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NEWS IN BRIEF



Artur Aleksanyan Becomes World Champion – Again

PARIS (Armenpress) – Greco-Roman wrestler Olympic champion Artur Aleksanyan became the world champion for the third time, at the World Championships here, on August 21.

Aleksanyan's rival was Musa Evloyev representing Russia.

Aleksanyan is an Olympic Champion (2016) and bronze medalist (2012), a three-time World Champion (2014, 2015, 2017), and a three-time European Champion (2012, 2013, 2014).

Aleksanyan is the second Olympic gold medalist of Armenia since regaining independence in 1991 and is the most decorated Olympian of independent Armenia as well. He has been nicknamed the "White Bear" and is one of the most renowned Armenian athletes of the 21st century.

Americana Mall Reverses Rejection Of Genocide Film Ad In Wake of Uproar

GLENDALE – On Thursday, August 17, the Armenian National Committee of America-Glendale held a press conference at the Americana at Brand to update the media and the community at large on its next steps in addressing the issue surrounding Caruso Affiliated's prior decision to reject advertisement space for the upcoming Armenian Genocide documentary, "Architects of Denial."

Initially, the press conference had been planned to announce an official boycott of the Americana at Brand and Caruso Affiliated based on its utter lack of sensitivity toward the Armenian-American community, its decision to reject billboard space calling it "too political," claiming that the advertisement would violate their "guideline principle," which is to "ensure that everyone in the community feels welcome" and Mr. Caruso's unwillingness to immediately meet with ANCA Glendale to rectify the situation.

But as the organization was setting up the microphones on the green public park in the heart of the Americana at Brand, Caruso Affiliated, submitted a response letter to the organization condemning "violence and atrocities of any form anywhere in the world, including the Armenian Genocide that has impacted the lives of Armenians in our community." The letter also stated that Caruso Affiliated will work see REVERSAL, page 16

Ankara Mayor Calls German MP 'Armenian' As Insult

ANKARA (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Ankara Mayor Melih Gokcek has called the Bundestag member from the Green Party Cem Ozdemir "an Armenian," in order to insult him.

Gokcek has accused Ozdemir of being an "Armenian servant" and traitor. Ozdemir, the son of Turkish immigrants who moved to Turkey, has been highly critical of the Turkish government.

Ozdemir introduced a resolution at the Bundestag for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. German lawmakers approved the bill on June 2, 2016, much to the dissatisfaction of Turkey.

"Sit tight, you Armenian servant," Gokcek wrote on both his English and Turkish Twitter accounts above a picture of Ozdemir.

Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) representative Garo Paylan responded, "Cem Ozdemir will become the pride of Turkey," Paylan tweeted, calling Gokcek a "racist fascist."

Paylan Files Complaint Against Columnist

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Turkish-Armenian parliament member Garo Paylan submitted a complaint against columnist of *Yeni Safak* (New Dawn) newspaper Hayrettin Karaman, on August 22. Hayrettin Karaman posted a note insulting Christians. He also included some quotes from the Koran about the relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim peoples.

Paylan filed a complaint with the Turkish prosecutor's office against Karaman on charges of inciting hatred and humiliating Christians.

Spanish Police Arrest Writer Supporting Genocide Recognition

GRANADA, Spain (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Turkish writer Dogan Akhanli who has been critical of Ankara's policies and written extensively about the Armenian Genocide, was arrested on August 19 after the Turkish government issued an Interpol arrest warrant, *El Periódico* reports.

Spanish police did not reveal the reason for the arrest.

After the 1980 coup, Akhanli went into hiding and was a political prisoner in a Turkish military jail between 1985 and 1987. He fled Turkey in 1991 and settled in Germany.

A German citizen, Akhanli is committed to memorializing the genocides of the 20th century, including the Armenian Genocide.

Akhanli wrote two novels on the mass killings of Armenians in 1915, *The Judges of the last Judgment* and *The Last Dream of the Madonna*.

Dr. Gary Zamanigian Elected Grand Commander of the Knights of Vartan

BOSTON – During the 99th Grand Convocation of the Knights of Vartan, Dr. Gary Zamanigian of Detroit was elected the Grand Commander of the brotherhood for the year 2017-2018.



The other members of the Grand Council are deacon Richard Norsigian, Howard Ateshian, Gary Javizian, Edward Bedikian, George Boyajian and Ray Bouloulian.

Zamanigian is a retired family practitioner in Trenton, Mich. and was affiliated with multiple hospitals in the area, including Henry Ford Hospital and Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital. He has been an active member of the local St. John Armenian Church and served as its board chairman and Diocesan delegate, in addition to chairing different committees. He has financially contributed to the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) programs of the Diocese in Armenia. He is also involved in the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

During the tenure of past Grand Commander Steve Kradjian, the organization established an office and communication liaison in Armenia and celebrated its 100th anniversary both in Philadelphia and Yerevan.

The convocation was organized by Ararat Lodge and Arpie Otyag of Boston under the chairmanship of Nelson Stepanian and Anahid Mardiros. Delegates had a chance to tour the Armenian Heritage Park, visit the Armenian Museum of America, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and other Armenian organizations.

In addition to workshops, an Armenian Kef Night was organized with the participation of more than 450 Armenians at Hyatt Regency, Cambridge.

Tsoleen Sarian Eager to Spread The Gospel of Project SAVE

By Alin K. Gregorian

Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN – Tsoleen Sarian is ready for her new role as executive director of Project SAVE, one which dovetails many of her diverse interests as well as professional experience.

Sarian studied history at Merrimack College and is a keen photographer, as well as someone who always wants to "contribute to Armenian causes and issues."

Project SAVE for Sarian, she said, "is a convergence of all those interests."

Sarian started working at Project SAVE in 2015 and took over as executive director in May 2017 from founding executive director Ruth Thomasian.

She said, "I want to do a strategic plan with our supporters, those that have an interest in us, and build on 40 years' work. I understand what people value in this organization – the fact that we preserve photos and Armenian life."

Sarian said that the Project SAVE archives serve as a primary source for recognition of the Armenian Genocide. "It gives a voice to people lost in Genocide. [It shows] that they are not lost and forgotten," she

added.

Project SAVE, she said, "tells the story of the Armenian diaspora. We celebrate life in the Armenian diaspora and not just in the homeland."

Every year, the organization has sold a one-of-a-kind calendar based



Tsoleen Sarian

on a theme.

The themes have included Armenian dance, life before the Genocide and even hats. The theme for this year is "Our Journey," celebrating the refugees and migrants who make up so much of the current

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40 Years of Interns

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News From Armenia

Armenia Wins Second Gold Medal in Wrestling Tournament in France

PARIS (Public Radio of Armenia) – Armenia's Maksim Manukyan (80 kg) beat Radik Kuliyevev of Belarus in the final to claim gold at the 2017 World Wrestling Championships under way in Paris.

It took the Armenian wrestler less than two minutes to defeat Georgia's Zurabi Datunashvili in the semi-final 7:0 earlier on Tuesday, August 22.

Manukyan won the second gold for team Armenia in the current championship. Reigning World and Olympic champion Artur Aleksanyan retained his title in a bout with Russia's Musa Yevloyev on Monday.

Armenian Goods Go on Exhibit in Moscow at Exposition

MOSCOW (Public Radio of Armenia) – An exhibition of goods made in Armenia opened in Northern Butovo – one of the most densely-populated districts of Moscow – on August 21.

Companies representing the light industry sector and firms processing agricultural products showcase their goods at the expo. Armenian souvenirs are also on display.

The exhibition has been organized by Armenia's Trade Representation in the Russian Federation under an export promotion program worked out by the Armenian Ministry of Economic Development and Investments, with support from the Armenian Embassy in Russia and in line with an agreement reached with the Department of Trade and Services of Moscow.

The exhibition will continue through August 27.

Prime Minister Extends His Condolences to Spanish Counterpart

YEREVAN – Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan sent a message of condolences to Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Spain Mariano Rajoy Brey.

"On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and myself, I express my deepest condolences on the terrorist acts in Barcelona that killed dozens of innocent people. We strongly condemn terrorism, which does not recognize nationality and borders with all its manifestations.

"We share your grief in a difficult moment for your country and express our sympathy to the friendly people of Spain and the victims' relatives, wishing strength and endurance to overcome the consequences of the tragedy.

"Please accept, Excellency, my sincere condolences and the assurances of my deepest respect."

Prime Minister Hosts German Development Bank Delegation

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Prime Minister of Armenia Karen Karapetyan on August 22 hosted a delegation led by German Development Bank (KfW) Regional Director Olaf Zimelka, the press service of the government announced.

Issues relating to the KfW funded programs being implemented in Armenia were discussed. The prime minister appreciated the cooperation with the bank and attached importance to its assistance to ongoing programs in different branches of economy and ensuring their continuation. Olaf Zimelka highlighted the productive mutual partnership with the Armenian government and expressed readiness to discuss the presented issues and proposals aimed at outlining the next steps. As for the Armenian government's activity, Olaf Zimelka highlighted the high growth rate of Armenia's GDP and the effective steps aimed at diversifying the export.

Prime Minister Attends Opening of Baze Youth Assembly

YEREVAN – Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan attended the opening of the 15th annual Baze youth gathering in Tsakhkadzor.

Welcoming and congratulating the youth on the opening of Baze, the premier noted that this edition of Baze is symbolic because its 15th anniversary is being marked this year. "More than 8,500 young people from Armenia, Artsakh and the Diaspora have participated in the gatherings ever since the launch of Baze, and I think this movement is a good platform where young people can feel united. Youth is the most exciting and progressive part of any society. Armenia is not an exception in this respect, and you all have the responsibility to make tomorrow's day better, it is important for you to be pleased with both the responsibility and opportunity, and act accordingly," Karen Karapetyan pointed out.

Karapetyan urged the youth to be independent, free and active. "Work on



Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan, second from right, speaks with the athletes.

ter's letters of appreciation to a number of young people for active participation in youth-targeted events and significant contribution to the

which bore on Armenia's economic development, including the reform of tax and customs systems, healthcare, education and sports.

Referring to economic developments, Karen Karapetyan noted that during the first 7 months of this year economic activity grew by 6.2 percent, industry – 12.7 percent, exports – 21.6 percent and imports – 28.5 percent. In the meantime, several programs have been launched. "Investments have been made in textile industry, agriculture, information technology, energy, tourism, and so on. We declared that we have developed investment programs to a total cost of USD3.2 billion, of which 830-840 million is expected in by this yearend. We will provide a report: the pace of ongoing investments shows that the aforementioned figures are quite feasible," Karen Karapetyan underscored.

Touching upon the implementation of programs by the Armenian Investment Club, the prime minister noted that the latter participates in the construction of Shnogh hydroelectric power station. At the same time, Karapetyan noted that hard work is needed to implement the proposed investment programs.



Some of the young athletes at the Baze games

yourselves regularly to become more competitive, up-to-date, take a look more confident and courageous look at tomorrow, and most importantly, love our country," the Prime Minister said.

Karapetyan handed the prime minis-

Government's youth policy, as well as on the 15th anniversary of Baze Pan-Armenian Youth Assembly.

After the participants had presented their vision of Armenia's development, the Premier asked their questions,

Grandmaster Levon Aronian Named Inaugural 2017 Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz Champion

SAINT LOUIS, Mo. – With the eyes of the world on Saint Louis for the inaugural and historic Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz competition, the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis (CCSCSL) crowned Levon Aronian the champion of the Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz and the fourth leg of the Grand Chess Tour (GCT).

"It's an honor to win this incredible tournament against this level of competition, especially against some of my all-time chess idols," said new Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz champion Levon Aronian. "I'm excited to carry this momentum into what I hope is a successful conclusion to the GCT at the London Chess Classic this upcoming December."

To capture the tournament victory, Aronian dazzled the chess board with an incredible performance against nine of the world's best chess players to take home the \$37,500 prize and 13 Grand Chess Tour points. Aronian's win in Saint Louis moves the Armenian grandmaster into third place overall in the Grand Chess Tour Standings.

The Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz awards a total prize fund of \$150,000 and represents the fourth of five stops on the 2017 GCT a circuit of international chess events featuring the world's elite chess talent, created in partnership between the CCSCSL and Chess Promotions, Ltd. (London Chess Classic). In a special twist to the inaugural Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz this year, legendary world

champion Garry Kasparov came out of retirement to play competitive chess for the first time in 12 years.

"From beginning to end, this year's inaugural Saint Louis Rapid & Blitz was truly a tournament unlike any other in chess," said Tony Rich, Executive Director of the CCSCSL. "It was incredibly special to witness history as an icon in our game Garry Kasparov returned to the chessboard and Levon Aronian put on a world-class display to take home the title and prize."

