

THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Volume LXXX, NO. 8 Issue 4102 \$ 2.00

The First English Language Armenian Weekly in the United States

Patriarchate Protests Seminarians' Deportation

By Arthur Hagopian

JERUSALEM — The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem has lodged a protest against the Israeli Ministry of Interior as a result of its decision to deport two seminarians involved in a fight with a Jewish youth who had spat on a religious procession in which they were participating.

Patriarchate spokesperson Rev. Pakrad Bourjekian noted that this was not the first time an unprovoked aggression against Armenian or Christian clergymen in Jerusalem had occurred.

He said not only were the clergy singled out for this kind of treatment, but lay members of the Armenian community who wore or displayed crosses bore the brunt of such attacks.

The latest incident occurred on Sunday, September 6 as Armenian seminarians were returning to the Convent of St. James after holding their weekly procession in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

As they neared the convent, they said a young Jew wearing a kipa spat on them.

One of the seminarians accosted the youth, who responded by spitting again, leading to a brawl which police stopped by arresting two of the Armenian seminarians and holding them for 24 hours.

That same evening, the police informed the Armenian Patriarchate that the matter would be dealt with at court the next morning.

But when the Armenians presented themselves at court, they were informed that the police had referred the matter to the Israeli Ministry of the Interior, which had decided on the deportation of the two seminarians, Bourjekian said.

The Patriarchate complained that the ministry has ignored protests and remonstrations, adding spitting on Christians by Jews is not a new issue, but has been practiced for several years without police taking any measures to stop it.

Bourjekian also noted that in addition to this "harassment by civilians," the Interior Ministry intentionally delays renewing visas of Armenian monks and priests who have been born in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, "causing them undue distress."



Sara Bogosian, left, and Michael Lally hang "The Three Roses," by Arshile Gorky.

Permanent Loan of Works by Gorky Makes Whistler Museum a Magnet

By Daphne Abeel

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

LOWELL, Mass. — The Whistler House Museum of Art has been a gem since its founding in 1908, but it is to become a magnet as well. This small house museum (the birthplace of the American painter, James McNeill Whistler) located on a quiet side street here, has become the recipient of a collection of 28 works by the renowned Armenian-American painter, Arshile Gorky. The works, to be on permanent loan, will be officially unveiled at a reception this weekend.

see GORKY, page 13

US Names New Karabagh Envoy

WASHINGTON (RFE/RL) — The United States named its new top negotiator in the Nagorno-Karabagh peace process late Monday, pledging to do "everything possible" to broker a near-term solution to the Armenian-Azerbaijani dispute.



Robert A. Bradtke

The State Department said career diplomat Robert Bradtke will replace Matthew Bryza as the US co-chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation's (OSCE) Minsk Group on Karabagh. "Ambassador Bradtke brings to this position more than 36 years of Foreign Service experience and extensive expertise in European security policy," department spokesman Ian Kelly said in a statement.

Bradtke was Washington's ambassador in Croatia until this July and had served as a deputy assistant secretary of state responsible for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the OSCE from 2001-2004. His professional career also includes a two-year stint as executive secretary of the US National Security Council during the final years of Bill Clinton's presidency.

see ENVOY, page 5

California Insurance Case Plaintiffs Plan Appeal

LOS ANGELES — Lawyers representing the descendents of Armenian Genocide victims who never received payment on their life insurance policies planned to appeal a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling against them on September 10.

The insurance companies mentioned in this case were Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank.

A class-action suit, led by Glendale priest, Vazken Movsesian, of St. Peter Armenian Church, and thousands of other Armenian Americans, descendents of some 1.5 million Armenian victims of the Genocide, had won a favorable ruling in 2007, which allowed descendents of Genocide victims who had bought insurance policies, to claim payment for those policies.

US District Judge Christina A. Snyder had decided that a California law gave the descendants the right to sue three German insurance companies that had been selling policies to Armenians in the waning days of the Ottoman Empire.

Attorney Mark Geragos, one of three Armenian-American lawyers representing the heirs, said the dissenting opinion in the 2-1 August 20 decision, written by Judge Harry Pregerson, would help make their case.

"There is no express federal policy forbidding California from using the term 'Armenian Genocide' in the course of exercising its traditional authority to regulate the insurance industry," Pregerson wrote.

Just after the ruling was announced last

month, attorney Brian Kabateck said the ruling could help secure a special hearing in front of a panel of 20 federal judges known as an "En Banc" hearing.

Geragos estimated that out of 5,000 requests for an En Banc hearing in US District Courts, perhaps 50 are approved each year.

"In some respects, the absurdity of the decision will be our best friend, because it could get the entire En Blanc case or get the Supreme Court to review it," he said. "We'll fight it anywhere and everywhere we have to."

Geragos said the appeal will ask for either a re-hearing in front of three judges or an En Banc hearing.

— Thomas C. Nash



NEWS IN BRIEF

Ambassador Yovanovitch To Visit Turkey

YEREVAN (news.am) — US Ambassador to Armenia Marie Yovanovitch will visit Turkey, a US Embassy representative said.

Yovanovitch is currently traveling in Georgia.

Georgian media report Yovanovitch recently met with Alexander Nalbandov, Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister, discussing Armenian-Georgian relationship.

Syria, Armenia Reach Early Trade Deals

DAMASCUS, Syria (UPI) — The Syrian and Armenian governments through a joint meeting in Damascus reached a series of preliminary agreements on energy and trade.

A joint economic committee wrapped up a meeting in Damascus, emerging with memorandums of understanding in trade, petroleum and transport, the official Syrian Arab News Agency reports.

The agreement comes on the heels of regional developments regarding simmering issues between Turkey and Armenia.

Damascus hosted officials from Yerevan recently, including a June visit between Syrian President Bashar Assad and his Armenian counterpart Serge Sargsian.

Bryza's Spouse Speaks on NKR, Armenian-Turkish Negotiation Processes

WASHINGTON (Azzg) — The re-opening of the Armenian-Turkish border fully meets the West's interests, as it will make Armenia less dependent on Russia and Iran, that the US has failed to achieve for many years despite the great financial assistance to Armenia, Zeyno Baran, director of the Center for Eurasian Policy and a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, a research center located in Washington, DC, said in an interview with the Turkish Turan news agency, news.am reports.

The possible reopening of the Armenian-Turkish border will draw Armenia closer to the West, which will allow the country to have partners other than Russia and Iran, she said.

According to her, Ankara has been and will be taking Azerbaijan's interests into account in making decisions on all the Caucasus-related issues, including the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement.

Baran said she, as well as many in Turkey, understand Azerbaijan's concern. However, she does not think Turkey will make a step detrimental to Azerbaijan's interests. It is not only because of strategic relations and growing exports of Azerbaijani energy resources through Turkey, but also because of the affinity between the two nations, she said.

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Schmidt vs. Krikorian

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Armenia to Borrow \$30 Million in 2010 for Telecom Network Debt

YEREVAN (Prime-Tass) — Armenia plans to take out a \$30 million loan in 2010 from the World Bank to develop the country's main communications network, Vache Kirakosyan, head of the information and high technologies department at Armenia's Ministry of Economy, said September 3.

Armenia and the World Bank are currently in talks over the terms of the loan.

The loan is the second stage of Armenia's program for the development of telecommunications technology in the country, Kirakosyan said. The World Bank has already financed a \$1 million research project in telecommunications necessary to develop the main communications network, he said.

Armenian President Receives Director of Russian Federal Security Service

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — President Serge Sargsian received this week director of the Russian Federal Security Service Alexander Bortnikov, who arrived in Yerevan to participate in joint consultations of heads of security services of Armenia and Russia.

Presidential press service told Armenpress that Sargsyan noted with pleasure about the Armenian-Russian strategic partnership, regular contacts in different spheres and high level of political dialogue which may be witnessed by expanding partnership between the two countries in different spheres.

The head of the country underscored the cooperation and regular contacts between the security bodies and noted that they promote the development of steps toward confronting existing threats and challenges with more efficiency.

The director of the Russian Federal Security Service said that he is satisfied with the cooperation with Armenian special services.

Armenia Is Ready to Promote Cooperation with the World Bank

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — National Assembly (NA) Speaker Hovik Abrahamyan received this week the head of the World Bank Armenian Office Aristomene Varoudakis.

At the meeting the two men discussed the global economic crisis and its impact on the economy of Armenia.

Abrahamyan said that the National Assembly is ready to work closely with the World Bank.

Internet Development Plan Ready for Release

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A development plan on information technology for the Armenian provinces will soon be presented to Territorial Administration Minister Armen Gevorgyan.

The document will address issues on the availability and affordability of the Internet in the provinces and also a suggestion on test programs to be implemented in one community of each province.

About 80 percent of Internet users in Armenia are in Yerevan and only 20 percent in the provinces.

Several Arrests Made in Connection with Murder Of Deputy Chief of Police

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Several people have been arrested connected with the murder of Deputy Chief of Police Gevorg Mheryan, who was shot to death February 3.

Chief of the Police Alik Sargsian said at the meeting with the reporters that the investigation is continuing.

French Mobile Operator to Launch Armenia Network

PARIS, YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — The French telecommunications operator Orange remains on track to launch Armenia's third mobile phone network before the end of this year, a top company executive said on September 2.

Bruno Duthoit, the chief executive of the newly registered Orange-Armenia brand, also insisted that the France Telecom group's mobile phone unit is undaunted by the near saturation of the local market for wireless services.

Orange won last October an international contract for the right to launch and operate the third Armenian wireless network. It paid 50 million euros (\$72 million) for the license, outbidding two other European telecom firms short-listed in the government-administered contest.

The company's decision to take part in

the bidding came as a surprise given the small size of Armenia's economy and rapid growth of its wireless sector in recent years. As of last January, an estimated 2.6 million of the country's three million residents had mobile phones connected to two networks owned by the subsidiaries of Russia's two largest wireless operators, MTS and Beeline.

Echoing statements by other Orange executives, Duthoit said the company feels that there is still room for a new operator's entry into the market. "Meeting many people and looking into market studies, I get the impression that many clients are awaiting an enlargement of their choice," he said in an interview. "In particular, there are people who still don't use mobile phones or use the services provided by the other operators but would like to have more choice in the terms of the quality of the services."

Duthoit added that Orange-Armenia does not plan drastic cuts in the existing mobile phone fees and will instead seek to woo Armenians with "a new approach, a new perception, a new image and perhaps certain new services." An Orange spokesman in Paris

said late last year that the French giant will put the emphasis on third-generation (3G) services such as video calls and broadband Internet connection.

The two other local mobile phone operators, meanwhile, said that they are gearing up for tighter competition in the market. "Of course, we are very seriously preparing for the entry of the third operator," said Anush Beghloyan, a spokeswoman for the national telecoms company ArmenTel owned by Beeline. "But we are not afraid and don't think that it will reflect negatively on the number of our mobile subscribers."

Ralph Yirikian, the executive director of the rival VivaCell-MTS network, which boasts more than two million subscribers, also claimed to be ready for "healthy competition" with Europe's second-largest mobile operator. Yirikian also admitted that Orange-Armenia can attract a sizable number of customers.

"Let us not forget that we Armenians, including myself, are a bit of show-offs and want to have a number of different [cellphone] numbers with different access code numbers," he said. "So there is room [for another operator]."

Debate Over Border Opening Becomes Even More Diverse

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) representative in Armenia stated on Wednesday that the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border will have a positive influence upon the development of Armenia's import and the rise of its level of competitiveness.

"In case of opening the border Armenia will get more competitive resources, and it will become a good stimulus for the economy," said the IMF's Nienke Oomes.

Meanwhile, Armenian economists insist on the opposite, saying that the local production that is still in the phase of development will not be able to stand the competitiveness of Turkish goods.

"Currently the domestic production goes through a serious decline in Armenia; and under such conditions when the volumes of import are seven times more than those of the export, competition with Turkish producers who have serious capital and market will simply be impossible," said Prof. Tatul Manaseryan, adviser to the Speaker of the National Assembly on economic issues.

According to the data of the National Statistics Service, about 25 percent of Armenia's imports are from Turkey. Meanwhile, economist Narine Mkrtchyan predicts if the border is open, the prices of the goods imported from Turkey will decrease, and domestic production will not be competitive with Turkish goods.

Economist Ara Nnryan, a member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) Dashnaksutyun parliamentary faction, said he believed that the opening of the border will have more negative than positive effects on the economy of Armenia.

"The economy in Armenia is not ready yet, and it will not be able to confront future possible problems," Nnryan adds.

Meanwhile, Vardan Ayvazyan, chairman of the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs of the National Assembly, says that "one should at least be blind not to notice the economic prospective of the Armenian-Turkish border opening, and the possibility of economic growth."

"Of course, there is the threat of Turkish economic expansion, but it is possible to neutralize them by means of legislation, the conditions of the World Trade Organization, the implementation of goods' standardization and customs duties," Ayvazyan says.

Armenia's Economic Rating Sinks One Notch

YEREVAN (Dow Jones Newswires) — Fitch Ratings downgraded Armenia further into junk territory as the country struggles to cope with the global economic crisis.

"Despite a strong policy response supported by the international community, the severity of the shock has materially weakened Armenia's credit fundamentals and medium-term prospects," said Fitch's Andrew Colquhoun. "Unlocking Armenia's economic potential and restoring strong and sustained growth necessary to reduce poverty and raise incomes will be much harder as a result of the crisis."

Armenia, a landlocked nation of 3 million in the Caucasus was fiscally prudent and too isolated to be hit by early fallout from the credit crisis. But the former Soviet republic has seen its economy get hit hard as Armenians who live abroad send less money home. Now, some expatriates are returning and looking for jobs, presenting new problems for the economy, which shrunk an estimated 16 percent in the first half of the year, according to Fitch.

The rating agency downgraded Armenia one notch to BB-, three steps from investment grade. The ratings outlook is stable, reflecting Fitch's view that "the near-term risks to macroeconomic and financial stability are relatively low given the policy response and support from the international financial community."

There is a stand-by agreement with the International Monetary Fund for \$820 million in aid and \$1.2 billion from other sources.

Officer Charged with Using 'Excessive Force' in Post-election Clashes

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Investigators in Armenia have moved to charge a senior police officer involved in the dispersal of last year's post-election demonstration with using excessive force.

According to a report issued by the Special Investigation Service (SIS) late last week, Gegham Harutiunian, who is charged with the use of a rubber baton against a citizen in Yerevan's Republic Square on the morning of March 1, 2008, has been confined within the city limits pending further investigation and trial.

"The search for the citizen against whom the police officer used violence is continuing," the SIS said in its statement.

One of the March 1 protesters, Vahagn Hayotsian, who claims that violence was used against him as well, says he has not submitted a complaint against any of the policemen who he says beat him on that day because he "couldn't recognize any."

"During the clashes I never saw a police officer with an uncovered face. They all wore riot gear. It is possible to submit a complaint against a concrete

person. They all must be tried. They know who participated in it. I was attacked by five. If they don't punish other policemen, why punish this one?" said Hayotsian.

David Arakelian, a police worker in the past who like Hayotsian was arrested and later tried and convicted for committing violence against a police worker, says it is not difficult for investigators to establish who had abused their authority while on duty.

Meanwhile, the body in charge of the investigation has appealed to all citizens who were eyewitnesses or suffered from police action on March 1-2, 2008 to turn to law-enforcement agencies and provide relevant information. Lusine Sahakian, a lawyer for a number of detainees in the March 1-related cases, says, however, that the SIS would find no crime in the action of police against several high-profile figures despite their numerous applications to the body.

The lawyer sees the possibility of amnestying the offenders in accordance with the bill approved by the legislature in June behind the greater willingness of investigators to find offenders among police officers.



ARMENIA

Armenia's Yezidis Bemoan Lowly Status

By Aghavni Harutyunian and Arpi Makhsudian

YEREVAN (Institute for War and Peace Reporting) — Most of the population of the Amo district in the Armenian village of Zovuni are ethnic Yezidis, making it a rare place even in the multi-ethnic Caucasus, but visitors can be forgiven for not noticing. Their attention will be occupied by the loud buzz coming from the high-voltage power cables overhead.

For the visitor, the noise may cause a headache, but the residents have lived with it since the 1970s, when the decision to install the wires was first made.

“When my father and uncle complained about it, they were told they would be given a house in a different place. Then the people went to the mountains for the summer, and when they got back, the lines had already been built,” said Qyalash Avdalian, an ethnic Yezidi whose family is considered the largest in the district.

Many local residents claim their health has been affected by the wires and that the government's failure “over four decades” to reroute the lines or rehouse the Yezidis is a result of endemic discrimination.

The Yezidis are Armenia's largest minority, with more than 40,000 people out of the country's total population of 3.2 million. That makes Armenia the second largest Yezidi community in the world, a long way behind that in Iraq, which may be as large as half a million.

They speak their own language, Yezidi, which is related to Kurdish, and have their own religion called Yazdanism, which is often presented as “devil-worship,” but which in reality combines elements of all the Middle East's faiths.

The government has tried to satisfy the Yezidis' demands, but is starting from almost nothing, since they have long been marginalized. Vardan Astsatrian, the head of the government's department for national minorities and religions, said the first job was to try to produce school books.

“In the last year books have been published for the younger children, and now we are working on a set of text-

books for the higher years,” he said.

But if he thought that was enough to please the Yezidis, he was mistaken. The new textbooks are written in the Kurmanji dialect of Kurdish but printed in the Cyrillic script.

“We do not know this language Kurmanji and we don't want to know it. It is as if Armenians had to learn in Azeri or Georgian,” said Hasan Tamoian, the head of Yezidi programs at Armenian public radio.

Armenia has no Yezidi schools, and never has had. Yezidi children study in normal Armenian schools with special language lessons, but even that is under threat since teachers of Yezidi are paid so poorly that the program may not last much longer.

Mamoian Asmar, for example, teaches in the village of Nor Geghi, which, like Zovuni, is in the Kotayk region, but wants to find a new job because there are few textbooks for her pupils and little money for her.

She only has textbooks for the first three classes, and has no idea what books the older children will use if she agrees to teach again.

“We are not going to teach the children the alphabet over again. Leaving that aside, the headmistress gave me extra teaching hours last year, but this year a teacher has demanded her hours back. What can I do then? I can't solve this problem on my own. I am not going to go to work for just four hours,” she said.

If young Yezidis leave teaching, the current deficit of specialists will become even more severe in the future, something the government has recognized as a major problem.

“In Soviet times there were serious specialists, doctors, academics who trained others. But now the specialists have died, or are too old,” said Astsatrian.

He said the government was trying to prepare a program in which Yezidis could be allowed into university with lower marks than ethnic Armenians to help produce more teach-

ers, but other officials say Yezidis often do not want to go to university, complicating the quest for a new class of specialists.

Tamoian said Yezidis should be grateful that they live in Armenia, where their situation is better than elsewhere. “In northern Iraq, in the Yezidis' homeland, there are no Yezidi newspapers, there is no radio, no cultural organization, and in Armenia conditions are better than ever,” he said.

He blamed the Yezidi view that they are discriminated against on the difficult economic conditions in the country, the proportionately poorer condition of Yezidi communities and a tendency not to emphasize education in Yezidi families.

But this does not wash with Aziz Tamoian, chairman of the Union of Yezidis, who was head of the village administration in Amo district in the 1960s and 1970s. He said the failure to remove the power lines as well as a consistent refusal to allow Yezidis to buy land, were proof of systematic discrimination against the community.

He said that the opposition of the villagers was ignored when the power lines were built, and that now some 40 houses are directly below the constant buzz of the cables.

