

Wolfgang Gust Honored in Berlin

By **Muriel Mirak-Weissbach**
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN — The German-Armenian Society (Deutsch-Armenische-Gesellschaft, DAG) has announced “with joy and satisfaction” that it has conferred an honorary membership on Wolfgang Gust. In accepting the honor, Gust wrote that he has appreciated the DAG’s efforts for many, many years.

In the announcement issued on September 29, the Dr. Raffi Kantian, writing on behalf of the board, stated, “The extremely significant contribution to the study of the Armenian genocide that Wolfgang Gust has made concerns the diplomatic documents from the archives of the German Foreign Ministry” during the First World War. see GUST, page 20



Wolfgang Gust and his wife



Aronian Gets Married after Winning FIDE World Cup 2nd Time

YEREVAN (Armenpress, *Guardian*) — Armenia’s leading GM Levon Aronian married Arianne Caoili on Saturday, September 30. The wedding took place at Saghmosavank Monastery with Serzh Sargsyan, both president of the Republic of Armenia and president of the Chess Federation of Armenia, serving as best man.

Born in the Philippines, Caoili has been living in Armenia since 2015. “I’m marrying not just Levon, but the whole of Armenia,” she said in a recent interview with Champord newspaper. She performed a traditional Armenian dance for her groom.

Aronian, the 34-year-old Armenian world number 2 chess player, who has dominated recent tournaments, took the \$120,000 first prize at the World Cup in Tbilisi on September 27. He beat China’s Ding Liren 4-2 in the final. Both qualified for the eight-player Candidates Tournament in Berlin in March 2018, which will decide who challenges Magnus Carlsen’s world title later next year.

Aronian stood better in four drawn classical games but was unable to convert against Ding’s stubborn defense. He switched to a more fluid attacking style in the fifth, a speed tie-break, provoked errors and broke through for a mating attack. Faced with a must-win sixth game, Ding mishandled a promising position and was overwhelmed by a swift counter.

Aronian thus secured World Cup victory to accompany Candidates place.

Aronian is the first chess player in the world to win the World Cup for the second time. He became World Champion again after 12 years.

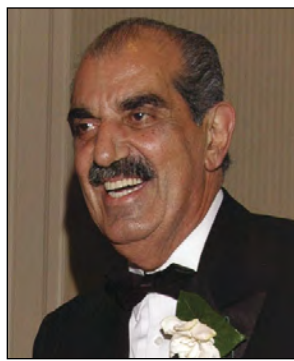
Haig K. Deranian, Former Grand Commander of Knights of Vartan, Dies

BELMONT, Mass. — Haig K. Deranian, of Belmont, formerly of Worcester and Watertown, died on October 2. He was 75.

Deranian served as commander of Ararat Lodge No. 1, Boston in 1984 and 1985 and served as Grand Commander of the brotherhood from 2008 to 2010. At the time of his passing he was a member of the Diocesan Board of Directors, Board Member of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, a and longtime Diocesan Delegate from St. James Armenian Church. His exceptional leadership in the Armenian Heritage Park Foundation was crucial for the success and eventual building of the Park, which officially opened in 2012.

He leaves his wife, Donna (Pino) Deranian, children Gregory Deranian and his wife Adrienne, Jason Deranian and his wife Jennifer and Jennifer Granfield and her husband Mossey; grandchildren Nicholas, Christian, Sam and Sophia, sister Charlotte Eordekian and her husband Harry and cousin Diane Kouyoumjian.

Funeral services were held at Saint James Armenian Church, Watertown, on Friday, October 6.



ARMENIAN MIRROR-SPECTATOR 85TH ANNIVERSARY



A BRIEF HISTORY

The following introduction, written by Marc Mamigonian, now director of academic affairs at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, appeared in the program book for the 75th anniversary of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator.

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* is the oldest English-language Armenian newspaper in the world. It was during the late 1920s that the Armenian-American community in the United States became aware of the existence of the new generation that had grown up in this new world. The vast differences in geographical background, language and education had created a gap between the generations. In an attempt to bridge this gap, the Armenian Democratic Liberal organization (ADL), publisher of the *Baikar* daily, at its convention in 1931, on the recommendation of a committee composed of Elisha B. Chrakian, Kapriel S. Papazian and Vahan Churgents, resolved to establish an English-language Armenian weekly, the first of its kind. The *Armenian Mirror* was first published on July 1, 1932 in Boston. Elisha B. Chrakian was its first editor.

From the beginning, the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* was dedicated to serving the entire Armenian-American community and to fill a need: to satisfy a readership of primarily English-speaking Armenian Americans. For three cents per issue, or a whole dollar if you subscribed, the non-Armenian-language reader was given access to news and views on Armenian affairs. The price has gone up, of course, but the *Mirror-Spectator* is still filling that need 75 years later.

Despite the depressed conditions of the time, the *Mirror* was widely accepted from the very beginning, and imitated.

see HISTORY, page 20



NEWS IN BRIEF

Dink Murder Trial Resumes

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) — The Hrant Dink murder trial resumed on October 2 in Istanbul’s Court for Serious Crimes, *Agos* reports.

A total of 83 suspects are involved with the trial, including police officers. The trials will be held October 2-3 and 5-6.

As before, Dink’s friends gathered outside the courthouse and demanded justice. One of his friends issued a statement, reminding everyone that the trial has been dragging on for 10 years but not everyone involved has faced justice.

“We are still very far away from justice. Ten years and three months have passed, but the murder hasn’t been revealed. We will continue following the trial,” Bulent Aydin said.

HDP lawmaker Garo Paylan joined the gathering.

New Appointment to The Diocese of Iraq

BAGHDAD — By the Pontifical Order of Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, Rev. Gabriel Sargsyan, a member of the Brotherhood of the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, was appointed to the Armenian Diocese of Iraq.

He formerly served the Armenian Diocese of Egypt.

MP Condemns Use of Force in Javakhk

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Parliament Member and head of the Javakhk Patriotic Union Shirak Torosyan condemned in a press conference this week an attack by Georgian law enforcement on Armenians in the village of Gumburdo in Javakhk, who had been erecting a cross-stone.

“The residents of the village tried to put forward the issue of a cross-stone, despite the preliminary agreement that it should be erected after the elections. A disproportionate amount of force was used,” Torosyan said.

Father Vahram Melikyan of the Mother See agreed. “Recently renovations were carried out during which several tombs were ruined and the remains were taken to another place together with the construction remains. Learning about this, the residents put the remains in sacks and re-buried them near the church. They wished also to erect a cross-stone. The erection of the cross-stone was prohibited by the law enforcement bodies of Georgia, which led to this unpleasant incident and causing some tensions.”

The Primate of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia continues meetings with the Georgian authorities and representatives of the Georgian Church to defuse tensions, he said.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Armenian, Czech Foreign Ministries Hold Consultations

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Political consultations between the foreign ministries of Armenia and the Czech Republic were held October 2 in Yerevan. Deputy Foreign Minister Karen Nazaryan led the Armenian delegation, while the Czech delegation was led by Jakub Dür – deputy foreign minister of the Czech Republic.

A range of issues related to the further development of the Armenian-Czech relations was discussed during the consultation, including actions towards enhancing political, economic dialogue and cooperation in various sectors.

The sides also discussed the Armenia-European Union relations and prospects for expanding partnership on the sidelines of international organizations and Eastern Partnership.

On the same day, the Czech delegation had a meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Shavarsh Kocharyan. During the meeting Kocharyan presented to the Czech side the efforts of Armenia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group co-chairs for advancing the settlement process of the Karabakh conflict, and touched upon regional security issues.

Armenia Plans to Expand Partnership with EU: FM Nalbandian

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia has close ties with the European Union and plans to expand the partnership in all spheres of mutual interest, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said during a joint press conference with Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn, on October 2.

“Our contacts, meetings, dialogues are on regular basis. Today’s visit is another chance to continue our discussions in Yerevan. The European Union provides significant assistance to Armenia’s ongoing reforms, constantly supports promoting human rights and rule of law, further strengthening democratic institutions, as well as Armenia’s efforts on the effective governance of judiciary. Over the past two years our partnership recorded important achievements in line with the spirit of the joint declaration of the Eastern Partnership summit in Riga,” Nalbandian said, stating that Armenia joined Horizon 2020, the talks over Creative Europe, Common Aviation Area are completed, the agreement on priorities document of Armenia and the EU is also completed.

Nalbandian once again recalled that the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership agreement has been initialed the signing of which in November 2017 in Brussels can be considered as one of the key achievements of the Eastern Partnership summit.

“The meeting with Johannes Hahn focused on discussing the preparation works of signing the agreement during the upcoming Brussels summit”, Nalbandian said.

He added that they have also discussed the regional issues, the situation in the Middle East and the developments in Syria.

President Sends Condolences to Trump

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan sent a letter of condolence to US President Donald Trump over the violence that took place in Las Vegas, press service of the President’s Office reported.

The letter says: “I was informed with a deep sorrow about the horrible violence in Las Vegas which claimed the lives of dozens of innocent people and injured hundreds. At this difficult moment of grief and loss, I extend my deepest condolences and support to you, the friendly people of the United States and the relatives of the victims, wishing them strength, and a speedy recovery to the injured. We together with the US people pray for the peace of souls of the victims and full recovery of the injured.”

Opening of the Haig and Elza Didizian ‘Master’s School’ Youth Center of Yerevan

YEREVAN – On September 20, under the presidency of Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II; with the presence of Serzh Sargsyan, President of the Republic of Armenia; the opening ceremony was held for the Haig and Elza Didizian “Master’s School” Youth Center of Yerevan.

The Youth Center will be operating under the auspices of the See of Holy Echmiadzin, and has been renovated by

ject, history of the institution and the important role of the Armenian Church in this initiative. Sarkissian expressed his gratitude to the president of the Republic of Armenia and the Catholicos of All Armenians for immediate assistance to the program, and thanked the primary benefactors Haig and Elza Didizian, and the over 150 friends who also supported the project.

Didizian made heartfelt remarks,

desire to participate in the godly mission of education and upbringing of a new generation; Ambassador Sarkissian, presented his proposal within the “Yerevan My Love” program, to renovate and complete this building to serve as a social-cultural rehabilitation center for children with physical disabilities.

Through the same sincere feelings, he re-constructed the park of Holy Echmiadzin, which is located by the St. Vartan and St. Hovhannes Baptistry of the Mother See that was built by his sponsorship. In this area a new cultural center is to be built in the future. And Ambassador Sarkissian is planning to build another educational center near the St. Hovhannes Church of Kond, Yerevan,” stated His Holiness.

Catholicos Karekin II expressed his appreciation to Armen and Nouneh Sarkissian, as well as Haig and Elza Didizian.

Catholicos Karekin II noted that in the personal history of the faithful Didizians, it is not their first beneficial initiative, and in appreciation for their additional benefaction; the newly renovated Center will be named in honor of Haig and Elza Didizian.

Extending His Pontifical love and greetings to all those present, the catholicos also expressed his appreciation to all the individuals and organizations who contributed to the opening of the center.

“There is nothing more gratifying than the fulfillment of a steadfast vision of our future, in the form of a dignified education of our younger generation. Educational centers and schools are the best guarantees for the building of the homeland, and preservation and maintenance of a national spirit,” he stressed, urging them to adhere to the mission of the upbringing of children, which for centuries has guided the Armenian Christian nation.

At the conclusion, the Catholicos of All Armenians offered his prayer that Heavenly God keep the native educational centers vibrant and bright, as well as keep under his blessings the homeland and the Armenian people worldwide.

Following the ribbon cutting ceremony, the guests toured the educational center and viewed the environment of the Center and talked to her first little visitors.



Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II with Ambassador Dr. Armen Sarkissian, left, and Haig Didizian

the “Yerevan-My Love” Foundation. The center has been created to offer social, educational and cultural treatment for children with physical disabilities, refugee and displaced children, who are deprived of adequate care, and for those from socially vulnerable groups.

The event was attended by the members of the brotherhood of Echmiadzin, officials of the government of the Republic of Armenia; Taron Margaryan, mayor of Yerevan; Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) President Berge Setrakian; benefactors of the Mother See, AGBU members and other guests.

A symbolic red ribbon at the entrance of the center was cut by the Catholicos of All Armenians, Ambassador Armen Sarkissian, president of the “Yerevan-My Love” Foundation, and Haig Didizian (London, UK) benefactor of the Mother See.

Sarkissian, ambassador of Armenia to Great Britain and himself a benefactor of the Mother See, delivered opening remarks presenting the goals of the pro-

ject, history of the institution and the important role of the Armenian Church in this initiative. Sarkissian expressed his gratitude to the president of the Republic of Armenia and the Catholicos of All Armenians for immediate assistance to the program, and thanked the primary benefactors Haig and Elza Didizian, and the over 150 friends who also supported the project.

Under the presidency of the catholicos a special Blessing Service for the newly opened building was offered. At the conclusion of the service, the catholicos extended his message to those present.

“Since the establishment of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church the most important part of her mission has been the educational enlightenment and the upbringing of children. Through this vision, in the Armenian national and ecclesiastical life, schools and colleges have been established which are the crown of the Armenian pedagogy and upbringing, where our children revered our enduring spiritual and national values and the glorious history of the Armenian people.

Two years ago, expressing a sincere

Catholicos of All Armenians Receives Members of the Knights of Vartan

ECHMIADZIN – On September 19, in the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, received members of the Knights of Vartan organization. They were led by Dr. Gary Zamanigian, Grand Commander.

During the meeting, they reflected on the activities of the organization in Armenia and the Diaspora, and reported on the approval of opening a Communications Office in Yerevan, for the purpose of more effective coordination of activities.

In his welcoming remarks, Zamanigian assured the Supreme Patriarch, that the organization will continue to support Armenia and its people through its activities, as well as to support the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church.

During the meeting, the Catholicos of All Armenians conveyed his appreciation and blessing to the members of the Knights of Vartan for the patriotic activities in the Diaspora and Armenia. His Holiness stressed that the programs implemented form strong ties between Armenia and the Diaspora, which will

be greatly enhanced by the newly established communications office. At the conclusion, the catholicos wished the organization members successful activities and implementation of new patri-

otic programs.

The meeting was attended by Archbishop Paren Avetikyan, a member of the Brotherhood of Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin.



Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II with members of the Knights of Vartan in Echmiadzin

Unseen Armenia: Artsakh Wine Festival, Togh Village

By Hovsep Daghdigian

TOGH, Artsakh – It would have been hard to imagine a more suitable site for the Artsakh Wine Festival (Sept. 16, 2017) than Togh village in Artsakh’s Hadrut marz (district). It is easily accessible; there is one main road through the vil-
lage. In the village center is an expansive preserve containing extensive remains of the medieval residence and administra-
tive structures of the Dizak meliks; Melik Yegan and his suc-
cessors. Togh and much of the Hadrut region was part of a
medieval region called “Dizak.”
Much of Karabagh was ruled by five medieval princes called
“meliks”. It is believed that many of the meliks were descen-
dants of earlier Armenian nobles. Though there were perhaps
100-200 meliks according to some sources; five meliks, called
the “khmsa melikoutyouanner” (“khmsa” is “five” in Arabic),
were the central governing body with Melik Yegan (Yeganyan)
and his successors being the chief among them. The Togh site
is being preserved and renovated with a descendent of Melik



Singers at the Artsakh wine festival



Dancers, Artsakh wine festival, Togh village

Yegan overseeing the restoration. Numerous signs, both in
English and Armenian, are posted with historical notes, pho-
tographs, and diagrams explaining the history and architec-
ture of the site.
The meliks were established from the 15-18th century when
Persia was in conflict with the Turks for control of the area.
Local Armenian rulers, allied with the Persians against
Turkish rule, were given autonomy by the Persians and
allowed to maintain armies, all of course subservient to
Persian authority. Persian Nadir Shah (ruled 1732-1747)
approved the confederation of the Khmsa Meliks in the
medieval principalities of Gulistan, Jraber, Khachen, Varanda,
and Dizak; all in Artsakh, headed by Dizak’s Melik Yegan.
The main two-story building at the Togh site was the palace
was built in 1737 by Melik Yegan, the son of a priest. Other
structures include reception halls, and the 17th-century Saint
Hovhanness church above the palace complex. There is the pos-
sibility that an earlier church existed on the site. Near the
church are gravestones of the Dizak meliks. The site abounds

in other structures as well.
At the wine festival there was, of course, wine tasting with
opportunities to purchase local wines. Food was in abundance
with kebab, khorovats, corn, with the specialty being Togh’s
unique harissa (“korkot” in the local dialect) made with pork
as opposed to the traditional use of chicken or lamb.
Numerous local handicrafts, pastries, preserves, etc. were also
available. But most impressive was the singing of patriotic
songs both by individuals and groups as well as dancing by
local youth groups. A young man sang songs from Sassun
which, like Artsakh, is mountainous with its people fiercely
defensive of their liberty. I could not imagine a more apt loca-
tion for such a festival. Simply to hear the music, soak up
some history, and jostle in line to get some harissa, was a
unique and rewarding experience.
More information on the Meliks of Artsakh is available from a
number of websites. In English, there is Raffi’s *The Five Melikdoms
of Karabagh* (1600-1827), *Armenian Literature in Translation*,
translated by Stepan Melkonian, 2010, Taderon Press.

Megerian Rugs Celebrates Centennial, COAF Partnership

YEREVAN – On the occasion of the 100th
Anniversary of Megerian Rugs, the Megerian
family hosted an evening of celebration at
Megerian Carpet Armenia. This event included
Armenian stars including Iveta Mukuchyan,
AramMP3, Nazeni Hohvannisyan, Sevak
Khanagyan, Rosy Armen, Marco Khan and
many more celebrity guests. A special part of
the Megerian anniversary event was dedicated
to the “Cutting of the Loom Ceremony,” which
indicated the conclusion of the Megerian and

Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) partnership
and internship program.
The six-month partnership was a special
internship opportunity for children from the
COAF village – Vanand village in Armavir, not
only to learn the age-old art of rug weaving but
to understand and partake in the marketing
and business side of running a multi-national
corporation. Together, President Raffi
Megerian, John D. Megerian, general counsel
and Dr. Garo Armen, COAF chairman and

founder, launched the program, along with all
internship participants and notable community
members.
One of the outcomes of the program is the
creation of a one-of-kind handwoven Armenian
Megerian rug, woven by both the internship
participants and Megerian’s master weavers.
This masterpiece will be donated to COAF and
auctioned off at their Annual Gala in New York
City on December 16, at Cipriani’s. This historic
rug design is based on a 17th-century motif

native to the Artsakh region of Armenia. If you
have any further inquiries or would like addi-
tional information about this new partnership,
please see the below contacts.
“Famous people in the US started to learn
about Armenia. We do all the possible to pre-
sent them Armenians life and history.
Unfortunately, Armenians faced a lot of diffi-
culties during last 100 years, and now this is
the time to go high and achieve big things,”
said Armen.



Dr. Garo Armen with one of the Megerian rugs



Garo Paylan with COAF volunteers



ARMENIA

International News

Young Armenian woman Drowns in Caspian Sea

NOWSHAHR, Iran (news.am) – A young Armenian woman drowned recently in the Caspian Sea, near Nowshahr.

The Armenian community of Iran reported that Vane Novshadian had come to the capital city of Tehran from the US to attend her father's funeral. Afterward, Novshadian's friends had decided to take her to the beach, and that is where the incident occurred. According to her uncle, the unfortunate incident took place while taking photographs.

Vane Novshadian was 33 years old. Her funeral was held Tuesday, October 3 in Tehran.

Putin Calls on All Countries to Provide Humanitarian Aid to Syria

MOSCOW (Armenpress) – Russian President Vladimir Putin says all countries should join the process of providing humanitarian aid to Syria and demining efforts in that country, TASS reported.

"A pressing task today is increasing the supply of humanitarian aid and demining the liberated territories," Putin said at the presentation of foreign ambassadors' credentials ceremony last week. According to the Russian president, "everyone who sincerely wishes peace to Syria and its people, who sincerely wants refugees to return to their homes should join these processes with the leading role played by the UN and without any preconditions."

April War 2016 website Launched

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The April War 2016 (www.april2016.am) website was launched through a joint effort by the Armses scientific and cultural educational NGO and the Center for Strategic Research of the Yerevan State University.

The site, dedicated to the April War in Artsakh, covers topics related to the military actions between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces, the lives of the fallen Armenian servicemen and the current stage of the Armenian-Azerbaijani war.

The idea for the site was born in May 2016.

Passenger Flow to Armenia Increases by 24 Percent This Year

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The passenger flow in Armenia's two airports in January-September 2017 comprised 1,922,183 people, an increase of 24 percent compared to the same period of the previous year, the General Department of Civil Aviation reported. In September, the passenger flow in the two airports was 255,010 people, surpassing the figure of September of 2016 by 15.5 percent. The passenger flow in Yerevan's Zvartnots airport comprised 245 364 people in September, 2017, which is an increase of 11.2 percent compared to September, 2016.

Former Iraqi President Talabani Has Died

BERLIN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Kurdish officials say former Iraqi President Jalal Talabani has died in a Berlin hospital at the age of 83.

A close family friend and a senior Kurdish official in Irbil said Talabani died after his condition rapidly deteriorated on Tuesday, October 3. He had suffered a stroke in 2012 and was moved to a German hospital later that year for treatment.

Talabani led one of Iraq's main Kurdish factions and went on to become the country's president after the 2003 US-led invasion toppled Saddam Hussein. He was often seen as a unifying elder statesman who could soothe the tempers among Iraq's Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds.

Chairman of Isfahan Armenian Prelacy Council Seriously Wounded

ISFAHAN, Iran (Araxnews, Noyantapan, asbarez.com, alikonline) – During the evening of September 22, Varuzh Minasian, chairman of the Armenian Prelacy Council of Isfahan, was attacked. A group of three attackers, with their faces covered, broke Minasian's foot, stabbed him, and severely injured his hands. According to one account, they struck his car with cudgels and metal objects, breaking the windows and piercing the car. However, according to a September 25 statement from the Prelacy, the car was not damaged. During the attack, the prelate of the Armenian Prelacy of Isfahan, Very Rev. Sipan Kechejian, was in the car but was not harmed. According to the Prelacy statement, there also was a driver in the car who was not harmed.

The attack took place opposite Minasian's house, when he was arriving home with the Prelacy car. The attackers stole nothing and only targeted Minasian.

Minasian and the prelate had newly returned from Armenia to Isfahan via Tehran. They had changed the date of their return ticket from Yerevan to Tehran to come early, stating that they needed to be present when the



Varuzh Minasian, at left, with Prelate Very Rev. Sipan Kechejian

Armenian schools in Tehran reopened. Thus, some sources speculate that the attackers knew the details of their return.

The attackers fled in a silver Peugeot. Minasian was brought to a hospital in an ambulance in serious condition. According to the Prelacy announce-

ment, Minasian was released on September 25 in satisfactory condition. The police have begun an investigation into the case.

On September 26, the Prelacy of Armenian Atrpatakan in Tabriz issued a statement condemning the attack and offering condolences.

'Turkey Has Turned into A Veritable Madhouse,' Says Nisanyan, Intellectual Who Escaped Jail

ATHENS (NPR) – Sevan Nisanyan, 60, recently slipped out of jail while serving an 8 1/2-year sentence for violating zoning laws. Turkish authorities have issued a warrant for his re-arrest.

Over the summer, Turkey's Twitter-sphere went abuzz after the appearance of a cryptic tweet: "The bird has flown away."

It was posted July 14 on the account of Sevan Nisanyan, a famous jailed intellectual, announcing he'd escaped from a Turkish prison. He had been behind bars since January 2014 and wasn't eligible for parole for another 10 years.

Nisanyan, 60, is a linguist with degrees from Yale and Columbia. He is also a newspaper columnist and travel writer who has penned several guidebooks about his native Turkey. And he's a self-taught architect who renovated his home village of Sirince in the hills above the Greco-Roman ruins of Ephesus, turning it into a tourist attraction on Turkey's Aegean coast.

That's what got him in trouble – or so the authorities say.

Nisanyan was convicted and sentenced to 8 1/2 years in prison for violating zoning laws in Sirince. After living in Istanbul and abroad, he had moved home in 1995 and started renovating dilapidated old houses into boutique hotels. He also built a mathematics village and summer camp for schoolchildren. But because of its proximity to the protected ruins of Ephesus, Sirince too had been declared a protected area. Nisanyan's projects were illegal.

Nisanyan, his supporters and some Turkish human rights activists contend he was being persecuted for his sometimes irreverent writings.

In late July, Nisanyan surfaced in Greece, where he received a temporary resident permit and has applied for political asylum.

NPR reached Nisanyan through Facebook, and conducted an interview with him this month via email, in which he said his time in prison was "extremely boring."

"I was treated decently, but very strictly," he wrote. "Turkey has turned into a veritable madhouse in the last few years. I feel relieved and liberated for getting out

of that insane pressure chamber."

It's rare for someone to be sent to prison in Turkey for illegal construction. Normally, says Ali Nesin, Nisanyan's friend and former neighbor in Sirince, violators pay an administrative fine and sometimes authorities tear down the building.

"The law was so strict, no one could even repair their own home or even build a wall in the garden," Nesin told NPR in a telephone interview. "Lots of people just did it illegally, but Sevan was open about going ahead with construction and challenging the state. Finally, the state responded pretty severely."

Nisanyan's supporters point out that on taking office, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan began construction on a \$350-million presidential palace with 1,000 rooms in an Ankara forest with the same protected status as Sirince.

They say Nisanyan's case also reveals a strain of anti-intellectualism in Turkish politics – and discrimination against ethnic minorities. Nisanyan is a Turkish citizen of Armenian descent.

While Nisanyan was in jail, Turkey stepped up its purge of voices critical of Erdogan's government. Rights groups say more than 150 journalists are in custody. Aid workers, including the local head of Amnesty International, were arrested over the summer. Since a failed coup last year, Turkey has fired some 150,000 employees from the public sector and detained more than 50,000 people for alleged links to the coup conspirators.

Before going to prison, Nisanyan did a photo shoot for a Turkish newspaper, in which he posed defiantly – shirtless in a bathtub, raising a glass of red wine.

Even while he was in jail, new convictions piled up. He was sentenced to another 13 months for insulting the Prophet Muhammad in a September 2012 blog post, which referred to Islam's founder as "an Arab leader who claimed he contacted Allah hundreds of years ago."

Nisanyan wrote that "making fun of" the prophet as a historical figure "is not hate speech. It is an almost kindergarten-level test of what is called freedom of expression," he wrote.

An infamous provocateur, Nisanyan also

wrote a 2008 book titled *Wrong Republic*, in which he criticized modern Turkey's founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

"Criticism towards the founding fathers, especially coming from an outsider Armenian writer, was not taken well," Turkish historian Sait Çetinoglu wrote in a column last year. He said the government tried "to defame Sevan."

Nisanyan's own eccentric behavior didn't help his reputation going into these legal cases. His wife reportedly sued him once for allegedly throwing a jar of his own excrement at her during an argument. They later divorced.

"Sevan is a very sharp-tongued person. He disturbed a lot of people, and there was animosity against him," his friend Nesin said. "He's not part of any group. He cannot be classified as left or right."

Initially held in a high-security prison, Nisanyan was transferred in March to a minimum-security facility, where he could check himself out on a furlough once every three months. That's what he did in mid-July – and never checked back in.

Turkey has issued a warrant for his re-arrest. He's listed as a fugitive.

Nisanyan said he hopes to win asylum and live out his days on the Greek island of Samos, from which he can look across the water and see the hills of his hometown.

"I am not a particularly nostalgic person, but being near Sirince has certain practical advantages when it comes to organizing tours, workshops, conferences, etc.," Nisanyan wrote to NPR. "Unfortunately my ability to speak Greek is rather limited, and that causes me to feel a little like fish out of the bowl. But I am sure I will adapt within a year or two."

On July 31, Turkish authorities announced plans to demolish 128 illegally renovated buildings in Sirince – including Nisanyan's own house.

The demolitions have not yet been carried out, Nisanyan said.

"The authorities seem very relieved by my departure," Nisanyan wrote. "I hope that the bureaucratic problems they created and cultivated over the years in Sirince will slowly disappear now that I am out of the picture."

Community News

Banquet of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Cambridge To Honor Aram Hintlian

By Seta. A. Buchter

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The pastor and Parish Council of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston are pleased to announce that Aram Hintlian, a longtime devoted and dedicated member of the Holy Trinity parish, will be honored as “Parishioner of the Year” at the Church’s 56th Anniversary Banquet to be held on Sunday, October 22, following Church Services, in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall of the church complex at 145 Brattle Street.

The Very Rev. Mesrop Parsamyan, newly-appointed Director of Ministries at the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), will be the Guest Celebrant on this morning and offer the homily, with the Divine Liturgy beginning at 10:00 a.m. During the Divine Liturgy, special prayers will be offered for the departed souls of the faithful who worked and built Holy Trinity Armenian Church at its present site in Cambridge. Following Church Services, the Annual Banquet will celebrate the 56th anniversary of the consecration of Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge.

“Aram Hintlian is the type of person every parish would be honored to call a parishioner,” states Fr. Vasken A. Kouzouian, pastor



Aram Hintlian

of Holy Trinity Church. “Aram comes from a family that was raised around the life of the Church. His parents taught all their children by example the meaning of being a devoted member of the Armenian Church. In turn, Aram and Becky have passed on that life-long commitment to their children, as have his siblings. Aram serves his Church on every level; at all major annual events, Bazaars, Golf Tournaments, fund-raising efforts, and on both the local and Diocesan levels. So much of our parish carries the fingerprint of Aram Hintlian. We are proud to call him Holy Trinity’s 2017 Parishioner of the Year. He is a role model for all.”

Hintlian is well-known in the Armenian community for his years of service to the Armenian Church and greater community, and his steadfast devotion to his faith and heritage.

A devoted member and supporter of Holy Trinity Armenian Church for almost four decades, Aram has served the Church in many capacities. He was a member of the

see HINTLIAN, page 9



A soldier with a medical kit from AWHF

Armenian Wounded Heroes Fund Announces New Medical Kit Deliveries

NEW YORK — Armenian Wounded Heroes Fund (AWHF) announced recently the delivery of 4,500 additional military-grade first-aid kits, as well as vital medical supplies to Artsakh.

This marks the second shipment of military-grade first-aid kits to Artsakh’s defense forces at the battlefield. The \$165,000 shipment was funded jointly by Armenian Medical Fund, USA, Hamazkayin NY, and individual AWHF donors. Special technical assistance was given by local partners of AWHF, IDEA Foundation in Armenia.

This shipment is on top of the 3,000 kits already deployed in two regions in fall 2016, bringing the total to 7,500 kits. During multiple monitoring missions, the organization members have observed a high level of readiness, training and professionalism in upgrading the combat casualty care system to US Army standards. The Armenian Ministry of Defense has confirmed these kits have already saved lives of servicemen on the border, which is subject to Azerbaijan’s constant violation of the cease-fire agreement. Below are pictures from the most recent monitoring mission in August of 2017.