Finally, at the conclusion of the Saint Louis Rapid and Blitz, the CCSCSL hosted the much-anticipated Ultimate Moves blitz games on Aug. 19, 2017. Ultimate Moves, a fun event traditionally played following the Sinquefield Cup, consists of a lively series of blitz games among GCT players and special guests. This year's Ultimate Moves competition pitted two teams managed by Rex and Randy Sinquefield, respectively. Team Rex consisted of Rex Sinquefield, Levon Aronian, Hikaru Nakamura, Sergey Karjakin, Ian Neopomniachtchi, Lenier Dominguez and special guest John Urschel, former Baltimore Raven offensive lineman and current PhD student at MIT. Team Randy consisted of Randy Sinquefield, Fabiano Caruana, Garry Kasparov, Vishy Anand, David Navara, Liem Le and special guest Rachel Li, the 7-year-old sister of Grandmaster Ruifeng Li. The competition went down to the wire, where a tiebreak match was held to determine the winner with Team Rex claiming victory.



INTERNATIONAL

Syria War: 'Dozens of Civilians Killed' in Raqqa Air Strikes

RAQQA (BBC) – US-led coalition air strikes have killed dozens of civilians in the Syrian city of Raqqa over the past 24 hours, activists and state media say.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported that 42 had died in attacks on areas held by so-called Islamic State.

Anti-IS group Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently said 32 were killed in one district alone.

The coalition said it adhered to strict targeting processes and procedures aimed to minimize risks to civilians.

Its aircraft are supporting a ground assault on Raqqa by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) alliance, which is believed to have captured more than half of the de facto capital of the IS "caliphate" since early June.

The Syrian Observatory, a UK-based group that monitors the six-year-old civil war through a network of sources, said on Tuesday that 19 children and 12 women were among those killed in Monday's air raids on the Sukhani and Badu districts.

The figures took to 167 the number of civilians killed in coalition strikes since 14 August, it said.

"The tolls are high because the air strikes are hitting neighborhoods in the city center that are densely packed with civilians," Syrian Observatory director Rami Abdul Rahman told AFP news agency.

Hussam Essa of Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently said: "Unfortunately, civilians have no way to protect themselves. All they can do is try to hide in whatever shelter they can and avoid going out into the street as much as possible."

The coalition said it took all allega-

tions of civilian casualties seriously and assessed those deemed credible, but that those made by the Syrian Observatory in recent days lacked "specificity and detail making it very difficult to properly assess".



Raqqa is Being Slaughtered Silently posted photos it said showed the destruction in Badu

"The coalition respects human life and our goal is always for zero civilian casualties," it added. "Coalition forces take all reasonable precautions during the planning and execution of airstrikes to reduce the risk of harm to civilians."

Earlier, it said coalition warplanes had conducted 20 air strikes in the Raqqa area on Monday, engaging 13 IS tactical units and destroying 24 fighting positions, a vehicle, a logistics node and communications infrastructure.

At the start of June, the coalition said its 22,983 air strikes in Syria and Iraq since 2014 had unintentionally killed at least 624 civilians. However, human rights groups believe the true figure is

far higher.

Airwars, an organization that tracks allegations of civilian deaths, said that as of 8 August, coalition air strikes were likely to have killed at least 4,487 civilians.

On Monday, UN spokesman Stéphane Dujarric told reporters that it was deeply concerned for the safety of up to 25,000 civilians trapped inside Raqqa, many of them women and children.

Tens of thousands of people had fled the city, but those remaining faced severe restrictions of movement in and out of the city, which had dwindling food and water supplies, he said.

"The UN stresses again that all parties to the fighting are obligated to protect civilians under international humanitarian law, as well as the need for sustained and unhindered access to those who need help," Dujarric added.

EU Commissioner Calls for New Turkey Policy

By Lisbeth Kirk

BRUSSELS (EU Observer) – The European Union (EU) enlargement commissioner Johannes Hahn has called for a change of course for the EU on Turkey's accession to join the bloc, after president Recep Tayyip Erdogan urged



Hahn (l) justified his demand with Erdogan's interference in the Bundestag election campaign. (Photo: ec.europa.eu)

Turks living in Germany not to vote for the county's two ruling parties in the upcoming September elections.

Erdogan said last week that German citizens with Turkish origins should not vote for chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU), Martin Schulz's Social Democratic Party (SDP) or the Green Party, because they had demonstrated an anti-Turkey stance.

"I believe it is time for the member states to discuss the strategic implications of this behavior. Shrugging your shoulders is not a political strategy in the long run," Johannes Hahn told German daily *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* Monday, August 21.

Hahn justified his demand with Erdogan's interference in the Bundestag election campaign, as well as Ankara's forced extradition request of the German-Turkish author Dogan Akhanli.

"The interference of president Recep Tayyip Erdogan in a national election campaign, as well as requests for extradition regarding alleged political opponents are unacceptable," said the Austrian EU commissioner, who has been in charge of the EU enlargement policies since 2014.

Armed police arrested Dogan Akhanli on Saturday morning at his hotel in Granada, Spain. He was handcuffed and driven to a regional HQ for questioning.

The 60-year-old writer was later freed, but is not allowed to leave Spain until judges have decided whether to extradite him to Turkey.

The arrest of a Turkish dissident has highlighted the way rogue regimes use Interpol to hunt their enemies inside the EU.

The European Parliament voted in July by a large majority to suspend Turkey's membership talks with the EU, saying president Erdogan's crackdown on political opponents meant Ankara did not meet the bloc's democratic criteria.

But, so far, EU member states and the European Commission have held back on criticism of Turkey.

They do not want to provoke a change of an agreement struck last year, whereby Turkey effectively stopped migrants reaching Greece, easing the migration crisis that had threatened EU unity.

The layoffs and arrests without a legal basis show that the leadership in Ankara "is apparently not willing to revise its course, which brings it farther and farther away from Europe," Hahn said.

The commissioner was backed by Luxembourg's foreign minister, Jean Asselborn, who told the German daily that "Erdogan knows no limits, he wants to provoke the abortions of the accession negotiations."

"We should keep a cool head and not fall for it," Asselborn added, saying that there was still hope that Turkish democracy could be saved.

Turkey applied to join what was then the European Economic Community in 1987, and was declared eligible to join the EU ten years later, but there has been little progress in reality on Turkey's membership bid since negotiations were formally launched 12 years ago.

International News

Armenia Lends Hand to Georgia for Forest Fire

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Several fire engines from Armenia went to Georgia's Borjomi Gorge this week to help Georgia fight wildfire, Georgia's Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili has said.

Apart from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey are also helping the country fight the fire.

The United States and Russia have also offered support, but Kvirikashvili has said that "what we have so far is enough."

A massive forest fire has been raging in Georgia for three days.

Armenian, Russian Presidents to talk Karabakh in Sochi

SOCHI (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Armenian president Serzh Sargsyan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin discussed the Nagorno Karabakh conflict at a meeting in Sochi on Wednesday, August 23.

Sargsyan departed for Russia for talks on a number of political, economic, humanitarian and cultural issues.

Also, the officials weighed in on a variety of aspects concerning the cooperation between the two countries within the CSTO and the EAEU.

Regional and international conflicts, including the one in Karabakh, were scheduled to be on the agenda.

Sargsyan and Putin's last meeting took place in Russia during the Armenian leader's visit in March.

Armenian Church to Be Restored into Cultural Center in Turkey

ISTANBUL (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The Armenian church in the Turkish town of Aksehir, Konya will be restored, while the priest's house behind the church will serve as a boutique hotel, Agos reported on August 18.

The restoration will take place within the framework of the World Humor Village Project, and start operating as a cultural center.

Aksehir Mayor Dr. Salih Akkaya said the restoration will be completed in the coming years.

Yerevan Said to Seek More Iranian Gas Imports

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Armenian government wants to more than double imports of natural gas from neighboring Iran, according a senior executive of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC).

Armenia has imported up to 500 million cubic meters of Iranian gas annually through a pipeline built in 2008. It has paid for those deliveries with electricity generated at a thermal power plant in Yerevan.

The swap arrangement is due to be expanded significantly following the construction of a third power transmission line connecting the two countries. It is due to be completed in 2019.

The NIGC director for foreign relations, Behzad Babazadeh, said last week that Yerevan wants to increase the daily volume of current Iranian gas deliveries from less than 1 million cubic meters to 2 or even 2.5 million cubic meters even before the new high-voltage line comes on stream. "NIGC is considering this request," he told the Shana news agency.

Babazadeh made clear that the Iranian side would like to be paid for the additional gas in cash. He also indicated that extra supplies would cost Yerevan more than the current price of Russian gas for Armenia set at \$150 per thousand cubic meters. "Of course, Armenia favors the price of Russia's gas sales, which is low, and we do not accept it," he said.

Armenia imports around 2 billion cubic meters of Russian gas each year. Russia's Gazprom gas monopoly owns the South Caucasus state's gas distribution network.

Visiting Yerevan last December, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said he and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan agreed to increase Iranian gas supplies to Armenia. But he did not elaborate.

Community News

San Diego Researcher Ardem Patapoutian Elected to National Academy of Sciences

LA JOLLA, Calif. — A scientist from The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) in San Diego—Ardem Patapoutian—has been elected to the prestigious National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for his “distinguished and continuing achievements in original research,” the academy announced today. Ardem joins several other TSRI scientists as members of this exclusive group of scientific scholars.

“Ardem has made extraordinary contributions to science,” said TSRI President Peter G. Schultz, PhD. “His work, and this well-deserved recognition, place him among an elite group of scientists, and we are incredibly proud to have him as colleague. I wish him a hearty congratulations.”

Patapoutian, a TSRI professor and member of the Dorris Neuroscience Center at TSRI and investigator with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, studies how cells “talk” to each other and send signals through the body. His lab works to uncover the basic mysteries of human sensory biology, such as the proteins underlying our sense of touch, and contribute to the development of future treatments for disease.

“It is truly such an honor to be recognized by the NAS, especially as the need to advocate for strong science public policy is more urgent than ever,” said Patapoutian. “TSRI has truly enabled the cutting-edge techniques that have propelled our research forward.”

Patapoutian is among the academy’s 84 new members and 21 foreign associates.



“IT IS TRULY SUCH AN HONOR TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE NAS, ESPECIALLY AS THE NEED TO ADVOCATE FOR STRONG SCIENCE PUBLIC POLICY IS MORE URGENT THAN EVER”

—ARDEM PATAPOUTIAN

The National Academy of Sciences is a private, nonprofit institution that was established under a congressional charter signed by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863. It recognizes achievement in science by election to membership and, along with other groups, provides science, technology and health policy advice to the federal government and other organizations.



Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Interns and Armenian National Institute (ANI) Director Dr. Rouben Adalian with Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), who visited Armenia in 1991 and observed the referendum for independence from the Soviet Union

Armenian Assembly Celebrates 40 Years of Intern Program in Washington

WASHINGTON — The Armenian Assembly of America celebrated the 40th year of its internship program, which provides opportunities for the next generation of Armenian Americans to participate in public service in Washington.

The Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program, founded in 1977, was the first internship program offered by an Armenian organization in America. For eight weeks each summer, the program gives college students of Armenian descent an opportunity to gain exposure to the policy-making process in our nation’s capital. Over 1,000 students have completed internships through the Assembly.

The Terjenian-Thomas Assembly class of 2017 interns included Lara Avsharian from California, Shant Bekarian from New Jersey, Taylor Boole from North Carolina, Milena Davtyan from Utah, Samantha Dore from Washington, Emily Hagopian from New Jersey, Mateos Hayes from Tennessee, Nicholas Jundanian from Maryland, David Madey from California, Lidia Nalbandyan from Utah, Hugh Rabjohns from Illinois, Axel Sarkissian from California, Alain Tamazian from California, and Sasha Tavitian from Washington. This summer’s internship program was led by Intern Coordinator Robert Arzoumanian, an alumnus from the 2016 program.

“I was honored to have the opportunity to return to Washington, DC as this year’s Terjenian-Thomas Assembly intern coordinator. It was great to see students from all around the country working together to help the Armenian American community. The Assembly interns were all incredibly intelligent and their passion for their work was contagious. It was a pleasure to work with them and I hope they use the knowledge and experience they gained this summer to continue improving their communities,” Arzoumanian said.

Through the Assembly’s Lecture Series, participants met with members of Congress, including House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Ranking Member and Armenian Caucus Vice Co-Chair Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI) and Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA). As part of the Capitol Ideas, the interns sat down with U.S. Department of Homeland Security Program Manager Noris Balabanian, Artsakh Representative to the U.S. Robert Avetisyan, and Armenian Church of America Eastern Diocesan Legate Archbishop Vicken Aykazian. Additionally, they discussed future careers with many Assembly intern alumni, including US Embassy in Armenia Political and Economic Deputy Chief Ruben Harutunian, Nahigian Strategies President Keith Nahigian, and Department of Justice Senior Counsel for National Security and Assembly Board Member Aram Gavor.