But he did not get much sympathy from Electric Networks of Armenia, which owns the lines.

“When these high-voltage electricity lines were put up, there were no houses in the security zone. The village was located away from the line. There were just a few plots of land where sheep were kept,” said Shavarsh Avetisian of the security department, adding that the houses were built under the lines in the 1980s, and that the Yezidi residents cannot blame the electricity company.

“The national minority card is always being played here. The Amo district only appeared here after the electric lines were built.”

(Aghavni Harutyunian is a reporter with *Azg* daily. Arpi Makhsudian is a reporter with *Capital* daily. Both are members of IWPR's Cross-Caucasus Journalism Network.)

Hundred Days in Office: Education Minister Shares Concerns and Expectations

By Siranuysh Gevorgyan

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) — Armenia's Minister of Education and Science spoke of the need for serious legislative changes and fund-

ing to solve the existing problems in the sphere as he held a press conference on Wednesday devoted to 100 days in office.

“Education should first of all serve the economy with its qualified specialists, and it should fulfill the orders of the economy,” said Minister Armen Ashotyan.

“Education must meet the expectations of the public concerning its system of values, because education is not only studying, but also upbringing.”

According to Ashotyan, a member of the governing Republican Party, in order to achieve those goals, it is necessary to make reforms in the legislative sphere, “which is far from being perfect.”

“There are various shortcomings and discrepancies in the legislation concerning education and science, which hinder the process of common development,” he said.

The minister said that at the upcoming autumn session of the National Assembly, some amendment packages will already be discussed, the rest will be ready next year, and they will be submitted during the spring session.

Ashotyan believes that the precondition for solving the problems of the sphere is the cre-

ation of demand towards knowledge within society.

“Unfortunately, knowledge and intellect are not considered to be guarantees for prosperous life in our society. The logic is that very often those who are clever and skillful are not as rich as those who did not receive education,” Ashotyan explained.

Referring to school textbooks, the minister said that even though they are written by the best specialists, however, most of them have not connection with schools.

“From the pedagogical point of view most of the textbooks are incomplete, because they do not correspond to the physical and psychological development of those school-children for whom they are designed, I mean they are very difficult. The Ministry has many things to do in this sphere, too,” concluded Ashotyan.

Opposition Tycoon Comes Out of Hiding

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — In a surprise move, Khachatur Sukiasian, a fugitive businessman and opposition parliamentarian, surrendered to Armenian law-enforcement authorities on September 2 to face trial for his alleged role in last year's post-election violence in Yerevan.

Sona Truzian, a spokeswoman for Armenia's Office of the Prosecutor-General, said Sukiasian was taken into custody immediately after arriving at the headquarters of the Special Investigative Service (SIS), which has been investigating the deadly unrest.

Sukiasian was among several opposition figures who went into hiding in March 2008 to avoid prosecution in connection with vicious clashes between security forces and opposition protesters sparked by a disputed presidential election. Like three other members of

Armenia's parliament arrested in the government crackdown, he was charged with plotting to “usurp the state authority” and organizing “mass riots” that left ten people dead. State prosecutors dropped the coup charges against them in April this year.

An amnesty bill approved by the National Assembly on June 19 gave Sukiasian and other fugitive oppositionists until July 31 to turn themselves in and face trial. They will be set free if found guilty and sentenced to up to five years in prison.

Three of the fugitives surrendered to the police before the deadline. Sukiasian, by contrast, chose to stay in hiding after the SIS made clear that he would be placed under pre-trial arrest.

One of his lawyers, Artur Grigorian, gave no clear explanation as to why the prominent oppositionist, who is believed to have fled Armenia last year, turned himself in now that he no longer qualifies for amnesty.

“It is not the prospect of an amnesty that could motivate him to come out,” Grigorian said. “He simply found it expedient to turn himself in now.”

One of Armenia's wealthiest men, Sukiasian got in trouble with the authorities in late 2007 after publicly voicing support for former President Levon Ter-Petrosian's bid to return to power. Many of his businesses were raided by tax authorities and fined for alleged tax evasion. One of them, the Bjni mineral water company, was effectively confiscated by the government late last year.

Correction

In a piece titled “Hellenism or Ottomanism” in the August 22 issue, by Prof. Christopher Walker, due to an editing error, Walker was named as the author of *At History's Crossroad: The Making of the Armenian Nation*. Walker's most recent book was the paperback edition of *Visions of Ararat: Writings about Armenia*. We regret the error.

A Word of Caution

A recent breakthrough in Armenian-Turkish relations has triggered a flurry of activities worldwide. The protocols just released by the foreign ministries of Armenia, Turkey and Switzerland present only a road map to lead negotiations to a final settlement on issues concerning Armenia and Turkey.

To prejudge the outcome of negotiations and to create a turmoil in the diaspora does nothing but create confusion and division among Armenians.

The Dashnag party, trying to promote its own agenda, has been organizing public rallies. To give the illusion that its actions enjoy community wide support. They have used unauthorized tactics. Thus, the Toronto rally on September 4 and the Montreal rally on September 9, in prelacy church halls, included the endorsement of the Social Democratic Hunchakian and Armenian Democratic Liberal (ADL) parties.

As far as the ADL is concerned, the legally-elected District Committee of Eastern US and Canada, under whose jurisdiction those two chapters fall, has never committed itself to the Dashnag agenda. The individuals participating in those rallies do not represent the organization; they are a minority, led by an expelled member Mike Kharabian, who seems to pursue some personal interest in using and abusing the party's good name and reputation.

ADL DISTRICT COMMITTEE OF US AND CANADA

September 7, 2009



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Earthquake in Georgia Felt in Armenia

TBILISI, Georgia (News.am) – An earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale occurred in the north-eastern Georgian town of Kutaisi on Wednesday, September 9. The Republic of Armenia Seismic Protection Agency's press offices said that several aftershocks were registered.

According to preliminary data, houses close to the epicenter were destroyed. No fatalities were reported.

The Armenian cities of Gumri, Vanadzor and Noyemberyan, experienced small quakes measuring 3-4 as a result.

European Parliament: A Conference to Struggle Against Genocide Denials

BRUSSELS – The European Armenian Federation, the Jewish Laic Community Centre and IBUKA-France have organized a conference on genocide denial, which will take place on Tuesday, October 6, starting at 9:30 a.m. in the European Parliament.

This conference is about the scope of the future Pan-European penalization of denial: a decision of the European Union, which enforces criminal prosecutions against deniers must be passed by the 27 member states legislations before the end of 2010. The conference, titled "Denial and Democracy in Europe," is held under the patronage of the European Deputy Elmar Brok (German Conservative) and aims at explaining to the European Union's policymakers how far the denial constitutes a perversion of freedom of expression and a threat for the bases of democratic societies.

Politicians, lawyers and historians will present the common points between denials of various genocides.

They will aim to convince the European leaders of the need for extending the penal provisions against all cases of proven denials as allowed by the European decision.

Air France and Armavia Sign Code Sharing Pact

PARIS (Dow Jones) – Air France said on September 4 it had signed a commercial cooperation agreement with the Republic of Armenia's national airline Armavia.

As of Monday, Air France and Armavia will commercialize four weekly code-share flights between Paris and Yerevan in Armenia and five between Yerevan and Paris.

Transport Minister and Italian Ambassador Meet

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Transport and Communication Minister Gurgen Sargisian recently received Italian Ambassador to Armenia Bruno Skappini, with the pair discussing Armenia's highway development plans.

According to the minister's press office, the ambassador said a few Italian companies have expressed interest in being a part of the projects, noting he would do everything he could to encourage them to make bids.

France Extradites Suspect In Assault

MOSCOW (Interfax) – In response to a request from the Russian Prosecutor General's Office, France will extradite Armenian native Karen Margarian to Russia to face assault charges.

Margarian is suspected of inflicting serious harm to a resident of the Altai territory in 2000.

The investigation has determined that Margarian fired an air rifle at a man, and wounded him, in a village in the Altai territory in December 2000, the Prosecutor General's Office said.

Margarian was placed on the federal wanted list in November 2001 and on the international wanted list in July 2007. He was detained in France in August 2007.

Georgia 'Open' to Armenian Language Proposal

By Hovannes Shoghikian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Georgia is ready to consider President Serge Sargisian's calls for the official use of the Armenian language in its areas predominantly populated by ethnic Armenians, Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze said on September 4.

Meeting with senior Armenian diplomats on Tuesday, Sarkisian listed measures which he said would help to integrate the sizable Armenian minority into Georgian society "without assimilation."

"I think that steps aimed at declaring Armenian a regional language in Georgia, ensuring the registration of [the Georgian diocese of] the Holy Armenian Apostolic Church and preserving Armenian monuments in Georgia would only contribute to the strengthening of Armenian-Georgian friendship and deepening of the atmosphere of mutual trust," Sarkisian said. Yerevan should be "tactful but consistent and principled" in raising these issues with Tbilisi, he added.

Sarkisian's remarks reportedly drew a scathing response from Georgia's Deputy Prime Minister Temur Yakobashvili. "Let Armenia deal with the development of the Armenian language on its soil, and we are very happy that Armenian is the only official language in Armenia," Yakobashvili said, according to the Russian daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*.

Vashadze took a more conciliatory line during a working visit to Yerevan on Friday. "The parties treat with respect and attention all ideas floated in Armenia and Georgia," he told journalists after talks with his Armenian counterpart, Eduard Nalbandian. "The president of Armenia did not say that the Armenian language must be made a regional one. What he said was that it would be useful to discuss that idea."

"We are ready to discuss any ideas with our Armenian colleagues," said Vashadze. "I want to emphasize that no matter what status the Armenian language will have in Georgia, Georgian citizens of Armenian descent ... have all of their rights protected as well as those of other peoples living in Georgia. For us, they are an integral part of our history and culture."

The two ministers refused to answer more questions from journalists. An ensuing statement by the Armenian Foreign Ministry said that "at the initiative of the Armenian side" they discussed "a number of issues relating to the Georgia's

Armenian community." It gave no details.

According to the statement, Vashadze and Nalbandian also spoke "in detail" about bilateral economic matters such as the ongoing reconstruction of a highway in southern Georgian that will substantially shorten travel between Armenia and Georgian Black Sea ports.

Political and other non-governmen-

that Georgian border guards are denying them access to more than 100 hectares of agricultural land located in a disputed section of the frontier. Armenia's Shant television reported on Thursday the villagers are now doing agricultural work there under the armed protection of Armenian border troops stationed in the area close to Turkey.

The Georgian-Armenian border has



Foreign Ministers Eduard Nalbandian of Armenia (right) and Grigol Vashadze of Georgia meet in Yerevan on September 4, 2009.

tal organizations in Georgia's largely Armenian-populated Javakheti have for years pressed the authorities in Tbilisi to allow the regional administration and public institutions to use Armenian alongside the country's official language. Earlier this year, they appealed to Sargisian to raise the issue with Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.

Neither president mentioned it in public statements made during Saakashvili's late-June visit to Armenia. Sargisian instead praised the Georgian government's efforts to ease socioeconomic hardship in Javakheti and bestowed a top Armenian state award on Saakashvili.

It was also not clear whether Vashadze and Nalbandian discussed an intensifying border dispute between the two neighboring states. Farmers in an Armenian border village have complained in recent weeks

still not been fully demarcated nearly 18 years after the break-up of the Soviet Union. According to the Armenian Foreign Ministry, the border demarcation was also on the agenda of Vashadze's talks with Nalbandian.

Meanwhile, Georgia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Nalbandov met on Thursday with Marie Yovanovitch, the US ambassador to Armenia, in Tbilisi to discuss the current state of the Georgian-Armenian relationship.

"In this context, the Georgian side emphasized the important positive dynamics outlined recently in the relations between Georgia and Armenia that serves the interests of both countries," the Georgian Foreign Ministry said in a statement issued after the meeting. "The sides agreed to keep in active contact on the issues of Georgian-Armenian relations."

Armenian, Croatia Presidents Participate in First Armenian-Croatian Business Forum

ZAGREB, Croatia (Armenpress) – Armenian President Serge Sargisian, who was here on a two-day official visit, participated with the Croatian President Stepan Mesic in the first Armenian-Croatian business forum.

Over 100 Armenian and Croatian businessmen representing different spheres participated in the forum. Within the framework of the visit a memorandum of cooperation has been signed between Armenian Trade Industrial and Croatian Economic Chambers.

The presidential press service announced that Sargisian visited the Zagreb observatory, got acquainted with the newest equipment there created with the support of Armenian specialists. The president also visited Zagreb's History Museum, got acquainted with the history of Croatia's capital.

Sargisian met with the chairman of the Croatian Parliament, Luka Babic. Babic and Sargisian agreed to advance the two nations' relations.

Sargisian presented to Babic the latest developments regarding Armenian-Turkish relations and the negotiations for Nagorno Karabagh.

The delegation which Sargisian headed included Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, Economy Minister Nerses Yeritsyan, Chairman of the Armenian Manufacturers and Businessmen Union Arsen Ghazaryan, Chairman of Trade-Industrial Chamber Martin Sargsyan and others.

After the official meeting ceremony, the face-to-face meeting of the two presidents took place.

The presidents discussed the development of cooperation in the field of tourism. The parties also discussed prospects of joint programs in agriculture.

Sargisian underscored the cooperation between the two countries within the frameworks of different formats and initiatives of EU.

During the second half of the day, Sargisian participated in the official dinner given by Mesic and visited an exhibition dedicated to the outstanding political figure, Josip Broz Tito.

Legrand, Garanyan to Perform in Krasnodar

KRASNODAR, Russia (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Well-known French composer, pianist, arranger and singer of Armenian origin, Michel Legrand will arrive here with his orchestra in late September for a concert.

According to the newspaper *Yerkramas*, the joint concert of Legrand with the Krasnodar Big Band, will be conducted by George Garanyan.

Legrand composed the music for many French classic films such as "The Umbrellas of Cherbourg" and "The Young Girls of Rochefort." His mother, Haykanush Ter-Mikaelian, was a pianist. Her father, in turn, Sargis Ter-Mikaelian, escaped from the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey, and found refuge in France.



NATIONAL NEWS

Armenian Assembly Statement on Turkey-Armenia Protocols

WASHINGTON – On August 31, the foreign ministries of Armenia, Turkey and Switzerland announced protocols to be signed within six weeks to establish diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey and to open the border.

This announcement is consistent with the US position that normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey proceed without preconditions. Armenian authorities have also made it clear that no preconditions means just that - no linkage to progress on the Nagorno Karabagh peace talks and no conditions on affirmation of the Armenian Genocide, or debating whether a genocide occurred through a commission-style process. The incontestable fact of the Armenian Genocide is internationally recognized, and Turks and Armenians have previously commissioned in 2003 an independent analysis through the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), which concluded that the events of 1915 constituted genocide.

The Armenian Assembly supports normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey without preconditions. The United States has spoken clearly about the need for Turkey to lift its blockade and establish diplomatic relations with Armenia. Turkey’s lifting of its blockade against Armenia and opening the border is not only long overdue but obligated under international treaties. For this long-awaited effort to succeed, it is incumbent that the United States require Turkey to adhere to its commitments with respect to Armenia.

While the August 31st announcement represents an important step, experience has shown that reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey requires Turkey to come to terms with its past. President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have all spoken eloquently on the need to recognize the Armenian Genocide. We could not agree more and urge President Obama and the US Congress to unequivocally affirm the Armenian Genocide. In so doing, the United States will honor a proud chapter in US history in helping to save the survivors of the first genocide of the twentieth century.

The Armenian Assembly views as encouraging the commitments made by the government of Turkey to normalize relations with Armenia without preconditions. However, we recall Turkey’s ample track record of unfulfilled promises. As such, many remain skeptical as prior governments of Armenia had also

offered to normalize relations with Turkey without preconditions only to be rebuffed.

Moreover, it is of particular concern that on the same day as the joint statement released by the Armenian and Turkish foreign ministries regarding the start of consultations to establish diplomatic relations that Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu sent mixed signals. Foreign Minister Davutoglu not only indicated that the opening of the border would be “a long process,”

but also stated that Turkey would guard Azerbaijan’s interests.

These pronouncements by Turkey’s Foreign Minister not only breach the spirit of framework just announced, but also directly contradict US policy “that normalization should take place without preconditions and within a reasonable timeframe.”

Normalization of relations within a reasonable timeframe

The US government has urged “Armenia

and Turkey to proceed expeditiously, according to the agreed framework...” The protocols set specific time limits and the international community expects Turkey to fulfill its commitments through measurable results and in good faith to normalize relations with the Republic of Armenia. The protocols also call for consultations and parliamentary debate, which we expect, will be vigorous and emotional, while also conducted with respect and dignity.

Schmidt v. Krikorian Case Gets Heard, Delayed Until October

By Thomas C. Nash
Mirror-Spectator Staff

COLUMBUS, Ohio – A long-awaited Ohio Elections Commission hearing on September 3 relating to charges of Armenian Genocide denial by an Armenian American candidate against an incumbent US House Representative ended with no decision, leaving the case continued to October 1.

Republican Jean Schmidt, who represents Ohio’s second district, filed false claims charges against 2008 independent challenger David Krikorian in April shortly after he announced he would run for the seat as a Democrat in 2010.

In the 2008 election season, Krikorian accused Schmidt of taking “blood money” to “deny the genocide of Christian Armenians by Muslim Turks” as a co-chair of the Caucus on US Turkish Relations and Turkish Americans.

In November, just before the election, Krikorian wrote, “The people of Ohio’s second district will, if they elect [Schmidt] on November 4th, condone her denial of the Genocide of 1.5 million Christians. And, in so doing, be guilty of a crime against humanity as the cover-up is just as bad as the crime ... Jean Schmidt MUST GO and WE the people must do it. Because you are Americans and because you are human beings and because you are Christians.”

In an exchange with Krikorian in 2007, before he entered the race against her, a Schmidt staffer wrote that she was not comfortable supporting the Armenian Genocide resolution. Schmidt has since maintained the position, authoring a column that ran in April in the Turkish paper Today’s Zaman

stating Congress should not debate the issue.

The Ohio Elections Commission, an appointed body consisting of seven voting members, heard five false claims charges from the Schmidt legal team, which includes Washington heavyweight and resident scholar at the Turkish Coalition of America (TCA) Bruce Fein.

Krikorian was defended by a legal team that includes Mark Geragos. Krikorian said his team began the hearing by arguing that the commission did not have jurisdiction over the case because it involves a federal election.

“There’s absolutely no authority from our perspective for [the OEC] to even be facilitating this complaint,” Krikorian said after the hearing. “It’s a clear first amendment issue”

In an interview, Brey responded that the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) only has initial jurisdiction when federal law preempts state law.

“The FEC does not have a false statements statute,” he said. “[Krikorian] can make the argument, but it’s never been successful.”

During the nearly seven-hour hearing, Krikorian said much of the back and forth between the two camps related to where the \$30,000 Krikorian stated Schmidt took from the Turkish government really came from.

“[Schmidt’s] the one alleging we made false statements, but at the same time here’s the ultimate problem: there is no canceled check from the government of Turkey in Jean Schmidt’s campaign account,” Krikorian said. “If that’s the standard of truth, then we can’t prevail. But everybody knows these [political action committees] are pushing the Turkish campaign of denial.”

When the hearing reconvenes on October 1, Krikorian said he hopes to have FBI whistleblower Sibel Edmonds appear to give

testimony on her knowledge of the influence Turkey wields in Congress in person. Edmonds broke a Justice Department gag order imposed in 2002 in order to give a deposition for the case in August.

