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Zatik Orphanage Summer Festival Organized by Armenian Volunteers

YEREVAN August 28, 2006. This Saturday, September 2nd, the children of Zatik Orphanage will learn that their friends in the Armenian Diaspora do not forget about them. For the third year running, Richard (Ric) Gazarian from Chicago, and the Armenian Volunteer Corps, is hosting a full day Festival, complete with face painting, popcorn, cotton-candy and a pony ride, for the 136 children at the orphanage!

Numerous businesses have made promises to make generous donations which will make this day successful. Tumanian Shaurma will provide food and Grand Candy will provide ice cream, for the third year running Luna Park has donated it's Moon Bounce for the day, and Cheers Disco Pub is supplying speakers and a DJ to kick off the fun!

Additionally, many other friends will participate to make the day as eventful and memorable as possible. Roughly 20 volunteers from the Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC), and also the Birthright Armenia/Depi Hayk Foundation, will be in attendance to help run the carnival games and do face-painting. The Zeytun dance group will put on a small performance, professional clowns will provide amusement, and a special guest appearance by Miss Armenia Lusine Tovmasyan has been planned.

And why does Richard return every summer to host and sponsor this event for the children of Zatik? He simply says, "They are like my extended family."

This relationship began in 2004 when Ric volunteered as an English teacher and mentor at Zatik Orphanage through the Armenian Volunteer Corps, an organization devoted to facilitating Diasporan Armenians with the opportunity to live and work in Armenia for long and short term volunteer service in hopes that those Diasporans will establish a life-long relationship with their countrymen and women in Armenia so that they can together build a stronger future.

Ric developed a strong attachment to his new found friends at Zatik, and they with him. Upon the end of his AVC service term in the summer of 2004, Ric decided he wanted to organize something special, something to bring happiness to the children in a memorable way. He organized the first "Zatik Festival" and like a true friend, Ric and the AVC volunteers try to play a continuing role in the lives of the children, and so are once again organizing the Festival fun this year.

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