftermath of the failed July 15 coup, which he laid squarely on the head of Fethullah Gülen, whose extradition from Pennsylvania has been requested by Turkey;
- Kemal Bey said yes, the coup attempt was made by Gülenists, whom he termed a “cancer” in the Turkish polity, though he is uneasy about the number of people jailed by the government, both before and after the coup attempt (he noted that even more people were jailed after the 1980 military coup);
- Charles King said that the current influx of refugees from Syria mirrors the situation in the late 1920s, when poor Russians, often of aristocratic background, descended upon Turkey after the Communist overthrow;
- Matt Habinowski treaded carefully around the many delicate issues that now lie between Turkey and the United States, and he emphasized the importance of the two countries to each other;
- Nevzer Hanim spoke of HasNa’s efforts to bring Turkish and Armenian young people to the United States for a three-week experience of speaking to one another;
- Zafer Bey assured us that most of the people he has interviewed for his upcoming book expressed appreciation of Peace Corps volunteers and did not believe the CIA conspiracy theories about us.

Probably no topic during the plenary session evoked more emotion than how the government of President Erdoğan and the Kurds of southeastern Turkey and northern Syria are dealing with each other. This is an issue we have known personally over the years and one that seems to elude solutions.



First Counselor Aydan Karamanoğlu and Arkadaşlar President John Wintrol at the Turkish Embassy



Professor Charles King



RPCV and current State Department Senior Turkey Officer Matt Habinowski



Professor Kirisci from Brookings Institute shares his insights on the current Turkey situation.

Huge kudos are owed to members of our Arkadaşlar board, John Wintrol (T-2), Ken Hill (T-9), and Mike Jewell (T-1), for lining up such substantive speakers! And also to the speakers themselves, who shared their impressions with eloquence, clarity, and that most difficult quality in discussing controversial topics, candor, indicating trust in the audience. That is the highest compliment of all.

## . . . And Yet Plenty of Fun



T-12s at each other's throats: Cathy and Ron McCutcheon, with Judith Cederblom



Zafer Parlak (Friend of Turkey) and Ken Hill (T-9) at the Embassy reception



Steve Allen (T-1) views handicrafts made by Anatolian Artisans, a group Arkadaşlar contributes to. At the table are Susan Boyette (left) and Suzy Stack (right).



Moses Silverman, John Kukankos, Judy (Wandschneider) Macuga, Tom Bauso, and Hal Kaufman, all T-17s, under the eye of Atatürk at the Turkish Embassy reception.



T-1s and friends, mixing at the Irish pub: John Wintrol, Allan Gall, Dave Kunkel, Barbara Allen, and Steve Allen.

## President's Corner

John Wintrol, T-2

Here we are, right between the end of our 5th Global Reunion in Washington and the traditional Cumhuriyet Bayram dinners at the end of October and in early November. The planned dinners, outlined elsewhere in this issue, will give everyone a chance to reconnect and talk about our Reunion's events and the current situation in Turkey.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to the great success of our Reunion. And as is true with all our Arkadaşlar activities, special thanks must go to Sandy Anderson and Linda Scheffer, who give unstintingly of their time and effort on behalf of the organization—in every possible way. We as Arkadaşlar would not be even a glimmer of our vibrant identity without the work and dedication of Sandy and Linda.

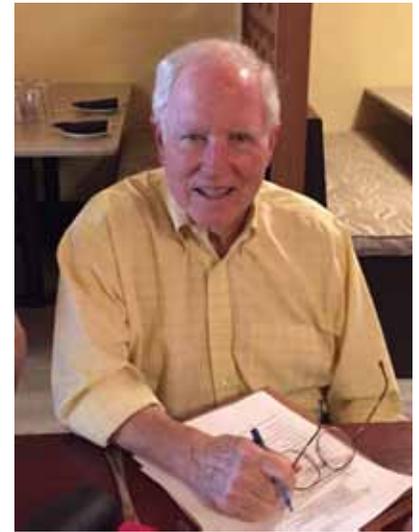
I also want to thank the speakers at our Reunion's Plenary Session who took time from very busy schedules to join us for informative, interesting, and challenging discussions. We greatly appreciate their participation.

The strikingly beautiful and nostalgic photo book, *Türkiye Through Our Eyes*, is a hardcover compilation of photos (with notations) taken by our fellow Peace Corps Volunteers in Turkey from 1962 to 1970. This book is the result of an amazing effort by the team that painstakingly put it together—Sandy

Anderson, Dick Janzig, Tom Reinhard, Lynn Maichle, Linda Scheffer, and Dale Evans—and shares poignant memories of Turkey. It is in a real sense an historical document, a snapshot of our time in that country we experienced at a young age and all love. We are deeply indebted to the team and to the members who contributed their photos.