Kirkorian said also wants to call Schmidt’s chief of staff, Barry Bennett, to the stand.

The witnesses, he said, will show that his claims regarding the Turkish government’s influence on Schmidt are accurate.

“For anyone to claims the Turkish PACs are not sponsored by the Turkish government is laughable,” Kirkorian said. “My hope is the OEC has the intellectual ability to look at the facts.”

Brey, however, said he was confident that the commission would rule in favor of Schmidt.

“We hope that [Krikorian] will be found to have made false statements and that the OEC will sanction him,” Brey said.

US Names New Karabagh Envoy

ENVOY, from page 1

Bryza has represented the US in the Minsk Group since June 2006, combining that role with the duties of deputy assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian Affairs, of which he was also relieved last month. His replacement in that position, Tina Kaidanow, is also a career diplomat with extensive experience in the Balkans. Kaidanow served until recently as the first US ambassador to Kosovo.

Bryza has been tipped to move to another post ever since the administration of President Barack Obama took office in January. Recent media reports have said that he could be appointed as US ambassador to Azerbaijan. Neither Bryza, nor the State Department has denied those reports.

Bryza was reported to heap praise on his Minsk Group successor on Tuesday. “Bradtke is an excellent diplomat and good friend of mine,” the Azerbaijani Trend news agency quoted the former Bush administration official as saying.

“We have informed the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan of Ambassador Bradtke’s appointment,” read the statement issued by Kelly. “Ambassador Bradtke looks forward to his first trip to the region in the coming weeks.”

The Minsk Group’s American, French and Russian co-chairs are due to visit Baku and Yerevan later this month to prepare for another meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents that could take place in early October. They hope that the two leaders will overcome their remaining disagreements over a framework peace accord drawn up by the mediating powers.

Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2009



Since its inception in 2001, TCA’s ‘Sponsor a Teacher’ program has raised over \$350,000 and reached out to 2,715 teachers and workers in Armenia and Karabagh.

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Community News

Armenian Assembly Holds Program at UC-San Diego on Armenian Genocide

SAN DIEGO, Calif. — As part of the Armenian Assembly of America's ongoing educational outreach regarding the Armenian Genocide, Assembly Western Region Director Yeghig Keshishian spoke to a class of freshman students at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD).

Keshishian addressed the students at the request of Prof. Fonna Forman-Barzilai who teaches the course, "Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing." The course explores the psychological, cultural and social constructions surrounding the genocides of the 20th century. Forman-Barzilai is a faculty member at the Political Science Department and was a guest speaker at the 2009 Armenian Genocide Commemorative Vigil in San Diego.

Keshishian discussed the genocide of minorities, such as the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, and provided the students with an overview of the history of the Armenian Genocide in the context of James Waller's book about perpetrators, titled: *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*. Keshishian also discussed Turkey's ongoing campaign of genocide denial and how it plays out in the United States.

"I appreciated this unique opportunity to discuss the Armenian Genocide with college students," stated Keshishian, adding, "The Assembly appreciates Prof. Forman-Barzilai's commitment to apprise students of past genocides and for her commitment to education as an important medium for its humanizing effect on our collective humanity. California has played a leading role in genocide education and prevention and the Armenian Assembly is proud to play a positive role in this regard."

Keshishian closed with a brief discussion of the current state of relations between the Republics of Armenia and Turkey, and noted that Armenia has consistently offered to normalize relations without preconditions.

AIWA Board Holds Summer Retreat

WATERTOWN, Mass. — The Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) Board of Directors met on Sunday, August 16, for a productive discussion of AIWA priorities, organizational structure and future plans.

Paula Parnagian, AIWA member and president of World View Services, provided facilitation and will be assisting with follow-up. Specific topics included the need to rebuild the AIWA website and to make better use of current social networking tools such as Twitter and Facebook, especially as the organization reaches out more to Armenian women worldwide. Governance issues and mechanisms to support new leadership within the organization were discussed and referred to appropriate committees.

Present were AIWA board members Eva Medzorian, Barbara Merguerian, Mariam Nigolian, Judy Norsigian, Olga Proudian, Joy Renjilian-Burgy and Alisa Stepanian, along with AIWA New England Chapter leaders Carolyn Atinizian and Christine Garabedian.

The retreat took place in Hampton Beach, NH, at the waterfront home of Christine Garabedian, who offered to host the event. Garabedian was bequeathed this summer home by her uncle, Charles P. Garabedian, who had been a beloved mentor and source of inspiration for his niece since she was a young girl.

The next AIWA board meeting will be held in late September.

Information about AIWA projects and programs to increase the visibility of Armenian women is available by contacting AIWA at 65 Main St., Watertown, MA 02472.



Laurel Karabian encourages the students to keep the torch of Arshag Dickranian School always lit.

TCA Arshag Dickranian School Starts 2009-2010 Academic Year

LOS ANGELES — TCA Arshag Dickranian School re-opened its doors for the 29th successive year to its students with the pomp and circumstance of its traditional Opening Ceremony on Tuesday, September 1.

The event took place at the open courtyard of the school, where students ranging from pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 took their assigned places.

The Very Rev. Bared Yeretzian, representing Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Western) Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Rev. Manoug Markarian of St. John Garabed Church, Benefactors Eleanor Dickranian, Cynthia Norian, Laurel Karabian, Kevork Tashjian and Hmayak Baltayan, School Board Members George K. Mandossian, Angine Garibyan and Arpi Avanesian-Idolor were among the special guests attending the back-to-school ceremony along with the school Principal Vartkes Kourouyan.

The Opening Ceremony was led by Yeretzian, who ended his prayers by adding his blessings to the students and well wishes to all those who were present.

Avanesian-Idolor greeted the students, teachers and parents on behalf of the School Board of Trustees, reminding the students of the importance of learning and the sacrifices being made by their parents, School Board of Trustees and teachers in helping them achieve their education at Arshag Dickranian School.

Laurel Karabian next took the podium to speak on behalf of the Dickranian Family. After welcoming the students and staff, Karabian urged the students to keep the fire in their spirits as well as the torch of Arshag Dickranian School always lit.

The program was concluded by the remarks of Principal Vartkes Kourouyan who welcomed all the new and returning students alike. Kourouyan highlighted the positive changes that were made at the school during summer recess. "We are happy to announce that 50 new students have enrolled at our school this year," said Kourouyan and added by informing the parents that the school will be concentrating on character building and standardized tests. Kourouyan also mentioned that the school will continue participating in interscholastic and national sports tournaments this year. Kourouyan concluded his remarks by declaring the beginning of the 2009-2010 scholastic year and asked for the cooperation of everyone to achieve overall success.

Located at 1200 North Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles, the TCA Arshag Dickranian Armenian School is a federally tax exempt, pre-K to 12th grade private educational institution. For more information visit www.dickranianschool.org.



The students listen to the speeches.

Dr. Vartan Gregorian to Be Honored as Professional of The Year by APS

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Dr. Vartan Gregorian, the 12th president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, will be honored by the Armenian Professional Society (APS) as Professional of the Year at a Gala event on November 7, at the Sheraton Universal Hotel, Universal City.

The Carnegie Corporation, a grant-making institution, was founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1911, its purpose being to "promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding" by providing grants to support programs of higher education. A Carnegie tradition is to "prepare students of all backgrounds with the knowledge and skills needed for economic success and for participation in a pluralistic democracy."

The APS has a similar mission to promote students in programs of higher education, as it annually awards exceptional students with graduate scholarships, thus benefiting the community. The organization has awarded several hundred thousand dollars of scholarships and grants to encourage students of Armenian descent to pursue higher education.

Like Carnegie, the Armenian Professional Society was launched by a group of illustrious and service-oriented professionals with foresight to promote the arts, sciences and other academic areas. The Armenian Professional Society acknowledges the achievements of outstanding individuals, encourages students who have attained university education to proceed to post-graduate studies, and has awarded scholarships to graduate students in the US and grants to institutions of higher learning in Armenia.

As president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Gregorian helps continue the traditions of higher learning. Gregorian was appointed to his current position as president in June 1997. Prior to that time, Gregorian served for nine years as the president of Brown University.

Gregorian attended Stanford University, where he majored in history and the humanities, graduating with honors in 1958. He was awarded a PhD in history and humanities from Stanford in 1964. Gregorian has taught history at San Francisco State College, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Pennsylvania where he became its 23rd provost until 1981.

He was president of the New York Public Library and Brown University. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Gregorian is the author of *The Road To Home: My Life And Times, Islam: A Mosaic, Not A Monolith*, and *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, 1880-1946*.

He has been honored by President Clinton, President Bush and most recently appointed by President Obama to the President's Commission on White House Fellowships. Previous notable recipients of the Professional Of the Year Awards include Gov. George Deukemejian (1981), Elizabeth Dole (2001), Jerry Tankian (2002) and George Avakian (2005) to name but a few.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Even with Deep Armenian Roots, Watertown High Barely Saves Classes

By Erica Noonan

WATERTOWN (*Boston Globe*) — With the third highest number of Armenian immigrants in the United States, Watertown faces a formidable challenge — how to preserve what may be the country's last surviving Armenian-language program at a public high school.

Prospects for the program, on the eve of its 40th anniversary, looked dim after the school could not find a replacement for its founder, Anahid Yacoubian, who retired from full-time work in 2007 but taught the advanced-level class to juniors and seniors until the end of school this spring.

Watertown's school administrators considered dropping the program for lack of teachers, but after a frantic search found an instructor just two weeks before the start of classes on September 8. Superintendent Ann Koufman-Frederick said officials were working out a one-year contract last week.

It appears the program at Watertown High is saved for this year but its future beyond that is uncertain.

"I would like Watertown High to continue offering Armenian. We are looking for a way to preserve the program, if possible, and are looking for a way to make that happen," said Koufman-Frederick, who is starting her first year as the district's superintendent.

The uncertainty was a painful reckoning for a town known worldwide for its vibrant Armenian-American community, but where about 9 percent of the population claimed Armenian heritage on the 2000 Census.

In Watertown, Armenian is not like other traditional high school language offerings. It represents a history and a legacy deeply imbedded in the town's makeup, one revered even more because the culture was nearly destroyed during a genocide by the Ottoman Empire that killed 1.5 million Armenians, and imprisoned and displaced

millions more, between 1915 and 1918.

For nearly four decades, the language program at the high school was operated and taught almost entirely by Yacoubian, a native Armenian who came to Watertown High in 1970. She was the school's Armenian heart and soul — organizing annual cultural festivals, bake sales and scholarships for college-bound students.

She still teaches adult Armenian language classes locally, and despite her retirement remains a frequent sight in Watertown High's Room 333, where maps of Armenia and the former Soviet Union line the walls, and the classroom computer is equipped with a hard-to-find Armenian font.

The idea that the program could fade away horrified her, Yacoubian said last week.

"The community has always been so supportive of us, and that is what has helped us get that far," she said. "It is a struggle for Armenians to keep their culture, but if we do this we have so much to share with the rest of the world."

Armenian language classes in Arlington and Belmont public schools disappeared years ago. Most Armenian cultural and language classes in the area are now held privately — mostly in Watertown, at either St. James Armenian Apostolic Church, St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church or the Armenian Library and Museum of America. One of the nation's largest Armenian summer camps, Camp Haiastan, run by the national Armenian Youth Federation, is less than 25 miles away in Franklin. From a practical standpoint, keeping the program alive is difficult, Yacoubian acknowledged. The language is so obscure that there is no official state certification for its instructors. Many parents today prefer that their children learn a more mainstream tongue. Some students have schedule conflicts because Armenian and some honors classes are taught at the same time.

"I'm very concerned about the future, but I am optimistic they have a whole year to look for someone now," she said. Without the upper-level class, few, if any, students are likely to enroll in the lower level one, she said, instead

choosing another foreign language in which to become proficient.

For survivors of the Genocide who fled to the Middle East, Europe and the United States, and their descendents, keeping that culture alive is considered the most sacred of obligations.

Although it happened nearly a century ago, the genocide is by no means ancient history. It continues to be a combustible international and political issue. In 2007, Anti-Defamation League president Abraham Foxman was blasted with international criticism after calling the Armenian massacres by the Turkish military "tantamount" to genocide, in the context of the Jewish Holocaust.

Earlier this year, the Armenian community pressured online search giant Google to ban ads from a Turkish genocide-denial group. And a congressional resolution that would officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, after pending for many years, was quietly shelved yet again, advocates say, because of delicate US-Turkish diplomatic relations.

"Knowing our language is knowing our history," said teacher Sirhan Tamakian, who arrived at Watertown High five years ago and is able to teach only the freshman/sophomore Armenian class in addition to her English-as-a-second-language course load. "If we don't know our history, we can't teach it to others or defend it."

But the number of students interested in studying Armenian is dwindling, due to changing immigration patterns and assimilation. Today, non-native students moving into Watertown are more likely to be from Pakistan or Brazil, in contrast to the immigrants of a generation ago arriving from Armenian-speaking households in Lebanon and the former Soviet Union, school officials said.

The school system has its own limitations, including shrinking budgets, teacher shortages and dwindling enrollments, Koufman-Frederick said. Between 6 and 15 students were lined up to enroll in each Armenian class this fall, compared with more than 20 pupils in each of the high school's several Spanish classes.

But local Armenian-Americans say the lan-

guage curriculum is deeply meaningful to the community, and should not be abandoned.

Ani Eskici, a 1986 Watertown High School graduate, took Armenian classes from Yacoubian, and today her 15-year-old son, Kevin, is a second-generation student.

Eskici's great-grandparents perished in the Genocide, and she was raised in Turkey by parents who were forbidden to speak Armenian because of governmental regulation. Today, as a bank teller at Watertown Savings Bank, Eskici uses her Armenian skills daily to assist elderly Armenian-speaking customers.

She hopes Kevin can use his language education to not only visit his homeland and relatives, but to work overseas in business or diplomacy.

"The program has been so important to us and I think it is so important for the community. I was so disappointed to hear it could get cut. There are a lot of people who value it greatly," Eskici said.

Koufman-Frederick said the district wants to support the program, but admitted the future is anything but clear.

"We're trying to be as smart as possible with what we offer," said Koufman-Frederick, who noted that one of her goals as the system's incoming chief is to appoint a task force to overhaul and expand foreign language programming, especially in the elementary schools.

Perhaps a partnership with local Armenian cultural organizations could be fostered to help support Watertown High's offerings, she said.

Houry Boyamian, principal of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary, which has students in preschool through fifth grade, said the loss of Armenian at the high school would be devastating.

"It is very important that our students can continue learning at an advanced level in school," she said. St. Stephen's already operates supplementary Armenian classes for its young members on Saturdays and Sundays, in addition to its day school and Armenian-language church services.

Watertown should not take the language program away, Boyamian said. "I think it should continue."



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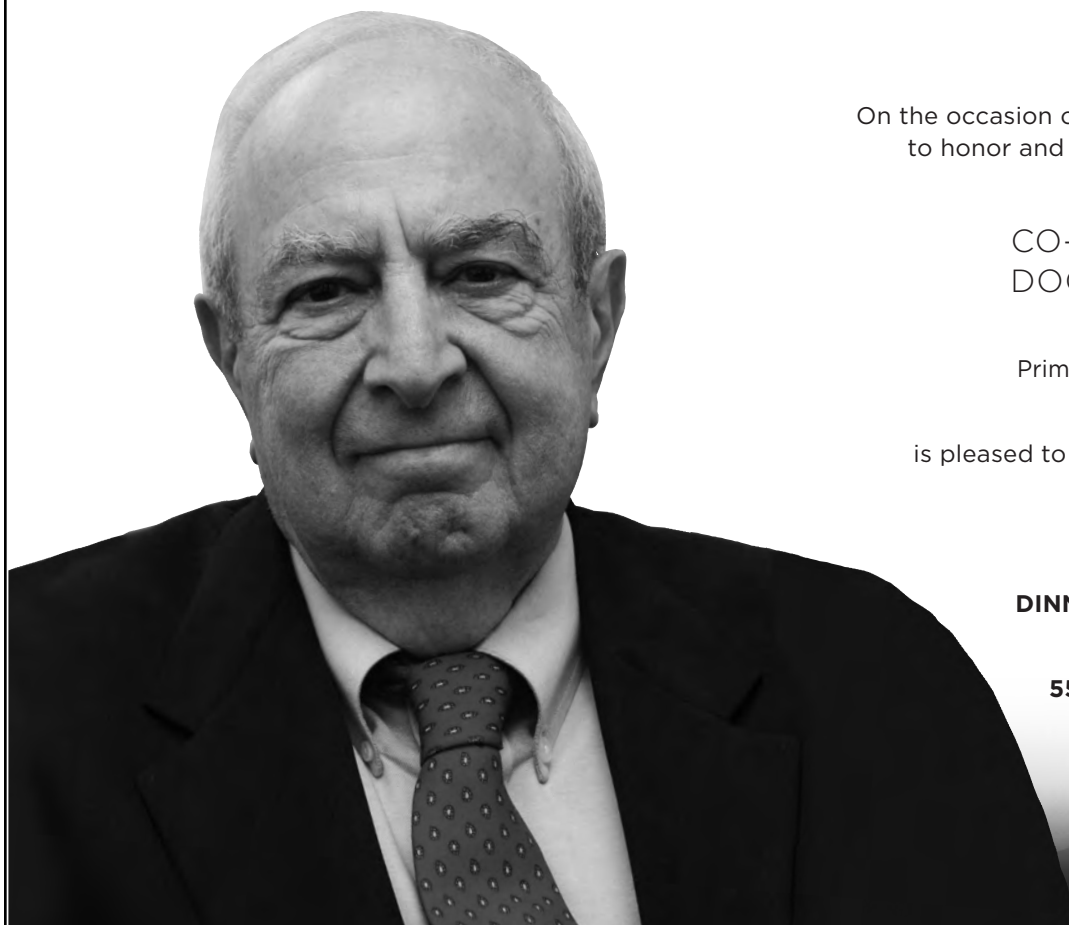
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COMMUNITY NEWS

Rev. Tateos Abdalian Honored on 25th Anniversary of Ordination

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — On Sunday, August 23, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), presided over the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Rev. Tateos Abdalian's ordination to the priesthood.

The event took place at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, Mass., where Abdalian was ordained in June 1984.

Abdalian celebrated the Divine Liturgy and was presented with a Pontifical Encyclical congratulating him on his 25 years of service to the Armenian Church.

"The feeling of love that Der Tateos brings to his ministry has grown stronger with each passing year," the Primate said. "We have all felt, and benefited from, his love. And today, as we observe this milestone in his ministry, it is our chance to let Der Hayr know just how much we love him, in return."

Following services, 150 people gathered for a reception in Abdalian's honor.

"It was wonderful and humbling," said Abdalian. "It was a family affair and that's what I wanted."

The celebration was organized by a committee from the Holy Trinity parish led by its pastor, the Rev. Vasken Kouzouian. Also serving on the committee were members of the St. James parish of Watertown — where Abdalian was born and raised.

"The beautiful part was that the funds that were collected [during the event] will benefit young people at the mission parishes, to send them on scholarships to St. Nersess summer conferences. Two historical parishes came together, and then the mission parishes directly benefited from it," Kouzouian said.

He added that the day was preceded by acolyte ordinations held on Saturday evening. "It was an overall beautiful picture," Kouzouian said.

Abdalian enrolled at St. Nersess and St.

Vladimir's seminaries in 1977 after working in the bank sector and as the administrative director of St. James Armenian Church of Watertown, Mass. He continued his studies at the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin and at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary in Boston.

He says that serving the Armenian people and helping them become closer to God is what drew him to the priesthood.