“Congresswoman Speier is one of two Armenian-American Representatives in the United States Congress, and I hold her in high regard. She proves her dedication to her work everyday, and I am fortunate to have interned in her office. I looked forward to work everyday. It was an incredible experience to hear her story, along with other professionals I met who work in the U.S. Government from meetings organized by the Armenian Assembly,” stated David Madey, a student at the University of California Davis who interned with Speier. “I believe the Congressional internship position is perhaps one of the most invaluable experiences to have for someone my age, and I am incredibly grateful to have had this one-of-a-kind opportunity.”

They had the opportunity to learn more about their cultural heritage and the Armenian Genocide in conversations and lectures with Armenian National

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Illinois Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi Joins Armenian Caucus

WASHINGTON — The Armenian Assembly of America announced that Freshman Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) has joined the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, supporting United States-Armenia relations. Krishnamoorthi, representing Illinois’ 8th District, currently serves on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

As part of the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program, Hugh Rabjohns, who attends Texas Christian University and grew up in Wilmette, Ill., interned in Krishnamoorthi’s office this summer in Washington, DC.

“It is an honor to have Congressman Krishnamoorthi join the Armenian Caucus. His broad view of the world and respect for history uniquely equips him to play a leading role,” Illinois-based Assembly Board Member Oscar Tatosian said. “His entrepreneurial spirit is the kind of friend Armenia needs,” he added.

Krishnamoorthi attended the Armenian Genocide Commemoration this past April on Capitol Hill and signed a bipartisan letter to President Donald Trump urging him to reaffirm the Armenian Genocide. He also issued the following statement commemorating the Genocide: “Today, on the 102nd anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide, we recognize the murder of 1.5 million Armenian men women, and children in the years that followed under the direction of the Ottoman Empire. Despite the truth of this history and the magnitude of these crimes, our government remains one of only three in the world not to recognize the genocide committed against the



Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) with Armenian Assembly intern Hugh Rabjohns

Armenian people. To deny the Armenian Genocide is to deny the humanity of its victims and the demands of our own.”

In June, Krishnamoorthi wrote an op-ed in *The Hill* titled “Did Turkey’s payments to Michael Flynn delay our military operations against ISIS?” where he explained: “Press and public attention have been focused largely on the Trump administration’s relationship with Russia, and there is much to be learned. Questions regarding Turkey, however, reveal most clearly how personal considerations may have overridden our national interests.”

Earlier this year, the Assembly highlighted Turkey’s attempts to gain surreptitious influence over U.S. officials and media to the detriment of U.S. national security, and urged the Senate and House Intelligence Committees to investigate the matter.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian EyeCare Project Embarks on 25th Anniversary Trip to Armenia

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. – The Armenian EyeCare Project (AEC) visits Armenia twice a year on medical missions but this was the first time a group of donors joined the trip to learn more about the organization they support and to see firsthand how the Project provides eye care for people in Armenia.

One of the most noteworthy events donors got to witness was the Grand Opening of the Project's newest Regional Eye Clinic in Armenia – the AEC Kapan Regional Eye Clinic – located in the town of Kapan in the Syunik province. Benefactors, along with AEC physicians and staff, joined Syunik Governor Vahe Hakobyan and representatives from Armenia's Ministry of Health for a ribbon-cutting ceremony followed by a small reception. Located in the southernmost province of Armenia, the organization's newest regional eye clinic will allow those living in the southern part of the country to receive the quality eye care they need without having to travel several hours.

Other AEC programs donors had a chance to visit and tour were the Project's subspecialty eye care clinics inside the Malayan Ophthalmological Center in Yerevan; the AEC John and Hasmik Mgrdichian Regional Eye Clinic located in Spitak, Lori; and the Mobile Eye Hospital while stationed in the Gegharkunik province of Armenia.

The Mobile Eye Hospital, the hallmark of the EyeCare Project, was a favorite among guests. Carol Chiesa, traveling from New Jersey, said "It was wonderful to visit and learn so much about how the AEC is helping so many Armenians – seeing the Mobile Eye Hospital and witnessing it in action really put the AEC's mission in perspective."

Another guest said, "Next time they plan this trip they need to tell people, 'You're going to cry every day.'" Pearl Apisson, a nurse and an attorney, along with her husband, John, a retired ophthalmologist, traveled to Armenia from Florida. Pearl was so moved and enthusiastic about seeing the patients on the Mobile Eye Hospital that she greeted each one with a big hug!

"There were about 25 people sitting on a bench by the Mobile Eye Hospital waiting to be seen. Most were indigent, over 70 years old, some with gold teeth, but all with big smiles," she describes.

Inside the Mobile Eye Hospital, guests saw a cataract surgery being performed in real-time through a TV monitor just a few feet away from the surgery itself. This was John's favorite part, as the retired ophthalmologist carefully observed the delicate surgery on the screen, calling the techniques used in the mobile clinic a "world standard."

Another guest, representing the feelings of everyone, said, "My favorite part was visiting the Mobile Eye Hospital. Seeing all those happy patients waiting, seeing the surgery going on in real-time and seeing those who were finished, eye patched, so happy and waiting to go home."

In addition to visiting several AEC programs across the country, the more than 25 guests who embarked on the special Anniversary Trip also experienced rich historical and cultural tours during the 12-day excursion throughout Armenia from July 17-29. These included trips to some of the world's oldest churches and monasteries, evenings filled with great food and traditional Armenian singing and dancing and much more.

"This trip was a great way to meet lots of wonderful people from all over the US with a common goal: a love for Armenia and a passion to help those less fortunate through eye care," Sossie Dermenjian, from Fresno said. "The relationships I cultivated with other like-minded guests on the trip was very meaningful to me. We were all at home."

For many on the trip, this was their first time in Armenia, which made their journey all the more important. "I never thought I would go to



The donor Wall at the AEC Kapan Regional Eye Clinic in Kapan, Syunik. [Photo by David Torch]

the land of my heritage," said Chiesa, who is half-Armenian. "I cannot explain the inner warmth and connection that I now have with Armenia – more than I ever expected." Making the journey to her motherland "even more special," Carol made the trip to Armenia with her brother and his family.

"The AEC gave me the opportunity I needed to make this trip," said Veronica Boursalian, another first-time traveler to Armenia. Boursalian, who traveled to Armenia from Maryland with her daughter Mimi, loved seeing the "beautiful view of Mount Ararat and the oldest cathedral in the world – Echmiadzin."

Another guest, Ann Christoph, said some of her favorite moments from the trip were the spiritual singers at Geghard Monastery, the Armenian dance performance at Megerian Carpet, the beautiful landscape throughout the country, visiting the Armenian Genocide Memorial and seeing the need for the EyeCare Project.

"It's very impressive what the EyeCare Project has accomplished in Armenia," said Christoph, a landscape architect who lives in Laguna Beach. She heard about the trip through AEC Founder Dr. Roger Ohanesian, her eye doctor. She said, "I loved the idea of traveling with people I know who have been involved in the country – not just tourists."

The EyeCare Project's 25-year involvement in Armenia enabled guests to participate in a number of activities that most visitors to Armenia do not have available to them. These



From left, Dr. Alex Malayan, Armenia's chief of Ophthalmology, with AEC founder Dr. Roger Ohanesian, right, receive awards from Armenia's Minister of Health Levon Altunyan. Photo by David Torch]

activities included an Award Ceremony with Armenia's Ministry of Health, in which Health Minister Levon Altunyan honored AEC physicians for their work in advancing eye care in Armenia. Guests also had a meeting with the Catholicos, in which the leader of the Armenian Apostolic Church expressed his gratitude to the organization for bringing sight to so many needy Armenians for 25 years. And as a special

treat – lunch in a private home where everyone learned to make Lavash bread.

Another highlight from the trip was the annual ophthalmology conference organized by the AEC each year – the AEC 15th International Conference on Ophthalmology & Neonatology – where hundreds of ophthalmologists, nurses, residents and medical students traveling from all over the world met in Yerevan to discuss the latest advancements in ophthalmology and neonatology, making Armenia's capital a destination for experts in the field to meet and learn about the most cutting-edge developments in eye care.

"We applaud Dr. Ohanesian for his foresight and perseverance in bringing the EyeCare Project to this level of achievement in Armenia," John and Pearl Apisson said. "It was amazing to witness the progress made in the country especially through the widespread introduction and dissemination of modern ophthalmic care to the citizens of Armenia."

Culminating a fun-filled two weeks, the EyeCare Project celebrated one of its last evenings in Armenia with a special 25th Anniversary Gala at the Radisson Blu in Yerevan. Overlooking a panorama of Armenia's stunning capital city – with views of Mount Ararat and the Mother Armenia statue – guests enjoyed the company of new and old EyeCare Project friends, donors, physicians and staff while sipping local wine, savoring a delicious buffet dinner, and dancing the night away. The party was the Project's way of saying "thank you" to all its donors and friends who support the organization's programs in Armenia.



Dr. Ohanesian gives guest a tour of the AEC Kapan Regional Eye Clinic. [Photo by David Torch]



COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Assembly Celebrates 40 Years of Intern Program in Washington

INTERNS, from page 4

Institute (ANI) Director Dr. Rouben Adalian and Library of Congress Armenian and Georgian Specialist Dr. Levon Avdoyan. The students explored Washington with special tours of Capitol Hill, US Patent and Trademark Office, and the World Bank, where they saw the Armenian art exhibit which features paintings and sculptures from the Balian Art Collection on loan to the Bank since 2007. The Terjenian-Thomas Assembly interns were also graciously hosted by Rita Balian, a long-time Assembly Trustee, whose late husband, Vartkess, served on the Assembly's Board of Directors during its early pivotal years.

"It was a great experience being involved with the Armenian Assembly of America Internship Program this summer. We learned a great deal about our Armenian heritage as well as the factors that influence Armenian American relations," said Taylor Boole, a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who interned with Rep. George Holding (R-NC).

In addition to UC Davis and UNC Chapel Hill, Assembly interns arrived from Stanford University, University of California Los Angeles, University of Southern California, California Polytechnic State University, University of Tennessee at Knoxville, The College of New Jersey, Emerson College, University of Washington, Wake Forest University, Texas Christian University, Brigham Young University and Salt Lake Community College.

From its earliest phases and over the past four decades, the Armenian Assembly Summer Internship Program has been celebrated and strongly supported by the Armenian community with major gifts from the Richard Tufenkian Memorial Fund, the John Hanessian Scholarship Fund, the Armen Astarjian Scholarship Fund, the Ohanian Memorial Fund, Ann Hintlian, Ann Nahigian, James and Connie Melikian, the Knights of Vartan, the Estate of Haig J. Boyadjian, and the Estate of George Judge Karabedian (George Kay), as well



From left, Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA), House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL), Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. George Holding (R-NC), Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE), and Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA)

as contributions in memory of former Assembly Board Members Dr. Lionel Galstaun, Peter Kezirian and John O'Connor. In 2003, the Armenian Assembly's Summer Internship

Program was renamed in honor of Aram and Florence Terjenian and Annie Thomas after the announcement of their pace-setting \$1-million donation to the program.

To find out more about the 2017 summer interns' journey in Washington, D.C., visit the Assembly's Intern Blog, Facebook, and Twitter.

OBITUARY

D. Gertrude (Michigan) DeCicco

FALMOUTH, Mass. — D. Gertrude (Michigan) Demirjian DeCicco, formerly of Belmont, passed away in Falmouth on August 19.

She was the wife of the late She leaves her children Nancy Nemetz and her husband of Houston, TX, Marcia Demirjian of Belmont and Stephen Demirjian and his wife Betsy of Weston; grandchildren Zoe, Kate and Maggie Nemetz, Abbey and Brooke Murphy and Alexa and Tim Demirjian as well as several nieces and nephews. She was the sister of the late Charles E. Michigan.

Her family thanked the staffs at Neville Center in Cambridge, Royal Megansett Nursing Home in Falmouth and Fidelis Hospice for the care that was provided.

Funeral services were held at Saint Stephen's Armenian Church, 38 Elton Avenue, Watertown on Thursday, August 24. Interment was in Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

Arrangements were made by the Aram Bedrossian Funeral Home in Watertown.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi Joins Armenian Caucus

RAJA, from page 4
The Assembly's letter to the Senate Intelligence Chairman Richard Burr (R-NC), Vice Chairman Mark Warner (D-VA), House Intelligence Chairman David Nunes (R-CA), and Ranking Member Adam Schiff (D-CA) read in part: "We are writing to urge your thorough

investigation of President Erdogan's Turkey in an expanded review of foreign governments and their activities that compromise America's democratic institutions to allow massive human rights violations and work against the United States in ways that are totally out of legal or diplomatic bounds."



House Foreign Affairs Chairman Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA), Armenian Assembly Utah State Chair Narine Sarkissian, and Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL) at the 102nd Armenian Genocide Commemoration on Capitol Hill

Sunday School Superintendents Gather for Summit

ARMONK, N.Y. — Sunday School Superintendents from parishes across the Eastern Diocese gathered for the second National Sunday School Superintendents Summit held August 11-13 at St. Nersess Seminary.