I join Peggy Hanson in honoring the late Steve Poppick for his work on *Buralarda* and in welcoming Dale Evans as new co-editor.

Wishing all of you a Happy October, I look forward to reports of all the Bayram dinners. I continue to view us as fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve as PCVs in Turkey.



### \*\*\* NEW Arkadaşlar photo book! \*\*\*

Hardbound, its 200 pages display 300 gorgeous and engaging photos, mostly in color, by 27 of our fellow volunteers. Arkadaşlar who attended the Global Reunion loved the book, and we are going to put in an order for a second printing. If you would like a copy, or several for gifts, send \$35 for each book, made out to Arkadaşlar, to Linda Scheffer; inquiries: lmscheffer@aol.com. Çok güzel—makes a great holiday gift!



The collage (above) of photos from the book, assembled by Tom Reinhard (T-09), appears on the back cover. In the previous issue of *Buralarda*, the photo in the center was misattributed; credit should have been given to Bob Calhoun (T-8).

Marie Zeller (T-2) showed off the new photo book, *Türkiye Through Our Eyes*, at the 2016 Reunion.

## A Tribute to Dave Weinman

by Peggy Hanson, T-1

When Turkey 1 landed at Esenboğa Airport in Ankara in 1962, a young dark-haired, clean-shaven man just a bit older than we were greeted us as we came down the Pan Am stairs. He looked very serious and wore a sensible suit. Of course, we all looked fairly serious, too, in our severely “professional” outfits: suits and ties for the men, skirts and jackets for the women. No frills. We were idealists.

We had learned at training at the University of Maryland that we were to be judged as representatives of America, the first such representatives to go out into Turkish towns and schools. President Kennedy himself had invited us to the White House, along with other groups, to send us off. I suppose that even though we were shaking in our boots, stuttering things like “Sinema saat kaçta başlıyor?” (did anybody really talk that language?), we were pretty full of ourselves.

Dave Weinman had quite a bit of experience under his belt in 1962, including the rigors of Amherst and the Navy, law school and Middle East Studies at the University of Michigan—but he had no idea how much trouble was stumbling toward him off that Pam Am Flight #1. I think he even had a smile on his face.

The smile probably faded just a little when half the group of eager recruits fell desperately ill at our in-country training quarters at Gazi Eğitim Enstitüsü. Could it have been the



Linda Scheffer, Dave, and Sandy Anderson at the 2016 reunion

barely-warm mercimek çorbası served in tin bowls? Or the jugs of water in our rooms that started out every morning looking pristine, turned yellow as we added the iodine tablets we were told to use, and which we found pristine again on returning from our classes? I can’t imagine what the poor room cleaners thought Americans did with their water jugs... Dave, of course, had to deal with the doctors—including the unforgettable Chris Hanson.

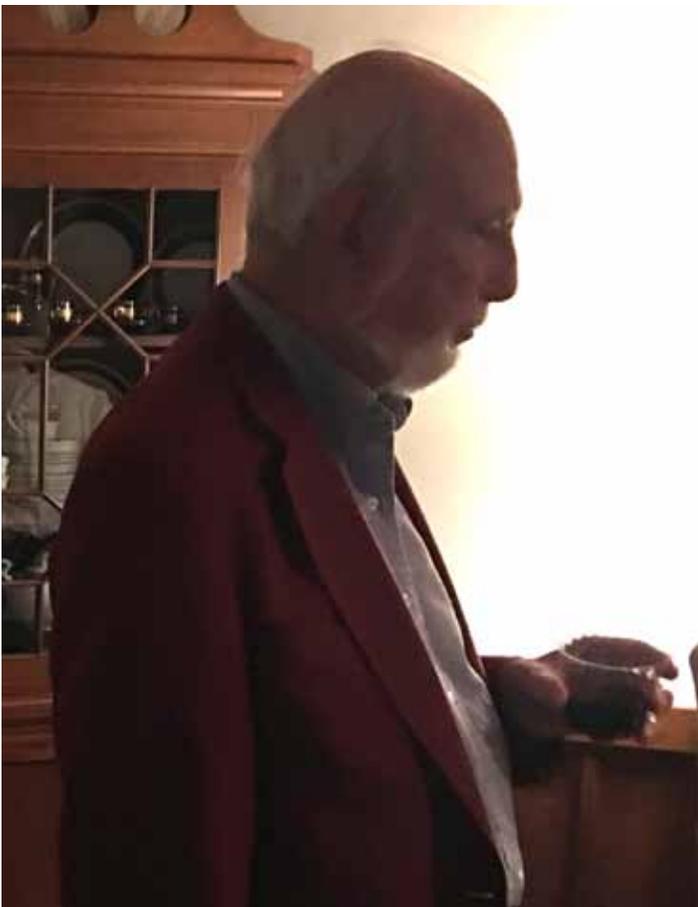
Somehow, Dave had managed to get all of us teachers placed in towns scattered all over western Turkey. The small forestry group in Turkey 1 went south. Blithely, we put our Peace Corps trunks and the suitcases we’d brought into the buses or taxis he’d arranged. Did we appreciate this? No. We were far too nervous for that.