"My reflections on the past have always centered on the people I had been entrusted to

God's flock?" Barsamian said, "the answer is clear: It is a feeling of love, which issues from a pure heart, a good conscience, and deep faith in the presence of Christ in his life."

Following his ordination, Abdalian was assigned to serve as the pastor of St. John the Baptist Church in Greenfield, Wis., where he worked with the community to build a new sanctuary for the church.

After the 1988 earthquake in Armenia, Abdalian worked with the office of the Wisconsin National Guard to organize relief efforts.

He has also served as pastor of the St. Peter Armenian Church in Watervliet, NY, and the St. George Armenian Church in Hartford, Conn.

While in Hartford, Abdalian was an on-call chaplain at Hartford Hospital and a member of the hospital's Pastor Services Advisory Committee. He was also police chaplain with the Hartford Police Department and a member of the department's Crisis Intervention Team.

His other involvement with the police force includes the establishment of the police chaplain program at the Cheltenham Police Department, as well as membership of their SWAT Intervention Team and the International Conference of Police Chaplains.

In 1999, Abdalian became pastor of the Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church in Providence, RI, and later served as pastor at the

Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cheltenham, Pa. Currently, he is the director of Mission Parishes at the Eastern Diocese, where he oversees about 15 mission parish communities. He visits each parish on a regular basis to celebrate the Divine Liturgy and organizes programming for parishioners. He also produces a weekly electronic publication for mission parishes titled "e-Tsayn."

In addition, Abdalian is involved in ecumenical activities. In 2006, he spoke at a gathering in Washington, DC, organized to raise aware-

ness of the genocide in Darfur. He is a member of the Oriental Orthodox/Roman Catholic Dialogue and the Standing Committee of Oriental Orthodox churches in America.

Abdalian said his family has been very supportive during his years of service to the Armenian Church. He is married to Yeretzgin Margaret Meranian. They have a son, David, and a daughter, Alicia, and two grandchildren.

Reflecting on his ministry, Abdalian said, "I could ask: was I able to bring someone closer to God; strengthen a faith; have one see the value and joy of life measured by a word of thanks, a smile of appreciation, a humble gesture? This is what a pastor has to do, and I certainly hope that in some measure I've been able to do this."



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian presents the Rev. Tateos Abdalian with the Pontifical Encyclical.

minister, for as a priest, ministry is nothing unless it is connected with people," Abdalian said.

When Abdalian was ordained in 1984, Kouzouian's father, the Rev. Mampr Kouzouian, served as the sponsor.

Abdalian says his ordination is particularly memorable because his father, who was under hospice care at the time, was able to witness this milestone in his son's life.

"When I ask myself, 'What inspired Der Tateos to dedicate his life to the ministry of

SOAR to Hold Reception

PHILADELPHIA — The Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc. is celebrating its fourth year of helping the orphans of Armenia. Established in March 2006, SOAR is the only nonprofit organization that focuses exclusively on providing humanitarian relief to orphaned children living in Armenia. The organization provided nearly \$60,000 in assistance in 2006, more than \$88,000 in 2007 and \$100,000 in 2008.

This year's complimentary cocktail reception will be held at The Village Hall (Spread Eagle Village) in Wayne, Penn., on Saturday, October 3, from 5 to 10 p.m. The program will feature the Ararat Dance Ensemble; Norik Y. Astvatsaturov — Metal Repoussé; Vocalist Julie Hoplamazian; Vocalist Karinne Hovnanian; Artist Mher Khachatryan; Roy Maloumian — Rugs; Manuel Panossian — Armenian Antiques and Artifacts and comedienne Lory Tatoulain.

Those interested should RSVP by September 26, to George S. Yacoubian Jr., at gyacoubian@soar-us.org.

Obituary

Boston-Armenian Community Mourns Loss of Archpriest Torkom Hagopian

WALTHAM, Mass. — Archpriest Torkom Hagopian, pastor-emeritus of St. Stephen's Armenian Church, died on September 3 at age 86. He had served as the church's pastor for 33 years.

Hagopian began his service to St. Stephen's in August 1962. Ordained in 1956, he served in Aleppo, Syria and Beirut, Lebanon before working with the four church communities in upstate New York: St. John the Baptist of Syracuse; Holy Cross of Troy; St. Hagop of Niagara Falls and the community in Binghamton.

Hagopian served as the pastor of St. Stephen's until 1995, when he retired, remaining an active member of St. Stephen's church and community. The Armenian Cultural and Educational Center (ACEC) was built during his tenure, for which he worked to raise the necessary funds.

His dream of having an Armenian day school was realized in 1984 with the establishment of the St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School.

The school today is a thriving center of education that consistently receives accolades and high marks from the state of Massachusetts.

Hagopian leaves his wife of 55 years, Yeretzgin Zevart Hagopian; children Zovig Kanarian; Noushig Hagopian and her husband Tim Enright; Sonya Hagopian and her husband Leighton Wolfe, all of Lexington; grandchildren Tamar and Paul Kanarian, Alec, Kyle and Nairi Enright, and Lenna Wolfe. He was the brother of Hovsep Hagopian of Watertown, the



Archpriest Torkom Hagopian

late Hagop Bozodjian, the late Sahag Hagopian, and the late Mary Kasparian. He also leaves several nieces, nephews and cousins.

In a statement, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan said, "We express our heartfelt condolences to Yeretzgin Zevart and their daughters, Dzovig, Noushig and Sonig. May he rest in eternal bliss."

The Funeral Mass took place at St. Stephen's on September 9, followed by burial at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Toronto to Host Armenian Bar Association's Mid-Year Meeting

TORONTO — The Armenian Bar Association (ArmenBar) will return to Canada for its mid-year meeting, on the weekend of October 2-4, in Toronto. The meeting will be held at the Hilton Hotel and will mark only the third time in the group's history that it has held a meeting in Canada. Vartkes Yeghiayan, respected attorney, author and the architect of the New York Life and other Genocide reparation cases, will be the keynote luncheon speaker.

"We have a vibrant group of members in Canada who have made significant contributions to the Armenian legal community and the Armenian Bar Association, so we are thrilled to be returning to visit our neighbors to the north for our mid-year meeting," said Sonya Nersessian, chair of ArmenBar.

Toronto is Canada's cultural, educational, financial, high tech, commercial, industrial and entertainment center. It's skyline boasts the CN Tower, the tallest structure in North America, and formerly the tallest structure in the world. The meeting headquarters at the Hilton is walking distance from the CN Tower, as well as other popular attractions.

As is customary, the event will draw numerous legal scholars, law professors, historians, judges, lawyers, law students and politicians from throughout the United States, Canada, France and Armenia. The conference will be punctuated by legal seminars, receptions and a meeting of the Board of Governors. Attorneys attending the meeting will receive continuing legal education credits for what promises to be an interesting and informative series of lectures, including "Research on Genocide Reparations."

In addition to Yeghiayan, the list of guest speakers includes attorney and author Michael Bobelian, immigration law specialists Chantal Desloges, Caroline Mouralian and Alice Yardum-Hunter along with law professors Katherine Kessedjian and David Nersessian.

The panel on Genocide Reparations will kick off the Saturday session, and will feature Harvard Law Prof. David Nersessian and Katherine Kessedjian, professor at the

University of Paris II, Pantheon-Assas, France. Nersessian and Kessedjian have been involved in extensive research on methods to achieve redress for the Armenian Genocide in international courts and tribunals. The panel will showcase new avenues for the Armenian community in its efforts to achieve retribution from Turkey for a crime which remains unpunished nearly a century after it was perpetrated.

Bobelian, an attorney and journalist, has recently published his latest text titled *Children of Armenia, a Forgotten Genocide and the Century-Long Struggle for Justice*. He will discuss the critically acclaimed book and research which went into its publication. Chronicled in the book is the story of Gourgen Yanikian, who in 1973 murdered the Turkish Consul General and Vice Consul from Los Angeles. He stated that the purpose of the killings was to demand justice for the Armenian Genocide. The act sparked a wave of attacks against Turkish diplomats throughout the world in the 1970s and 1980s. Yeghiayan's two-decade quest to bring the New York Life class-action lawsuit to light is also covered in the book.

Desloges, Mouralian and Yardum-Hunter are all experts in the area of immigration law. Desloges is the founder of the immigration and refugee law free advice clinic in Ontario. Mouralian has offices in Quebec and Lebanon, and has assisted hundreds of Armenians in the immigration process. Yardum-Hunter has been an immigration specialist for 30 years. She has written and lectured extensively on the subject, and has been recognized as a "Super Lawyer." The lecture will deal with the hot topic issue of cross boarder immigration in North America.

The meeting will be presided over by Armenbar Chair Sonya Nersessian from Boston, Mass. "We are proud of our organization, excited about the meeting, and believe it will be an enriching experience for all who attend," said Nersessian.

More information about the event can be obtained by visiting the ArmenBar website at: www.armenianbar.org.

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— from the family of
Victoria T. Karjian,
one of the loyal originals

Nor Serount Cultural Association to Hold 11th Annual Armenian Independence Day Festival

GLENDALE, Calif. —The Nor Serount Cultural Association (NSCA) and its members are gearing up for a commemoration of the Independence of the Republic of Armenia on Sunday, September 20, at Verdugo Park here.

In this tradition of celebration, NSCA plans a day of fun and activities. Entertainment will be provided by a line-up of well-known performers and dance groups including Sako, Harout Hagopian, Samvel Sahakian, Armen Aloyan, Hratch Bogharian, Harout Khachoyan, Maggie, Arman Baghjachian, the Lilia Dance group and the Ereboundi Dance Group. Armenian businesses, artists and craftsmen will display their works and services. Traditional Armenian food will be served. Youngsters will enjoy the different carnival games set up for their enjoyment.

Admission is free.



Dancers at last year's Nor Serount program





New York METRO

Armenia Fund Declares 2010 ‘The Year of Shushi’

NEW YORK — In an effort to jumpstart socio-economic development in the legendary town of Shushi, Armenia Fund USA and its world-wide affiliates will launch a comprehensive program of infrastructure and business development projects beginning in 2010.

The Armenia Fund “Save Shushi” campaign will officially kick off on its annual Thanksgiving Day Telethon, in addition to pre-Telethon fundraising drives, such as direct mail and phone campaigns, conducted by Armenia Fund USA and other affiliates in the All-Armenia Fund global network.

“In the 1990s, the Armenians won the pivotal battle for liberation in the hills and fields of Shushi. Today, they are fighting a very different battle: a war on poverty,” explained Armenia Fund USA Chairman Raffi Festekjian.

“Too many residents, jobless and living in unsafe ruins, have been forced to leave these hard-won lands for which they or their compatriots sacrificed so much,” Festekjian added. “Somehow, the inspiration from military victory has been slowly overtaken by economic paralysis and social apathy. And time is running out to win back the hearts and minds of those residents remaining.”

The Armenia-Azeri war left Shushi almost completely destroyed. The town center is a gloomy picture of half-destroyed houses built in the 18th and 19th centuries. With so many abandoned shelters, many of the jobless residents live as squatters, with no heat or electricity. Provincial schools are also physically unsafe and unhygienic, leaving families little incentive to remain in Shushi without hope for a better future.

During the early 20th century, the Armenians of Shushi boasted a population of 45,000, seven churches, 22 newspapers and a public theatre. After the liberation of Shushi, many presumed that this history-making province would be reborn, attracting business investment and tourists, generating jobs, and building strong, robust communities. Despite

the best of intentions, the rebirth of Shushi was a dream deferred.

Today, the officials of the Shushi and Karabagh government, along with leaders of Armenia Fund, have agreed to put Shushi on the economic map. To stimulate growth in Shushi the government of Karabagh decided to move a number of state institutions such as the Supreme and Appeals Courts from the capital of Stepanakert to Shushi. Constructing the buildings to house these offices and paving roads and streets to reach them, would immediately generate local jobs; but that is only a small step toward the substantive change so desperately needed to save Shushi.

Although the government of Karabagh is prepared to subsidize all such infrastructure projects, its limited budget cannot address all the imperatives for revitalizing Shushi, within a small window of time. This is where the Armenian Diaspora becomes a critical factor in determining the ultimate fate of this legendary region.

“Without jobs, good schools and a place to call home, there is very little incentive to stay in Shushi, which is of great strategic importance to the security of Karabagh,” states Irina Lazarian, executive director of Armenia Fund USA, Eastern Region. “This is why Shushi’s war on poverty must be fought on multiple fronts: housing, health care, education, business and cultural development, not to mention well-functioning institutions that can facilitate growth and progress.”



Map of Shushi Province

houses and apartments, local town halls and health care hubs; parks and water fountains, cultural and recreational centers. Water pipelines, school heating systems, gymnasiums, school facilities, roads and street repairs also will be underway.

In addition, a brand new medical hospital is planned to provide village-wide access to emergency and critical health care, plus a state-of-the-art administrative center to help fast-track economic growth and investment. Other business development efforts include a Rug Manufacturers Association and micro-loans for start-up local enterprises. These projects will take place not only in Shushi proper, but the seven villages within Shushi province, including: Karintak, Kirsavan, Hin-Shenk, Medz-Shenk, Eghtsahogh and Lisagor.

“Obviously, this is a massive undertaking. There is much catching up to do and so little time left, before the people will give up on Shushi altogether” notes the mayor of Shushi. “But with the will of Armenians everywhere, who draw inspiration from what Shushi has come to symbolize in our story of national survival, it will rise from the ashes once more. Not only victorious, but prosperous, too.”

For more information about Armenia Fund’s “Saving Shushi” campaign, send an e-mail to info@armenianfundusa.org.

Armenia Fund USA Ramps Up Fundraising Efforts

NEW YORK —Armenia Fund USA (AFUSA) has hired fundraiser and marketer Rachel Onanian Nadjarian to assist the organization in expanding its development initiatives. She will bring her over 15 years of experience working with non-profits to help the Armenia Fund USA to not only increase its core constituency but also to increase the volunteer base and AFUSA’s reach within the diaspora.

“Now that the Armenia Fund USA has started focusing on economic development and micro-financing projects in Armenia and Karabagh, it is essential that we bring more people in touch with the Armenia Fund’s mission and the critical difference it is making in the strength and well-being of our homeland,” states AFUSA Board Chairman Raffi Festekjian. “We are excited to have Rachel’s leadership and talents to help us achieve our goals.”

An essential part of Nadjarian’s role will be enhancing communication materials and channels, thereby creating greater awareness of the Armenia Fund’s mission and its endeavors in Armenia and Karabagh. “We have a lot of exciting initiatives underway and many more things we want to do,” comments Irina Lazarian, executive director of AFUSA. “It’s great to have someone like Rachel on the team and we look forward to working with her over the coming year.”

Nadjarian has worked at and consulted to several non-profits and profits in the areas of fundraising, marketing and strategic planning, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Museum of Science, Boston University School of Management, Bernard Hodes Advertising and Crimson & Brown Associates. She received a bachelor’s degree in economics and sociology from Wellesley College and an MBA in non-profit and public management from Boston University. She and her husband, Paul, live in Manhattan with their three children.

Written Publication

Important Message for Potential Lawsuit Claimants

Attorneys MARK GERAGOS, VARTKES YEGHIAYAN, AND BRIAN KABATECK are seeking documents and information about bank accounts held at the Deutsche Bank and Deutsche Orientbank in Ottoman Empire Turkey by individuals of Armenian descent between 1875 and 1915. The documents and information are sought from United States residents who may be class members in a pending class action lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Central District of California against Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank for the recovery of assets not returned to victims of the Armenian Genocide or their heirs.

If you have any such documents or information you may be a potential claimant in the above mentioned lawsuit. Anyone with documents or further information should contact any of the lawyers representing the proposed class by no later than September 15, 2009.

You may also submit information about your potential claim online at www.armeniangenocidebankclaims.com.

The court has not certified a class and has not made any decisions regarding the merits of the claims. This is not a court-ordered notice, and the court has played no role in causing this advertisement to be published. The lawyers identified below have made published this advertisement in an effort to develop evidence to support the allegations made in the case and to identify members of a potential class.

Mark Geragos:	geragos@geragos.com	(213) 625-3900
Vartkes Yeghiayan:	vartkesy@sbcglobal.net	(818) 242-7400
Brian Kabateck:	bsk@kbklawyers.com	(213) 217-5000



New York METRO

Free Health Clinic Has Served More Than 40,000

By Florence Avakian

BINGHAMTON, N.Y. — Long before the current discussion regarding the millions in the United States without health insurance, or the money to pay for expensive health care, there was a compassionate and dedicated individual who did something creative and constructive about this dilemma.

In 1997, Dr. Garabed Fattal established a free clinic, subsequently named after him, here. In the last 12 years, 400 to 500 volunteer physicians, nurses, pharmacists, lab technicians and office personnel have devoted their free time every Monday and Thursday evenings from 5 p.m. to late into the night, to service indigent people and those without health insurance. At present, the weekly workload includes 100 to



Dr. Garabed Fattal

120 patients, and climbing. There is also a Wednesday evening dental program serving the clinic patients.

“Since the time when we started this system in 1997, we have not even once interrupted our services because of lack of personnel,” Fattal said proudly, during an interview at the recent Armenian Medical World Congress held in New York over the weekend of July 4.

In the last 12 years, the Dr. Garabed A. Fattal Community Free Clinic has registered over 40,000 patient visits. Located in Broome, Binghamton’s largest county with a population of 250,000, the clinic also serves people from surrounding counties and neighboring upstate Pennsylvania. “We don’t discriminate,” he stated with emphasis.

Fattal was 67 when he retired from a large consolidated hospital facility where he was the chairman of a centralized Department of Pathology. He is also a clinical professor at the Upstate Medical University where he has been a 30-year member of the Admissions Committee. It was when he retired that he decided something must be done for those without health insurance in the Binghamton area.

Stand Up and Be Counted

What motivated him? “Many people are unable to obtain and pay for health care. It was unthinkable for me that this most advanced and sophisticated society can’t take care of its own people. In America today, there are almost 50 million people with no health insurance and another 20 to 25 million with inadequate coverage.” He decided that “those of us who have been in the health care professions should stand up and be counted.”

It took two years to convince other retired doctors to open a clinic. It was not easy. He had to find a locale to practice, as well as to convince the local hospitals to treat the patients for free. “It was a very long and complex job. We finally ended up with a system in the County Health Department pro bono with examination rooms. When the day workers leave, we come in after hours,” he explained.

And then there was the all-important issue of money. “We had to prod the county,” he noted. Half a million dollars were needed per year — all through donations. New York State, the county, local charities all contributed, and the rest

came from many generous individual donors. Fattal has been one of the major donors.

Care, aftercare and medicines were given to the patients without charge. In addition, when a patient was in need of an operation, a sophisticated hospital procedure, or further research on a case, the hospital did it for free. “This was an opportunity to tell a hospital CEO to help us,” he related.

Currently, still on the faculty of the medical school, Fattal is aware that other people will have to be groomed to carry on this crucial endeavor, and he’s hard at work doing so. “I’m not a doctor who retires, goes to Florida and plays golf. And, I have no interest in health care politics,” he said, pointing out that the clinic was named after him only after the continued insistence of his colleagues.

Deep Roots in Aleppo

Born in Aleppo, Syria in 1927, Fattal comes from an Armenian family with roots in that community for more than 500 years. He explained that there has been an Armenian community in Aleppo during these five centuries, many emigrating from Cilicia over the years. “There is a 500-year-old Armenian Church in Aleppo named Karasoon Mangantz Yegheghetzi dedicated to the 40 Armenian martyred children. It is a beautiful old church, big like a cathedral,” Fattal recalled.