The event was organized and sponsored by the Diocese's Department of Christian Education. Superintendents representing 11 parishes explored the challenges facing Christian educators and the newest paradigm shifts in faith formation. In addition to structured discussions, networking, and drafting a "state of the Sunday Schools" report, participants heard presentations on education, faith

development theory, the Christian life journey, Diocesan educational resource and paths to community discipleship.

A visit from the Primate, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, afforded a welcome opportunity for dialogue. Reflections and prayer experiences were interspersed throughout the weekend.

The presentation of Fr. Tavit Boyajian, pastor of Sts. Joachim and Anne Church (Palos Heights, Ill.), was a Summit favorite. Boyajian performed his original songs about Armenian Church history and the Bible on guitar and piano, before awed audience members. He also shared online links to badarak hymns he had recorded as a teaching resource. The Christian Education department will be working to make Boyajian's songs more widely available.

The session afforded an opportunity to discuss an instructional CD of badarak hymns in English translation produced by Andrea Carden and a team of educators at the St. Leon parish (Fair Lawn, NJ), as well as the general subject of teaching sharagans and songs.

The Summit concluded with a moving Divine Liturgy (and grape blessing) celebrated by the Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, director of the Diocese's Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center and Professor of Liturgical Studies at St. Nersess.



Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan

Following worship, Fr.

Daniel gave a talk on the deeper, more authentic nature of the liturgy, which prompted animated conversation.

Other presenters included Nancy Basmajian, director of Adult Christian Education in Cheltenham, PA, and a former Diocesan youth and education staffer; Elise Antreassian; and Eric Vozzy of the Diocesan Department of Creative Ministries who spoke on the "Bread and Salt" video series.

Proposals from the summit will help foster change in local programming as well as the priorities of both the Department of Christian Education and the Diocese overall.



Knights and Daughters of Vartan

Public Presentation

GUEST SPEAKER



Donald J. Tellalian, AIA NCARB



2014 Configuration, Matt Conn photo 2013 Configuration, Matt Conn photo 2012 Initial Configuration, Matt Conn photo

Donald J Tellalian, AIA

Principal Architect, Boston Armenian Heritage Park

"How we built the Park"

Tuesday, September 12, 2017, 7:00 PM Sharp

St. Mary Armenian Church Cultural hall
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Entrance Free- Desert Reception

Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Girls Uncover History at Armenian Archaeology Camp

By Linda B. Glaser

ITHACA, N.Y. — On the slopes of Mount Aragats, the tallest mountain in Armenia, archaeologists are painstakingly uncovering the ancient past. From July 17 to 20, six Armenian girls got an insider's view as participants in the pilot session of Camp Aragats.

The camp is the first programmatic initiative of the US-based Aragats Foundation and its Armenian sister organization, the Aragats Cultural Heritage Foundation. Founded in 2014 by Cornell archaeologists Lori Khatchadourian and Adam T. Smith, the Aragats Foundation serves as the public outreach wing of Project Aragats, a collaborative archaeological research program dedicated to exploring Armenia's past through the modern era. The goal of the Aragats Foundation and its Armenian partner is to harness archaeology to enhance local prosperity through tourism.

"Bringing tourists into the area would be a boon to local business and a spur for entrepreneurship," says Khatchadourian.

Education is another priority area for the foundation, and Camp Aragats represents its first public engagement effort. The girls-only pilot session was a response to the limited opportunities for girls in rural Armenia, says Khatchadourian. The camp focused on cultivating broad interests in archaeological research in addition to teaching the campers about the ancient history of their region.

"Archaeology is a terrific vehicle for sharing the thrill of scientific discovery and the possibilities of new technologies to illuminate the past. These insights and skills can be translated into domains beyond archaeology. Our goal is to ignite



Arshaluys Mkrditchyan, GIS specialist at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Republic of Armenia, teaches campers how to fly a drone.

an interest in scientific and humanistic inquiry that can open doors and opportunities for children as they continue with their education," says Khatchadourian. She served as camp co-director with Armine Harutyunyan, Armenian archaeologist and executive director of the Aragats Cultural Heritage Foundation. The camp piggybacked on the summer field

research of Project Aragats. Scholars working on the project (including several Cornell graduate students) donated anywhere from an hour to half a day to teach the campers about their work. "It was extraordinary to have so many different dimensions of research going on at the same time, but that is the culture of Project Aragats. We cultivate multidisciplinary research so that when the different pieces are brought together, the sum is much greater than the parts," notes Khatchadourian.

Campers learned how to dig at the site of Gegharot, working alongside seasoned excavators from the nearby village. "Above all else, the children loved the process of excavation," says Khatchadourian. "There was nothing quite like the excitement of stumbling upon a sherd of ancient pottery with their trowels and recognizing that they were directly uncovering the past."

Like ancient potter apprentices, campers learned how to work with clay and got to attempt putting together a fragmented vessel from the Late Bronze Age. In a ceramic analysis session, they learned to identify the fragments of ancient pottery that litter the dirt roads of their neighborhood (which lies just below an ancient fortress) that they had previously thought of as mere rocks.

Campers learned how to spot ancient burials by walking the landscape with a team of survey archaeologists, and a paleolithic specialist taught them how to knap Stone Age tools from obsidian. In a session on paleoethnobotany and palynology, campers learned how botanical remains can convey information about ancient climate, agriculture and diet. And a session on human osteology allowed the girls to try their hands at identifying Bronze Age skeletal remains as they learned how bones can convey information about age, sex and health.

During the session on spatial technologies, which included working with maps, the campers learned how to fly a drone. "That was definitely a highlight," says Khatchadourian with a laugh.

(Linda B. Glaser is a staff writer for the Cornell College of Arts and Sciences.)



Campers with camp co-director Armine Harutyunyan, Armenian archaeologist and executive director of the Aragats Cultural Heritage Foundation, far left, and camp co-director Lori Khatchadourian, associate professor of Near Eastern Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences, middle of back row.

New IAGS President Theriault to Speak at NAASR on Genocide Studies Agenda

BELMONT, Mass. — Dr. Henry Theriault, recently elected as president of the International Association of Genocide Studies (IAGS), will be in conversation with National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Academic Director Marc Mamigonian, on the state of genocide studies today and the place of Armenian Genocide studies within the field as a whole. The event, titled "Setting the Agenda: Genocide Studies Today and the Place of the Armenian Genocide," will take place on Thursday, October 21, at the NAASR Center, 395 Concord Ave. The program is presented as the first of the 2017-2018 NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues. Theriault has served as founding co-editor of the peer-reviewed journal *Genocide Studies International*, chaired the Armenian Genocide Reparations Study Group and was lead author of its 2015 final report, and his autobiographical narrative, *Out of the Shadow of War and*

Genocide, was included in *Advancing Genocide Studies: Personal Accounts and Insights from Scholars in the Field* (2015), edited by Samuel Totten. After 19 years on the faculty in the Philosophy Department at Worcester State, in 2017 he became associate vice president for academic affairs. As a scholar who has been a leading voice among of genocide studies over the past decade and more, and now as president of the IAGS, a position to which he was elected in June 2017, Theriault is among those setting the agenda for genocide studies. In his inaugural address, he stated that "genocide studies has been at the forefront of recent human rights advances. ... Demagogues attack the sensibilities genocide studies engenders. Our work is a crucial challenge to their propaganda. IAGS must strive against this marginalization while innovatively expanding the field, especially creating space for emerging scholars particularly vulnerable to this backlash."



Prof. Henry Theriault

Arts & Living

USC Hosts 3rd Annual Innovate Armenia Festival

LOS ANGELES – An upbeat, outside-the-box festival explores what it means to be Armenian in the 21st century and celebrates innovation and innovators

On Saturday, September 23, the University of Southern California (USC) Institute of Armenian Studies presents Innovate Armenia 2017, a day of discovery, technology, music, food, wine, chess and lively conversation headlined by a pair of celebrity-journalist brothers and two 2016 Pulitzer Prize winners.

The brothers are *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius and Harvard Business Review editor Adi Ignatius.

The Pulitzer Prize winners are poet Peter Balakian, of Colgate University, and novelist Viet Thanh Nguyen, a USC professor of English and American studies.

A Vietnamese-born English literature professor headlining an Armenian diaspora festival may seem strange, but it goes to the heart of the USC Institute of Armenian Studies' outward-looking, internationalist philosophy.

"We take global Armenian questions and explore them as part of big world issues," says director Salpi Ghazarian. "Innovate



Viet Thanh Nguyen

Armenia is the platform where we make the best of scholarship accessible."

The Armenian diaspora experience has lessons for everyone, according to David Kang, a featured speaker at Innovate Armenia 2016. A professor of international relations, business and East Asian languages, Kang heads USC's Korean Studies Institute. His presentation last year focused on the fluidity of hybrid identities. "Armenians are going through very similar issues that Koreans have," he said in his talk.

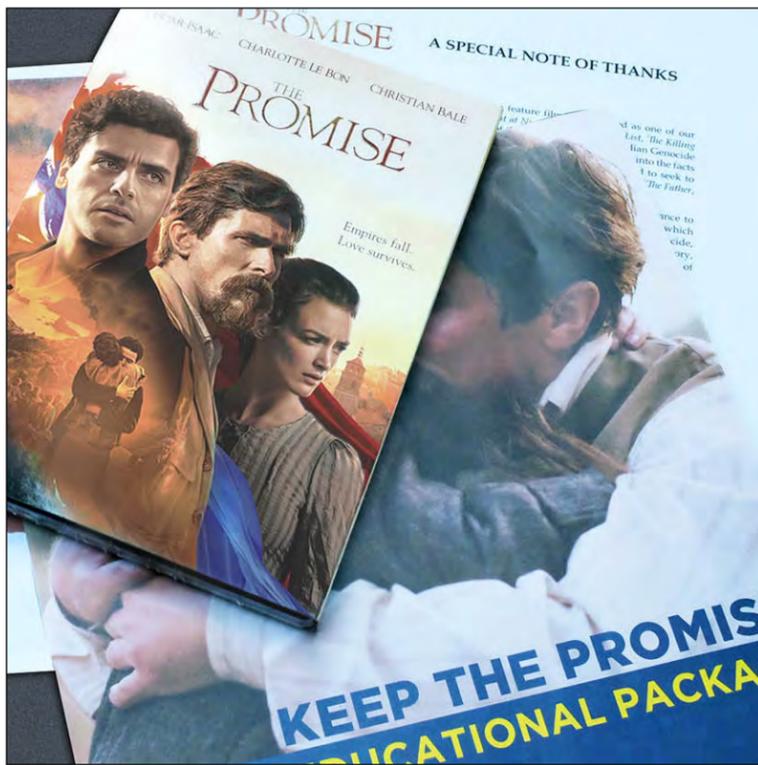
In a city as multiethnic as Los Angeles, the immigrant experience is something most of us can relate to, Ghazarian said. "Anyone, including those whose ancestors arrived on the Mayflower, will find something to pique their interest at Innovate Armenia."

Last year's festival, which focused on digital humanities, drew 3,000 attendees and 20,000 more watched online. This year's program – with a focus on rethinking, relearning and reimagining identity, language, history and technology – is expected to draw even larger crowds.

Some highlights of the day's events, starting at 10 a.m.:

- Back-to-back presentations in USC's Bovard Auditorium include a session on rearing global citizens, featuring the Ignatius brothers – both prominent public intellectuals; and a session on new approaches to teaching the humanities, pairing literary icons Nguyen and Balakian. Other provocative speakers include Hovig Etyemezian, chief of the Mosul operation for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees; Arman Jilavian, CEO of the Armenia-based Aurora Prize, a \$1-million award recognizing global humanitarian excellence; and Paul Berberian, CEO of Denver-based Sphero, maker of smartphone-controlled toy robots used in education.

- A panel discussion on teaching excellence features five Luys Scholars, recipients of an Armenian government program which supports the education of students of Armenian descent attending top universities in the United States and around the world. Another see INNOVATE, page 11



Keep The Promise Educational Package which includes a copy of "The Promise" DVD, a letter from filmmaker Terry George, a tailored The Promise Study Guide and a reference of Armenian Genocide curriculum resources and contacts.

AGBU Launches Promise to Educate Movement to Foster Armenian Genocide Education

NEW YORK – On August 14, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), in partnership with Survival Pictures, the production company behind "The Promise," and major Armenian organizations in North America, launched The Promise to Educate campaign to raise funds for the advancement of Armenian Genocide education across the United States.

Expanding on the social impact mission of "The Promise" and recognizing the gaps in genocide education in the US, AGBU and its partners have initiated a campaign to send copies of the film and relevant curriculum resources to public educational institutions across the country. While human rights issues and related history are included in the social studies curricula of the vast majority of public schools, the Armenian Genocide goes largely ignored. Currently, the Armenian Genocide is not a required subject in history courses in most schools and lack of awareness and teaching materials leaves it on the sidelines.