Those first few months were hard. We learned that, indeed, nobody did go around saying “Sinema saat kaçta başlıyor?” They said a lot of other things, though. And they said them fast.

Meanwhile, back in Ankara, Dave was slaving away to get our living allowances sent on time—and then to prepare for the bitter complaints that they were never enough. He worried about our health and at one point insisted that we must have western toilets available. Ha! I think he was tired of dealing with doctors. Again, did we appreciate all this? Noooooo... Right. You remember.

I have never understood why Dave loved his job so much, or why he was so interested in each one of us. Still today, he knows volunteers who didn’t even serve during his tenure. Dave has been the catalyst and glue to help hold Arkadaşlar together. He modeled the commitment to each other that has lasted for 54 years. He held onto us as we scattered throughout the world. He kept us up to date on each other. He worried about each illness we had and grieved when we lost members.

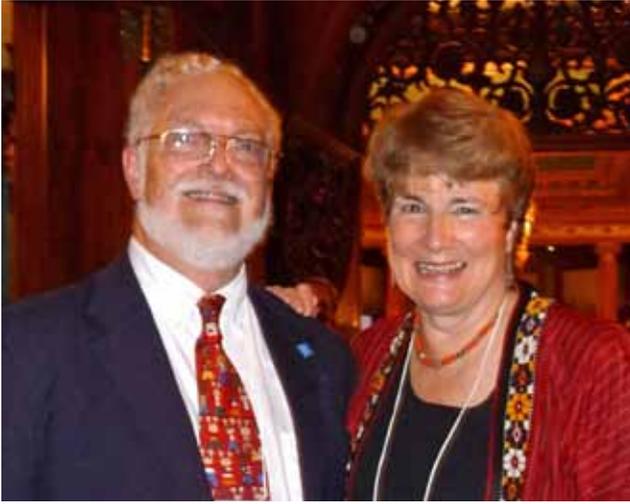
Kids once asked Nasrettin Hoca why he always rode his donkey backwards. “I’m not going backwards, the donkey is,” was his reply. That’s kind of how it’s been with Turkey Peace Corps volunteers and Dave. We should probably look to see which way he’s facing—which is, inevitably, *ONWARD*. Lead on, dear Amca!



Dave in a reflective moment

## R.I.P. Steve Poppick

***Buralarda* co-editor,  
Arkadaşlar Board Member  
by Peggy Hanson T-1**



*Buralarda* buddies: Steve and Peggy at the 2011 reunion

As we are all learning in this era, it is hard to say “goodbye” as our friends in Arkadaşlar drop from the scene one-by-one. For me, it is particularly difficult to say “güle güle” to Steve Poppick, with whom I have worked on *Buralarda* for many years. Steve’s professionalism was matched only by his determination. In June, he put together our newsletter in a hospital bed in New York, just weeks before his death from leukemia. Steve’s enthusiasm for life was evident in many areas and he, along with Sandy Anderson, ran a tight ship doing *Buralarda*. He had standards right up to the end, and he never failed to show interest in what we were doing and a cheerful “can-do” attitude. Steve is such a role model for living!

### In Memoriam

During the past few months we became aware of the passing of the following Arkadaşlar. Our condolences and heartfelt best wishes go out to their family members and friends.

Judith Gornto Ülgen, T-16 (Spring, 2015)

Doris Whitman, Staff (June 7, 2016)

Stephan W. Poppick, T-10 (August 18, 2016)

Visit the Arkadaşlar website obituaries page for more detailed information about friends who have passed away:  
[www.arkadaslar.info/obituaries.htm](http://www.arkadaslar.info/obituaries.htm)

## New *Buralarda* Co-editor

With this issue, Dale Evans (T-13) joins the *Buralarda* team. He previously volunteered to provide design, layout, and prepress services for the T-13 “memory book,” *There and Back Again* (2012), and this year’s photo book, *Türkiye Through Our Eyes*. Prior to retirement in 2010, he worked in various capacities for the University of Hawaii’s agriculture college, and for his last 15 years there edited and produced the college’s Extension publications. Dale entered the Peace Corps as a married volunteer and trained at Occidental College; he and his then wife, Mary Ann, taught English at the orta-okul level in Kastamonu.