Following the Armenian Genocide, his father Asdvadzadour, chaired a committee of the Salvation Army, which found homes and jobs for the Genocide survivors who settled in Aleppo. “The local Muslim community welcomed the huge influx of Armenian survivors. The Armenians felt safe there.”

The Fattal family, going back centuries had been in the rug-making business (Fattal is the Arabic word for weaver). From 1907 to 1908, his father who had studied law in Istanbul in the early years of the 20th century, returned to Aleppo when the Genocide started. Following World War I when Syria and Lebanon became French colonies, his

father became a judge, rising to the highest court in the country.

His mother, Mariam, was born in Aintab. Her grandfather’s brother was a priest of the Aleppo Armenian Church, and while still very young, his mother was sent to Aleppo. Young Garabed was one of six children of Asdvadzadour and Mariam Fattal, all of whom having become professionals in different fields.

Studying at the St. Joseph University Medical School in Beirut, Garabed Fattal graduated in 1953, and emigrated to the United States in 1954. Specializing in pathology, he went to Manitoba, Canada in 1955, and for the next 10 years, was on the faculty of the University of Manitoba Medical School and Hospital. Due to a friend’s urging, he came to Binghamton, NY where there was a great need for an experienced pathologist.

At Binghamton General Hospital where he worked for the next 25 years, he became director of laboratories. When Wilson Memorial,

Binghamton General and Ideal Hospitals consolidated, he became chairman of the Department of Pathology and director of Clinical Laboratories (with 250 professionals), retiring from active practice in November 1994.

Fattal who at 82-years old, has also been deeply involved in the St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Church in Binghamton, serving as its Parish Council chairman for 12 years. He skis, plays tennis and bikes long distance, but above all, prefers to talk about his pet project. “The people who are the core of this voluntary medical program are so committed, so dedicated. Some of them work on the staff of the community hospital, but they approach this after-hours volunteer program with utmost devotion.” While he would like to pass the baton in the near future to a younger individual, Fattal states without hesitation that this program is an “absolute joy” for him, and that he intends to “stick around as long as possible.”



Dr. Garabed Fattal addresses a group of volunteers at a volunteers appreciation reception.

Teen’s Sketch of St. Nersess Seminary Auctioned Off to Benefit Youth Programs

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — Alexa Chevian is a typical 16-year-old. In the summers she enjoys sleeping in until noon, video games, texting, hanging out with friends, and staying up late watching movies. But unlike a typical teenager, she loves to sketch, something she has enjoyed since the age of 4. “My head works in images,” explains Alexa Chevian. “When I get an idea, I draw it because I’m not good at writing.” This skill has earned her the cover of her high school’s course catalog.

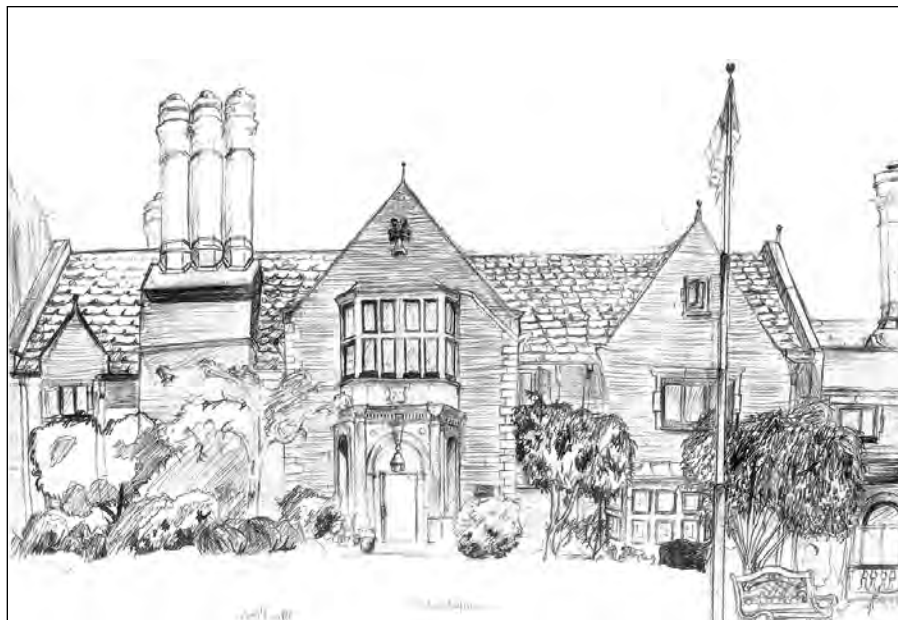
Her artistic talent continues with her most recent sketch of the facade of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. She attended the youth conferences at the seminary for the first time this summer, and as she shares, this is her way of giving back to such a great program; a program that her father and mother helped to build into a popular summer curriculum among Armenian youth.

Alexa is the daughter of Fr. Mardiros and Yeretzgin Diane Chevian. Fr. Mardiros Chevian served as the dean of St. Nersess and the director of the summer programs for more than a decade in the 1980s, touching the lives of hundreds of teenagers throughout North America. Now it’s an interesting twist that his own teenager has begun to attend these same programs that he helped to make so suc-

cessful, and in addition, is assisting the seminary through her time and talent.

The auction is now open for the original, signed pencil sketch, which is double-mat-

“Evening Under the Stars” reception on September 26. The bidding will begin at \$250. All proceeds generated from this auction, and subsequent sales of reprints



Sketch by Alexa Chevian of the seminary

ted and glass-framed. This silent auction format will culminate with the announcement of the highest bidder during the

and cards, will benefit the Youth & Vocations programs of the seminary, including these summer youth programs.



Arts & Living

Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church Sponsors 'Rising Stars' Concert

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — On Saturday, September 26 at 7 p.m., the Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church of Providence will present their annual autumn concert titled, "Rising Stars," featuring Kate Norigian, John Norigian, Timothy Aznavourian and David Griego.

Kate Norigian, soprano, has a bachelor of music degree in vocal performance from Rhode Island College, where she studied voice under the instruction of Dr. Edward Markward. While at Rhode Island College, Norigian participated in several opera workshop performances and also in Rhode Island College musicals, including the "Pirates of Penzance," where she performed the title role of Mabel. She continues to study voice under the tutelage of Maria Spacagna. Norigian was accepted to study in Rome this summer at the Academia Di Santa Cecilia where she studied with world-renowned soprano, Renata Scott.

John Norigian graduated with a master's degree in piano performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music. He has won numerous competitions in Rhode Island,



Kate Norigian

including first prize in the College Division of the MTNA Piano Competition in 2002 and 2004. He also won the University of Rhode Island Concerto Competition, subsequently performing Mendelssohn *Concerto No. 1* with the URI Symphony Orchestra.

Aznavourian is a guitarist and vocalist, specializing in classical and folk music. He began learning guitar at the age of 12 by teaching himself. At the age of 17 he began to take formal lessons and advanced his music education at Rhode Island College. He is a member of the Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church Choir and is currently studying to serve on the church altar.

Griego began to study the flute at the age of 9, but gave it up as an early teen to focus on his other major interest, chess. He has won many championships and awards. After leaving the competitive chess arena, Griego resumed his music studies with the eminent Philharmonic flutist, John Curran. He teaches flute in the Cultural Committee's Art Education Program.

In addition to the four performing artists, there will be a presentation of the art works of Dr. Ara Sadaniantz. Sadaniantz is professionally a well-known cardiologist. However, as a child he was very interested in art and continues his passion whenever he has the opportunity. He specializes in landscaping and beautiful scenery. He has had several successful art showings locally, including for the Rhode Island Medical Association.

— Irene Eranosian



A scene from "Who Killed the Eastern Dentist?"

'Eastern Dentist' Staging Combines Murder Mystery and Dancing

PARAMUS, N.J. — The Greater New York Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group is going to stage the first Armenian murder mystery theater, to be held on Saturday, October 10, at 8 p.m. at the Assyrian Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary, 644 Paramus Road.

The mystery, Hagop Baronian's comedic play titled, "Who Killed the Eastern Dentist?," was written around the 1860s, about an Istanbul dentist who is having affairs with the wives of his patients, thus creating enemies who are out to get him. The murder takes place at a masquerade party. The audience will be invited to participate in catching the killer of the dentist.

The TCA is combining this theatrical affair with a dinner-dance with music from a DJ. Food will be catered by Cornetta's Restaurant of Blauvelt, NY and the members of the audience can bring their own beverages. There will be dancing throughout the evening. As the setting is that of a masquerade party, attendees are invited to wear masks.

For reservations, call Maro Hajakian (201) 934-3427, Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850, Noushig Atamian (718) 894-5878 or Missak Boghossian (212) 819-0097.



A scene from "Who Killed the Eastern Dentist?"

Director Tests His Own Borders

Atom Egoyan Ventures Into New Territory with An 'Erotic Mystery'

By Katrina Onstad

TORONTO (*International Herald Tribune*) — On a frosty March morning here the stars stood still while others orbited around them, as tends to happen on a movie set. An assistant's arms wrapped Julianne Moore in a lime popsicle-colored parka; someone else crouched below Amanda Seyfried, lifting her blouse to hold a heating pad belt to her torso.

Inside a cavernous restaurant the director Atom Egoyan waited for a small correction in the lighting to begin shooting a scene for his new movie, "Chloe," which will have its premiere next month at the Toronto International Film Festival.

With the cameras rolling, the two actresses sipped Chardonnay at the bar and began verbally circling each other. Moore played a married gynecologist; Seyfried was the prostitute she enlisted to gauge the fealty of her husband (Liam Neeson). Sexual taboos; miscommunication; a shoot from the depths of an icy Toronto winter — all of this looked very much like a typical Egoyan film, except it wasn't.

"Chloe" — which Egoyan describes as an "erotic mystery" — is a star-studded break from form for him, the first of his features for which he has not written the screenplay. He has spent more than two decades fashioning complicated puzzles like "The Sweet Hereafter" and "Exotica," in which characters misread one another and the world, cornered by sexual desire and technology. Now he was playing hired gun to Ivan Reitman, producer of a string of top-grossing populist comedies like "Animal House" and "Ghostbusters" and director of "Kindergarten Cop." Reitman stood on the sidelines, hands in pockets, surveying silently.

The odd pairing — they are even physical opposites, with the bearlike Reitman towering over the diminutive Egoyan — seems like a meeting of the mainstream and the margin. But besides Canadian citizenship, the two share something else: a need to stretch.

Reitman was interested in putting aside the guffaws and overseeing "a more delicate piece." And at 49, Egoyan exuded a youthful restlessness. "There's a definite ceiling for the type of films I've done," he said over lunch during a break in filming. "And as an artist there is a point where you're trying to find and test how wide your sensibility can go."

It helped, he said, that the script in question was by Erin Cressida Wilson, who has unpacked perversity in an Egoyan-like fashion with her screenplays for the S&M drama "Secretary" and the Diane Arbus fantasia "Fur." "She can write in this very linear fashion that I couldn't even if I tried," Egoyan said. "It's an extreme examination of how to re-eroticize a marriage."

In 2008 "Chloe" was blessed by that rare alignment of casting and financing. (The film's budget is an estimated \$20 million, with backers including Studio Canal and Montecito, Reitman's company.

see EGOYAN, page 14



ARTS & LIVING

Permanent Loan of Gorky Works Makes Whistler Museum a Magnet

GORKY, from page 1

For many years, the museum has had in its permanent collection a single, early painting by Gorky, "Park Street," done in 1924 during the years he spent in Watertown. Now, it will display a significant portion of his oeuvre on permanent loan.

The collection, given by anonymous donors, includes drawings and paintings that highlight the artistic accomplishment that have led Gorky to be ranked in the roster of important abstract expressionists such as Willem de Kooning, Stuart Davis and Jackson Pollack, who, in the 40s, 50s and 60s, changed the way we view the world.

The process of making the loan final has taken five years, and museum director Michael Lally and Sara Bogosian, chair of the Arshile Gorky Committee, have been involved every step of the way.

As they reviewed final proof of the catalogue, just a few days before the opening reception, they spoke nearly in unison about what it means for the museum to have this collection.



A work from the Gorky Collection

Said Lally, "It's a great thing for the museum, the city of Lowell and really for the whole region." Added Bogosian, "This is important for the entire arts community. These works are from a private collection and most of them have not been seen. It's a big deal for the city and also for the Armenian community."

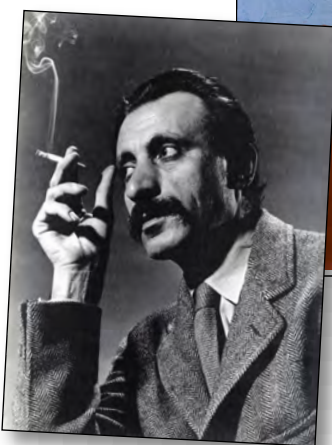
Said Lally, "Having these pieces on permanent loan means that the donors retain ownership but the museum has the right to display them publicly. We will have the only existing stone sculpture by Gorky, in addition to the drawings and paintings."

The varied works range from line drawings on paper of Mina Boehm Metzger, Gorky's student, patron and friend (for whom this collection is named), to bold, colorful oil abstracts that show the influences on the artist of Cezanne, Picasso, Leger, Miro, Matisse, Chirico and others.

As Hayden Herrera has noted in her biography of Gorky (Arshile Gorky: His Life and Work, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), his philosophy of working as an artist was closer to that of the apprenticeships that many European artists served under master painters. Gorky did not copy, but he studied and absorbed the influences of other artists, while developing his own unique approach to the creation of art.

Said Bogosian, "You can see him learning from the Cubists, the Impressionists, the Surrealists to establish his form of abstract Expressionism."

Gorky was born Vosdanig Manoog Adoian, in the small village of Khorkom, near Van. The date of his birth and many details of his early life have been difficult to document, but it is known



Arshile Gorky



"The Three Roses" by Arshile Gorky

that he was the only son of his mother, Shushan's second marriage to a well-off farmer and trader. Sedrak Adoian. If there is one painting of Gorky's with which the general public is acquainted, it is the iconic portrait of himself and his Shushan. In the painting, the two seem to look in different directions, but the intense closeness between them is clear. Before Gorky was born, his mother's family had suffered death and destruction at the hands of Kurds, who were urged on by the Turks to attack Armenian families. Later, the Genocide killed more members of his immediate family. These events would weigh on Gorky for the rest of his life.

With his sister, Vartoosh, he came to the United States in 1920, settling first in Providence, then moving to Watertown where he spent several years. He eventually moved to New York, where he soon became part of a vibrant, bohemian community that included other artists, art critics and patrons. It was sometime in the 1920s that he changed his name from Vosdanig Adoian to Arshile Gorky, claiming that he was a cousin of the Russian writer, Maxim Gorky.

Gorky married twice, but it was his second marriage to Agnes Magruder, whom he called Mougouch, that produced two daughters, and that sustained him through recurring bouts of depression and periods of economic difficulty. In a tragic end to a brilliant career, at the culmination of which Gorky was referred to as "the Father of American Abstract Expressionism," Gorky committed suicide in 1948, after the breakup of his marriage due to his increasing mental illness and depression.

The Whistler House Museum was chosen by the donors above four other museums that sought the collection.

Said Lally, "One institution wanted the works only for research rather than display. Many of

the pieces needed cleaning and restoration, and that involved expense. We applied to the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation for a grant to fund what needed to be done."

The works were then sent to the Williamstown Art Conservation Center (connected with the Clark Museum). A contract negotiated through the donated services of a local law firm, Gallagher & Cavanagh, covered the arrangements for restoration.

Bogosian, who has served on the museum's board for 16 years, said, "I think my being on the board helped to build trust with the donors. For me, this process has been a labor of love. Gorky, after all, is the most famous survivor of the Armenian Genocide. It has been a very personal effort for me to promote the work of this artist."

Two other board members who have been especially supportive of the process of obtaining the collection are Anastasia Porter, who has been associated with the museum for 50 years, and Therese O'Connor.

Coincidentally, the Philadelphia Museum of Art is mounting a traveling show titled "Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective," which will go to the Tate Modern in London and then to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles. It opens on October 21 and includes 175 of Gorky's works. Once it is over, the works will disperse to their owners, while the Whistler's trove will remain in place.

The first event to mark the Whistler's opening of "Drawings and Paintings by Arshile Gorky: Mina Boehm Metzger Collection" is the Private Preview Party to take place, Sunday, September 13, at 6 p.m. Gorky's daughters, Maro and Natasha and son-in-law Matthew Spender will attend the opening as will Gorky's biographer, Herrera. The event is sponsored by the Board of Trustees of the Lowell Art Association, Inc. and the museum itself. (For details, visit www.whistlerhouse.org.)

Future events planned include a reception for the public, September 19 from 2 to 4 p.m. The official opening for the public is September 16, and the show will hang in the Parker Gallery until November 7, and then be moved to the main museum building. On Saturday, September 26, at 2 p.m., there will be a reading from *The Fogg* by Alfred Bouchard, which includes poems about Arshile Gorky and his works. On Saturday, October 10, at 6 p.m. there will be a performance of an original play by Regina Eliot Ramsey, produced by the Image Theater about the relationship between Willem de Kooning and Arshile Gorky.

The works by Gorky join the museum's permanent collection that focuses on 19th- and 20th-century artists associated with New England, including William Morris Hunt, Frank Weston Benson and Aldo Hibbard amongst others.

Gorky, of course belongs in this category, thanks to his years in Providence, Watertown and Boston. But his influence reaches far beyond the New England region, and this unique collection can be expected to attract art lovers and admirers of Gorky from throughout the country and even from abroad.

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ARTS & LIVING

Atom Egoyan Ventures into New Territory with an 'Erotic Mystery'

EGOYAN, from page 12

After the cast signed on, two of the three leads appeared in surprise hits, increasing their celebrity currency: Seyfried with "Mamma Mia!" and Neeson with "Taken." "We've had incredibly good luck pulling this together," Reitman said. "It's been a joyful experience so far."

And then within a few days of my set visit, Neeson's wife, the actress Natasha Richardson, fell on a ski slope in Quebec. What had seemed a minor injury bloomed into something much worse; Richardson was soon transferred to Lenox Hill Hospital in New York, where she died. After the news media descended on the city for a glimpse of tragedy, Egoyan was left in Toronto with an absent star and an interrupted change of course.

Egoyan was first nominated for the Canadian equivalent of the Oscar, the Genie, at 24. The film, "Next of Kin" (1984), is a black comedy about a lonely young man masquerading as an Armenian adoptee. Egoyan's reputation built slowly throughout the 1990s with critically lauded independent films: "The Adjuster," "Exotica" and "The Sweet Hereafter." "The Sweet Hereafter," which Egoyan adapted from a Russell Banks novel, starred Ian Holm as a lawyer trying to prey on a small town suspended in grief after a school bus accident. That 1997 film earned him the "surprise" Oscar nominee slot for best director (and best screenplay adaptation), though he was crushed by James Cameron's "Titanic." "At a luncheon

James Cameron took me aside and said: 'You know, in a way, we made the same movie. They're both about large metal objects crashing through ice,'" Egoyan said, grinning.

Although he claimed to love "Titanic," and financed his early films in part by directing trashy television shows like "Friday the 13th," any trace of mass audience "pop" is virtually absent from Egoyan's oeuvre and, possibly, his life. He was born in Egypt to Armenian parents who had been painters, and was raised in Victoria, British Columbia.

"Atom has no lowbrow side; he doesn't even have a middlebrow side," said the novelist Douglas Cooper, who has known Egoyan since they roomed near each other at the University of Toronto. Typical dorm-room activities included conversations about Harold Pinter and how to depict genocide in art.