These kits are the same as those used by the US Army to prevent combat deaths from extremity bleeding, lacerated lungs, and breathing difficulties caused by penetrating trauma. A complete system includes individual soldier kits, squad medic bags, and platoon-level professional medic equipment. Advanced training is provided by the new Combat Medic School (funded by the

see WOUNDED, page 8



Violinist Nuné Melik visits soldiers.

Michigan Recognizes Artsakh Republic

State Sen. David Knezek Leads Resolution Calling for US Recognition and Expansion of Economic and Cultural Ties with the Republic of Artsakh

LANSING, MI — Michigan became the eighth US state to recognize the independent Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh), with the overwhelming bipartisan passage of S.R.99, spearheaded by Senator David Knezek (D – 5th District). The bipartisan measure calls upon the US to establish economic and cultural ties with the Republic and support peace and stability across the South Caucasus, reported the Armenian National Committee of Michigan (ANC-MI).

“The Michigan Senate vote for Artsakh independence represents a resounding reaffirmation of our enduring American commitment to democratic self-determination and an equally powerful blow against Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev’s ongoing aggression against this peaceful republic,” said ANC of Michigan Chair Lara Nercessian. “Armenians from the Great Lakes State and across the US commend Sen. Knezek and his fellow State Senators for standing strong with the people of Artsakh.”

“Artsakh’s story is a very American story – one of freedom, self-determination, democracy, and peace,” said state Sen. David Knezek. “Michiganders are proud to join Artsakh in saluting these shared values as we work to expand US-Artsakh cultural and economic ties and support a lasting peace in the region.”

Senate consideration of the Artsakh independence measure began at the opening of the September 29th session with remarks by Sen. Knezek and an introduction of Robert Avetisyan, Republic of Nagorno Karabakh Representative to the US, who was on hand for the historic vote.

“We would like to thank Senator Knezek for supporting the democratic aspirations of Artsakh and his longtime leadership on the issues of concern to our compatriots living in the Republic,” said Avetisyan. “We are grateful to the ANC of Michigan for their tireless efforts in defending Artsakh’s security and promoting the international recognition of Artsakh. We hope Michigan’s recognition – the eighth US state to do so – will be an example for democratic societies around the world.”

Earlier Michigan State House candidate for the 40th District Mari Manoogian joined Knezek, House Rep. Clint Kesto (R-39th Dist) and Avetisyan for a breakfast briefing prior to the vote.

“As a Chaldean-American, I come from a community that has long been persecuted based on religion and ethnicity,” said Kesto. “I understand the needs and aspirations of the Armenian community, and I stand with the Armenian people in their quest to continue their manifest destiny and freedom as an independent nation and self-preservation.”

Adopted by a voice vote, S.R.99 discusses Artsakh’s historically Armenian roots and Soviet dictator Josef Stalin’s 1921 decision to force the South Caucasus region under Soviet Azerbaijani control. Peaceful efforts by the Artsakh people seeking independence were met with pogroms in Azerbaijan’s capital Baku and

see MICHIGAN, page 7



COMMUNITY NEWS



One Step Ahead, an Armenian team that won the People's Choice Award at the Technovation Challenge World Pitch Summit 2017, and AGBU Silicon Valley members at the Interactive Exhibition in Silicon Valley, California.

AGBU to Support Technovation Armenia

SAN FRANCISCO – Technovation Armenia is the national pitch contest of the Technovation Challenge, an international technology and entrepreneurship competition for girls.

On September 5, AGBU Central Board member Dr. Yervant Zorian became the first Goodwill Ambassador of AGBU Armenia's BRIDGE4CSOs program for Technovation Armenia. Technovation Armenia is the national contest of the Technovation Challenge which attracts thousands of schoolgirls from across the world to come up with mobile app ideas that offer sustainable solutions to problems in their communities.

Aiming to link the diaspora's talent to local civil society organizations, BRIDGE4CSOs will support Women and Information Society non-governmental organization which, along with National Institute of Education, initiated Technovation Armenia and facilitated the participation of Armenian teams in the

Technovation Challenge 2017.

An avid supporter of innovative education and engagement of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), Zorian, helped Armenian team One Step Ahead with the Technovation Challenge World Pitch Summit 2017. The team—comprised of five girls aged 15-16 from the Vahan Tekeyan Karbi secondary school in Aragatsotn province – won the People's Choice Award. As a goodwill ambassador, he will continue supporting the local Technovation initiative.

“Even though the contribution of women has always been important in Armenia's technology sector, achieving such global recognition in the competition – a combination of state-of-the-art technology and entrepreneurship – achieved by high school girls from this remote village of Karbi is extremely inspiring. This is exactly why AGBU fosters STEM education and teamwork

from school age,” said Zorian.

One Step Ahead entered the contest with a bilingual Armenian Sign Language app and became one of the 12 finalists selected out of 3,000 teams. As the finalist in the education category, the team traveled to Silicon Valley to attend the World Pitch Summit and Awards Ceremony held at Google Headquarters in Mountain View from August 7 to 11. Along with the People's Choice Award, the team received \$10,000 to improve the app. “This contest changed my life a lot, especially regarding my choice of the future profession,” said Aghavni, a member of the winning team.

Financed by the European Union, BRIDGE4CSO program is run by AGBU Armenia in cooperation with the European Partnership Foundation. It helps Armenian civil society organizations enhance their skills by tapping into the expertise of the diaspora.



Robert Fisk

Journalist, Middle East Correspondent for *The Independent*
Seven-Time Recipient of British Press Awards' Reporter of the Year



David Barsamian

Writer, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio



Philip Terzian

Senior Editor at *The Weekly Standard* and Pulitzer Prize finalist



The Armenian Mirror-Spectator

SYMPOSIUM ON ARMENIAN ISSUES IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Journalism and “Fake News”: Armenian Genocide and Karabagh

Aram Arkun , Moderator

Journalism is changing at a rapid pace, including how the news is produced, distributed and consumed. Join *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator* along with a panel of internationally acclaimed journalists to discuss the issues facing journalism today and their impact on the Armenian case.

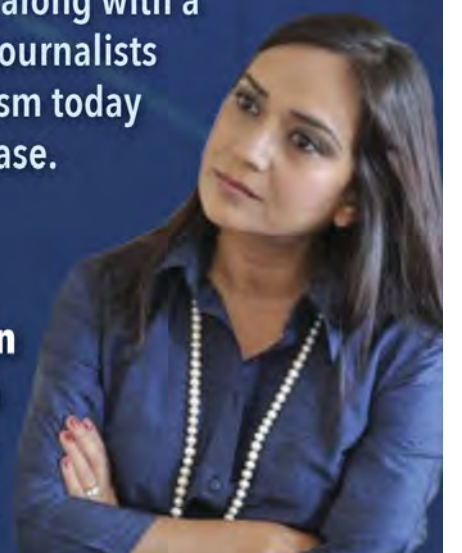
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Amberin Zaman

Columnist for *Diken* and *Al Monitor*, former Turkey Correspondent for *The Economist*





COMMUNITY NEWS

Michigan Rep. Dan Kildee Joins Armenian Caucus

WASHINGTON — The Armenian Assembly of America welcomes Rep. Dan Kildee (D-MI) to the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues. An Assembly delegation met with Kildee last month and discussed issues of concern to Armenian American constituents living in Michigan's 5th Congressional district. Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, Michigan-raised Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan, and Grassroots & Development Associate Mariam Khaloyan were joined by the Assembly's Michigan State Director John Jamian, St. John Armenian Church of Greater Detroit Pastor Very Rev. Aren Jebejian, and members of the Armenian-American community.

Kildee is also a committed supporter of religious freedom in the Middle East. In the 114th Congress, he co-sponsored H.Res. 279, which urged "respect for freedom of expression and human rights in Turkey," as well as H.Con.Res.75, which designated "the atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria" as "war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide."

"On behalf of Armenian Americans in Michigan, we thank Rep. Dan Kildee for his dedication to and support of US-Armenia relations, as well as for joining the Armenian Caucus following our insightful meeting," Jebejian stated.

As part of its advocacy efforts in Michigan, an Assembly-led delegation consisting of constituents from the state's 8th Congressional district visited Rep. Mike Bishop (R-MI) in his Brighton district office. Local advocates expressed their appreciation to the



Armenian Assembly of America staff with the Assembly's Michigan State Director John Jamian, Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian, Edmond Azadian, and St. John Armenian Apostolic Church of Greater Detroit parishioners.

Genocide, Seyfo, and the broader genocidal campaign by the Ottoman Empire."

Delegation members thanked Bishop for being one of the 36 signers of the bipartisan letter addressed to US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson opposing the sale of guns to Turkey in light of the vicious attack by Turkey's security detail in our Nation's Capital against peaceful protesters, which was spearheaded by Armenian Caucus Co-Chair and fellow



From left, Armenian Assembly Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan, Nicole Papelian Matthews, Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian, Rep. Dan Kildee (D-MI), Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, Armenian Assembly Grassroots & Development Associate Mariam Khaloyan, Dr. Greg Movsesian, and Karen Movsesian

Congressman for being a Member of the Armenian Caucus and for co-sponsoring H.Res.220, which "expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States, in seeking to prevent war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against religious and ethnic groups in the Middle East, should draw upon relevant lessons of the US government, civil society, and humanitarian response to the Armenian

Michigan Congressman David Trott (R-MI). The letter urged the State Department to reject a proposed sale of semi-automatic handguns and ammunition to a Turkish government controlled entity authorized to import firearms to the Department of Security of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey.

"We deeply appreciate Congressman Bishop's steadfast support, including during



Rep. John Moolenaar (R-MI) with Armenian Assembly Grassroots & Development Associate Mariam Khaloyan and Executive Director Bryan Ardouny

his tenure in the State of Michigan House of Representatives and in the Michigan Senate," said Assembly State Director John Jamian. "We look forward to working with him and the entire Michigan delegation to champion pro-Armenian legislation in Congress," he added.

The same month, Jamian led another group who met with Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI), a Member of the Armenian Caucus who has co-sponsored H.R. 220 and signed a bipartisan letter to President Donald Trump urging him to affirm the Armenian Genocide. The letter stated in part: "In that spirit of honoring the victims and redoubling our commitment to prevent genocide, we ask you to appropriately mark April 24th as a day of American remembrance of the Armenian Genocide."

The Assembly staff remains dedicated to reaching out to Members of Congress from Michigan in its headquarters in Washington, DC. On September 5, Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny and Grassroots and Development Associate Mariam Khaloyan thanked Rep. John Moolenaar (R-MI) for joining the Armenian Caucus and co-sponsoring H.Res.220 alongside his colleagues from Michigan.

The Assembly continued its outreach in Michigan with a grassroots-level meeting with Jebejian and local activists at St. John Armenian Church. Attendees discussed the important role of advocacy and political involvement for Armenian Americans, and highlighted the long-term significance of engaging and educating public servants at all levels throughout Michigan.



From left, Very Rev. Aren Jebejian, Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI), Renee Axt, St. John Armenian Church Parish Council Chairman Jeff Axt, Armenian Assembly Michigan State Director John Jamian, and Christine A. Derdarian

Michigan Recognizes Artsakh Republic

MICHIGAN, from page 5

the cities of Sumgait and Kirovabad and a six-year war for Artsakh independence, which concluded with a tenuous cease-fire in 1994.

"The Armenians of Artsakh remain resolute in their efforts to exercise the right to self-determination and live free from violence and repression, and by recognizing the government of Artsakh, the international community can help put to rest this century-old conflict," notes the Michigan Senate Resolution.

The measure goes on to call on the "President and Congress of the United

States to recognize a free and independent Republic of Artsakh", and "to strengthen and solidify our country's economic and cultural relationship with the Artsakh Republic." It goes on to support Artsakh efforts with the international community to "reach a lasting solution to the existing regional problems and establish peace and stability in the strategically important region of South Caucasus."

Michigan joins Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, Louisiana, California, Georgia and Hawaii in adopting legislation which supports the independence of Artsakh.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Wounded Heroes Fund Announces New Medical Kit Deliveries

WOUNDED, from page 5

US government) and is unique to the entire region. We would appreciate your support in providing these life-saving first-aid kits, so that we can cover the remaining regions.

AWHF works closely with the leadership of the Central Military Hospital in Yerevan to supply critical medical supplies to support wounded warriors. AWHF delivers both specifically procured, specialized medical equipment and supplies, and additional supplies that have been donated in the US.

Sponsor a Hero

AWHF is taking a larger role in financing the rehabilitation costs of approximately 25 young, wounded heroes who are undergoing rehabilitation in Yerevan. This includes medical, rehabilitation, lodging (in some cases), and nutritional expense for our heroes. We are seeking

individual and corporate sponsors who can "Sponsor a Hero" for \$250 per month. This amount covers all of the costs related to the care and rehabilitation of one hero. In addition, we have recruited volunteers to teach English and accounting, and expect to expand to other subjects in the near future. We also organize concerts on-location and other events, to lift the spirits of our heroes. Volunteers are encouraged to contact us if they can contribute in any way.

Armenian Wounded Heroes Fund is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to serving our heroes, standing with them through challenging times, saving lives, and supporting the rehabilitation of our wounded heroes who have sacrificed all for our homeland.

For more information, visit www.armenian-woundedheroes.com; write to info@armenian-woundedheroes.com.



Executive Director Position Manoogian Manor, Livonia, MI

The Manoogian Manor, founded by Alex and Marie Manoogian, a fully licensed non-profit facility providing assisted living and personal care services for seniors, is currently taking resumes for the position of its Executive Director. A 90-bed premier community that has just gone through a major multi-million dollar renovation is known for its outstanding resident care programs. Potential candidates should have extensive experience in the industry, having run similar or larger programs in the past.

- Michigan Assisted Living Administrator's License will be required.
- A passion for working with seniors
- College degree BA/BS, preferably in Business Administration, Hospital Administration, Hospitality, or health-related field.
- Must have a minimum of three years of executive managerial experience in senior living, assisted care, nursing home administration or similar.
- Must possess excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Must demonstrate a warm, outgoing, and compassionate personality.
- Must have demonstrated integrity, maturity and leadership skills.
- Must have knowledge of community agencies and appreciation for social/life history status of the residents.
- Knowledge of the Armenian language and or culture is a plus

Interested candidates should send resume with cover letter to: Manoogian Manor, Attention Gregory Jamian at jamiang@americaremedical.com

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Adishian Salutes Collective Endeavor of Conservancy at Annual Banquet

FRESNO — The historic Old Administration Building of the Fresno City College was the site of the second annual banquet of California's Central Valley Armenian Cultural Conservancy on Saturday, September 23, as guests gathered to celebrate the past year's accomplishments while also looking forward to its future potential. Preceding dinner, guests and community leaders enjoyed a lavish mezze table and wine as they shared in fellowship with a spirit of possibilities.

Fr. Vartan Kasparian, Pastor Ara Guekguezian, and Pastor Greg Haroutunian attended and Kasparian and Guekguezian offered the invocation and benediction, respectively.

Michael Rettig, a graduate student and *Hye Sharzhoom* editor at California State University, Fresno, served as master of ceremonies, and acknowledged guests, ACC committee members and the keynote speaker. As a student of history, while working on his master's thesis, he conveyed the first-hand experience of curating boxes of family treasures and

Hye Service Award, a special tribute, to Linda Hamilton for her unwavering dedication to the Conservancy as a founding member, serving as secretary, and for providing an office for the Conservancy. Along with several notables in the community, she has been a constant advocate for the preservation of ethnic heritage - Armenian and other backgrounds - throughout the City of Fresno.