## More Reunion Fun



Back row, L to R, David Kerman and Jura Strimaitis (T-8), Betty Hanks Leonard (T-2), and Gene Blanchard (T-4). Foreground L to R, Kathy Markley Scruggs (T-2) and Pat Mitchell Lowther (T-2)



Tony Carey and Beverly Ausfahl (T-13s) at the festival

## Cumhuriyet Bayram Dinners, 2016

Our Cumhuriyet Bayram Dinners are special this year because we can hear from people who attended the Global Reunion and have stories to share of friends and the situation in Turkey. And others have copies of the new Photo Book, *Türkiye Through Our Eyes*. Hopefully, everyone will get a chance to see it. Afiyet Olsun! and Güle Güle Eğlenin!

**Maine/New Hampshire:** Sunday, November 6, 1:30, Mediterranean Grill, 10 School Street, Freeport, Maine. RSVP George and Cathy Wilson or Betty Hanks Leonard.

**Massachusetts/New England:** TBD. Contact Colleen Clark.

**New York City:** Sunday, October 30, 12:00–3:00, Peri Ela Restaurant, 1361 Lexington Ave., NY, near 90th St. \$45. RSVP Hank Levy.

**Washington, DC:** Sunday, November 6, 5:30–8:00, at Kazan Restaurant, 6813 Redmond Drive, McLean, VA. \$55. RSVP Linda Scheffer.

**North Carolina/South Carolina:** Saturday, October 27, late afternoon at Carolina Türk Evi, 743 East Franklin St., Chapel Hill. Following dinner, Arkadaşlar are invited for drinks and dessert at the home of Jordan Scepaniski and Lea Wells, 908 Arrowhead Rd., Chapel Hill. RSVP Jordan Scepaniski.

**Florida:** Sunday, November 6, 1:00 at Istanbul Turkish Cuisine, 7025 County Road 46A, Suite 1011, Lake Mary. RSVP Lynda Özgür.

**Wisconsin:** TBA. Contact Bill Surbaugh or Eph Frankel.

**Ohio:** Sunday, October 30, 1:00 at Anatolian Café, 2270 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights. Please reserve in advance with Cathy McCutcheon.

**Kansas:** Saturday, October 29, 6:30. Potluck at the home of Susan (McHenry) Holm and David Wexler, 2200 SW Arvonian Place, Topeka. RSVP to Susan.

**Washington:** Saturday, October 29, 4:00, potluck at the home of Dale and Ruth Hultengren, 2132 North 172nd, Shoreline. RSVP Dale and Ruth.

**Oregon/Southern Washington:** Saturday, November 12, 4:00, potluck at the home of Jan and Steve Katz, 6835 SW 60th Ave, Portland. RSVP Jan and Steve.



Arkadaşlar on NPCA Walk for Peace at the White House. 1st row: Identities of the two on the left uncertain (please identify yourselves), Joyce Harper (T-8), Zafer Parlak (FOT), Doug Shifflet (T-5). 2nd row: Ephraim Frankel (T-9), Bob and Sylvia Staab, (T-9s), and Jordan Scepaniski (T-4) in back



T-4 Dinner at Jill Diskan's, from bottom left: Judy Rusnock Jenkins, Lea Welles (wife of Jordan Scepaniski), Jerry Leach, Beth Johnston Healy, Jordan Scepaniski, Susan Teller Goodman, Marianne Leach; not shown are Jim Healy and Jill Diskan

Çok teşekkürler to our photographers: Peggy Hanson, pages 1 and 2, p.3 right column, p.4 upper right, p.5 left, p.6 right column top; Sandy Comstock Anderson p.3 upper left; Betty Robbins, wife of Moses Silverman, p.3 lower left; Ellie LeBaron p.5 right; Rita Dunn Carey p.6 bottom, p.7 left; Jill Diskan p.7 right.

## ***Buralarda***

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Friends of Turkey

Visit Us on the Web  
at  
[www.arkadaslar.info](http://www.arkadaslar.info)



“Buralarda” means “hereabouts” or “somewhere around here” in Turkish.  
It comes from an exercise in some of our “mim-mem” Turkish language lessons:  
“Buralarda bir benzinci var mı?” (“Is there a gas station somewhere around here?”),  
repeated with different vocabulary nouns substituted for “benzinci.”