Egoyan has also staged his own operas, as well as those by Strauss and Wagner. Neeson worked with him last summer on a Lincoln Center Festival production of the Samuel Beckett play "Eh Joe." "I was very inspired by Atom," Neeson recently said on the phone from New York. "He's incredibly bright, with a wicked sense of humor. He's a renaissance man. There's no one like him in Hollywood."

And that's intentional. After the success of "Exotica," Egoyan spent several months in Los Angeles, a period he jokingly refers to as "my lost year." Meetings begat more meetings and finally he returned to Toronto to make movies on a smaller scale. The exception being the 2005 Kevin Bacon post-modern noir "Where the Truth Lies," a Canadian-British co-production that still allowed Egoyan the creative freedom he has cultivated — until now.

"I never wanted my films to be tested because test screenings have to do with clarity, whether or not you feel confused or uncertain," he said. "Confusion and uncertainty are what the films I write are based on. But 'Chloe' is being designed to go through that process. We shot a lot so we could have malleability to change things. I have no problem with it because that's the intention of this film, to find a wider audience."

This found audience would be new for Egoyan: "Where the Truth Lies," budgeted at \$25 million, took in \$872,000, according to box-officemojo.com. In May his most recent film, "Adoration," came and went swiftly to mixed reviews.

That he had slipped, somewhat, from the good graces of the once-adoring cinephiles, was something Egoyan admitted he thought about. He credited good reviews with gaining him attention as a young filmmaker, and wondered if the changing film world had made it harder

for his kind of movies — what he called medium-size films — to be seen.

"There was a time when there was a real anticipation of an independent film," he said. "But the attention span has changed, and the ability of the critical community to read these films. I think there's a tremendous pressure on critics and film writers to concentrate on films that are perceived to be more popular, and I think it's changed the landscape."

Before starting "Chloe," Reitman became a student of Egoyan's films. "I think for how good his movies are, a lot of them are hard to take," he said. "They're tragedies and very independent in spirit, so they've had somewhat a limited audience." The storytelling in "Chloe," Reitman added, "is faster than his historical work. But it is an Egoyan film in that it's a very personal look at human psychology, with lots of small moments told through nuance. It's less enigmatic."

Moore was drawn to the story of a lived-in marriage. She, Neeson and Egoyan were, at the time, all in long-term relationships. (Egoyan is married to the actress Arsinee Khanjian, and they have a 14-year-old son.) "In ordinary adult life, sex has a different kind of currency than in most movies," Moore said. "Atom's films always understand that sexuality is meaningful."

As research before shooting, Egoyan traveled to New York and, through a friend's recommendation, found a bar in a prominent hotel rumored to host high-end sex workers. He quickly noticed a young blond woman watching him. The director approached and offered her money to explain how this retro form of prostitution worked. "It's very much alive, and based on eye contact, all the things you'd normally do in a bar," he said. "But there's a different negotiation, of course, and that's fascinating. At what point does something that might have become a date become a business interaction?"

He finished his break and went back to shoot Moore and Seyfried, seated at the bar, enacting exactly that negotiation.

Several months later, in the searing heat of July, Egoyan locked up his bicycle outside a cafe in the upscale Summerhill neighborhood of Toronto, near his home. Over breakfast he described the moment when Neeson pulled him aside on the set and told him of Richardson's fall. "He just talked with her and everything seemed to be OK. But there was a feeling of: 'You should go.' And it just changed the course of everything."

Reitman and Egoyan were in immediate phone contact. "First you think, 'Oh my God.' The human side takes over, and you try to proceed in a way that's respectful and honorable," Reitman said. "But there are always one's finan-

cial obligations. Films involve hundreds of lives." Egoyan described a flood of insurers and completion bonders on the set. He brought together the principals, and they went over the script, altering sequences for Neeson's absence.

But within days he quietly returned to Toronto in a private plane, undetected by the news media. "He conducted himself in an extraordinary manner," Reitman recalled. "He was under pressure from the sadness of what had happened, and he channeled it into the performance of those two days."

Over the summer Egoyan attended test screenings of "Chloe" with audiences in Los Angeles and Toronto, reviewing the feedback with Reitman. The response has been extremely positive, Egoyan said; no clarity issues. But strangely, a complex, Egoyan-esque meta-narrative has been imposed on the film that was supposed to be his most direct. It's now the tragic movie about marriage during which one very famous marriage ended so tragically.

Asked if the film read differently to him now elicited a polite, conclusive answer from Neeson: "I can't go back there."

To the same question Egoyan gave a considered response. "It will have interesting overtones because it is about how precious a marriage is," he said. "Maybe it will always be known as the film Liam was working on when that happened. But ultimately we finished the film, and Liam is magnificent in it. Now all we can do is wait and see."

Third Bi-Annual International Conference Of Armenian Writers to Take Place at UCLA

LOS ANGELES — The third biannual conference of Armenian writers who write in a language other than Armenian (English, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, etc.) will be held at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) on November 6 and 7.

The two previous conferences were held in Yerevan (Tzaghkadzor), Armenia, in 2004 and 2006 with the participation of a large contingent of writers from various countries.

This international conference is organized by the Writers Union of Armenia, with the cooperation of the UCLA Armenian Studies Chair, headed by Dr. Peter Cowe who is co-chair of the organizing committee with Levon Ananyan, president of the Writers Union.

Preliminary topics for the symposium include:

- The Role of the Family as the Locus of Roots and Source of Inspiration for Literary Creation.
- The Mutual Interrelation between the Writer and his/her Readership in non-Armenian language Media (the interface between a writer's intended audience and readers' response).
- The Diverse Reflections of Homeland in Literature (different understandings of Armenia, diasporic host societies, spiritual homelands, etc.)
- Perspectives and Talking Points between Writers in non-Armenian language Media and their Counterparts writing in Armenian and also with Armenian communities of varied language heritage.
- Significant Current Literary Trends and Future Expectations with Particular Focus on the Younger Generation of Writers.

Other suggestions are also welcome. Send suggestions to Prof. Osheen Keshishian (osheen@glendale.edu) or Edmond Azadian (Edmondazadian@hotmail.com).

A call for papers has been issued for the symposium and interested individuals should submit a 250-word abstract relating to the symposium topics, no later than September 30 to either lananyan@web.am or cowe@humnet.ucla.edu. Each panel will consist of a major overview presentation of 20 minutes to be followed by several more focused papers of 10 minutes and general discussion.

The conference language will be in English.

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ARTS & LIVING

New York State PBS Station to Broadcast 'We Drank the Same Water'

MONTREAL — On Sunday, September 13 at 7 p.m., the Mountain Lake PBS (Plattsburgh, NY) will broadcast the Armenian documentary "We Drank the Same Water" ("Nous Avons Bu la Meme Eau") by Serge Avedikian.

"We are excited that PBS has decided to broadcast this program," said Armen Bechakjian, chairman of Montreal AGBU. "This is a unique documentary about the discovery of painful memories of genocide, but also of survival, redemption and developing human relations across new generations exploring a common past."

"We have cooperated for several months to bring this film to the PBS audience," said former AGBU Chairman Viken L. Attarian, "and it will be simultaneously broadcast through other PBS stations as well. We are hoping that it gets the wide coverage it deserves. We have raised record sums for PBS through our partnership

and we hope to repeat previous successes."

The AGBU Scout volunteers and Attarian will be present to assist in the membership pledge drive during the broadcast. Also present will be the award-winning filmmaker of this unique film, Avedikian, who was especially invited from Paris to participate in an on-air interview with Attarian.

Mountain Lake PBS has been bringing innovative Armenian programming to the Canadian and American public for close to a decade. Armenians are urged to watch this film and to pledge their support to Mountain Lake PBS.

The film will be broadcast simultaneously by the Albany PBS and will be picked up later for broadcast by other stations. Coverage would go to almost two-thirds of New York state, Southern Quebec, Eastern Ontario (up to Kingston) and any cable grid that would pick up the signal.



A poster for "We Drank the Same Water"

Exhibit of Photos by Haik Kocharian at NYC Gallery

NEW YORK — 92YTribeca presents a new exhibit by New York-based multimedia artist, Haik Kocharian. The exhibition features photographs taken in and around the Indian subcontinent, including the ancient city of Varanasi, the coasts of Varkala and the Tar Desert. The photographs trace a day's cycle from sunrise to sunset in three distinct stages (the first two of which are on view in this exhibition), exploring not only the spirit of the region and its people, but also the nature and complexities of personal transformation that comes with renewal, loss and release. The opening reception was on Friday, September 11 at 6 p.m.; the exhibit runs through September 30.

The first part of the exhibition, "New," depicts worshippers in the ancient city of Varanasi performing their daily ablutions in the Ganges River. Using water as a metaphor for rebirth and renewal, these images suggest the joy and gratitude that accompanies the beginning of each new day. The second segment, "Relation," evolves into a more emotional realm, exploring the nuances of love and human relationships. Visions of veiled female figures haunt these images, hovering between reality and apparition, yet never revealing their faces to the viewer.

Kocharian's images can be found in numerous private and corporate collections worldwide including Bloomingdales, Ralph Lauren and Paris W Hotels. His most recent shows include a solo exhibition at Robin Rice Gallery in 2007 and Appel Gallery in Sacramento in 2009. His work has been published in several US and European magazines including Smithsonian, Elle and Madam Figaro, and he was a finalist in the Positive Focus Photo Competition and the Smithsonian Magazine Annual Photo



A woman bathes in the Ganges.

Competition.

But photography isn't Kocharian's only medium. His rich, acoustic songs have been described as lyrical, heartfelt and often funny, but they can also be dark, angry and at times provocative. Kocharian has performed concerts in New York, Los Angeles and throughout Europe. His first album, "Heaven," was released in 2007, and his second album, "Juice," was released earlier this year. He is currently working on his new album, "Overdose of Pleasure," scheduled for release by mid 2010.

For more information, visit www.92YTribeca.org.



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ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 22 – OCTOBER 27 – Michael Bobelian, author of *Children of Armenia*, published by Simon & Schuster, will participate in a series of readings and book signings. This groundbreaking book is the first to chronicle the aftermath of the first genocide of the 20th century, recounting the Armenian struggle for justice in the face of silence and denial. For more info., www.childrenarmenia.com.

- **SEPTEMBER 22** — 6:30 p.m., at UC Berkeley, 223 Moses Hall, Berkeley, Calif.
- **SEPTEMBER 23** — 7:30 p.m., at the Skylight Bookstore, 1818 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif.
- **SEPTEMBER 24** — 7:30 p.m. at the AGBU Alex Manoogian Center, 2495 E. Mountain St., Pasadena, Calif.
- **SEPTEMBER 29** — 7 p.m., at the Glendale Public Library, 222 E. Harvard St., Glendale, Calif.
- **OCTOBER 1** — 7 p.m., at the Fresno Public Library (Fig Garden Branch), 3071 West Bullard Ave., Fresno, Calif.
- **OCTOBER 18** — 4 p.m., at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, 15105 Mission Hills Road, Mission Hills, Calif.
- **OCTOBER 27** — 7 p.m. at Chaucer’s Bookstore, 3321 State St., Santa Barbara, Calif.

NOVEMBER 7 – Armenian Professional Society Honors Dr. Vartan Gregorian as their Professional of the Year. Sheraton Universal, Los Angeles. Tickets: \$150.

NOVEMBER 8 – Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston travels to California to present its dynamic “Power in Rhythm” performance at Glendale High School Auditorium, 1440 E. Broadway, Glendale. For tickets, contact www.itmyseat.com.

CONNECTICUT

SEPTEMBER 13 – Annual Festival of St. Stephen’s Armenian Church, New Britain and Hartford at the Quartette Club, 225 Wooster St., New Britain, at 12 p.m., rain or shine. Live music, Armenian food; free admission.

SEPTEMBER 26 – Richard Hagopian, Hachig Kazarian, Jack Chalikian, Mal Barsamian, Ron Tutunjian and Paul Mooradian will play in West Hartford, on Saturday. Details will follow. Dance will start at 6 p.m. and end at midnight. The event has been moved to a smaller venue. Make reservations.

FLORIDA

JANUARY 16-23, 2010 – Join Armenians worldwide on the Armenian Heritage Cruise XIII 2010. Sailing on Saturday. To San Juan, PR, St. Thomas and Grand Caicos Islands on the Costa Atlantica. Prices start at \$679 per person. Contact TravelGroup International 1-866-447-0750, ext 102 or 108. Westcoast: Mary Papazian (818) 407-1401; Eastcoast: Antranik Boudakian (718) 575-0142.

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 13 – Trinity Family Festival, 12-5 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Delicious shish, losh, chicken and doener kebab dinners, take-out meals, pastries and beverages. Moonwalk for kids; family games and contests starting at 1:30 p.m. Armenian music by the Greg Krikorian Ensemble. Blessing of “Madagh,” 4 p.m. Raffle drawing for cash prizes, 4:30 p.m., with grand prize: \$1,000; second prize, \$300 and third prize, \$100. Tickets, \$5 or six for \$25. Winner need not be present. Further details to follow. For info., contact Holy Trinity Church Office, (617) 354-0632 or e-mail office@htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 13 – Armenian Church of Holy Translators – Annual picnic. Sunday, 12-5 p.m. New England Laborers Training Camp. 37 East St., Hopkinton. If it rains, go to Church Hall, 38 Franklin St., Framingham. For questions, call Robin Navoian Palombo at (508) 881-7922 or e-mail robinpal@comcast.net.

SEPTEMBER 13 – Picnic Festival at St. Gregory Armenian Church, 158 Main St., North Andover. Armenian-American dancing, food and other activities, 1-5 p.m., on church grounds.

SEPTEMBER 13 – 36th Annual Husenig Foundation Picnic. Simmons St., Rehoboth, Mass. Live music by Gary Kashmanian’s NE All Star Band. Delicious shish kebab, losh kebab, khayma, chicken, pilaf, fresh corn and home baked pastries. For more info., call Bob Janigian (401) 944-2218.

SEPTEMBER 13 – Exhibit Opening and Reception of “In the Shade of Peacock: Parables, Paintboxes and Other Diverse Media” by Marsha Odabashian at the Armenian Library and Museum of America, Watertown. On display through October 11, the exhibit features a range of paintings, acrylic and mixed-media assemblages, and addresses



From September 13 – October 10, the Whistler House Museum celebrates Arshile Gorky, with a preview party on September 13; the exhibit featuring works by Gorky, such as the one pictured above, starts on Wednesday, September 16. For more info., call (978) 452-7641 or e-mail jdyment@whistlerhouse.org.

the formal tensions between borders and interiors, literal and perceived depth, and representation and abstraction. The reception takes place from 2-4 p.m. and is free.

SEPTEMBER 14 – Public Reception for ALMA’s Traveling Exhibit “Legion Armenienne: The Armenian Legion and Its Heroism in the Middle East during World War I,” 5-7 p.m., Northbridge Town Hall (7 Main St., Whitinsville, Mass.) Exhibit continues until September 22. Hours: Mondays, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.; Tuesdays through Thursdays, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Info.: (617) 926-2562 or info@almainc.org.

SEPTEMBER 13-OCTOBER 10 – Whistler House Museum celebrates Arshile Gorky. Preview Party, September 13, Parker Gallery, donation, \$50 per person; \$35 for members. Event features a premiere of works by Gorky, as well as the cuisine and music of his Armenian homeland. For reservations, contact Whistler House Museum of Art, 243 Worthern St., Lowell, call (978) 452-7641 or e-mail jdyment@whistlerhouse.org. Exhibit opens on Wednesday, September 16, 11 a.m. Admission, \$5, adults. Public reception, Saturday, September 19, 2-4 p.m. On Saturday, October 10, at 6 p.m., an original play will be performed by Regina Eliot Ramsey about Willem De Kooning and Gorky.

SEPTEMBER 15 – 16th Annual Golf Classic. \$150 donation includes golf, cart, lunch, banquet, driving range, gifts, prizes and a lot of laughs. A limited number of sponsorships are still available (banquet, lunch, cart, and hole). Save the date and come and play at Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, Boylston. (35 minutes from Boston, 10 minutes from Worcester). 10 a.m. Shotgun start. For more information, call the Armenian Church of Our Saviour, 87 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609. (508) 756-2931. All proceeds are tax deductible. Credit cards honored.

SEPTEMBER 18 – St. James Hye Café. Delicious Armenian food and fellowship. Children’s activities will be provided. 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Friday, 6:30 p.m. Parties of six or more are encouraged to make reservations by calling the St. James church office at (617) 923-8860, no later than 5 p.m. on September 17.

SEPTEMBER 20 – Celebrating 15 years of Greening Armenia Regional event honoring Armenia Tree Project. Sunday. Please save the date. Details to follow.

SEPTEMBER 21 – St. Stephen’s Armenian School/ACEC 14th Annual Golf Outing. Framingham Country Club. \$170 includes golf, lunch, dinner and contests. For info., contact Astor, (781) 326-5764.

SEPTEMBER 24 – Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club – 29th Annual Fall Dinner and Drawing, 6:30 p.m., Thursday,

Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Donation: \$7.99 for delicious losh kebab dinner. Tickets on sale at door. Lottery drawing at 8 p.m. for regular monthly prizes plus five additional cash prizes. “One-Time” numbers will be sold at the dinner. Special offer: Buy four numbers for the night and get the fifth free. For more info., contact the Holy Trinity Church Office at (617) 354-0632 or e-mail office@htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 26 – Smithsonian Museum Day Offers Free Admission to Armenian Library and Museum of America, Watertown. Visit www.almainc.org. Select the Calendar page and click on Smithsonian Museum Day to download your Museum Day Admission Card. Attendees must present the Museum Day Admission Card to gain free entry. Each card provides museum access for two people. The museum is open 1-5 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 28 – First Annual Sts. Vartanantz Golf Tournament and outing, Butter Brook Golf Club, Westford. \$150, includes golf, cart, prizes, reception and awards dinner. 1 p.m., shotgun start. Dinner only, \$35. Proceeds to benefit Sts. Vartanantz Youth Scholarship Fund. Contact Ara at (978) 251-4845, Steve at (978) 808-2820 or e-mail: StsVGolf@earthlink.net.

OCTOBER 2 – Jazz Nights @ ALMA with Armen Donelian Trio at Armenian Library and Museum of America, Watertown. Donelian (piano), David Clark (bass) and George Schuller (drums) will perform music from their latest album “Oasis.” The concert begins at 8 p.m. in ALMA’s Contemporary Art Gallery; museum doors open at 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$15 (includes one complimentary glass of wine for 21+). ALMA members, students and JazzBoston members (with proper ID) pay \$10. Visit www.almainc.org or call (617) 926-2562 to preorder tickets/make table reservations.

OCTOBER 3 – Brattle Boutique and Sparks St. Café – A Fall Fair featuring specialty gift and food items, sponsored by the Women’s Guild of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Saturday. Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. This new event will feature a variety of specialty vendors selling gifts and gourmet food. There will also be a Children’s Corner with activities and items for children. Admission is free. For further info., contact the Holy Trinity Church Office at (617) 354-0632 or e-mail office@htaac.org.

OCTOBER 3 – Armenian American Professionals Gala Banquet and Dance Honoring Massachusetts state Rep. Peter Koutoujian of Waltham. 6 p.m., cocktail hour. Dinner with music and dancing with DJ Eddie K. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Cambridge. For information and tickets, contact Ara Demirjian at (617) 974-8343. Sponsored by the following associations: Armenian American Medical Association, Armenian American Dental Society, Armenian American Nurses Association, Armenian American Bar Association (Law Society) and hosted by the Armenian American Pharmacists’ Association.