Rettig's introduction of Lena Maranian Adishian, founder of The 100 Years, 100 Facts Project, highlighted the trajectory of her on-line initiative that evolved into the two-run print publication of the companion book she co-authored with Nareg Seferian, *Impact of An Ancient Nation: Bridging the Past, Present, and Future with 100+ Facts About Armenia and Armenians*, which recently became a recipient of the International Rubery Book Award.

She related an example of Armenians contributing to the Central Valley and its impact on others for generations. Adishian shared this personal story: "During a chat with a fellow mom at my child's pre-school in Redondo



Participants and committee chairs, from left, Mike Kilijian, Banquet Chair; Mary Ekmalian, Editor, ACC Newsletter; Charles Barrett, ACC Co-Chair; Lena Adishian, Keynote Speaker; Michael Rettig, Master-of-Ceremonies; Midge Barrett, ACC Co-Chair; Margaret Hokokian, Membership Chair, and Deacon Allan Y. Jendian, Publicity Chair.



Participants and committee chairs, from left, Mike Kilijian, Banquet Chair; Mary Ekmalian, Editor, ACC Newsletter; Charles Barrett, ACC Co-Chair; Lena Adishian, Keynote Speaker; Michael Rettig, Master-of-Ceremonies; Midge Barrett, ACC Co-Chair; Margaret Hokokian, Membership Chair, and Deacon Allan Y. Jendian, Publicity Chair.

emphasized "the importance of a place of repository for such items, especially when material is either lost or thrown away in cases where there is not an interested family member. While we may not guarantee that our children and grandchildren will be interested in their heritage, we can ensure that there are institutions in place such as the ACC for those who are motivated and curious to engage with their history."

He invited the community to unite in furthering the Conservancy's purpose and mission "To collect, preserve and interpret the evidence of the Armenian experience in Central California."

Co-Chair Charles Barrett presented the ACC's

Beach, she told me that her grandmother and several Japanese families farmed in Reedley among Armenian neighbors who even taught them how to make dolma. When the US government rounded up Japanese-Americans during World War II, her grandmother's family had to leave their home and was placed in an internment camp. She went on to say that their Armenian neighbors took care of the farm for them until they were able to return two years later and added, "we will always remember our Armenian family friends with gratitude and appreciation."

Adishian stated, "Stories like this remind us all of the deep ties, the immense contribution,

and the heart that Armenians have given in the Central Valley. It is so important to preserve these types of stories for our future generations, and for there to be a place designated for these stories to live, to be shared, and to be learned." She commended those present for their support of the Armenian Cultural Conservancy which represents a collective endeavor toward an enduring institution of learning. "The Armenian footprint in the Central Valley has made a deep and positive impact since the 1890s. While the Armenian

members at large, can learn more about their identity and also explore the richness that an ancient heritage has to offer in today's modern world.

The second annual banquet of the Armenian Cultural Conservancy was co-sponsored by the Foreign Language Department of FCC and Heritage Fresno.

The Educational Employees Credit Union and the Daughters of Vartan - Fresno Alidz Chapter were major Corporate Sponsors; and Banquet Sponsors included: Midge and Charles Barrett, Mary and Alain Ekmalian, Edward V. Hagopian and Raffi Dorian, Margaret and Paul Hokokian, Edward M. Kashian, Sue and Mike Kilijian, Lee and Don Leone (In Memory of Brother Vartan Torosian), Arpini Mirigian, Walter Vosganian and the National Raisin Company.

ACC's ad hoc committee members are: Chuck and Midge Barrett, co-chairs; Linda Hamilton, treasurer; Gary Becker, secretary; Mike Kilijian, banquet chair; Dn. Allan Y. Jendian, program and public relations; Mary Ekmalian, newsletter editor and invitations; Margaret Hokokian, membership and decorations; Helen Moordigian, decorations, Herb Arden, mailing; and Larry Johnson and Deacon Van Der Mugrdachian, website.

The reception committee and mezze contributors were Midge Barrett, Mary Ekmalian, Margaret Hokokian, Rosemary Jendian, Mike Kilijian, Helen Moordigian, Barbara Mortanian and Patty Torosian.



Master of Ceremony Michael Rettig

legacy lives on in us as individuals, it also lives on in our institutions to preserve our cultural heritage. I know the Conservancy will showcase that legacy for posterity."

Both Rettig and Adishian, the grandchildren of Genocide survivors, agree that the Conservancy will be a valuable receptacle from which young Armenians, as well as community

Banquet of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Cambridge To Honor Aram Hintlian

HINTLIAN, from page 5

Parish Council from 1987 to 1993 and is a Diocesan Delegate (a position he has held for the past 25 years). Aram served as Chairman of Holy Trinity's Annual Parish Assembly in 2003 and 2004, and then again from 2007 to 2017. He chaired the Trinity Christmas Bazaar from 1990 to 1992, and has been running the "Country Store" booth at the Bazaar since 1981. An active member of the Trinity Men's Union, he served as chairman from 1995 to 2004. Since 2005, he has been co-chairman of the annual Holy Trinity Gregory Hintlian Memorial Golf Tournament. He is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Holy Trinity Trust Fund, where he serves as treasurer.

On the Diocesan level, Hintlian has been a Proposal Committee member and Nominating Committee Chairman at the Annual Diocesan Assembly. Since 2014, Aram has served as a Trustee of the Ararat Youth and Conference Center (AYCC) in Greenville, NY, which is home to the St.

Vartan Camp, and is currently the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the AYCC.

Hintlian was born on June 30, 1952 in Arlington. He was one of four children of the late Aram and Anne Hintlian. He graduated from Belmont High School in 1970 and during his high school years, played soccer, hockey and golf. He attended Babson College in Wellesley and graduated in 1974. During his years at Babson, Aram played soccer and hockey and was captain of the Babson College hockey team. He earned his MBA from Babson College in 1975.

After college, Hintlian moved to Easthampton, where he started his career as business manager at Williston Northampton School (1975 to 1978). In 1978, having moved back to Boston, he worked at the family business, Superior Nut Company. In 1981, Aram, his brother Greg, and father Aram, left Superior Nut Company to found their own business, International Nut Company. In 1989, International Nut was sold to a private equity firm and Aram and Greg continued to

work for the new entity, Nutcracker Brands, Inc. Aram and Greg bought the business back in 1997 and eventually sold the company to Ralcorp Holdings, where he worked until his retirement in 2014.

During his career in the nut industry, Hintlian was a member of the New England Confectionery Club and served as president of the association. He also was a member of the Peanut and Tree Nut Processors Association, the national association of the nut industry, where he served on the Board of Directors for 20 years and was Chairman of the Board from 2000 to 2003.

Hintlian is currently on the Board of Overseers at Babson College.

He has had a life-long love of golf and is an avid golfer, enjoying being with friends out on the golf course. He also enjoys skiing and spending time with his family at his ski house at Sunday River in Maine.

He enjoys going to all the New England Patriots' games, having been a dedicated season ticket holder for 47 years. He also enjoys

hockey and attending Boston Bruins games where he has been a season ticket holder for the past 37 years.

Hintlian is married to Becky (Ondo) Hintlian and is the father of Ali and Tori Hintlian. He is the brother of Cynthia Kazanjian, Nancy E. Hintlian and the late Gregory Hintlian.

The pastor and Parish Council of Holy Trinity Armenian Church invite the Greater Boston community to join them on October 22 as they honor a faithful son and servant of the Armenian Church. During the Banquet, recognition will be given to outgoing Parish Council member Jack Ekchian.

Donation for the dinner is \$40 for adults and \$20 for children under 12. Seating is by advance paid reservation only with a RSVP deadline of October 18.

Tickets may be purchased by contacting the Holy Trinity Church Office, emailing office@htaac.org, or logging onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/464/>.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenia Offers a Warm Welcome to Academy Award-Winning Director Terry George, Producer Eric Esrailian

NEW YORK — Armenians honored “The Promise” director Terry George and producer Eric Esrailian who arrived in Yerevan on September 21 to join a series of memorable events devoted to the movie and its creators, including the late Kirk Kerkorian.

The trip began on Friday afternoon with a press conference. George and Esrailian shed light on the main challenges of production and distribution of the movie, as well as its educational impact. “I want to thank people of Armenia and AGBU because it is a tremendous honor for us to be in Armenia, especially after the long journey of the film,” said Esrailian. “It would not have been possible without the dedication, courage, bravery and generosity of the late Kirk Kerkorian. This was entirely his vision and passion.”

Inspired by the movie and its original score, “We Promise” musical tribute featuring the Armenian National Philharmonic Orchestra, pop stars and dancers premiered at the Opera Theater in Yerevan on Friday evening. Tigran Petrosyan joined Swiss singer Veronika Stalder to perform Sari Siroun Yar arranged and recorded by Grammy-winning artist Serj Tankian and Stalder for the film. Armenian pop starts, including Iveta Mukuchyan, Tigran Petrosyan and Narine Dovlatyan, took the stage to sing a touching rendition of the title song “The Promise” written by the late Chris Cornell who believed strongly in the film’s social action movement. Armenia’s President Serzh Sargsyan, Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan, Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, AGBU

ted. So, this is the most emotional moment of the whole production of The Promise itself, the most important moment of the project,” he said.

Later, over 150 people, including filmmakers and journalists, attended the two-hour masterclass held by Terry George and Eric Esrailian and hosted by AGBU Armenia and Creative Armenia, a cultural non-profit. George shared his approach to storytelling and filmmaking. Finalists of George’s filmmaking challenge who told human rights stories through 60-second videos were honored during the masterclass.

During an intimate dinner at Yerevan’s Cafesjian Museum, AGBU President Berge Setrakian presented Terry George and Eric Esrailian with a meaningful and touching gift, Book of Gratitude. Armenians from as far as South Africa, Jordan and Australia sent letters



Terry George and Eric Esrailian hold a masterclass for filmmakers in Yerevan.

significance of The Promise and its creators’ tremendous efforts, His Holiness awarded George and Esrailian the Order of Saint Sahak-Saint Mesrop. His Holiness told the guests that he acknowledges the challenge of making such an impressive motion picture that depicts the great tragedy of the Armenian people.

The guests also attended Sunday Divine Liturgy and a requiem service for the late Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin I, Kirk Kerkorian and Chris Cornell at the Mother Cathedral of Holy Echmiadzin.

The Promise is a major historical drama depicting the Armenian Genocide through a

touching love story. After its mainstream release in the United States and Canada in April, The Promise continues to open in theaters across the world. Produced by Kerkorian’s Survival Pictures, The Promise features an all-star international cast, including Oscar Isaac, Christian Bale, Charlotte Le Bon, Shohreh Aghdashloo and Angela Sarafyan. The movie’s original score was created by Oscar-winning composer Gabriel Yared with the title song “The Promise” written and performed by the late Chris Cornell. All proceeds from the film have been designated to various charities with an emphasis on human rights causes.



Terry George receives a precious gift, a sculpture made to resemble the camera of journalist Chris Myers, Christian Bale’s character in The Promise.

President Berge Setrakian along with foreign ambassadors and dignitaries attended the performance.

Above all, the visit to Tsitsernakaberd on Saturday morning held a symbolic meaning for both guests. In George’s words, it was a true highlight of his efforts over the recent years. “This visit sums up everything that I worked for over the last four years and brings into focus what really cinema and the power of cinema can be about, to try to commemorate the loss of lives and the horrible crime that was commit-

and notes sharing their feelings and appreciation for the film. The Promise was profoundly moving for those who saw a striking resemblance between the suffering of their ancestors and lives of the movie’s characters. The guests were also given a sculpture made to resemble the camera of journalist Chris Myers, Christian Bale’s character in the movie, who said, “Without journalists, there would be no Armenians.” The sculpture symbolizes the great service journalists and others rendered during the Armenian Genocide, documenting the atrocities and exposing the truth to the world.

“We dedicate this book to the many individuals who stood up and gave a voice to our story,” reads the gratitude letter of AGBU President Berge Setrakian. “For seventy-seven days, the talented production team and actors filmed a series of images that pulled directly from our collective history. The gratitude of the Armenian people cannot be quantified, but we have compiled here for you, a symbolic collection of seventy-seven letters and notes from around the world demonstrating how your efforts have touched our lives.”

The meeting with Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, on Sunday was another important highlight of the trip. Acknowledging the



Academy Award-Winning Director Terry George tours in the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan.



Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, awards George and Esrailian the Order of Saint Sahak-Saint Mesrop.



AGBU President Berge Setrakian; director Terry George; producer Eric Esrailian and AGBU Armenia Executive Director Talar Kazanjian at a press conference on Friday, September 22.



COMMUNITY NEWS

85 Years *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator*

BENEFIT

gala

Celebrating 85 Years

REFLECTING—CONNECTING—INSPIRING

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**2017 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD****Robert Fisk**

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2017 EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS**David Barsamian**

Writer, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio

Amberin Zaman

Columnist for Diken and Al Monitor
Former Turkey Correspondent for *The Economist*

Friday
November 3
2017

Reception, Meet the Awardees
6:30 P.M.

Dinner and Program
7:30 P.M.

Mistress of Ceremonies

Anaide Nahikian

Leader, Advanced Training Program
on Humanitarian Action at Harvard
Humanitarian Initiative

Entertainment

Black Sea Salsa



Arts & Living

Violinist Nuné Melik at Armenian Museum on October 15

WATERTOWN – The Armenian Museum of America presents a concert, “Hidden Treasure: An Undiscovered Repertoire Celebrating Armenian Survival and Creativity,” on Sunday, October 15, at 2 p.m. The program, featuring accomplished violinist Nuné Melik accompanied by pianist Michel-Alexandre Broekaert, will be held on the third floor of the Armenian Museum in the Adele & Haig Der Manuelian Galleries.

The free concert, co-sponsored by the Composer’s Union of Armenia, is made possible by a grant from the Dadourian Foundation. A reception will follow at the conclusion of the concert.

The “Hidden Treasure” project is an unprecedented initiative in the history of classical music of the Caucasus. Initiated and produced by Melik, it is based on more than seven years of research.

Three trips to Armenia, funded by McGill University and the Canada Council for the Art were undertaken, resulting in the discovery of an impressive array of the rare musical scores and related material. The outstanding contribution made by Melik has been highlighted in media publications such as Strings Magazine, Huffington Post, Armenian Mirror-Spectator and various TV programs interna-



Nuné Melik

tionally. “Hidden Treasure” has been presented in numerous performances to audiences at Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Centre; and broadcast on CBC Radio.

Striving to educate the North American public about the heritage of her country’s music, numerous lectures were given by Melik: Columbia University, New York; Arizona State University, Tucson and Wayne University, Detroit being among them. The program has been selected as part of the national tour of the Jeunesses Musicales Canada, and China tour in 2019.

Though enjoying collaboration with several pianists, Melik formed a duo with a University of Montreal alum, Michel-Alexandre Broekaert, in 2010. Ever since, they have performed over 60 concerts across Canada and the United States. In the upcoming seasons, the ensemble will be performing in more than a dozen cities in Canada and the United States, China and Europe to promote and launch the upcoming Hidden Treasure CD, recorded in collaboration with Yamaha Artist Services New York and McGill University.

The Armenian Museum of America is located at 65 Main St., Watertown.



Members of Huyser perform.

A Thrilling Performance by Huyser Ensemble on the Diocesan Plaza

NEW YORK – A rocking concert under a starlit sky wowed a sell-out crowd of more than 200 on Diocesan Plaza on Thursday, September 7. The Huyser Music Ensemble of St. Illuminator’s Cathedral brought the audience to their feet cheering and clapping several times with their songs of love, desire and nationalism sung in Armenian, and performed by a band of six professional musicians and singers.