"The primary goal of the filmmakers of 'The Promise' was not only to bring our history to light, but to encourage a dialogue among middle school and high school students and their teachers," said AGBU Central Board Member Ani Manoukian. "The AGBU Alternative Education Department works to provide a diverse range of resources on various topics of Armenian language, history and culture for classrooms. The distribution of 'The Promise' DVDs, along with tailored study materials, provides access to trustworthy information about the Armenian Genocide, challenging the powerful forces of denial."

Donations will allow AGBU to supply Keep The Promise Educational Packages to American public middle and high schools, higher educational institutions and libraries. Each package includes a copy of "The Promise" DVD, a letter from filmmaker Terry George, a tailored "The Promise" Study Guide and a reference of Armenian Genocide curriculum resources and contacts. The package is developed in cooperation with genocide education organizations, such as the Armenian National Institute (ANI), The Genocide Education Project and the Zoryan Institute.

Following the successful grassroots outreach campaign for the movie, AGBU and major Armenian organizations in North America, including the Armenian Assembly of America, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), Children of Armenia Fund (COAF), the Dioceses and Prelacies of the Armenian Church of the United States and Canada, as well as other religious and cultural institutions, are again joining efforts to bring Keep The Promise Educational Packages to classrooms.

"Tell the world about the Armenian Genocide, and every genocide taking place across the globe. We owe it not only to the descendants of the Armenian Genocide, but all people who are vulnerable, to learn about and learn from our history so that it is never repeated again," said filmmaker Terry George in his letter addressed to educators. "Together, through education we can raise awareness so that future generations will never forget and never stay silent."

A minimum donation of \$100 distributes Keep The Promise Educational Packages to five public institutions in the United States. AGBU encourages all members and friends to support the campaign by making online donations at www.thepromisetoeducate.org. Educators and administrators are welcome to sign up online to receive the packages.

Christopher Atamian To Speak on Fifty Years of Armenian Literature in France

FRESNO – Author and translator Christopher Atamian will present a lecture titled "Fifty Years of Armenian Literature in France: A Zenith of Diasporan Writing" at 7:30 p.m., on Friday, September 8, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191 on the Fresno State campus.

The book of the same name was published as Volume 6 in the Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno in 2016.

This is the first presentation in the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture series, which is supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Atamian's seminal translation of Krikor Beledian's *Fifty Years of Armenian Literature in France: 1922-1972*, brings this important work to the English-reading public for the first time. Beledian wrote his opus – part essay, part text book – in French; he traces the fascinating history of a group of forty or so Armenian writers, mainly Genocide survivors, who all regrouped in Paris after the Great Catastrophe of 1915. There, while



Christopher Atamian

working during the day in factories they composed a stunning body of work which included poetry, prose, theatrical plays, philosophical musings and even medical treatises.

Their writing was at times conservative and at others as experimental and groundbreaking as those of their leading European colleagues. One wrote luminescent poetry reminiscent of Verlaine; another repatriated to Soviet Armenia only to be killed by the Armenian secret police; another wrote one of the most important Armenian novels of the 20th century; yet another was deported and gassed at Auschwitz. Sarafian, Yessayan, Vorpuni, Nartuni, Sema, Lass... Come discover a lost world of writers and poets, love and intrigue, politics and faith.

Copies of *Fifty Years of Armenian Literature in France* (in English) will be on sale at the lecture.

Atamian is a writer, filmmaker and translator. He also writes for the *New York Times Book Review*, *The Weekly Standard* and the *New York Press*. He increasingly spends his hours writing mainstream projects but remains attached to writing about and disseminating Armenian culture and literature in different ways, whether as a writer, journalist, editor or translator.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



ARTS & LIVING

Verismo Opera's 2017-2018 Season Features 'Tosca' and 'Turandot'

FORT LEE, N.J. – From Italy to China, the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera's 2017-2018 season spans the globe with performances of Giacomo Puccini's "Tosca" and "Turandot." On Sunday, October 15, Verismo Opera brings to the stage again Puccini's "Tosca" set in Italy with Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa's libretto in four acts based upon Victorien Sardou's drama, La Tosca.

The grand opera company premieres Puccini's portrayal of both ancient China and the opera's namesake princess, Turandot, on Sunday, April 22, 2018. Verismo Opera, the house opera company of the Bergen Performing Arts Center (bergenPAC) in Englewood, presents these productions at the theatre at 3:00 p.m.

The company is known for realistic portrayals of everyday life in its productions. "These traditional operas present realism and remain true to the original with the music, grand sets, and beautiful costumes. Both operas introduce another generation to the magnificent splendor of complete, professional productions," said Lucine Amara, artistic director, New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera.

Under the baton of Principal Conductor and Music Director Lucy Arner, a live orchestra accompanies the performance of Tosca. General Manager/Stage Director Evelyn La Quaif directs the fully staged opera, with Chorus Director/Associate Conductor Michael



A scene from "Tosca"

Wittenburg leading the Verismo Opera Chorus. The principals and the Verismo Opera Chorus perform in Italian with English supertitles provided for the audience.

In September, Verismo Opera resumes the Bring the Family to the Opera initiative to see

Tosca on October 15. This well-received program introduces children and families to live, fully staged performances of grand opera, as the composer intended.

Special ticket rate offers for senior citizens and children go on sale starting September 7.

Group discounts are available with a minimum purchase of 10 tickets. This discount is not available online.

Purchase regularly priced tickets now for Tosca online at www.bergenpac.org. Tickets may also be purchased in person at bergenPAC's box office, located at 30 North Van Brunt Street, Englewood.

For 28 years, the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera has been an integral part of the region's classical music culture. In November 2017, the company celebrates its 29th season with the launch of the annual international vocal competition. Led by Metropolitan Opera luminary Lucine Amara, Verismo Opera delivers a rich, grand opera experience for performers and viewers.

As the Bergen Performing Arts Center's house opera company, Verismo Opera provides performing opportunities for young musicians and artists through its semi-annual productions at the theatre and concerts held in local settings. Community members are invited to get involved as supernumeraries and volunteers.

The vocal competition begins in November with finals generally drawing artists throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia. Verismo Opera also organizes opera workshops, master classes and concerts and offers affordable, highly professional productions.

For more information, visit Verismo Opera's web site, www.verismopera.org

USC Hosts 3rd Annual Innovate Armenia Festival

INNOVATE, from page 10

panel tackles the education of at-risk and immigrant youth to excel in Southern California schools, and pursue higher education in top universities.

- A speaker stage in Alumni Park hosts fast-paced TED-style talks, with scientists, scholars and educators from across the Armenian diaspora, including Jet Propulsion Lab roboticist Richard Ohanian and Houston-based International Space Safety Foundation president Michael Kezirian.

- More than a dozen exhibitor booths showcase innovators in STEM education, many from Armenia, including: Armath Labs and Real School, programs that bring after-school computer coding classes to youngsters across urban and rural Armenia; ed-tech company Dasaran.com, creator of Armenia's first comprehensive e-learning portal; SoloLearn, a free, code-teaching app that took the grand prize in the 2017 Facebook Start App of the Year contest. Also attending the festival is the head of the Dilijan campus of United World College, a network of 14 mixed-nationality boarding schools; and teachers from the Yerevan-based Ayb School, who together with other colleagues attending from Armenia, churn out math and science Olympiad winners year after year.

- On the entertainment stage, the music and dancing never stops with performances by eclectic Armenian artists from Beirut, Vanadzor, Philadelphia, Paris, Yerevan and Glendale.

- Interactive experiences include chess games with woman grandmaster Tatev Abrahamyan and international master Andranik Matikozyan; a maker space where scientists and festival-goers can collaborate hands-on to solve or observe engineering challenges; and complimentary tastings hosted by Armenia Wine Company, maker of ancient Armenian wines using 21st-century viticulture techniques.

The festival coincides with "Undeliverable: Postcards and Photos of Lives Interrupted," a unique installation in Doheny Library of vintage postcards of Armenian life in the pre-genocide years, interlaced with mind-bending contemporary imagery by Brazilian photographer Norair Chahinian. A panel discussion with Chahinian, postcard collector Orlando Carlo Calumeno and exhibition co-curator Narineh Mirzaeian takes place in Bovard Auditorium during the program.

Innovate Armenia 2017 takes place Saturday, September 23, 10 am to 6 pm in Alumni Park and Bovard Hall on USC's University Park Campus. Admission is free. All-day parking is easily available for \$12 in USC parking structures.

Sponsor A Teacher
In Armenia and Karabagh
17th Anniversary

Since its inception in 2001, TCA's Sponsor a Teacher program has raised over \$607,000 and reached out to 6,027 teachers and school workers in Armenia & Karabagh.

Yes, I want to sponsor teachers in Armenia and Karabagh to continue helping them to educate the children, our future leaders. I would like to have the teacher's name and address.

\$200 \$400 \$600 Other \$ _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip code _____
Tel _____

Make check payable to: Takayan Cultural Association -Memo: Sponsor a Teacher
Mail your check with this form to:
TCA Sponsor a Teacher
5326 Valverde, Houston, TX 77056
Your donation is Tax Deductible.

ARTS & LIVING

Tsoleen Sarian Eager to Spread The Gospel of Project SAVE

SARIAN, from page 1

Armenian Diaspora. Among the photos will be ones from an orphanage in Aleppo in 1915, a march by Armenians in Egypt thanking the country for rescuing Genocide survivors and a family in front of the Statue of Liberty.

She added, "I want it to be hopeful. People go through hell but just like you or me, they want to educate their children and they want to do it safely. It's about family and having a safe place."

"We all have a journey. What is happening today is too familiar for us," she noted.

Sarian recently visited Lebanon, where she met with United Nations workers. She said when she asked them about the state of the Syrian refugees, she was assured that they would eventually be fine. The situation of the Palestinians, however, is hopeless. They have been in refugee camps for generations and for them getting out is that much harder.

Sarian has long been active in the community. She was a basketball and volleyball player in the Homenetmen and the Armenian Youth Federation. She has been a longtime member of the Armenian Memorial Church, as well as the Armenian General Benevolent Union Young Professionals' group as well as the Friends of the Armenian Heritage park. She

was an intern with the Armenian Assembly of America and currently serves on the board of the Armenian National Committee Eastern Region.

She is also a longtime supporter of and volunteer for Peter Koutoujian, current sheriff of Middlesex County and former state representative. She joined his campaign staff in 2002 and has continued her work until now.

From 2002 to 2013 she was on the Massachusetts State House Armenian Genocide Commemoration Steering Committee, serving as its chair during her last three years. Previously she worked at the Armenia Tree Project and the Global Partnership for Afghanistan, as well as a period with the Conflict Management Group.

She was just accepted into Northeastern University master's degree in nonprofit management.

Modern History

History, a subject she majored in at Merrimack College, is getting a boost from modern technology. For people like her and



Tsoleen Sarian, left, with Ruth Thomasian

her family, descendants of survivors of the Armenian Genocide, online forums can present an opportunity to recognize and connect.

"My mother's family (from Aintab) was into the genealogy stuff," she said. "My grandmother had a binder of people from Aintab." She added, jokingly, "She would harass people and we would say 'please don't be so

nosy!"

Now, with the organization launched by George Aghjayan, Armenians who may have lost many of the family tree branches can throw down roots.

"It is where people can help each other. This is the story about the orphanage or school," she said.

Representatives from Project SAVE were on hand at the most recent Armenian Genealogy Conference, "letting people know that our archives exist so they can research with our photographs."

Sarian urged everyone to be mindful that they would be happy to receive old photographs that "they don't know what they can do with."

Donating photographs to Project SAVE is more than simply dropping off a box; it is safeguarding the story.

"We sit down with you. We want you to tell us the stories of the photograph, names, locations, dates. That goes into our database."

Project SAVE is also in the process of digitizing all of its photos.

She noted that the organization's archive has 45,000 photos, of which 7,000 have been digitized.

"We are getting there. There is more digitization to be done," Sarian said.

Fortunately for the group, this effort is not going to cost them much as the scanning is done in-house by volunteers.

Thomasian, who had started the organization, will continue to help the organization by doing fundraising.

Sarian said that the organization is working toward making its work and direction more familiar in the community and to make the photos more accessible.

"We prefer that they come in but our archivist can work with them," she said.

She is extending the group's reach in social media, on Facebook and Instagram, and watches who follows it.

"Our photos are watermarked," she said. "It is really exciting to see how far they are reaching."

One task going forward, Sarian said, is reaching out to even more people.

"How do I reach out to more communities

so that they know we exist and so that we can preserve and document their photographs," she noted.

The easiest way is through its website. A new revamped website is in the works, being completed by a firm in Armenia.

"It's a win for everyone to hire a design firm in Armenia," she said. "I am thrilled about that."

She said she would want to host forums where people can talk about photographs and discuss "the richness of our culture and history."