OCTOBER 3 – Second St. James Parish Reunion and kef, hosted by the St. James ACYOA Seniors. Saturday, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. at St. James Armenian Church. Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall. 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Featuring Bob Raphalian (oud), Leon Janikian (clarinet), Harry Bedrossian (keyboard and vocals), Kenny Kalajian (guitar) and Leon Manoogian (dumbeg). \$25 per person. Tables of 10 may be reserved with advance payment. For tickets, contact Melanie Khederian at (617) 694-1057 or at mkhederian@gmail.com. All proceeds to benefit the 2010 ACYOA General Assembly and National Sports Weekend hosted by St. James ACYOA.

OCTOBER 4 – Celebration of Armenian Independence Day (New Republic) by the Lowell ARF, 1 p.m., Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Westford Road, North Chelmsford; complimentary dinner and program; David Boyajian will be recognized for his years of dedicated service to the No Place for Hate campaign and will offer an update.

OCTOBER 8 – Michael Bobelian, author of Children of Armenia, will participate in a reading and book signing. 7 p.m. at NAASR Bookstore, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont, Mass. This groundbreaking book is the first to chronicle the aftermath of the first genocide of the 20th century, recounting the Armenian struggle for justice in the face of silence and denial. For more info., www.childrenarmenia.com.

OCTOBER 15 – Human Rights in Armenian History, a lecture by Prof. Simon Payaslian, at 7 p.m. at the Armenian Library and Museum of America, Watertown. Payaslian, Kenosian Chair in Modern Armenian History and Literature at Boston University, discusses the development of human rights in Armenia within a long historical perspective and contends human rights values and customary practices require centuries of development. For more info., visit www.alamainc.org. The event is free and open to the public.



ARTS & LIVING

OCTOBER 23 & 25 — Armenian Festival, Armenian Church of Our Saviour, offering the most delicious shish, losh and chicken kebab on char-broiled grills. Freshly-made kheyma, kids meals available, raffle/prizes, beer and wine. The best authentic Armenian baked goods, country store, music and fun for the entire family. Friday, October 23, 5-9 p.m., and Sunday, October 25, 12-5 p.m. Save the date. Cultural Center, 34 Boynton St., Worcester. (508) 756-2931.

NOVEMBER 6 — Wine Tasting, 7-9 p.m. Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Road, Chelmsford. Tickets: \$30 per person (before October 24) \$35 thereafter. Includes brief wine presentation, appetizers and wine. Contact Carol Hildebrand (978) 618-6982 or e-mail stswine-tasting09@gmail.com.

NOVEMBER 6 — Jazz Nights at ALMA with Steve Tashjian's Classic Groove at Armenian Library and Museum of America, Watertown. ClassicGroove returns to the stage, performing an exciting range of jazz favorites in ALMA's Contemporary Art Gallery. The concert begins at 8 p.m.; museum doors open at 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$15 (includes one complimentary glass of wine for 21+). ALMA members, students and JazzBoston members (with proper ID) pay \$10. Visit www.almainc.org or call (617) 926-2562 to preorder your tickets/make table reservations.

NOVEMBER 6 — "The Golden Voices of Opera," featuring Yeghishe Manucharyan, Victoria Avetisyan and Yelena Dudochkin with Tatyana Dudochkin, piano. Celebrate 2009 Armenian Cultural Heritage Program. Sponsored by Holy Trinity Armenian Church and Choir of Greater Boston. Friday, 8 p.m. Longy School of Music, Edward M. Pickman Concert Hall, 27 Garden St., Cambridge. Tickets: \$25 per person. The program will include favorite arias, duets and romances, including Verdi, Puccini, Rossini, Tigranyan, Abrahamyan, Rimsky-Korsakov and others. For further info., contact the Holy Trinity Church Office at (617) 354-0632 or e-mail office@htaac.org.

NOVEMBER 7 — Film Screening of "Hove" presented by the Armenian Library and Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown, at 2 p.m. Olympia Dukakis stars in this moving tale about two Armenian women whose friendship is deeply affected by an encounter with the past and the powerful, unresolved legacy of the Armenian Genocide. Co-star Shirleyann Kaladjian and Director Alex Webb will attend the screening. Admission is \$8. ALMA members pay \$5. Visit almainc.org.

NOVEMBER 21 — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston sponsors the popular and beloved singer Alla Levonyan of Armenia in a live concert. Save the date. Details to follow.

DECEMBER 4 — Jazz Nights at ALMA with Yulia Musayelyan Quartet at Armenian Library and Museum of America, Watertown. Musayelyan (flute), Fernando Huergo (bass), Franco Pinna (drums) and a pianist conclude the 2009 concert series with original compositions and arrangements that infuse folk rhythms from Argentina, Armenia and other cultures. The concert begins at 8 p.m. in ALMA's Contemporary Art Gallery; museum doors open at 7:30 p.m. Tickets, \$15 (includes one complimentary glass of wine for 21+). ALMA members, students and JazzBoston members (with proper ID) pay \$10. Visit www.almainc.org or call (617) 926-2562 to preorder tickets/make table reservations.

DECEMBER 4 and 5 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Friday, 3-9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Save the date. Details to follow. For info., contact Holy Trinity Church Office at (617) 354-0632 or e-mail office@htaac.org.

FEBRUARY 27-28, 2010 — Arsenal Center for the Arts sponsors the Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston. The production will be performed for two nights at the Charles Mosesian Theater, 321 Arsenal St., Watertown.

OCTOBER 9, 2010 — 30th Anniversary celebration of the Armenian Independent Radio of Boston. Please mark your calendar. Details to follow.

MICHIGAN

SEPTEMBER 12 — ADL/Tekeyan Cultural Association presents An Evening at the Movies. Join us as we screen the award-winning film by the Taviani Brothers based on Antonia Aslan's nostalgic novel, *Skylark Farm*. Saturday, 7:30 p.m., AGBU Manoogian School Hall. Reception to follow. Admission is free. Donations encouraged. For more info., call Hagop Alexanian (248) 334-3636.

OCTOBER 10 — The AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian School 40th Anniversary Celebration Dinner Dance, featuring the opening of the new High School Building Expansion. 22001 Northwestern Highway, Southfield. Hors d'oeuvres and school tours, 7-7:45 p.m. Ribbon-cutting ceremony, 8 p.m. Strolling dinner and open bar to follow. Music provided by Arthur Apkarian. Donation, \$50. Advance tickets only. Reservations by September 30: Linda Darian Karibian (248) 932-5282 or school office (248) 569-2988.

NOVEMBER 19 — Soiree Musical, featuring violinist Henrik Karapetian and his quartet, 7 p.m. Bloomfield Township Library Hall. Reception to follow.

NEW JERSEY

OCTOBER 7 — Michael Bobelian, author of *Children of Armenia*, published by Simon & Schuster, will participate in a reading and book signing. 7 p.m. at the Books and Greetings Bookstore, 271 Livingston St., Northvale, NJ. This groundbreaking book is the first to chronicle the aftermath of the first genocide of the 20th century, recounting the Armenian struggle for justice in the face of silence and denial. For more info., www.childrenarmenia.com.

OCTOBER 10 — Tekeyan Cultural Association — Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group Presents "Who Killed The Eastern Dentist?" A Masquerade Party in Baronian's 1860s Istanbul. A Murder Mystery Dinner Theater prepared by Harout Chatmajian. Assyrian Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary, 644 Paramus Road, Paramus. Saturday, at 8 p.m. Donation, \$60; BYOB; dress code (optional); 1860s attire and mask. For tickets, call Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850, Noushig Atamian (718) 894-5878, Maro Hajakian (201) 934-3427 or Missak Boghosian (212) 819-0097.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 17 — Michael Bobelian, author of *Children of Armenia*, published by Simon & Schuster, will participate in a reading and book signing. 7 p.m., at Barnes & Noble, 97 Warren St., New York, NY. This groundbreaking book is the first to chronicle the aftermath of the first genocide of the 20th century, recounting the Armenian struggle for justice in the face of silence and denial. For more info., www.childrenarmenia.com.

SEPTEMBER 26 — "Evening under the Stars" at St. Nersess Seminary — 150 Stratton Road, New Rochelle. Join in for this cocktail and hors d'oeuvres benefit reception at \$100 per person. A great opportunity to learn about and support the most important institution for the future of the Armenian Church in North America. RSVP at stnersess.edu or call (914) 636-2003.

OCTOBER 15 — Michael Bobelian, author of *Children of Armenia*, will participate in a reading and book signing. 7 p.m. at the Zohrab Center, 630 Second Ave., New York, NY. This groundbreaking book is the first to chronicle the aftermath of the first genocide of the 20th century, recounting

the Armenian struggle for justice in the face of silence and denial. For more info., www.childrenarmenia.com.

OCTOBER 24 — AGBU New York Special Events Committee (NYSEC) presents — AGBU Performing Artists in Concert. A benefit for the AGBU Performing Arts Fellowship Program, showcasing the talents of 12 Armenian youth, under the artistic direction of Hrant and Kevork Parsamian, all of whom have benefited from AGBU's scholarship assistance toward their studies in performing arts. Curtain time 8:30 p.m. Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, 154 West 57th St., New York City. Tickets, \$65. For tickets and info., call (212) 319-6383, ext. 124 or visit www.carnegiehall.org.

JANUARY 5, 2010 — Dinner and program at Cipriani Wall Street. On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the Fund for Armenian Relief is proud to honor and thank a lifetime benefactor to the global Armenian community, Dr. Edgar Houspian. For info., (212) 889-5150 and far@farusa.org.

PENNSYLVANIA

OCTOBER 3 — The Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), Inc. Fourth Annual Complimentary Cocktail Reception. The Village Hall, (Spread Village) in Wayne. A cultural evening featuring the Ararat Dance Ensemble; comedienne Lory Tatoulian, vocalists, artists and rugs. 5-10 p.m. For additional info., contact George S. Yacoubian, Jr. at (610) 213-3452 or gyacoubian@soar-us.org.

RHODE ISLAND

SEPTEMBER 14 — Second Annual Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church Golf Outing. Please join us for a wonderful day of golf at the Pawtucket Country Club. 11:30 a.m. BBQ lunch, 1 p.m. Shotgun start and 6:30 p.m. Dinner and Awards, Prizes and Raffles. For info., contact the church office at St. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, (401) 272-7712.

SEPTEMBER 26 — Autumn Concert — "Rising Stars," featuring Kate Norigian (soprano), John Paul Norigian (piano), Timothy Aznavourian (guitar/vocal) and David Griego (flute). Presented by the Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church as part of its annual Classical and Armenian music; presentation of the art works of Dr. Ara Sadaniantz. Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson St., Providence. 7 p.m. Donations, \$10. Refreshments.

NOVEMBER 28 — Providence ACYOA hosts the Annual Holiday Kef, featuring an All-Star Band. Jason Naroian, Leon Janikian, Kenny Kalajian, David Hoplamazian, Joe Kouyoumjian and more. For individual or table of 10 reservations, call Kevork Vartanian at (401) 419-1052 or Ara Janigian at (401) 486-8495 or Sevan Janigian at (401) 533-4147 or contact providenceacyoa@gmail.com.

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 3 — Michael Bobelian, author of *Children of Armenia*, published by Simon & Schuster, will participate in a reading and book signing. The Armenian Bar Association mid-year meeting in Toronto, Canada. This groundbreaking book is the first to chronicle the aftermath of the first genocide of the 20th century, recounting the Armenian struggle for justice in the face of silence and denial. For more info., www.childrenarmenia.com.

The Mirror-Spectator has a new Calendar Policy: The Mirror-Spectator is now accepting all calendar items for free. All items may be sent to mirrorads@aol.com. Due to the anticipated shortage of space, items may be edited to fit the space.

ALMA Offers Free Admission on *Smithsonian* Magazine's Fifth Annual Museum Day

WATERTOWN, Mass. — On Saturday, September 26, the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) will participate in the fifth annual Museum Day, presented by *Smithsonian* magazine. During this day, ALMA visitors with a Smithsonian Museum Day pass can explore ALMA, the largest ethnic museum in Massachusetts and the largest Armenian museum in the diaspora, free of charge from 1 to 5 p.m.

A celebration of culture, learning and the dissemination of knowledge, Smithsonian's Museum Day reflects the spirit of the magazine, and emulates the free-admission policy of the Smithsonian Institution's Washington, DC-based properties.

Last year, upwards of 200,000 people attended Museum Day, with all 50 states plus Puerto Rico represented by over 900 participating museums, including 84 Smithsonian affiliate museums. This year, the magazine expects to attract over 1,000 museums.

Those interested can visit www.smithsonian.com/museumday to download a Museum Day Admission Card. Attendees

must present the Museum Day Admission Card to gain free entry. Each card provides museum access for two people, and one admission card is permitted per household.

Founded in 1970 with the launch of *Smithsonian* magazine, Smithsonian Media — comprising *Smithsonian* magazine, Air &

Space, goSmithsonian, Smithsonian Publishing Digital Network, Smithsonian Books and advertising for Smithsonian Channel — allows the intellectually curious to indulge and engage their passions for history, the arts, science, the natural world, culture and travel. Smithsonian Media's flagship publication, *Smithsonian* mag-

azine, has a circulation of more than two million. This multimedia network is also affiliated with the world's most visited museum and research complexes at the Smithsonian Institution. For more information, visit www.smithsonian.com, www.airspacemag.com and www.gosmithsonian.com



On Saturday, September 26, the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) will grant visitors with a Smithsonian Museum Day Admission Card free admission to its Museum exhibit galleries.



COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN

Mirror-Spectator

Established 1932
An ADL Publication

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The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July, by:
Baikar Association, Inc.
755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509
Telephone: 617-924-4420
FAX: 617-924-2887
www.mirrorspectator.com
E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com
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New York/New Jersey Office
560 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632
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SUBSCRIPTION RATES:		
U.S.A.	2nd Class	\$75 a year
	1st Class	\$120 a year
Canada	Air Mail	\$125 a year
All Other Countries	Air Mail	\$190 a year
Display advertising rate: \$7 per column inch		

© 2009 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA and additional mailing offices.
ISSN 0004-234X
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, P.O. Box 302, Watertown, MA 02471-0302
Other than the editorial, views and opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the policies of the publisher.

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COMMENTARY

Armenia Needs Support, Not Bashing

By Kevork Marashlian

The announcement by the Armenian and Turkish foreign ministries of protocols as guidelines for establishing diplomatic relations and for developing relations in multiple spheres between both countries has elicited a knee-jerk response of a doom-and-gloom scenario by many arm-chair political pundits in the Armenian Diaspora and mainly in the US, even before political circles in Armenia have declared their positions for or against this new development. Numerous others are jumping on the bandwagon in a rush of bashing the government of Armenia.

A case in point is George Aghjayan’s response in the Armenian Weekly to the ADL Eastern US and Canada District’s statement on the protocols. The ARF leader from the Worcester area considers the announcement of the protocols “a disaster of Armenia’s foreign policy” and misinterprets the ADL statement when he says, “the ADL seems satisfied that simply announcing diplomatic relations ...suffices ‘for a political victory for Armenia.’” Whereas the ADL statement clearly indicates that if Turkey does not back down again (as it did following the April 22 announcement of the road map for opening of the borders), eventually, the process may result in a political victory of Armenia’s initiative of the football diplomacy.

The first word of the protocol is, “Desiring to establish good neighborly relations ...”. So it is an agreement to agree on a long list of propositions, not a done-deal, and there is no indication that all items have to be agreed upon as a condition for establishing normal relations.

Armenia is under tremendous pressure by the West, mainly by the US, but so also is Turkey, to establish normal relations. Isn’t Azerbaijan also pressured not to rock the boat? And if this is all a set up of a game of agreements and broken agreements, then why should Armenia be denied to play by the same rules of the game?

We should have a minimum of trust and confidence in Armenia’s leadership and not jump the gun accusing them of selling out our homeland, our rights and our future. Everyone certainly has the right to express opinions, concerns and criticisms, but crossing the line into judging, accusing and slandering is unacceptable.

About two years ago when Turkey’s president offered then Armenia’s President Robert Kocharian to form an international panel of historians to discuss the historical veracity of the Armenian Genocide, Kocharian rightfully turned down the offer, but proposed to establish diplomatic relations and to open the borders without any preconditions, and proposed the formation of a number of intergovernmental commissions and sub-commissions to examine all issues between the two countries. Turkey ignored Kocharian’s counterproposal. And now, more than two years later, Turkey accepts precisely the same proposal in the form of nicely written-up protocols. But at the time, Kocharian’s counterproposal was not attacked vehemently by our pundits as it is being done now.

Instead of spending our energies to further press the overburdened leadership of Armenia, let us redouble our efforts to increase our political pressure on our own US government to shape its foreign policy of the Caucasus by reconciling US national interests with historical justice. This is certainly an immense task for the relatively small US Armenian community, but it is just as immense a task for the relatively small country of Armenia and Artsakh to stand up indefinitely to the combined pressures of the West, the EU, Turkey, Azerbaijan and their allies, no matter how just a cause Armenia stands for.

If at the cost of reasonable concessions Armenia can achieve the lifting of the blockade, opening of the borders and establishment of normal relations with Turkey, it will breathe easier and will secure its strengthening and development, which are its most immediate and urgent needs.

(Kevork Marashlian is the executive secretary of ADL Eastern District of US and Canada.)

ADL District Committee of US and Canada Appeals to President Obama

Dear Mr. President,

Your election as the leader of world’s most powerful nation on earth restored America’s credibility among nations and placed the country on the path of its Founding Father’s.

We believe that your vision will be able to bring peace to the world and prosperity at home, because your policies match America’s moral authority to its military strength.

It was that vision which took all Americans by storm and gave a landslide mandate to your administration.

The one-million-strong American-Armenian community was also mobilized to join the movement, mostly inspired by your unswerving stand on issues that concern us. Your continued actions as a senator, and later your pledge as a presidential candidate did not leave any doubt that this time around, moral fortitude would prevail over political expediency.

Most reassuring was specially your statement made on April 12, 2007, which said in particular: “For those who aren’t aware, there was a genocide that did take place against the Armenian people. It is one of these situations where we have seen a constant denial on the part of the Turkish government and others that this occurred.”

In April 2009, your statement about the Martyrs’ Day Commemoration, unfortunately fell short of your earlier pledges, allowing the Turkish government to pretend a breakthrough in Armenian-Turkish relations and then retract.

However, we do believe that your other public and private relevant statements in Ankara and your administration’s relentless political actions have brought about a change in the Turkish government’s longstanding intransigence. We believe that those changes must not stand in your way to fulfill your pledge and moreover deny Turkish policymakers a way to find subterfuge in America’s hesitation.

For many years, the premise that using the word “Genocide” may harm American-Turkish relations has proven wrong. Every time Turkey makes headway in that direction, America’s moral paradigm is compromised. Hiding festering wounds will not help healing.

Thanks to your leadership, recent protocols were made public by the respective foreign ministries of Armenia, Turkey and Switzerland. Those advances must not pre-empt America’s moral standing, nor the credibility of its foreign policy.

We urge you at this critical time for the entire Caucasus region to confront Turkish leaders with the historic truth. That will help, in the first place, to heal the deep wounds in the history of the Turkish people, thereby laying the foundations of a true democracy, allowing that country to join the family of civilized nations.

We believe that will also be consonant with your conscience and with America’s global leadership and will help Armenia regain its place in the world.