By Florence Avakian

More than an hour before the start of the open-air concert, people had already lined up outside the Plaza anxiously waiting to grab their seats. The event was organized and hosted by St. Vartan Cathedral and Cathedral Dean Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian. It was titled “Our Mission, Creating the New while Preserving the Old.”

Even before the performers took to the outside steps of the Cathedral which were dramatically lighted by flares, and dancing colored configurations on the Cathedral entrance, some attendees could be heard humming and singing a few of the well-known Huyser favorites. Many were also seen greeting each other since they apparently had enjoyed other Huyser concerts in the Tri-state area.

With the excitement mounting, deafening applause and cheering greeted the performers with each number. One of the first folk songs, a joyous rendition of Tamzara, featuring the whole troupe, inspired several in the audience to spontaneously jump up and dance, with the audience loudly clapping. This was repeated again and again with other songs.

Two romantic numbers had the audience dreamily singing along. *Chooni Ashkharuh Kezi Nman* (None Like you in the World) by Razmik Amyan, was sung with heartfelt emotion by Maria Barsoumian, who also shared with great passion the deeply moving *Haverj Ser* (Eternal Love) by Georges Garvarentz and Charles Aznavour.

The feelings of romance continued with Diran Jebejian singing with great sensitivity the poignant *Siro Yerk* (Song of Love) by Arno Babajanyan and Vahan Haroutiunian, as well as the well-known lyrical folk song *Sari Aghchig* (Mountain Girl).

A standout also was *Life and War* written and presented by Harout Barsoumian for his musical degree at the State Music Conservatory of Aleppo, and included several dynamic presentations, including placing the guitar behind his head at one point, and playing without missing a note. Joining him in this performance, which resulted in oohs and aahs from the audience, were Maria Barsoumian and Diana Vasilyan.

They are singular musicians in their own right, and for this concert included musical director Karine Barsoumian, artistic director, and lead vocalist Harout Barsoumian, vocalist and pianist Maria Barsoumian, vocalist and percussionist Diran Jebejian, guitarist and vocalist Ara Yegoryan, violinist Diana Vasilyan, and guest performer on the trumpet Michael Sarian who offered several rocking jazz solos.

By the conclusion of the performance, the enthusiasm of the audience had already reached fever pitch. Spontaneously they stood and cheered as the ensemble passionately sang *A Toast to Our Heroes*, dedicated to all the courageous Armenian soldiers in Artsakh, Armenia and those fighting all over the world. With thunderous clapping by the crowd, the ensemble again repeated this powerful song, bring to a close a concert that long will be remembered.

Dignitaries attending included Diocesan Vicar General the Very Rev. Simeon Odabashian, St. Illuminator Armenian Cathedral pastor Rev. Mesrob Lakissian, and Armenia’s Ambassador to the United Nations Zohrab Mnatsakanyan. Present for this occasion were members of several church, and social Armenian organizations, along with a large number of Huyser devotees.

Armenian Independence Day Concert At St. Vartan Cathedral

NEW YORK – The independence of Armenia 26 years ago was celebrated at New York’s St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral on Thursday, September 21, 2017, with a classical concert attended by esteemed diplomats and featuring young musical talents. The evening cast a positive outlook for the future of the homeland and the diaspora.

The event was organized by the Armenia’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations, and its Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, along with the participation of regional and national Armenian organizations.

To begin the celebration, a special Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Republic of Armenia was conducted by clergy from throughout the metro region, led by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan.

The special guest for the evening, Edward Nalbandian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, congratulated everyone on Armenia’s National Independence Day, making special mention of the soldiers who defend the borders of the homeland and emphasizing that Armenians will continue to live on their native soil.

The St. Vartan Cathedral Choir sang under the direction of conductor Khoren Mekanejian, with soloists Anoosh Barclay, Alvert Mayilian, Hasmik Mekanejian, Solange Merdinian, and Anahit Zakarian rendering the national anthems of the United States and Armenia. Florence Avakian accompanied on the organ.

The evening’s musical program featured young performers in a concert curated by pianist and ethnomusicologist Sahan Arzruni.

The concert included pieces by world composers, ranging from Khachaturian to Tchaikovsky. These were expertly played by cellist Laura Navasarian, pianist Michael Kakossian Khoury and violinist Simon Hagopian-Rogers – all New York natives in their young teen-age years.

In concluding remarks, Archbishop Barsamian offered congratulatory words that “we as a people around the world come together in unity to celebrate the 26th anniversary of Armenia’s independence.”

Barsamian addressed his words to several hundred audience members in the cathedral as well as to viewers of a live internet broadcast of the concert. More than 1,500 viewers tuned to watch the concert on the Livestream channel and Facebook page of the Eastern Diocese.

Reflecting on the musical talents of the young generation, Archbishop Barsamian said they are the ones who will carry forward the spirit of the Armenian martyrs and survivors.

“We bow our heads in front of our martyrs, parents, grandparents and survivors who had the dream of a free and independent Armenia,” he said. “We were fortunate to see that dream realized; and witnessing the talents of the young generation tonight is a source of inspiration for all of us.”

He offered respectful words of gratitude to the generous benefactors of the celebratory concert, Nazar and Artemis Nazarian.

A reception followed in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium, where Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Armenia’s permanent representative to the UN, spoke of the birth of Armenia’s independence and the struggles it has faced over the last two and a half decades.

“Today is a symbolic day for all of us and we celebrate with the performance of brilliant



ARTS & LIVING

‘Where Is Your Groom Part II’ to Be Performed in Watertown

WATERTOWN — Following a laugh-out-loud debut at New York City’s Miller Theatre, where more than 500 audience members gathered to see the sequel to the popular comedy “Where Is Your Groom?,” aptly titled “Where Is Your Groom Part II,” the cast is preparing to bring their performance to the Mosesian Center for the Arts on November 11.

Promising a night of laughs while taking a closer look at the Armenian-American experience, the play’s sequel centers on the wedding of a young couple whose parents want to plan the wedding their own way. As the patriarch, Koko, says to his daughter, “We are giving you the wedding of our dreams!” A colorful cast of supporting characters, from the pot-stirring matchmaker to the odar wedding planner, round out the laughs and warmth of the play, which lovingly pokes fun at the Armenian family, community and cultural life.

Connecting with audience members of all ages and featuring musical nostalgia, Armenian idioms and a relevant storyline, the play is enjoyable for the whole family.

“Where Is Your Groom’ and its sequel have resonated so well with the audience because they all saw pieces of themselves in the characters,” said Nairi Hartounian, a graduate student at New York University studying public relations and corporate communication who also takes part in the new play. “The storyline’s appeal and humor has cultivated a strong and lasting impression on audience members.”

Playing the role of matriarch Siroun, the overbearing yet clever character reminded

Hartounian of “the strong Armenian women I was surrounded by growing up.”

While the group expresses their creativity on stage, offstage they have created genuine friend-

said Raffie Bagrevandian, a real-estate professional from Astoria who plays the role of Russian-Armenian businessman Sergei. “As the next generation of Armenians who will carry on

lege years, I was an active member of the Armenian community both on and off campus,” said writer and director Taleen Babayan. “I’m excited for our group to perform ‘Where Is



Cast photo from debut performance at New York City’s Miller Theatre last March.

ships as members of an ensemble cast and crew of 20 Armenian young professionals who have shared their love of the Armenian culture to over 3,000 audience members, who have referred to the play as a “dynamic story” with a “spot-on” cast who left “tears of laughter” in their eyes.

“Being involved in this play production has allowed me to get closer to my Armenian roots,”

the torch, it’s our duty to preserve and share our culture and heritage while stimulating dialogue.”

The original “Where Is Your Groom?” performed in Watertown back in 2014 to a jovial audience and the cast is eager for its return performance in a significant Armenian-Diasporan community.

“As a former Boston resident during my col-

Your Groom II’ for a historic Armenian community that has promulgated our culture over the past century.”

“Where Is Your Groom Part II” will take place on Saturday, November 11, at 7 p.m. For tickets and more information, visit <http://www.mosesianarts.org/index.php/shows/visiting-productions/where-is-your-groom>

Armenian Independence Day Concert At St. Vartan Cathedral

CONCERT, from page 12

talent,” said Mnatsakanyan. “Today reminds us that Armenia is a source of joy; but it also reminds us that Armenia is a responsibility, and Armenia is hard work.”

Mnatsakanyan spoke of the need to defend the nation’s borders and that “Armenia is for us all.”

An Extra Dose of Armenian Spirit

One of Armenia’s achievements throughout its history has been its cultural prowess, as displayed by the young talents performing that evening in the St. Vartan Cathedral sanctuary.

Sahan Arzruni, winner of the Armenia’s Movses Khorenatsi Medal for exceptional achievement in cultural development, said he wants to pass on his musical knowledge and experiences to the gifted students because “they are the future of our people.”

“If I can infuse them with an extra dose of the Armenian spirit, for the preservation of our culture and my heritage, so much the better,” said Arzruni, who recently traveled through the provinces of Armenia and Artsakh to teach and perform music.

“The other day I read that the Armenian

DNA has been around for 3,500 years. Let’s keep it going,” he said.

Cellist Laura Navasardian, a student at the Special Music School and Juilliard Pre-College, said she was proud to be part of the Armenian Independence Day celebration and dreams of one day performing in her homeland, where her parents were born during the Soviet period. Having played Impromptu by Alexander Haratunian, she noted the importance of spreading Armenian music globally.

“Musicians are ambassadors of culture,” said Navasardian, who won first prize at the Cremona International Music Competition in Italy last year as well as the Grand Prize at the International Grande Music Competition in New York. “We have great Armenian composers who could be

American Prodigy Competition. “I played Chante-Poème once in a competition in Europe and I could see the Russian judges knew the piece and they were happy to hear it since it is not played as much now.”

Performing works by Arno Babadjanian and Aram Khachaturian, pianist and composer Michael Kakossian-Khoury, who has played for the Armenian Armed Forces in Yerevan, said it was an honor to perform among other Armenian talents at a holy site like St. Vartan Cathedral, noting the “ambiance of togetherness and unity.”

“The concert brought out my Armenian roots more than any other event because of its meaning and location,” said Kakossian-Khoury, who has played the piano for seven years and has



Laura Navasardian

introduced to the world through Armenian musicians and it should be our pledge to our culture and to our country to do that.”

Playing the violin since the age of 4, Simon Hagopian-Rogers said he was happy to help celebrate Armenian Independence Day, September 21 – which coincidentally falls on his own birthday. Hagopian-Rogers, a student at the Special Music School and Juilliard Pre-College selected Chante-Poème by Aram Khachaturian to play – one of his favorite pieces.

“I always try to have an Armenian piece prepared for Armenian audiences, but the main thing is the quality of the music,” said Hagopian-Rogers, who made his debut at Carnegie Weill Hall and won first prize in the

been a finalist in competitions at Carnegie Hall. “It felt great to identify as someone who can share the value and celebration of Armenian independence.”

In an interview, Mnatsakanyan reiterated the significance of an independent Armenian land and the importance of strengthening the homeland through unity.

“Armenia is not just 29,000 square kilometers. It is more than that, and we must care about it,” he said. “We have demonstrated this power of being together on such an important and symbolic day. We have all these institutions that define our strong sense of identity; and we have statehood, which tops it all.”

— Taleen Babayan



ARTS & LIVING

How Hybrid Cuisines in Berlin Cross Cultures – and Conflicts

BERLIN (DW) – Berlin is known for its diverse restaurant scene. But as DW's Rachel Stern reports, hybrid, fusion and crossover restaurants don't always receive a warm welcome – often for political reasons.

The Berlin cafe Mixtape Bagel Burger in the diverse and up-and-coming neighborhood of Moabit is an unconventional combination: both for its juicy all-natural burgers enclosed in a bagel rather than bun, and its co-owners of Turkish and Kurdish backgrounds.

Yasin Duran und Meral Kiyak had been friends since meeting 20 years ago as children in Charlottenburg, shortly after Duran moved to Berlin from Turkey with his family. Bound by their gusto for gastronomy as adults and drive to unite people of differing backgrounds, they decided to open their own cafe in 2015 – with a social message. A statement by Che Guevara graces the marquee: "Let's be realistic, let's try the impossible."

"We don't want to change the world, but rather make our everyday a bit easier in order to live better," Duran told DW on a Friday afternoon at Mixtape, which is decorated with "Coexist" signs comprised of various religious symbols.

The menu is divided into East Coast and West Coast sections – alluding to the US hip hop groups they say overcame their beefs, or fights, through music. You can taste Duran and Kiyak's heritage in the spices they employ for the East Coast versions.



Mixtape Bagel Burgers co-owners Yasin Duran and Meral Kiyak, who is wearing a colorful Coexist t-shirts iconic to the cafe

The business is one of a few culinary collaborations in Berlin that are consciously aiming to bridge the gap in tastes, traditions and prejudices. Often unlikely to exist in the places where their cuisine or owners come from, they are able to thrive amid Berlin's burgeoning and experimental foodie scene.

Neither Duran and Kiyak felt they fully fit in growing up in Berlin, having both been ostracized by classmates when they didn't celebrate the same holidays. Duran, who stumbled upon his first bagel at a Mehringdamm cafe in 2013, wanted to turn multiculturalism into a more innate concept from a young age. "As an adult you can discuss things, but as a child you don't understand that," he says.

Could Mixtape Bagel Burgers exist in Turkey or Kurdish populated regions of the country? "Good question," says Duran, pointing out that it would be highly unlikely unless the two hid their



Guests sample the pan-Balkan menu at Kafana

identities: For a long time, even speaking Kurdish was banned in Turkey. But in Berlin their shop caters to a mixed crowd: In the afternoon it is filled with nearby students and lawyers on their lunch breaks from two nearby court-houses.

Israeli-Palestinian hummus with a German twist

Yet such good intent does not always lead to harmony. The first few weekends that the hip hummus restaurant Kanaan – run by an Israeli and a Palestinian – opened, police patrolled the premises in response to threats from pro-Palestinian groups. But the fear soon faded when there were no incidents.

Now open for two years in the trendy neighborhood of Prenzlauer Berg, Kanaan is a hybrid in many ways. "It's not about bringing in a whole new thing, but using a different twist, something that Grandma used to do but a little bit better," says Israeli co-founder Oz Ben David, who previously worked as a marketer bringing Middle Eastern products and ideas to Europe.

To introduce their cuisine to a Berlin audience, Ben David and his co-founder, longtime restaurateur Jalil Dabit, have given the German dishes on their seasonally-rotating menu a

continued on next page

Sponsor A Teacher
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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.

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ARTS & LIVING

from previous page

Middle Eastern twist.

The most ordered item is currently hummus Kartoffelpuffer (a type of potato pancake) topped with tahini sauce, pomegranate and za'atar, a mix of Middle Eastern spices.

"We play with a German thing they know, but in a new way," says Ben David, sitting underneath refashioned GDR-era lights hanging from the restaurant's ceiling. Israeli and Arabic music plays in the patio, styled like a German beer garden with long tables and self-service in the summer.

To facilitate acceptance of new tastes at a young age, the restaurant now offers free hummus to children age three and under – with an added cookie comprised of tahini, a popular sesame paste, to those who finish the plate.

"Only in Berlin could we create a project like this to be so successful in such a short amount of time" says Ben David, biting into a cookie him-

many dishes and different tastes, says Vladimir Kotic, a Montenegrin restaurateur who opened the tavern on January 13 of this year, the Serbian Orthodox New Year.