Photographs from Project SAVE have been used in documentaries by Bared Maronian, especially in "Women of 1915."

"We have our finger on the pulse. We are making it more accessible and letting people know what we have."

But the Genocide is not the only Armenian story. "We want the story beyond the Genocide. Who are we? I want to be able to celebrate that and all the wealth that we have as a nation," she noted.

Sarian added that she plans to increase the number of collaborative projects and programs. One recent such program was a lecture and exhibit by Prof. Armen Marsoobian, titled "Reimagining a Lost Homeland," co-sponsored by the Armenian Museum of America.

In addition, she said she was excited to announce a collaboration with Houshamadyan, a digital project that is reconstructing Ottoman Armenian town and village life. "Through this partnership, Project SAVE's photos will be featured on their site, and allow us to share the cultural history of Armenians through the images and stories with greater and more diverse audiences," she said.

As for her vision for the future of Project SAVE, Sarian said, "All I know is that I want to do it right and build a governing board. A few people have done a lot of good work [for the group]. I want to take it beyond that."

"We are building on what Ruth did. It is a legacy of 42 years that she leaves. There is so much value in it," she said.

On November 19, Project SAVE will celebrate with a Thanksgiving brunch event to honor Thomasian's vision and 42 years of service and to acknowledge the many volunteers, photo donors and supporters who have contributed to Project SAVE. An event for the community to come together and celebrate as we look ahead to the future. The program will take place at the Westin Waltham Boston Hotel.



Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian

Okra and Vegetable Stew

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound fresh or frozen okra
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 medium potato, peeled and sliced or diced
- 3/4 pound lamb cut for stew (shoulder)
- 2 cups crushed or stewed tomatoes or 2-3 medium tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1/2 cup low sodium tomato sauce (optional)
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- Paprika, sweet basil, cayenne pepper, and sea or Kosher salt and black pepper to taste
- 4 cups water (more to taste)
- Juice of one large lemon
- Olive oil, unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped

PREPARATION:

In a large pan, sauté the lamb in olive oil or unsalted butter, add the onions and garlic, and cook until onions are translucent and the lamb is browned. Add the bell pepper, carrot, and potato and cook a few more minutes. Add the water, tomatoes, tomato paste, tomato sauce, spices, lemon juice, and the okra last. Stir and bring to a low boil; cover and cook on medium heat until the okra and vegetables are tender, about 35 to 40 minutes. Check and stir occasionally. When ready to serve, add the parsley and extra lemon juice, if desired.

Serves 6.

*Christine's recipes have been published in the Fresno Bee Newspaper, Sunset Magazine, Cooking Light Magazine, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/> > <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>

TCA MHER MEGERDCHIAN THEATRICAL GROUP

THE UNEXPECTED

by Agatha Christie

GUEST

- SAVE THE DATE -

OCTOBER 28 & 29



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

FLORIDA

JANUARY 20-28, 2018 — Armenian Heritage Cruise XXI 2018 Eastern Caribbean Cruise aboard the Royal Caribbean's Freedom Of The Seas. Travelling to: St. Kitts / St. John's Antigua / San Juan / Labadee, Private Island. Cabin Rates starting from US \$1044 / person based on Double Occupancy, including Port Charges and ACAA registration fee. Government taxes of \$108.36 are additional. Armenian Entertainment, Armenian Cultural Presentations, Armenian Festival Day, Tavlou & Belote Tournaments and much more. Call TRAVELGROUP INTERNATIONAL @ 1- 561-447-0750 or 1- 866-447-0750 Ext. 108. Ask for Janie.

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 10 — Trinity Family Festival, 12-5 pm, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Delicious Armenian food – shish, losh, chicken and Kevork's doener kebab - paklava, khadaif, and more with take-out available. Armenian music for listening and dancing, featuring the Greg Krikorian Ensemble with Greg Krikorian, oud and vocals; George Righellis, guitar and vocals; Bob Raphalian, violin; Charlie Dermenjian, dumbeg; and Steve Surabian, tambourine. Lots of activities for children including the Moonwalk. Blessing of the Madagh at 4 p.m., followed by raffle drawing for cash prizes. For further information, log on to www.htaac.org/calendar/event/448/, contact the Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 17 — Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families and Friends. 2-4 p.m. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Cindy Fitzgibbon, WCVB-TV5 is emcee. Enjoy the Greg Krikorian Ensemble. Hoodsies! At 2:30 pm meet Wally the Green Monster and his sister, Tessie. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.

SEPTEMBER 21 — Welcome Reception for New Citizens following the Naturalization Ceremony at Faneuil Hall. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Funded by the Anna & Noubar Afeyan Endowed Fund. For information, email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 22 — St. James Hye Café. Join us for delicious food and fellowship, and live musical entertainment! Enjoy Kebab, Falafel, Imam Bayeldi, and more. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. For more information visit www.stjameswatertown.org. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

OCTOBER 4 — Wednesday, Sts. Vartanantz - Hye Point Golf Outing @ Butter Brook Golf Club, Westford. \$150 includes Golf, Lunch, Dinner, and 20 Raffle Tickets. 10:00 a.m. shotgun start. Registration desk on October 4 open at 9:00 a.m. Contact: Mark at 508-633-7447; Steve, 978-808-2820; or email StsVGolf@earthlink.net. Proceeds to benefit scholarships for Diocesan youth programs.

OCTOBER 10 — Reducing and Managing Stress: Walking the Labyrinth. 5:30 p.m. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway in partnership with Hollister Staffing. HUBweek program. Networking Reception follows at Hollister Staffing, 75 State Street. RSVP appreciated at HUBweek or hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

OCTOBER 13-14 — St. James 70th Annual Bazaar. Delicious Armenian Food and Pastries! Silent Auction, Attic Treasures, Booths and Vendors. Raffles, Children's Activities and more! Details to follow. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information contact 617.923.8860 or info@stthagop.com or visit www.stjameswatertown.org.

OCTOBER 11 — Geometry as Public Art: Celebrating the Immigrant Experience. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. 5:30pm. HUBweek program. Reception hosted by The Bostonian Hotel. RSVP appreciated at HUBweek or hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

OCTOBER 14 — Armenian Friends of America, Inc. Present HYE KEF 5 Dance Featuring: ONNIK DINKJIAN. 7 p.m. – Midnight, 123 Old River Road • Andover. AFA room rates until 9/16/17 • Call 978-975-3600. Ticket Prices Include Buffet and Dance • Cash Bar Only. \$55 if purchased before 9/1/17 • \$65.00 after 9/1/17. \$50 for Students 21 and under. Continuous Buffet 7:30 – 9:30 pm. Advance tickets only. John Arzigian - 603-560-3826, Lucy Sirmaian - 978-683-9121, Peter Gulezian - 978-375-1616, Sharké Der



On Sunday, September 17, come for Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families and Friends, Armenian Heritage Park, Boston, 2 to 4 p.m. Cindy Fitzgibbon of WCVB will emcee the family-friendly program, which will feature the Greg Krikorian Ensemble as well as Wally the Green Monster and his sister, Tessie. Of course, Hoodsies will be aplenty. RSVP at hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.

Apkarian - 978-808-0598, To Benefit: The Armenian Churches of the Merrimack Valley (St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church of N. Andover, The Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, Haverhill, Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church of Chelmsford, Ararat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem, NH) www.ArmenianFriendsofAmerica.org. John Berberian / Oud, Mal Barsamian / Clarinet, Ara Dinkjian / Keyboard, Ron Tutunjian / Dumbeg

OCTOBER 19 — The Battle of Bash Aparan. Lecture by Dr. Dikran Kaligian. Presented by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and the Armenia Tree Project. At NAASR, Belmont, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

OCTOBER 26 — Annual Fall Dinner and Drawing sponsored by the Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club, 6:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. All are invited, and you don't have to be a member of the 1000 Club to join us for a delicious losh kebab and pilaf dinner; \$9.99 per person; tickets on sale at the door. Regular monthly raffle drawing at 8 p.m., plus five \$25 door prizes. "One-time" numbers will be sold on the night of dinner; special offer: purchase five "one-time" numbers for \$20, save \$5. For further info, contact the Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 30 — Concert by famous Istanbul-Armenian singer, Sibil Pektorosoglu (www.sibilmusic.com), at the Ellsworth Theatre at Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill. Sponsored by the Armenian International Women's Association. Details to follow.

NOVEMBER 2 — Thursday, Symposium with the participation of International media representatives, dedicated to the Armenian Mirror-Spectator's 85th Anniversary. Details to follow.

NOVEMBER 3 — Friday, 85th Anniversary Celebration Banquet of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator Newspaper the first English Language Armenian Newspaper in the United States @ Newton Marriott Hotel Banquet Hall. 85 Years and Beyond. Details to follow

NOVEMBER 10 — Benefit dinner for Armenia Tree Project's 100th anniversary living memorial to General Dro and the Battle of Bash Aparan, presented by the Armenia Tree Project and the Kanayan family. Armenian American Social Club, Watertown. Details to follow.

NOVEMBER 18 — Armenian Women's Welfare Association Lucheon/Auction will be held on Saturday, at the Oakley Country Club in Watertown.

NOVEMBER 19 — The Westin Waltham Boston Hotel, Project SAVE will celebrate with a Thanks Giving brunch event to honor Founder Ruth Thomasian's vision and 42 years of service and to acknowledge the many volunteers, photo donors and supporters who have contributed to Project SAVE. An event for the community to come together and celebrate as we look ahead to the future. For more information call 617-923-4542 or email: archives@projectsave.org.

DECEMBER 1-2 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12 noon-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEPTEMBER 30 — Shish Kebab supper at the historic Ararat Armenian Congregational Church in Salem NH. 4:30 - 7. Delicious meal with shish kebab, pilaf, vegetables, salad and dessert! Adults \$15; children 12 and under \$7.50

NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 25-26 — Return to Asbury. Friday, kickoff cocktails, Watermark, 7 p.m. to 12 a.m., 21 plus; Saturday, Beach Day, 7th Avenue Beach, starting at 11 a.m.; Saturday night, 8 p.m. to 2 p.m., the legendary Onnik Dinkjian and Friends, the Berkeley Hotel. \$85 (\$100 after August 15). 17 and under, \$45. Mezze, cash bar and hook up. Asbury Park.

OCTOBER 7 — Kalfayan Orphanage of Istanbul Charity Fund Event. Please save the date for the Gala banquet celebrating the 150th anniversary of the orphanage at St' Leon's Armenian Church, Fairlawn. Held under the Auspices of Archbishop Khajag Barsamian (Primate), Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

NOVEMBER 18 — Save the date. Gala banquet celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association. At the Terrace at Biagios. 299 Paramus Road, Paramus. Featuring Elie Berberian and his band from Montreal.

PENNSYLVANIA

SEPTEMBER 23 — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston is headed back to Pennsylvania to celebrate Armenian Independence Day, with its 30th anniversary production of "The journey continues..." At Centennial Hall of Haverford School, 450 Lancaster Ave., Haverford. Saturday, 7 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are going fast so please reserve your seats ASAP. For tickets, call Ana Torcomian at 610-659-7839, Alina Ashjian at 617-8521816 or email sayatnovadancecompany@gmail.com. Tickets are \$30, \$40 and \$50 with discounted rates available for groups of 20 or more.

RHODE ISLAND

SEPTEMBER 13, 2017-MARCH 14, 2018 — Armenian Film Festival "The Nation's Past & Present" Sponsored by Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, in Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence. New exclusive showings of : "Cultural Genocide" Wednesday, September 13, , at 7 pm, "Country of Armenian Kings - 1" (Van, Diarbekir, Tigranakert) Wednesday, October 11, , at 7 pm, "Garni, Geghard" Wednesday, November 15, 2017, at 7 pm, "Armenia" (Yerevan, Echmiadzin, Khor Virap, Zvartnots, Sevan, Dilijan, Lori) Wednesday, January, 24, at 7 pm "Country of Armenian Kings - 2" (Ani, Kars, Edesia, Musaler) Wednesday, February, 21, at 7 pm, "Country of Armenian Kings - 3" (Cilicia, Kharbert, Adana, Zeytoun) Wednesday, March, 14, 2018, at 7 pm. All presented in English, donation of \$10.

OCTOBER 22 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church & The Rhode Island Orthodox Clergy Fellowship presents - Spiritual Music Festival, 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence.

Calendar items are free. Entries should not be longer than 5 lines. Listings should include contact information. Items will be edited to fit the space, if need be. A photo may be sent with the listing. Items should be sent no later than Mondays at noon.

COMMENTARY

Russia and Turkey Squeezing Armenia

By Edmond Y. Azadian

For the last two centuries, relations between Turkey and Russia have directly impacted Armenia's destiny. Ironically, improved relations between the two powers have worked to the detriment of Armenia's interests.