Sincerely,

Edmond Azadian Papken Megerian
Co-chairman Co-chairman
ADL District Committee of US and Canada

Irresponsible Implosion

When the high court of history sits in judgment at some future date and records the span of services rendered by the Armenian Democratic Liberal party (ADL) leadership of these past few years, there is no doubt that it will bring severe and harsh blame to its conduct. The sad fact is that ADL members, who gave them their position of significance and influence, are not only disappointed but permitted themselves a certain turpitude, a lethargy to creep in to further damage their beloved organization.

The perfect word that describes the present situation of ADL is influenza, which ancients thought was brought about by the malign influence of the stars, to people who had gone off course and permitted natural life styles to influence their actions. They also believed that the only remedy was to return to moderation, sacrifice and a healthy lifestyle – in present terms, “a sound mind and a sound body.” Unfortunately, the present leadership of ADL is indeed suffering from severe but fortunately not fatal influenza-like sickness.

With extreme passion and resolve, all organizations strive to insure the existence and continuity of our community here in the dispersion. Through editorials, columns, church altars, conferences, assemblies and especially political parties, we all work, plead, beg, insist and correctly shout from the roof tops that the only means to have a healthy and lasting Armenian community here in America is to have our young become involved in our affairs. This important advocacy has been championed in the pages of the *Mirror-Spectator* time after time in editorials, columns, poems, articles and views in spectacular and ideal fashion through its decades of publication.

Perfectly true. Youth is the main component to insure the tranquility, peace and vitality of the Armenian community. In the case of the ADL; it is more so as the leaders and members are mostly in their 60s, 70s and beyond. Young blood, young minds, young enthusiasm, are necessary. It takes extraordinary

see IMPLOSION, page 20



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Azerbaijan and Turkey Protect Armenia's National Interest Inadvertently

After reviewing hundreds of articles in regional and international media outlets and scores of statements by various officials regarding the Protocols between Armenia and Turkey, it is clear that these agreements will not be ratified by the Turkish Parliament, unless the Armenian government first makes concessions on Karabagh (Artsakh).

As expected, there was great agitation against the Protocols last week among opposition political parties in both Armenia and Turkey. Furthermore, some Azeri officials and analysts criticized Turkish leaders for appearing to go back on their repeated promises of not opening Turkey's border with Armenia until the Karabagh conflict was resolved.

On April 22, when Armenia and Turkey made public a "Roadmap" to regulate their contentious relations and open their mutual border, Azerbaijan strongly objected, threatening to retaliate against Turkey by taking a number of steps, including cutting off oil supplies.

Turkish leaders immediately stopped the implementation of the "Roadmap" in order to appease their "junior brother," Azerbaijan. Turkish officials repeatedly announced that they would not open their country's border with Armenia, unless

the Karabagh conflict was settled to the satisfaction of Azerbaijan. Prime Minister Erdogan felt obligated to fly to Baku in May to make the same pledge in his address to the Azeri Parliament.

But as international pressure mounted on both Armenia and Turkey to go forward with the frozen "Roadmap," Turkish leaders were careful not to alienate Azerbaijan once again. This time around, they fully briefed President Aliyev during every step of their discussions with Armenia, repeatedly assuring Azerbaijan that its interests would be protected and that nothing would be agreed upon with Armenia, unless the Karabagh conflict was first settled. Just before the two Protocols were announced on August 31, Prime Minister Erdogan briefed President Aliyev by telephone and a high-level Turkish delegation flew to Baku for follow-up talks.

A close reading of the lengthy text of the professionally crafted two Protocols and the appended Timetable indicates that the most critical detail – the date of their expected ratification – is left out! The documents spell out in great precision the terms of the agreements as well as the specific deadline for each of "the steps to be undertaken."

For example, they state that as of August 31, Armenia and Turkey have six weeks to complete "internal political consultations" before the Protocols are submitted to their respective Parliaments for ratification. The documents also specify the exact timeline for the opening of the border and the formation of various committees.

However, all of these steps are contingent upon the crucial prerequisite of ratification of the Protocols by the two Parliaments, for which no date and no deadline is mandated. The joint announcement issued on August 31 by Armenia and Turkey, simply calls on both sides to "make their best efforts" for the "timely" ratification of the Protocols. The missing deadline is certainly not the result of an oversight.

After securing Armenian officials' agreement to Turkey's two preconditions – the formation of a "historical" committee

and recognizing its territorial integrity – Ankara found a clever solution for its third precondition. It made the opening of the border with Armenia contingent upon the resolution of the Artsakh conflict, without including a direct reference to this requirement in the Protocols.

Since the ratification of the proposed agreement by the two Parliaments does not have a particular deadline, the Turkish government will probably apply its extensive diplomatic resources to pressure Armenia – via the OSCE Minsk Group of mediators on Artsakh, composed of France, Russia and the United States – into making concessions acceptable to Azerbaijan.

Turkey could therefore be expected to delay the ratification of the Protocols by its Parliament until Azerbaijan's conditions are met on Artsakh. In recent days, several Turkish commentators pointed out this gaping loophole in the Protocols, boasting that Turkey would not open its border until Armenia makes territorial concessions on Artsakh. Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu made that same pledge practically on a daily basis since the August 31 announcement.

Interestingly, President Aliyev has not said one critical word about this agreement, which calls for the opening of the border with Armenia – something he vehemently opposes. The reason is that he is assured by Ankara that nothing of that sort would take place until Artsakh is delivered to him on a silver platter!

Armenia's president and foreign minister, on the other hand, have been repeatedly stating that they would not accept any linkage between the Artsakh negotiations and the opening of the Turkish border. In order to preserve their own credibility and safeguard the country's national interests, Armenia's leaders should not make even the smallest concession on Artsakh and not ratify these Protocols, until the Turkish Parliament ratifies them first. But, since Turkey refuses to ratify them without the settlement of the Artsakh conflict, the whole agreement would collapse and the international community would then hold Turkey solely responsible for its failure.

Remembering Senator Ted Kennedy

By Gregory Aftandilian

Much has been written and said about the life of Sen. Ted Kennedy since his death a short time ago. For me, his passing left me sad and reflective, for few people have touched me as profoundly as he did. I was fortunate to have worked for him for the entire year of 1999 as a foreign policy fellow, an experience that not only was rewarding on a professional level but which left a lasting impression on me as an example of how a person who wielded so much influence and power could also render so much kindness and compassion.

Growing up in Massachusetts and being interested in history and politics naturally led me to take an interest in Ted Kennedy and his policies. So when an opportunity came knocking while I was a State Department analyst (I was selected as a Brookings Congressional fellow in late 1998 to spend the following year working on Capitol Hill), I gravitated to the Kennedy office. Luckily, I was chosen by Kennedy's senior staff to work as a fellow on foreign policy issues even before my colleagues in the fellowship program were able to obtain positions in other Congressional offices. I felt very fortunate in having landed such a plum assignment.

My first encounter with the senator was, naturally enough, at an Irish cultural event at the Kennedy Center along the Potomac River in Washington. As a staffer, I was to hover around him as guests greeted him and to jot down notes if someone asked him to do a favor. Walking with him into the famous center and seeing the large bust of his slain brother made the evening especially moving. Perhaps because the evening was also an ethnic event I chatted with him about the Armenian community in Massachusetts as I walked him to his car. I knew that a few years earlier he had hosted a wonderful reception for Catholicos Karekin I at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston where the two leaders got along famously, and I told him the sad news that the catholicos was suffering from cancer. Upon hearing this, Kennedy stopped in his tracks and told me to draft a get-well note from him to the catholicos the first thing in the morning. Later that year, when the catholicos succumbed to cancer, Kennedy asked me to draft a statement on his behalf for the Congressional Record in tribute to the life of Karekin I.

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LETTERS

Armenian Studies in US Was Result of Effort by Many

To the Editor:

I read with considerable interest in the May 2 issue of the *Mirror-Spectator* "ALMA Chairman Haig Der Manuelian Speaks at Society for Armenian Studies 35th Anniversary Banquet," which included some of Der Manuelian's recollection of the early days of Armenian Studies in the US and, thus, early days of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

As one of the three original founders of NAASR, with Arra S. Avakian and Thomas T. Amirian, I, too, remember those times with clarity and vividness, including the role of Der Manuelian, one of the first nine founders of NAASR. He is correct to identify the vital part played by Prof. Richard Frye, who was a catalyst for NAASR and for the establishment of a chair (endowed professorship) in Armenian Studies at Harvard University. There are others whose important roles must also be remembered.

In April 1954, when I was chairman of the Program Committee of the Boston branch of the Armenian Students' Association (ASA), I invited Professor Frye to address our group. I was taking a class in Middle Eastern History with Professor Frye at that time in the course of my graduate studies. His talk, before a capacity audience, titled, "The Study of Armenian History, Language, and Culture – It's Need and Importance," called for the establishment of Armenian Studies on the same footing as Persian, Arabic and other regional studies and for the elimination of Armenian-Americans' "ghetto mentality."

In the weeks after Professor Frye's talk, I spoke with Arra Avakian, who had taught Armenian History in Harvard's Extension School, and Thomas Amirian, who shared my enthusiasm for what Frye had said. As it happened, one day I encountered Van Aroian, who is today on NAASR's Board of Directors and who was also a student of Professor Frye's, leaving the latter's office. I learned that they had been conversing about the need

for a chair in Armenian Studies. I had noted the emphasis Frye had placed on the role of Armenia and in the Middle East and had wondered at his interest in the subject. We also discussed the issue of the need for a permanent program in Armenian Studies at a leading university.

Soon after this conversation, on April 29, 1954, I sent a long memo to Frye outlining a possible course of action towards the achievements of the goal establishing a program in Armenian Studies at a leading university such as Harvard.

It was decided that the next step would be to approach the Armenian Students Association (ASA) at their national convention to enlist them to spearhead the movement for the establishment of a chair or program in Armenian Studies. However, while endorsing the idea, the ASA chose not to take on the responsibility for such a large undertaking, which involved raising a minimum of \$300,000.

Thus, it was decided that a new entity would have to be created. A group of nine began meeting and planning: Amirian, Avakian and I were joined by Richard Malkasian, Jack Guveyan, James Etmekjian – all ASA members – along with Eghishe Chrakian, Haig Der Manuelian and Richard Frye.

Meetings and discussions took place throughout 1954 and early 1955. By the time of the public launch of NAASR in March 1955, a group of about 60 men and women had joined and became founding members of the organization. Among them were prominent members of the community such as James Ajemian, Rev. Arten Ashjian, Edna Bogosian, Dikran Boyajian, K. Merton Bozoian, Hamasdegh-Gelenian, Dr. Elizabeth Gregory, G. John Gregory, the Rev. Dr. Yervant Hadidian, J. Mark Kolligian, Rev. Papken Maksoudian, John Mirak, Dr. Thomas Moranian, Zabelle Tahmizian, Zareh Thomajan, Gen. Sarkis Zartanian and notable members of the Harvard faculty such as Prof. Roman Jakobson, Prof. Michael Karpovich and Prof. William L. Langer, at the time the director of

Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, who played a major supporting role and acted as a go-between with the Harvard administration. It would be impossible in a short letter to list all the names, yet all deserve credit and recognition for doing their part to get the ball rolling.

Still others contributed a great deal to the establishment of NAASR and to the creation of the field of Armenian Studies in the US even before NAASR's establishment. A few must be noted, including Rev. A. A. Bedikian who taught Armenian courses at Columbia as early as the 1930s and was a member of NAASR's first Board of Directors; Prof. Robert P. Blake of Harvard who introduced Armenian language and history to Harvard in the 1920s; Prof. Sirarpie Der Nersessian of Wellesley College and Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks Center who appeared at so many NAASR events in the early days; and Prof. Giuliano Bonfante of Princeton, a philologist who did important work on the Armenian language. These great scholars and a handful of others laid an important foundation.

It is a fact, however, that before NAASR was launched Armenian Studies in the US only existed in isolated instances, including at Columbia University, and not on a permanent basis. The men and women who were the founders of NAASR understood the need for Armenian Studies to take its place as a permanent part of academic studies in the US. I am proud to have been one among them.

One day the history of Armenian Studies in the US will be written. It is important – and not only important, but also only right – that the many who made such great efforts and sacrifices to achieve all we have today and to give worldwide recognition to Armenian Studies are not forgotten.

– Manoog S. Young
Chairman Emeritus
National Association for Armenian
Studies and Research (NAASR)



Remembering Senator Ted Kennedy

REMEMBERING, from page 19

These early encounters impressed upon me not only the senator’s compassion but also his close ties to the Armenian community. That April, he spoke at the Armenian Genocide commemorative event on Capitol Hill, and I was proud to have drafted his speech, which was later placed in the Congressional Record, and to have accompanied him to the event. However, on the ride over from the Senate to the House side, where the event was taking place, I saw that Kennedy, much to my chagrin, was not going over my draft, but seemed to be thinking about something else. Only later did I realize that he was collecting his thoughts before arriving at the event. There, he spoke from his heart and delivered a hard-hitting and moving speech, much better than I could have ever composed. That same month, Kennedy also received in his office the then president of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, another memorable event. Kennedy opened the conversation with Kocharian by saying how his family and the Armenian people have had a long and enduring friendship, going back many decades. Later that year, I discov-

ered that President John F. Kennedy, while a freshman at Harvard in the 1930s, had tutored a poor Armenian-American teenager in Cambridge, helped him graduate from high school and kept in touch with him until his own tragic death in 1963. When I wrote an article about this story, based on an interview I conducted with the widow of the person who was tutored, Senator Kennedy was so moved by it that he directed me to send it to his sisters and his niece, Caroline Kennedy, and to the archives of the John F. Kennedy Library.

His commitment to the Armenian people extended to the political battle over Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which restricted US aid to Azerbaijan because of its blockade of Armenia. In 1999, Kennedy went down to the Senate floor and took part in the debate to preserve Section 907 when opponents of Armenia were seeking its removal. It was typical of him to tell me that fellow supporters of Armenia, like himself, would prevail in the fight when the outcome of that vote initially looked uncertain. His participation in that debate helped keep Section 907 unchanged over the next two years.

Outside of working on Armenian issues for the senator, I worked closely with his foreign policy advisor on various topics and together we briefed Kennedy for his meetings with a number of world leaders, including Egyptian President Mubarak, Jordan’s King Abdullah, Irish Prime Minister Ahern and Georgian President Shevardnadze. Kennedy always went out of his way to introduce me to these leaders, even though aides usually operate in the background. It was this personal touch of his that I always found so thoughtful and caring. When my son was born that year, Kennedy sent him a “warm Irish welcome” note that our family has treasured, as we have an inscribed print of one of his Cape Cod paintings.

As my fellowship was sadly coming to an end in late 1999, I heard of an opening on the staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and applied for it. Kennedy was legendary for being helpful to his staffers in their career pursuits and he did the same for me. If it were not for his personal intervention, I would have not gotten the job, as competition for such positions was extremely stiff. Seven years later, Kennedy and his staff were again instrumental in helping me obtain an international security affairs fellowship at Harvard.

Even after I left his office, Kennedy would always treat me with the same warmth and kindness as he did when I worked for him. When I would run into him in the corridors of the Senate, he would pat me on the back and ask me how I was doing. He took a genuine

interest in all of his former staffers and would invite them to his annual Christmas parties where, after performing a hilarious skit in costume with his wife Vickie and making fun of himself, he would then move around the room to greet everyone personally.

Ted Kennedy never forgot his Irish ethnic roots and even though he grew up in wealth and privilege, he understood, probably based on his family’s background, that life was unfair at times, discrimination was a scourge that had to be defeated and that public service meant championing the rights of all people. He worked assiduously and successfully for immigration reform early in his career, overturning laws that discriminated against people from outside of Northern and Western Europe. Thousands of ethnic families today, including Armenian-American ones, owe their existence and opportunity in America to Kennedy’s immigration reform efforts. He similarly championed health care reform, believing that no American family should be denied health coverage for a loved one in need of care. And he championed human rights around the world, believing that basic freedoms of free speech and assembly should not be denied.

It was this compassion, both at the personal level and in the national and international arenas that endeared him to so many people, including me. I was fortunate to have known him, even for a relatively short period of time, and will always be grateful for his friendship and the lessons he taught me.

(Gregory Aftandilian is currently a consultant and writer on Middle East affairs, having spent over 21 years in government service.)

Irresponsible Implosion

IMPLOSION, from page 18

nary courage and superhuman hope to assume that any young man or woman would like to join ADL ranks in being witness to the chaos, confusion, conspiracy and conflict that reigns within the leadership of this party.

The provincially-inspired founders of this organization witness from their heaven the shameful and ugly division, confusion, distortion and out-of-control situation that surrounds the so-called leadership of the ADL. Void of all principles, ideals and virtue, driven by self-interest and personal gain they have created a poisonous atmosphere and spread shame and disbelief among the once proud and dedicated members.

Needless to say, times change and bring with them new situations, new challenges and problems. But values, virtues and principles of goodness, unity and harmony remain constant. Worldwide ADL community witnesses selfish motivations instead of common good, festering animosities instead of love, punishment instead of gratitude, suspension and expulsion instead

of reward and praise. All these combined have created an untenable situation totally alien – this once much respected and loved political entity.

Despite the iron grip of reality, the ADL members and supporters worldwide should try to keep their dreams hopeful and alive. This present situation is an aberration and only temporary. We all should amputate the recent past, as difficult as it may seem. The Armenian world must believe that the havoc, the chaos, the confusion and discord along with the bleak, the black and the bitter will soon disappear. An Arthurian Galahad with his army of knights will soon emerge and bring back the passion, the brawn, the courage and that person will spread order, harmony, unity and purpose. The ADL stood for generations and put back a heavenly smile on the faces of its founders and wipe their tears away.

(Nubar Dorian recently published a collection of his articles titled, *Harvests of the Heart*. He lives in New Jersey.)

Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Release Statement on Armenia-Turkey Developments

WASHINGTON – US Representatives Frank Pallone Jr. and Mark Steven Kirk, co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, recently released the following statement on the recent Armenia-Turkey developments.

“As co-chairs of the Armenian Caucus, we support the aim of Monday’s development between Armenia and Turkey to move toward normalizing relations. We believe it is essential that the two countries do so without preconditions and in a timely manner.

“While we are optimistic that efforts are being renewed to lift the Turkish blockade and establish relations between the two countries, we remain concerned with Turkey’s willingness to cooperate in the matter.

“On July 30, along with 80 Members of Congress, we sent a letter to President Obama expressing our concern that the Turkish government will once again stall progress on these efforts. Only weeks after announcing the historical agreement to work towards normalization with Armenia, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan steered his country away from the negotiations by placing preconditions on normalization. Once again, we fear that Turkey will use the recent developments as an excuse to continue stall tactics, which prevent a truthful working relationship between the two nations.

“We are concerned with certain provisions

of the protocols, which may include preconditions to opening the border between Armenia and Turkey. Normalization of relations should take place without preconditions. Any attempt to include a review of historical fact, such as the Armenian Genocide, or to include the ongoing Nagorno Karabagh peace process into these negotiations stands in direct opposition to the intent of these talks.

“We remain hopeful that Turkey, by lifting its illegal blockade, will open the door to normalized relations between Yerevan and Ankara, and a new era of Armenia-Turkey relations based on truth, justice, peace and cooperation. By coming to terms with the past and reconciling any current conflicts, Turkey and Armenia will help bring more stability to a volatile and strategic region of the world,” the statement of US congressmen reads.

Late on August 31, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Turkey issued a press release which said: “The Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey have agreed to start their internal political consultations on two protocols – the ‘protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations’ and the ‘protocol on the development of bilateral relations’ – which have been initiated in the course of their efforts under Swiss mediation.”

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