Situated on an unassuming side street near the bustling Bundesplatz in Wilmersdorf, it offers a vibrant pan-Balkan line-up, not only of food, but also entertainment. There's been stand-up from a Croatian comic and regular Yugoslavia-themed pub-quiz nights advertised on Kafana's website as being held in "Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin" – small variations of the same language, yet often described as their own languages due to continual political differences.

"We speak one language and we totally understand each other," says Kotic, who also runs the Montenegrin fish restaurant Lesendro, and previously ran a few restaurants while living in Belgrade, Serbia's capital. "It's like German peo-



Kanaan founders Oz Ben David, who grew up in Beersheba in Israel, and Jalil Dabit, an Arab Christian from Ramle in Palestine.

self. In Israel and Palestine, he says, too much fear and skepticism of "the other" exists – personally and in business.

Bringing the Balkans together

Other restaurants feature food from regions formerly filled with strife – but united by a similar food, culture and language.

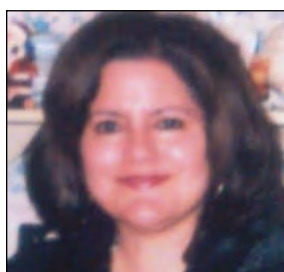
Take Kafana, a Serbian restaurant which offers tapas-style dishes hailing from throughout the Balkans, be it the popular pepper and eggplant paste adjar, or a mini-version of the Serbian schnitzel, Karadjordjeva.

This is the first time Serbian and Balkan cuisine is served as tapas, allowing people to try

ple who are speaking German here in Berlin and German who are Bavarian. There are differences of course but they understand each other."

Kafana, the Serbo-Croatian word for tavern, is a place able to run particularly well in Berlin, with a confluence of cultures interacting both in the kitchen and as guests in restaurants.

"In my businesses, I work a lot with Croatian people, with Albanian, with Macedonians, Italians, and really everyone," says Kotic, sitting in the dimly lit restaurant decorated with classic chandeliers and freshly-made jars of adjar for sale. "We want to be a Berlin restaurant for all people from Berlin."



Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian

Fresh Cucumbers in Dilled Yogurt

INGREDIENTS

3 or 4 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded, and thinly diced or sliced 2 cups plain white or Armenian yogurt
1 medium white or red onion, thinly sliced
3-4 cloves garlic, minced
2-3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (and some lemon zest to taste)
1/4 cup fresh chopped dill or 1 teaspoon dill weed
2-3 green onions, finely chopped
Sea or Kosher salt, coarse black pepper, a dash of paprika or Aleppo pepper to taste
Enough white vinegar and water (equal parts) to just cover cucumbers
1 tablespoon sugar
Olive oil, lemon slices, dried or fresh mint

PREPARATION:

Place the diced or sliced cucumbers in a glass bowl, cover with equal parts white vinegar and water, add the salt and sugar and toss. Let stand for 1-2 hours.

Drain cucumbers completely. Add the yogurt, onions, garlic, lemon juice, spices, and remaining ingredients to the cucumbers and combine. Check seasonings, cover, and chill before serving.

Serve cucumbers on a bed of Romaine lettuce or fresh spinach with sliced Armenian cheeses, marinated peppers, and assorted breads or crackers. Drizzle with olive oil and garnish with sliced lemon and mint, if desired.

Serves 4-6.

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

Read News in Armenian at:



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES AND RESEARCH (NAASR)
AND THE NEAR EAST FOUNDATION



Present the Boston-Area Public Premiere of the Documentary



THEY SHALL NOT PERISH: *The Story of Near East Relief*

Friday, October 13, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Scottish Rite Masonic Museum (formerly National Heritage Museum), 33 Marrett Road, Lexington, MA

Following the screening there will be a panel discussion with Taner Akcam, Hayk Demoyan, Shant Mardirossian, & Nora Nercessian, moderated by Marc Mamigonian.

Co-sponsored by AGBU-New England District, ANCA-Eastern MA, Armenian Assembly of America, Facing History and Ourselves, Knights of Vartan-Ararat Lodge

This event is free and open to all. A reception will follow the program.



ARTS & LIVING

C A L E N D A R

CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 18 — Join the Armenian EyeCare Project for its 25th Anniversary Gala at 6:30pm at the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach. The organization will honor Founder Dr. Roger Ohanesian for 25 years of dedicated service to Armenia in the field of eye care. The fun-filled evening includes an authentic Armenian dinner, roving entertainers, a silent & live auction, Tom Bozighian & his band and Artur’s Armenian Dance Troupe. To RSVP or for more information, call 949-933-4069, email leslie@eyecareproject.com or visit eyecareproject.com/25th-anniversary-gala/

MASSACHUSETTS

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 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 13 — Friday, 7:30 p.m. Film Screening: “They Shall Not Perish: The Story of Near East Relief,” at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum (formerly the National Heritage Museum), 33 Marrett Road, Lexington (at the intersection of Route 2A and Massachusetts Ave.). Co-sponsored by National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and the Near East Foundation. Featuring a panel discussion with Taner Akcam, Hayk Demoyan, Shant Mardirossian, and Nora Nercessian, moderated by Marc Mamigonian. Contact hq@naasr.org for more information.

OCTOBER 13-14 - St. James 70th Annual Bazaar 11am-8pm Delicious Armenian Food and Pastries. Silent Auction, Attic Treasures, Booths and Vendors. Super Raffle (Apple Products, Electronics, and Children’s Prizes), \$100 Raffle and Children’s Activities. St. James Armenian Church – 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Sponsorship opportunities available. For more information contact 617.923.8860 or at www.stjameswatertown.org/bazaar

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 • 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 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 15 — “Hidden Treasure” Concert: An undiscovered repertoire of classical music of the Caucasus. With Nuné Melik, violin, and Michel-Alexandre Broekaert, piano, Sunday, Armenian Museum of America, 65 Main St., Watertown, Adele and Haig Der Manuelian Galleries, 3rd floor. 2 p.m. Cosponsored by the Composers Union of Armenia and funded by the Dadourian Foundation. Admission is free.

OCTOBER 15 — 4th Annual Trinity Tailgate, New England Patriots vs. New York Jets, sponsored by the Trinity Men’s Union of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 12:15 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. All are invited to a tailgate party to watch the game, 1 p.m. kick-off, on a 12-foot high-definition screen. Lots of food, beverages and snacks. Silent Auction of 2 tickets to the December 31, 2017 Patriots vs Jets Game, 1 p.m. kick-off. For further information, call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632.

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 22 — Annual Banquet Celebrating the 56th

Anniversary of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston and Honoring Aram Hintlian, as Parishoner of the Year, Sunday, 12:15 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. During the Banquet, recognition will also be given to outgoing Parish Council member Jack Ekchian. Dinner donation is \$40; children under 12, \$20. Seating is by advance paid reservation only with a RSVP deadline of October 18. For further information, call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/464/>

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.

NOVEMBER 2 – Thursday: Symposium on Armenian Issues in the International Press. “Journalism and “Fake News”: The Armenian Genocide and Karabagh. Journalism is changing at a rapid pace. Join the Armenian Mirror-Spectator along with Robert Fisk from Beirut, Lebanon, David Barsamian, Philip Terzian and Amberin Zaman to discuss the issues facing journalism today and their impact on the Armenian Case. Wellesley College, Alumnae Hall Ballroom, 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA. Doors open at 6:00 pm, Program starts 7:00 pm. Reception to follow, free admission.

NOVEMBER 3 - 85th Anniversary Benefit Gala of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, the first English-language Armenian newspaper in the United States. Boston Marriott Hotel, 2345 Commonwealth Ave. Newton, MA. Reception, Meet the Awardees 16:30 PM; Dinner and Program, 7:30 PM. 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award to Robert Fisk, Journalist, Middle East correspondent for *The Independent* of London based in Beirut, seven time recipient of British Press Awards’ Reporter of the Year; 2017 Excellence Awards to David Barsamian, founder and director of Alternative Radio, and Amberin Zaman, columnist for Diken and Al Monitor, former Turkey correspondent for *The Economist*. Mistress of Ceremonies Anaide Nahikian, Leader, Advanced Training Program at Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Entertainment, 12 Musicians of Black Sea Salsa. For Reservations please call Aram Arkun (917) 743-9005 (cell), Email: tcadirector@aol.com.

NOVEMBER 3-4 — 61st annual St. Stephen’s Armenian Apostolic Church Bazaar. Friday and Saturday. Come with family and friends for delicious chicken, beef and losh kebab, koftah and kheyma dinners, pastries and specialty gourmet items. Handmade arts and carts, White Elephant table and ever popular silent and live auction items. Visit the church’s website, www.soorpstepanors.org for menus, pastry and gourmet items. Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown. Admission is free.

NOVEMBER 3 and 4 – Annual Autumnfest Bazaar sponsored by the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe, at our new location 1280 Boston Road, (Rte 125) Bradford MA , Friday 12 – 7 pm and Saturday 12 – 7 pm. Lamb, Losh, Chicken Kebab and Kheyma. Dinners served all day. Pastry table, Armenian cuisine, gift baskets, raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org or call (978) 372-9227.

NOVEMBER 10 — Benefit dinner for Armenia Tree Project’s 100th anniversary living memorial to General Dro and the Battle of Bash Aparan, Friday, presented by ATP and the Kanayan Family. Armenian American Social Club, Watertown. 7:30 p.m. \$75 per person. Call (617) 926-8733 or info@armeniatree.org to reserve your seat.

NOVEMBER 12 — From Armenia to Boston for the first time. Beloved singer RUBEN SASUNCI, live in concert with the Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston (SNDC). Sunday, at 4 p.m. at Shaw Auditorium - Watertown High School, 50 Columbia St. Tickets: \$45 and \$35 to be reserved from front to back, in the order calls are received. For tickets and info, please call Mike Demirchian (617) 240-8266 or Vrej Ashjian at (339) 222-3429.

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 .

MICHIGAN

OCTOBER 8 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association will present the stage play “All Rise, the Court is in Session” at the Lawrence Technological University Mary Marburger Science and Engineering Auditorium. 3 p.m. The play is a drama by one of Armenia’s prominent playwrights, Perch Zeytuntsyan, performed by the TCA MHER Megerdchian Theatrical Group from New York. Adapted and directed by Gerald Papasian from Paris. The play recounts the trial proceedings of Soghomon Tehlirian who avenged the extermination of his nation and family by assassinating Talaat Pasha in Berlin on March 15, 1921. The play will be in Armenian with English subtitles. For reservations and other questions, you may contact Eventbrite or: Karine Koundjakian at 248-761-9844; Shoushan Minassian at 248-762-4641; Pamela Coultis at 248-646-7847; Noreen Masropian at 248-376-0899; Doris Krikorian at 734-464-7973; Yvonne Korkoian at 248-254-3029 or Diana Alexanian at 248-334-3636

DECEMBER 2 — Nor Keghi Kef Time III Pagharch Dinner and Dance Fundraiser for Nor Keghi School in Armenia, 6.30 p.m. St. John Armenian Church Hall, Southfield. Continuous music by an assembly of Detroit’s All-Star Armenian Musicians will again entertain attendees to the third “Pagharch” feast that residents of the historic Armenian district dined on for centuries at the start of the winter season in mountainous Keghi district. The government of Armenia on Feb. 1962 renamed the region of Ashdarag to Nor Keghi to honor the history of Kephizees of historic Western Armenia. Funds raised will help in development of the school’s multi-purpose auditorium.

NEW JERSEY

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.

NEW YORK

NOVEMBER 16 — Join Armenia Tree Project and Paros Foundation for a fundraiser to support kitchen renovations, beautification and environmental education at the school in Rind, Vayots Dzor. Featuring live performance by singer/songwriter Hooshere and silent auction featuring fine art and luxury gift items. Almayass Restaurant, 24 E 21st Street, New York. 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Donation: \$100 in advance, \$125 at door. For more information, info@armeniatree.org.

NEVADA

NOVEMBER 10-12 — Association of Armenian Church Choirs, 2017 Convention & Assembly, Las Vegas. Saint Geragos Armenian Apostolic Church, Contact: website: www.aaccwd.com • email: events@aaccwd.com. The AACCWD is an organization of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America.

PENNSYLVANIA

OCTOBER 15 – Armenian Intercommunal Committee of Philadelphia celebrating Armenian Cultural Month presents a musical program by Areni Choir at Holy Trinity Armenian Church. Sunday, 2 pm. Admission is free. Light meal will be served. 101 Ashmead Rd, Cheltenham, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, phone: 215 663-1600.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



ARTS & LIVING

Young and Pro Musicians Shine at New York Concert

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK — It was a presentation of Armenian Youth Talent competition finalists, and renowned professional musicians at Merkin Concert Hall on Sunday, September 17. The special event was dedicated to the 26th Anniversary of Armenian independence, and presented by Direct Help for Armenian People (DHAP), and its founder and president, Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian.



Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian

With the concert stage festooned with a large bouquet of fall season flowers in the colors of the Armenian flag, the enthusiastic audience was warmly welcomed by Mistress of Ceremonies Eugenia Sarian, a previous DHAP winning performer. This was a recital of pre-teen and teen performers, with bright futures shining ahead.

The concert began with a rousing rendition of Arno Babajanyan's well-known *Azg Parabantz*, and Yerevan joyfully sung by the costumed 16-member pre-teen Hamazkayin Arekag Choir, conducted by their musical director, Vagarshak Ohanyan. These numbers were followed by Armen Martirosyan's Haykagan Banak, each number garnering loud cheering and applause.

Several young gifted pianists shared their talents, including Arpi Bakshian, Eliz Ohanian, Jero Meradian and Andre Boldi. Two of Babajanyan's deeply heartfelt piano compositions, *Melody*, and *Elegia*, were offered with great feeling and skillful technique by Michael Khoury, and Nareg Balian, respectively. Both young artists were in Armenia last summer and participated in a group of 10 young Armenian youngsters who gave a patriotic concert organized by Amirkhanian for Armenian soldiers.

The only singer in the group, Anahit Indehigulyan, performed a passionately memorable Martiki Yerk, and Vahn Mouradian presented on the cello another one of Babajanyan's most beautiful and soulful works, *Vocalise*.

Thirteen-year-old cellist Laura Navasardian, a winner of two international competitions in 2014, and 2016, tackled Enrique Granados' demanding *Intermezzo*, displaying her flawless technique, and long sweeping phrases, played with warm and lush tones.

At the conclusion of each performance, each young musician received deserved plaudits from the audience, as well as a certificate and a monetary award. The 2017 judges for the Armenian Youth Talent Competition were pianist Lusine Badalyan, composer and pianist Karen Hakobyan, St. Vartan Cathedral Choir Director Khoren Mekanejian, baritone Vagharshak Ohanyan, pianist Karine Poghosyan, and violinist Diana Vasilyan.

Following intermission, three renowned musicians took center stage, cellist Suren Bagratuni and pianist Lilit Navasardian — both born in Yerevan — and Ukrainian-Armenian-American cellist Marta Bagratuni.

Suren Bagratuni, winner of the Silver Medal at the 1986 International Tchaikovsky Competition, and an acclaimed international cello soloist, recitalist and chamber musician, tackled the demanding modern solo work, Sonata by Adam Khudoyan, playing with awe-inspiring technique, and passion. He was joined by Marta Bagratuni who has performed at Carnegie Hall, and the Kennedy Center, for another of Khudyan's modern compositions, Nostalgia.

Both cellists performed Che Sharadyan's solemn, flowing version of Amen, Hayr Soorp, a deeply spiritual work, with Marta Bagratuni accompanying the moving performance with her delicate soprano voice.