The Ottoman Empire waged three major wars against Russia: the Crimean War of 1853-1856, which ended with the defeat of Russia at the hands of Turkey and its allies; the War of 1877-78 which resulted in the advance of Russian forces all the way to San Stefano (Adrianopolis), close to the Ottoman capital, and of course, World War I, when although the Ottoman Turkish alliance with Germany was defeated, the ensuing collapse of the Russian Empire did not help Armenia's plight.

At the conclusion of the second war between the two powers, Armenia's fate was featured in two consecutive congresses, San Stefano and Berlin.

The vague clauses of the Berlin Treaty eventually came to fruition in 1914, with the appointment of two European governors in Armenian vilayets, a move which was frustrated because of the war and the Genocide. However, during the war, the Russian presence helped Armenians to wage a self-defense war in Van, thereby saving the lives of 200,000 Armenians.

During the Cold War, Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the West, however, Moscow has tried to win over Ankara through some political gestures at the expense of the Armenians. Nikita Khrushchev announced at one point that the Soviet Union did not have territorial claims from Turkey, indirectly validating the Treaties of Moscow and Kars, which have sealed the present border between Armenia and Turkey.

Also, in deference to Turkey, the issue of the Genocide was muted in the USSR and the remains of the national hero General Andranik were stranded in Paris until Armenia gained independence.

Currently, Turkey has adopted an imperial posture. Just a few days ago, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced that Turkey is on its way to becoming a major regional and international power.

Turkey is a NATO member; it is cognizant that it cannot abandon the NATO umbrella. By the same token, NATO cannot allow

which in turn may contribute to the stability of the Black Sea region. Although Ankara voted against the annexation of Crimea to Russia and even defended the rights of the Crimean Tatars, this closer relationship will solidify Russia's grip on Crimea.

Both Russia and Turkey entered the Syrian war theater on opposite fronts, now they have become partners in resolving the conflict.

But the major fact which draws the two sides together is the economy.

As the West tries to frustrate Russian efforts to supply its gas to Europe, Moscow has found a way to achieve its goal through Turkey, which has become a willing partner of Russia. Russian supply of natural gas to Turkey has increased 22 percent since the beginning of the current year. Russia's Gazprom has begun to build a second section of the Turkish Stream pipeline, intended mainly to reach Europe.

Incidentally, Ankara also has tense relations with Israel, but it will bite the bullet to attract Israeli pipelines directed toward Europe. Thus, although Turkey is deprived of hydrocarbons, it is becoming an energy hub through politics and strategic location.

Russia is building Turkey's first nuclear power plant at Akkuyu, whose first tower will be operational on the centennial of the Turkish Republic in 2023. But the most crucial cooperation between the two countries is in the defense sphere. The two parties are on the final stages of the delivery of advance Russian-made S-400 missile defense system, which will be a boost to Russian arms industry, in addition to marking a strategic shift in the NATO structure. Both sides of the issue are irritants for the west.

The closest issue which affects Armenia directly is Ankara's intent to enter the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev has been instrumental in drawing Turkey and Azerbaijan closer to the EEU. Russian President Vladimir Putin is thankful to the latter and has ignored his contemptuous attitude toward Armenia.

Ankara's cooperation with or participation in the EEU brings up a very thorny issue, that of closed borders between Armenia and Turkey. In addressing the issue, the Minister of Economy Nihat Zeybekci reiterated his country's position, that the border will remain closed until the Nagorno Karabakh issue is resolved. Baku continues to hold sway over Ankara with its continued investments in Turkey.



Turkey to stray away, given its strategic location. But a certain dichotomy allows Turkey to play one camp against the other – Russia versus the West.

Erdogan is getting on the nerves of many leaders these days, especially those in Europe, but they have to put up with his arrogance. Normally cool-headed German leaders are outraged with Erdogan's conduct and bombastic statements.

Russia has long taken Armenia's allegiance for granted and in pursuing its international policies, Armenia's interests do not figure in its plans.

Although Russian-Turkish relations suffered a severe blow in 2015, after Turkey shot down a Russian war plane, their mutual economic interests have drawn the two powers together. And the West's continued sanctions against Russia are drawing the two even closer.

An article by Murad Sezer in Reuters outlines why Russia needs Turkey. The article quotes another Russian source, Rotislav Ishchenko, that closer relations between the two countries will facilitate the Russian navy's easy access to the Straits of Bosphorus,

Mr. Erdogan is on his way to Astana, which has become the main forum dealing with the war in Syria. But beyond that, its EEU participation will be on the agenda. It seems that Turkey will have its cake and eat it too, by joining the EEU and refusing to open the border with Armenia, with the blessings of Vladimir Putin.

Following Astana, Erdogan will stop in Baku to further guarantee the flow of Azerbaijani investments, spiced with some incendiary statements against Armenia.

Armenia is being squeezed by Russia and Turkey. Yet, any independent move by Yerevan is frowned upon by Moscow. The recent participation of Armenian armed forces in a NATO military drill in Georgia has raised eyebrows in Moscow. A commentator sniped, "Go and ask NATO to resolve your problems with Turkey and Azerbaijan."

Armenia is caught in an untenable position. To wield any power in an international forum requires commensurate clout, which Armenia lacks.

And this situation defines Armenia's foreign policy.

Mirror Spectator



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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Americana Now Accepts to Advertise Armenian Genocide Documentary

Americana shopping mall executives in Glendale once again reversed themselves declaring that they not only now accept to advertise the Armenian Genocide Documentary, Architects of Denial, but offered to do it for free!

In the process, Americana's executives behaved erratically, unprofessionally, and most surprisingly, against their own business interests by behaving insensitively toward the major block of their shoppers, the large local Armenian population.

It all started two weeks ago when Americana's General Manager Julie Jauregui refused to sell space on its billboard by calling the Armenian Genocide documentary "too political." When I contacted Americana for a proper explanation, I was told by Emily Davis, responsible for Americana's Public Relations and Communications: "We have strict standards for our advertisements and we carefully review all content. This did not comply with the advertising guidelines for our portfolio properties throughout Southern California." When asked why the documentary did not comply with Americana's advertising guidelines, three days later I was told by Emily Davis, Americana had no further comment!

Under pressure from the local Armenian community and the Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Chapter, Jackie Levy, Americana's Executive Vice President, changed course and sent a conciliatory letter to ANCA, dangling the hope that there would be a resolution to the issue after meeting with the Glendale City Council and the documentary producers, and declining to meet with ANCA.

A few days later, Jackie Levy, sent a much harsher letter to the documentary producers stating once again that Americana declines the requested advertising because the shopping mall is for people "who can come together to enjoy themselves... that is why we have established policies prohibiting advertisements concerning political issues." She then offered to meet with ANCA and expressed the wish to "reaffirm our longstanding support of the Armenian community..." which is a complete lie. Americana has repeatedly taken anti-Armenian positions, particularly on the Armenian Genocide issue when they banned the sale of genocide t-shirts three years ago.

Jackie Levy then proceeded to make the most offensive remark, mentioning "comments we have received ranging from the Armenian community and the Turkish Consulate." Levy should be asked how many Turkish shoppers frequent Americana vs. 100,000 Armenians in Glendale. Furthermore, why is Levy allowing the Consulate of a foreign despotic regime to interfere in the decisions of Americana and the local community? By doing so, Levy is equating Armenians – the victims of genocide – with those whose ancestors had committed such heinous mass crimes!

Meanwhile the pressure started mounting on Americana by various American TV networks which broadcast the Armenian protests against the shopping mall. There were also more than 20 Armenian and non-Armenian speakers, including this writer, who addressed the Glendale City Council on August 15, expressing their outrage at Jackie Levy's insensitive letter. At the end, all five City Council

members expressed their unhappiness with Americana's rejection of the Armenian Genocide ad and committed to follow up with the shopping mall's executives to pressure them to change their position.

Finally, Americana executives reversed their position once again on August 17, by announcing shortly before ANCA's press conference scheduled to declare a boycott of Americana by the local Armenian community. Jackie Levy announced that Americana now agrees to display the advertisement and "at no cost to the producers."

Levy excuses Americana's earlier negative decision as a "misunderstanding" of their position on human rights "and for that we apologize. We have always condemned violence and atrocities of any form anywhere in the world, including the Armenian Genocide that has impacted the lives of Armenians in our community."

In response, ANCA announced that they consider Americana's reversal an "initial positive step." The ANCA further stated that the shopping mall "should be demonstrating its corporate citizenship" and "must seek a relationship with the community that demonstrates, in concrete terms, its understanding and care for the surrounding community and our city. In the coming weeks, we look forward to meeting with Mr. Rick Caruso [Americana's owner] and his management team to discuss, in concrete terms, how we can forge a better relationship and bond between the community and the Americana and Caruso Affiliated that results in a genuine, constructive and meaningful long-term relationship."

Given Americana executives' contradictory statements in the last couple of weeks, the Armenian community has lost complete trust in their promises. Mr. Caruso, Americana's owner, not only should review the shopping mall's relationship with the local Armenian community, but also decide if several of his executives should continue working for him given their unprofessional behavior.

ATP Leadership Provides Update on Forest Fires in Armenia

We were saddened to witness the forest fires in the Khosrov Forest Reserve and in Artavan, Vayots Dzor on August 13. Unfortunately, our country lost many hectares of old growth forests, with estimates ranging from 2,500 hectares to 10,000 hectares. In addition to the benefits to tourism and other ecosystem values of these 600-year-old forests, we lost a large stand of 150-year-old juniper trees, as well as habitat for the animals living in these forests.

Information is still being gathered by organizations and governmental agencies involved in the recovery effort. We expect to know more in the coming days and clarify the extent of the losses, and hopefully identify the causes of the fires, as well as the action plan to prevent such

disasters in the future.

There is an ongoing risk in Armenia to forest fires, especially in summers when temperatures are hot and the air and soil is dry. This threat is further exacerbated by climate change which has caused higher temperatures and more erratic weather patterns including drought in summer. We often see smaller fires, but these have been the largest in recent memory.

Of course, the issue raises questions about Armenia's capacity to fight such fires or withstand other natural disasters. The weekend events have revealed a lack of resources and infrastructure to fight massive fires, though the men and women deployed to fight the fires are to be commended for their hard work and brav-

ery to bring the disaster under control.

We also received technical support from Russia in the form of water distribution and a firefighting air vehicle, which helped disaster management workers to control the spread of the fires. Clearly there is more room for improvement and capacity building, and we would like to see this become more of a national priority to protect our natural heritage.

None of the sites were planted by ATP, but we have already begun to take action and reach out to the major stakeholders involved in the recovery and future prevention efforts. These include the Ministry of Nature Protection, World Wildlife Fund, Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets, Caucasus Nature Fund, and the United Nations. All of the parties are interested in coordination and a proactive approach to preventing similar disasters in the future.

Here are a few initial steps that ATP has taken:

We are visiting our planting sites to assess any areas of risk and ideas to prevent the outbreak or spread of fire

We have extended a hand to partners working in or around Armenia's forest reserves, to assist with monitoring for threats

We are already developing educational materials for the public to learn about threats and think twice about practices that can cause forest fires

Protecting our green infrastructure is a team effort. At this stage, we wanted to let people know that we're aware of the threat, we are concerned and our experts are talking to the appropriate parties to determine an action plan for solutions.

Carolyn Mugar, ATP Founder
Jeanmarie Papelian, Executive Director
Lucineh Kassarjian, Country Director

LETTERS

All-Armenian Toronto Fund Chair Refutes Criticism

To the Editor:

I read the letter to the editor by Harutyun Yesayan ("More Transparent Accounting for All-Armenian Fund in Toronto," July 29) with great interest and with some regret. Hayastan Foundation Toronto has been operating since 1992-93, building much-needed humanitarian infrastructure in our Homeland. Our foundation has published its audited financial statements regularly since its inception, having a transparency much admired by our donors. In this article there seems to be a claim that the accounting firm that the foundation uses has used questionable language in the financial report. Well, our accounting firm, KRP LLP, uses the same boiler plate language for all other charitable institutions as well. These are standard legal statements just like other accounting firms use in their reports. We cannot change that.

The writer of this article questions the missing cost numbers next to the list of the project names in our 2016 newsletter. Over the years, we have published all the project costs in different documents and public presentations. For special anniversary issues we also publish them in the newsletter. As 2017 is the foundation's 25th anniversary, we shall do so in this year's issue, to be published in November.

The writer of the letter and your readers should also be pleased to know that Hayastan Foundation Toronto has no costs for office and no payroll. Moreover, the travel costs to review the projects on site are borne by the executive. Even the newsletters have been printed for free. Lastly, we would have appreciated very much if the *Mirror-Spectator* had contacted us and asked for an explanation before publishing this article which perhaps unwillingly casts a shadow on the Foundation's operations. Your readers will also be pleased to know that, thanks to our donors, Toronto is currently building a school for the Ughdasar village, a medical/community centre for the Khntisorisdan village, six houses for needy families with 5+ children in Artsakh, sanitary stations in Shushi, Amaras and Dadivank and, finally, a comprehensive field sports complex for the school in the Nalbandyan village.