Suren Bagratuni and Marta Bagratuni were joined by pianist Navasardyan, who has performed throughout Armenia, Russia and the United States, in two difficult compositions, Franz Schubert's harmonically beautiful



Bagratuni, Bagratuni, and Navasardian

Adagio for two cellos and piano, and Joseph Handel's *Andante* and *Allegro in G Minor*. The three acclaimed professionals blended together showing great musicality and understanding, and played like one.

Their outstanding performance was greeted with a long sustained standing ovation, and several bouquets of flowers presented by the young talented DHAP competition winners.

Following the concert, Amirkhanian expressed gratitude to the parents for their encouragement to the young talents, and to Ardemis Nazarian and the Nazarian Family Foundation for their long-standing dedication philanthropy to DHAP. She also thanked Doctors Kenn and Irene Kakossian as well as Edward and Carmen Gulbenkian for their contributions.

A crystal award was presented to Suren Bagratuni by Amirkhanian, who also expressed

appreciation to the professional musicians. She expressed special thanks to her assistant Marina Bagdasarova who made a presentation of a special certificate from Armenia to Amirkhanian.

Rev. Mesrob Lakissian, pastor of the St. Illuminator Armenian Cathedral, delivered his appreciation to all the performers, and read a portion of United Nations Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan's message in which he congratulated all the finalists of the 2017 Armenian Youth Talent Competition, and thanked them for sharing their "talent and the fruit of their hard work. I am deeply touched by your strong dedication to the wealth of Armenian culture, by the pride and confidence in manifesting your identity," the message said, and concluded with the ambassador wishing them "every success in your future endeavors."

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. 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.

NOVEMBER 4, 5 — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Annual Food Fair & Bazaar. Saturday, 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday, noon — 6 p.m. Shish Kebob, Kufta, Kheyma, Choreg, Yalanchi, Losh Kebab, Armenian Pastries, midia, Vosbov Kheyma, etc. Daily Raffle, Silent Auction Kids activities & Balloon Man, and much more. Cash, Check, Visa & Mastercard accepted. Call 401-272-7712 for further info.

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.

TEKEYAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF DETROIT

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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Kurdish Referendum: A Factor of Stability or Instability

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The referendum held on September 25 in Iraqi Kurdistan triggered a political movement in the entire Middle East, whose outcome is difficult to forecast at this time.

It is ironic that in another part of the world, namely Europe, a simultaneous struggle for independence began. Indeed, Catalonia held a referendum on October 1 to leave Spain, when centuries-old frustration came to a head. With almost the same size of the population as Iraqi Kurdistan, 7 to 8 million, Catalonia was brought under Spanish rule in the 15th century, during the reign of King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile. The Catalans suffered most under the fascist rule of General Francisco Franco (1938-1975), who went so far as to ban the language, much like the fate of Kurds under Turkish and Iraqi rule, thus threatening to destroy their identity. Catalonia's referendum sent tremors throughout Europe, especially in Scotland and Belgium, where irredentism is ripe to explode any time.

The only difference between Catalonia and Iraqi Kurdistan is that the former faces one opposing force, Spain, while the latter by at least four, and major powers still waiting in the wings: Turkey, Iraq and Iran have all been mobilized to stifle Kurdistan's aspirations for independence. Syria is too fragmented and weak to join the fray but, in principle, shares the same policy as its neighbors regarding Kurdistan.

Kurdistan's referendum marks the demise of the Sykes-Picot

are concerned that Kurdistan's independence will inexorably fan the aspirations of Kurds in their respective countries to fight for independence. The Kurds are estimated to be 30 to 40 million strong, living in Iraq, Syria, Iran and Turkey. The latter has been cracking down on Kurds for the past three decades.

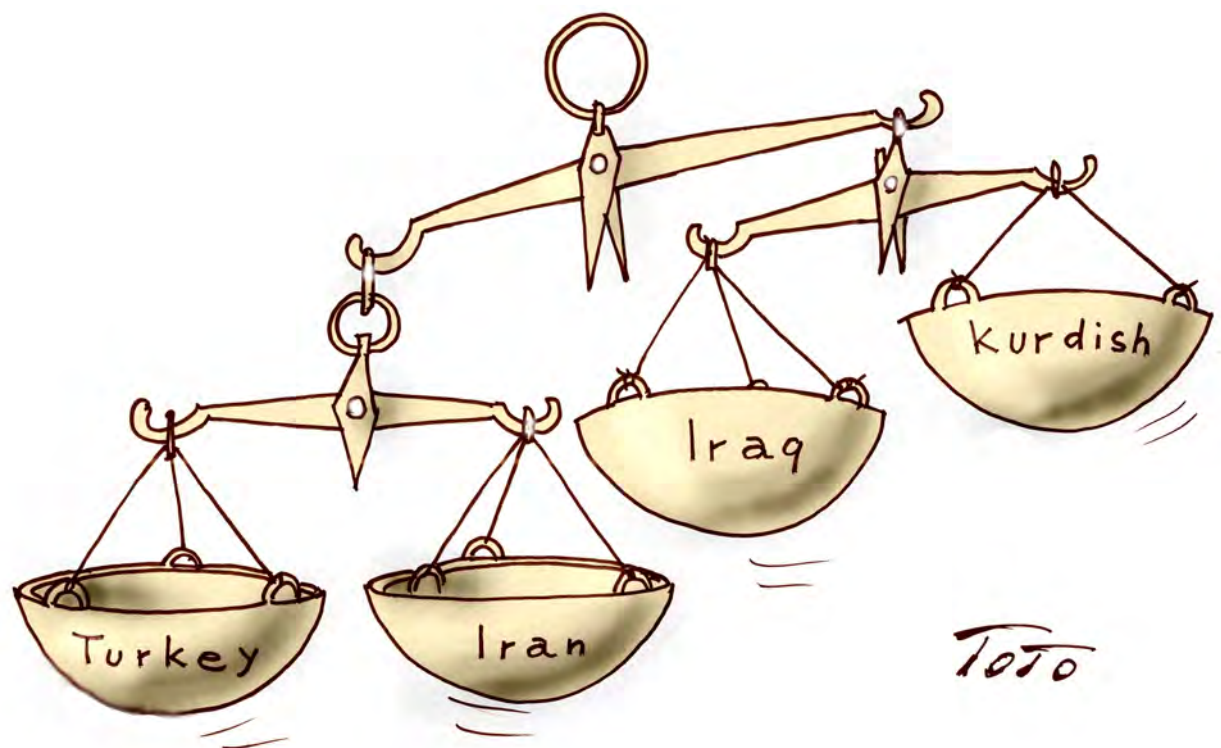
There is general consensus among political observers that war against Kurdistan is not imminent, mainly for the fact that major powers have already made huge investments in Kurdistan. But Turkey may instigate the local Turkmen who have always seemed to act as the fifth columnists to stir some trouble in Kurdistan. Also, Mr. Abadi's weak government may attempt to retake Kirkuk from Kurdish control.

Former French Foreign Minister Bernard Couchner has stated that Kurdistan's independence may bring stability to the region. However, Kurdistan's neighbors do not seem to share that view as they intensify their war of words.

In anticipation of Kurdistan's forthcoming independence, several major powers have ventured to make huge investments. Thus, Kurdistan's regional government has signed deals with Exxon Mobil (US), Total (France), Taqa (United Arab Emirates) and Gazprom (Russia). It would be foolhardy for any party to mess with these interests by engaging in military action.

It was the psychological moment for Masoud Barzani to hold the Kurdish referendum, as the central government in Iraq is still fighting to recover the last remaining pieces of territory from ISIS and can ill afford to challenge battle-hardened Pesh Merga fighters on the battlefield.

While keeping the PKK Chief Abdullah Ocalan in jail, Turkey had granted the status of Kurdish leadership to Masoud Barzani,



Treaty of 1916 and opens a Pandora's box in reviving the Treaty of Sevres of 1920, in which Armenia holds a share, too.

The Kurds in Iraq took a few very strategic measures to consolidate their internal base on the domestic front and to occupy the oil-rich region of Kirkuk after helping Iraq to defeat ISIS forces occupying that city.

Iraqi Kurdistan is ruled by two families, Talabanis and Barzanis, who to this day, maintain their separate militias which have been at odds most of the time. Those forces, called Pesh Mergas, concluded an understanding on the domestic front and helped the US forces in clearing ISIS from the Iraqi territory. A total of 5.2 million (or 72 percent) of voters participated in the referendum, with 93 percent casting a "yes" vote. The conclusion of the referendum vote does not automatically mean independence. It only gives a mandate to begin negotiations with the national government in Baghdad, whose prime minister, Haidar Al-Abadi, is in no mood to negotiate. He is asking the results of the vote to be annulled before sitting at the negotiation table.

Turkey adamantly opposes independence for Kurdistan for obvious reasons. Thus far, Ankara has been dealing with Iraqi Kurdistan's regional government, ignoring Baghdad's warnings. Kurdistan's oil was flowing to Turkey, generating 80 percent of the regional government's budget. While Mr. Abadi is seeking control of Irbil and Suleymanya airports, Turkey's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, is threatening that the "spigots of the pipelines are in our hands."

Iran, Turkey's archrival in the region, has joined the latter in war games on the Kurdistan borders. Thus, all regional countries

who now in disappointment states that he had pinned hopes on Turkey which at this time has made a 180-degree turn regarding its Kurdish policy by opposing the referendum. Iraqi Kurds had paid a heavy price to be in good graces of Ankara, by fighting their brethren in the ranks of PKK.

While regional forces have met the referendum with hostility, the major powers have demonstrated a benign tolerance. The US has sided with Turkey and Bagdad, deploring the referendum, but in the meantime vowing to continue supporting the region militarily. Moscow also has expressed "concern" over the referendum, but beyond that it has kept a meaningful silence. The most assertive support came from Israel, for obvious reasons. For a long time, Israel was isolated. Although it has established diplomatic relations with Egypt and Jordan, that was not considered a breakthrough. Now, Israel has set up shop in Kurdistan and has been supplying arms and supporting the region militarily, because for the first time, it is extending its power all the way to the gates of Iran, a major Shiite power antagonistic to the Jewish state. Israeli analyst Avigdor Eskin has outlined his country's strategic interests in Kurdistan, in an interview with Armenian TV I. In that interview, he confessed that Israel has been supporting the Kurds and supplying them with arms since the 1960s, which means that Kurdish rebellions against Saddam Hussein might have been instigated by Israel. Mr. Eskin also gave high marks to Armenia's cautious policy in this matter.

Sooner or later, the US will line up with Israel, because in the Middle East, Israel's position is the one the US follows.

continued on next page

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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

How Turkey Destroyed or Disposed Its Historical Archives And Documents

For several decades, the Turkish government and its propagandists have been announcing that the state documents, particularly the Ottoman archives, are fully open and available to any researcher from around the world.

What Turkish officials and their supporters do not say is that many documents of the Ottoman archives have been removed, destroyed, sold or disposed of. In addition, some of the most sensitive archives are still closed to outsiders.

Last month, Turkish journalist Uzey Bulut posted a revealing article, “Turkey Uncensored: A History of Censorship and Bans” on the PhilosProject.org website regarding the status of Turkish archives and documents going back to several centuries. Ms. Bulut is free to expose such secrets because she no longer lives in Turkey. She is currently based in Washington, DC.

In Turkey today, Wikipedia’s website is blocked by governmental order because Wikipedia refused to delete articles revealing that the Turkish authorities are supporting the Islamic State terrorists. Furthermore, 127,000 websites and 95,000 individual Web pages are blocked by Turkey, according to Bulut.

This modern-day banning of thousands of websites is the continuation of Ottoman Sultan Bayazid II’s decree of 1485 A.D. imposing the death penalty on anyone printing books in Turkish or Arabic. The ban remained for more than two centuries, Bulut reported. “That prohibition is widely cited by historians as one of the major reasons for the intellectual and scientific collapse of Islam at the dawn of the industrial revolution.”

The Turkish Republic, during the rule of its founder Kemal Atatürk as of 1923, continued the tradition of censorship by banning “at least 130 newspapers, magazines and books, according to Mustafa Yilmaz and Yasmin Doganer’s book, *Censor During the Republican era (1923-1973)*. Turkey’s second Prime Minister (1950-1960), Adnan Menderes, banned 161 publications, according to Bulut.

Returning to archival censorship, Bulut quoted Turkish-Jewish historian Rifat Bali who “explained the history of disposed or destroyed state archives in his 2014 book, *The Story of Destruction of Plundering: Printed or Written words, Dead Letters, Archives Thrown Out (or Sold) for Scrap*.” ...The archives of many political parties, the Senate, and several other governmental or non-governmental institutions in Turkey are either closed to public use or no longer exist.” According to Bali, “the archives of the political parties closed down during the September 12, 1980 coup d’état were sent to SEKA (Cellulose and Paper Factories) as scrap paper.”

The Republican People’s Party’s (CHP) archive is the most important one because it is the party of the founding years of the Republic. As Bali wrote: “Some say it [the archive] was burnt. Some say it was thrown away on September 12. Some say, no it hasn’t been thrown away. It is here. So it is a mystery today. A large part of the archive is nonexistent.”

In addition, Bali reported that “the archives of the presidency, the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) and the Ministry of the Interior are closed.” Interestingly, Bali noted the strange story of how “confidential documents of the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs were found at a scrap dealer in Ankara in 1998. For the ministry had sold 15 steel safes to a scrap dealer. It was then understood that the ministry sold the safes because of a lack of space at the ministry without even looking what was inside them.”

Bali also reported in his book several other examples of the destruction of important documents:

– “Many of the Turkish Institute of History’s documents – including a letter by Atatürk – have been thrown away;”

– “All minutes of the proceedings of the Senate that was established with the 1961 constitution and remained active until the September 12, 1980 coup d’état were sent to the Cellulose and Paper Factories (SEKA);”

– “When the state-funded Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) moved to a new building in 1965, its authorities said that ‘old documents do not fit a new building’ and sent some of the documents of the archives to SEKA;”

– “When a shortage of paper emerged at SEKA in 1980s, state institutions were called on to send their old papers to the factory. Many archives at institutional level were thus gone;”

– As recently as 2013, Turkish National Library’s old books in Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac were sold by the ton, “as there were no librarians who could read in those languages.”

As an investigative Journalist Uzey Bulut concluded: “with so much information withheld from the Turkish public, state propaganda has created masses who blindly follow whatever state authorities – who have lost their moral compass and never object or speak out even when they see brutal violations of human rights, who do not respect differing opinions or the right to dissent, and who promote an extremely inaccurate version of history – have to say.”

The next time Turkish government propagandists write “our archives are open,” you can send them a copy of this article, the revelations of which from distinguished Turkish journalist Uzey Bulut will shut them up!

Kurdish Referendum

from previous page

Washington has not demonstrated an independent policy there for a long time.

Mr. Erdogan, by straining relations with the West, all but forced Europe and especially the US to depend on the Kurds. That is why Mr. Erdogan has been desperately embracing Vladimir Putin, who is on a state visit in Ankara these days.

In the turmoil of the Middle East, the Kurds have been successful in maintaining stability in Iraqi Kurdistan and the Rajova region, in Syria, right on the Turkish border. This has meant two things: that the Kurds can rule themselves and that they can be reliable partners for the West.

Taking advantage of the stability in Kurdistan, Iraqi Armenians have gravitated to that region, where even they have representation in the parliament and have fighters embedded with the Kurdish Pesh Merga.