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Chair, Hayastan Foundation Toronto, Inc.

In Appreciation of Armenian Heritage Park

By Steven Vilkas

The Japanese have a word, "komorebi," which roughly translates to the sunlight filtering through the trees. The beauty of this sight was all around us at the last "Tea and Tranquility" event put on by the founders, friends and supporters of the Armenian Heritage Park in Boston. It was a warm, pleasant, and peaceful Wednesday afternoon, with the weather being complemented by the equally warm, pleasant and peaceful personalities of those who had decided to attend...as well as those curious characters who were interested in what we were doing. Perhaps they observed a kind of "komorebi" within us being projected through our smiles, our conversations, and the fellowship we shared around the now famous sculpture of the split dodecahedron which crowns the park as a profoundly poignant and poetic symbol.

While enjoying our surroundings as well as the socialization, the crowd was building and in spite of this I felt as though I were still in some faraway sanctuary which, curiously, happens to be in the heart of a bustling city. There are so

very many things about the Armenian Heritage Park which set it apart from other public spaces in urban environments. The ethos it was founded upon are ever-present...as ubiquitous as the soothing bubbling of the fountain at the center of its beloved labyrinth...or of the flowers, in their variegated splendor, which also happen to remind me (metaphorically) of the founders and friends who have done so much from building, to beautifying, to tirelessly promoting the value of this labor of love.

One could, in the precious silence of the early morning, find a means for meditation by walking the aforementioned labyrinth...or at dusk, perhaps, to observe the travelers from dozens if not hundreds of different nations conversing with locals on the comfortable black benches. You will be able to appreciate the stunning Boston skyline...its familiar fusion of old, historical structures with new, innovative edifices while listening to the festive music and entertainment of nearby Faneuil Hall. You'll smile as you gaze at the charming North End homes, undoubtedly enjoying the aroma of many delicious dishes while you observe that Boston Harbor is a stone's throw away from where you're located.

see APPRECIATION, page 16



US Government Demands Details on All Visitors to Anti-Trump Protest Website

SAN FRANCISCO (*Guardian*) – The US government is seeking to unmask every person who visited an anti-Trump website in what privacy advocates say is an unconstitutional “fishing expedition” for political dissidents.

The warrant appears to be an escalation of the Department of Justice’s (DoJ) campaign against anti-Trump activities, including the harsh prosecution of inauguration day protesters.

On July 17, the DoJ served a website-hosting company, DreamHost, with a search warrant for every piece of information it possessed that was related to a website that was used to coordinate protests during Donald Trump’s inauguration. The warrant covers the people who own and operate the site, but also seeks to get the IP addresses of 1.3 million people who visited it, as well as the date and time of their visit and information about what browser or operating system they used.

The website, www.disruptj20.org, was used to coordinate protests and civil disobedience on 20 January, when Trump was inaugurated.

“This specific case and this specific warrant are pure prosecutorial overreach by a highly politicized department of justice under [Attorney General Jeff] Sessions,” said Chris Ghazarian, general counsel for DreamHost. “You should be concerned that anyone should be targeted simply for visiting a website.”

The warrant was made public Monday, when DreamHost announced its plans to challenge the government in court. The DoJ declined to comment. A hearing is scheduled for Friday.

The government has aggressively prosecuted activists arrested during the 20 January protests in Washington DC. In April, the US attorney’s office in Washington DC filed a single indictment charging more than 217 people with identical crimes, including felony rioting.

Advertisement

Ghazarian said that DreamHost provided the government with “limited customer information about the owner of the website” when it first received a grand jury subpoena a week after the protests occurred. But the government came back in July with the much broader search warrant.

“We’re a gatekeeper between the government and tens of thousands of people who visited the website,” said Ghazarian. “We want to keep them protected.”

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, which has been advising DreamHost, characterized the

By Julia Carrie Wong and Olivia Solon

warrant as “unconstitutional” and “a fishing expedition.”

“I can’t conceive of a legitimate justification other than casting your net as broadly as possible to justify millions of user logs,” senior staff attorney Mark Rumold told the *Guardian*.

Logs of IP addresses don’t uniquely identify users, but they link back to specific physical addresses if no digital tools are used to mask it.

“What they would be getting is a list of everyone who has ever been interested in attending these protests or seeing what was going on at the protests and that’s the troubling aspect. It’s a short step after you have the list to connect the IP address to someone’s identity,” he said.

Wide-reaching warrants for user data are sometimes issued when the content of a site is illegal such as pirated movies or child sexual abuse imagery, but speech is rarely prohibited.

“This [the website] is pure first amendment advocacy – the type of advocacy the first amendment was designed to protect and promote,” Rumold added. “Frankly I’m glad DreamHost is pushing back on it.”

It’s not the first time that the US government has sought to unmask people protesting against Trump or his policies.

President’s first Trump Tower homecoming met with mass protest

In March this year, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), a division of the homeland security department, ordered Twitter to hand over the phone number, mailing addresses and IP addresses associated with @ALT_USCIS, an account that purported to convey the views of dissenters within the government.

The account, whose username is a reference to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services, is one of dozens of alternative Twitter accounts established after Trump was inaugurated. The unverified accounts claimed to provide an uncensored view of civil servants who disagreed with Trump’s policies.

To protect the identity of the person running the account, Twitter launched a lawsuit against the Trump administration, arguing that it would have “a grave chilling effect on the speech of that account in particular and the many other ‘alternative agency’ accounts that have been created to voice dissent to government policies”.

After public outcry over the administration’s overreach, CBP dropped the request.

Americana Mall Reverses Rejection Of Genocide Film Ad In Wake of Uproar

REVERSAL, from page 1

with the producers of “Architects of Denial” and the City of Glendale in an effort to display the advertisement at the Americana at Brand, at no cost to the producers.

The press conference was kicked off with opening remarks by former ANCA-WR Executive Director Elen Asatryan who thanked the media and the community members, and announced the long list of elected officials and community leaders who were in attendance, standing in solidarity with the organization.

ANCA Glendale Chair, Artin Manoukian then took to the podium to provide the organization’s statement. “Let us be abundantly clear, the Americana serves at the pleasure of the City of Glendale and its citizens, not the other way around...the Americana was basing its decisions on Turkish government interests that oppose the values of tolerance, respect for all cultures and in this case the facts of history. Exposing genocide is never something that should be silenced.”

Manoukian concluded his remarks with “We appreciate these initial positive steps the Americana and Caruso Affiliated are taking. However, this is not how a company like Caruso Affiliated should be demonstrating its corporate citizenship. Caruso Affiliated must seek a relationship with the community that demonstrates, in concrete terms, its understanding and care for the surrounding community and our city. In the coming weeks, we look forward to meeting with Mr. Rick Caruso and his management team to discuss, in concrete terms, how we can forge a better relationship and bond between the community and the Americana and Caruso Affiliated that results in a genuine, constructive and meaningful long-term relationship.”

Executive producer of “Architects of Denial,” Dean Cain followed Manoukian’s comments by thanking Caruso for “recognizing that genocide is not a political issue, it’s a historical fact.” Cain concluded with, “I am glad to see this first step and I hope the film will educate people.”

State Sen. Anthony Portantino, who joined the efforts at the very start with the release of a strongly-worded statement, personally communicated with Caruso Affiliated, and spoke at the Glendale City Council meeting on the subject, took to the podium stating, “I am proud to stand here today. Yes, we should appreciate the effort that’s been done, but it also underscores why we make docu-

mentaries about historical facts. Let’s be clear the atrocities of 1915 are not in dispute. A movie about a historical fact should not be subject to additional scrutiny for its advertising.” Portantino ended his remarks with a, “shout out to the grassroots who advocated, posted, made calls and sent emails. Remember, people power trumps money power all day long.”

Portantino’s remarks were followed by Glendale Mayor Vartan Gharpetian who spoke on behalf of all four Council members present stated, “As the proud Mayor of our Jewel City and the home to more than 100,000 Armenian-Americans, I called the actions of Americana at Brand, as too insulting, and too far from advocating for human rights.”

He added, “Today, I am pleased that Caruso Affiliated took the necessary steps to learn about the historical facts and acknowledging the atrocities of the Armenian Genocide in their letter of apology received today.”

In the final statement provided by the Armenian Bar Association, board member Garo Ghazarian stated, “Yet, we still demand. We demand that Mr. CARUSO deliver to the public an open apology from the Americana for their reckless manipulation of Armenian history; We also demand that Mr. Caruso ensure – in swift fashion – that information about arts projects, education, and public outreach addressing the Armenian Genocide enjoy the full light of day and the bright lights of public display at the Americana. Time was running out an hour ago. Time, is now up.”

On Tuesday, August 15, Executive Producers of “Architects of Denial,” Montel Williams and Dean Cain released a statement noting “The seriousness of this issue cannot and should not be understated. This is no longer about our movie or an advertisement. This is about vindicating the dignity of the victims and the survivors of a genocide.”

The same evening, dozens of community leaders and members, including ANCA Glendale Chair Artin Manoukian and State Senator Anthony Portantino took to the Glendale City Council to provide powerful testimonies and ask the city to take immediate action in resolving the matter. The Councilmembers ended the oral communication section by condemning Caruso Affiliated’s decision and agendizing the matter for the next city council meeting.

Elected officials and community organizations present at the press conference included CA State Senator Anthony Portantino, Glendale Mayor

Vartan Gharpetian, Glendale Councilmembers Ara Najarian, Zareh Sinanyan, Paula Devine, Vrej Aghajanian, Glendale City Clerk Ardashes Kassakhian, Glendale Unified School District Board President Nayiri Nahabedian and members Dr. Armine Gharpetian and Shant Sahakian, Glendale Community College Board President Dr. Armine Hacopian and Trustee Yvette Vartanian Davis, and Crescenta Valley Town Council President Harry Leon.

In addition to the attendees, the following organizations also joined ANCA Glendale as coalition partners in an official call to action: American Hellenic Council, ANCA La Crescenta, Burbank, Hollywood Chapters, Armenian American Chamber of Commerce, Armenian American Council on Aging, Armenian Bar Association, Armenian Cultural

Foundation, Armenian Educational Foundation, Armenian Society of Los Angeles, Armenian Youth Association of California, Armenian Relief Society - Glendale Chapter, Assyrian American Association of Southern CA, Committee for Armenian Students in Public Schools, Davidian/Mariamian Educational Foundation, Homenetmen Glendale Ararat Chapter, Glendale Teachers Association, Hamazkayin Armenian Cultural & Educational Society - Glendale Chapter, Korean American Forum of California, Korea Glendale Sister City Association, New Joulfa Zartonk Association, Richard Tufenkian Pre-School, SEYFO Center - Assyrian Genocide Research Center, SWANA-LA (Southwest Asian And North African - Los Angeles), Urmia Armenian Society, Vahan and Anoush Chamilian School.

In Appreciation of Armenian Heritage Park

APPRECIATION, from page 15

At one point, I had the privilege of listening to Donald (Don) Tellalian speak to the crowds about a number of different subjects. This man, animated with the passion and enthusiasm of an advocate for the public welfare most sincere, told the story of how the park came to be but also of what it represents from a number of different perspectives. He used a miniature dodecahedron to demonstrate its geometric properties, not merely from a scientific perspective - he cleverly used the nature of this fascinating shape to reconcile matters of ethics, immigration/assimilation, the “coming together and pulling apart” of the human condition.

The presentation spoke to us in a way which, even now as I sit here in reflection...appears as a brilliant proof of how mathematics can speak a beautiful, universal language and unite our distant human families under one roof of common, equitable principles.

The dodecahedron sculpture speaks to the architect and the philosopher...to the life-long resident as well as the new arrival...to the Bostonian as well as the tourist, without the slightest indifference or discrimination. We are all, indubitably, bound to experience both impermanence and a metamorphosis in our own experience.

In the end this beautiful talk produced an empowering chorus of applause which was followed up with a poem composed by Peter Chan. He was selfless, interesting, and engaging a fellow as you please as well as quite talented with photography. We then walked the labyrinth at the encouragement of Andrea Burns. This was something to behold, to take pride in...each of us walking mindfully - a fascinating contradiction of independence and interdependence. While we were each on our own while walking, thinking and feeling singularly, we were physically no more than a few steps from each other...drawing forth from the comforts of solidarity while certainly enjoying the “disconnect” from our modern state of constantly being “online”.

Between discussions, conversations and walking sessions, everyone had a chance to enjoy iced tea and pastries which were both refreshing and delicious. One couldn’t have asked for a better time. Body, mind and spirit were each well treated. Consider this a token of our gratitude as well as a declaration of our unwavering support.

(Steven Vilkas is co-founder, S&S Consulting, a Boston-based firm dedicated to leadership development and a North End resident.)