Armenia has adopted a nuanced approach to the entire issue. It maintains friendly relations with Baghdad, but it has also an agreement with Kurdistan to establish diplomatic relations by opening a consulate in Erbil. In deference to Tehran, which opposes the referendum, Armenia’s foreign minister, Edward Nalbandian, has come up with a prudent announcement, stating “We do hope that Iraqi government and regional authorities in Kurdistan do not spare energies to avoid conflicts.”

The situation in Artsakh is totally different. The government in Stepanakert has congratulated the country for the outcome of the referendum and expressed full support for Kurdish independence. Kurdistan’s independence reinforces the principle of self-determination for ethnic minorities, pundits’ cautions aside that each case is different. The principle of self-determination is based on the same tenet in international law. Only political factors surrounding the issues determine the outcome in each case.

An extensive BBC article titled “We don’t need to go from Kurdistan to Catalonia,” referred to the Artsakh case, suggesting “regardless of international recognition, self-proclaimed governments can exist.”

Kurdistan’s independence will change realignments in the Middle East, moving closer Sunni Turkey to Shiite Iran and Baghdad. Israel will further expand its dominance in the region with tacit acquiescence of Sunni kingdoms on the Arabian Peninsula.

Kurdistan’s referendum has triggered an entire new political game in the Middle East.

When the dust settles, a new nation may be drawn on the map.

An Armenian Island on the Bosphorus

By Raffi Bedrosyan

What makes Istanbul beautiful is the Bosphorus dividing the City between Europe and Asia, and what makes the Bosphorus beautiful is a series of architecturally magnificent palaces, mansions and mosques. Most of these architectural masterpieces on both sides of the Bosphorus are created by one Armenian family of architects, the Balyans. This article will explain the little-known history of the only island in the Bosphorus and its connection to the Armenians, specifically to the Balyans.

Over three generations of Balyans have served the Ottoman sultans in the 18th and 19th centuries, building a multitude of palaces, mosques, barracks, schools and clock towers for the Ottomans as well as several churches, schools and mansions for the Armenian communities all over the Empire, but mostly in Istanbul and specifically along the Bosphorus. Among the most notable Bosphorus works by the Balyans are the Palace, Mosque and Clock Tower of Dolmabahce, Beylerbeyi Palace, Ciragan Palace (now a luxury hotel), Kuleli Military School (used as an orphanage by the British Army after World War One to gather thousands of Armenian orphans rescued from Turkish and Kurdish homes), Ortakoy Mosque, Kucuksu Palace, and several other mansions. The Turkish Tourism Ministry and official guides refrained from identifying the architects of these buildings as the Armenian Balyans until the 2000’s and instead, mentioned an Italian architect called ‘Baliani’...

Anyway, while the Ottoman sultans ordered the Balyans to build one palace after another, they started to pile up enormous amounts of debt and had to declare bankruptcy in 1876. Chief Architect of the Empire, Sarkis Balyan, was owed large sums of money as well, and Sultan Abdulhamid decided to give Balyan the only island in Bosphorus as compensation against his debt. The island was just a formation of rocks across from the village of Kurucesme, right in the middle of the Bosphorus. Sarkis Balyan decided to build a summer house on these rocks to enjoy with the love of his life, his wife Makruhi Dadyan, the daughter of another famed Armenian family in the service of the Ottoman Empire as suppliers of gunpowder and armaments. Unfortunately Makruhi died young soon after due to tuberculosis and Sarkis Balyan started living in seclusion on the island. The island became known as Sarkis Bey Island, a meeting point for Sarkis Balyan’s intellectual and artistic friends. One of his guests was famed Armenian-Russian painter Ivan Hovhannes Aivazovski, who always stayed on this island whenever he visited Istanbul. Some of his famous seascape paintings were created here.

Sarkis Balyan passed away in 1889, and the island was unfortunately not maintained by his heirs. The government took over the island and started using it as a coal depot for the steamships criss-crossing the Bosphorus. In 1940, the heirs of Balyan were successful in having the island returned to their ownership, but they ended up selling the island in 1957 to Galatasaray Sports Club, one of the most prominent sports institutions in Turkey. The island was renamed as Galatasaray Island, expanded with swimming pools and sports facilities. In 2006, it was

leased to a private entity for further expansion with several restaurants as a high society entertainment center. In 2017, much of the expanded facility was demolished by the pro-Islamic government and at present, there are proposals to build a mosque on the original Sarkis Bey Island...

The Bosphorus is connected with Armenians in many other ways. Robert College is the oldest American college outside the United States. It was founded in 1863 on the European shores of Bosphorus by Christopher Robert, a wealthy philanthropist and Cyrus Hamlin, an education missionary, who had learnt Armenian in order to communicate with the first students of the boarding school, mainly Armenian boys. The school expanded rapidly and became a leading educational institution in Istanbul, eventually adding a university with many faculties. Until World War One, most of the students were minorities, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians and Jews. Unfortunately, the 1915 Armenian Genocide claimed several Armenian graduates of Robert College as well, along with the rest of Armenian intellectuals. Prominent Armenian journalist Teotig (Teodoros Lapchinjian), who compiled a list of the Armenian intellectual victims in his 1919 book *Memorial to April 24*, mentions at least 10 Robert College graduates murdered by execution or massacre.

I will conclude with a personal anecdote. I was also a high school student at Robert College. Our gym teacher was Abbas Sakarya, a sports legend in Turkey, the first Turkish wrestling champion who won international gold medals, the first accredited gymnastics coach, the first founder of a swimming academy, a very strict, severe man who never cracked a smile. Robert College held annual Bosphorus Crossing swim races from the Asian to the European side. The width of the Bosphorus Strait is about a mile but with the treacherous currents, one has to swim double or triple that distance during the crossing. Along with dozens of other university and high school students, I also participated in the race and I ended coming in second among the high school students. Mr. Sakarya congratulated me and along with a rare smile, he whispered into my ear: ‘Abris’, in Armenian, roughly translated perhaps as ‘Bravo’. At the time, I thought he may have used that word as a complement because he knew I was Armenian. But years later, near his death at age 97, I found out that this Turkish legendary sportsman and teacher was in fact a hidden Armenian from Bursa, an orphan of the genocide.

There are many secret and untold stories about Armenians in Turkey. Turks may not know or may not want to know them, but they must be told.

(Raffi Bedrosyan is a civil engineer and a concert pianist, living in Toronto. He donated proceeds from his concerts and CDs toward construction of school, road and water infrastructure projects in Armenia and Karabagh, in which he also participated as an engineer. He helped organize the reconstruction of Surp Giragos Diyarbakir/Dikranagerd Church. He gave the first Armenian piano concert in the Surp Giragos Church since 1915, most recently at the 2015 Genocide Centenary Commemoration. He is the founder of Project Rebirth, which helps hidden Islamized Armenians reclaim their original Armenian roots, language, and culture.)



A Brief History of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*

HISTORY, from page 1

In 1933, the *Spectator*, which was unaffiliated with a political party, was printed in New York City and edited by John Tashjian. In 1939, the *Armenian Mirror* and *Spectator* merged. The establishment of these newspapers was a reflection of changes taking place within the Armenian-American community.

Then, as now, the newspapers' contents were a mixture of news from Armenia and the Armenian-American and other diasporan communities. The inter-communal political struggles too, played out in the pages of the paper. Since the history of the Armenian community in this era has yet to be written, the pages of the newspapers of the time are the place to look for the "first draft of history" of such major events as the murder of Archbishop Tourian in New York City on Christmas Eve in 1933.

As the editors of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* noted on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the paper in 1942:

"This new generation of Armenian-American youngsters attended American public schools, held their own as scholars and as athletes, in competition with their fellow American classmates, and spoke the King's English, not with the accent of the parents from Sivas or Harpoot, but as any authentic native 'Amerigatzi' ... Through living in the same country and often under the same roof, the immigrant parents and their American-born sons and daughters, in some respects, were as people from two different planets. Yet, whereas, the elders, through the force of circumstances, had acquired a fairly adequate knowledge of the English language and were making steady progress in their appreciation of the problems of America and their American children, the latter, deprived of the mother tongue and strangers to the cultural and historical background of their parents, found it difficult to understand the older generation."

Bedros Norehad served as editor at the time he two papers merged to form the *Mirror-Spectator*, which then had its offices in New York City. Many years later, he would write that "There are many areas, such as the partisan excesses of the party papers that an independent press can improve on: there are areas, commitment to principle, self-sacrifice, devotion, which an independent press can well emu-

late."

Jack Andreassian took over the leadership when Norehad entered the military during World War II, and he in turn was succeeded in the late 1940s by Mardiros Sarkisian. Major coverage was given, of course, to war-related news, and after the war significant developments such as the proposed return of Kars and Ardahan to Soviet Armenia and the controversial "repatriation" of Armenian Americans to Soviet Armenia.

During the war, the ADL made an offer to Armenian-American servicemen that the paper would be sent to them free of charge which they did, despite the larger-than-expected demand!

Under Bob Vahan's editorship, the *Mirror-Spectator* moved to Shawmut Avenue in Boston, long the home of the Armenian-language Baikar Daily where it remained until moving to its current headquarters on Mount Auburn Street in Watertown in 1961. Vahan would remember that "my whole time with the *Mirror-Spectator* was one of controversy. I always took a stand not always looked upon favorably by the hierarchy but I believed best suited for our constituency at the time."

The decade following the move to Boston was a tumultuous one in the Armenian-American community, but also one of accomplishments and advances. Vahan recalled that "some important stories where we boosted the programs" were the establishment of NAASR and the recreation of an Armenian Studies chair at Harvard University, the building of St. Vartan's Cathedral in New York City, the *Mirror-Spectator's* move from New York to Boston, the growth of the AGBU in the US and the successful fundraising by urging "Will Writing" following the election of Alex Manoogian as president, the building of the new Baikar building in Watertown (Architect John Danielson), the death of Gevorg VI and the election of Vazken I as Catholicos of All Armenians.

Following a stint by Krikor Vosganian as editor in the early 1960s, Helene Pilibosian Sarkissian became the first woman to edit the paper. In the early 1990s she wrote that "Totally naïve to the problems that could arise, I began the practice of journalism with enthusiasm." In this period, the paper distinguished itself with superb coverage of the unprecedented com-

memoration of the Armenian Genocide in April 1965. The editorial on April 24, 1965, contained these words: "On this, the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Great Crime, [the Armenians] remember that lives, homeland, and 35 billion dollars in savings and property were lost to the grace of the Turkish government and mob. They remember that the world has not yet recognized the need for restitution and that Turkey will never even admit its crime and its present distortions of history. These Armenians feel that the cause of justice is never outdated."

An era marked by the ethnic revival and the "rediscovery of roots" was reflected in the pages of the *Mirror-Spectator*, under Varoujan Samuelian's editorship, and articles on these themes frequently appeared. Samuelian's column, "Juicy Tidbits," provided a forum for this thoughtful and provocative views. TIT was also an era that saw the proliferation of new organizations in the Armenian-American community such as the Armenian Assembly and the influx of Armenians from the Middle East, especially Lebanon.

Helene Pilibosian Sarkissian returned in 1976 to co-edit the paper with Barbara Merguerian. Merguerian would remain until 1985 and return to her post in late 1990s. A historian, she brought a refreshing perspective at a point in history when debates over the Armenian Genocide and its denial were escalating to previously-unknown levels.

At the time of the *Mirror-Spectator's* 50th anniversary, Merguerian wrote: "Although it is easy to chronicle the many ways in which our community has grown over the past five decades, what is remarkable is that so many problems remain unchanged. We continue to

be frustrated in attempts to recover our lands; we see the desecration of our monuments and the denial by the Turks that the massacres of 1915 ever took place. We continue to search for a response to assimilation and intermarriage and we develop many new programs, many of them educational ... And we look for more effective ways to express our cultural heritage.

Ara Kalaydjian became editor after Merguerian left to take a position at NAASR in the mid 1980s and he steered the paper through another turbulent decade and more that was undoubtedly dominated by the rebirth of an Armenian nationalism in Soviet Armenia and the renewed and strengthened call for Karabakh to be freed from Azeri domination, the traumatic and devastating 1988 earthquake, Armenian independence in 1991 and the bitter war with Azerbaijan.

After Barbara Merguerian's return sting as editor for three years with the assistance of Dr. Suzanne Moranian, she handed over the editor's desk to Alin K. Gregorian in 2000. Gregorian has been faced with the challenges of a changing readership, the rapid rise of the Internet, and a multitude of complex issues facing the Armenian-American community, and indeed, Armenians worldwide. Many of the challenges faced by print media today.

Yet, the mission of the *Mirror-Spectator* to connect and inform its readership on issues, programs and events remain vitally important today as it was in 1933. "With your support," comments Editor Alin Gregorian, "The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* will continue in its mission of shedding light on all that we think matters to the greater Armenian-American community."

Armenian Film Festival Screens In Rhode Island

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — A monthly series of "world-premier" films about Armenia, titled "The Nation's Past and Present," got rolling at the Egavian Cultural Center in Providence.

The first film, "Cultural Genocide," was presented last month courtesy of the Cultural Committee at Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church.

The film is the first among six that cover Armenian history, culture and ecclesiology.

The film series features a movie each month this fall, covering topics ranging from the infamous first genocide of the 20th century with the annihilation of 1.5 million Armenians in Turkey to stories of ancient kingdoms and architecture.

All movies are presented in English. The films highlight cultural, artistic, architectural and historical aspects of the little-known treasures that are hidden within Armenia.

"This is a world premiere event," says a news release issued by the church's cultural committee. "Armenia is a small country, but she has an extremely rich and important history. For instance, how many people know that Armenia was the first nation that accepted Christianity as its nation's religion in 301 AD?"

The next movie presentation is "Country of Armenian Kings-1" on Wednesday, October 11, at 7 pm (on Van, Diyarbakir/Tigranakert), followed by "Garni, Geghard" on Wednesday, November 15, at 7 pm. Both are at the Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence.

Wolfgang Gust Honored in Berlin

GUST, from page 1

War; Gust has "inspected them, edited and interpreted them, before making them available to interested parties worldwide. His website www.armenocide.net is a true treasure trove for researchers and interested persons."

"For the German-Armenian Society it is a special honor to have someone like Wolfgang Gust as an honorary member," the announcement continued.

The German-Armenian Society, which celebrated its centennial three years ago in Berlin, was founded by Johannes Lepsius, and has continued to promote friendship and scholarly cooperation between the two countries. (See <https://mirrorspectator.com/2014/07/18/1914-2014-100-years-of-the-german-armenian-society/>). The website founded by Wolfgang Gust and his wife Sigrid has indeed become the meeting place for genocide researchers throughout the world, with an exceptionally large number of visits by individuals in Turkey. The website presents crucial documents from the archives of the Foreign Ministry of Imperial Germany,

which was a wartime ally of the Ottoman Empire. The correspondence among diplomats in Turkey and Berlin provides a crucial record of what the Germans knew and did not know about the genocide. In addition to the original documents, in German and English, are articles and educational materials pertaining to the subject. A print version of a large number of documents appeared in German in 2005, and in 2014 the Zoryan Institute put out an English translation: *The Armenian Genocide - Evidence from the German Foreign Office Archives, 1915-1916*. New York. Among the many honors conferred upon him for his pioneering work was a tribute to Wolfgang Gust on the occasion of his 80th birthday, two years ago. In a *Festschrift* containing greetings, testimonials and scholarly articles, friends and researchers from many countries including Germany, France, Armenia, Turkey, Denmark and the United States, joined to express their gratitude for his continuing achievements. (See <https://mirrorspectator.com/2015/06/04/happy-birthday-wolfgang-gust/>)

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